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**Song Zheyuan, the Nanjing Government  
and the North China Question  
in Sino-Japanese Relations, 1935-1937.**

*Abstract*

The focus of this study is the relationship between the Chinese central government and Song Zheyuan, the key provincial leader of North China, in the period immediately preceding the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the impact of tensions in that relationship on Japan policy.

The most urgent task confronting the Chinese government in the late 1930s was to secure an equitable and formally-negotiated settlement of outstanding questions with the Tokyo government. The efforts of the Nanjing government are examined in terms of the divisions within the government and in the context of the public debate on Japan policy which was extended to cover fundamental questions of the regime's diplomatic maturity and the function of diplomacy in the new state.

However, the Sino-Japanese question was not purely a diplomatic issue. Tensions between central and northern regional authorities and continuing provincial independence combined with persistent political and military interventions by the Japanese armies in North China to undermine the initiatives of the centre as the lack of an effective central Japan policy eroded regional confidence in the centre. By 1935 Nanjing's control in the North was breaking down and the initiative in contacts with Japan in the region passed to provincial leaders: Song Zheyuan emerged as a key figure in relations with Japan.

In 1935-7 Song occupied all the significant political and military offices in Hebei and Chaha'er provinces. Nanjing was entirely dependent on Song for the defence of the North, yet Song remained ambivalent towards Nanjing and Japan, berating the central authorities for their 'abandonment' of the North while maintaining close contact with the Japanese military. While he had no formal role in foreign affairs, his informal function in the relations with Japan demands closer attention.

**Song Zheyuan, the Nanjing Government  
and the North China Question  
in Sino-Japanese Relations, 1935-1937**

[~~two volumes~~]

[~~Volume I~~]

Marjorie E. Dryburgh

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

University of Durham, Department of East Asian Studies  
1993

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- 9 JUL 1993

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### **Declaration**

No material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted by me for any other degree at this or any other university.

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## Abbreviations used in Text

BMC	Beiping Branch Military Council ( <i>Junweihui Beiping fenhui</i> )
CEC	Central Executive Committee ( <i>Zhongyang zhixing weiyuanhui</i> )
CPC	Central Political Council ( <i>Zhongyang zhengzhi huiyi</i> )
GDA	Guandong Army ( <i>Kantō gun</i> )
MAC	Military Affairs Commission ( <i>Junshi weiyuanhui</i> )
NCGA	North China Garrison Army (Tianjin Army) ( <i>Kahoku chūton gun</i> )
PAC	Beiping Political Affairs Commission ( <i>Beiping zhengwu zhengli weiyuanhui</i> )
PPC	Peace Preservation Corps ( <i>bao'andui</i> )

# Song Zheyuan, the Nanjing Government and the North China Question in Sino-Japanese Relations, 1935-1937

## Introduction.

The focus of this study is the development of Japan policy and the conduct of relations with Japan by the Chinese central government, the impact upon that development by tensions between centre and region, and the effect on the centre-region relationship of Japanese regional intervention in the years 1935-1937.

Between 1935 and 1937, after three years of diplomatic inactivity, the Nanjing government finally adopted a more active approach to Japan policy, only to find that its previous rejection of direct diplomatic negotiations with the Japanese as futile had been entirely accurate. Diplomatic contacts were renewed and formal advances made, but to no avail: attempts at formal negotiations failed and the position adopted by the central government became irrelevant as the actions and allegiances of a hitherto obscure provincial governor, Song Zheyuan, emerged as a decisive factor in the future of relations between China and Japan.

The traditional view of Nanjing's Japan policy is that, for Chiang Kai-shek and the Nanjing government, resistance to Japanese aggression took second place to the struggle against domestic enemies, that Chiang appeased the Japanese in order to free his armies for the encirclement campaigns against the Communists, that only his arrest by Zhang Xueliang at Xi'an in December 1936 forced Chiang to suspend the anti-Communist campaigns and adopt a policy of resistance, and that it was this one shift in policy that brought about the clash of Chinese nationalism and Japanese imperialism which sparked off the eight-year long war in July 1937.<sup>1</sup> Within this framework, disputes over Japan policy are presented primarily as ideological disputes between the

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1. See for example Liu, (1950), *Sino-Japanese diplomacy in the Appeasement Period, 1933-1937*. PhD thesis, University of Pittsburgh; Coble, Parks M. Jr., (1991), *Facing Japan: Chinese Domestic Politics and Japanese Imperialism, 1931-1937*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; Wu Tien-wei, (1976), *The Sian incident: a pivotal point in Modern Chinese History*. Ann Arbor: Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, 26; anything published in the PRC before the mid-1980s. As more primary material became available on the 1930s, there were signs of a qualified reassessment of the Nanjing government: Guo Dajun, (1986), 'Cong «jiu yi ba» dao «ba yi san» Guomin Zhengfu dui Ri zhengce de yanbian.' *Lishi Yanjiu*, 1986, #4; Yuan Wuzhen, Liang Yuelan, (1987), 'Guomindang di wu ci daibiao dahui shi qi zhengce zhuanbian de qidian.' *Shixue yuekan*, 1987, #3; Chen Mingzhong, (1989), 'Shilun 1935, 1936 nian Zhong-Ri huitan.' *Minguo Dang'an*, 1989, #2; this tendency has not been sustained.

central government and its pro-resistance critics, chiefly educated urban liberals and - at a greater distance - the Chinese Communist Party; the failure of the Nanjing government to make any progress in its relations with Japan is seen at best as a lack of vision or failure of will, at worst as a cynical bartering of China's interests - including sovereignty over North China - to avert conflicts with Japan which might threaten the position of the central government.

A closer examination of central government views on Japan policy reveals disunity, despair, frequent negligence and occasional ineptitude, but neither complacency over China's position nor cynicism. In dealing with the Tokyo government, Nanjing was negotiating from a position of extreme weakness, politically as well as militarily. Handicapped by a history of diplomatic defeats by the western powers, a severe lack of trained and experienced diplomats and - for much of 1935 - a Foreign Minister who saw diplomacy as the preserve of powerful nations, China in 1935 was ill-equipped to take on Japan. In the face of these difficulties, divisions within the central government hindered the development of a positive and coherent policy: while it was generally agreed that some solution to the Japan problem had to be found, there was no consensus on what constituted an acceptable solution, or how such a solution might be reached. This problem was exacerbated by vague and conflicting messages emanating from Tokyo on Japan's China policy and the obvious divisions between the civil and military wings of the Japanese authorities.

It was doubtful whether formal diplomacy with Tokyo could have achieved much: whereas Nanjing's requirements were based on securing recognition and respect by Tokyo of Chinese unity and sovereignty over the North, the Japanese position was increasingly dominated by the denial of Nanjing's sovereignty and legitimacy as a diplomatic actor. This denial was not made explicit until January 1938 - after Japan had failed to achieve a settlement mediated by Germany to the Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge) and Shanghai incidents - by the then Japanese Prime Minister Konoe Fumimārō's statement that Tokyo would no longer deal with the Nanjing government. However, Japanese disregard for the Nanjing government pervades diplomatic contacts throughout the period: in Japan's failure until 1936 to move its embassy in China from Shanghai to the capital, Nanjing; in the insistence that, in the absence of successive

ambassadors the Chinese foreign minister deal only with the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing; and in the refusal, once negotiations had finally been established, to consider any of China's terms until Japanese demands had been unconditionally accepted.

While Japanese intransigence prevented advances in diplomacy, the weakness and, at the upper levels, non-professional character of the Chinese Foreign Ministry hampered the Chinese pursuit of a more equitable basis for the Sino-Japanese relationship, and the Ministry was criticised for failing to use even the limited means at its disposal to enhance China's international status. The appointment of the foreign minister and ambassador to Japan was dictated more by individual links to Japan than by diplomatic experience: Wang Jingwei (Foreign Minister 1933-1935), Zhang Qun (Foreign Minister 1935-1937) and Xu Shiying (Ambassador to Japan, 1936-8) had no prior experience of foreign affairs, and the appointments of Wang and Zhang owed more to factional balance of power within the Guomindang than to their personal capabilities. As if in recognition of this, the final power of decision over the approach to Japan was not formally the preserve of the foreign minister but of a loose coalition of the minister, Chiang Kai-shek and Huang Fu and their respective advisers.<sup>2</sup> This did little to add diplomatic expertise to the process and created further problems of coordination.

The development of an appropriate response to the Japanese threat was not simply a matter of foreign policy decision and implementation by the central government. Stalemate in negotiations at the centre did not prevent further political advances by Japan, and the ease with which these advances could be made in North China - in particular the provinces of Hebei and Chaha'er - increased tension between China and Japan and allowed the Japanese armies to ignore the possibility of a political settlement while making Nanjing's need to reach a settlement all the more urgent. The exclusion of the influence of the Guomindang and the Nanjing government from the provinces bordering on Manzhouguo was a basic tenet of the Japanese Army's China policy. The efforts throughout 1935-1937 of the Japanese armies to intervene in the affairs of Hebei and Chaha'er brought the special administrative structures created by

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2. See Chapter I.

Nanjing to handle the special problems existing in the North to the front line of Japan policy, and the relationship between the central government and the northern leaders became of crucial importance to the future of relations with Japan.

Until mid-1935 there was a degree of central control over the North. In 1933-1935, North China political and military affairs were managed by the Beiping Branch Military Council (*Beiping junfenhui*) BMC and the Beiping Political Affairs Commission (*Beiping zhengwu zhengli weiyuanhui*) PAC: these organisations, subordinate to the Military Affairs Commission (*Junshi weiyuanhui*) chaired by Chiang Kai-shek and the Executive Yuan (*Xingzhengyuan*) led by Wang Jingwei, were seen as the last defence against the Japanese advance and served the dual purpose of dealing with the Japanese armies and ensuring the loyalty of the northern military and political bodies to the centre. Their chairmen, He Yingqin and Huang Fu, had direct if not always decisive influence on the response to Japan in North China. By mid-1935 the BMC and the PAC had been seriously undermined and He and Huang, finding their positions in the North untenable, had left for Nanjing. This brought the northern provincial authorities into direct contact with the Japanese armies, and it is from this point that Song Zheyuan begins to emerge as a decisive force in the North.

It might be assumed that in the North China of the 1930s, the threat of Japanese invasion must inevitably overshadow tensions between the provincial authorities and the centre, and that all sectional, local interests must be forgotten in the pursuit of the national interest. However, the existing divisions between centre and region were exacerbated by Japanese pressure. The perception of unity, if not as a panacea for China's problems, then at least as the only rational response to external threat, presupposes a commonly-accepted definition of the national interest and how it should be pursued, *which is not the case*. If the Nanjing government was itself divided over the best way to confront the Japan problem, the divisions between North China and the centre were aggravated by North China's fear that it was a dispensable region, that Nanjing's 'nation' stopped far south of Beiping and that the provinces bordering on Manzhouguo would if necessary be sacrificed to preserve the south-eastern power-base of the Guomindang. The centre on the other hand was distrustful of the northern leaders, suspecting them of secretly seeking a *modus vivendi* with the Japanese and



putting the short-term interests of the region or their own power before those of the nation.

This mutual distrust was a powerful influence on relations between the centre and Song Zheyuan. Song had been abruptly dismissed as governor of Chaha'er in summer 1935 and for three months was without an official post. Unlike He Yingqin and Huang Fu, Song was tied to Hebei-Chaha'er: he could not leave the region without losing his territorial base and his army: he reportedly sought to consolidate his position by first seeking closer relations not with the central government but with the Japanese. Despite the alarm these contacts caused to Nanjing when they were revealed, within a few months Song had been appointed chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, a post carrying political and military authority over the two front-line provinces. Between his appointment in December 1935 and the outbreak of the war in July 1937, Song's talks with the Japanese military continued to alarm the central government as his intransigence in those talks apparently infuriated the Japanese.

These divisions between Song and the centre, while sometimes exploited by the Japanese armies for subversive purposes, should be seen as the product not of external provocation but of Song's background and as inherent in the relationship between central and provincial government at the time. China in the Republican period (1911-1949) was in an advanced state of disintegration. Post-Opium War initiatives to strengthen and defend the nation worked not by reinforcing the strength of the centre but by devolving tasks and therefore powers on the provinces. The early moves for industrialisation promoted by the Self-Strengthening Movement and the establishment of militia forces were funded and administered by the provinces, which began to gain significance as politico-administrative units.<sup>3</sup> The creation of provincial assemblies in 1909 can be seen as a further concession to the provinces' growing appetite for autonomy.<sup>4</sup> Once the centre collapsed, the provinces had both the desire and the capacity for further independence.

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3. Chesneaux, Jean, (1969), 'The Federalist Movement in China, 1920-3.' in Gray, ed., *Modern China's Search for a Political Form*. London: Oxford University Press, p.99.

4. Chesneaux, (1969), p.103. The edict establishing provincial assemblies was issued in 1907, although the assemblies were not convened until 1909. Mackerras, (1982), *Modern China: a chronology*. London: Thames and Hudson, pp.224, 230.

In the aftermath of the Wuchang uprising in October 1911, provinces individually declared their secession from Beijing, and, in the absence of a convincing pretender to central authority, retreated into regionalism. Periods of disunity following the collapse of a dynasty were not unknown; now however, the rejection not only of the Qing but of the imperial system itself allowed the viability of a centralised system of government for China to be questioned, fuelling provincial desires for autonomy. The absence of a politically stable and morally convincing central authority aggravated the centrifugal tendencies of the second half of the 19th century. That China should be reunified was rarely seriously or openly questioned by the major political forces;<sup>5</sup> both the nature of this new China, and the means by which reunification was to be achieved, were disputed, and the divisions remained.

The disputes over the new form of China and the autonomist ambitions of the provinces found expression in the federalist movement (*liansheng zizhi yundong*) of 1920-1923. The concept of 'federalism' as a system of government for republican China received support from a variety of sources for differing motives. Intellectuals, inspired by the stability and prosperity of federal unions such as the United States and Switzerland, saw in federalism the hope of a gradual reunification for China in a system which would accommodate regional diversity. Federalism, it was argued, would bring the government closer to the people and bring greater political awareness; federalism would protect the people from dictatorship by the central government, and guarantee against the risk of attempts to restore the Qing dynasty,<sup>6</sup> and prevent the spread of natural disasters and rebellions beyond their area of origin.<sup>7</sup> These claims for the federalist system cast some light on provincial concerns and grievances against the central government in the early republic: having gained a measure of autonomy in the final decline of the Qing, the provinces were now unwilling to relinquish that power, especially to a central government which appeared distant, inept or determined

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5. Both the Guomindang and the Communist Party at first flirted with federalism, but this was a temporary measure adopted when they had little chance of selling their political programmes to the country as a whole. See Chesneaux, (1969), p.96.

6. This was still considered a serious risk until the expulsion of the Court from the Imperial Palace by Feng Yuxiang in 1924. Chesneaux, (1969), p.125, n.112.

7. From article by Tang Dechang in *Taipingyang*, cited in Chesneaux, (1969), pp.124-5. Chesneaux does not explain Tang's grounds for this last claim.

to wield power in ways of which the provinces disapproved. Similarly, article 32 of the provincial constitution of Zhejiang, drawn up in 1922, stated:

"No law of the national government and no treaty with foreign countries which violates the provincial powers or augments its obligations will be valid without the previous consent of the province."<sup>8</sup>

Distrust of the policy of the central government towards the foreign powers after episodes such as the Nishihara loans and the Versailles Peace Conference, in which China's interests were sacrificed because the central government could not or would not safeguard them, reinforced the desire for control over foreign affairs as they affected the province, the underlying assumption being that the central government would not only restrict the freedom of the province itself but cause it to be further restricted by a foreign power: that, central governments since 1860 having failed to protect China from foreign incursions, their influence was best excluded. This is echoed in Song Zheyuan's reaction to Nanjing's efforts to exert its authority in the North.

While the theoreticians of federalism examined in detail the workings of the system abroad, little attempt was made to examine the possible application of federal principles in the light of China's problems. Conversely, those experiments in government styled 'federalist' by their authors seemed to have little regard for the basic principles of the federalist ideal. Those politicians converted to the cause did so apparently as a means of promoting in one province political programmes they had no chance of enforcing in China as a whole. Sun Yat-sen flirted with 'federalism' in Guangdong as a temporary measure to acquire a base from which to advance his claim to govern all China: seeing federalism as an interim measure he had by no means abandoned thoughts of eventual reunification under a centralist government.<sup>9</sup>

Local leaders who claimed to embrace the cause of federalism seem often to have been driven to it either by distrust of the corrupt and despotic central government, or, attracted by the autonomist aspects of federalism, by a wish to increase their own regional power without envisaging union at some point in the future with other provinces. In August 1921, Zhao Hengti, governor of the strongly federalist Hunan,

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8. Chesneaux, (1969), p.116, n. 76.

9. Chesneaux, (1969), pp.113, 134.

called for a pan-China federalist conference to be held in Wuchang to devise a new federalist order for the nation, but the conference was never held<sup>10</sup> and while other provinces in the South and East adopted federalist provincial constitutions, there does not seem to have been a sustained effort to unite with other federalist local administrations: 'federalism in one province' remained the norm, and, despite the optimistic declarations of the theorists that a federalist system would protect the people from dictatorship by the central government, the system did nothing to defend them against federalist leaders such as Zhao Hengti, whose rule seemed to differ little from the despotic and brutal regimes of unabashed warlords.<sup>11</sup> The lack of motivation to establish a genuine federation, and to prove that federalism was more than another excuse for local despotism was a major factor in the discrediting of federalism as the solution to China's problems.<sup>12</sup>

The calls for federalism subsided, and China was nominally unified by the Northern Expedition. However, outside the south-eastern provinces closely controlled by the Nanjing government,<sup>13</sup> the drive towards provincial autonomy remained powerful, and its influence can be seen throughout Song Zheyuan's career. Song was born in Leling, north-western Shandong, in 1885. He came from a family of officials; his father however had no official post and made a precarious living by teaching. From the age of seven, Song received a classical education from his father and grandfather. His family was poor - Shandong suffered badly from flooding in the 1890s - and at the age of 16, Song went out to work to support his family; by his own account as a farmer, but according to other sources as an elementary-school teacher.<sup>14</sup> Standard Chinese biographies of Song emphasise the 'patriotic' motives behind his career.

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10. Chesneaux, (1969), p.119

11. Chesneaux, (1969), p. 130.

12. Chesneaux, (1969), p.126.

13. Lary, (1974), *Region and Nation: The Kwangsi Clique in Chinese Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.17, gives only Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui as being firmly under central control, with Fujian, Jiangxi, Hunan, Hubei and Henan, as being 'kept loyal only through the judicious use of military force'.

14. Lü Weijun, (1989), *Song Zheyuan*. Jinan: Shandong daxue chubanshe. p.3; 'Mingxuan zi ji' in *Song gu shangjiang Zheyuan jiangjun yiji* 2 vols *Zhuanji wenxue congkan* 87 Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, 1985, (hereafter SZYYJ), p.74. This was in 1901, the year in which civil service examinations were suspended in 45 cities in Shandong under the terms of the Boxer agreement.

According to the biography of Song produced by the Leling CPPCC, in 1900, at the height of the Boxer rebellion, the young Song had visited Beijing with his father, and witnessed the attack on Beijing by the allied western armies, an experience which made him determined to work to develop China and free the nation from foreign humiliations.<sup>15</sup> In 1905, powerfully affected by the Russo-Japanese War and the loss of parts of Manchuria to Japan, he abandoned teaching for the army, serving first under Lu Jianzhang, for whom his father had worked, and then under Lu's friend and relative Feng Yuxiang.<sup>16</sup>

Until 1930 his career followed the classic path of warlordism and regional independence. Under Feng he was involved in the 1915-1916 rebellion in protest at Yuan Shikai's imperial ambitions. It was far from clear which side Feng was fighting on until the rebellion was virtually over and its outcome obvious,<sup>17</sup> a tactic which Song was later to use in his response to the South-Western rebellion of 1936 and the Xi'an incident as well as in his dealings with the Japanese. Song Zheyuan claimed adherence to the principle of a unified China, and therefore to Chiang Kai-shek as its *de facto* leader, and had achieved his posts as governor of Chaha'er and commander of the 29th Army by siding with Nanjing in the 1930 war between Yan Xishan and Feng Yuxiang and the central government. He joined the Guomindang with the rest of Feng's forces in 1926, but showed little enthusiasm for the Party and closed down all local Party branches in Chaha'er in 1933. Officers of the 29th Army were issued with pictures of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, which they were expected to carry at all times, but they also carried a *baihua* version of the Four Books and Five Classics. Song's adherence to the eight Confucian virtues is remembered by former colleagues rather than his opinions on the Three People's Principles, and the higher authority to which he refers in his political speeches is the nation, not the Guomindang.<sup>18</sup>

After the Northern Expedition and his declaration of allegiance to the centre in

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15. Lü Weijun, (1989), p.4.

16. Lü Weijun, (1989), p.5.

17. Sheridan, (1966), *Chinese Warlord: the Career of Feng Yuxiang*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp.54-63.

18. Wang Zhanghai, (A), 'Song gu jiang Mingxuan dui wo zhi zhiyu' and Liu Zhensan, (A), 'Cong ershijiu jun de qiyuan shuodao Song Mingxuan xiansheng de wei ren' in *SZYYJ*, p.1170 and p.1078.

1930, Song found himself in conflict with the reunification efforts of the Guomindang in terms of both pure ideology and practical questions of the relationship between centre and province. As Fitzgerald points out:

"... even when it is directed towards national unification, state-building is invariably divisive because it involves competition for state power. There is a natural temptation to trace conflict in the state-building process to ideological differences ... and downplay the potential for political conflict and social resistance in state-building generally."<sup>19</sup>

Until 1926, the competition between the northern provinces and between the provinces and the central government in Beijing had been fierce, yet there had been no incentive to reduce the power of the centre *vis-à-vis* the provinces while central power remained the ultimate prize of provincial competition. However, once the Guomindang was established in Nanjing, Song found himself subject to Guomindang and central government control through Party political education officers in the 29th Army, the BMC and the Chaha'er provincial government with little prospect of greater power except through greater provincial autonomy. The Guomindang, on the other hand was committed to extension of state power:

"Sun [Yat-sen] and his successors believed the imperial state had failed to defend the people from foreign aggression not because it oppressed the people but because it made too *few* demands on them..."<sup>20</sup>

For Sun Yat-sen - and Chiang Kai-shek - the state alone could define the national interest. Moreover for Sun, who believed that, every Chinese being a patriot, no Chinese could fail to support the national revolution as an indisputably patriotic cause, the relationship between sectional - in this case regional - interests and the national interests was self-evident.<sup>21</sup> This unprecedented expansion of the state which he envisaged was in itself a potential source of conflict:<sup>22</sup> extension of central control would necessarily entail restriction of the powers of the provinces.

The question of relations between centre and other regions of China has been

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19. Fitzgerald, (1990), 'The Misconceived Revolution: State and Society in China, 1923-1926.' *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol 49, # 2, p.323.

20. Fitzgerald, (1990), p.326. *Italics in original.*

21. Fitzgerald, (1990), p.327.

22. Fitzgerald, (1990), p.325-6.

studied in some detail elsewhere.<sup>23</sup> Regionalism was a powerful force in the China of the 1920s: while it might not be unrealistic to expect it to take second place to feelings described as nationalism in a time of national crisis it is equally probable that the tensions created and expressed by regional divisions would remain as an undercurrent. Political regionalism was traditionally seen by Chinese as a force which weakened China and exposed it to encroachments by foreign powers. Regionalism in Republican China was condemned as an obstacle to national reintegration:

"The stronger regionalism is, the weaker nationalism is. ... If we Chinese are extremely attached to our native regions, then we naturally have great difficulty in recognising the nation that stands above the region. ... In our work we are only concerned with advancing our region, and do not give thought to the interests of the nation. While the country is divided up along these provincial, *hsien* and *hsiang* lines [what hope is there] of easily producing a common national viewpoint?"<sup>24</sup>

In a study of the South-Western (Guangdong-Guangxi) regional clique, Diana Lary argues that regionalism and nationalism in China were not necessarily incompatible, and that the political regionalism which traditionally flourished at times of central weakness in fact prevented the total dissolution of China as an entity:

"... it is not absurd to see regionalism as the sinews which held China together ... its proponents seldom saw it as more than a bridging phenomenon; they operated on the assumption that the centre would reassert itself, and that regionalism as a political force would submit gracefully to the reborn Centre. It held the fort for the Centre, it provided a continuity between the order that had died and the new one that would emerge."<sup>25</sup>

In North China, Lary suggests, "... the question was less one of regional independence than of detachment by foreign invasion..."<sup>26</sup> Regional feelings did not dissolve under the threat of foreign invasion, but were made more acute by the impotence of the central government: in North China in the 1930s the problem of regional desires for greater autonomy and dissatisfaction with the centre was complicated by the repeated interventions of the Japanese armies, contemptuous of Nanjing's claims to be

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23. See Lary, (1974); Kapp,(1973), *Szechwan and the Chinese Republic, 1911-1938*. New Haven: Yale University Press; Chesneaux, (1969).

24. *hsien* (*xian*): county; *hsiang* (*xiang*): village. Wang Zaoshi quoted in Lary, (1974), p.1. Wang was a founder member of the All-China Federation of National Salvation and critic of the Guomindang and Nanjing government.

25. Lary, (1974), p.8-9.

26. Lary, (1974), p.17.

considered the central government of a unified China and explicitly committed to the separation of strategic regions from the centre, and by the apparent belief of Northern Chinese leaders such as Song Zheyuan that the Nanjing government preferred to sacrifice regional leaders to the Japanese rather than risk resistance. Song Zheyuan was not the passive object either of detachment by Japan or of attachment by the central government, and retains a crucial position in relations between China and Japan precisely because of his refusal to succumb to the conflicting pressures placed on him by the Japanese and Nanjing. Song cannot however be seen as a purely regional figure: as a senior military and political figure in Hebei-Chaha'er, he could not escape a national rôle. While the South-Western leaders could retreat from the centre to strengthen the region and mobilise their armies in resistance to Japan at a distance of thousands of miles, Song was forced directly and personally to confront these issues.

The Nanjing government of the 1930s was unable to subdue regionalism as a political force or repress the desire for regional independence for the sake of the national interest which it claimed to represent: in North China the government had no choice but to work through the regional leaders. Nanjing could extend its control over North China and the conduct of relations with the Japanese military in the region not directly, but only indirectly via an established power group - Song Zheyuan and his 29th Army - whose relationship to the Nanjing government was ambiguous, and whose loyalty was conditional.

This study focuses deliberately on the Chinese experience and perceptions of the Sino-Japanese relationship in the 1930s, and draws predominantly on Chinese sources, chiefly on collections of government documents published in Taiwan with, where possible, materials from the Second Historical Archive of China in Nanjing, and supplemented where appropriate with material from the contemporary press and memoirs of those involved, mostly in the North China aspects of the Sino-Japanese relations. While this emphasis on Chinese sources imposes certain limits, it redresses the balance of past scholarship on East Asia in the 1930s and the Sino-Japanese relationship which, relying on non-Chinese material, addressed largely non-Chinese



concerns; the present study is intended as a complement, not a substitute, to this work.<sup>27</sup> While there are still significant gaps in the published Chinese primary material, the efforts of the Nanjing government to develop and implement a coherent Japan policy while retaining control over North China and the internal and external factors blocking those efforts emerge clearly from the sources.

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27. For example, Trotter, Ann, (1975), *Britain and East Asia, 1933-1937*. London: Cambridge University Press; Fox, John P., (1982), *Germany and the Far Eastern Crisis, 1931-1938*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; Shimada Toshihiko tr. J.B.Crowley, (1983), 'Designs on North China, 1933-1937' in James William Morley, ed., *The China Quagmire*, pp.2-232; Crowley, James B., (1966), *Japan's Quest for Autonomy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Borg, Dorothy, (1964), *The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938*. Harvard East Asian Series 14. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; Duus, Peter, Myers, Ramon H., Peattie, Mark R., *Japan's Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

## Chapter I

### The Debate on Sino-Japanese Rapprochement, (January-May, 1935)

The efforts of the Nanjing government to formulate a unified and effective policy for dealing with the Japan problem in the period 1935-1937 were hindered by both external and domestic factors. The most obvious impediment to amicable, equitable relations pursued by formal means at the level of central government between China and Japan was 'Japan' itself. Nanjing struggled to identify and respond to 'true intentions' on the part of Japan, but was thwarted by the contradictions between central government policy as proclaimed by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and that pursued by the North China Garrison and Guandong Armies, differences in method which however appeared to mask a greater unity of purpose. Response in good faith to ostensible moves towards more friendly relations with the Japanese central authorities left China exposed to further advances by the Japanese military; wariness concerning the intentions of the military provoked accusations that Nanjing lacked 'sincerity' in its dealings with Tokyo.

Policy formulation in Nanjing was hindered by the lack of a consistent and unequivocal stance on the part of Japan: this stagnation at the centre accelerated a shift in the balance of power over contacts with Japan from centre to region in the second half of 1935. Efficient implementation of policies adopted was rendered nearly impossible by apparently growing divisions between central and regional authorities, and the extraordinary degree of *de facto* autonomy enjoyed by local authorities in North China in their dealings with the Japanese armies. It is this autonomy which gives Song Zheyuan his significance. This drift of control over policy formulation and execution from the centre was deplored by critics of Japan policy as a symptom of passivity, subordination of China's legitimate claims in its dealings with Japan to Japan's agenda, and abdication by a demoralised and politically bankrupt centre of responsibility for national security and survival. The damage done by this decentralisation was obvious not only to opponents of the central government: the major policy goal of the Foreign Ministry of Zhang Qun (December, 1935 - February, 1937) was the establishment of exclusive central control over substantive Sino-Japanese contacts.

While it is generally convenient to refer to 'the Japan policy of the Nanjing

government', there is no intended implication that approaches adopted towards Japan reflected a government- or Party-wide consensus on the Japan problem. The extent to which Chiang Kai-shek is often assumed to dominate and indeed embody the central government of 1927-37 - and therefore personally to dictate policy - has distorted later perceptions of events: in the case of Japan policy, the inability of a central government crippled by differences of opinion to produce a solution to an insoluble problem is seen as a deliberate policy of non-action on Chiang's part. It appears however that during much of 1935, Japan policy at central government level originated not in any individual but in a coalition of Chiang Kai-shek, Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei, and Huang Fu, then chairman of the Beiping Political Affairs Commission.<sup>1</sup>

Each of these three had limitations as sources of policy. Chiang, absent from Nanjing for much of 1935 pursuing the encirclement campaigns against the Communists and trying to develop closer links between regional leaders in South-West China and the central government, was often out of touch with events as they unfolded. Huang Fu,<sup>2</sup> having spent the past two years dealing with the Japanese armies in a fruitless effort to stabilise North China, suffered from the twin handicaps of being widely perceived as the author of an 'appeasement' policy in the North,<sup>3</sup> and of weariness with the Japan problem as a whole to the point where he refused to return to Beiping and regularly presented his resignation. Wang Jingwei, concurrently Chairman of the Executive Yuan, was at best a part-time Foreign Minister, and does not seem to have devoted the energy to the post which China's critical position demanded: if it appears that Wang presided over a period of singular despair and inertia in Japan policy, it seems from the available evidence that the explanation can

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1. In North China affairs, He Yingqin, Army Minister and Chairman of the Beiping Branch Military Council (a sub-branch of the Military Affairs Commission) (*Junshi weiyuanhui Beiping fenhui*), was also influential.

2. Huang had been appointed Minister for Domestic Affairs, but had not yet taken up the post. He had studied in Japan and become a member of the *Tongmenghui* before 1911; after returning to China he had served first under the Qing and then under various Beiyang warlord governments in Beijing in the 1920s. He sided with Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang after the Northern expedition but never became a Party member. *Zhongguo jinxindai renming da cidian*, Beijing: Guoji guangbo chubanshe, 1989, (hereafter *RMDCD*), p.607.

3. Coble, (1991), p.142.

be found partly in the attitude and opinions of Wang himself.<sup>4</sup>

The available evidence is far from satisfactory. Wang Jingwei's career in the Nanjing decade is overshadowed by his leadership of a 'puppet' government under Japanese protection during the War, and there is little material available on his activities as Foreign Minister in 1935.<sup>5</sup> It is recorded in chronologies of the period that he met Japanese diplomatic and other personnel - chiefly the Japanese Minister in China (later Ambassador), Ariyoshi Akira and the Consul-General in Nanjing, Suma Yakichirō - that the Japanese presented demands relating in general or specific terms to the suppression of the 'anti-Japanese' movement, or to the suspension of the boycott of Japanese goods. Few traces of these contacts or of correspondence between Wang and his colleagues on issues concerning the Sino-Japanese relationship appear in published collections of archival material.

The first half of 1935, described by a contemporary observer as the most significant period in Sino-Japanese relations since the loss of Manchuria in 1931,<sup>6</sup> saw a determined effort by the Chinese central authorities to re-establish dialogue with the Japanese civil authorities in Tokyo after several years of virtual diplomatic silence. To those critics of the Nanjing government advocating a more assertive foreign policy, any attempt to promote more amicable relations with Japan seemed premature and deeply misguided: while Manchuria remained in Japanese hands, and Japan had not repudiated the policies which had led to its seizure, any talk of friendship or normal diplomatic

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4. See for example Wang Jingwei, (1935a), 'Jiuwang tucun zhi fangzhen' *Dong Fang Zazhi* (hereafter *DFZZ*), XXXII, 6, pp.5-11, discussed below, p.24.

5. In contrast, the activities of his successor, Zhang Qun, are well-documented. Staff of the Second Historical Archive have turned down requests for material on Wang's discussions with Japanese diplomatic personnel at this time on the grounds that Wang Jingwei was not Foreign Minister in 1935, and that such material therefore cannot exist. (Personal observation, November, 1990.) The problems of obtaining material on Wang specifically and from the Archive in general were confirmed by Professors Cai Dejin (Marxist-Leninist Research Institute, Beijing Normal University) and Shao Yunrui (Marxist-Leninist Teaching and Research Institute, Nankai University, Tianjin) in December 1990. However, the only example of a conversation between Wang and Japanese Embassy staff which I have found comes from the Second Historical Archive, and was published in 'Zhong-Ri jian you guan Zhong-Ying jiekuan yu Zhongguo bizhi gaige jiaoshe qingkuang ziliao xuan' (hereafter *ZYJK*) *Minguo Dang'an* 1989, 2, pp.12-26. It records a discussion between Wang and the ambassador, Ariyoshi, in March 1935 on the prospects of a British loan to China and support for currency reform. Despite Japanese objections to British involvement in China's financial affairs, the discussion is more amicable than any recorded between Zhang Qun and Japanese Embassy staff; this may be simply because it took place before the North China crises of May and June which soured relations between China and Japan.

6. 'Zhong-Ri wenti zhi zhankai.' *DFZZ*, XXXII, 6, p.103.

relations could only be self-deluding. To these critics it seemed that the Chinese central government spent the period in pursuit of a chimera of rapprochement (*qinshan*) with Japan - with no sign of any new practical approach to the Japan problem as a whole which would translate 'rapprochement' at the level of central government into effective action to curb the Japanese armies in North China - until the illusion was rudely dispelled in June by the expulsion of Guomindang Party branches, the central armies and key officials from the vitally important provinces of Hebei and Chaha'er.<sup>7</sup>

This rather crude opposition of the delusions of the central government and the realities of the Japan problem as it affected North China ignores the ambivalence in Nanjing towards Japan and the tensions created by the Japan problem, as well as glossing over some of the limitations of China's diplomatic behaviour in the 1930s. In examining the approach of the central government to the Japan problem at this time it is relevant to examine exactly what Nanjing hoped or expected to achieve by its overtures to Japan, what were the intentions underlying the rhetoric of conciliation, and why and by whom it was felt that these overtures had to be made.

Nanjing's rejection of direct contact with Tokyo after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 when the Japanese civil government had declared itself willing to attempt a negotiated settlement, was still seen as a grave blunder.<sup>8</sup> By early 1935, any hopes of support from abroad had faded: Britain was hinting that China could expect no help in dealing with Japan unless it made more efforts of its own; the League of Nations' ability to enforce compliance by Japan with the League resolutions and directives on the Manchurian problem ended in March, two years after Japan's formal departure from the League. It could not be assumed that the Japanese armies would be satisfied for long with the gains of 1931-1933, or that China would, by the time the next advance came, be strong enough to offer adequate military resistance; there could be no possible security unless Tokyo could be prevailed upon to restrain the military.

Since the Tanggu truce of May 1933, which ended the fighting following the

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7. Du Zhongyuan, (1935b). See also Chapters 2-3, *passim*.

8. Furuya, (1981), tr. Chang Chun-ming, *Chiang Kai-shek, his life and times*. New York: St. John's University Press. pp.443-4;

Japanese invasion of Rehe,<sup>9</sup> there had been no major armed conflicts between China and Japan in the North, and tentative moves had been made to stabilise North China. Under the leadership of Huang Fu, the PAC had negotiated the resumption of rail and postal services between North China and Manzhouguo - insisting however that this implied no recognition of any legal status of Manzhouguo - and preliminary talks on air services had begun. This concentration on practical matters and evasion of the primary issue of Japanese occupation of the North-Eastern provinces angered Chinese who felt that Nanjing should make the return of the North-East and the resumption of the *status quo ante* September 1931 a precondition of all further contacts with Japan. Rail and postal links benefitted Manzhouguo but not China,<sup>10</sup> and while the agreements resulted in a temporary reduction in tension, this had no value unless Nanjing was able to exploit any improvement in atmosphere to negotiate a lasting and comprehensive settlement. If Nanjing was to regain credibility, it was essential to show that the central government was prepared to tackle the important issues of Sino-Japanese relations.

It was also imperative that the Nanjing government dispel the impression that it was losing direction not only in foreign affairs but also in domestic matters. By late 1934, it appeared that the twin pressures of the Communists in Jiangxi and the Japanese in the North had forced the suspension or abandonment of all other political development. The Guomindang Fifth National Congress, originally scheduled for November 1933, had twice been postponed, the second time - according to government sources - at the request of 'Bandit Suppression' generals Chen Jitang, Li Zongren and Gu Zhutong.<sup>11</sup> There had been no National Congress since the three rival Fourth National Congresses of November 1931 and no Congress of undisputed legitimacy since the death of Sun Yat-sen.<sup>12</sup> One of the tasks of the Congress was to plan for the

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9. On the Tanggu truce, see Chapter II.

10. Zhang Xiruo, (1935), 'Tanggu xieding yilai de waijiao.' *DLPL*, #144, 5.5.1935, p.6.

11. 'Di wu ci quanguo daibiao dahui zai du zhanqi.' *WBZK*, #43, 7.1.1935, pp.12-13.

12. Fourth National Congresses: led by Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing, 12-23.11.1931 (381 delegates); led by Hu Hanmin in Guangzhou, 18.11-5.12.1931, (over 500 delegates); led by Wang Jingwei in Shanghai, 3-5.12.1931, (over 200 delegates). The Wang Congress was, according to one source, convened after the departure of Wang Jingwei and Sun Ke's followers from the Hu Congress in protest at Chen Jitang's attempts to control the Congress. *Zhonghua Minguo shijian renwulu*. ed. Huang Meizhen. Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin

end of the phase of political tutelage - originally planned for 1935 - and the inauguration of constitutional government,<sup>13</sup> yet there was no sign of progress or leadership towards that goal from the Guomindang. With the departure of the Communists from Jiangxi, the perceived urgency of the Communist threat relative to China's other problems was diminished; Nanjing had to be seen to take effective action on China's other problems: Japan, and the progress of the revolution itself. Episodes such as the Twenty-One Demands (1915) and the Nishihara loans (1917)<sup>14</sup> had left a clear association of calls for friendship with Japan with the sacrifice of China's rights and interests in return for short-term personal advantage by corrupt and reactionary Beijing warlord governments. There is a visible effort on the part of the Nanjing government to place its approach to China's present problems, domestic and foreign, in the context of a revolution which continued under the leadership of the Guomindang: to argue in fact that closer relations with Japan were not a retrograde step but an essential part of that revolution.

The use of diplomacy for a nation in China's position and the competence of the Nanjing government in foreign affairs was the subject of much discussion in the unofficial Press at this time. China was not apparently taken seriously as an independent power - and therefore as a diplomatic actor - by western governments: in the two-tier international system of the 1930s, China was placed firmly on the lower tier. The dismissive attitude of western governments to China had powerful effects on China's diplomatic development: China's function as a source of concessions and special privileges for foreign powers did not encourage successive Chinese governments to look favourably on diplomatic solutions, and had not facilitated the development of foreign affairs organisations capable of dealing with those powers on equal terms.

Diplomacy was thus seen by some as an instrument used by stronger nations;

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chubanshe, 1987 (hereafter *SJRWL*), pp.209-10. The legitimacy of the Third National Congress was disputed by Wang Jingwei's Reorganisation Clique (*gaizupai*).

13. Lubot, (1982), *Liberalism in an Illiberal Age*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press. p.

14. See Etō, (1986), 'China's International Relations, 1911-1931.' in Fairbank and Feuerwerker, eds., *Cambridge History of China, vol. XIII: Republican China, (1912-1949) part 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.96-98 and Ch'i, (1980), 'Ts'ao Ju-lin (1876-1966): His Japanese Connections.' in Iriye, ed., *The Chinese and the Japanese: Essays in Political and Cultural Interactions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp.140-161, *passim*.

as one writer commented:

"The greatest principle of normal diplomacy is first to create a *fait accompli* and then to seek legal recognition of it. By not negotiating in a void, one has a better chance of success. It is not enough merely to state one's intentions..."<sup>15</sup>

This assumption, informed more by China's experiences than by a study of 'standard diplomatic practice' among more powerful states, is echoed by Wang Jingwei's warning against over-ambitious initiatives<sup>16</sup> and was not likely to encourage a positive approach to Japan. However, the assumption that China as a weak nation could not use diplomacy was far from universal, and commentators on foreign affairs on the whole tended to berate the government for its passivity: Zhang Zhongfu, writing in *Duli Pinglun (Independent Critic)* in February admonished:

"If a strong nation is neglectful of diplomacy, this need not be catastrophic; if a weak nation is careless this can lead to its extinction."<sup>17</sup>

Those who argued for a more active diplomatic approach did not see diplomacy as a panacea, yet they were disgusted with what they saw as the ineptitude of the responsible central authorities: the Chinese Foreign Ministry was accused of throwing away even those limited advantages which could be gained by diplomacy through its own incompetence and inactivity. As Fu Sinian concluded an attack in *Duli Pinglun* on advocacy of rapprochement with Japan,

"We hope that the politicians will... use China's diplomatic capacity to the full, and not just sit by and watch as the ambassador in A is not in his post, the ambassador in B does nothing, and the ambassador in C is not up to the job. The authorities did the nation a great wrong in failing to fulfil their responsibilities in diplomacy after the September 18th Incident..."<sup>18</sup>

Another writer in *Duli Pinglun*, Wei Chen, accused Chinese diplomats of having been 'asleep', relating his own experiences in the Chinese Embassy in Washington in support of this.<sup>19</sup>

At the time of the Manchurian crisis, Wei wrote, China had no full diplomatic

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15. 'Bianjiang waijiao ying zhuyi zhi dian.' *Yishi Bao* (Tianjin), 23.12.1934; reprinted *WBZK*, #44, 14.1935, pp.32-4.

16. See p.26 below.

17. Zhang Zhongfu (1935a), 'Ruo guo shi fou wu waijiao?' *DLPL*, #139, 25.2.1935, p.12.

18. Meng Zhen, (1935a), 'Zhong-Ri qinshan ???!' *DLPL*, #140, 4.3.1935, p.3.

19. Wei Chen, (1935), 'Ruci waijiao!' *DLPL*, #138, 18.2.1935, pp.3-5.



representation with the major powers apart from Shi Zhaoji, Chinese Minister in London. Chinese representation elsewhere was in the hands of low-ranking *chargés d'affaires* (*daiban*) who attracted little respect from either the Chinese Foreign Ministry or the host governments, and did not have the training or the seniority to take any action on their own initiative. For example, the *chargé* in Washington in September 1931 was 76 years old, and had not been back to China for fifty years. He was replaced by Yan Huiqing; when Yan was transferred shortly afterwards to Geneva and thence to the Soviet Union, he took all his Washington staff with him. Until after the conclusion of the Tanggu truce in May 1933, the ministry in Washington was left empty except for the new *chargé*, his assistant, whose only skill was the drafting of official documents in Chinese, a trainee clerk and an elderly typist, and - temporarily - two Chinese students. Only the *chargé* was an official employee of the Nanjing government. This skeleton staff was overwhelmed with floods of telegrams from Nanjing, most passing on information on the situation in China less recent and less accurate than that provided by American news agencies.<sup>20</sup>

There was no-one in Washington competent to deal with the American authorities or with other diplomatic personnel, no-one to accept invitations to public debate with Japanese representatives, no-one - in the absence of adequate funding or instructions on policy from the Chinese Foreign Ministry - to give China's account of the Sino-Japanese dispute except by repeating verbatim speeches made by China's representatives to the League of Nations. Japanese representatives, on the other hand, were more senior than their Chinese counterparts, received frequent policy updates from their government and were aided in their propaganda work by the Japanese chamber of commerce in New York and the lecturer in Japanese history at Columbia University:<sup>21</sup> Japan's account of events in China went unchallenged. Even Chiang Kai-shek had sanctioned criticism of China's diplomatic response to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria;<sup>22</sup> the inadequacy of that response had obviously left a powerful impression on critics of the government. In May, Zhang Zhongfu wrote more

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20. Wei Chen, (1935), p.4.

21. This position was funded by the Japanese government. Wei Chen, (1935), p.5.

22. See p.23.

specifically in *Duli Pinglun* on the failures of Chinese diplomacy. He briefly acknowledged the material obstacles to China's efforts in foreign affairs before moving on to enumerate the diplomatic shortcomings of successive Chinese governments:

"The Chinese government has no diplomatic policy and no Chinese government ever has had one, but has always relied on *ad hoc*, piecemeal responses, clutching at straws...; not only do (Chinese governments) have no fixed diplomatic policy, they do no research or preparation for diplomatic problems concerning China...; Chinese governments have no intelligence system for diplomacy...; Chinese governments have no system for disseminating information concerning Chinese diplomacy..."<sup>23</sup>

The approach of successive Chinese governments to diplomacy as portrayed by its critics can only be described as amateurish: discussion of matters important to China, such as the Shandong question, were delayed at the Paris Peace Conference (1919) and the Washington Conference (1922) because the Chinese delegations were sent without full instructions or documentation;<sup>24</sup> at the time of the revision of the unequal treaties, the Chinese mission in Washington had to ask another foreign embassy for details of a treaty recently concluded with China, as the Chinese Foreign Ministry had not sent details.<sup>25</sup> If western representatives described China to their governments as backward, chaotic and badly governed, it was all the more important for China's diplomatic representatives abroad to counteract that impression.

With the appointment of high-profile professional diplomats such as Gu Weijun to important posts in Europe, the situation improved somewhat, but China suffered from the lack of a professional diplomatic class. Ambassadors were often chosen for their personal knowledge of and contacts with one particular country, and even those with long diplomatic experience lacked versatility. For example, Gu Weijun, educated in the United States, spent his working life in Europe and devoted himself to raising China's profile with western powers, in particular the United States and Britain, but he has been described as 'at best inadequate and often completely inept'<sup>26</sup> in dealing

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23. Zhang Zhongfu, (1935b), 'Zhongguo waijiao shibai de zhengjie.' *DLPL*, #148, 2.6.1935, pp.2-5.

24. This failure to provide adequate documentation also created problems in dealing with the Japanese in North China. See below Chapter II, p. 45, 49; Chapter VI, p.146.

25. Zhang Zhongfu, (1935b), p.4.

26. Hilary Conroy in preface to Chu, (1981), *V.K. Wellington Koo*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, p.xi.

with the USSR and Japan. The difficulties of finding a Foreign Minister who could deal with full range of China's foreign relations were acute. Zhang Qun, for example, was appointed Foreign Minister mostly on the strength of his personal contacts in Japan and had neither diplomatic training nor experience.

The first tentative move towards renewed contact with Japan appears to have come from Chiang Kai-shek himself. In January 1935, the debate on the future of relations between China and Japan was reopened by an article published in *Waijiao Pinglun* (*Foreign Affairs Critic*) entitled 'Friend or Foe? An Examination of Sino-Japanese Relations.' The article itself was written by Chen Bulei, based on instructions from Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>27</sup> Published under the name of Xu Daolin, an adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, the article was clearly marked as coming from sources close to the centre, while allowing enough distance from Chiang himself to avert any possible embarrassment if the initiative misfired. Chiang thus gave official sanction to debate on the future of relations with Japan, and signalled the intention of the Nanjing government to provide a relatively friendly atmosphere for Japanese participation in that debate.

In examining the state of the Sino-Japanese relationship, the article was frank in its analysis of China's past errors, which included misjudgment of the relative strength of China and Japan, and diplomatic inflexibility and timidity. The article contained broad hints that, while the responsibility for any improvement in relations lay with the Japanese authorities, Nanjing would not be unresponsive if Tokyo assumed that responsibility. The 'revolutionary diplomacy' advocated in the article differs somewhat from the 'revolutionary diplomacy' of the 1920s and early 1930s:<sup>28</sup> 'Xu' cites the example of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, in which Lenin made substantial concessions to Germany to allow Russia to withdraw from the First World War and complete the revolution.<sup>29</sup>

The piece succeeded in provoking discussion: it was reprinted in both Chinese

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27. Chen Bulei, (1981), *Chen Bulei huiyilu*. Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, p.93; 'Di hu? You hu?' is reproduced in *XZTJG* as an appendix to *China's Destiny* (*Zhongguo zhi mingyun*) with no mention of the name of Xu.

28. See Jordan, (1991), *Chinese Boycotts versus Japanese Bombs*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

29. Furuya, (1981), pp.443-4

and Japanese journals - with the omission in one Japanese publication of sections on 'Errors committed by Japan' - and received a number of replies from both Chinese and Japanese writers.<sup>30</sup> The admissions of past errors were welcomed, but 'Xu's' failure to give concrete proposals for future action was attacked: as Du Zhongyuan pointed out in *Xinsheng zhoukan* (*New Life Weekly*), the 'Xu' did not seem to have considered what was to be done if the Japanese military refused to renounce its aggressive policies.<sup>31</sup> This lack of substance was characteristic of Nanjing's declarations on Japan policy: much attention was devoted to examinations of the nature of Japan's China policy, of Japan's 'true intentions', yet the government at this time failed to engage with the Japan problem to the point of developing an active response. Any effective response to Japan needed, it seems, to be based on an acceptance that there would be no 'total resolution' of the problem of Sino-Japanese relations, coupled with a willingness to attempt partial solutions insofar as these were compatible with Chinese sovereignty. Calls on the Japanese military to renounce aggression, or on the masses of China and Japan to rise against their common oppressor, the Japanese military, showed little realism; yet understanding of China's plight was useless if it led only to despair and inactivity. The criticisms of China's diplomatic behaviour outlined above suggest that, while the Japan problem as a whole was beyond resolution, there was still scope for the Nanjing government to strengthen its diplomatic defences and enhance its international standing.

While Chiang Kai-shek's thoughts on the future of relations between China and Japan were widely debated, the article published by Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei at the same time seems to have received comparatively little attention. 'Policy for national salvation and survival' (*Jiuwang tucun zhi fangzhen*) appeared in the first issue of the year of *Dong Fang Zazhi*.<sup>32</sup> Wang focused not only on the immediate problem of Japanese pressure on China, but on the broader issues of China's international

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30. See for example four articles by Japanese authors reprinted in *Waijiao Pinglun* under the title 'Ri ren duiyu Xu zhu 'Di hu? You hu?' zhi piping.' *WJPL* IV, #4; Lin Baisheng, (1935), 'Dui Ri liang tiao luxian.' *Waijiao Pinglun*, IV, 2, pp.71-88.; Du Zhongyuan, (1935a), 'Di hu? You hu?' *Xinsheng zhoukan*, vol. II, #2.

31. Du Zhongyuan, (1935a).

32. Wang Jingwei, (1935), 'Jiuwang tucun zhi fangzhen.' *Dong Fang Zazhi* (hereafter *DFZZ*), XXXII, 1, pp.5-12.

position and the state of the Chinese revolution. The article reads not as a call to arms but as an explanation of why the Chinese revolution had so far failed to do for China what the French and Russian revolutions were perceived to have done for France and Russia, and why China was still poor, backward, internationally isolated and largely unreconstructed.

Whereas pre-revolutionary France and Russia, Wang argued, were already free and equal as nations, and their revolutions were directed towards the search for social equality, China's problems originated in the fact that China was not free and not equal in the international sphere; the goals of the Chinese revolution therefore were firstly the attainment of freedom and equality for China as a nation, and only secondly the realisation of social equality. Moreover the French and Russian revolutions were not followed, as China's had been, by protracted civil war, and had therefore succeeded quickly in comparison to the Chinese revolution.<sup>33</sup> China's position, Wang suggested, could be more usefully compared to that of Turkey. Both suffered not only domestic oppression from the pre-revolutionary government, but also external pressure from the Great Powers; like the Chinese revolutionaries, the Young Turks saw the overthrow of the dynasty as the first step towards national regeneration, yet this met with immediate hostile reactions from foreign powers; the Turkish revolutionaries had successfully overthrown the decadent Ottoman dynasty only for the new government to suffer repeated defeats in war between 1912 and 1918 and the loss of one third of its population and half of its territory. This was, Wang suggested, inevitable in the circumstances.

"... when a national revolution demands freedom and equality for the nation in the face of oppression by the Great Powers, and when a popular revolution demands freedom and equality for the people in the face of oppression by the ruling class, both must endure countless sacrifices. The ruling classes see the people's demands for freedom and equality as rebellion, treason and heresy; they accuse them of revolution, they kill and dismember them; the Great Powers see a weak nation's demands for freedom and equality as rebellion, treason and heresy; if they think it important, they send punitive expeditions against the nation, they demand indemnities and divide its territory; if not, they fetter and oppress it..."<sup>34</sup>

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33. Wang Jingwei, (1935), pp.7-8.

34. Wang Jingwei, (1935), p.8.

Wang's vision of China's future was bleak. The only way to be assured of equal status and treatment internationally, Wang warned, was to achieve equal strength; this process of construction would take time. In the face of the interference by foreign powers which Wang had predicted above, the prospects for attaining anything like equal strength were not good. Although Japan's systematic advance into China since the Sino-Japanese war of 1895 had sometimes been delayed, it had never been deflected:

"We must know that the present national emergency was to be expected...; it is the cumulative result of many incidents, and we must be resolute in preparing for a long struggle..."<sup>35</sup>

Wang insisted that everything must be subordinated to the goal of national reconstruction; there were no easy solutions to China's problems. Wang appears to have believed that all domestic construction, which he takes to include the campaigns against the Communist Party as well as economic and national defence preparations, must be completed before a solution to external problems could be attempted. He referred dismissively to the 'illusion' that China could find a way out of the crisis by diplomatic means, and warned against ambitious diplomatic initiatives unsupported by appropriate military capability:

"In today's world, survival is bought with the strength of the nation... if we try to make diplomatic advances without suitable military preparations, then the danger is that we may doom the nation to extinction..."<sup>36</sup>

Wang denied that the central government intended to seek 'peace' with Japan. He explicitly rejects the analogy drawn by 'Xu Daolin' with Lenin's conclusion of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk; Lenin was able to do this, he argued, only because he knew that Germany, faced with powerful enemies on the western front, could not enforce the provisions of the treaty. China could not make similar sacrifices to Japan in the hope of winning time to complete the revolution, as there was nothing thereafter to restrain Japan from further advances. He also pointed out the futility of attempting war against the Japanese, reminding readers that China had no allies who would support her in such an effort.<sup>37</sup>

Wang Jingwei's apparent rejection of diplomacy as a means of dealing with the

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35. Wang Jingwei (1935), p.9.

36. Wang Jingwei, (1935), p.9.

37. Wang Jingwei, (1935), p.10.

Japan problem raises the question of precisely what he, as Foreign Minister, intended to contribute to China's survival. There were of course limits to what could be achieved by diplomacy alone: Japan's determination to attain a position of dominance in East Asia at the expense of the west meant that any attempt by China to develop close relations with any power other than Japan would arouse Japanese resentment, and possibly result in military retaliation by Japan; it seemed clear that in the long run only military force could stop Japan's advance into China. Yet even if attempts to delay or mitigate further Japanese aggression had little chance of success, to do nothing was to evade the responsibility of the central government to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to deny a basic goal of the revolution: the search for national freedom and equality. Moreover a refusal to try to improve relations would reduce China's already slim chances of gaining foreign support against Japan.

It would have been neither realistic nor convincing, in the light of the experiences of the past twenty years, for Wang to promise instant regeneration for China. However, his insistence that China's difficulties were only to be expected, and his failure to suggest any possible way out other than domestic reconstruction were tantamount to an admission that the central government was powerless in the face of the present crisis, and would be more appropriate to a resignation statement than a New Year address to the nation.

Despite the pessimism expressed by Wang, Japanese Foreign Ministry attitudes in the early part of the year seem to have encouraged the Nanjing government to further advances. On January 23rd, Foreign Minister Hirota addressed the Diet on the subject of relations with China. He spoke relatively favourably of recent political developments in China, and outlined a China policy of 'no threat, no invasion'.<sup>38</sup> This attracted immediate interest in Nanjing: the following week Wang Jingwei and Chiang Kai-shek had meetings with Ariyoshi Akira, Japanese Minister in China, and Suzuki Yoshiyuki, military attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Nanjing, to clarify the attitude of the Japanese government.<sup>39</sup> It was clear that the status of Manzhouguo and the

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38. Shimada, (1983), 'Designs on North China, 1933-7.' in James William Morley, *The China Quagmire*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.91-2.

39. 'Jiang weiyuanzhang tan Zhong-Ri wenti.' *WBZK*, #48, pp.12-13.

'anti-Japanese' (described by the Japanese as *pai Ri* and by the Chinese as *fan Ri*) movement in China remained as significant obstacles to amicable Sino-Japanese relations but, on the whole, Chiang and Wang seemed encouraged by the meetings. Chiang stated to reporters on February 2nd:

"We believe that Foreign Minister Hirota was sincere in his recent speech to the Diet on China, and the government and people of China should have sympathy with [his viewpoint]. Because the Chinese people was provoked, an anti-Japanese (*fan Ri*) movement arose; the government has at all times used reasonable restraint to deal with this difficult period in the international situation. Only sincere exchange based on principles of equality can dispel suspicions; if we are to set out on this bright and magnanimous road, then both China's anti-Japanese feelings and Japan's overbearing attitude to China must be reformed... if all our compatriots can, with open minds and under wise and just guidance, refrain from impetuous and anti-Japanese action, then I believe that Japan will respond with good faith."<sup>40</sup>

Wang Jingwei's response to Hirota was no less effusive. On February 20th, Wang presented his report as Foreign Minister on Sino-Japanese relations to the Central Political Committee (*zhongyang zhengzhi huiyi*) CPC of the Guomindang. Wang emphasized the close bonds formed by shared interest and culture between China and Japan, citing Sun Yat-sen's speech on relations between China and Japan at Kobe in January 1924. Sun had referred to the long-standing geographical, historical, cultural and racial links between China and Japan, which should provide the basis for close relations and cooperation between the two nations in the modern world; Wang reminded the Party of the moral and material support given to Sun Yat-sen and other Chinese revolutionaries, including himself,<sup>41</sup> in the years before the establishment of the Republic as an indication of the close relations which should exist between the two countries.

Wang's invocation of Sun Yat-sen's call for Sino-Japanese friendship was a clear move to reclaim amity with Japan as a legitimate aim of the revolution.<sup>42</sup> The

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40. 'Jiang weiyuanzhang tan Zhong-Ri wenti.' *WBZK*, #48, pp.12-13.

41. Bunker, in his biography of Wang, records the suggestion that Japanese diplomatic intervention may have saved Wang from execution after he was arrested for the attempted assassination of a Qing prince in 1905. Bunker, (1972), *The Peace Conspiracy: Wang Jingwei and the China War, 1937-1941*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p.7.

42. The Kōbe speech was also evoked by Sun Ke in an address to the Japanese people on the anniversary of his father's death in March. 'Zongli shishi jinianri Sun yuanzhang gao Riben chaoye renshi.' *WBZK*, #54, 25.3.1935, pp.20-21.



references to Japanese liberals and their support for the Chinese revolution, while similarly motivated, also indicate a tendency which was to cloud the more optimistic assessments of Japan's attitudes towards China. The assumption that there were more 'liberal' elements in Japan who might influence the course of policy in China's favour was a recurring theme in Nanjing's Japan policy at this time.

Wang did not deny the distance between Sun's vision and the present state of the Sino-Japanese relationship, but declared that the problems were not insoluble:

"... in the past twenty years unexpected conflicts have repeatedly arisen between the two nations, and, what is worse, these conflicts are becoming increasingly serious and dangerous, so that not only are relations between China and Japan getting steadily worse, but the whole international atmosphere is made uneasy because of them... [however] we believe ultimately that the present conflicts can be resolved with sincerity in both sides. After reading Mr. Hirota's speech, I felt that it was broadly the same in spirit as the proposals we have held all along."<sup>43</sup>

He concluded

"If the people of China and Japan are not bound by short-term interests and restricted by transitory emotions and maintain justice with sincerity in order to plan lasting peace between two nations, then the basic problems between China and Japan must be susceptible of a just resolution which will not only bring benefits to East Asia, but make the greatest contribution to world peace."<sup>44</sup>

This very public statement of optimism for the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship seemed misplaced to many Chinese observers of Japan's recent actions in China. Fu Sinian commented in *Duli Pinglun*:

"The past two months have been the time of talk of 'rapprochement between China and Japan', and in the future this talk and these actions may become a more integral part of national policy... however the point we have already reached is enough to make us very uneasy. Is this in celebration of the third anniversary of the January 28th Incident? If so, it is the blackest of historical jokes...."<sup>45</sup>

He noted that Wang Jingwei's report to the CPC had been described by *Da Gong Bao* as the most friendly statement towards Japan since the resumption of Sino-Japanese trade after the war of 1895, and commented, "... there can be few speakers as eloquent

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43. 'Wang changwei zai zhongyang zhengzhi huiyi duiyu Zhong-Ri guanxi zhi baogao si.' *WBZK*, #50, p.7.

44. 'Wang changwei zai zhongyang zhengzhi huiyi duiyu Zhong-Ri guanxi zhi baogao si.' *WBZK*, #50, p.7.

45. Meng Zhen (Fu Sinian), (1935), p.2.

as Mr. Wang...<sup>46</sup> but found little else in the report to commend.

"It is all very well for diplomats to speak empty words within certain limits... but Hirota, after the polite platitudes, returned to his demand that China suppress the anti-Japanese movement... why could Mr. Wang not utter platitudes and then demand that Japan return the North-East, and meet void with void, substance with substance?"<sup>47</sup>

Wang Jingwei is usually portrayed - on the evidence of speeches such as this - as the leader of a 'pro-Japanese' (*qin Ri*) tendency in the Nanjing government,<sup>48</sup> and it has been suggested that he was at his most conciliatory to Japan during Chiang Kai-shek's absence in Sichuan in early 1935,<sup>49</sup> yet the tone of this report is in marked contrast to the pessimism Wang showed in his *Dong Fang Zazhi* article in January. In his report to the CPC he refers to 'unfortunate incidents' which soured Sino-Japanese relations; in his article he spoke of an unswerving Japanese policy of aggression dating back to 1895. This contrast leads one to doubt that he was whole-heartedly behind the efforts to improve relations with Japan. The explanation of the lack of substance to Nanjing's efforts at this time may lie in part in this apparent ambivalence on the part of the Foreign Minister. Whatever Wang's private feelings, it seems to have been felt that if there was to be any improvement in Japan's attitude to China, Nanjing could not allow itself to be anything other than positive in its public expressions of amity towards Tokyo: this understandably created tensions between the government and a bewildered public.

Foreign Ministry expectations of Japan were less positive than the public statements suggested. The Foreign Ministry's house journal, *Waibu Zhoukan* (*Foreign Ministry Weekly*), reprinted articles from the unofficial Press on matters of interest to its staff. It seems reasonable to assume that the reprinting of an article implies broad approval of the opinions expressed; these articles show a less sanguine view of relations with Japan than published statements. An article reprinted from the *Tianjin Da Gong Bao* on Hirota's speech to the Diet on January 23rd expresses extreme

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46. Meng Zhen (Fu Sinian), (1935), p.2.

47. Meng Zhen (Fu Sinian), (1935), p.2.

48. See for example Zhang Tongxin, (1988), *Jiang-Wang hezuo de Guomin zhengfu*. Harbin, Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe. p.363-6.

49. Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.366.

suspicion of the intentions underlying the Hirota statement hailed by Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei as sincere and close to the views held by China.<sup>50</sup>

The writer argued that Hirota's speech differed only in tone and not in substance from more aggressive recent statements, and that it retained the assumptions about Japan's self-assigned special position and responsibilities in East Asia which had provided the justification for previous Japanese military advances in China. The speech could be seen as a declaration of good intentions and respect for China's independence only if divorced from its context of post-1931 Sino-Japanese relations; if seen in the light of recent experiences, it could only be a reaffirmation of Japan's determination to force China into a subordinate position. The article concluded with a reminder that Hirota's speech had coincided with a renewed attack by the Japanese armies in North China:<sup>51</sup> "Japan's intentions are not hard to fathom: the Eastern Chaha'er incident shows that we cannot rely on talk of diplomatic improvement..." The piece was followed by a reflection on the anniversary of the Japanese attack on Shanghai;<sup>52</sup> articles reprinted in early March are similarly sceptical.<sup>53</sup>

Despite these reservations on the part of the Foreign Ministry, by mid-February, Chiang Kai-shek already had plans for action to back up the positive statements of the central government: he decided to send Wang Chonghui, then a jurist of the International Court of Justice at the Hague, on an unofficial visit to Tokyo for discussions with Foreign Minister Hirota and other influential Japanese political figures. The aim of Wang's mission was to try to clarify Japan's 'true intentions'; moves towards amity with Japan were still clearly in an exploratory phase.<sup>54</sup> While the idea for the mission appears to have originated with Chiang himself, planning for the visit was delegated to Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei and Huang Fu, who joined

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50. 'Guangtian (Hirota) xin dui Hua waijiao zhengce de jiantao.' from *Tianjin Da Gong Bao*, 26.1.1935; reprinted in *WBZK*, #48, 18.2.1935; pp.38-41.

51. See Chapter II.

52. 'Yi-er-ba jinian yu ganxiang.', *WBZK*, p.40.

53. 'Lun Zhong-Ri jingji tixie' *Nanjing Zhongguo Ribao*, 24.2.1935; 'Zai lun Zhong-Ri wenti' *Tianjin Da Gong Bao*, 9.2.1935. Reprinted *WBZK*, #51, 4.3.1935, pp. 39-41, 41-2 respectively.

54. Telegram Wang Jingwei to Huang Fu, 11.2 1935; Shen Yunlong, ed., (1976), *Huang Yingbai xiansheng nianpu changbian*. (hereafter *HYBNP*), Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, p.846.

Wang Chonghui in Shanghai to discuss details of the mission.<sup>55</sup> The form and presentation of the visit to the public in China and Japan were arguably as important as the content of Wang's discussions with political figures. Any visit to Tokyo by a senior Chinese public figure, even if described as 'unofficial', was bound to attract attention. To reduce the opportunities for elements within Japan to exploit Wang Chonghui's presence in Tokyo for propaganda purposes, and presumably also to minimise criticism from Nanjing's domestic opponents, it was felt that the significance of the visit should be played down. On the other hand, the civil authorities in Tokyo should be made to take Wang's visit seriously or it would be wasted.<sup>56</sup>

Wang Chonghui left Shanghai for Japan on February 16th; the previous day, Huang Fu informed Chiang Kai-shek, now in Lushan, of the results of his talks with Wang Chonghui and Wang Jingwei. In Tokyo, Wang was to limit the content of his talks with the Japanese authorities, and he was to confine his activities mostly to meetings with Foreign Ministry personnel and members of bodies such as the Japanese Association for International Law (*Kokusai hōgaku kyōkai*); he might meet people from Japanese Military Headquarters so as not to offend the military but was at all costs to avoid contact with the General Staff, seen as more in sympathy with the Japanese Army in the field. Jiang Zuobin, Chinese Minister in Tokyo, and Nemoto Hiroshi, a friend of Huang Fu, were to make preparations in Tokyo. Publicity for the visit still presented certain problems; Huang Fu had discussed the problem with the Japanese Minister in China, Ariyoshi Akira,<sup>57</sup> but Ariyoshi had declared himself unable to prevent the Japanese Press from covering Wang's visit, as his presence in Japan could hardly be concealed. He undertook however to ask that only Wang's movements, and not his statements, be reported.<sup>58</sup>

Wang Chonghui arrived in Tokyo on February 19th; on February 20th, the day on which Wang Jingwei delivered his report to the CPC on Sino-Japanese relations, and again on February 26th, Wang Chonghui met Foreign Minister Hirota for

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55. Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Jingwei, 12.2.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.846-7.

56. Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Jingwei, 12.2.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.846-7.

57. Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Jingwei, 12.2.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.846-7.

58. Telegram Huang Fu to Chiang Kai-shek, 16.2.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.847-8.

discussions on the future of Sino-Japanese relations. Wang proposed three principles as a basis for an improvement in relations: respect for equality under international law; mutual amity; resolution of disputes by peaceful diplomatic means. He also proposed that diplomatic representation in China and Japan be elevated to embassy status before substantive talks began.<sup>59</sup> According to Japanese sources, Wang also made more specific allusions to a Sino-Japanese friendship treaty; there is however nothing in the Chinese primary material to suggest that this was sanctioned as a concrete proposal by Nanjing, or that it was seen as a feasible or desirable goal at this point. Hirota agreed 'in principle' with Wang's proposals, but made no more specific reply.<sup>60</sup>

What then was the value of Wang Chonghui's mission to Japan? It confirmed Nanjing's determination to improve relations if at all possible with the Japanese central government, and placed Nanjing's basic conditions for those negotiations on record. Nanjing's willingness to initiate negotiations represented a retreat from 'Xu Daolin's' insistence that, Japan being responsible for the problems between China and Japan, Japan should also be responsible for the resolution of those problems. However, had Nanjing been inflexible on this point, it seems improbable that there would have been any negotiations at all. Wang Chonghui's activities in Tokyo did not reassure Nanjing's critics that the central government could secure an equitable settlement; some believed it was a mistake to send Wang to Japan in the first place, and he was severely criticised for not only meeting figures involved in the Japanese occupation of Manchuria but actually dining with Ding Shiyuan, Manzhouguo's Ambassador to Japan, at the residence of the Japanese vice-minister for foreign affairs, Shigemitsu Mamoru.<sup>61</sup> If Wang's visit to Japan was to be seen in retrospect as a success, then Nanjing would have to translate the gesture of goodwill into something more concrete and, most importantly, reciprocal. Given the depth of hostility between sectors of the Chinese population and Japan, especially towards the Japanese military, the task of persuading

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59. Chen Mingzhong, (1989), 'Shilun 1935, 1936 nian Zhong-Ri huitan.' *Minguo Dang'an*, 1989, #2, p.107.

60. 'Hirota daijin O Chō-kei kaidan yōroku' (Digest of Hirota's talk with Wang Chonghui) 26.2.1935, Gaimushō archives; quoted by Crowley, (1966), *Japan's Quest for Autonomy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.211.

61. Ding and Wang were long-standing acquaintances, both having served under the Beijing governments of the 1920s. Meng Zhen (Fu Sinian), (1935), p.3.

the Japanese authorities that a closer and more amicable relationship with the Chinese central government was feasible, and domestic critics that a closer and more amicable relationship with Japan was possible without further damaging sacrifices of Chinese territory and sovereignty was not an easy one.

Significant extensions of Nanjing's nominal or actual control over the northern provinces - such as the restoration of GMD branches in Chaha'er in late 1934, the currency reform of November 1935, or the agreement of Hebei and Chaha'er to participate in elections for the National Assembly in May and June 1937 - and significant moves towards a more formal approach to Sino-Japanese contacts - such as Wang Chonghui's mission to Tokyo and the exchange of ambassadors in May 1935 - were followed by renewed advances by the Japanese military in North China, as if to reassert claims to a special position in the North and a special role in China policy in competition with the central governments of China and Japan.

While Wang Chonghui's visit to Tokyo was not returned by any representative of the Japanese civil authorities, concurrently with Wang Chonghui's visit to Japan, Major-General Doihara Kenji, chief of the Guandong Army's Special Services Agency in Changchun, and one of the architects of the 'puppet' state of Manzhouguo, made a similarly unofficial visit to China. Despite outrage in the Press at his being allowed to come to China at all,<sup>62</sup> Doihara spent several days in Beiping and Tianjin and then prepared to go south to Nanjing and Shanghai. Huang Fu kept Chiang Kai-shek informed of Doihara's movements:

"... Doihara has been in Beiping-Tianjin for the past few days and has made a great show of meeting everyone... his general purpose is to establish whether China is a friend or a foe, so his conclusions may carry some weight..."<sup>63</sup>

As Huang Fu and Wang Jingwei briefed Wang Chonghui to persuade the Japanese Foreign Ministry that Sino-Japanese relations were to be conducted on the basis of equality and mutual respect for territorial and administrative integrity, and exclusively through formal channels, they also prepared for meetings with a Major-General of the Guandong Army whose career in China had been mostly dedicated to the rejection of equality and the destruction of China's administrative and territorial integrity by

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62. See for example Du Zhongyuan, (1935b).

63. Telegram Huang Fu to Chiang Kai-shek, 12.2.1935; *HYBNP*, p.847.

irregular means. It seems improbable that Huang and Wang were blind to the inconsistency of meeting Doihara with the newly-defined basic principles for the Sino-Japanese relationship; it is presumably Nanjing's awareness of its own weakness in the face of the Japanese armies in North China, and of Doihara's influence over the military, that led both Huang Fu and Wang Jingwei to agree to meet Doihara, and to try to persuade him that China was indeed a potential friend. Whereas Chiang Kai-shek had openly participated in friendly overtures towards the civil government in Tokyo, he withheld this approval from Doihara, apparently at the suggestion of Huang Fu.

"We have decided to wait until after he comes [to Shanghai] and then to meet him separately but actually to present the same opinions to him, which may be more effective. While in Beiping he let slip that after meeting Wang [Jingwei] he would try to see Chiang [Kai-shek] ... your being in Guling, where access is fairly easy, may encourage him to present this request; if you do not want to receive him, then when the time comes it may be best for you to move elsewhere..."<sup>64</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek's reply to this advice is not recorded, but he did not meet Doihara, and shortly before Doihara arrived in Shanghai, Chiang left Guling for Nanchang.<sup>65</sup> The reception of Doihara by the central government shows the limits of Nanjing's courage: while it was thought possible to take a principled stand - quietly and within well-defined limits - with the Tokyo authorities, this was not seen as a possibility with the Japanese military. Thus Huang Fu did not advise Chiang Kai-shek to refuse outright to see Doihara, but rather to make a meeting inconvenient for the Japanese officer.

Doihara visited Huang Fu in Shanghai on February 18th; Huang appears - from his account of the meeting to Yin Tong - to have found Doihara relatively amiable.<sup>66</sup> Huang's basic position in discussion with Doihara, presumably the 'united opinions' to which he referred in his telegram to Chiang Kai-shek, was related, albeit distantly, to the principles proposed by Wang Chonghui to Hirota in Tokyo, with the omission of Wang's insistence on the primacy of formal diplomatic relations. Huang's explanation of these principles was phrased in conciliatory terms: while insisting that

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64. Telegram Huang Fu to Chiang Kai-shek, 12.2.1935; *HYBNP*, p.847.

65. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #6, p.114.

66. Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong (Tianjin), 18.2.1935; *HYBNP*, p.848-9.

Japan must attempt no further infringement of Chinese territory and sovereignty, he spoke of the 'peaceful resolution' of the problem of Manzhouguo as an end result of improved relations. He alluded to provocative speech and actions on both sides which soured relations, and accepted that it was incumbent on China as well as Japan to take action to improve this. He warned Doihara that it would not benefit Japan to exploit its position as victor in successive wars, and that any cooperation between China and Japan must be based in the spirit of equality and mutual benefit, yet spoke of economic cooperation as possible and necessary. Doihara denied that Japan harboured any other, less reasonable, intentions and declared that Japan had no territorial ambitions in China; all Japan wanted, he said, was for China to abandon its hostile thinking (*didui yisi*) towards Japan.<sup>67</sup>

While denied a meeting with Chiang Kai-shek, Doihara was not snubbed in Nanjing, meeting Wang Jingwei and Sun Ke, son of Sun Yat-sen.<sup>68</sup> After leaving Nanjing, he went via Fujian to Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Nanning; he was received by Chen Jitang, Zou Lu, Hu Hanmin and the South-Western leaders Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi,<sup>69</sup> all critics of the 'soft' line taken by Nanjing in Japan policy.

After the departure of Wang Chonghui for Japan and Wang Jingwei's report on Sino-Japanese relations to the CPC, the central government adopted substantive measures to assure Japan of Nanjing's good faith in seeking rapprochement, distancing itself still further from the hostile feelings towards Japan among Chinese intellectuals by banning the publication of anti-Japanese views, and sacking Shao Yuanchong, who had been responsible for much of the anti-Japanese propaganda emanating from the Guomindang, and replacing him with Ye Chucang.<sup>70</sup> Despite Nanjing's efforts, there was no sign that Tokyo was willing to reciprocate; in March, the purchase of the

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67. Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 18.2.1935; *HYBNP*, p.848-9.

68. Meeting with Sun Ke, 20.2.1935; with Wang Jingwei, 21.2.1935; *DFZZ*, XXXII, #6, p.114.

69. Meetings with Hu Hanmin in Hong Kong, 2.3.1935, 9.3.1935; with Xiao Fucheng, Zou Lu and Chen Jitang in Guangzhou, 4.3.1935; with Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi in Nanning, 5.3.1935. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #7, pp.208-9. With Chen Yi in Fuzhou, 12.3.1935, *HYBNP*, p.853. Returns to Changchun, 22.3.1935, *DFZZ*, XXXII, #8, p.103. See also Li Tsung-jen, (Li Zongren), tr. Tong Te-kong, (1979), *The Memoirs of Li Tsung-jen* Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. pp.314-5.

70. Kahn, (1978), 'Doihara Kenji and the North China Autonomy Movement, 1935-6.' In Coox and Conroy, eds., *China and Japan, the search for balance since World War I*. Santa Barbara: ABC Clio Press, pp.179-80.



Chinese Eastern Railway from the Soviet Union by Japan was completed in defiance of protests from the Chinese Foreign Ministry.<sup>71</sup> On March 26th, Japan's final withdrawal from the League of Nations became effective; last minute attempts by China's representatives in Geneva to persuade the League to enforce its rulings over Manchuria while the League's jurisdiction was still valid failed.<sup>72</sup>

Nanjing appeared united in the belief that China had no hope of securing direct western political support against Japan, but western powers - particularly Britain and the United States - were still sufficiently concerned with the stabilisation of the Far East to contemplate some form of support for the Chinese economy, which was on the verge of collapse as the United States Silver Act (1934)<sup>73</sup> took effect. However, while the state of the Chinese economy threatened British commercial interests in Asia, London's main concern was the improvement of Anglo-Japanese relations, which had deteriorated significantly since the collapse of the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1921. Joint Anglo-Japanese action in China would, it was hoped, reduce Japan's self-imposed isolation and make Japan more amenable to influence from the western powers.<sup>74</sup> Neither of these concerns necessarily implied equal concern for the preservation of Chinese sovereignty as an end in itself.

The Silver Act, by committing Washington to large-scale silver purchases, effectively raised world silver prices, making the export of silver from China highly profitable and creating a drain on silver reserves which severely undermined the Chinese silver-based currency; the imposition of a high export tax on silver by the Chinese central government drove the trade underground, and provoked an 'orgy of silver-smuggling' in 1934-1935.<sup>75</sup> Therefore in early 1935, Song Ziwen and Kong Xiangxi intensified their efforts to involve the United States and Britain in support of

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71. *DFZZ*, XXXII, 8, p.102.

72. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #9, p.101.

73. On United States silver policy and China, see Borg, (1964), pp.121-137. For Chinese Foreign Ministry views on the silver problem, see 'Baiying wenti yu guoji maoyi - benbu tongren guoji wenti taolunhui taolun timu', *WBZK*, #60, 6.5.1935, pp.35-42; 'Baiying wenti zhi jiantao - benbu tongren guoji wenti taolunhui baogao', *WBZK*, #61, 13.5.1935, pp.25-31; #62, 20.5.1935, pp.30-34.

74. Trotter, (1975), *Britain and East Asia, 1933-1937*. London: Cambridge University Press, pp. vii.

75. Song Ziwen, quoted in Coble, (1986), *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government, 1927-1937*. Harvard East Asian Monographs, #94, p.193.

the Chinese currency. Progress was slow: the United States seemed unwilling to get involved at all, and Britain was reluctant to make the substantial loans at first requested by the Chinese without tying them to a reorganisation of the currency, as it was feared that otherwise Nanjing would after a few years be found suffering from the same difficulties with an added burden of debt.<sup>76</sup>

A further and possibly decisive sticking-point was Anglo-American insistence that Japan be involved in any search for a solution. The exclusion of the influence of the western powers from East Asia was a fundamental goal in Japanese foreign policy,<sup>77</sup> and an essential element of the 'economic cooperation' (*keizai teikei*) now being promoted by Tokyo as a vehicle for the improvement of relations between China and Japan. Anglo-American intervention in support of the Chinese economy threatened Japan's intended position of economic primacy in Asia; it was highly improbable that Japan would agree to participate in any western initiative to support the Chinese economy, and inconceivable that any measures acceptable to China, the western powers and Japan could be developed. From China's point of view, Japanese involvement was to be resisted not only for practical reasons: that the Japanese would resist proposals which tended to strengthen China, and possibly influence the western powers - whose primary aim was the 'stabilisation' of East Asia for the sake of their own economic interests, and not the protection of China's interests - in favour of a solution which sacrificed China's interests for the sake of calm; but also precisely because Japan was so anxious to impress upon the world the special nature of the Sino-Japanese relationship and Japan's special position *vis-à-vis* China it was essential that Nanjing assert its right as a sovereign state to seek external help where and when it chose.

In the end, the British Foreign Office having failed to secure the active participation of France or the United States, but anxious to avoid the choice of bilateral cooperation with Japan, or unilateral action by Japan, decided to act alone. In June, it was announced that Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, chief economic adviser to the British government, was to lead the mission to the Far East.<sup>78</sup> The scheme also attracted

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76. On the British government's response see Trotter, (1975), pp.132-147.

77. Shimada (1983), pp.79-86.

78. Trotter, (1975), p.147.

opposition in Japan; British statements on the arrangements did not sufficiently emphasize that Japan was to be included in the project, and it was therefore suspected in some quarters in Japan that the project was an attempt to exclude Japan from an Anglo-American rehabilitation of China.<sup>79</sup>

In May, the Chinese and Japanese governments elevated their diplomatic representation to Embassy status. Ambassadors were exchanged at the same time with Britain, the United States, Germany and France.<sup>80</sup> This step, taken with little fanfare, nonetheless represented a great advance in Nanjing's search for international recognition. Yet in the case of Japan, despite the symbolic significance of the move, there was little sense that the formal elevation would contribute much to relations between the two governments. British and Japanese delays in transferring embassies from Beiping and Shanghai respectively to the capital of the state on which they were supposedly conferring full diplomatic recognition robbed the change of much of its impact. The official Foreign Ministry statement hailed the move as a milestone in China's relations with Japan:

"The question of upgrading diplomatic representation between China and Japan originated in 1928, but because of various difficulties it could not be realised. It is with pleasure that China and Japan will now within the shortest time and by the simplest procedures simultaneously upgrade their diplomatic representation and thus bring satisfactory resolution to a matter which has been unresolved for many years; at the same time, we are most appreciative of the diligence and sincerity of Foreign Minister Hirota which have made an unprecedented improvement in relations between China and Japan. We firmly believe that the development of relations between China and Japan should be based on the principle of mutual respect. This elevation of diplomatic representation is the clearest expression of that respect: henceforth we can rely on this spirit to resolve all questions between China and Japan with the aim of mutual benefit... therefore today is a truly significant day for relations between China and Japan..."<sup>81</sup>

However, by the time of the exchange of ambassadors, the move towards rapprochement between China and Japan seemed to have lost some of its momentum, and outside the Foreign Ministry the elevations were met with some scepticism. *Dong*

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79. Shimada, (1983), pp.93-5.

80. China exchanged ambassadors with the Soviet Union after the abrogation of the unequal treaties in the 1920s, and with Italy in 1934. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #12, p.1.

81. *WBZK*, #62, 20.5.1935, p.1.

*Fang Zazhi* commented:

"... In this elevation of diplomatic representation, the impetus came entirely from outside; all we did was to agree... If this step is an expression of good feeling towards China on the part of the great powers, they should immediately renounce all special rights which they have in China, and take equal treatment and respect for sovereignty as their guiding principle. Otherwise our people will have no choice but to conclude that they were using this step to create good feeling before intensifying their economic invasion... After the September 18th incident, relations between China and Japan were almost severed; that, three years later, we have advanced to the point of exchanging ambassadors can be credited to the diplomatic efforts of Mr. Hirota. But whether relations between China and Japan can be maintained depends entirely on Japan."<sup>82</sup>

The latest proposal to exchange ambassadors had in fact come from China on the occasion of Wang Chonghui's visit to Tokyo, and was now greeted with little visible enthusiasm by the Japanese civil authorities.<sup>83</sup> Intended by the Japanese Foreign Ministry as an encouragement to Nanjing's 'amity' policy, the upgrading of the diplomatic missions was seen by the army as unnecessary and premature until China gave more specific proof of goodwill. War Minister Hayashi Senjurō accepted the exchange of ambassadors only on the understanding that this would entail no change to the present North China policy - this was precisely the reason why Nanjing had desired the exchange in the first place.<sup>84</sup> Attempts by the Japanese Foreign Ministry to deflect this criticism by protesting that the elevation was 'purely procedural'<sup>85</sup> can hardly have encouraged the Chinese government; attitudes such as that expressed above in *Dong Fang Zazhi* can have done nothing to reassure opponents of the elevation that China was 'sincere' in its talk of rapprochement or suitably grateful to Japan for allowing the elevation.<sup>86</sup>

Nanjing's overtures to Tokyo had so far received no effective reply: Hirota had approved 'in principle' of Nanjing's intentions as outlined by Wang Chonghui but had not committed himself to any specific counter-proposals. While Nanjing's approach

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82. 'Shijie shengge.' *DFZZ*, XXXII, #12, p.1.

83. The original proposal for an exchange of ambassadors had been approved by the Katō Takaaki cabinet (Foreign Minister: Shidehara Kijūrō) in July, 1924. Shimada, (1983), p.95.

84. Crowley, (1966), p.213.

85. Shimada, (1983), p.94.

86. Crowley, (1966), p.213.

remained tentative and unsystematic, it was easy enough for the authorities in Tokyo to delay a response, and there was no incentive at this point for Tokyo to attempt genuine rapprochement with Nanjing. It is difficult to tell exactly what the Nanjing government genuinely expected these overtures to the Japanese government to achieve: Wang Jingwei had serious misgivings concerning the future of relations with Japan; Huang Fu and Chiang Kai-shek's expectations are less clear. There were of course practical problems in establishing dialogue with Japan: the Japanese ambassador, Ariyoshi Akira, was resident in Shanghai, not Nanjing, and rarely seems to have visited the capital. There is no available record of the activities of the Chinese embassy in Japan at this time; it may be that Hirota was as elusive as Ariyoshi or that the diplomatic inertia described above persisted in the Tokyo Embassy.<sup>87</sup>

Nanjing could not expect much of Hirota. The Foreign Ministry privately acknowledged the limits of his desire to improve relations with China,<sup>88</sup> and the unofficial Press discussed both the basic orientation of his policy and the constraints under which he operated at length. Fu Sinian warned against expecting any rapprochement offered by Hirota to resemble terms that might have been available from the more conciliatory Shidehara Kijūrō. The influence of the political parties had declined since Shidehara's time, and the influence of the military over all political matters increased. Factional struggles within the Japanese Foreign Ministry threatened the position of Hirota himself and his vice-minister, Shigemitsu, and outside the Foreign Ministry his policies were under attack from all sides as he tried to take a middle line between the isolationist line supported by the Army and the right wing, and a more liberal approach.<sup>89</sup> The difficulties of producing a China policy which would pacify all Hirota's critics without totally alienating Nanjing and alarming other powers with interests in East Asia was to absorb the Japanese Foreign Ministry for much of 1935, and the result was to be far from satisfactory.

In the early months of 1935 Nanjing's preoccupation with the issue of formal

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87. See pp.8-10 above.

88. See p.30 above.

89. Wang Dongfan, (1935), 'Guangtian (Hirota), waijiao zhi moluo.' *WJYB*, VI, #2, 15.2.1935, pp.41-51, *passim*.

relations appear to have led the central government to ignore the growing crisis in North China. By May, the activities of the Japanese armies in the North threatened to exclude central influence from the two provinces and forced the Nanjing government temporarily to abandon any talk of rapprochement with Tokyo.

## Chapter II

### The Japanese Advance in North China. (January-April, 1935)

The overtures of the Chinese central authorities to the Tokyo government and the discussions in Nanjing over the future of relations with Japan were overshadowed by renewed conflict in North China. The undermining of Nanjing's diplomatic efforts by military or political encroachments by the Japanese armies in North China - the North China Garrison Army (*Kahoku chūton gun*) NCGA, based in Tianjin, and the Guandong Army (*Kantō gun*) GDA, based in Manchuria - was a recurring factor in relations between China and Japan in 1935-1937. The original function of the Japanese Guandong and North China Garrison Armies as guardians of Japan's interests in China provided the pretext for their interventions in Chinese administration and encroachments on Chinese territory and left the armies determined to secure recognition by the Chinese authorities in North China and by the Japanese civil authorities of their rôle in China policy. That Nanjing apparently persisted in seeing rapprochement with the Japanese central authorities as a viable option in these circumstances and continued to make overtures to Tokyo further eroded the confidence of the Chinese public in the central government.

While, given the imbalance in military strength between China and Japan, there was no visible hope of restraining the Japanese armies in North China *without* reaching understanding with the Japanese central government, negotiation with Tokyo alone could not provide a solution to the problem. The Japanese cabinets of the late 1930s found the excesses of the Japanese armies in North China an embarrassment but were unwilling renounce the gains made by the military. The Okada Cabinet had in December 1934 reaffirmed that the authority of the Nanjing government in North China was incompatible with the best interests of Japan:<sup>1</sup> even had the civil authorities reduced the influence of the military over China policy, this would not necessarily have produced the *volte face* desired by Nanjing. Moreover, it seems that the North China question was not raised as a major issue in Nanjing's first approaches to the Japanese central government, and that Nanjing had not at this point fully confronted the implications of the North China issue - in particular the role which the Japanese armies

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1. Furuya, (1981), pp.459-61.

envisaged for themselves in North China, and their relations with local leaders in the region - for the Sino-Japanese problem as a whole.

The lack of a clearly defined Japan policy at the centre and of effective administrative structures encompassing both national and North China aspects of the Japanese question was a significant barrier to the response to Japan in the North. The response to Japan in North China in the years 1933-1935 was handled by proxy, by centrally-appointed officials on the orders of the centre. This system might allow, if functioning effectively, a maximum of control by the central government in Nanjing with the maximum of distance from embarrassing failures, and would at the same time partly gratify the Japanese armies' demand that North China affairs be negotiated locally with North China officials. In practice, the system slowed communication between the capital and the North and left local officials alienated from the centre, with little control not only over the decisions made by the centre but also over the information on which that was based.

North China affairs were dominated in early 1935 by the efforts of the Guandong and North China Garrison Armies to assert their right to act independently of Tokyo in North China, and to consolidate their position in Hebei and Chaha'er. Japan had gained certain rights to garrison troops in North China under the Boxer treaty of 1901, but by the mid 1930s, they had acquired a broader base for future efforts: the Tanggu truce of May 1933, which concluded the fighting after the Japanese occupation of Rehe.<sup>2</sup> The 'full implementation' of the truce agreement was reported to be a key aim of Guandong army policy in January 1935;<sup>3</sup> this appears to have entailed a more formal recognition of all the powers claimed by the Japanese military under the Tanggu truce, and a wider interpretation of and more uncompromising attitude towards any 'provocation of hostilities' (article 1) by the Chinese.

The interpretation of the truce agreement by the Japanese armies for the purposes of demands presented in 1935 was much broader than one might expect from the text translated below and was often dictated by expediency rather than the letter of

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2. See box below and Map 3 (Hebei province); Chinese version in *Kangzhan qian Huabei zhengju shiliao*. ed. Li Yunhan, Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1982 (hereafter *HBZJSL*), pp.273-4; English version in Liu, (1950), Appendix A.

3. Wang Dongfan, (1935), p.48.



**The Tanggu Truce, May 31st, 1933.**

The Commander-in-Chief of the Guandong Army, General Mutō, formally accepts the proposal for the termination of hostilities made on May 25th, 1933, at Miyun by Yu Yanmou, the representative of He Yingqin, Chairman of the Beiping Branch Military Council.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Guandong Army, General Mutō, therefore confers full powers on Major-General Okamura Neiji, Chief of Staff of the Guandong Army, to represent the Guandong Army in signing with Lieutenant-General Xiong Bin, the representative of He Yingqin, Chairman of the Beiping Branch Military Council, the following ceasefire agreement:

1. The Chinese Army shall immediately withdraw to the south-west of the line from Yanqing to Changping, Gaoliying, Shunyi, Tongzhou, Xianghe, Baodi, Lintingkou, Ninghe and Lutai and undertakes not to advance beyond that line and to refrain from all provocative or disruptive actions.

2. The Japanese Army may at any time use aeroplanes or other means to verify the carrying out of Article 1. The Chinese authorities shall grant them protection and facilities for this purpose.

3. The Japanese Army, after verifying the withdrawal of the Chinese Army to the line stated in Article 1, undertakes not to cross the said line and not to continue to attack the Chinese forces, and shall voluntarily withdraw to the line of the Great Wall.

4. In the area south of the Great Wall and to the north and east of the line defined in Article 1 order shall be maintained by a Chinese police force. *The said police force shall not be constituted by armed units hostile to Japanese feelings.*

5. The present agreement shall come into effect upon signing. The two representatives have signed the present agreement and affixed their seals.

(Signed) Okamura Neiji, Representative of the Guandong Army.

(Signed) Xiong Bin, representative of the Chinese Army in North China.

*Declaration: If there are armed units disturbing peace and order in the Demilitarised Zone which the police force is unable to cope with, the situation will be dealt with after agreement between the two parties.*

(Signed) Okamura Neiji, Representative of the Guandong Army.

(Signed) Xiong Bin, representative of the Chinese Army in North China.

*Note: Items in italics omitted from version of truce published by Nanjing in 1933.*

the agreement; moreover the interpretation of the truce agreement was later extended to cover matters, such as the Chaha'er-Rehe border, raised but not agreed on during the negotiation of the truce.<sup>4</sup> Still other matters, such as the removal of the Guomindang branches from Hebei-Chaha'er, supposedly formed the subject of 'oral

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4. See below, p.49, 51.

understandings', unpublished at the time and unrecorded even in later Chinese versions.<sup>5</sup>

Nanjing maintained that the truce was entirely a military agreement and that its terms applied only until hostilities were ended, yet the Japanese armies' interpretation of the terms of the agreement and their insistence that the agreement remained effective *sine die*, had serious political implications. Most significant in 1935 were the stipulation that police force in the War Zone (*zhanqu*) in Eastern Hebei - the area from which Chinese troops were excluded under the terms of the truce - should not be composed of units hostile to the Japanese (article 4) - which the Japanese armies were now to extend to cover all officials in Hebei-Chaha'er - and the provisions allowing the Japanese to oversee conditions in the War Zone and to participate in action to maintain order there (article 2 and declaration).

Particular difficulties were caused by the attitude of the Japanese armies to the War Zone: originally intended as a buffer zone to prevent conflicts breaking out again after the ceasefire, it had become an area to which the Japanese armies had virtually free access, and was now a continual source of conflict. In May, Yu Xuezhong, governor of Hebei, passed on to Chiang Kai-shek the Japanese armies' view of the War Zone as explained to an official of the provincial government:

"[Takahashi Tan, Japanese military attaché in Beijing] said that the Guangdong Army actually sees the War Zone as an occupied zone; although they have now returned it to China, this perception remains. If the Chinese see it as part of China's territory where China can freely exercise its powers, then we are fundamentally at odds on this; (Japan) must ask China to understand that the War Zone is a special zone; if anything happens, China must consult with the Japanese army so as not to cause conflict..."<sup>6</sup>

The Tanggu truce thus gave the Japanese military considerable *de facto* freedom of action in Hebei and Chaha'er, which they were determined to formalise and extend.

In response to the special conditions in North China in the 1930s, Nanjing adopted special administrative measures. While it was conceded that issues of contention in the North might be dealt with on the spot, Nanjing did not see the

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5. Liu, (1950), p.56.

6. Letter Yu Xuezhong to Chiang Kai-shek, 22.5.1935, *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian - dui Ri kang zhan shiqi: I, 1 Riben de qinlüe* Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang dangshi weiyuanhui, 1983 (hereafter ZYSL1), pp.667-8.

existing provincial authorities as competent to do so. There was therefore an added, quasi-local tier of administration above the provincial authorities, consisting of the PAC in Beiping, subordinate to the Executive Yuan (established May, 1933), and the Beiping Branch Military Council (*Junshi weiyuanhui Beiping fenhui*) BMC, a sub-branch of the Military Affairs Commission (established August, 1932),<sup>7</sup> which, while nominally 'North China' organisations, acted in principle as a vehicle for the extension of central control over North China, both specifically in dealings with the Japanese armies, and generally in developing relations between centre and region by political education work in the provincial governments and armies.<sup>8</sup>

If the nominal function of PAC and the BMC was to advance the integration of central and local politics and the handling of the Japan problem, they do not appear to have fulfilled it. Tensions between centre and region were as visible in the relations between the provinces and the PAC and the BMC as between the provinces and the central government in Nanjing. Huang Fu, chairman of the PAC, claimed to find it easier to deal with the Japanese than with the Chinese in Beiping,<sup>9</sup> and it is suggested that this dislike was reciprocated by influential figures in the North, such as Xiao Zhenying, adviser to Song Zheyuan.<sup>10</sup> As for dealing with the Japanese armies in the North, the function of the two Councils seems at times to be to distance the central government from problems rather than to resolve them.

Thus by 1935 the existence of the BMC and the PAC contributed little to a united, coherent response to the Japanese threat. The division of responsibility for contacts with Japan in North China between central, quasi-local and local organs of government was blurred and under dispute; poor communication between the levels compounded the difficulty of providing a coordinated response, and the fact that few officials had experience both of North China and of Sino-Japanese affairs hampered the

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7. See Appendix I 'Special Administrative Structures in North China'

8. *SZYYJ* contains a number of articles on Song by former political education officers, of which the most informative are: Liu Jianqun, (A), 'Wo yu Song Zheyuan jiangjun de jici jiaowang.' *SZYYJ*, pp.1133-1144; Xuan Jieqi, '«Zhenzheng de yongshi» zhuiyi Song Zheyuan jiangjun.' *SZYYJ*, pp.1145-1164; Zhang Ziyang, 'Wo yu Song jiangjun de yi duan gongzuo jingyan jiqi baoguo de juexin.' *SZYYJ*, pp.1089-1093.

9. Shen Yiyun, (1980), *Yiyun huiyilu* Taibei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, p.502.

10. Li Shijun, (A), 'Song Zheyuan yu Jiang Jieshi guanxi de shimo.' *Jiangsu Wenshi ziliao*, 4, p.124.

development of a coordinated approach.<sup>11</sup> It is possibly redundant to look too far for a 'basic purpose' of either the PAC or the BMC; it is conceivable that they were not envisaged as formally constituted bodies in their own right but that they were formed around Huang Fu and He Yingqin, the officials chosen to deal with North China affairs. The extreme vagueness of the organisational guidelines for the PAC issued at the time of its establishment seem to support this view.<sup>12</sup>

By early 1935 the system was breaking down. It appears from communications between the North and the centre that the North China authorities of all levels felt ill-equipped to respond to the renewed Japanese advance of early 1935 without support from the central government: the centre seemed under-prepared and unwilling to become mired in the problems of the North. The underlying message of the communications of the North with the centre seems to have been that this was a crisis so serious that the centre must take a more active role or face a repetition of the events of 1931: the centre's assumption seems to have been that closer involvement would lead to the escalation of the North's problems - and possibly that this might obstruct the improvement of formal relations between Nanjing and Tokyo - and that any incident should therefore had to be solved as quickly and as far from Nanjing as possible. Key figures at the centre - notably Wang Jingwei - appeared to be paralysed by the conviction that China's problems were in the short term insoluble; the resulting political inactivity, damaging at central government level, was fatal in North China, where the effort required to prevent the deterioration of an already highly unsatisfactory *status quo* far exceeded anything the central government appeared prepared to do in support of its officials in the North.

This gap between northern expectations of the centre and central perceptions of its role in the North was visible from the beginning of the year. In January 1935, a dispute on the border of Rehe and Chaha'er escalated into serious conflict between forces based in Manzhouguo and Song Zheyuan's 29th Army. The pretext given by the Japanese for attack was that Chinese forces from the 29th Army had made repeated incursions into the territory of Manzhouguo, yet the incident was no minor territorial

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11. Li Yunhan, preface to *HBZJSL*, p.i.

12. See Appendix I, 'Special Administrative Structures in North China'.

dispute between forces on either side of the border. There was considerable military and political tension in the area: Song and the 29th Army had participated in the Great Wall campaign and resistance to the Japanese occupation of Rehe of 1933, and later absorbed the remnants of Feng Yuxiang's People's United Army for Resistance to Japan (*Minzhong kang Ri tongmeng jun*); and the Chaha'er provincial administration, also led by Song, obstructed Guandong Army plans to expand westwards into Chaha'er towards Suiyuan and to replace the Chinese provincial administration in Chaha'er with an 'autonomous' Mongol administration which were made explicit as early as 1933.<sup>13</sup>

To this suspicion and animosity between forces on the border was added a running dispute over the border itself: Nanjing's own records and maps of the Chaha'er-Rehe border were not sufficiently detailed to establish authoritatively the exact line of the border,<sup>14</sup> and Japanese cartographers were systematically redrawing the provincial boundary of Chaha'er and Rehe, expanding the territory of Manzhouguo as they went.<sup>15</sup> The Guandong Army had demanded recognition of its own version of the border at the time of the Tanggu truce, but Nanjing's representative, Xiong Bin, had evaded the question, claiming not to have access to accurate maps of the region.<sup>16</sup> These disagreements are reflected in later writing on the incident: while Chinese historians speak for example of the Eastern Chaha'er Incident (*Chadong shijian*), Japanese accounts tend to refer to the episode as the Western Rehe Incident.<sup>17</sup>

The problem of Eastern Chaha'er-Western Rehe was complicated by the fact that the area in question was occupied in 1933 by Liu Guitang, whose allegiances were abnormally fluid even by the standards of the time.<sup>18</sup> Liu Guitang, born in Shandong

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13. See Shao Yunrui, (1989), *Huabei shibian*. Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, p.9.

14. See He Yingqin's instructions to Zhang Yueting on Datan conference, 1.2.1935, *He Yingqin shang jiang jiu wu jishi changbian*, vol2. Taipei: Liming wenhua shiye gongsi yinhang, 1984 (hereafter *HYQSJ*), p.385.

15. See reports from Fan Hansheng and Chen Xigeng to Chinese Foreign Ministry, *Zhong-Ri waijiao shiliao congbian III: Ri jun qin fan Shanghai yu jin gong Huabei* Taipei: Zhonghua Minguo waijiao wenti yanjiuhui, 1964, (hereafter *ZRWJ3*), pp.220, 225.

16. Li Yunhan, (1973), *Song Zheyuan yu qi qi kangzhan*. Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, p.60.

17. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.60.

18. Li Yunhan, (1973), pp.60-1.

in 1892, began his career, according to one source, as a 'bandit' (*fei*).<sup>19</sup> In 1928, after the Northern Expedition, he surrendered to He Yingqin and was promoted to division commander. In the war of 1930 between Chiang Kai-shek and the northern warlords, Yan Xishan and Feng Yuxiang, and in the 1931-33 conflicts with Japan Liu served under Yan Xishan, Feng Yuxiang (twice), Zhang Xueliang, the GDA, and Song Zheyuan. In December 1933, Song ordered Liu, then stationed near Guyuan, to move his forces to Yangyuan for training. Liu rebelled, and defected again to the Japanese; the territory occupied by his forces again came under the control of Manzhouguo, and he was promoted to commander of the Manzhouguo Third Route Army.<sup>20</sup> When, in 1934, Song sent in forces to reoccupy the territory, the GDA brought in reinforcements and accused Song of 'invading' Rehe.<sup>21</sup>

Tensions had increased rapidly in late 1934. After a group of Japanese special services personnel was detained in Zhangjiakou by Song's forces in late October, the Japanese authorities issued an ultimatum demanding that Song's men be withdrawn from the disputed area around Guyuan before December 31st.<sup>22</sup> Song ignored the deadline, and conflicts in the border zone continued: in January 1935, a Manzhouguo militia unit was defeated and disarmed after coming into conflict with a unit of the Guyuan county PPC.<sup>23</sup> In early January 1935, Song warned Chiang Kai-shek by telegram that a crisis might be imminent. Chiang, who had been warned by Yang Jie in Tokyo that Japanese frontline forces were impatient with what they saw as the inactivity of the Tokyo government,<sup>24</sup> and were contemplating independent action, replied to Song:

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19. Terms such as 'bandit' (*fei*) and 'puppet' (*wei*) generally reveal more about the point of view of the writer than about the subject and are to be treated with caution.

20. By 1934, Liu was living in the Japanese concession in Tianjin where he survived an assassination attempt in 1936; after the Lugouqiao incident he fought first for Japan as *Huangbanjun qianjin zongsiling* and then for China under Yu Xuezhong. He attacked an anti-Japanese base at Pingfei in 1939 (unclear whether this in support of Japan or as attack on Communists) and was captured and executed by the Eighth Route Army in 1943. *RMDCD*, p.175.

21. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.60-1.

22. Coble, (1991), pp. 195-6.

23. GDA statement to He Yingqin, 19.1.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.380-1.

24. Telegram Yang Jie to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.1.1935, *ZYSL1*, p.663.

"Japan is sure to put extreme pressure on Eastern Chaha'er or North China this spring; we hope that you will increase troop strength and consolidate defences to thwart their aggressive ambitions..."<sup>25</sup>

Chiang also ordered the Military Affairs Commission to send Song ¥50,000 for this purpose.<sup>26</sup> On January 19th, He Yingqin, chairman of the Beiping Branch Military Council, and the senior military official in North China, received the following notification from the Japanese military attaché in Beiping, Takahashi Tan:

"Governor Song's office had promised... that troops and other organisations stationed to the south-west of Datan would be withdrawn before December 31st; thus the Guandong Army believes that China has already clearly recognised that this is part of the territory of Manzhouguo, and hopes that (Song) will complete the withdrawal. However, not only has he not kept to his original undertaking, but in mid-January he moved troops to near Zhangliang and Beizhaigou and increased defences in this area, (which) on January 15th attacked Manzhouguo self-defence forces in this area... The Guandong army cannot ignore these aggressive actions and has decided to use all necessary force to clean up the territory of Manzhouguo."<sup>27</sup>

Takahashi's statement is somewhat at odds with another Japanese effort to remove the 29th Army from the disputed territory: in September 1934, the Guandong Army's head of special services in Chengde had leaflets dropped over Zhangbei claiming that the presence of Song's forces in the area was illegal not because the land was part of Rehe, but because it fell to the east of the extension into Chaha'er of the boundary of the Hebei War Zone, and that in occupying the area the 29th Army was contravening the Tanggu truce.<sup>28</sup> Although the truce agreement itself makes no reference to the creation of a demilitarized zone in Chaha'er, the Chinese authorities in North China did not feel in a position to argue.

On January 20th, He Yingqin reported to Nanjing that he had instructed Song Zheyuan to order the withdrawal of 29th Army forces from the disputed areas, and to avoid conflict with the Japanese beyond the Great Wall if at all possible, effectively revoking Chiang Kai-shek's orders of January 9th. He does not seem to have received

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25. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang's reply, 9.1.1935, *ZYSL1*, p.663.

26. Chiang Kai-shek's reply to Song Zheyuan, 9.1.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.663. ¥50,000 is the same amount as the Standing Committee of the Guomindang CPC voted to spend on exhuming Liao Zhongkai and reburying him with proper honours. *WBZK*, # 61, 13.5.1935, p.13.

27. Statement by Takahashi Tan, 20.1.1935. *HYQSI*, p.380 *ZRWJ3*, p.245.

28. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.61.

explicit instructions from Nanjing on the handling of the incident at this point, and showed no enthusiasm for assuming sole responsibility for the resolution of the incident.<sup>29</sup> He pointed out that in case of serious fighting the Japanese might take the opportunity to advance further into Chaha'er, seizing the area round Guyuan and Dushikou, which would extend their control as far as Zhangbei and the Beiping-Guisui railway, threatening Nanjing's grasp of the North-West.<sup>30</sup>

The following day the Chinese and Japanese central authorities announced that the Eastern Chaha'er Incident was to be treated as a local matter: Qin Dechun, Song Zheyuan's second in command, and Yue Kaixian, special representative of the Foreign Ministry in Chaha'er,<sup>31</sup> began talks with Matsui Gennosuke, Guandong Army special services chief in Zhangbei.<sup>32</sup> The Japanese attack was soon renewed: on January 23rd, the day of Foreign Minister Hirota's speech to the Diet on relations between China and Japan,<sup>33</sup> Song Zheyuan reported to Nanjing that Japanese planes had bombed Dongzhazi and the Japanese infantry begun to move on Dushikou; in the following days, he sent reports several times daily, informing the centre of the occupation of Dongzhazi and Dushikou and continuing air-raids on towns on the southern end of the Chaha'er-Rehe border; Nanjing was apparently unresponsive.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, there were rumours of impending action near Duolun in Northern Chaha'er by Mongolian forces led by Li Shouxin under the guidance of the Japanese special services agency in Duolun.<sup>35</sup>

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29. See p.56 below.

30. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, copy to Huang Fu, 20.1.1935; *HYQSI*, p.381.

31. The Foreign Ministry's special representatives (*tepaiyuan*) in Beiping-Tianjin and in Chaha'er province, Cheng Xigeng and Yue Kaixian, were relatively junior officials whose main function was to report on matters of interest to the Ministry and liaise with the provincial authorities; after the abolition of the PAC and the BMC, when Nanjing's direct control over the North was diminished, they were to become more important as a source of information on developments in Beiping and the activities of local political figures.

32. Yue Kaixian report to Foreign Ministry, *ZRWJ3*, p. ; *HYBNP*, p.842; *DFZZ*, XXXII, #4, p.109. 'Special services' agencies (Japanese: *tokumu kikan*; Chinese *tewu jiguan*) were responsible for intelligence and subversive activities.

33. On the Hirota speech (23.1.1935), see Chapter I.

34. Telegrams Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin: 23.1.1935; 24.1.1935; 25.1.1935; *HYQSI*, p.382.

35. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.62.



He Yingqin again appealed to Nanjing for instructions: Chiang Kai-shek replied that Guyuan and Dushikou must be held, but without the use of too many troops; one can only assume that this was to prevent escalation.<sup>36</sup> As the Executive Yuan held an emergency meeting on the incident, He Yingqin continued to press Nanjing for a more long-term approach to the problems of North China:

"The Eastern Chaha'er problem has been hanging over us for more than a year; in the past I discussed the matter with Huang Fu and (we felt that) the results might be more satisfactory if we voluntarily proposed terms for a resolution to the Guandong Army. However in the last year, public opinion has been so opposed to the restoration of rail and postal services across the Wall that this was temporarily postponed, and this latest incident is the result. We may be able to find an adequate solution to the Guyuan problem but other matters may cause even greater difficulties; if we are to find a lasting solution, it might be best to do so under the auspices of a Sino-Japanese conference, and to resolve the questions over the Chaha'er-Rehe boundary at the same time as the conflict at Duolun."<sup>37</sup>

Takahashi, when approached, expressed no objection in principle to the proposal and agreed to refer it to the Guandong Army for consideration; Nanjing rejected the scheme immediately. The Chinese central government was by now under pressure not only from North China but also from Tokyo, Foreign Minister Hirota threatening escalation if Song Zheyuan did not withdraw his forces.<sup>38</sup> Chiang, Wang and Huang cabled from the capital, "We must seek an immediate resolution to this incident and avoid prolonging it lest this lead to its escalation..."<sup>39</sup> and passed on official instructions for the resolution by the BMC. Any resemblance to a political or diplomatic agreement - including references to the Chaha'er-Rehe border as a national boundary, or the engagement of Yue Kaixian in the negotiations in his capacity as Foreign Ministry official - were to be avoided; the agreement was to be purely military; Guyuan and Dushikou were to be held at all costs. However, as long as these points were adhered to, the creation of a buffer zone between Chaha'er and Rehe could be accepted if necessary.<sup>40</sup> There was a risk that any buffer zone in Chaha'er might be as abused by

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36. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, ZYSL1, p.663-4.

37. *HYBNP*, pp.842-3.

38. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #4, p.109.

39. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei and Huang Fu to He Yingqin, 26.1.1935; ZYSL1, p.664.

40. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, Huang Fu to He Yingqin, 26.1.1935; ZYSL1, p.664.

Japanese forces as the War Zone in Hebei.<sup>41</sup>

Preliminary discussions on the resolution of the conflict began in Beiping between He Yingqin, chairman of the Branch Military Council, representatives of the Chaha'er authorities, and Takahashi, the military attache in Beiping. The Guandong army authorities cabled He Yingqin on January 29th rejecting the broader approach to the problem which he had proposed:

"In order to achieve a swift and localised resolution of the incident, the Guandong army has decided to begin discussions on the spot between the army in Rehe and representatives of Song Zheyuan's forces; as for the proposal to expand the scope of the talks and convene a meeting in Beiping, we have never wanted this but have decided to wait until a further opportunity for discussion arises..."<sup>42</sup>

He Yingqin insisted that, if talks were to be held in Zhangjiakou, terms must be concluded first in Beiping between the Japanese authorities there and only formally agreed in Datan. China was to be represented at Datan by Zhang Yueting, chief of staff of the 37th division of the 29th Army and Guo Yukai, head of Guyuan county, accompanied by Zhang Zude of the provincial government. The Japanese delegates included Lieutenant-Colonel Matsui Gennosuke and Major-General Tani Hisao, commander of the Japanese forces in the area. Two days before the talks were to be held, Takahashi Tan and He Yingqin exchanged proposals for the resolution.<sup>43</sup>

Japanese Terms	Chinese Terms
<p>1. Chinese to apologise for illegal crossing of border.</p> <p>2. All arms confiscated by Chinese from Manzhouguo militia to be returned.</p> <p>3. Chinese must give under-taking never again to cross the border illegally or to act in a way threatening to Manzhouguo; if they do so, then the Japanese armies will occupy the Guyuan-Dushikou area, including Zhangjiakou.</p>	<p>1. Chinese will make verbal expression of regret for the unfortunate incident of the borders of Chaha'er and Rehe.</p> <p>2. Chinese will return all arms taken from Rehe militia.</p> <p>3. Chinese will give undertaking not to go beyond a line through Shitouchengzi, Nanshizhuizi and Dongzhazi (villages on the Eastern side of the Great Wall), and will not act in a threatening manner.</p>

41. See above, p.46.

42. Guandong Army to He Yingqin, 29.1.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.382.

43. *HYQSJ*, p.383; see Map 3, (Hebei province).

He Yingqin gave Zhang Yueting instructions via Song Zheyuan on the details of the Chinese position,<sup>44</sup> ordering him to avoid any mention of 'Manzhouguo', or of a *national* border between Chaha'er and Rehe, and warned against any ambiguity in the description of the line beyond which the Chinese forces were to withdraw (item 3 above in Chinese terms). However, the fundamental differences between the Chinese and Japanese approaches to the incident and the question of the location of the border and tensions in the region in general were not confronted: although the terms exchanged revealed radically different interpretations of the incident, there is no evidence that any serious attempt was made by the Chinese to modify Japan's stance. Zhang Yueting's powers were strictly limited; if the Japanese repeated the threat to occupy Guyuan and Dushikou in the event of further conflict, Zhang was to avoid giving a clear answer. He Yingqin seemed determined that any record of the talks should as far as possible avoid touching on any matters of substance; the talks, as shown by the Chinese unofficial record,<sup>45</sup> were brief and limited to the repetition by Tani Hisao, the chief Japanese delegate, of the Japanese conditions, rendered in milder terms than above but still threatening the occupation of Guyuan and Zhangjiakou if conflicts on the border continued.

Tani also expanded on Japan's definition of 'provocation of hostilities by China', which now apparently included any reinforcement of Chinese defences on the border with Rehe south of Guyuan. There was no official joint declaration or written record of the talks: while in principle China escaped formal commitment to a resolution dictated by Japan, in practice Japan was free to publish its own version of the resolution of the incident. On February 4th, Chinese and Japanese official accounts of the resolution were published:<sup>46</sup> the Chinese version referred to an 'oral understanding' (*kouyue*) in which it was recognised that the incident originated in a 'misunderstanding', and emphasised a desire on both sides for a peaceful resolution of the incident; the Japanese version, issued in Changchun by the Guandong Army authorities gave a more formal status to the agreement (*xieding*), placed all the blame

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44. He Yingqin's instructions to Zhang Yueting, 31.1.1935; *HYQSI*, p.384-5.

45. Record of talks at Datan, 2.2.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.385-7.

46. Appendix II, 'Chinese and Japanese versions of the Datan 'Agreement''.

for the incident on China, recording that Zhang Yueting had accepted Japan's interpretation of the incident and acknowledged the intention of the Guandong Army to take independent action if further conflicts arose. Both statements were published in the Chinese press.<sup>47</sup>

The Eastern Chaha'er incident exposed serious weaknesses in Nanjing's handling of the Japan problem as it affected North China. The scale of the incident, and the scope of the settlement both call into question Nanjing's acceptance of Japan's definition of a 'local' matter. While it had in the past been accepted that provincial authorities might deal with administrative matters related to foreign residents such as missionaries and traders without reference to the central government,<sup>48</sup> the case of the Eastern Chaha'er incident is obviously different from this: the Japanese demands at Datan, which clearly infringed Chinese sovereignty, exceeded the normal scope of a local settlement.

There is no indication that He Yingqin received instructions from Nanjing concerning a settlement until *after* the escalation of the incident, and it does not seem that he saw his orders of January 20th to Song Zheyuan to withdraw from the disputed area and avoid conflict with the Japanese as more than a temporary measure to delay conflict.<sup>49</sup> Earlier that day, he had cabled Wang Jingwei and Chiang Kai-shek to urge a more positive approach:

"... concerning our diplomacy with Japan, I must ask the centre to decide its basic policy without delay, otherwise we will have no way of responding. Especially in the present situation in North China, the Guandong and Tianjin armies can initiate direct action whenever they choose simply by issuing a statement, with complete disregard for standard international diplomatic practice. If there is a fundamental decision of the centre's diplomatic policy towards Japan, then we should resume normal diplomatic contact directly with the Japanese central authorities... even if we still lose, I feel it has some value compared to the present *ad hoc* responses, in which we constantly fear incidents and at times do not know who we should negotiate with..."<sup>50</sup>

He could not refuse to deal with the Japanese, yet he does not seem to have seen it as

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47. WJYB, VI, #2, p.254; reprinted in Shao Yunrui, (1985), pp.18-19.

48. Chen Tiquang, (1945), *Zhongguo waijiao xingzheng. Guoli Xinan Lianhe Daxue xingzheng yanjiushi congkan*. Chongqing: Commercial Press, p.48.

49. See p.51.

50. Telegram He Yingqin to Wang Jingwei, Chiang Kai-shek, copy to Huang Fu, 20.1.1935; HYBNP, p.842.

his responsibility to do more than handle the details of local issues within the framework of a centrally-defined Japan policy, with the support of the central government. However, the centre had not defined its policy in North China and was unable or unwilling to give support.

At Datan, as in other discussions with the Japanese armies, the Chinese delegates had no authority to do more than pass on conditions decided in Beijing by He Yingqin. The provincial governor of Hebei, Yu Xuezhong, was to complain that where Chinese officials hoped to secure some modification in Japanese terms, they were told by the Japanese officers that their terms were passed down directly from the Army Ministry and were not negotiable.<sup>51</sup> Nanjing's refusal to support its own officials in the same way lowered morale, and contributed to Japan's efforts to undermine the credibility of Chinese officials in negotiation.

Nanjing's continued acceptance of local solutions to North China problems gave tacit recognition of independent action by the Japanese military as a vehicle for Sino-Japanese relations and obstructed any efforts made by the centre towards the normalisation of the relationship. It is difficult to reach a safe conclusion on the real opinions of the central authorities on the North China problem at this stage without access to, for example, records of the talks between Chiang and Wang Jingwei, and Ariyoshi Akira and Suzuki Yoshiyuki, Japanese ambassador and military attaché respectively, which coincided with the Eastern Chaha'er incident. The incident was the subject of an emergency meeting of the Executive Yuan but apart from this there are few traces of central government attention to it<sup>52</sup> and there is no sign that the incident deflected the efforts to establish dialogue with Tokyo or formed an important part of that dialogue.

Nanjing, while apparently preoccupied with the necessity of reaching a swift settlement of the conflict to avoid escalation at any cost - even if this meant retreating in the face of Japanese advances in the North - remained unwilling to become too closely involved in the 'local' settlements which it insisted provided the best solution.

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51. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 22.5.1935, ZYSL1, pp.667-8.

52. Huang Fu is reported to have gone to Shanghai for talks on the Eastern Chaha'er incident on February 1st; it is not recorded whom he was going to see. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #5, p.88.

Even He Yingqin was clearly disillusioned with piecemeal local settlements in North China and reluctant to assume responsibility for them in the absence of a more active approach by the central authorities in Nanjing. Officials such as Song Zheyuan, and later Yu Xuezhong, were more distanced from the central government: their reports - Song's to Chiang in early January - were met if at all with formulaic exhortations to defend Chinese territory without offending the enemy, their orders came at second hand via He Yingqin, and as the Japanese bombed Chinese towns they heard the central government speaking of Sino-Japanese friendship.

Efforts were made to include North China in the general improvement of relations sought in spring 1935. The mission of Wang Chonghui to Tokyo in February<sup>53</sup> was not an isolated event, but may have been the first in a series of similarly unofficial visits to Japan in the spring of 1935 which, under the guidance of Huang Fu, involved both central and North China personnel. After Wang's visit to Tokyo, both Li Zeyi of the Beiping Political Affairs Council and Yin Tong, head of the Beiping-Liaoning railway offices in Tianjin and adviser to the Branch Military Council, visited Japan in March and May respectively.<sup>54</sup> The official purpose of both visits was related to technical rather than political matters: Yin was ostensibly attending a railway exhibition and Li was investigating the Japanese marine products industry,<sup>55</sup> yet both visited the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Li meeting the vice foreign minister, Shigemitsu Mamoru, and Yin the foreign minister, Hirota Kōki.<sup>56</sup>

Yin Tong was presumably received as a representative of Huang Fu. Like Wang Chonghui, Yin emphasized that he was visiting Hirota in a personal capacity, but the content of Yin's discussions with Hirota was much more specific than Wang Chonghui's appear to have been from available records, touching not only on matters of relevance to North China, but also on issues affecting China as a whole, including economic development, cooperation with Japan, and China's relations with western

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53. See Chapter I.

54. *DFZZ*, XXXII, 7, p.208; 11, p.88.

55. Li Zeyi, 'Ribei de shuichan shiye' *DFZZ*, XXXII, 12, pp.12-27, 16.6.1935.

56. Li met Shigemitsu 6.3.1935; *DFZZ*, XXXII, #7, p.208; Yin's report on his meeting with Hirota 7.5.1935 to Huang Fu in *HYBNP*, pp.867-870.

powers; all of the issues raised by Yin were to recur in later, more formal discussions between Chinese and Japanese diplomatic personnel.

On the problems of North China and the Tanggu truce, and the interference of the Japanese military in China policy, Yin was critical of the hostile attitude towards the Chinese authorities displayed by the Guandong and North China Garrison Armies, and of the inactivity of Japanese diplomatic staff in China which left the Chinese with no choice but to deal with the military. Hirota, on the other hand, accused Chiang Kai-shek of encouraging military interference in China by agreeing to meetings with military personnel such as, Suzuki Yoshiyuki, the military attaché in Shanghai. Yin also sounded out Hirota on the possibility of replacing the Tanggu truce with a more formal agreement less obstructive to the development of friendly relations between China and Japan, in the hope, he said, of getting Hirota to consider whether he might support such a proposal if it were later presented to the Army Ministry; Hirota's reply was non-committal.<sup>57</sup>

Yin also revealed that Huang Fu was unlikely to return to Beiping, but would probably return to work in Nanjing once his health had improved, explaining,

"...it would be better for [Huang] to go to Nanjing than to return to the North, and better for him to go to Sichuan than to remain in Nanjing, because success in diplomatic relations depends on one's diligence... in the present tense climate, it would be utterly pointless for Mr. Huang to go back to Beiping and labour over a few minor local affairs and risk sacrificing the whole picture over details..."<sup>58</sup>

There are other references in the correspondence between Chiang and Huang to the possibility of Huang going to Sichuan after leaving Moganshan in Zhejiang, where he was now 'resting'; that the idea was mooted might suggest that Chiang, while unwilling to abandon his work in the South-West, felt a need to be more closely involved in the long-term handling of the Japan problem.

Yin Tong's conversation with Hirota may be seen as a further step in the direction, first taken by Wang Chonghui, of trying to re-establish dialogue with the central government in Tokyo; it represents an advance beyond Wang's visit first in Yin's references to specific issues of concern to the Chinese government and second

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57. Yin Tong's report on conversation with Hirota, 7.5.1935; *HYBNP*, p.867.

58. Yin Tong's report on conversation with Hirota, 7.5.1935; *HYBNP*, p.867.

in its more integrated approach to central and 'local' (*i.e.* North China) issues. It may also be seen as a direct challenge by the Chinese authorities to the role of the Japanese armies in North China, especially in Yin's proposal of the abolition of the Tanggu truce. It is probable that news of the meeting reached military circles in Tokyo, and, like the elevation of the diplomatic missions which followed it, this would have added to the anger felt by the Japanese armies in North China at the 'anti-Japanese' incidents of May 1935.



### Chapter III

#### The Hebei and Chaha'er Crises (May-July, 1935)

Until mid-1935 the burden of applying central policy to local conditions in North China had fallen mostly on Huang Fu and He Yingqin. As the Japanese armies' drive to exclude the authority of the Nanjing government from North China gained momentum, and pressure from the Japanese military on the PAC and the BMC increased, Huang and He's positions became precarious. Huang left the North in January and, because of ill-health and disillusionment, did not return; He Yingqin remained in post until May, but was obviously dissatisfied with his position, and with the centre's reluctance to engage with the Japan problem. Now, as well as the BMC, it was the provincial governors, first Yu Xuezhong in Hebei, then Song Zheyuan in Chaha'er, who were targeted by the Japanese and who suffered dismissal - and in the case of Yu Xuezhong, transfer to Gansu - for failures of North China policy.

The talks which the Japanese initiated in May and June 1935 in pursuit of the broader goal of removing any organisations inimical to Japan or its aims from North China culminated in the imposition of Japanese demands on the Chinese authorities. Despite the efforts of the Chinese authorities to ensure that the matters were resolved informally without written agreement, both negotiators, He Yingqin and Qin Dechun finally gave in to pressure to provide written acknowledgement of their acceptance of the terms. The results were known as the He-Umezu and Qin-Doihara agreements (*He-Mei xieding*, *Qin-Tu xieding*). The term 'agreement', with its overtones of negotiation and consent, is slightly misleading: Chinese agreement was given only under threat of military action by Japan.

This attack on central power in North China was ostensibly a response to 'anti-Japanese' incidents in Tianjin and the War Zone in May: the alleged protection by Chinese officials of an armed 'bandit' unit on the Hebei-Rehe border and the murders of two Chinese who had close links with the Japanese. In the early hours of May 3rd, two newspaper publishers, Bai Yuhuan and Hu Enpu,<sup>1</sup> both known for their opposition to the Guomindang and closeness to the Japanese, were murdered in the Japanese concession in Tianjin. The Japanese authorities concluded immediately that Chinese

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1. Editors of *Guoquanbao* and *Zhenbao* respectively. Shimada, (1983), p.103.

officials were responsible for the deaths; the consul-general in Tianjin, Kawagoe Shigeru, speculated on the political background to the deaths in a telegram to the Foreign Ministry on May 4th,<sup>2</sup> and on May 7th, Takahashi Tan, the military attaché, and Giga Seiya, head of the GDA special services agency at Yuguan, visited Chen Dongsheng, of the Hebei provincial government, and Yu Xuezhong, governor of Hebei, to protest at the murders.<sup>3</sup> The evidence produced by the Japanese was entirely circumstantial: the point of the complaints seems to have been not to find and punish the killer, but to establish the responsibility of previously-targeted Chinese officials and organisations for creating a climate in which the murders were possible and to secure their removal.

In his conversation with Yu Xuezhong, Giga insisted that the two killings were coordinated: they were carried out within the space of a few hours by people with knowledge of Hu and Bai's movements and, presumably, some financial backing - two people in a car were seen leaving the Beiyang Hotel, where Hu Enpu was staying under an assumed name,<sup>4</sup> around the time of his murder. Yu Xuezhong argued that this knowledge of the habits of Hu and Bai, who, he had heard, were usually conscious of security, suggested that the killings were done by someone who knew them well rather than by Chinese government agents. Giga dismissed this, pointing out that Chinese special services personnel of, for example, the third gendarmes would have been able to gain detailed information on Hu and Bai.<sup>5</sup>

Giga warned Yu that although Hu and Bai had no personal connections with the Guandong Army,<sup>6</sup> the army was deeply disturbed at the organised killing of people well-disposed towards Japan, and that such killings were seen by Japanese as provocative. Both Giga and Takahashi demanded that the Chinese authorities support

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2. Telegram Kawagoe to Japanese Foreign Ministry, 4.5.1935; *Gendaishi shiryō 8: Nitchū sensō*, Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 1982, (hereafter *GDSSR8*), p.77.

3. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.5.1935, reporting conversations of 7.5.1935, *ZYSL1*, pp.665-7.

4. Hu was using the name Shen Zhujun; it is unclear why he did this and whether it was habitual. Shao Yunrui, (1989), p.42.

5. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.5.1935, reporting conversations of 7.5.1935, *ZYSL1*, pp.665-7.

6. Bai Yuhuan was an employee of the Guandong Army. Telegram Kawagoe to Japanese Foreign Ministry, 25.5.1935; *GDSSR8*, p.78.

the concession police in their search for the culprits; after pointing out that the concession was beyond the jurisdiction of the Chinese authorities, Yu agreed.<sup>7</sup>

The Japanese concession police later identified the car seen leaving Hu's hotel as one belonging to a concession resident, Shen Zhuchang, previously known for his opposition to the Nanjing government who had, according to information received by the Japanese consul-general in Tianjin, Kawagoe Shigeru, recently contacted senior central officials in Tianjin to declare his adherence to Nanjing and offer to denounce his former associates.<sup>8</sup>

The Japanese later alleged that the killings had been organised by Yang Hu, peace preservation commissioner of Shanghai and - allegedly - a Blue Shirt official; according to an associated theory later advanced by a Japanese writer, the killings were carried out by Green Gang members of the Blue Shirts who also had links with the *Yuanwenhui*, a terrorist group which acted under the direction of both Japanese and Chinese groups.<sup>9</sup> It has also since been suggested that Sakai Ryū, staff officer of the NCGA, was behind the killings.<sup>10</sup>

As explanations for the deaths of Hu and Bai, these theories raise more questions than they answer. Relationships between Chinese and Japanese groups in Tianjin at the time were complex, and the efforts at the time of the Japanese military to bind the Hu-Bai murders and Sun Yongqin's incursions into the War Zone into a total conspiracy theory with the maximum possible involvement of the Chinese authorities at all levels have further muddled the waters. It is suggested that the Japanese invocation of a 1902 note to claim the right to supervise the investigation into the killings indicates that the Japanese were indeed involved and were therefore unwilling to see the culprits identified by the Chinese authorities;<sup>11</sup> however, supervision of the investigation also gave the Japanese grounds for arrests which might otherwise be considered blatantly arbitrary: the attractions of this should not be underestimated.

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7. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.5.1935, reporting conversations of 7.5.1935, ZYSL1, pp.665-7.

8. Indebted to Shimada, (1983), pp.104-7 for the Japanese version the Hu-Bai murders.

9. Shimizu Minoru, 'Himitsu kessha «Chimpan» kōsaku ni oduru.' *Jimbutsu ōrai*, special issue, June 1958; recounted in Shimada, (1983), pp.106-7.

10. Shao Yunrui, (1989), p.44.

11. Shimada, (1983), p.107.

A report from the Chinese police in Tianjin notes that the Japanese had arrested the owner of the Beiyang Hotel where Hu was murdered for connections with the third gendarmes, several concession residents who had close relations with the Chinese authorities and two officials of the Tianjin Guomindang branch, engaged in surveillance work in the Japanese concession against the Communist Party. The report says nothing about the participation of the Chinese police in the search for the culprits; no-one was ever charged with the murders.<sup>12</sup>

The Hu-Bai murders were closely followed by disturbances in the Eastern Hebei War Zone which provided a further pretext for Japanese pressure on the North China authorities. Since the conclusion of the Tanggu truce, order within the War Zone was kept by Chinese PPC units over which the Japanese exerted varying degrees of influence. In late 1934 and early 1935 these forces were undergoing reorganisation, and by the Chinese and Japanese authorities. Agreement on the reorganisation of the War Zone PPC was finally reached in principle in April 1935, and the War Zone Purification Committee (*zhanqu qingli weiyuanhui*) established to deal with these matters was dissolved at the beginning of May as the new PPC units began to move into position.<sup>13</sup>

The reorganisation was difficult, and there were repeated disturbances involving the PPC units in Eastern Hebei<sup>14</sup> which added to an already high level of disorder in the War Zone.<sup>15</sup> The Hebei-Rehe border suffered as did the Chaha'er-Rehe border from the activities of small semi-independent units to which both Chinese and Japanese authorities referred as 'bandits'. While much smaller than the forces commanded by,

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12. Report from Tianjin police, passed on to Executive Yuan 22.5.1935 by Yu Xuezhong. Second Historical Archive of China, Executive Yuan archive, II, 901.

13. *HYBNP*, p.861.

14. Conflicts between the Luanxian PPC and militia in February 1935 resulted in deaths and substantial damage to property, and in March 1935 the militia in Yutian mutinied when ordered to disarm and leave its original positions. Estimates of casualties in the Luanxian fighting ranged from 60 to several hundred; damage to property was estimated at ¥50,000. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #6, p.114; the Yutian mutiny was put down by Yin Rugeng, and the leader, Wang Jizong, executed for mutiny. *DFZZ*, XXXII, #8, p.103, #9, p.101; *HYBNP*, p.854.

15. See for example Huang Fu's report to Executive Yuan, 27.11.1934, in Executive Yuan Archive, Second Historical Archive of China, II.905.

for example, Liu Guitang in Chaha'er,<sup>16</sup> these units, while unaligned, were a source of conflict in their own right and, in their occasional association with either the Chinese or the Japanese side, added to frictions between China and Japan.

The Chinese authorities feared that over-enthusiastic pursuit of forces which they perceived as hostile in the immediate vicinity of the Wall would arouse the suspicions of the Japanese and provoke retaliation, especially as they suspected some of these units to be receiving covert Japanese support and guidance, as in the case of an armed group led by Qi Wenping in November 1934; Huang Fu speculated in a report to the Executive Yuan that he was armed and guided by 'foreigners' and encouraged create disturbances south of the Great Wall.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, it was sometimes convenient for the Japanese to see this hesitation as evidence of Chinese official complicity in the activities of the 'bandits'.

Around the time of the Hu-Bai killings in early May, a force calling itself the 'Army of Resistance to Japan and of National Salvation' (*Kang Ri jiuguo jun*), led by Sun Yongqin,<sup>18</sup> clashed with the Japanese in Luowenyu, north of the Great Wall in Rehe province, and Sun escaped across the Wall into Zunhua county in the War Zone. At the request of the GDA, Takahashi Tan the military attaché in Beiping, visited the Branch Military Council on May 20th to accuse Zunhua officials of harbouring subversives and inform the Council that the Guandong Army had decided to send whatever forces were necessary to Zunhua to wipe out Sun Yongqin's forces.<sup>19</sup> He

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16. On Liu Guitang, see Chapter II.

17. Huang Fu's report to Executive Yuan, 27.11.1934, in Executive Yuan Archive, II, 905.

18. Sun Yongqin, born 1890 in Xinglong county. In March 1933 when the Japanese invaded Rehe he was inspired with desire to resist Japan and formed a band of poor peasants into an anti-Japanese army at Zhaojiazhuang in Chengde county. In December 1933 he led them back to Xinglong and joined with masses in the area and raised the standard of 'First army under Heaven, killing the rich and aiding the poor' and began an anti-Japanese rebellion; his army rapidly expanded to over 100 people. He killed/got rid of Japanese/puppet police units in Chengde, Xinglong, Guancheng and Qian'an and caused Japanese/puppets to lose control of southern Rehe. In February 1934, the CCP Eastern Hebei special committee sent a representative, Wang Lutong to Sun's headquarters to explain the Party's anti-Japanese policy and strategy. Sun Yongqin joyfully accepted the Party's leadership. Later, the army was reorganised and its name was changed to 'Army of Resistance to Japan and National Salvation' (*kang Ri jiuguo jun*); Sun Yongqin was commander, and the force increased to over 5,000 people. In February 1935, the Army of Resistance to Japan and National Salvation entered Zunhua county and was attacked by Japanese and Guomindang forces; Sun Yongqin heroically sacrificed himself in the struggle. In the August 1st Manifesto (*ba-yi xuanyan*; 1935) the CCP designated him a national hero. Fang Xue, (A).

19. *HYQSI*, p.390-1.

had also returned to the Hebei provincial government to complain to Chen Dongsheng that Sun and his forces were receiving support from Chinese officials in Zunhua.<sup>20</sup> Although Sun is said to have been acting under the leadership of the CCP,<sup>21</sup> the Japanese, who might be expected to seize on any hint of Communist involvement as a means of increasing pressure on the Chinese authorities, made no reference to Communist connections.

To Chinese officials it seemed that the provincial authorities were being held responsible by the Japanese armies for a level of disorder in the War Zone which was created by the actions of the Japanese armies, and which Japan's actions now rendered them powerless to prevent. Yu Xuezhong lamented:<sup>22</sup>

"... they are like cuckoos in the nest... whatever they do, they do it to harm us and pursue what they want... places such as Changli and Yueting were originally garrisoned by PPC units; now they will not allow the new PPC units to take over, instead recommending that Liu Zuozhou's forces be sent there, intending to prevent our political power from reaching these areas, so that they can do as they please without interference and continue their silver and drug smuggling... in places north of the railway like Zunhua and Qian'an the PPC is restricted on all sides ... so that at any time bandits may cross the Wall... recently they said that they were suppressing ['bandits'] in Zunhua and asked our troops to withdraw so as to avoid accidents; when we withdrew the Japanese forces at Luowenyu also withdrew, allowing a large number of bandits to advance into the area..."<sup>23</sup>

The perception among Chinese officials in Hebei that the general problems of the War Zone were the result of Japan's actions, that Japan's intervention had in this case impeded Chinese forces' handling of Sun Yongqin, and the discrepancies between the accounts received from Japan and from their own officials of the Sun Yongqin episode did not incline the provincial authorities to cooperate with the Japanese. Defences in the War Zone as a whole were weakened at that time as the old and new PPC units changed over. According to Yu Xuezhong, on May 5th, the PPC commander in Zunhua received notification from Iwanaga, commander of the unit of the Japanese military police pursuing Sun, that Japanese forces were pursuing 'bandits' on the line

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20. Yu Xuezhong's report on meeting in letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 22.5.1935, ZYSL1, pp.668.

21. See the account in Shao Yunrui, (1989), p.45, drawn from *Zaoqi changcun - Hebei geming lieshi shiliao*, pp.162-7, Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1979.

22. See also p.33 above.

23. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 22.5.1935, ZYSL1, pp.668.

of the Great Wall, and a request that he withdraw his forces 25 *li* south of the Wall to avoid any conflict which might arise from 'misunderstandings'. The Chinese PPC commander at first objected to the distance of the withdrawal but, after discussion with Iwanaga, ordered his troops to withdraw as requested to the south of Zunhua county town. The Japanese first established a base at Daheju in Luowenyu, but then withdrew their forces to Sandaohe, north of Cheheqiao without informing the Chinese. By the time Iwanaga sent a representative to discuss joint defences with the Chinese, Sun had already - on May 7th according to second report - crossed the Wall into Zunhua. As the change-over of PPC units was not yet complete, there were insufficient Chinese forces in Zunhua to wipe out Sun's army, which, according to Yu's report numbered over 1,000 reasonably well-armed men.<sup>24</sup>

Chinese reports mention sufficient animosity between Sun and local officials to cast some doubt on the Japanese accusations of official collusion with him: his forces are reported to have started fires over an area of 40 *li* in Pianshanyu and Weichengyu;<sup>25</sup> Yu Xuezhong reported a dispute between Sun and He Xiaoyi, the county head of Zunhua, who had refused his demand for ammunition for an attack on another 'bandit' force, Sun sent He a letter abusing him for 'using foreign help to oppress the people'.<sup>26</sup>

The death of Sun and the rout of his forces on May 24th in no way diminished the determination of the Japanese military to hold Chinese officials responsible for Sun's activities: as the ostensible problem of Sun Yongqin was disposed of, the deeper crisis became apparent. The Japanese had in the past expressed dissatisfactions or made demands concerning the administration of Hebei which they now expected to be heard. He Yingqin reported to Chiang:

"Japan has been saying openly that Hebei is under the control (*lit: is the* «*waifu*») of Zhang Xueliang, and has been expressing dissatisfaction with Yu

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24. Shimada, working from Japanese primary sources, says that Sun's army 'must have been a small force'. Shimada, (1983), p.103; Fang Lei (A) gives the size of the army as 5,000 men, but this may refer to total 'potential' strength rather than the number of men involved in this incident. He Yingqin later reported the rout of a force of over 400 men, and notes that 300 corpses were left after the defeat. *HYQSJ*, pp.394-5; Shao Yunrui (1989), p.45, refers to a record of Sun's forces killing 15,000 Japanese and Manchurian troops in the space of a year, which suggests a larger force.

25. He Yingqin letter to Takahashi, 24.5.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.391-2.

26. Yu Xuezhong letter to He Yingqin, 25.5.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.393-4.

Xuezhong and Zhang Ting'e [Mayor of Tianjin]. It is now no longer a question of moving the provincial government to Baoding: it seems they will have to go..."<sup>27</sup>

He Yingqin did not see the removal as a solution in itself, nor was he willing to deal with this crisis alone, as he pointed out to Chiang:

"If no satisfactory solution to the Hebei government question can be found then there will be no end to the threat to North China; my wisdom and strength are inadequate to respond to this situation..."<sup>28</sup>

Yu Xuezhong also urged the centre to support the region in dealing with the Japanese:

"... given the hard line their representatives are pursuing, and the difficulty of the situation in the War Zone, and their recent statements, endless spreading of rumours and creation of incidents, I fear that their military faction may be displeased with the recent elevation of the diplomatic missions and talk of rapprochement,... they use these incidents as a pretext, and the future of North China is gravely threatened. My responsibility is to bear the brunt of this and I will follow your instructions at all times... but *as in our contacts with them we must often negotiate through the local authorities, I fear that we are weak and ineffective, and that this may lead to further complications which will weaken us even more. It seems that if the centre was to use all its strength to discuss this with them they might show more respect...*"<sup>29</sup> (emphasis added)

Thus pleas from officials in Beiping for the centre to become more actively involved in the affairs of North China now changed to warnings of the potential consequences of non-involvement. The Japanese armies had orchestrated a series of incidents involving plain-clothes units (*bianyidui*) in Tianjin first in 1931 in conjunction with the occupation of Manchuria, and again in 1933 in protest at the sacking by the Chinese authorities of the then chief of public security in Beiping, Bao Yulin, for blocking moves against drug trafficking;<sup>30</sup> it was now rumoured, He informed Chiang, that they had planned another wave of such incidents but been restrained when preparations were already complete by Umezu Yoshijiro, commander of the NCGA.

With the threat of violent disturbances hanging over the North, He Yingqin was visited on May 29th by Col. Sakai Ryū, staff officer of the NCGA, the military attaché, Takahashi Tan. Beiping-Tianjin, they asserted, had become a base for anti-Japanese, anti-Manzhouguo activities, and there was evidence of government

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27. He Yingqin telegram to Chiang Kai-shek, *HYQSJ*, p.394. This is a supplement to a more detailed report which has not been published.

28. He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 27.5.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.394.

29. Yu Xuezhong letter to Chiang Kai-shek, 22.5.1935; *ZYSLI*, p.668.

30. Shen Yiyun, (1980), p.512.



involvement both in the killing of Hu Enpu and Bai Yuhuan, and in the Sun Yongqin episode. Was He Yingqin, they asked, aware of this?<sup>31</sup> They further demanded to be told who led the anti-Japanese organisations responsible for these incidents and warned He:

"If subversive activities based in Beiping-Tianjin against Japan and Manzhouguo continue, Japan believes this to be a violation of the Tanggu truce and the Boxer agreement, and it may be necessary to extend the War Zone to Beiping-Tianjin... if in the future similar incidents arise or Japan gets warning that they may do so, it cannot be guaranteed that there will not be a recurrence of the 1900 incident [the punitive campaign by the foreign powers against the Boxers] or September 18th Incident... only when China abstains from subversive actions against Japan or Manzhouguo need the Japanese armies withdraw to the north of the Great Wall [otherwise] the Japanese army may enter the War Zone at any time..."<sup>32</sup>

Sakai added - as a *personal* opinion according to the Chinese record - that if Chiang Kai-shek did not fundamentally change his 'dual' policy toward Japan, of superficial friendship and secret preparation for war, the Japanese armies might feel obliged to take drastic steps. He went on to demand the dismissal of Yu Xuezhong as an enemy of Manzhouguo, the withdrawal from Hebei of the 3rd gendarmes, all branches of the Guomindang, the political education division of the Branch Military Council, the Blue Shirts and, if possible, the remaining central army divisions; if this was done, relations between China and Japan might improve.<sup>33</sup> If these demands were accepted, the BMC would be deprived of its entire political and military infrastructure.<sup>34</sup> Sakai and Takahashi presented the Political Affairs Commission with the same demands.<sup>35</sup>

In reply to He Yingqin's request for instructions, Wang Jingwei informed He that he had instructed the Chinese Ambassador in Tokyo, Jiang Zuobin, to call on Foreign Minister Hirota to point out the inappropriateness of a military attaché presenting such demands when both China and Japan were striving to improve relations. Wang was awaiting Chiang Kai-shek's advice on the Yu Xuezhong question; his personal opinion

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31. Summary of demands presented by Takahashi and Sakai, 29.5.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.396-8. See also He Yingqin telegram to Liu Xiang, 'He Yingqin you guan He-Mei xieding dianwen si jian' ed. Zhou Wenlin, *MGDA*, 1988, 2, (hereafter *HYQDW*) p.17.

32. Summary of demands presented by Takahashi and Sakai, 29.5.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.396-8.

33. Summary of demands presented by Takahashi and Sakai, 29.5.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.396-8.

34. Zeng Kuoqing, (A), 'He-Mei xieding qian fuxingshe zai huabei de huodong' *WSZLXI*, IV, 14, p.144.

35. Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Jingwei, Chiang Kai-shek, 30.5.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.672-3.

was that: "If Yu can take the long view and voluntarily resign then this is best, and the government will reward his loyalty..." Wang was far from complacent about the future, commenting,

"The military attaché may say that these are merely verbal demands, but if our response is inappropriate, the result may easily be a second September 18th Incident. I hope you will approach this with the greatest calm..."<sup>36</sup>

He Yingqin's next report from Beiping warned of impending troop increases on the Beiping-Liaoning railway, and reconnaissance flights by Japanese planes over Beiping-Tianjin; it was rumoured that the Japanese forces which had entered Zunhua county to pursue Sun Yongqin had not withdrawn to Rehe, but that more troops were being moved into the War Zone, and that Sakai Ryū was openly saying that Japan reserved its freedom of action if the Chinese government did not comply with its demands, and was prepared to act at any time.<sup>37</sup>

The gravity of the situation was confirmed by a report by Huang Fu to Chiang Kai-shek on his meeting in Shanghai with Isogai Rensuke, the Japanese military attaché, in which Huang warned that this time Japan would not relieve pressure on the North until all its objectives were achieved. Huang outlined the reasons for Japan's dissatisfaction which included impatience at China's refusal to resume civilian flights between North China and Manchuria as well as anger at the elevation of diplomatic representation.<sup>38</sup>

Thus even in late May the central authorities saw little chance of stalling the Japanese; they were preoccupied with the prospect of a further Japanese invasion of the North and dismissive of individual North China officials such as Yu Xuezhong. There was little personal support for Yu: while Wang Jingwei and He Yingqin blandly justify his removal in terms of the greater interest of stability in North China compared to Yu's pride and status, Huang hints at maladroitness handling of the Japanese by Yu, and Chiang accuses him of exacerbating the problems of Hebei and complaining that

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36. Telegram Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 30.5.1935; *HYQSI*, p.398.

37. Telegram He Yingqin to Wang Jingwei, Chiang Kai-shek (Chongqing), Huang Fu (Shanghai) 30.5.1935; *HYQSI*, p.399.

38. Telegram Huang Fu to Chiang Kai-shek, 30.5.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.671.

criticism of Yu had been kept from him.<sup>39</sup>

He Yingqin was therefore instructed by Wang Jingwei to persuade Yu to resign voluntarily before the Japanese formally demanded his dismissal; despite his apparent irritation with Yu and his stated conviction it was pointless to be intransigent in the face of Japanese demands without being prepared to go to war,<sup>40</sup> and that Yu should therefore be sacrificed if necessary, Chiang seemed still to hope that some time might be bought by ordering Yu to move to Baoding at once and transfer the provincial government with him. Yu rejected He's arguments, stating that appointments were the responsibility of the centre: if the centre dismissed him he would obey, but he would not resign. Nanjing finally felt obliged to dismiss him;<sup>41</sup> He Yingqin was asked to act as provincial governor as a transitional measure.<sup>42</sup>

Sakai and Takahashi returned to see He Yingqin on June 4th for his response to their earlier demands. He Yingqin reminded them that as the killings of the journalists took place in the Japanese concession in Tianjin, they were not within Chinese jurisdiction, but that the Tianjin municipal authorities had been ordered to co-operate in the search for the culprits; as for Sun Yongqin, the military police had participated in the suppression of his forces, and the provincial government had been ordered to investigate the allegations of official support for him; if these were found to be true, they would be dealt with according to Chinese law. Yu Xuezhong's transfer had been ordered, and Jiang Xiaoxian, commander of the third gendarmes, and Zeng Kuoqing, head of political education in the BMC, had already been moved.<sup>43</sup> In answer to this, Sakai repeated, now in the form of a demand, the matters he had last raised as a 'personal opinion' on May 29th: Yu Xuezhong must be dismissed and his 51st Army removed from Hebei; Guomindang Party Branches must be removed from Hebei; the BMC political education division and the third division of the military police must be dissolved; the Blue Shirts and other anti-Japanese organisations must be eradicated; and

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39. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Zhang Xueliang, 31.5.1935; *ZYSL*, p.674.

40. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Zhang Xueliang, 31.5.1935; *ZYSL*, p.674.

41. Telegram He Yingqin to Wang Jingwei, 1.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.400; See also Yu Xuezhong, (A), 'Wo shi zenyang bei Ri bichu Huabei de.' *WSZLXJ*, IV, 14, pp.175-6.

42. Telegram Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 3.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.400-1.

43. *HYQDW*, p.17.

the remaining central army divisions must be withdrawn from Hebei.<sup>44</sup> Sakai warned again that the specific issues concerning North China formed only one aspect of the Sino-Japanese problem: the real question was the attitude of Chiang Kai-shek, and the resolution of problems between Japan and China depended on whether Chiang persisted in what Sakai described as an ostensible search for rapprochement and secret preparations for war.<sup>45</sup>

Jiang Zuobin, the Ambassador in Tokyo, again visited Hirota with proposals for the resolution of the incident: Hirota seemed unwilling to become directly involved in the affairs of North China, but agreed to pass on Jiang's protest and the demand that Sakai moderate his behaviour to the Army Ministry.<sup>46</sup> However, the Army Ministry had given no prior authorization to Sakai for the demands presented, but approved retrospectively a slightly more limited set of demands, to which Sakai seems to have paid little attention.<sup>47</sup> In Beiping-Tianjin, the NCGA maintained a high profile. On June 5th, Sakai issued a statement to the Associated Press:

"If Beiping-Tianjin does indeed become part of the War Zone, American and other residents and business people in North China need not fear that their interests will be harmed... In fact, commerce will be advanced by the expulsion of Chinese forces from Beiping-Tianjin... There are three things to be feared in the life of the Chinese: officials, the army and the police; if we remove the threat of the Chinese armies commerce will of course develop."<sup>48</sup>

As tensions rose in Hebei, reports were received of a second incident at Zhangbei in Chaha'er involving Japanese special services personnel and the 29th Army. On the evening of June 5th, four plain-clothes officials of the Duolun agency, again -

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44. Record of He Yingqin's reply to Sakai and Takahashi, 4.6.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.401-3; see also Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu, Wang Jingwei, Chiang Kai-shek, 4.6.1935; *HYBNP*, 875-6.

45. *HYQSI*, p.403.

46. Telegram Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 6.6.1935; *HYQSI*, p.404; *HYBNP*, p.876.

47. Furuya, (1981), p.464. According to Crowley,(1966), pp.214-6, when the demands were discussed in Tokyo, the naval authorities opposed them altogether because they feared they would provoke intervention from the western naval powers; conditions authorized by General Nagata Tetsuzan, chief of the Army Ministry Military Affairs Bureau, were that the officers nominally responsible for the Bai-Hu murders and the Zunhua disturbances were to be sacked; that Guomindang military advisers be excluded from the Branch Military Council; that central troops be withdrawn south of Baoding, and that anti-Japanese organizations in Hebei be restricted. The Army Ministry ordered Umezu Yoshijiro, commander of the Tianjin garrison, henceforth to restrain the officers in Huabei; pressure was to be applied if at all by economic means and the support of local regimes. cf. Shimada (1983), p.106, who states that Umezu authorised only a "friendly warning" by Sakai.

48. *HYQSI*, p.404.

according to the Chinese - travelling without proper documentation had been detained by officers of the 132nd division, commanded by Zhao Dengyu.<sup>49</sup> They were released at 11am the following day. The Japanese authorities issued an immediate protest at the detention.<sup>50</sup> It was also claimed that Song Zheyuan had undertaken to guarantee freedom of movement for Japanese between Duolun and Zhangjiakou after the first Zhangbei incident of October 1934.<sup>51</sup>

According to information received by He Yingqin, the Japanese authorities had threatened to send forces to occupy Chaha'er if the Chinese did not make immediate reparation by dismissing the provincial governor, Song Zheyuan, and punishing the officers responsible; on June 5th, He Yingqin passed on to Chiang Kai-shek reports of increased activity of Mongol forces led by Li Shouxin, a Manchurian Mongol closely associated with the Japanese, at Daliangdi near Duolun, and of Japanese troop movements in Manzhouguo towards the Chaha'er-Rehe border.<sup>52</sup>

On June 7th, He Yingqin cabled the centre to report a telegram from Qin Dechun, second in command to Song Zheyuan and head of the civil division of the Chaha'er provincial government: the consul from Zhangtan, Hashimoto, had told him that the central authorities in Nanjing and the Chaha'er provincial authorities were to cease all intervention in the affairs of Inner Mongolia, that Chinese forces were to be withdrawn from Pangjiang, that Chaha'er province must employ Japanese military advisers and allow freedom of movement to Japanese motor vehicles between Duolun and Zhangjiakou, and that the area around Yong'anbao in East Chaha'er was to be recognised as part of Rehe.<sup>53</sup> Chiang had received reports that the Japanese intended to escalate the incident, and replied to He that Song Zheyuan must therefore be instructed to resolve the incident as soon as possible.<sup>54</sup>

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49. Coble, (1991), p.206; Shimada, (1983), p.120. When Song Zheyuan reported the incident to Chiang on June 13th, he mentioned one GDA officer and one civilian of the «Shanlin xiehui»: Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek, 13.6.1935; *ZYSL*, p.685.

50. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.417.

51. See Chapter II.

52. *HYQSJ*, p.403-4; telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 5.6.1935; *ZYSL*, p.677.

53. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, Huang Fu, 7.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.404-5.

54. Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 13.6.1935; *ZYSL*, pp.684-5.

There appeared to be some disagreement among the Japanese over the handling of the incident: the NCGA and Doihara Kenji, then head of the GDA special services agency in Shenyang, favoured a low-key approach, allowing Nanjing 'voluntarily' to dismiss Song Zheyuan. The GDA authorities in Changchun advocated a decisive approach and the presentation of formal demands that Song Zheyuan be removed as provincial governor and that the 132nd division be removed from Eastern Chaha'er, and were reported to be discussing tactics in Changchun with Sakai Ryū of the NCGA. He Yingqin feared that if a solution was not reached soon, the GDA would be able to impose a hard-line policy on Doihara and China's losses would be greater: it was essential to act quickly and bring the incident rapidly to a conclusion.<sup>55</sup>

Qin Dechun and Men Zhizhong had gone first to Beiping to report on the incident to He Yingqin and thence to Tianjin to negotiate a settlement of the incident with the Japanese. On June 17th, Qin reported that Men was to return to Zhangjiakou to ask Song Zheyuan's opinion on recent developments in the Chaha'er problem, and suggested that the centre deal with Song either by simply moving him to another province, or by appointing him to a post of equal status, as they had done with Yu Xuezhong, such as Bandit Suppression Commissioner for the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region. These solutions would be acceptable as long as they were seen to be decided and implemented by the centre of its own accord. Qin foresaw no problems arising from such a solution from Japan or from Chinese domestic political circumstances, but was less sanguine about Song's response: "Looking at Song's character, we fear that he may take the line that he would rather die in glory than live in dishonour."<sup>56</sup>

Thus in Chaha'er as in Hebei, the centre heard reports of Japanese determination to take aggressive action to enforce its demands if necessary and dismissed Song Zheyuan as it had dismissed Yu. Song, unlike Yu, was not first given the option of resigning. On June 18th, He Yingqin passed Qin and Men's proposals - omitting Qin's reservations about Song Zheyuan's willingness to cooperate with the scheme - to

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55. Telegram He Yingqin to Shang Zhen, 17.6.1935; *HYQJSJ*, pp.417-8; telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.6.1935; *HYQJSJ*, p.417.

56. Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin, 17.6.1935; *HYQJSJ*, pp.418-9.

Chiang Kai-shek in Chengdu, and informed Chiang that the Executive Yuan had that day resolved to dismiss Song, appoint Qin Dechun governor of Chaha'er and move Zhao Dengyu's 132nd division north from Eastern Chaha'er to Yangyuan.<sup>57</sup> He then informed Song of the Executive Yuan's decisions, saying that the urgency of the matter had prevented him from seeking Song's agreement in advance.<sup>58</sup> Song replied that the power of appointment and dismissal lay with the centre, and that he would obey the centre's orders.<sup>59</sup>

The same day, after receiving Song's reply, He Yingqin was told that Doihara Kenji had visited the BMC in Beiping to protest at Song's dismissal; this news may have given Nanjing second thoughts on Song's attitude to the centre and relations with the Japanese, and provoked further telegrams from He Yingqin affirming the centre's appreciation of Song's loyalty and asking his opinion on the appointment of Qin Dechun as governor of Chaha'er.<sup>60</sup> On June 20th, however, Doihara told the BMC that it was 'inappropriate' for Song to remain in Chaha'er as commander of the 29th Army: Japanese attitudes to Song at this point appear to have been somewhat confused.<sup>61</sup> Chiang Kai-shek ordered that Song be appointed Bandit Suppression Commissioner for Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia, and that half of the 29th Army be moved to the north-west, leaving two divisions to defend Chaha'er; he asked Song to go to Sichuan to discuss details of his new appointment with him.<sup>62</sup> Song, who had left Zhangjiakou for Tianjin immediately on hearing the news of his own dismissal, declined.<sup>63</sup>

In Beiping, Qin Dechun continued to negotiate with the Japanese for a settlement of the Chaha'er incident. On June 21st, Sakai formally presented demands to Qin

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57. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 18.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.419-20.

58. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 18.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.420.

59. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 18.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.420.

60. Telegrams He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan (2), Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin (2), 19.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.420-1.

61. Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun, 20.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.423.

62. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 19.6.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.688.

63. Wang Shijiu, (A), 'Ji-Cha teshuhua qian Song Zheyuan yu Jiang Jieshi de gouxin doujiao.' *WSZLXJ*, VI, 22, pp.42-3.

Dechun. They were as follows:

- "1. All of Song Zheyuan's forces now stationed in the area to the east of the extension of the Changping-Yanqing line defined by the Tanggu truce and north of the Great Wall are to be withdrawn to the south-west of these lines; thereafter Chinese forces are not to re-enter the area from which they were withdrawn.
2. All anti-Japanese organisations, (of the central or north-eastern authorities, the Blue Shirts, militia and Guomindang branches) are to be dissolved.
3. The above two conditions must be fulfilled within two weeks of the presentation of the demand.
4. Song Zheyuan is to admit his guilt for the incident and those responsible are to be punished.
5. There is to be no further migration from Shandong to Chaha'er."<sup>64</sup>

These conditions, Sakai informed Qin, were the result of a joint decision of the GDA and NCGA authorities and could not be changed.<sup>65</sup> The following day Doihara presented Qin with 'modified' demands, which were rephrased, but little different in substance from those presented by Sakai; Qin passed these on to He Yingqin, and later informed him that the Japanese authorities were again insisting on a written statement of consent from the provincial authorities.<sup>66</sup> In his reply, He Yingqin insisted that matters such as the withdrawal of Party branches and armies were to be seen to be done voluntarily by Nanjing and not as a response to Japanese demands; the National Defence Commission (*Guofang huiyi*) authorised the provision of detailed written regulations concerning a demilitarised zone by the BMC.<sup>67</sup> The matter was finally closed on June 27th with the despatch of two separate non-official letters, one containing apologies for the incident at Zhangbei in June and noting that the provincial government would dissolve organisations likely to damage friendly relations between China and Japan, respect Japan's 'legitimate' (*zhengdang*) actions in Chaha'er, and that troops of the 29th Army would be withdrawn to the south and west of a line from Changping in Hebei through Yanqing and Dasenbao, passing north of Dushikou and Zhangjiakou and south of Zhangbei, and the other undertaking to limit migration by Chinese into Chaha'er.<sup>68</sup>

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64. Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin, 21.6.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.424-5.

65. Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin, 21.6.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.424-5.

66. Telegrams Qin Dechun to He Yingqin (2), 22.6.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.425-6.

67. Telegrams He Yingqin to Qin Dechun, 25.6.1935; *HYQSI*, p.428; 26.6.1935 (2), *HYQSI*, pp.430-1.

68. Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin, 27.6.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.431-2.



By now He Yingqin had left Beiping for Nanjing. On June 8th, Wang Jingwei had cabled Chiang and He to report a conversation between Suma Yakichirō, consul-general in Nanjing, and Tang Youren, vice-minister for foreign affairs:

"Suma explained... the opinions of Japanese Military Headquarters: that Japan could not rest until the central armies were withdrawn [from Hebei]... the only way is to order the BMC to use the form of a standard transfer of forces to order the armies stationed in Beiping-Tianjin to move south a little so that Japan has no pretext for action..."<sup>69</sup>

On June 7th, Isogai Rensuke, military attaché in Nanjing, had gone to Tianjin for a meeting with Umezu Yoshijiro, commander of the NCGA, and He found the reports he received of the meeting deeply alarming. The objections of the Japanese to Yu Xuezhong were much deeper than it had at first appeared: "... It shows no sincerity to dismiss Yu Xuezhong from a post in one province only to appoint him to another post over three";<sup>70</sup> and the penalties for rejection of Japan's demands were now made explicit. Asking permission of Chiang Kai-shek to agree to the withdrawal of the central army units south of Beiping to Baoding or Changxindian, He Yingqin reported Japan's plans in case of Nanjing's non-compliance:

"[the NCGA] is to occupy the Tianjin-Nanjing railway line, the north bank of the Yellow River and Tianjin; the GDA is to come from Yuguan and maintain order in the War Zone and supervised the grey-uniformed PPC units in the War Zone including Liu Hezhou's [*sic*] forces; the army stationed in Rehe is to come from Beikou and occupy Beiping, and at the same time move troops to Zhangjiakou and Eastern Chaha'er to put pressure on central armies near Beiping..."<sup>71</sup>

While the military authorities in Tokyo did not seem able to control the actions of officers such as Sakai, the Army Ministry was in fact trying to restrain the armies in North China. In his reply to He Yingqin, Chiang advised delaying any move of the armies, but seemed more fatalistic concerning the resolution of the incident than He might have hoped:

"No matter whether the report of the meeting is true or false, we must make appropriate preparations... We cannot move our forces south at this time; not only would this do no good but it would fall in with their plans and would cause the

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69. Telegram Wang Jingwei to Chiang Kai-shek, He Yingqin, 8.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.679.

70. This was a reference to Yu's appointment as Bandit Suppression Commissioner of the Sichuan-Shaanxi-Gansu border region. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, 8.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.678.

71. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, 8.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.678; full report of meeting from Chinese intelligence, *HYQSI*, p.405-7.

collapse of the Party and the nation, so if we do want to move them we must wait for an appropriate time and then move them voluntarily; for now we can only depend on our officials and see whether they have the mandate of heaven; we cannot hope for too much."<sup>72</sup>

On June 9th, Sakai and Takahashi returned to visit He Yingqin in Beiping for his reply to the demands presented on May 30th and June 4th. He Yingqin replied to the points raised at his last two meetings with Sakai and Takahashi: Yu Xuezhong and Zhang Ting'e, Mayor of Tianjin, had already been transferred; the BMC political education division and the 3rd gendarmes had been withdrawn; the Hebei GMD branch had been moved to Baoding, and the Tianjin city branch had stopped work; organisations considered by Japan to be a hindrance to Sino-Japanese relations<sup>73</sup> had been wound up; the decision to move the 51st Army had been taken.<sup>74</sup> Sakai then presented four new demands - all Guomindang branches were to be withdrawn from Hebei; a deadline was to be set for the withdrawal of Yu Xuezhong's 51st Army from Hebei; the 2nd and 25th divisions of the central armies were to be withdrawn from Hebei; all anti-Japanese activities throughout China were to be suppressed - and warned that if the Chinese authorities did not comply immediately the NCGA reserved its freedom of action.<sup>75</sup>

He Yingqin appeared to feel that he had no choice but to comply and urge the centre to support him; Sakai had insisted that the first three new demands must be met within a few days and, having been resolved by the Japanese Military Headquarters in Tokyo, could not easily be modified.<sup>76</sup> Several hours later he reported that Tokyo insisted that the withdrawal of the Hebei Party branches and of the central armies be implemented by June 12th; and that Nanjing should not insist on discussing the Hebei question with Japanese diplomats: it could be dealt with only by the NCGA.<sup>77</sup>

Wang Jingwei replied by return that the withdrawal of GMD branches and the prohibition of anti-Japanese activities could only be done on the orders of the centre,

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72. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 8.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.678.

73. Including the *Lizhishe* and the *Junshi zazhishe*. HYQSI, p.408.

74. Record of meeting between He Yingqin, Sakai and Takahashi, 9.6.1935; HYQSI, pp.407-8.

75. Record of He Yingqin meeting with Sakai and Takahashi, 4.6.1935; HYQSI, pp.401-3.

76. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, 9.6.1935; ZYSL1, pp.680-1.

77. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, 9.6.1935; HYQSI, p.410.

and that a meeting was to be held the following day to discuss this; the military matters on the other hand, could be handled as He himself saw fit. Wang concluded "if Japan still occupies [Beiping-Tianjin], we can only go to war."<sup>78</sup> Chiang Kai-shek disagreed with Wang Jingwei, still hoping that a way could be found to keep the central armies in the North. He told He Yingqin of this and gave his reasons in greater detail to Wang Jingwei:

"If the central armies are moved south, this will be the same as forcing us to abandon [Beiping-Tianjin] and have the same significance as if we abandoned North China altogether. We have already done all that they asked a few days ago and all that remains is this minor matter, but they still continue to threaten the centre and repeat their demands that we withdraw. On one hand they send Matsumoto and Hashimoto to Guangdong-Guangxi to encourage the establishment of a separate government, on the other they agitate in Inner Mongolia and Chaha'er, causing disturbances everywhere; their aim is to overthrow the centre, divide China and it is already clear that soon we will have no room for manoeuvre at all. ...no matter whether the central armies move south or not, I fear that they will continue to seek to provoke war with the centre and will not stop until they have reached all their goals...If the central armies withdraw, then there will be a precedent which Guangdong-Guangxi can use; our internal and external problems will aggravate each other and we will have great problems internationally and suffer a great loss of faith from the people... I have considered this repeatedly and feel that the withdrawal of the central armies in fact is the crux of the whole matter: we must decide to refuse; we cannot accept... we must use all our strength to resist this demand... "<sup>79</sup>

He Yingqin inclined to the line taken by Wang Jingwei, recommending that the central armies be withdrawn only as far as Henan to leave them as close as possible to the likely conflict and minimise damage to morale in North China. He replied to Chiang:

"... Japan really hopes that if they come into conflict with the central armies, they can launch an immediate attack on Nanjing, Shanghai and the Yangtze valley. As we have made no military, economic or diplomatic preparation for this, if war does break out we will lose Beiping-Tianjin at once, moreover if Nanjing, Shanghai and the Yangtze valley are destabilised, then we will be faced with immediate internal collapse... we cannot make appropriate preparations in such a short period, moreover we have no preparations at all in the rear... for the sake of preserving the *status quo* we can only do as Wang says we should... "<sup>80</sup>

On the morning of June 10th, an emergency meeting of the CPC was held to debate the Japanese demands: Wang Jingwei informed He Yingqin that the closing of the

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78. Telegram Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 9.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.410.

79. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei, 9.6.1935; *ZYSL*1, pp.679-80.

80. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 9.6.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.681.

The Goodwill Mandate (*Dunmu bangjiao ling*)  
*Translated from Huang Yingbai Nianpu, p.879*

The urgent duty of our nation is now, domestically, enforce honest and enlightened government and, internationally, to affirm good faith and maintain peace; friendly relations with our neighbours are most important for this. The central government has repeatedly stated that our people must treat friendly neighbours with goodwill, and that the people must use no speech or actions which are discriminatory or provocative of ill-feeling, and especially must not establish any organisation which might harm relations between China and other powers. It is hoped that all will abide by this solemn declaration; any person infringing it will be severely dealt with.

Hebei Party branches had been authorised, and an order, the Goodwill Mandate (*Dunmu bangjiao ling*), prohibiting anti-Japanese activities in all China had been issued by the government. The CPC had presented no alternative proposals for dealing with the problem of the central armies.<sup>81</sup> He Yingqin informed Takahashi of these decisions the same day, and that evening passed the news on to Chiang Kai-shek in

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81. Telegram Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 10.6.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.411; cf Telegram Wang Jingwei to Kong Xiangxi, 'He-Mei xieding qianxi Wang Jingwei zhi Kong Xiangxi midian yi jian' *MGDA*, 1989, 2, p.27, in which Wang complains of his difficulty in persuading the National Defence Commission to accept his solution.

Chengdu.<sup>82</sup>

The following day, Takahashi returned to present He Yingqin with a declaration (*jueshu*) of the content of their talks. He refused to accept the document, sent it back to Takahashi, and notified the centre of his refusal.<sup>83</sup> The following day, He Yingqin left Beiping for Nanjing, ostensibly to report to the centre and seek further instructions; before leaving he cabled Huang Fu to urge him to return to Beiping:

"Although we have already done everything [the Japanese] have asked concerning the latest conflict in Hebei, I fear that we will have even more problems in the future. I am a soldier and do not have the ability to deal with this: bearing the brunt of diplomatic conflicts is unspeakably painful for me. I have determined to ask the centre to ask you to return to the North to take charge, and will use all my strength to support you..."<sup>84</sup>

He explained his reasons for leaving. His continued presence in Beiping would serve as an incitement for further Japanese demands - he had heard by now that a demand for the withdrawal of Song Zheyuan's 29th Army from Chaha'er was imminent - not only was he not capable of dealing with these demands, but if he remained in Beiping, the centre would be hampered in its response to the North China question. He had therefore delegated responsibility for the affairs of the BMC to his secretary, Bao Wen Yue, and the standing committee, and for the maintenance of order in Beiping-Tianjin to Wang Shuchang, garrison commander of Beiping-Tianjin, Shang Zhen, chief of police, and Shao Wenkai, commander of military police and the Mayors of the two cities.<sup>85</sup>

With the departure of He Yingqin, there was no senior political figure in North China whom the centre could trust with the security of the region; this was all the more worrying in the light of a secret Japanese document which gave *de facto* independence of China north of the Yellow River as the minimum acceptable result of the present

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82. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 10.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.682; see also HYQSJ, pp.411-2.

83. Chinese version of Takahashi memorandum, HYQSJ, pp.412-3; telegrams 11.6.1935: He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, HYQSJ, p.414, ZYSL1, p.682-3, HYBNP, p.880; Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, Chiang Kai-shek; Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, HYQSJ, p.414; He Yingqin to Huang Fu (two telegrams), HYBNP, 879.

84. Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu, 10.6.1935; HYBNP, p.879.

85. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei, 12.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.684.

efforts.<sup>86</sup> Chiang Kai-shek cabled He Yingqin to urge him to conclude the appointment of a permanent successor to Yu Xuezhong - Yu had been temporarily replaced by Zhang Houwan, but this was only intended as a transitional measure.<sup>87</sup> In He's absence, pressure from the Japanese military attaché, Takahashi, continued, as he pressed Bao Wenyue to conclude a written agreement on the basis of the declaration (*jueshu*), which had now become a more formal memorandum (*beiwanglu*);<sup>88</sup> the members of the BMC sent a telegram demanding that He Yingqin return to North China; he declined.<sup>89</sup>

On the appointment of a replacement for Yu Xuezhong, He Yingqin had earlier advised Chiang that a northerner should be selected, pointing out that the appointment of a southerner might provoke resentment; this could easily be exploited by the Japanese.<sup>90</sup> When Chiang suggested that He himself assume the post temporarily, He had declined.<sup>91</sup> There was no obvious candidate for a permanent appointment, and on June 17th, Chiang cabled Wang Jingwei, saying that only He Yingqin could fill the post; to He, he sent a telegram urging him to return to the North, saying:

"... circumstances in North China are truly the most odious of circumstances, but now the life or death, survival or destruction of the nation hang in the balance; I do not want to force you again to take responsibility for this difficult situation, but if you do not go back to the North, then in the future North China will become daily more disordered and it will be even harder for us to reestablish control..."<sup>92</sup>

Chiang asked He to go first to Baoding, and gradually to transfer the BMC there, and promised appoint someone to relieve him after three months when the worst of the crisis had passed.<sup>93</sup> This idea was soon dropped. The new appointments were finally

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86. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 15.6.1935; *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian - dui Ri kang zhan shiqi: VI Kuilei zuzhi* (2) Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang dangshi weiyuanhui, 1983, (hereafter ZYSL6), pp.74-5.

87. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 14.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.685, the same, dated 15.6.1935; HYQSJ, p.416.

88. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 15.6.1935; ZYSL1, p. 686.

89. HYBNP, p.882.

90. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 2.6.1935; HYQSJ, p.400.

91. Telegrams Wang Jingwei to He Yingqin, 2.6.1935, HYQSJ, p.400; He Yingqin to Wang Jingwei, 2.6.1935; HYQSJ, pp.400-1.

92. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 17.6.1935; ZYSL1 p.687.

93. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 17.6.1935; ZYSL1 p.687.

decided on June 24th: Shang Zhen, former chief of police in Tianjin, was to be governor of Hebei, Cheng Ke - on the recommendation of Shang Zhen - was appointed Mayor of Tianjin, and Wang Kemin was appointed acting Chairman of the PAC.<sup>94</sup>

By now, Chiang Kai-shek was anxious that He Yingqin's prolonged stay in Nanjing might arouse the suspicions of the Japanese: he warned

"... the Japanese may see this as the final decision of our military officials; they will not only pay the closest attention to it but will also use all... possible methods to create a [threatening] atmosphere. I hope your discussions will be finished within a month. [*i.e.* by early July]"<sup>95</sup>

The approach to Japan adopted when Chiang had last been in Nanjing was now, he admitted, useless in the present circumstances. Chiang asked He to reach a decision on the future approach to Japan, resume talks with the Japanese and send someone to report to him personally in Sichuan once the talks were concluded, whether that conclusion was for further compromise or for a decisive break with Japan.<sup>96</sup>

Pressure on the North continued: on June 28th, an armed group, the North China Righteous Autonomous Army (*Huabei zhengyi zizhi jun*) led by Bai Jianwu and supported by the Japanese, advanced on Beiping from Fengtai.<sup>97</sup> Although Bai was driven back from the city, for He Yingqin the attack emphasized the weakness of Beiping's defences, and the possible consequences of non-compliance with Japanese demands. The Japanese authorities in Nanjing and Shanghai, outraged at an article published in the periodical *New Life Weekly* (*Xinsheng Zhoukan*) deemed insulting to the Japanese Emperor, were also taking a harder line on anti-Japanese expressions.<sup>98</sup> In early July, He again informed Chiang Kai-shek that Japan was again demanding a written response from He to the demands concerning Hebei; after discussions with Wang Jingwei, He had decided to reply in a standard, non-official letter to Umezu Yoshijirō, commander of the NCGA that he acknowledged the matters proposed by

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94. Telegram Wang Jingwei to Chiang Kai-shek, 24.6.1935; ZYSL1, pp.689-90.

95. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 26.6.1935; ZYSL1, pp.690-1.

96. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 26.6.1935; ZYSL1, pp.690-1.

97. *HYBNP*, p.884.

98. The article, 'Idle talk on Emperors' ('Xianhua huangdi') was published under a pseudonym; as the author could not be identified, the editor of *New Life Weekly*, Du Zhongyuan was tried and imprisoned for eighteen months for 'insulting the head of a friendly state'. Ting, (1974), pp.105-8.

Sakai on June 9th, and undertook voluntarily (*zizhu*) to implement them. The text had been sent to the BMC that day to be passed on to Umezu via the military attaché, Takahashi.<sup>99</sup> He Yingqin's telegram was dated July 6th; Chiang's reply, marked '*Urgent*', telling He that his letter to Umezu was wrongly worded and must be corrected if it had not been sent was not sent until July 8th,<sup>100</sup> by which time He had already received confirmation from Beiping that the letter had been delivered to Umezu by Takahashi.<sup>101</sup>

Despite He's declaration that this could be considered the end of the Hebei incident, the underlying problems of North China were not resolved. In late June, Chiang had lamented:

"...Yu Xuezhong has been driven from Hebei, Song Zheyuan from Chaha'er; the Party branches have been dissolved and our armies moved south: North China is destroyed. There is no longer any need to be accommodating towards Japan; we need only wait for the emergence of the puppet state of North China and their tricks will all have been played. This is really only a question of time: whether we are yielding or not really does not matter... Now we cannot hold Hebei-Chaha'er, and have no hope of satisfying the general interest so there is no point in compromising; I feel there is now no point in vacillating or looking back..."<sup>102</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek instructed the governor of Henan, Liu Zhi, to begin the construction of defences on the south bank of the Yellow River, to be completed by the following spring.<sup>103</sup> Chiang saw the difficulties as a natural consequence of China's weakness:

"...Because the strength of the nation is incomplete, we had no choice but to withdraw our troops and infringe our sovereignty, lose territory and suffer insults; in time of revolution this does not matter, and all-under-heaven and later generations will forgive us. All we seek is to preserve the status of an independent nation, and if only we do not leave a trace of ink in the hands of the enemy, even if the nation is destroyed and the race extinguished we may die with a clear conscience..."<sup>104</sup>

Within days of Chiang writing this, the final defence that the government had rejected written agreement of the Japanese demands crumbled as first Qin Dechun and then He

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99. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.7.1935; ZYSL1, p.692.

100. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 8.7.1935; ZYSL1, pp.692-3.

101. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 9.7.1935; ZYSL1, p.693.

102. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 21.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.688-9.

103. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Liu Zhi, 27.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.691.

104. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 21.6.1935; ZYSL1, p.688-9.



Yingqin gave in to the continuing pressure for written acknowledgement of the demands. The deliberately unofficial form of the Chinese responses, and the duress under which they were granted render the description 'agreement' - as in 'He-Umezu agreement' (*He-Mei xieding*) or 'Qin-Doihara agreement' (*Qin-Tu xieding*) - misleading in its implication of negotiation and consent. The Japanese insistence that the 'agreements' be even partly formalised seems to be intended as a conscious attack on the Nanjing government's domestic standing. Regardless of the legitimacy or otherwise of the 'agreements', Nanjing was powerless to prevent the enforcement of the Japanese terms.

In Nanjing, anger from within Party and government at the handling of the North China question had forced the resignation of Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei and his associates. The position of the BMC and the PAC was now seriously weakened: it was recognised that the two bodies had come to the end of their useful lives yet there were no plans for their replacement; the two key central officials in North China, Huang Fu and He Yingqin, had retreated south to the capital; neither was willing to return, and local northern political figures, unsupervised by central officials, remained under severe pressure from the Japanese military. The Bai Jianwu affair, in exposing the inadequacy of Beiping's defences, allowed the 29th Army, whose future like that of Song Zheyuan was now uncertain, to gain a foothold in the North again, when units of the army were invited by Bao Wenyue of the BMC to garrison the Beiping suburbs.<sup>105</sup> Thus by July 1935, Song had regained a role, albeit informal and precarious, in North China: if he was to retain it he had not only to secure some formal recognition from Nanjing but also avoid the further hostility of the Japanese forces in the region.

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105. *HYBNP*, p.884.

#### Chapter IV

### Relations with Tokyo Reassessed (June-December, 1935)

By the summer of 1935 it was clear that the initiatives of the first part of the year - the formal exchange of ambassadors and the unofficial missions of Wang Chonghui and Yin Tong to Tokyo - could not alone resolve the problems besetting relations between China and Japan: the exchange of ambassadors had produced no visible change in the nature or frequency of formal contacts between the two governments; and the efforts of unofficial envoys secured no visible change in the atmosphere. While the exchange of ambassadors and the despatch of missions to Tokyo might create an impression that cautious steps were being taken by the Chinese central authorities towards the development of a more amicable relationship with the Japanese central authorities, the crucial problem of relations between Japan and China - the independence of action enjoyed by the Japanese armies in North China, and the inability or unwillingness of the Japanese civil authorities to restrict that independence - was not addressed, and the only actual effect of this renewed diplomatic activity seems to have been further to irritate the Japanese military authorities.

Despite the protests of the Chinese central government to the Japanese authorities in China and Japan, the political advance of the Japanese armies in North China continued. The Japanese Ambassador, Ariyoshi Akira, was still resident in Shanghai, and visited Nanjing only infrequently, to raise matters of concern to the Japanese government; there is no record of any contact at all between the Chinese Ambassador in Japan, Jiang Zuobin, and the Japanese Foreign Ministry until late June other than Jiang's presentation of his credentials. This stagnation was damaging morale even before the North China debacle: in April Huang Fu had warned Yang Yongtai, a senior aide of Chiang Kai-shek, that disorganisation and dejection pervaded the political scene in Nanjing, and that some officials, including vice foreign minister Tang Youren, were secretly planning to resign.<sup>1</sup> Whereas in the earlier part of the year, approaches to Japan such as Wang Chonghui's visit to Tokyo seem to have been developed by discussions between Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei and Huang Fu, by late June communication seems to have been less frequent, and Chiang and Huang seem to have

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1. Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 26.4.1935; *HYBNP*, p.861.

moved to dissociate themselves from Wang Jingwei.

As it became obvious in Nanjing that the pressure from the Japanese military on the local authorities in North China could not be withstood, and that the withdrawal of formal structures of central influence - the central armies, the political education staff in provincial military and civil bodies and the Guomindang party branches - in Hebei and Chaha'er could be neither avoided nor even postponed, anger grew at the failure of the central government to develop a more effective programme for approaching the problem of relations with Japan. The despatch of goodwill missions to Japan in early 1935 came to be seen as a substitute for policy decisions rather than as a supplementary way of pursuing a policy; by June, critics of this approach included not only diehard opponents of central government Japan policy but also figures close to the Chiang-Wang-Huang coalition, which was now beginning to show signs of dissolution. Wang's resignation from his post as Foreign Minister and his later reinstatement must be seen as significant, yet there is little more than circumstantial evidence to point to the exact reasons for that resignation and its implications for relations between Wang and the rest of the Party and government.<sup>2</sup>

Another critic of Wang was Zhang Qun, then governor of Hubei province, a close associate of Chiang Kai-shek and Huang Fu. In late June, having heard that he was to be asked to go to Japan, Zhang wrote to Tang Youren, vice foreign minister for political affairs and secretary of the Central Political Committee (CPC), to refuse. His refusal was explicitly critical of the handling of Japan policy in general and the reliance on personal contacts with influential Japanese in particular.

"... I hear there is talk in Nanjing of sending me to Japan. Now in our diplomacy towards Japan, the most important thing is to decide our national policy and take responsibility for implementing it; if we only respond with [changes in] personnel... this will do nothing to help us in our present difficulties... Now the opinions of the people are divided and minor incidents constantly arise; if we think of our response only in terms of appointments and we do not consider methods, then we will continue to sacrifice people, and how will that benefit us?"<sup>3</sup>

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2. The secondary sources which cover the Wang Jingwei resignation crisis - Coble, (1992), Shimada, (1983), Cai Dejin, (1988), and Zhang Tongxin, (1988) - do so without reference to primary sources; while their accounts and analysis are considered, no satisfactory conclusions on this episode may be reached without adequate documentation.

3. Telegram Zhang Qun to Tang Youren cc Huang Fu, 18.6.1935; *HYBNP*, p.882

According to Zhang's former secretary, Feng Ruofei, in the 1930s Zhang Qun had no political aims of his own but served merely as an agent of Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>4</sup> Zhang, who was close to Chiang and Huang, was - again according to Feng - regularly included in informal discussions on Japan policy<sup>5</sup> and was to be Chiang's choice of Foreign Minister once illness finally forced Wang Jingwei to resign after the attempt on his life in November 1935. In summer 1935, the severe flooding then affecting Hubei and much of central China made it difficult for Zhang Qun to leave his provincial duties.<sup>6</sup> Had Zhang simply not wanted to go to Japan in June, he could have offered this excuse; however his refusal to go to Tokyo appears to have been not only an avoidance of personal involvement in missions to Tokyo, but an attack on the validity of the policy itself.<sup>7</sup>

By refusing to become involved in further informal overtures to Japan, Zhang Qun deprived Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei of a central tactic of current Japan policy. Had Zhang Qun been prevailed upon to go to Japan, the Foreign Ministry could have given this as further evidence of dialogue with Tokyo; with Zhang's refusal, all attention in June 1935 was drawn to the crisis in North China.

The public anger at events in North China<sup>8</sup> was apparently echoed within the Guomindang. Wang himself complained of his reception by a National Defence Commission (*Guofang huiyi*) meeting on June 10th: Commission members had objected to his proposal that the Japanese conditions concerning Hebei be accepted, and demanded that Chiang Kai-shek, now still in Sichuan, be consulted before any decision was made.<sup>9</sup> It is suggested elsewhere that a meeting of Central Political Committee

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4. Feng Ruofei, (A), 'Wo suo zhidao de Zhang Qun' *WSZLXJ*, XIV, 42, p.197.

5. Feng does not state exactly when this involvement began, saying only that Zhang fully supported a series of 'agreements selling out the nation (*mai guo xieding*)' a conventional (in the PRC) description of agreements including the Tangu (1933) and Shanghai (1932) truces, as well as the He-Umezu and Qin-Doihara 'agreements' (1935). Feng Ruofei, (A), p.203.

6. See Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 22.7.1935; *HYBNP*, p.888.

7. There is no record of further informal missions to Japan until Wang Zhengting's visit to Tokyo in November, by which time formal talks between the Chinese Embassy and the Japanese Foreign Ministry had been in process for several months. On Wang Zhengting, see below, p.114.

8. See Coble, (1991), pp.212-3.

9. Telegram Wang Jingwei to Kong Xiangxi, 10.6.1935; 'He-Mei xieding qianxi Wang Jingwei zhi KONG Xiangxi midian yi jian' *MGDA*, 1989, 2, p.27.

(CPC) on June 19th at which Tang Youren and Wang Jingwei faced the CPC to announce the dismissal of Song Zheyuan as provincial governor of Chaha'er and report on the Hebei and Chaha'er incidents was decisive in provoking Wang's resignation.<sup>10</sup> The Chaha'er incident was particularly embarrassing for Wang: whereas Chiang Kai-shek appears to have been closely involved in the earlier stages of discussions over the Hebei problem, in the Chaha'er incident, Wang and He Yingqin seem to have bypassed Chiang altogether and independently ordered that the Japanese conditions be accepted.<sup>11</sup> The dismissal of Song Zheyuan had been offered to the Japanese as a concession to forestall the formal presentation of demands; no attempt appeared to have been made to moderate Japanese demands or delay acceptance. Wang Jingwei was left with full responsibility for the debacle.

It is reported that Wang and Tang were attacked for their handling of the crisis by senior Guomindang members including Sun Ke, chairman of the Legislative Yuan, Yu Youren, chairman of the Control Yuan, and Dai Jitao, chairman of the Examination Yuan.<sup>12</sup> Supporters of Yu Youren within the Control Yuan later tried to have Wang Jingwei and other officials held responsible for the disasters in North China - including Huang Fu, Huang's aide, Yin Tong, Yuan Liang, Mayor of Beiping, Li Zeyi of the Beiping Political Affairs Commission, and senior War Zone officials Yin Rugeng and Tao Shangming - impeached for treason.<sup>13</sup>

The concentration of criticism on Wang Jingwei calls into question the nature and extent of his personal responsibility for the present crisis. There were superficial differences in approach to the North China problem between Chiang, He and Wang: Chiang appeared to favour evading or delaying any response to the demands presented by the North China Garrison Army for as long possible; Wang and - understandably - He seemed to feel that acceptance was inevitable and delay useless. If these are to be

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10. Zhang Tongxin. (1985), pp.365-6; *Waibu Zhoukan* which usually provides summaries meetings of the Executive Yuan and CPC does not mention a CPC meeting on this date. cf Cai Dejin (1988), pp.227-8, who cites Chiang's rejection of the airline treaty negotiated by Wang as the final provocation for Wang's resignation.

11. See Chapter III; Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.367.

12. Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.365.

13. Shimada, (1983), p.134; Coble, (1991), p.221 and fn.

seen as differences of style rather than substance, it should be noted that the style was the only aspect of its Japan policy which Nanjing could truly be said to control.

Protests from within the CPC are shown as being directed against Wang Jingwei and Tang Youren personally as authors of a discredited policy; Chiang Kai-shek himself apparently suffered relatively little criticism, despite assuming joint responsibility for the North China incident in his statement to the CPC, possibly in an attempt to defend Wang.<sup>14</sup> For Chiang to assume joint responsibility with Wang for the present crisis was politically inconvenient, the disagreements between them on the handling of the incident may explain why Chiang did not do more to defend Wang. That Chiang escaped unscathed suggests also that the attacks on Wang in June were not provoked by the North China affair alone but revealed long-standing dissatisfaction with Wang's performance as Foreign Minister.

Chiang's own official statement on the Hebei and Chaha'er crises to the CPC and the National Defence Commission (*guofang huiyi*) reached Nanjing on June 30th, after the attacks on Wang Jingwei had begun. The response of the central and regional authorities to the North China affair is reinterpreted to put a more favourable gloss on government reactions. Chiang's claims for a swift, coordinated and effective response to a sudden and unforeseeable crisis are exaggerated. No official statement by Wang Jingwei on the crisis is available for comparison, yet it appears that where Chiang is prepared to distort, exaggerate and misrepresent in order to present himself, his political allies and China's future in a more favourable light, Wang is not: the bleakness of Wang's vision of the future of the nation<sup>15</sup> added to the insecurity felt within the Party at China's position and left him open to charges of defeatism.

In his statement, Chiang emphasises his own close involvement with the response to the North China incidents, saying that, although isolated in Sichuan, he had been in daily contact with the relevant central and local authorities. Chiang is careful in his account of the response to the crisis not to deny the humiliations suffered, but to stresses the greater suffering averted by accepting these trials:

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14. Statement Chiang Kai-shek to CPC and National Defence Commission, 30.6.1935, *HYQSI*, pp.434-6; cf Coble (1991), p.221 Coble claims that Chiang did nothing to defend Wang; see also Shimada (1983), p.134.

15. See for example Wang Jingwei, (1935a), quoted in Chapter I.

"... in order to escape the sufferings that Japan wanted to inflict on us, we could not do otherwise than voluntarily to withdraw our armies... transfer the officials on the frontier and close down the Party branches: this is unbearable for anyone of any courage... [but] in this latest incident, [Japan] at first wanted, by presenting conditions which were simply intolerable, to provoke us to use military force against them, and then, by a military occupation, to deepen our internal difficulties and divisions; although we have lost much by this response, they did not get what they wanted..."<sup>16</sup>

Thus, it is implied, the North China affair ended not in humiliating defeat but in qualified victory: the designs of the Japanese armies were thwarted by the perspicacity of the central authorities and their courage in taking unpopular decisions. A show of resistance, Chiang argued, was not a sign of conviction but an abandonment of the greater good in a cowardly attempt to court popular favour:

"... in speaking of sacrifice, we must not forget the need to take an indirect path to victory (*weiqu qiuquan*); we must not make a show of courage and risk everything on a single venture in order to avoid suspicion or to seek temporary sympathy..."<sup>17</sup>

If the flaws visible with hindsight in Chiang's argument were evident at the time to the members of the CPC, the fact that Chiang's defence of the handling of the North China affair was presented by telegram from Chengdu made it less easy to challenge. The advantages which distance gave to Chiang Kai-shek in Chengdu were denied to Wang Jingwei in Nanjing. On June 30th, after discussions in Shanghai with Zhang Qun and other figures close to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei decided to resign as Chairman of the Executive Yuan and Foreign Minister.<sup>18</sup> He informed the central government of his decision and in early July left Shanghai for Qingdao, pleading illness; that sources in the Chinese press at the time suggested that his intention was to move from there to Dalian and place himself under Japanese protection indicates the level of distrust which he then inspired.<sup>19</sup> Kong Xiangxi was appointed acting chairman of the Executive Yuan, and Xu Mo, vice foreign minister for administrative affairs, became acting foreign minister.<sup>20</sup>

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16. *HYQSI*, p.435.

17. *HYQSI*, p.436.

18. Apart from Zhang Qun, Wang also met Huang Shaohong, Chen Yi and Xiong Shihui. *HYBNP* p.885.

19. Coble, (1991), p.224; Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.367.

20. *HYBNP*, p.889; Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.360.

On August 7th, the CPC passed a vote of no confidence in the Foreign Ministry and proposed the establishment of a Foreign Affairs Committee (*waijiao weiyuanhui*).<sup>21</sup> Wang again formally presented his resignation on August 8th, and was followed by numerous Executive Yuan officials, including, on August 12th, Gu Mengyu and Chen Gongbo, Ministers for Railways and Industry respectively and, on August 13th, Wang Shijie, Minister for Education, the chiefs of the secretariat and political affairs division of the Executive Yuan, Zhu Minyi and Peng Xuepei respectively, and Tang Youren.<sup>22</sup> The Ambassador in Japan, Jiang Zuobin, is said to have threatened also to resign if Wang Jingwei was not persuaded to resume his post, and the Japanese government warned of dire but unspecified consequences if Wang was replaced.<sup>23</sup>

This wave of resignations - the simultaneous loss of a foreign minister, a vice foreign minister and an ambassador - and the prospect of a further deterioration in relations with Japan, combined with - according to some interpretations - fear of being left with sole responsibility for the failures which had provoked the resignations and the chaos which would ensue - seem to have alarmed Chiang Kai-shek in Chengdu and persuaded him to increase his efforts to get Wang Jingwei to return. On August 14th, at Chiang's instigation, the standing committee of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) cabled Wang asking him to reconsider.<sup>24</sup> He refused.

Chiang Kai-shek returned from Chengdu to Lushan and, after talks with senior government officials including Kong Xiangxi, Jiang Zuobin and Zhang Qun, sent Zhang Qun to Qingdao to talk to Wang Jingwei.<sup>25</sup> Wang declined Chiang's invitation to join him in Lushan, but, supposedly mollified by Chiang's public support, finally agreed to a meeting in Nanjing. On August 22nd, Wang and Chiang met in Nanjing and Wang's return to his posts of chairman of the Executive Yuan and Foreign

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21. Matsumoto, (1974), *Shanghai jidai: janarisuto no kaisō* 2 Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, p.28.

22. *HYBNP*, p.892; Matsumoto, (1974), p.28.

23. Zhang Tongxin, (1988), pp.366-7.

24. Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.361; Matsumoto, (1974), p.29.

25. *HYBNP*, p.893.



Minister was announced.<sup>26</sup>

If Wang's resignation in July was forced by anger within Party and government at the failure of the central government's Japan policy to protect Chinese territory and sovereignty in the North, it is far from clear whether his reinstatement is to be seen as a sign of renewed confidence or as an admission that, despite his obvious unpopularity in some sections of the Party, there was for the present no alternative to Wang as foreign minister, and that the means and timing of his removal as well as the ensuing mass resignations among his followers were not only potentially damaging to the prestige of the government but also risked further impairing its ability to respond to the current crisis. Wang apparently secured considerable concessions in return for resuming his ministry: his conditions reportedly included an enhancement of the status of the Executive Yuan in comparison to the Legislative and Control Yuans - which had in the past acted against him by restricting financial support for his policies and by the attempt to impeach him -<sup>27</sup> and an agreement that the political and diplomatic business of the Executive Yuan need not in the future be discussed by the CPC.<sup>28</sup> However, Wang still had misgivings concerning his position: he suggested that these be resolved at the CEC plenum, now due to be held in October but later postponed until November.<sup>29</sup>

There is a distinct change in the tone of Nanjing's overtures to Japan in autumn 1935. In the aftermath of the North China crisis, the case for the adoption of a more positive and formal approach to the Japanese central government in Tokyo was clear: informal overtures to Tokyo had failed; it was rumoured that the Japanese armies in North China were far from satisfied with even the major gains of the summer; and while relations with the Japanese Ambassador in China, Ariyoshi Akira, were difficult, no attempt had yet been made to take advantage of the elevation of diplomatic representation in Tokyo. The next step forward was therefore taken not by Wang Jingwei in Nanjing, but by the ambassador in Tokyo, Jiang Zuobin, who had so far

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26. *HYBNP*, pp.893-4.

27. Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.364.

28. Zhang Tongxin, (1983), p.367.

29. *HYBNP*, p.897; Zhang Tongxin, (1988), pp.361, 367.

played no visible part in the recent overtures to the Japanese government.

These efforts of autumn 1935 to inaugurate formal talks with the Japanese Foreign Ministry survived Wang's political demise in November and were pursued with no substantive change in terms throughout 1936. Wang Jingwei does not appear to have sought a more visible personal involvement this approach. That Wang did not initiate more formal talks with Tokyo earlier in 1935, openly expressed doubts on the advisability of diplomatic initiatives unsupported by actual political or military strength,<sup>30</sup> and seems to have taken no part in the talks once they were started, might suggest that the more formal approach to the Tokyo government was imposed on the Foreign Ministry.

However, Japanese secondary sources refer to parallel discussions in Nanjing between Wang Jingwei and Tang Youren, and Ariyoshi Akira and Suma Yakichirō, the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing. It is recorded that main focus of these discussions - which soon stalled, as no agreement could be reached on basic terms - was the activities of the Japanese armies in North China and the obstacles which these activities placed in the way of amicable relations.<sup>31</sup> While these may be seen as a reaction to an immediate problem rather than an attempt to redefine the Sino-Japanese relationship, the fact that Wang's continuing involvement in Sino-Japanese affairs appears to have been simply omitted from the Chinese record at this point should be taken into account before any judgement on his apparent inactivity is made.

Jiang Zuobin, who had returned to China in late June, had discussed the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship with Chiang Kai-shek in Chengdu during the Wang resignation crisis, and with Wang Jingwei himself before returning to Japan after Wang's reinstatement. In early September, Jiang visited Foreign Minister Hirota to propose formal discussions on the improvement of relations between China and Japan. He restated the three principles proposed by Wang Chonghui in February, of equality, mutual amity and peaceful resolution of disputes, as a future basis for relations between China and Japan,<sup>32</sup> and indicated how these principles might operate in practice:

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30. See Wang Jingwei, (1935a), quoted in Chapter I.

31. Shimada, (1935), p. 134.

32. See Chapter I.

respect for independence and equality under international law, demonstrated by the revocation of all unequal treaties; mutual amity, shown by the renunciation by China and Japan of efforts disturbing the peace and unity of the other; the resolution of disputes by peaceful diplomatic means, and the revocation of agreements concluded by other means, such as the Shanghai and Tangu ceasefire agreements (1932 and 1933 respectively).<sup>33</sup> If Japan was prepared to observe these basic principles, Nanjing would end the 'anti-Japanese' movement and boycotts in China, suspend discussion of the problem of Manchuria, and begin talks on economic cooperation between China and Japan; if this was successful, then discussion of military matters could be considered.<sup>34</sup>

Thus Nanjing was offering substantial concessions, but also making considerable demands in return. However desirable it was for Tokyo to see the end of the boycotts of Japanese goods and the beginning of economic cooperation, the loss of the rights gained under the unequal treaties - which included not only the remaining Japanese concessions but also the right to station troops in China - would seriously undermine Japan's position on the Asian mainland. Even on the question of Manchuria, Nanjing's offer to *suspend* discussion of the problem gave no hint of acceptance of the *status quo* in the North-East.

Hirota undertook to report the ambassador's offer to the cabinet for detailed consideration; however he expressed certain reservations concerning China's position which, although not presented as demands for further concessions, represented a substantial erosion of the advances implied in Nanjing's terms. The nature of Hirota's objections reveals differences between the Chinese and Japanese diplomatic authorities not only over the extent to which either side could be expected to make concessions but over the terms on which any discussion on rapprochement could legitimately be initiated. According to Japan's terms of reference, China's demands were untenable.

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33. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.31-2; ZYSL3, pp.640-1. The Shanghai ceasefire agreement ended hostilities after the Japan attack on Shanghai in January 1932 and differed from the Tangu truce in that it was negotiated with League of Nations intervention. For the text of the Tangu truce, see Chapter II, p.45.

34. The nature of this military cooperation is not specified; it may be a reference to Sino-Japanese cooperation against the Communists? Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.31-2; ZYSL3, pp.640-1.

Urging the Chinese government to consider the practical problems raised by the Chinese terms, Hirota referred to economic links which, he said, must be maintained between Manchuria and North China, warning that failure to ensure this would jeopardise any future agreement.<sup>35</sup> While formally bypassing the political aspects of the Manchurian problem, this insistence on the restoration of economic relations would not only speed the consolidation of existing structures in Manchuria but also emphasize the incongruity of a continued refusal by the government in Nanjing to grant formal recognition to a state of affairs which they had tacitly admitted themselves to be powerless to change.

Hirota also questioned Nanjing's good faith in beginning formal talks with Tokyo, warning Jiang Zuobin that there was suspicion in Japan over China's contacts with other governments: rumours of plans for alliance with the USSR, and the arrival of the British mission led by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross<sup>36</sup> in Japan had, he said, again provoked fears that China was returning to a policy of playing one power off against another, 'using barbarians to control barbarians' (*yi yi zhi yi*).<sup>37</sup> This was not just a cynical ploy to ensure that China remained weak by increasing its diplomatic isolation. Japan had repeatedly shown itself to be hostile to continued presence and influence of the western powers - particularly the United States and Britain - in East Asia. While China's search for help from the League of Nations at the time of the Manchurian crisis had foundered on the unwillingness of western powers to risk a major confrontation with Japan, there was still a perceived need among western governments to keep Japan involved in the international system, especially as Tokyo moved to throw off the constraints of the naval limitations treaties. The desire in London to restrain Japan indirectly and to replace the formal constraints of the naval treaties with the less formal obligations involved in Anglo-Japanese cooperation in

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35. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.31-2; ZYSL3, pp.640-1.

36. See Chapter II; also, for material on Sino-Japanese discussions on the British loan proposals, ZYJK, pp.12-26.

37. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1935; *Zhong-Ri waijiao shiliao congbian IV: Lugouqiao shibian qian hou de Zhong-Ri waijiao guanxi* Taipei: Zhonghua Minguo waijiao wenti yanjiuhui, 1964, (hereafter ZRWJ4), pp.31-2; *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian - dui Ri kang zhan shiqi: I, 3 Zhongguo zhengfu zhi juece yu kang Ri zhunbei* Taipei: Zhongguo Guomindang dangshi weiyuanhui, 1983, (hereafter ZYSL3), pp.640-1.

support of the Chinese economy informed much of British East Asia policy, was a major reason for the despatch of the Leith-Ross mission, and continued to make Japan suspicious of China's involvement with third powers.<sup>38</sup>

In a move further isolating Nanjing, it was suggested by Hirota - and agreed - that the content of the discussion was to be kept secret.<sup>39</sup> Publication of Japan's terms - in particular any reference to recognition of Manzhouguo - would cause a public outcry in China, and might easily lead to the suspension of talks; public rejection of the terms would rally popular domestic and possibly international support behind the Nanjing government. Publication of terms which the Chinese considered excessive - for example the Twenty-One Demands (1915) - had in the past been used to undermine Japan's negotiating position. If, however, the Chinese government could at first be prevailed upon to keep the terms of discussion secret, later publication would be more likely to embarrass Nanjing than Tokyo.

Hirota's refusal of a direct response to Jiang's proposal is explained in part by the difficulties of developing a China policy acceptable to all sections of the Tokyo government. In the absence of any consensus on China policy between civil and military authorities in Tokyo and any definite approach from Nanjing, relations with China had been allowed to drift: now that Nanjing had expressed an interest in addressing the problems which remained unresolved between China and Japan, the Japanese Foreign Ministry found itself without counter-proposals to the Chinese approach. The knowledge that some of Nanjing's stipulations - in particular those concerning the unequal treaties - would be generally unacceptable also prevented the Foreign Minister from giving more than a vague reply to Jiang Zuobin.

Discussions in Tokyo on China policy had begun in June, but it was not until October 4th that the results of these discussions were formally adopted as the basis of a new China policy.<sup>40</sup> Three conditions, initially developed by the chief of the Foreign Ministry East Asia Bureau, Morishima Goro, were to form the basis for cooperation

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38. Trotter, (1975), p.137.

39. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.31-2; ZYSL3, pp.640-1.

40. Crowley, (1966), p.222, pp.230-2; Shimada, (1983), p.131. See Appendix III for text of agreement adopted by Cabinet.

between the Foreign, Navy and Army Ministries on China policy. These conditions: the suppression of anti-Japanese activities in China; the formal recognition of Manzhouguo; and joint military action against Communism, were designed to satisfy the demands of the military while allowing room for the formal discussions at central government level desired by the Japanese Foreign Ministry.<sup>41</sup> At the same meeting on October 4th, the cabinet also adopted the policy - originating in the Army Ministry, and in apparent contradiction to the desire of the Foreign Ministry for formal inter-governmental talks - of exploiting tensions between the central government and the regional authorities in North China to advance Japanese interests.<sup>42</sup> The Foreign Ministry, to the anger of the Army Ministry, did not mention this last policy to the Chinese authorities: even after Tokyo's China policy had been formally decided, the Chinese government found itself faced in negotiation with a policy containing contradictions of which it was not informed.

Hirota's formal reply to Jiang Zuobin was therefore delayed until October 7th. Jiang reported to the Chinese Foreign Ministry,

"[Hirota said that] the three major principles [we] proposed should be put into practice, but to facilitate this [we] must first agree to the following points. Firstly, China must totally abandon its policy of playing one power off against another (*yiyizhiyi*) and not in future use the influence of Europe or the United States to restrict Japan; if China persists in its overt moves for rapprochement but covert alliance with Europe and the United States to attack Japan, there can be no possibility of rapprochement. Secondly, there must be satisfactory normal relations between China, Japan and Manchuria as a basic precondition for Sino-Japanese rapprochement... Japan would believe China was sincere only if China could formally recognise Manchuria; if immediate recognition presented problems for China, then China must at least respect the existence of Manzhouguo, and a) ensure that there was no conflict between Manchuria and neighbouring regions of China, and b) ensure that there were close economic links between Manchuria and neighbouring regions of China. Thirdly, China and Japan must plan effective methods of defence against Bolshevisation (*chihua*)..."<sup>43</sup>

Jiang asked for time to seek instructions from Nanjing before replying to these points.

Hirota again asked Jiang that the content of the discussions be kept secret in order to

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41. Crowley, (1966), pp.229-30.

42. Crowley, (1966), p.231.

43. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 8.10.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.32-3; ZYSL3, pp.641-2.

facilitate the progress of the talks.<sup>44</sup> The terms presented by Hirota - later known as Hirota's Three Principles - were to come to dominate Sino-Japanese discussions until the outbreak of the War.

Jiang Zuobin's report was passed on to Chiang Kai-shek in Chengdu; Chiang commented to Wang Jingwei:

"... if they impose... the three conditions, then in form this is not too serious, but in content this involves withdrawing from the League of Nations, recognising the puppet state of Manzhouguo (*wei man*) and joining an alliance against the Soviet Union..."<sup>45</sup>

Chiang did not demand that Hirota's conditions be explicitly rejected, but recommended the most careful consideration of Japan's terms, adding:

"... we must establish counter-proposals, and no matter what we do, must ensure their full effectiveness: [Japan] must respect Chinese sovereignty and unity... If [Japan] first restores normal diplomatic relations, in particular, first ending the state of war in North China in order to establish good faith between our two nations, then it is possible to discuss anything..."<sup>46</sup>

Wang Jingwei at first - according to Huang Fu - found it impossible to formulate a response to Hirota's terms.<sup>47</sup> Eventually a reply was agreed, and the formal reaction of the Chinese government was presented in a note to Hirota on October 20th (see boxes).<sup>48</sup> After elaborating on China's basic principles, the note repeated the three points raised by Foreign Minister Hirota at his meeting with Jiang Zuobin on October 7th and gave the response of the Chinese government to those points.

China's three major principles for the future conduct of Sino-Japanese relations were restated more explicitly than is previously recorded. The full implementation of the principles would resolve all the most serious outstanding problems between China and Japan to China's satisfaction, and provide new grounds for approaches to western powers on the revocation of the remaining unequal treaties, still a nominal aim of Nanjing's foreign policy. The return of the Japanese concessions to China, the abolition

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44. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 8.10.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.32-3; ZYSL3, pp.641-2.

45. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei, 13.10.1935; ZYSL3, pp.642-3.

46. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei, 13.10.1935; ZYSL3, pp.642-3.

47. Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 15.10.1935; HYBNP, pp.902-3.

48. Note to Japanese Foreign Ministry, 20.10.1935; ZYSL3, pp.643-5; see also telegram Jiang Zuobin to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 23.10.1935; ZRWJ4, p.33.

**China's Three Major Principles for Sino-Japanese Relations**  
**As stated in note to Japanese Foreign Ministry 20.10.1935.**  
*Translated from Zhonghua Minguo zhongyao shiliao congbian chubian, III: Waijiao fendou, pp.643-5.*

China and Japan shall each respect the absolute independence of the other under international law; Japan shall revoke all unequal treaties with China, for example those concerning concessions, leased territory, consular jurisdiction and so on; army units and gunboats of one power may not cross or be stationed in the territory or territorial waters of the other without the consent of that power. China and Japan shall observe and respect all rights and duties held by any independent nation under international law.

China and Japan shall henceforth maintain friendly relations and eschew all unfriendly actions such as attacks on unity, disturbance of the peace and discrimination against the other.

Relations between China and Japan shall henceforth be restored to normal channels (*huifu zhenggu*): all incidents and problems between China and Japan shall be resolved by peaceful diplomatic methods; any actions by or deliberate pressure from non-diplomatic organisations must cease.

of consular jurisdiction and Japan's right to station troops in Chinese territory would remove the protection for Japanese-sponsored smuggling and political activities and deprive the Japanese military of its base in China. The strict observance of rights and duties under international law, and adherence to peaceful methods for the resolution of disputes would logically entail the eventual return of Manchuria to Chinese rule. Clarification of the implications - as Nanjing saw them - of China's three principles revealed the distance between the minimum conditions acceptable to China and Japan.

Any future discussions on such terms might appear pointless while China was powerless to enforce conditions which could only embarrass or irritate the Japanese civil and military authorities. However, the presentation of the principles to the Japanese government served as formal notification of China's dissatisfaction with the state of relations between China and Japan, and emphasized China's willingness to seek to improve relations on more equitable terms. While it was arguably impossible to secure Japanese agreement to the terms without fundamental changes in the Japanese political climate, for the Nanjing government to limit China's demands to what it could reasonably expect China to gain from Japan in the present circumstances would be to surrender without even the token protest which the terms represented.

The tone of Nanjing's response to Hirota's three conditions was not conciliatory: the vague protestations of common interest in the preservation of peace in East Asia,



**Response of the Chinese government to three points raised by Hirota Kōki, 7.9.1935.**

**As stated in note to Japanese Foreign Ministry 20.10.1935.**

*Translated from Zhonghua Minguo zhongyao shiliao congbian chubian, III: Waijiao fendou, pp.643-5.*

If Japan acts fully in accordance with the three major principles proposed by China as basic preconditions for Sino-Japanese rapprochement, then China wishes to clarify the following:

On the first point raised by Foreign Minister Hirota, China has no intention of playing one power off against another (*yiyizhiyi*). Past conflicts between China and Japan have all arisen from a failure to establish friendly relations; now, in order to establish friendly relations, China [undertakes that] nothing in China's relations with other powers will have an adverse effect on China's relations with Japan, and especially that this will not result in any exclusion of or harm to Japan; Japan should adopt a similar policy concerning China in its own relations with third powers.

On the second point raised by Foreign Minister Hirota, Japan has shown understanding of China's inability to recognise Manchuria (*Manzhou*); although China cannot in future have relations at governmental level with Manchuria, [the Chinese government undertakes that it] will not use any methods other than peaceful ones to cause any disruption in the present state of that place (*gai chu*) and moreover will seek to preserve economic relations between the peoples on either side of the Wall (*guan nei wai renmin*).

On the third point raised by Foreign Minister Hirota, in recent years China has already made the greatest efforts in the defence against Bolshevism (*chihua*), and has not begrudged great sacrifices in pursuing its eradication; the Red Peril (*chihuo*) is now no longer a great threat. As for the defence of the regions on China's northern borders, if Japan can fulfil China's three major principles, China has decided to seek agreement with Japan, on the principles of non-infringement of Chinese sovereignty and independence, on effective methods of achieving this.

This is our response to the three points raised by Foreign Minister Hirota: Japan must first fulfil all the conditions raised on September 7th by Jiang Zuobin as a representative of the Chinese government and, except for the problem of Manchuria, restore the *status quo ante* [September 1931]. It is hoped, in the interests of order and tranquillity in the regions of China, and the fundamental improvement of relations between China and Japan, that Japan will dissolve everything - such as the Shanghai and Tanggu ceasefire agreements and the discussions between Chinese and Japanese military during the North China incident of June this year - which prevents the full exercise of Chinese sovereignty within Chinese territory, creates frequent disturbances which are difficult to suppress and can only harm relations between China and Japan.

the references to shared culture and history and appeals to justice and amity which were so much a feature of statements made for public consumption earlier in the year<sup>49</sup> are absent and the reply begins with an affirmation that full adherence by Japan to China's principles was a precondition for Chinese consideration of Japan's terms. It is made clear on the subject of relations with third powers that the Chinese government would make no unreciprocated concessions, and on the question of

49. See for example, Chiang's statement to reporters and Wang Jingwei's CPC speech, Chapter I; also Zhang Xueliang's account of his meeting with reporters in February 1935 in Executive Yuan Archive, II, 750.



Manchuria it is implied that while the Chinese government would not use force to retake the territory, it reserved the right to use peaceful methods to influence the region. Manchuria is referred to in the Chinese response as a geographic rather than a political entity: the division between Manchuria and neighbouring provinces such as Hebei is defined as the Great Wall, a physical rather than a political barrier, and the specific question of negotiations on economic relations between Manchuria and the neighbouring provinces is evaded. Hirota challenged Jiang on the references to Manchuria, asking if the rejection of negotiations at governmental level implied a blanket refusal to deal with Manchuria, if the future recovery of Manchuria by peaceful means was contemplated and if the population of Manchuria was regarded as 'Chinese'. Jiang's denial of the last cannot be seen as a comment on the claim of the Chinese government to be the legitimate ruler of Manchuria; he declined to give a clear answer on the other points.<sup>50</sup> Jiang and Hirota met again on October 28th, but no progress appears to have been made.<sup>51</sup> Later discussions between Japanese Foreign Ministry and Embassy personnel, when not taken up with the immediate problems of the activities of the Japanese military in North China, seem to have focused on the procedural aspects of the planned talks on Sino-Japanese relations and neither side seems to have thought it necessary or advisable to probe too deeply the discrepancies between Chinese and Japanese perceptions of the problem and proposals for its resolution.<sup>52</sup>

At the end of October, Jiang Zuobin returned to China for the sixth plenum of the fourth central committee of the Guomindang. The tasks of the plenum were to prepare for the Fifth National Congress of the Guomindang, which was to be held on November 12th-22nd, and to make arrangements for the reform of the currency. The plenum was to be the prelude to a reassertion of the political and financial control of the Party over the state: the Fifth National Congress of the Guomindang, the first since the death of Sun Yat-sen to escape any serious challenge to its legitimacy, was to be

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50. Jiang Zuobin's reports of this meeting with Hirota do not mention this exchange, which is recounted in Shimada, (1983), p.133.

51. Shimada, (1983), p.133.

52. On the talks between Ding Shaoji and Shigemitsu Mamoru, see below from p.112.

the stage from which a reunified and ideologically revitalised Party rallied the nation in support of the national construction of which the currency reform was to provide the material base.

The reform of the currency - the transfer from the silver standard to a foreign exchange standard - was to be managed with British advice and support.<sup>53</sup> Efforts to secure British help had absorbed Kong Xiangxi and Song Ziwen for much of early 1935; however, by the time the British mission, led by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, arrived in Asia, the initial divergences between Chinese and British hopes for the mission had become more marked. The British Foreign Office hoped that the despatch of an envoy to East Asia would promote an improvement in Anglo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese relations, thereby stabilising the region and allowing Britain to concentrate on developments in Europe. However, as schemes for support for the Chinese economy as a vehicle for Anglo-Japanese cooperation were discussed in London, the initiative in London passed to the Treasury. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neville Chamberlain, and the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, Sir Warren Fisher, both favoured a more active approach to East Asia policy than the Foreign Office. Once Leith-Ross, chief economic adviser to the British government, had been chosen to lead the mission, the reform of the Chinese currency, desired by Nanjing but not seen as of lasting value by the British Foreign Office, became the primary objective, tending to overwhelm all others.

It was something of a coup for China to secure the participation of Leith-Ross, but the fact that the British Treasury, and not the Foreign Office, was to handle the mission created certain problems for Nanjing. While Foreign Office information on China was filtered through British diplomats in China, Treasury information came at third hand through businessmen and also from A.F.H. Edwardes, former Acting Inspector General of Chinese Customs and now an adviser in London to the government of Manzhouguo.<sup>54</sup> British Treasury assumptions and priorities were not, it appeared, shared by the British Foreign Office, or by the Japanese or Chinese governments.

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53. On China's currency problems, see Chapter I.

54. Bennett, (1992), p.49.

The views of Edwardes appear to have been influential: the first plan for the stabilisation of the Chinese currency involved a loan not to China - as Kong Xiangxi and Song Ziwen had originally requested - but a loan of £10 million to the government of Manzhouguo in Xinjing (Changchun) secured against salt and customs revenues, which would enable Xinjing to pay compensation to Nanjing for the loss of those revenues in return for recognition of Manzhouguo; this compensation to the Chinese government was to be used to underwrite the reform of the Chinese currency. While Chamberlain approved of the proposal, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, had doubts as to its practicality.<sup>55</sup>

Once the Chinese refusal to recognise Manzhouguo and the Japanese refusal to contemplate paying for any recognition had forced Leith-Ross to abandon this bizarre scheme,<sup>56</sup> Kong and Song tried to persuade Leith-Ross that, other powers being unwilling to undertake joint support of the currency reform, Britain should unilaterally make the loan necessary to boost Chinese foreign exchange reserves.<sup>57</sup> The British Foreign Office insisted, and the Treasury agreed, that no loan should be agreed until the American and Japanese governments had been informed; the Chinese government was unwilling either further to delay the reform of the currency or to involve Japan and went ahead with the reform on November 3rd.<sup>58</sup>

All banks in China, including foreign banks, were ordered to hand over their silver to the central bank. The order was at first widely disobeyed: any immediate unifying or strengthening effect on the Chinese economy was lost as provincial Chinese banks and foreign banks in China refused to hand over their silver reserves. The Chinese government claimed the reform as a triumph, and it was gradually more widely - but not universally - accepted. British banks were reluctant to hand over their silver reserves until it was clear that the majority of Chinese banks had done so, finally relenting in January 1936;<sup>59</sup> Japanese banks in Shanghai retained their silver reserves

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55. Trotter, (1975), p.150.

56. Trotter, (1975), p.153.

57. Trotter, (1975), p.155.

58. Trotter, (1975), p.158.

59. Trotter, (1975), pp.159-60, 166.

until March 1937.<sup>60</sup> The move gravely alarmed the Japanese armies in North China: it was seen as an expression of Nanjing's continuing determination to exert financial control in the region. In the immediate aftermath of the reform, Japanese efforts to separate the northern provinces from the centre were redoubled, and the National Congress and the continuing talks in Tokyo were overshadowed by increasingly threatening developments in North China.

While the practical tasks of the plenum were to make arrangements for the Fifth National Congress and the reform of the currency, it was equally important after the trials of the summer to establish a working consensus on the future of China and the Guomindang, and to ensure that at the Fifth National Congress the Party displayed unity and dedication of purpose. Outstanding disputes, for example with the south-western leaders Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi over the validity of decisions taken at the rival Fourth National Congress in Guangzhou in 1931,<sup>61</sup> as well as the remaining questions over the position of Wang Jingwei and his supporters<sup>62</sup> had to be resolved if a convincing show of unity was to be made.

The plenum started inauspiciously. On the morning of the first day, members of the CEC were assembled for a group photograph when a man - at first thought to be a journalist - produced a gun and fired three shots at Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei. He was wrestled to the ground by Guomindang elder Zhang Ji and Zhang Xueliang, and shot twice by Wang Jingwei's bodyguards. Wang and his assailant were taken to the Nanjing Central Hospital. Wang's wounds were not life-threatening: the revolver used in the attack was, according to the police, not powerful enough to inflict fatal damage; his assailant died from loss of blood on November 2nd.<sup>63</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek, according to some accounts also an intended target, had not attended the photo session on the advice of his aides. This fortunate escape, and the divisions between Chiang and Wang, convinced some - most notably Wang's wife,

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60. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), *Wushi nian lai Zhongguo yu Riben*. vol.II (1935-1937). Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, p.221.

61. Li Zongren, (1979), p.287.

62. See p.93 above.

63. Peng Gechen, (A), 'Wang Jingwei bei ci mu ji ji' *Jiangsu wenshi ziliao* IV, p.61. According to Zhang Tongxin, (1988), p.370, Sun had taken poison before the shooting and died minutes afterwards.

Chen Bijun - that Chiang himself had orchestrated the attempt, possibly through the Blue Shirts.<sup>64</sup> Suspicion also fell on opponents of the central government such as Fujian rebels of 1933, Li Jishen and Chen Mingshu; however, the would-be assassin was soon identified as one Sun Fengming. Sun, born in Anhui, had past connections with the Fujian authorities, and was now nominally a journalist of the *Chenguang* news agency (*chenguang tongxunshu*). According to Sun in a statement made in hospital shortly before he died, the agency was established in October 1934 and functioned as a front organisation for anti-government activities.<sup>65</sup>

The Fifth National Congress of the Guomindang, which began in such inauspicious circumstances, has been described as a turning-point in pre-War politics - including Japan policy - in Nanjing.<sup>66</sup> Representatives of the major Party factions from Nanjing and the regions attended; the absence of some regional leaders, most notably the south-western leaders, Li Zongren, Bai Chongxi and Chen Jitang, can be cited as evidence of the limits of that unity and stability, yet this was the first National Congress since the death of Sun Yat-sen whose legitimacy went unchallenged. The ability of the Congress to accommodate the broader range of Guomindang membership seems to be due less to actual unity of opinion than to a willingness to tolerate greater diversity in the interests of apparent harmony.

While there is no evidence that the Congress itself produced any radical change in approach to the Japan problem, a more positive approach to Japan, encouraged by a combination of factors, was becoming visible by late 1935. The experiences of North China in May and June had shown that the Sino-Japanese conflict was not static: the Japanese armies in North China had not yet attained their goals and would not voluntarily refrain from further encroachments on Chinese sovereignty and territory until they had done so. Nanjing could not simply wait for a change in the international situation which would restrain the Japanese military, as China was constantly losing ground. Domestically, China was on the whole more united than before: the campaigns against the Communists were announced to be on the brink of success; this is revealed

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64. Shimada, (1983), pp.134-5; Bunker, (), pp.

65. Peng Gechen, (A), p.61.

66. See Yuan Wuzhen, Liang Yuelan, (1987).

with hindsight to be something of an exaggeration, yet the immediate threat to the south-eastern power-base of the Nanjing government posed by the CCP bases in Jiangxi had been removed and the effect of this on morale should not be underestimated. Nanjing's influence in the south-west, especially in Sichuan, was increasing and relations with former enemies of Nanjing such as Yan Xishan and Feng Yuxiang were significantly improved.<sup>67</sup> These perceived advances gave the Nanjing government confidence to confront the alarming deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations in the North. Popular anger at the past failures of Japan policy, said to be manifested most clearly in the attempt on Wang's life in November, was increasing and the resignation of Wang Jingwei, and the transfer of his vice foreign minister for political affairs, Tang Youren, to the Ministry of Transport after the Congress are seen as signs that Nanjing was becoming more responsive to that anger. Tang was assassinated in Shanghai on December 25th, shortly after his transfer: this, like the attempt on Wang Jingwei's life in November, is conventionally described as a protest against the Japan policy of the central government.<sup>68</sup> Thus Nanjing's position was threatened not only by Japanese encroachment but by the internal tensions caused by that encroachment: failure to confront the problem of the Japanese army in North China could mean the end of the Nanjing government.

Nanjing had reached this conclusion before the Congress. The effort to inaugurate formal talks with the Japanese Foreign Ministry, showing a greater willingness to confront the problems besetting relations with Japan, dated from September and might conceivably have been started earlier had the political crisis surrounding the resignation of Wang Jingwei not intervened. With the departure of Wang Jingwei for medical treatment in Europe, and the transfer of Tang Youren to a vice-minister's post in the Ministry of Transport, a new order within the Chinese Foreign Ministry - or at least the appearance thereof - was established, and Wang's successor, Zhang Qun, pledged himself to a new, more active Japan policy. By the time of the Congress, however, the 'new' approach to Japan was already beginning to lose momentum in the face of

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67. Feng accepted the post of vice-chairman of the Military Affairs Commission in January 1936. Sheridan, (1966), pp.274-275.

68. Yuan and Liang, (1987), p.64, Hu Shi, 'Women yaoqiu waijiao gongkai', *DLPL*, 184, 5.1.1936, pp.10-12.

Japanese unresponsiveness.

The report on foreign affairs at the Congress was delivered by Chiang Kai-shek,<sup>69</sup> and was hailed as the authoritative statement of the Party on foreign affairs. Chiang mentions Japan by name only once, in a passing allusion to Japan's stated concern for the maintenance of peace in East Asia, yet the landmarks in China's foreign relations to which he refers are the loss of Manchuria, the Shanghai incident of 1932, and the North China crisis, and much of his argument is clearly devoted to the problem of relations with Japan.<sup>70</sup> Chiang re-emphasized the primacy of Sun Yat-sen thought, reiterating his belief in the duality of nationalism, in the need to pursue domestic construction as well as independence and equality in the international sphere. However, he did not insist that domestic construction first be completed *before* problems of foreign affairs be addressed; this would appear to be a significant change in emphasis to his previously declared policy of international pacification before resistance to external threat (*rangwai bi xian annei*).<sup>71</sup>

Chiang emphasized the fluctuating nature of alliances and enmities in foreign relations

"... in relations between one nation and another there are no century-long grudges... but relations between nations are complicated and broad in scope, and not as simple as those between individuals - if one considers the problem with reference to one incident or one aspect, it might appear impossible that nations A and B can cooperate; if one considers the problem from another aspect, it might seem impossible that nations A and B can be divided...."<sup>72</sup>

To apply this argument to relations between China and Japan in the aftermath of the Manchurian incident and at a time when the Japanese military was again struggling to separate five provinces of North China from the centre seems naive. The principle of seeking cooperation where possible might be applicable to relations between China and other powers, but in the case of China and Japan, assumptions making Sino-Japanese cooperation 'impossible' pervaded every aspect of Japan's attitude to China. Denial of

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69. Full text given as 'Jiang weiyuanzhang dui di wu ci quanguo daibiao dahui yanjiang duiwai fangzhen bing ti jianyi' ZYSL3, pp.657-9.

70. ZYSL3, p.657.

71. ZYSL3, p.657. The view that internal pacification must *precede* resistance to external threat was also expressed in Wang Jingwei (1935a); see Chapter I.

72. ZYSL3, p.658.



China's sovereignty was implicit not only in Japanese military and political encroachments in North China but in the demands of the Japanese Foreign Ministry that China cease contact with Leith-Ross, renounce American and British financial support and refrain from 'playing one power off against another'.

However, Chiang insisted that the final judgement on foreign affairs remain the prerogative of those formally appointed for the task:

"... in international relations everything is relative and nothing is absolute; we must take the prosperity of the whole nation and the interests of the whole people as paramount and not be bound by transient emotions or sectional interests. *The balancing of these and decisions on what is important and what trivial is the task of politicians and members of the revolutionary party...*

.... if we look at the situation of nations in revolution in east and western Europe after World War I [we can see that] their domestic and foreign difficulties and obstacles were mostly similar to our political situation in recent decades, but because the whole nation had a shared faith, and the responsible authorities had the powers to respond, they were able to change crisis to stability..."<sup>73</sup>

Chiang appears - in retrospect - less informed in his use of foreign analogies than Wang Jingwei; yet where Chiang appears to overestimate the stability of the new European states and understate the difficulties China could expect to experience in achieving even a limited degree of stability, the comparison with the Czechoslovakia of the 1930s was arguably more flattering to his audience than Wang's comparison of China with the Turkey of 1919,<sup>74</sup> and more likely to win support for the broad powers for which he now asked. Whereas Wang appears to use examples which will excuse inaction and inspire despair, Chiang is looking for pretexts for action and for strengthening the Party and himself.

Like Wang Jingwei, Chiang did not see China's present problems as the product of mere chance:

"... laws of causality operate in this unprecedented national emergency: it did not come about by chance. It is as Mencius said, that a people must first humiliate itself before others can humiliate it, and that a nation must first attack itself before others can attack it... Sun Yat-sen constantly reminded us that if we remained resigned to our own backwardness, and did not pursue self-sufficiency and self-strengthening (*zili ziqiang*), then today's friendly ally would become tomorrow's enemy; conversely, if we can achieve self-sufficiency and self-strengthening, then

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73. ZYSL3, p.658.

74. See Chapter I.

it is not impossible that today's enemy may become tomorrow's friendly ally."<sup>75</sup>

In placing more of the blame specifically on China and less on loosely defined external circumstances, Chiang also places more of the solution to China's problems within China's control. If it seems unrealistic for Chiang to argue that the way towards China's salvation and international rehabilitation lay in self-strengthening, without apparent consideration that a major obstacle to this was the commitment of a foreign power - Japan - to keeping China weak, Chiang appears to have preferred to set unrealistic goals rather than to set none at all. He concluded:

"As long as international developments do not cut off the road of the existence of our nation and the revival of our race, we will take the interests of the whole nation and the whole race as paramount. Exercising the greatest restraint in all minor problems within the limit of the non-infringement of our sovereignty, we will work for political harmony with friendly powers; taking equality and mutual amity as our basic principle we will work towards economic cooperation with all friendly nations...

We will not lightly abandon peace until all hope for peace is lost; we will not lightly talk of sacrifice until that final point at which sacrifice becomes inevitable... but there is a limit to peace and to the resolution for sacrifice: embracing the final resolution for sacrifice, we will continue to make the greatest efforts for peace."<sup>76</sup>

Chiang's proposal that the government be given full discretionary powers for dealing with matters of foreign relations within the terms which he outlined, which echoed Wang Jingwei's reported demand that bodies such as the CPC and other Yuans no longer be allowed to interfere in the affairs of the Executive Yuan, was unanimously accepted.

Also in November 1935, an article entitled 'How to improve Sino-Japanese Relations' was published in Chiang's name in journals in China and Japan which more specifically addressed the problem of relations between China and Japan.<sup>77</sup>

The article is close in tone and argument to the diplomatic note presented to the Japanese Foreign Minister in October, and in marked contrast to official and semi-official pronouncements from earlier in the year: little space is devoted to protesting

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75. ZYSL3, p.658.

76. ZYSL3, p.658.

77. 'Ruhe gaishan Zhong-Ri guanxi', November 1935, *XZTJG*. According to Li Yunhan, the article first came out in September 1935, and was published in a Japanese journal. Li, (1977), 'The Origins of the War: Background of the Lugouqiao Incident, July 7, 1937.' in Paul Sih, (ed.), (1977), *Nationalist China at War, 1937-1945*. Hicksville: Exposition Press, p.15.

China's sincerity in seeking more amicable relations with Japan. In the article, Chiang is visibly concerned with refuting Japanese misconceptions of China's domestic situation and international position, and with reasserting China's diplomatic autonomy:

"There are those who fear that the military, political and economic influence of the United States and Britain in China is still increasing; in fact the effect of their special privileges is already gradually being reduced. If China, in its present economic difficulties, wishes for the support of and cooperation with the United States and Britain, this does not necessarily exclude the possibility of cooperation with Japan; at the same time, cooperation with Japan does not render cooperation with the United States and Britain impossible."<sup>78</sup>

Chiang made it clear that in the exercise of this autonomy, China's interests were to be seen as paramount, and emphasized that the aim of China's programme of construction was to fit the nation for fully equal and independent status, implicitly rejecting the subordinate rôle envisaged by Japan for China and Manzhouguo in a new East Asian alliance.

"Domestically we need peace and unity and we aspire to equal strength with the strongest nations in the world; therefore we nurture the strength of the nation and reinforce our national defences and develop our culture... China is a fully autonomous (*zizhu*) independent state; we cannot abandon our territory or the basic principles of our administration..."<sup>79</sup>

The continued emphasis on unity - when the official definition of a united China included the territory of Manchuria - was not likely to pacify Japan, nor were the references to the strengthening of China and the development of national defence when Japan appeared to see no reason for China to strengthen itself other than to attack Japan politically or militarily, and when - as in the case of Eastern Chaha'er - Japan explicitly equated national defences with preparation for aggressive action.<sup>80</sup>

Chiang rejected the perception of the Chinese government as weak and China itself as necessarily disunited, citing the suppression of the Fujian rebels and the CCP as evidence of Nanjing's determination and ability to exert control over the whole of the territory of the former empire, and stated categorically "it cannot be said that China has no capacity for unity."<sup>81</sup> He was careful to emphasize, as he did in all public

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78. *XZTJG*, XIII, pp.527-8.

79. *XZTJG*, XIII, pp.528.

80. See Appendix II: 'Chinese and Japanese Versions of the Datan Agreement'

81. *XZTJG*, XIII, p.528.

statements, that Sino-Japanese friendship was to be seen as an attainable goal:

"If China and Japan both, with sincerity, by peaceful methods and regular channels wish to resolve all conflicts, then if they must drive out mutual suspicion and wipe out harmful speech and actions it is not difficult to hope for the realisation of Sino-Japanese cooperation...."<sup>82</sup>

However, Chiang pointed out that China had only limited ability to influence the Sino-Japanese relationship, and was implicitly critical of the Japanese response to China's overtures:

"It is not impossible at times to make certain compromises with or concessions to Japan, but in fact however much China hopes to improve relations with Japan, and no matter what sincerity and tolerance China shows to the opinions of Japanese politicians in order to pursue the policy of Sino-Japanese friendship, it should not be forgotten that there is after all a definite limit to China's forbearance..."<sup>83</sup>

He eschewed conventional references to China and Japan's shared history and culture, concentrating on the more depressing current state of relations, citing Japan's suspicion of China and "irresponsible and excessive pronouncements" as a major cause of bad relations between the governments.<sup>84</sup> Whereas in early 1935 'misunderstandings' and 'unfortunate incidents' were blamed for the problems of Sino-Japanese relations, and in Chiang's speech to the National Congress he attributed China's problems in part to China's own disorder and backwardness, here Chiang blames only Japan's suspicion and bad faith for the state of mutual hostility which then existed.

As the 'autonomy movement' fomented by the Japanese armies in North China gathered momentum, Chinese diplomatic contacts with Japan were increasingly dominated by Chinese objections to the continued intervention of the Japanese armies in China's domestic affairs and the inability or unwillingness of the authorities in Tokyo to restrain them. Whereas until recently such complaints had been seen as futile,<sup>85</sup> now repeated protests were made.

In early November, after Jiang Zuobin had returned to Nanjing for the plenum and Congress, contact with the Japanese Foreign Ministry was maintained in his absence by discussions between Ding Shaoji, counsellor (*canshi*) at the embassy in

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82. *XZTJG*, XIII, p.528.

83. *XZTJG*, XIII, p.530.

84. *XZTJG*, XIII, p.531.

85. Telegram Yang Yongtai to Jiang Zuobin, 13.10.1935; *ZYSL3*, p.643.

Japan, and Shigemitsu Mamoru, vice foreign minister. The Tokyo embassy was left without an ambassador until March 1936, when Xu Shiying presented his credentials. The inadequacy of representation in key embassies at the time of the Manchurian crisis<sup>86</sup> was mirrored by the absence of a senior official in Tokyo at the height of the North China autonomy movement. While many of the difficulties in dealing with Japan were arguably beyond China's power to change, the impression that China was incapable of defending its own interests can only have been reinforced by this omission. Ding - junior in rank to a vice-minister - made no progress in his dealings with Shigemitsu: protests at the actions of the Japanese armies in North China, and demands that China's independence and equality be respected ignored or met with irrelevant or specious counter-claims. When Ding and Shigemitsu met on November 8th, renewed tension over developments in North China and Nanjing were already visible. Ding had been charged with assuring the Japanese Foreign Ministry of China's desire to begin full and frank discussions on the principles which Jiang Zuobin had previously discussed with Hirota Kōki. Discussions on this question were diverted into arguments over other pressing grievances between the two governments: a secondary purpose of Ding's meeting with Shigemitsu was to protest at the interference of the North China Garrison Army in the affairs of Hebei, warning that failure to restrain the Japanese military in China would obstruct the general improvement of relations and cast doubt on the sincerity of the Japanese government in seeking an improvement. The Japanese government, on the other hand, was put out at China's recently announced currency reform, especially as this had been done with British support: Shigemitsu accused Nanjing of bypassing Japan and using British power to restrict Japan.<sup>87</sup>

Shigemitsu continued the questioning, begun by Hirota in October, of China's three principles as a viable basis for the improvement of Sino-Japanese relations. Apparently hoping to exploit assumed divisions within the Nanjing government on Japan policy, he referred to a report that China's three major principles as explained by Jiang Zuobin in Tokyo to Foreign Minister Hirota differed from the principles as given by sources in Nanjing: which version, he asked, was to be taken as authoritative?

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86. See account from Wei Chen, (1935), in Chapter I.

87. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry, 8.11.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.34-5.

Ding denied any actual difference, suggesting that the version given in Tokyo only appeared different as it was more detailed, and that the more detailed version should be seen as authoritative. Shigemitsu then pointed out that the principles were very similar to those proposed by the then Foreign Minister, Wang Zhengting, in an attempt to improve relations in the immediate aftermath of the September 18th Incident; if the principles had failed as a basis for friendly relations in 1931, he warned, it seemed unlikely that they would succeed in changed circumstances four years later. Ding merely repeated Jiang Zuobin's opinion that if China and Japan were sincere in wanting to improve relations and willing to begin frank talks on the matter, it should not be difficult.<sup>88</sup> Wang Zhengting in fact flew to Tokyo at the end of November for informal talks - presumably on the three principles - with the Japanese authorities but there is no detailed record of his activities in Japan.<sup>89</sup>

By the time Ding and Shigemitsu next met on November 18th, the Japanese stance had hardened again. The Japanese Foreign Ministry no longer offered even qualified consideration of China's principles for the improvement of relations: the three conditions stated by Foreign Minister Hirota<sup>90</sup> were to be seen as an integral part of Japanese policy and were to serve as a starting point for any future discussions. While affirming Japan's willingness to begin discussions, Shigemitsu informed Ding that Japan could approve 'superficially' of China's three major principles for the improvement of relations, but that China should be aware that it would be futile to insist on, for example, the return of concessions or the withdrawal of Japanese garrisons in China as the goal of any future talks, which appears to be tantamount to saying that Japan approved of the principles as principles as long as China did not seek their implementation. Ding's proposal that procedures for the formal discussions be considered seems to be merely a device to move the discussion on to less contentious grounds in the hope of avoiding or at least postponing their suspension in circumstances which would make resumption improbable. Shigemitsu repeated Tokyo's objections to

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88. Telegram Ding Shaoji, to Foreign Ministry, 8.11.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.34-5.

89. *HYBNP*, pp.915, 918.

90. See p.98 above.

the Chinese currency reform, which he described as 'obstructive' to the talks.<sup>91</sup> The price of improved relations with Japan appeared to be the sacrifice of China's rights to manage its own diplomatic and financial affairs.

The meeting on November 20th between Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese ambassador Ariyoshi Akira was a measure of Chinese anxiety that something be done to rescue formal relations before they were irreparably harmed by events in North China and to demonstrate the concern of the centre for the North: much of the discussion was taken up with the search for a solution to the problems of North China and the rôle of the Japanese armies in the autonomy movement. The following exchange is significant: asked by Ariyoshi for his opinion of Hirota's 'three principles', Chiang said that he personally approved of them and had no counter-proposals, but that only once the problems of North China had been settled would it be possible to begin formal talks on the terms raised during discussions in Tokyo.<sup>92</sup> This represented a retreat from the terms of the diplomatic note presented to Hirota on October 20th and from Chiang's private opinion as stated to Wang Jingwei on October 13th that the principles were unacceptable.<sup>93</sup> This ready acceptance is surprising, and unhelpful in that it further undermined the Chinese negotiating position in Tokyo, already under attack from the Japanese Foreign Ministry. The apparent concession does not seem to have won any improvement in Japan's attitude to Nanjing, and suspicions of an 'anti-Japanese' policy on the part of the Guomindang influencing government policy remained.<sup>94</sup>

Chiang's 'acceptance' of Hirota's terms and the refusal of other Chinese negotiators to admit that this was more than an acceptance 'in principle' was to be the subject of much confusion and fruitless discussion in future talks. In a telegram to the

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91. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 19.11.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.35-6.

92. Record of talks, Chiang Kai-shek and Ariyoshi Akira, (also present: Zhang Qun, Tang Youren; Horiuchi, Suma, Arino), 20.11.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.471-4; ZYSL1, pp.716-8; ZYSL6, pp.82-4; the Japanese account is unambiguous: Suma informed Hirota that Chiang had stated he 'completely agreed' with the Principles. Telegram Suma Yakichirō to Hirota Kōki, 21.11.1935; *Nihon gaikō nenpyō nara ni shūyō bunsho*, Tokyo: Gaimushō, 1955, p.312.

93. See p.99 above for Chiang's immediate reaction to Hirota's terms.

94. See telegrams from Wu Tiecheng to Chiang Kai-shek, 24.12.1935, 30.12.1935, 4.1.1936; Executive Yuan Archive, II, 751.

Chinese Embassy in Tokyo, the Foreign Ministry stated that Chiang had given his approval to "the three principles discussed by Jiang Zuobin and Foreign Minister Hirota"<sup>95</sup> which is ambiguous: it could refer also to the three *Chinese* principles, whose full acceptance in Nanjing was also doubted by the Japanese authorities. It is possible that developments in North China had led Chiang to conclude that talks must be begun on any terms, and that the penalties of delay would exceed those of a preliminary agreement to consider Japan's conditions.

Nanjing evidently felt threatened by Japan at this time: a Chinese Foreign

**Thirteen Demands presented to China by Japan**

*Dated November 21, 1935, Foreign Ministry Archive.*

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1. China must end all talks with the British adviser (Leith-)Ross.
2. The five provinces of Shandong, Shanxi, Suiyuan, Chaha'er and Hebei in the North China region must be given financial independence.
3. China must leave the League of Nations.
4. China must recognise Manzhouguo.
5. China, Japan and 'Manzhouguo' must cooperate to form a Far Eastern economic bloc.
6. China must withdraw all military forces from the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Shandong.
7. China must establish organisations to facilitate the development of passenger and freight transport between Manzhouguo and the Yangtze valley; all railways in North China are to be managed by Mantetsu.
8. The Military Affairs Commission (*junshi weiyuanhui*) must abolish the Army Ministry which concentrates all military powers under the leadership of He Yingqin, but those actual powers are to be concentrated in the Executive Yuan.
9. China must end the anti-Japanese movement.
10. The Chinese government must sack Zhang Xueliang and transfer his forces out of Shaanxi and the North-West.
11. There must be frank cooperation between China and Japan on the eradication of the Communist bandits, especially in the North-West.
12. Japanese observers must henceforth be allowed to attend congresses of the Guomindang to ascertain whether China is in fact sincere.
13. China must fully renounce the support of the United States and Britain politically, economically and financially.

95. Telegram Foreign Ministry to Embassy in Tokyo, 21.11.1935; ZRWJ5, p.471; ZYSL1, pp.718-9; ZYSL6, p.84.



Ministry document dated November 21st lists thirteen demands presented by Japan to China (see box below). It appears to be a summary of outstanding demands prepared by the Ministry for internal reference: there is no mention in Chinese sources of a formal presentation of demands of this scope. Some of the conditions - such as the formal recognition of Manzhouguo, joint action against Communism in North-West China and the suppression of the anti-Japanese movement - had already been formally presented as demands in discussions between the Chinese and Japanese governments. Other matters, such as the dismissal of Zhang Xueliang, the reform of the Army Ministry and the exclusion of Chinese forces from provinces in the south-east may have been hinted at in informal conversations between Chinese and Japanese or may simply have been what the Chinese authorities saw as the logical extension of Japanese demands to date.<sup>96</sup>

That such a list appears to have been compiled might suggest that the Chinese authorities were giving their position serious consideration at this time, and that they were not entirely absorbed in the response to the immediate threat from North China. There is however no evidence of any systematic diplomatic activity on the basis of the list of demands.

There was a further meeting between Ding Shaoji and Shigemitsu Mamoru on November 25th, chiefly to pass on a protest at the actions of the North China Garrison Army. A staff officer, Nakai, of the North China Garrison Army had told Shang Zhen, provincial governor of Hebei, that the promotion of an autonomous organisation in the North was not the initiative of a minority of the Japanese army in the field but the joint proposal of the Japanese Army and Foreign Ministries.<sup>97</sup> Shigemitsu agreed to investigate the matter, but was otherwise dismissive of China's concerns, informing Ding that if China would only begin talks along the lines proposed by the Japanese government, such incidents need not occur.

Ambassador Jiang Zuobin had remained in Nanjing after the 5th National Congress and was appointed Minister of Domestic Affairs - a post left vacant by the

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96. See Appendix IV 'Probable Origins of the Thirteen Demands'

97. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 26.11.1935; *ZRWJ4*, pp.37-8; see also Chinese Foreign Ministry to Ding Shaoji, 22.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.470-1, *ZYSL6*, p.85; and Shang Zhen to He Yingqin, 21.11.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.455, *ZRWJ5*, pp.470, and *ZYSL6*, pp.84-5.

resignation of Huang Fu - in the reshuffle which followed the National Congress and the loss of Wang Jingwei. It is not clear whether this is to be taken as a comment on Jiang's past handling of the Japanese authorities. Many of the new ministers, including Jiang himself and Zhang Qun, now appointed Foreign Minister, had been educated in Japan, but the associates of Wang Jingwei most closely associated with a 'pro-Japanese' political line, either resigned or were dismissed or demoted by Chiang.

Zhang Qun's appointment as Foreign Minister was approved at the first plenum of the fifth central committee on December 6th. Zhang had maintained many Japanese contacts, and had been unofficially involved in Sino-Japanese affairs for some time, but had never before held an official foreign affairs post. In his memoirs, Zhang states that he was appointed specifically to meet the special needs of the situation, and describes his task as preventing an irrevocable rupture in relations between China and Japan in order to gain time to resolve China's internal problems and prepare for resistance. Zhang refers to a deliberate policy on the part of Wang Jingwei of avoiding direct contacts with Japan, and states that by late 1935 this had become untenable. Specific changes were therefore made to China's Japan policy: minor incidents were to be ignored, and negotiations via local authorities avoided; all problems were to be handled by formal discussions between the diplomatic authorities. A full 'normalisation' (*tiaozheng*) of Sino-Japanese relations, a systematic resolution of all outstanding problems, was to be pursued by these means.<sup>98</sup>

While Zhang presents his appointment as a break with the policies of the Wang Jingwei ministry, it cannot be seen as a clear move from 'Wang Jingwei diplomacy' to 'Zhang Qun diplomacy', especially as Zhang himself had been involved in discussions over the Sino-Japanese relationship under Wang, and the influence of Chiang Kai-shek and Huang Fu continued. Features of the approach to Japan pursued by Zhang, such as the attempts to initiate formal negotiations between the central governments, were already emerging in the last months of Wang Jingwei's tenure of the post: the collective way in which decisions were apparently reached blurs the differences between individual approaches.

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98. Zhang Qun, (1977), 'Ren waijiaobuzhang de huiyi.' *Zhuanji wenxue*, XXXI, 6, pp.50-6, December 1977; p.53.

Zhang's first major engagement was a meeting with Japanese Ambassador Ariyoshi Akira on December 20th. The record of the meeting displays all the difficulties of Sino-Japanese negotiations at the time. Zhang and Ariyoshi disagreed over the implications of Chiang Kai-shek's 'acceptance' of Hirota's terms for Sino-Japanese negotiations, and over the relative importance of matters of principle and detail in approaching negotiations; Ariyoshi insisted on the impossibility of a global solution to all the problems remaining between China and Japan; Zhang and Ariyoshi exchanged accusations of vagueness over the terms proposed by each side in Tokyo for formal discussions of improvement of relations; Ariyoshi denied any responsibility on the part of Japan for the state of North China, and demanded that the local authorities in the North be given wider powers if the situation is not to deteriorate. Finally, when his complaint about anti-Japanese feeling in the student movement in Beiping was met, not by assurances of Sino-Japanese friendship, but by a suggestion that he consider the reasons for this hostility, Ariyoshi swept out, informing the Foreign Minister that he was returning to Shanghai and that Zhang might discuss any matters arising with the consul-general, Suma Yakichirō.<sup>99</sup>

Meanwhile, talks in Tokyo continued: Ding and Shigemitsu met again in late December for further discussions on procedures.<sup>100</sup> It was agreed by December 24th that small delegations from China and Japan were to be led by diplomatic personnel, normally the Foreign Minister and Ambassador: while the Japanese government favoured restricting participation by non-diplomatic personnel, other specialists might be called on to contribute when appropriate.<sup>101</sup> Yet it was clear from Ding's report of his next meeting with Shigemitsu on December 27th that the question of the terms of the talks was no nearer to resolution:

"... Shigemitsu offered the opinion that... as for the Minister [Zhang Qun]'s hope that the unequal treaties might be revoked and that all outstanding questions... might be resolved at once when talks began, this is not likely to help the talks run

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99. Conversation, Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi Akira, 20.12.1935; Second Historical Archive of China, Nanjing, Foreign Ministry Archive, 1217; also published in 'You guan Zhang Qun chu ren Nanjing Guomin Zhengfu waijiaobuzhang qijian Zhong-Ri jiaoshe de yi zu shiliao.' *MGDA*, 1988, 2, (hereafter *YGZQ*), pp.19-21.

100. There appear to have been other meetings since November 18th, but there is no actual record of them. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry, 24.12.1935; *ZRWJ4*, p.37.

101. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry, 24.12.1935; *ZRWJ4*, p.37.

smoothly. The revocation of the treaties is an especially inappropriate subject for the early stages of the talks: the atmosphere in which the September 18th incident [leading to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria] occurred was created by this very issue; if it is raised again now, Japan might get the false impression that China did not want improved relations..."<sup>102</sup>

Shigemitsu remained pessimistic over the future of any talks, and refused to give any undertaking to restrain actions by Japanese nationals in China, commenting "... if [the Chinese government] wants the Japanese government to restrain actions taken in defence of Japan's rights and interests, it is better not to begin any talks..."<sup>103</sup>

It appeared that the relatively positive approach of the Nanjing government to the problem of relations with Japan in late 1935 had resulted not in progress or even the possibility of progress towards a more amicable and equitable relationship between China and Japan but a confirmation of the barriers to such a relationship. The approach 'achieved' nothing in these terms, yet if it is compared with the earlier approaches, in which relations were conducted at an informal level and direct government-to-government contacts were avoided, it represents some limited progress in terms of China's diplomatic behaviour. However, relations at the level of central government form only part of the picture: as the year passed, the unofficial and irregular aspects of the Sino-Japanese relationship, in particular the interactions between the Japanese armies in North China, northern regional leaders and the central authorities in Nanjing became increasingly important. The hostility of the Japanese military to central control of the North displayed in the demands of summer 1935 developed into a determination to separate five provinces of North China - Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Chaha'er and Suiyuan - from the central government financially and politically. It is with these efforts, and the strains in relations between centre and region in China that the following chapters are to be principally concerned.

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102. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry, 27.11.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.38-9.

103. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry, 27.11.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.38-9.

**Chapter V**  
**The North China Autonomy Movement (I)**  
**(August-October, 1935)**

In late 1935, the Chinese government had responded to the diplomatic stalemate with Tokyo by intensifying its efforts to promote dialogue on all matters affecting the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship and to ensure that issues of concern to China were discussed on terms acceptable to China. In contrast to this advance in the formal inter-governmental aspects of relations with Japan, the central government lost momentum in its approach to the Japan problem as it affected North China just as an unprecedented threat from the Japanese military to Nanjing's position in the region emerged.

The demands of the Japanese armies in North China had already forced the dismissals of the provincial governors of Hebei and Chaha'er, the closure of local Guomintang branches<sup>1</sup> in the two provinces, the transfer of the Hebei provincial government from Tianjin to Baoding, and the withdrawal of central army units from Hebei. Even the reluctant acceptance and, in July, the written confirmation of that acceptance of the North China Garrison Army's (NCGA) demands was not expected in the long term to resolve the problems facing North China nor to satisfy the Japanese military. The continuing uncertainty over the security of provincial officials appointed by the central government to posts in North China, the loss of leadership of the Political Affairs Commission and the Beiping Branch Military Council and the effective collapse of the post-Tanggu truce administrative order in North China left Hebei and Chaha'er vulnerable to further Japanese political initiatives. While this vulnerability was recognised by the central authorities, tensions within the Guomintang and the Executive Yuan absorbed the central government's attention and severely constrained its freedom of action. As a wave of unrest swept China in the autumn, culminating in the Japanese-sponsored North China Autonomy Movement (*Huabei zizhi yundong*) of November and December, intended to secure the separation of five provinces of North China from the control of the central government, the failure of the 'last resort' solution which the Political Affairs Commission and the Branch Military Council

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1. Some Guomintang personnel, such as those formally attached to the 29th Army, continued political work under cover until the end of the year. Xuan Jieqi, (D), p.1160.

represented found Nanjing apparently without plans to salvage the situation.

The Political Affairs Commission and the Branch Military Council appeared to serve chiefly to formalise the position of senior central military and political figures - He Yingqin and Huang Fu - in North China and to provide a vehicle for direct control by the central government over the affairs of North China. By summer 1935, He Yingqin and Huang Fu, the only senior officials with the experience necessary to supervise North China affairs had, in the process of gaining that experience, conceived such a disgust for the leadership of North China that neither was willing to return to the North to deal with the crises of the autumn. In their absence, the PAC and the BMC were leaderless, inactive and, the Japanese military was to claim, redundant.<sup>2</sup> While Nanjing's unwillingness to relax its control over the North discouraged the immediate abolition of the two councils, their continued existence and inactivity after their chairmen had left North China only emphasised the central government's inability either to revive the two institutions or to devise viable alternative structures.

The case of the PAC was seen as particularly urgent. Huang Fu had left Beiping in January and in July this departure was recognised as final. In the absence of a suitable permanent replacement for Huang, Wang Kemin<sup>3</sup> had been appointed acting chairman of the PAC. For Huang Fu the appointment underlined the dangers of allowing the PAC - a natural focus for Japanese pressure - to remain in existence without competent management:

"Appointing Wang [Kemin] as acting chairman of the PAC was a last resort; acceptable as a temporary measure but not in the long term. Wang is old and blind: not only reading and commenting on official documents, but also many other things are inconvenient for him; even when talking to guests and walking, he relies on others for support; moreover he has no training in languages and depends on interpreters when dealing with foreigners. Therefore in foreign and domestic affairs he must rely on the ears, eyes and speech of his

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2. Record of conversation Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi, 6.11.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.403-5, ZYSL6, pp.123-4.

3. Wang Kemin, (1873-1945), Born Zhejiang. Studied in Japan in the last years of the Qing dynasty. After the 1911 revolution, served as managing director of the Sino-French Industrial Bank (*Zhong-Fa shiye yinhang*), President of the Bank of China and Minister of Finance under the Beiyang government. Wang was appointed to the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council in 1935; after the outbreak of the war in 1937, served as chairman of the Executive Council (*xingzheng weiyuanhui*) of the Japanese-sponsored Provisional Government (*Linshi zhengfu*) and chairman of the *Xinminhui*. He was also twice chairman of the North China Political Council (*Huabei zhengwu weiyuanhui*). He committed suicide after being arrested by the Guomindang after the Japanese surrender. *RMDCD*, p.40.

aides. If this goes on for too long, at best he may achieve nothing and waste a lot of money; at worst he may be manipulated by other people and led into enormous abuses... Legally I have no responsibility for the PAC... but I cannot deny some slight moral responsibility; in my present position it is difficult to speak out on this, but out of respect for [you] cannot but speak my mind on the folly of prolonging this state of affairs. I hope you will investigate this and cable the government to order its abolition."<sup>4</sup>

That Nanjing should be reduced to appointing the ageing and inept Wang to such an important post suggests the extent to which Nanjing's difficulties in the North were essentially related not only to structural matters but also to personnel. Although Chiang Kai-shek was readily convinced that the dissolution of the impotent and vulnerable PAC was necessary, his desire for at least a token central government presence in the North left all responsibility for maintaining this presence with He Yingqin, who was as reluctant as Huang Fu to accept further responsibility for the affairs of North China. Differences of opinion between Chiang Kai-shek and He Yingqin, already apparent earlier in the year, hampered the development of coherent plans for the future of the North, as He Yingqin rejected further responsibility for North China but failed to produce an alternative solution convincing to Chiang.

When Chiang Kai-shek cabled He Yingqin in late July to propose that the PAC be abolished, he proposed that its duties be taken over by the BMC, and ordered He to return to his post as chairman of the BMC.<sup>5</sup> He Yingqin argued against the absorption of the PAC into the BMC on the grounds that the position of the BMC itself was far from secure. The BMC was still, he warned Chiang, so closely associated in the eyes of the Japanese with Zhang Xueliang and the old North-Eastern Army (*dongbei jun*) that it was unlikely to survive without substantial changes to its organisation and personnel.<sup>6</sup> Even had He Yingqin not yet heard that the Japanese armies had intended at the time of the Hebei crisis in June to demand the dissolution

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4. Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 22.7.1935; *HYBNP*, p.889; on relations between Huang and Wang, Xiang Xintang, (A), 'Qianding «Tanggu xieding» de qianqian houhou' *Tianjin wenshi ziliao*, 32, pp.45-58, p.55 suggests that Huang wished to undermine Wang after dispute over money; on Wang's infirmity, Liu Jialuan, (A), 'Ri kou qinlüe huabei yu Ji-Cha zhengquan de xingcheng' *WSZLXI*, XXII, 63, p.63 notes that Wang was generally known as 'Blind Wang'.

5. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 5.8.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.697-8.

6. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.8.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.698.

of the Branch Military Council,<sup>7</sup> the hostility shown to the BMC may have given him grounds to suspect this, and by early 1935 his experiences seem to have led him to conclude that the order represented by the BMC and the PAC was inadequate as a solution to the problems created by the activities of the Japanese armies in the North. Throughout the autumn and early winter He Yingqin ignored Chiang's assurances that only his immediate return to Beiping could save North China,<sup>8</sup> and remained in Nanjing until early December, by which time it was obvious that all his presence in Beiping could achieve was the formal transfer of control to his successor.

The difficulty of finding officials close to the central government who were both willing and able to undertake key posts in North China was clearly a major factor in the eventual loss of central control of the region. Huang Fu found his position as chairman of the PAC stressful, complaining in autumn 1934 that neither the Japanese in the North and nor critics of the government's North China policy in Nanjing and Shanghai appreciated or cooperated with his efforts:

"Now I feel like a tennis-ball: the Japanese say 'Mr. Huang, if you really don't have any answers, you may as well going now, rather than getting in our way here' and with one blow send me back to the south; once I get to the south, everyone I meet asks me, 'Yingbai, when are you going back North?' and they send me bouncing back to Beiping... caught between these two attitudes, what can I do? The Japanese are unyielding and strong, and their demands are insatiable; our people have short sight and high expectations, but they will not take responsibility for meeting them..."<sup>9</sup>

Between his final departure from Beiping in January 1935 and July of that year, Huang Fu made repeated attempts to resign his post. He was not allowed to do so until June, by which time his pleas to be released from his duties had become desperate. After receiving one rejection of his resignation from Wang Jingwei, he cabled Yang Yongtai, Chiang Kai-shek's aide, in Chengdu:

"Given the present situation, if you ask me to go back [to Beiping] it is not merely as if you were driving me into a pit, it is as in the time of tyrants when

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7. Record of conversation Amamiya Tatsumi with Tang Youren, 6.11.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.403-5, ZYSL6, pp.123-4. Amamiya's claim that the dissolution of the BMC was a long-standing aim of the armies in the North may of course have been a distortion intended to add weight to the demand.

8. See p.144.

9. Yun Sheng, 'Gan xing zaji' GWZB, XI, 37, 17.9.1934 (no page numbers).



a man was given a scarf and ordered to hang himself; it is outrageous... "10

Despite criticism in the Press of Nanjing's handling of North China affairs, much of which can be read as personal criticism of Huang and He, there was some apparent sympathy within the central government for their refusal to return to their posts, which Japan's actions were seen to have rendered virtually untenable. Shortly before the final escalation of the autonomy movement in November, the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing, Suma Yakichirō, complained to Tang Youren, vice-minister for foreign affairs, that the North China administration was 'too complicated', and urged him to have a senior official North to preside over its simplification. Tang cited the dissolution of the PAC as evidence of Nanjing's commitment to the streamlining of the North China administration, but noted:

"... Japan's opinions [on this matter] are too complicated and confused... so it is very difficult for China to do anything; when the centre wanted He Yingqin to go to the North in his capacity as chairman of the BMC to deal with this problem and Japan disagreed, he was displeased and would not go. It is the same in my case: if the centre wanted me to go to North China I really wouldn't want to go..."11

Yet despite He and Huang's protests, they were only released from their posts with extreme reluctance, and no serious attempt was made to replace them within the existing structures. Huang Fu's successor as chairman of the PAC, Wang Kemin, was chosen as a stop-gap and was, if Huang is to be believed, barely competent to fill that role. He Yingqin was not officially replaced at all: he may now have been so closely personally identified with the BMC that he was considered irreplaceable as its chairman; it is equally possible that no-one else was willing to accept the post.

This failure to engage with the problems of the North was later seen by Huang and He's successor, Song Zheyuan, as an abdication of responsibility,<sup>12</sup> and was in marked contrast to the more positive line taken in formal diplomatic contacts with the Japanese government. The serious exploratory talks initiated by the Chinese Embassy

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10. Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 13.6.1935; *HYBNP*, p.881.

11. Record of talks, Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 3.11.1935; *Zhong-Ri waijiao shiliao congbian V: Riben zhizao wei zuzhi yu Guolian de zhicai qinlue* Taipei: Zhonghua Minguo waijiao wenti yanjiuhui, 1964, (hereafter *ZRWJ5*), pp.353-4, *ZYSL6*, pp.151-3.

12. Qi Xiemin, (A), 'Song Zheyuan yu Ji-Cha zhengquan.' *Tianjin wenshi ziliao*, 2, p.57; Li Shijun, (A), p.130.

in Tokyo in September 1935 with the Japanese diplomatic authorities on the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship were apparently undertaken not in the hope that any immediate or radical improvement in relations between Nanjing and Tokyo could thereby be achieved, but on the assumption that cautious diplomatic efforts could do no harm, and that a failure formally to state China's terms for the improvement of the relationship would leave the Chinese government exposed to accusations that it was unwilling or unable to defend its own interests.

On the specific issue of North China, Nanjing was in a far more delicate position. Discussions with the Japanese Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, while frustrating, took place in a less hostile atmosphere than confrontation with the Japanese military personnel in North China and involved a lesser risk of political humiliation or actual physical harm; in the crises of the summer the Japanese armies had already demonstrated their willingness to make radical demands in retaliation to 'hostile' or otherwise unacceptable acts by representatives of the central government, and the category of unacceptable acts was being extended. Whereas the Japanese Foreign Ministry recognised the right of the Chinese diplomats to represent China as a whole, that recognition was qualified in the case of matters affecting North China, and Tokyo insisted that Nanjing recognise that Japan had special rights and interests in the region; the Japanese armies were by now moving towards an explicit withdrawal of all recognition of Nanjing's authority in the North. Thus the probability of difficulties in the North provoking a decisive break in relations appeared to be increasing as the potential consequences for China of such a break became increasingly serious. While Jiang Zuobin and Ding Shaoji persevered in their fruitless overtures to the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, it may have been felt that the risks of using similar tactics in Beiping were too great.

The prolonged absence of senior central officials left a political vacuum in the North which the Japanese armies were quick to exploit. He Yingqin and Huang Fu had been in close contact with the centre, and were not only well-briefed in comparison to provincial officials on the principles of the centre's approach to the Japan problem but were also actively involved in decisions on the implementation of those principles. Thus while Huang and He remained in North China, the coordination of a response to

the Japanese armies between Beiping, the central authorities in Nanjing and Chiang Kai-shek's various offices in Nanchang, Wuhan and Chengdu was undoubtedly difficult in practical terms; once He and Huang had returned to Nanjing, the difficulties increased significantly. In the absence of the more senior central officials, the active involvement of the BMC and the PAC in liaison with the Japanese diminished and there was no coordination at supra-provincial level from Beiping of Chinese reactions to renewed Japanese encroachments.

The responsibility and initiative therefore passed to the provincial level, to officials such as Shang Zhen, governor of Hebei, Han Fujun, governor of Shandong and, most significantly, to Song Zheyuan, summarily dismissed in June 1935 as governor of Chaha'er. The provincial officials were more junior than Huang and He, less experienced in formal dealings with the Japanese and, as Japanese military officers tried to win over the northern provincial governors to their plans for 'autonomy' for North China, lacked the authority to intervene in the dealings of their peers with the Japanese armies. The experiences of the summer had also affected regional leaders: although He Yingqin had expressed misgivings over Japan policy in the North,<sup>13</sup> he was less likely to suffer as a result of that policy than a provincial governor such as Yu Xuezhong or Song Zheyuan. Trust in the central government was eroded by the suspicion that officials at provincial level were seen as dispensable, and might be sacrificed at the demand of the Japanese to buy time or save face.

The breakdown of the political order which had prevailed in the North since the last major Japanese advance in 1933 coincided with a new phase in Japan's North China policy. Huang Fu's fears that the PAC might be the focus for renewed Japanese demands were misplaced: the Japanese military were now determined not to subdue the representatives of central authority in the North but to undermine and ultimately exclude them. As a new emphasis in the approach of the Japanese military on wooing the regional authorities rather than bullying the representatives of the centre became visible, Nanjing's preoccupation with Party affairs and problems of domestic politics, and comparative neglect of the North did little to hinder the Japanese efforts. Huang Fu, now deeply pessimistic over the future of North China, was critical of the political

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13. See Chapters II, III.

infighting which diverted attention from the real problems of North China:

"As for the present domestic political situation, North China is only considered from the point of view of temporary and sectional interests, with everyone fighting for their own benefit; the centre is suffering from divisions and dissent within its own organisation, with everyone seeking whatever security they can find, so that already at the centre there is no leadership and in the regions there is no shame; if this is allowed to continue, the future does not bear imagining..."<sup>14</sup>

Huang may not have been suspicious of Song personally; he had in the past voiced similar suspicions concerning Yu Xuezhong,<sup>15</sup> and it is possible that a degree of superficial amity with the Japanese armies was seen as an unavoidable evil among North China officials. However, in this context, the role of Song Zheyuan, given his status and the effect that the experiences of the summer may have had on his attitudes to the Japanese and to the Nanjing government, is of central importance.

After his dismissal as governor of Chaha'er on June 19th, Song had left Zhangjiakou immediately for Tianjin. The Bai Jianwu uprising on June 28th, by exposing the vulnerability of Beiping after the withdrawal of the central army units, allowed Song and his 29th Army to gain a temporary foothold in Beiping-Tianjin.<sup>16</sup> Song's position was however far from secure, and it is at this time that he is said to have sought the security with the Japanese that he did not expect from Nanjing by becoming more closely involved with Japanese military personnel in Tianjin in order to avoid further conflicts which might lead to his expulsion from the North.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore by late August, when Song's future was formally settled with his appointment as Garrison Commander of Beiping-Tianjin, he was already by some accounts involved in potentially compromising contacts with the Japanese military in North China. Having been dismissed as governor of Chaha'er supposedly for provoking the Japanese military, he was now given a post in which the ability not to invite Japanese reprisals for real or imagined offences was of equal importance.<sup>18</sup> While

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14. Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 22.7.1935; *HYBNP*, p.888.

15. Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai, 26.4.1935; *HYBNP*, p.860.

16. See Chapter III, pp.77, 80.

17. Qi Xiemin, (A), pp.53-4; Wang Shijiu, (A), p.44.

18. Note however Doihara's objection to Song's dismissal, Chapter III.

the appointment of Song to a senior position in Hebei may - given the reasons for his dismissal - be seen as something of a risk, the appointment kept the substantial forces of the 29th Army intact and secured the defences of Beiping-Tianjin, which had been weakened by the withdrawal of the central army units and Yu Xuezhong's 51st Army in June. Transferring Song from North China would have dispersed his forces - in whose political and military education Nanjing felt it had made a significant investment since 1933 - and confronted Nanjing with the choice of leaving the frontier with Manzhouguo undefended or risking Japanese objections to any other army units transferred into the region.

The appointment of Song to a purely military post distanced him slightly from the Japanese armies and left political matters in the hands of the provincial governors, Qin Dechun and Shang Zhen, less abrasive than Song and personally on better terms with the central authorities. The apparent acceptance of his presence in Beiping-Tianjin by the Japanese armies may have reassured Nanjing that he had modified his formerly confrontational stance toward the Japanese, and there is no sign that specific rumours of the alleged attempts at accommodation had yet reached the capital.<sup>19</sup>

It appears that, as Song could not easily be replaced, Nanjing thought it prudent to try to pacify him, and reassure him that he continued to occupy a key position in North China. Qin Dechun, Song's second-in-command, recounts a meeting with Chiang Kai-shek at Lushan in the late summer of 1935<sup>20</sup> at which Chiang informed Qin that the 29th Army was to be given full responsibility for North China. Qin was to pass this order on to Song and to tell him that his chief task was to delay conflict with the Japanese armies in order to buy time for the central government's war preparations; no-one other than Song was to be told of this.<sup>21</sup> No references to this order appear in the available primary material and, from Qin's account, it appears to be more a vague

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19. Li Shijun, (A), p.124, and Wang Shijiu, (A), p.44, state that Chiang Kai-shek had received intelligence reports of Xiao Zhenying's contacts with the Japanese on Song's behalf before Xiao admitted them to him, but does not specify how long before.

20. Qin, (1967), *Qin Dechun huiyilu* Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, p.165 states that the meeting took place in July, but as Chiang did not return to Lushan until August 14th, and Qin is recorded as having left Lushan on August 24th, it seems most probable that the meeting took place immediately before Song's appointment as Garrison Commander of Beiping-Tianjin on August 28th. *HYBNP*, pp.892-4.

21. Qin Dechun, (1967), pp.165-6; Liu Ruming, (A), 'Qiqi kangzhan yu ershijiu jun' *SZYYJ*, p.1169 also mentions the order.

exhortation to responsible behaviour than anything else. Chiang did not seem to intend to entrust North China to Song at this point: he continued to urge He Yingqin to return to his post in Beiping until this was clearly impossible, and to show suspicion of Song's activities, particularly after receiving reports of his contacts, direct or otherwise, with the Japanese military. Song on the other hand, may have taken the communication more seriously; this might partly explain his resentment at He Yingqin's return to North China in December, his anger, described by Liu Jianqun, at being given responsibility for the North without the means to fulfil that responsibility, and his undertaking, without first informing the centre, of discussions with the Japanese in November.

However, in July and August, developments in the North were overshadowed by the very open divisions which had developed in the capital. The political damage done in the capital by the perceived mishandling of developments in North China left the central authorities unable to cope with the aftermath of the crisis. While Huang Fu's illness and his apparently growing distaste for political office led him to resign the post of Chairman of the PAC and refuse that of Minister of Domestic Affairs, attacks from the CPC over his handling of the North China crisis provoked a second key figure in the making of Japan policy, Wang Jingwei, to resign his post as Foreign Minister.<sup>22</sup> Vital posts were left empty and the Party divided at a time when Party unity and political initiative were desperately needed.

The realisation of Party unity was not at this point simply a matter of pacifying Wang Jingwei and his allies and other dissident factions in Nanjing: there were fears that, as in 1931, the south-western regional leaders were planning a rival Congress; and there was still no consensus on important matters such as the inauguration of constitutional government.<sup>23</sup> Nanjing needed to establish itself as the seat of the one unchallenged Guomindang, and demonstrate a determination to proceed with the political agenda bequeathed by Sun Yat-sen if it was to retain any legitimacy. The quest for unity within the Guomindang appears therefore to have distracted attention from developments in the North: the Fifth National Congress of the Guomindang, originally

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22. See Chapter IV.

23. Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 15.10.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.902-3.

scheduled for November 1933, was again postponed to allow time for rifts in the Party to be healed and, despite repeated assurances from the central authorities to officials in the North that they had not been forgotten, the situation in the north continued to deteriorate, and no fundamental solution to the growing problems of North China was even attempted until the Congress was over.

Thus the tentative first moves made towards a rationalisation of the North China administration reflected the constraints under which Nanjing was operating. It is doubtful that much could have been achieved in the face of the Japanese hostility which radical reforms in the North could have been expected to encounter. Given the political instability in the capital in the aftermath of Wang Jingwei's resignation, the central government could not risk any rash moves: the abolition of the PAC on August 29th was little more than a recognition of its ineffectiveness.<sup>24</sup>

The abolition of the PAC has been ascribed by some sources to Japanese pressure,<sup>25</sup> yet the available primary sources make no reference to Japanese demands for its dissolution in the summer of 1935. The abolition of the Council was later described by Tang Youren, vice-minister for foreign affairs, as a simplification of the North China administration,<sup>26</sup> and it was later reported that certain elements within the Japanese military saw the dissolution of the PAC as a deliberate attempt to evade further discussions in North China on issues such as air transport between North China and Manzhouguo.<sup>27</sup> While the PAC, as a symbol of Nanjing's authority in North China, was a natural object of Japanese resentment, much of the overt hostility towards structures of central authority in Hebei and Chaha'er appeared to have been directed not at the Political Affairs Commission but at the Branch Military Council. Whereas the PAC, in negotiations with the Japanese over matters including the resumption of rail, road and postal traffic between China and Manzhouguo, had proved useful to the advancement of Japanese aims, the BMC worked against Japan, cooperating with the

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24. 'Xingzhengyuan zhu Ping zhengwu zhengli weiyuanhui cunfei zhi shimo', excerpt from report of CPC to Fifth National Congress (*Zhongguo Guomindang wu quan da hui zhengzhi huiyi gongzuo baogao*); orders dated 29.8.1935 abolishing PAC in *HBZJSL*, pp.141-3.

25. Coble, (1991), p.242.

26. Record of talks Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 3.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.353-4, *ZYSL6*, pp.151-3.

27. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 7.10.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.700.

local Guomindang branches to oversee political education in the northern armies.

Underlying this hostility to the BMC were more radical plans for the future of North China: reports that the Japanese armies intended to go further and promote the formation of a separatist regime in North China had first been received from the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo in June;<sup>28</sup> by late September it seemed that the Japanese armies intended to realise these plans as soon as possible. On September 24th the new commander of the NCGA, Tada Hayao, made a statement to reporters, later published as a pamphlet, on the state of relations between China and Japan. 'Basic Concepts concerning China'<sup>29</sup> was reported in the Chinese press and a full Chinese version was published in *Guowen zhoubao*.<sup>30</sup> Tada spoke of Japan as the liberator of a China oppressed by white colonial nations, seeking only to promote the prosperity of China and lasting peace in East Asia. While he acknowledged that this image had been sullied by a few who disregarded China's independence or dignity, or advocated its annexation, his objections to this disrespect were practical rather than moral. He pointed to the state of relations between Chinese and Japanese in Manzhouguo as an example of the problems caused by the sense of superiority felt by some Japanese, commenting:

"Although, if we compare ourselves with the Chinese, it is inevitable that we should experience some sense of superiority, knowingly to give full rein to this... is no way to pacify (*suifu*) [the Chinese]..."<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, Tada's condemnation of the open expression of feelings of superiority as counter-productive did not mean that Japan's actual position of superiority was not to be maintained in relations with China. China, once liberated from western semi-colonialism, was to remain in a subordinate position to Japan. Japanese economic and technological help was intended only to allow China to assume the role of market for Japanese manufactured goods and supplier of raw materials, and North China was to

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28. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry, 18.6.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.347-8, ZYSL1, p.694, ZYSL6, p.125.

29. I have not been able to locate a Japanese version of the Tada statement; it was translated into Chinese as 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian'. The version to which reference is made here is a Chinese translation held by the Bureau of Investigation of the Ministry of Legal Affairs (*Fawubu diaocha ju*) and published in ZYSL6, pp.15-28.

30. Coble, (1991), p.245.

31. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.23.



develop economically not for its own benefit but to support the economies of Japan and Manzhouguo:

"North China must become a haven of peace... made by the Japanese for the Chinese people, and transform it into a market where Japanese and Chinese manufactured goods and other materials can circulate in freedom, stability and reciprocity. If this paradise of Sino-Japanese co-existence and co-prosperity can be realised, then it may promote and support the healthy development of Manzhouguo in the North, thus the cooperation and mutual support of Japan, Manzhouguo and China (led by Japan), may become the first step towards a guarantee of peace in East Asia..."<sup>32</sup>

None of these sentiments or aims were new, yet their publication under the name of the commander of the Japanese North China Garrison Army was as alarming to Nanjing as it was offensive. Even where Tada appeared at first sight to be echoing proposals made by Nanjing, his motive in making these proposals was radically different to that of the Chinese government. Tada criticised the Japanese practice in China of using the influence and contacts of those whom Tada described as 'professional pro-Japanese elements' (*zhiye zhi qin Ri jia*), of Japanese-educated officials, who were well-disposed toward Japan but often had little formal connection with foreign affairs:

"There is a group of people in China calling themselves pro-Japanese (*qin Ri jia*); they are people who have studied in Japan and can speak Japanese; they try to use this for their own benefit or profit. They mediate between the Chinese government and Japan; they are skilled in going along with the words of Japanese officials and claiming to mediate between the two governments in the interests of friendship and cooperation, [but] other than moderating Japan's attitude and probing the attitudes of our authorities, they have no other use..."<sup>33</sup>

Tada's objection to these 'pro-Japanese' officials was not that their role in Sino-Japanese affairs represented a departure from the standard practice of open and equitable diplomacy through formal channels but that they lacked the power to further Japan's aims and, more importantly, that they were not sufficiently 'pro-Japanese'.

"They use their expert knowledge of Japanese and Japan not *for* Japan but only for their own country; it has no benefits for Japan... There is no real difference between Chinese of the Euro-American faction (*Ou-Mei pai*) and of the pro-Japanese faction (*qin Ri pai*); in truth there is only the China faction... If we rely on these professional pro-Japanese people to further our plans for Sino-

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32. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.27.

33. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.23.

Japanese friendship and cooperation, it is the height of folly. It would be better to make direct contact with those who have real power and responsibility, and then decide what is possible and what is not... "34

Even Tada's advocacy of direct contact with those with 'real power and responsibility' held no comfort for the Chinese government, for he made it clear that he did not consider the regime led by Chiang Kai-shek competent or worthy to exercise that real power or responsibility. He was openly hostile to the Nanjing government and the Guomindang:

"They not only ignore the fact that they owe their survival to Japan, but [also] feed off their people to sate themselves; not only are they the common enemy of [Japan (*diguo*)], but it would not be an exaggeration to say that they are the enemy of humanity (*rendao*). Therefore if we are to save the Chinese people, we must dispense with these warlords... "35

The existence of Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang was, Tada argued, the chief obstacle to the pursuit of Japan's benevolent and enlightened policy towards China:<sup>36</sup> even Nanjing's acceptance of the terms presented by Japan concerning Hebei and Chaha'er and the promulgation in June of the 'Goodwill Mandate'<sup>37</sup> was an empty gesture:

"... although the Chinese government issued orders to adopt a friendly policy towards Japan, their secret work against Japan has not stopped. The Party branches and the Blue Shirts swarm everywhere, and the Branch Military Council continues its anti-Manzhouguo activities, while the Nanjing government's Industry, Rail and Finance Ministries secretly plan to obstruct Sino-Japanese cooperation... "38

He concluded his comments on Chiang, Nanjing and the Guomindang with an explicit threat:

"As for Chiang Kai-shek himself... since the Jinan incident [of 1928]<sup>39</sup> he has shown complete antipathy towards Japan... it is obvious that he cannot cooperate with Japan... In its relations with Chiang Kai-shek and his party, is [Japan] to surrender to them? or to overthrow them? There is no other way of

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34. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.23.

35. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.17.

36. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.24.

37. See Chapter III.

38. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', ZYSL6, p.25.

39. The Jinan incident, May 1928. The large-scale attack by Japanese forces, stationed in Shandong despite Chinese protests, on the Northern Expeditionary forces. SJRWL, pp.156-7.

resolving the problem... "40

It is a further example of the discrepancies between Japanese and Chinese perceptions of the state of Sino-Japanese affairs that Tada cites 'a policy of negotiation on one hand, resistance on the other concealed within a policy of rapprochement' as evidence of Chinese duplicity and anti-Japanese feeling: the slogan of negotiation on one hand, resistance on the other (*yimian jiaoshe, yimian dikang*), is more usually associated with Wang Jingwei than with Chiang Kai-shek, and with a failure either to resist or to negotiate: it is conventionally seen in the PRC as the nadir of Nanjing's pre-War diplomacy.<sup>41</sup> While allegations of covert hostility toward Japan on the part of Chiang Kai-shek had been made before, for example by NCGA staff officer Sakai Ryû in May in talks with He Yingqin,<sup>42</sup> they had been made in 'informal' conversations between Chinese and Japanese officials: Tada's open description of Chiang as a diehard enemy of Japan and his call for Chiang's deposition far exceeded any previous statements. Shortly after the first statement was released, Tada followed it with a second statement in which he advocated 'autonomy' for five provinces of North China (Shandong, Hebei, Chaha'er, Suiyuan and Shanxi), and the financial separation of those provinces from the central government.<sup>43</sup>

Neither the military nor the civil authorities in Tokyo were at first willing to comment on the Tada statements.<sup>44</sup> The Chinese Ambassador in Tokyo, Jiang Zuobin, confronted Foreign Minister Hirota over the issue but does not appear to have received any reply of substance to his protest.<sup>45</sup> Hirota was in a difficult position: by the time Jiang raised the matter on October 7th, the Japanese Cabinet had already formally adopted a new China policy which - at the insistence of the Army Ministry against the wishes of the Foreign Ministry - explicitly allowed the support of local regimes against

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40. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian', *ZYSL6*, pp.24-5.

41. Cai Dejin, (1988), pp.199-200.

42. See Chapter III.

43. *HYBNP*, p.900.

44. Shimada, (1983), p.144.

45. Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry, 8.10.1935; *ZRWJ4*, pp.32-3, *ZYSL3*, pp.641-2.

the centre.<sup>46</sup> Hirota had offended the Army Ministry by declining to inform the Chinese authorities of this,<sup>47</sup> and was presumably unwilling to risk angering the military further by openly repudiating this manifestation of the policy. If the Japanese Foreign Ministry's position was unclear to Nanjing, the military authorities' involvement was not, as He Yingqin had informed Chiang:

"The pamphlet 'Basic Concepts concerning China' issued by Tada was drafted by Tada himself; I hear that the wording of the original draft was more pacific, but that it was revised before publication by Military Headquarters in Tokyo; the original intention was to circulate [the pamphlet] only to the Japanese military for propaganda and information purposes. When Japanese papers in Tianjin published parts of the pamphlet, this was not at all what Military Headquarters had intended, but they cannot say that they were not aware of [the pamphlet's existence]... "<sup>48</sup>

It also appeared that while the Japanese diplomatic authorities did not openly support the military initiative, they shared the assumptions concerning North China on which it was based. He Yingqin reported a conversation between Tang Youren, vice foreign minister and the Japanese consul-general to Chiang:

"Suma said... that Japan is to make a statement (*you biao shi*) on North China: the provinces of China, being contiguous with Manzhouguo, occupy a special position in relations between China and Japan, and therefore cannot be subject to the same constraints as other Chinese provinces. "<sup>49</sup>

In the light of Tada's and other public statements in favour of northern autonomy, the attempts of the Japanese Foreign Ministry to distance itself from the initiative by claiming that it originated in Chinese desires for independence for the North, and was therefore entirely a Chinese domestic matter in which any Japanese interference was unnecessary and inappropriate, appeared disingenuous, especially when followed by the suggestion that intervention by the Chinese central government might result in disorders which could threaten Japanese interests and therefore justify action by the Japanese.<sup>50</sup> As the autonomy movement gathered momentum, the lines followed by Japanese military and diplomatic personnel seemed to converge, reinforcing Nanjing's suspicions

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46. See Appendix III, 'Understanding between Foreign, Army and Navy Ministries on China Policy'

47. Crowley, (1966), pp.231-2; Shimada, (1983), p.132.

48. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 4.10.1935; *HYQSI*, p.441.

49. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.442-3.

50. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 3.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.74-5.

of collusion between the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo and the armies in the North.

Nanjing received numerous reports in early October of contacts between Japanese military personnel in Hebei and Chaha'er and Chinese military and political figures to discuss matters related to the Tada statement including the question of 'autonomy' for the North.<sup>51</sup> While the earliest reports suggested that Japanese plans for the North had yet to be finalised, on October 5th, the Branch Military Council reported to He Yingqin that the broad principles for the new order in the North were to be: the expulsion of anti-Manzhouguo, anti-Japanese elements from North China; the economic independence of North China; and Sino-Japanese cooperation in the defence of North China against Bolshevism;<sup>52</sup> these were uncomfortably close to the principles proposed in Tokyo by Foreign Minister Hirota.<sup>53</sup>

The motives of the Japanese armies in launching this initiative were reported to be impatience at the difficulty of making satisfactory progress with the Chinese central authorities on matters affecting North China. He Yingqin reported a conversation with Tang Youren to Chiang:

"At first [the Japanese armies] thought that [in the aftermath of the North China incidents of summer 1935] China was so damaged that they could get everything they wanted, and that the PAC could represent the centre in all negotiations, but because of the rupture over airlinks and the lack of power and then dissolution of the PAC, they feel we are being evasive and that there is no point in discussing matters affecting North China with the centre or with the Guomindang, and therefore they initiated this movement for the independence of North China..."<sup>54</sup>

The charges levelled against the central government by the Japanese armies to justify this agitation for the independence of North China were echoed by the concerns expressed in Nanjing by Japanese diplomatic personnel. They included duplicity - the operation of a 'dual policy' toward Japan of ostensible friendship and covert

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51. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang's reply, 1.10.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.440; He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 3.10.1935; *ZYSL*6, pp.74-5; He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 4.10.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.441.

52. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 5.10.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.442.

53. See Chapter IV.

54. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 7.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.700.

preparation for hostilities<sup>55</sup> - and also the accusations that Nanjing was bleeding North China's financial reserves for its own purposes and burdening the region with unnecessary administrative expenses to support the Branch Military Council and the special municipalities of Beiping and Tianjin.<sup>56</sup> It was also alleged that Nanjing had not only lost momentum in its campaigns against the Communists in the North-West but had actually concluded an alliance with the CCP in July 1935.<sup>57</sup>

Varying accounts of Japan's intentions for the future of North China continued to arrive in Nanjing: a report from Yin Tong confirmed that the abolition of the BMC was an intended requirement of Japanese plans, and that the retention of the substantial customs revenues - ¥40,000,000 by one estimate<sup>58</sup> - collected in the North was planned both to provide a firm financial base for the new regime and financially to undermine the centre. Like He Yingqin in May and June, Yin now felt that only greater central involvement in North China could save the region:

"The scope of their plans is enormous, but they are still far from specific realisation, so we still have some room to manoeuvre. I feel that no matter what, there must be an organisation to supervise North China, and the centre must send a senior official to oversee it if we are to stabilise the region, otherwise there is no hope of saving the situation."<sup>59</sup>

However, having once escaped North China, He Yingqin showed no inclination to return. He's reply is not recorded; Huang Fu reminded Yin of the domestic and international factors acting against Nanjing and concluded, "... this is not just a question of whether [He Yingqin] will consent to this out of good will, it is a question of what is actually possible..."<sup>60</sup>

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55. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 4.10.1935; *HYQJSJ*, p.441; Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 15.10.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.703-4; record of conversation Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi, 19.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.348-9, *ZYSL6*, p.126.

56. Record of conversation Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 3.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.353-4, *ZYSL6*, pp.151-3; 'Ribei dui Hua jichu guannian', p.19.

57. Telegrams Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 10.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, p.77; Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 5.10.1935; *HYQJSJ*, p.442; record of conversation Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi, 19.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.348-9, *ZYSL6*, p.126. The talks are said to have begun in autumn 1935. Garver, (1989), 'The Origins of the Second United Front: the Comintern and the Chinese Communist Party.' *China Quarterly*, #113, pp.46-7.

58. Telegram Yin Tong to He Yingqin, 10.10.1935; *HYQJSJ*, p.444.

59. Telegram Yin Tong to He Yingqin, 10.10.1935; *HYQJSJ*, p.444.

60. Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 15.10.1935; *HYBNP*, pp.902-3.

The Japanese North China initiative of October 1935 differed from the Hebei and Chaha'er crises of the summer in that, whereas in the summer Japanese efforts were focused on the provincial authorities and the supra-provincial Branch Military Council and Political Affairs Commission, the Japanese military was now not only actively seeking support outside government bodies amongst retired politicians and warlord elements but also bypassing the BMC - and hoping to secure its abolition - and trying to win over the provincial authorities to the projected new regime.<sup>61</sup> While the abolition of the PAC does not seem to have been seen as a positive step by the Japanese armies, by early October the abolition of the BMC was expected soon to be demanded by the Japanese.<sup>62</sup>

Overtures had reportedly been made to two groups of Chinese: despite Tada's exhortation in September to deal with Chinese who had 'real power and responsibility',<sup>63</sup> approaches had been made to 'retired' political and military figures of the Beijing governments of the 1920s, as well as to the political and military figures of the existing provincial authorities. In early October Shang Zhen reported a rumour that figures such as Cao Kun, Wu Peifu and other members of the Zhili and Anhui cliques, had been approached as prospective leaders of an autonomous government of the five northern provinces;<sup>64</sup> Yuan Liang, Mayor of Beiping, passed on other rumours that the National Assembly of 1924 under the premiership of Wang Yitang and the Presidency of Cao Kun was to be restored.<sup>65</sup> None of the former Beijing politicians had significant independent military backing but the cause of autonomy was said to be supported by a selection of middle-ranking military and political figures and quasi-independent 'bandit' leaders: reports of impending disturbances in Beiping-Tianjin by armed units such as the self-styled North China Autonomous Army of National Salvation (*Huabei zizhi jiuguo jun*), led by Bai Jianwu, and the North China Protect-the-Nation Army (*Huabei huguo jun*), led by Liu Guitang and Shi Yousan,

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61. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 7.10.1935; ZYSL1, p.700; 3.10.1935; ZYSL6, pp.74-5.

62. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935, 9.10.1935; HYQSJ, pp.442-3.

63. See p.134 above.

64. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935; ZYSL6, pp.75-6.

65. Telegram Yuan Liang to Chiang Kai-shek, 10.10.1935; ZYSL6, pp.76-7.

continued to arrive in Nanjing.<sup>66</sup> These rumours persisted into November: intelligence sources reported to the BMC that the Japanese armies were promoting the restoration of the Beijing government in collusion with the Democratic League (*Minzhu tongmenghui*) an organisation associated with former Beijing politicians including Cao Kun, Wang Yitang, Cao Rulin and Shen Tongwu as well as Sun Chuanfang and Qi Xieyuan.<sup>67</sup>

The involvement of Beijing politicians gave substance to the Japanese claim that the autonomy movement was an indigenous Chinese initiative, absolving the Japanese authorities from any responsibility for restraining the movement. Yet even had they been willing to participate in the formation of a new regime, which was in doubt, they were unlikely to have been able to rally enough support among Chinese to pose a serious independent domestic threat to the Nanjing government. However, the military forces supporting the movement, while not in themselves large enough to threaten the authorities in the North, were still capable of creating disturbances on a scale which would justify Japanese military intervention in the region to protect Japanese citizens and interests.

This need to portray the autonomy movement as an expression of essentially Chinese aspirations is reflected in contemporary Japanese accounts of the movement. A work published in 1936 on North China's political affairs lists organisations 'guiding' the movement in December 1935 (*Minshū jichi undō shidō dantai*).<sup>68</sup> All members of the organisations listed are Chinese, and although many of the addresses of the organisations are in the Tianjin Japanese concession, the political background to

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66. *HYBNP*, p.901; telegram Yuan Liang to Chiang Kai-shek, 10.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.76-7. The Bai Jianwu force appears to have been taken seriously: its establishment was followed by the declaration of martial law in Tianjin. On Bai Jianwu see Chapter III; on Liu Guitang, see Chapter II. Shi Yousan (1891-1940) Born Changchun, Jilin. Began career under Cao Kun, later defecting to Feng Yuxiang; promoted to rank of commander (*junzhang*). In 1929 switched allegiance from Feng to Chiang Kai-shek; appointed commander in chief (*zongzhui*) of the 13th Route Army and member of Henan provincial government. 1930 returned to Feng Yuxiang and appointed commander in chief (*zongsiling*) of Feng's 4th Army, but returned to Chiang in October of the same year and was given back his previous post. In 1931 joined the Guizhou-Guangdong anti-Chiang coalition; after their defeat escaped to Shandong where he was sheltered by Han Fujū. After the outbreak of the war in 1937, appointed deputy commander of the Ji-Cha war zone and governor of Chaha'er. Defeated in 1940 in attack on 8th Route Army; captured by Gao Shuxun and buried alive. *RMDCD*, p.89.

67. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 9.11.1935; *HYQSI*, pp.446-7. It is unclear whether this organisation has any connection with the China Democratic League (*Zhonghua minzhu tongmenghui*) mentioned in Himeno, (1936), *Hokushi no seijō* Tōkyō: Nisshi mondai kenkyūkai, p.45; see Appendix V, 'Autonomy Organisations in North China, December 1935'

68. Himeno, (1936), pp.43-46; see Appendix V.



the movement, while referring to Japanese support for the movement and admitting the significance of that support, emphasises the domestic reasons for the movement, including opposition to the 'dictatorship' by Chiang Kai-shek and the Guomindang, and local grievances such as tax increases.<sup>69</sup>

Little biographical data is available on most of the members of pro-autonomy organisations, except for those of the Chinese Greater Asia Association (*Da Yaxiya xiehui*). The officers of the Association included co-vice presidents Gao Lingwei and Qi Xieyuan and Lu Zongyu, who were later to become members of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council; and members included Han Fujū, governor of Shandong, Song Zheyuan, Qin Dechun, Xiao Zhenying, and division commanders of the 29th Army Liu Ruming, Feng Zhi'an, Zhang Zizhong and Zhao Dengyu. The aims of the society - the promotion of amity between all Asian nations and of cultural, political, economic and social advancement in the cause of unity of all Asian nations - are vaguer than many of the other organisations listed yet still compatible with the aims of autonomy as stated for example by Tada's pamphlet in September.<sup>70</sup> There is no trace in the Chinese sources of any involvement by Song with a 'Chinese Greater Asia Association' and no suggestion that he was particularly close to the members listed other than Han Fujū and the officers of the 29th Army or that he was attracted to pan-Asian thinking in any form, and it would appear that while the survey can be taken as evidence of the Japanese desire to demonstrate broad support for autonomy for the North, it says little conclusive about Song's orientation.

It was nonetheless important that the 'official history' of the autonomy movement accommodate both groups courted by the Japanese military in their search for a figurehead for the autonomous regime. The Beijing politicians often had close personal links with Japan, had presided over a phase of Sino-Japanese relations when the balance of power was much more to the liking of the Japanese military, had powerful reasons for resenting the Nanjing government, were arguably ideologically closer to the Japanese armies than to the Guomindang, and were therefore logical targets for Japanese plans for 'autonomy' for the North. However, any regime headed

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69. Himeno, (1936), pp.46-7.

70. See p.133 above.

by former Beijing politicians firstly would be widely regarded as a retrograde step and secondly could neither win nor retain power in the face of opposition from within the region without open Japanese intervention; on the other hand, if the cooperation of the existing North China authorities could be secured, the forces of the 29th Army and Shang Zhen's 32nd Army could be enlisted in the defence of autonomy and the break with the present structures of authority would be minimal, adding further weight to the Japanese insistence that the autonomy movement was a Chinese movement.

There were reports that overtures to Yan Xishan, Han Fuju - provincial governors of Shanxi and Shandong respectively - and Song Zheyuan had also been made, and that an autonomous federal government to be established under the existing regional authorities had also been mooted.<sup>71</sup> It was noted that some of the subordinates of Song in particular seemed to welcome those overtures.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, Shang Zhen informed the central government that the south-western leaders, Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi, had sent two representatives, Chen Zhongfu and Ren Shoudao, to Tianjin to discuss the autonomy movement with Japanese and Chinese bodies.<sup>73</sup> The prospect of a North-South alliance against Nanjing was far more alarming than any initiative involving the Beijing politicians.

According to information received from a representative of Qin Dechun, now governor of Chaha'er, and passed on to Chiang by He Yingqin, the Japanese were anxious to secure the cooperation of the existing provincial authorities if possible, but were also prepared to consider coercive methods if necessary:

"[The new] organisation is to be realised by the end of November this year; it is most important to secure the economic independence of North China and its separation from the centre... I also hear that on a recent visit to Zhangjiakou, Doihara told Qin Dechun and Xiao Zhenying that if the provinces of North China could themselves find a way of separating from the centre, this was excellent, but that otherwise Japan had many [alternative] plans..."<sup>74</sup>

Doihara had proposed that an effective break from the centre was to precede the formal

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71. Telegram Yuan Liang to Chiang Kai-shek, 10.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.76-7.

72. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.75-6.

73. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 7.10.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.700; Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.75-6. Li and Bai had received Doihara Kenji when he visited China in spring 1935 (see Chapter I); Chen Zhongfu had had some contact earlier in the year with Japanese officials including the then War Minister Hayashi Senjurō; *DFZZ*, XXXII, 10, p.122.

74. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 4.10.1935; *HYQSI*, p.441.

establishment of a new independent organisation in the North; Qin Dechun and Xiao Zhenying reported that they at first resisted Doihara's plans, warning him explicitly that they could not follow the example of Pu Yi in supporting such an initiative.<sup>75</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek appeared to feel at this point that there was still a chance of salvaging the situation if Nanjing would only act quickly to reassert its authority over the North. He replied to He Yingqin:

"... I expect that at this time Japan cannot want a puppet organisation, but only wants to sever economic and financial links between North China and the centre so as to hold power of life and death over the centre... the generals in North China only want to preserve the appearance of unity with the centre; if they can retain all tax revenues, they will gladly do so. The retrievability of the situation lies in the fact that no-one, in China or abroad, wants a puppet organisation, therefore if you can suddenly fly to Beiping, it will not be difficult to thwart their vicious plans... this will not only save China but also save our generals."<sup>76</sup>

It is a measure of Chiang's anxiety that he decided to intervene personally, and route his return from Xi'an, where he was pursuing his campaigns against the Communist armies, to Nanjing via Zhengzhou, Luoyang and Taiyuan, meeting en route Yan Xishan and Song Zheyuan's secretary, Wang Shijiu, and to send his chief of staff, Xiong Bin, to Jinan for talks with Han Fujun and Shang Zhen.<sup>77</sup>

On his return to Nanjing, Chiang declared himself satisfied with Yan's attitude,<sup>78</sup> and later received an affirmation of loyalty to the centre from Song Zheyuan.<sup>79</sup> However, the problem was obviously far from being settled, and Chiang warned He Yingqin that immediate action from the centre was needed. He insisted that a response to the North China problem could not be postponed until progress had been made in the talks at central government level:

"If we insist on waiting until we have reached understanding with Japan, then we can wait until North China is lost and no understanding will be reached, especially as Japan is now using our search for an understanding as a weak

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75. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 7.10.1935; *HYQSL*, p.442.

76. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin 6.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.699.

77. Telegrams Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan, 8.10.1935; Chiang Kai-shek to Bao Wenyue, Shang Zhen, Han Fujun, 13.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, pp.701-2; Wang Shijiu, (A), p.43.

78. Telegrams Chiang Kai-shek to Shen Honglie, 14.10.1935, Chiang Kai-shek to Xiong Bin, 15.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, pp.702-3.

79. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang's reply, 19.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.705.

point to prevent us from going back to Beiping, and to do as they please in North China... if we fall in with this then... later generations will say that North China was not taken by Japan or by the northern generals, but that it was abandoned by the centre."<sup>80</sup>

Chiang urged He to leave for the North at once:

"... the security of North China, and the survival of Party and nation all depend on your going; if this does no actual good it can at least do no harm... whatever happens, we all hope you will undertake this and in will the future make no further presumptuous requests..."<sup>81</sup>

He Yingqin remained in Nanjing and doubts over the attitude and activities of Song Zheyuan were reawakened.

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80. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin 6.10.1935; ZYSL1, pp.699-700.

81. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin 6.10.1935; ZYSL1, p.700.

**Chapter VI**  
**The North China Autonomy Movement (II)**  
**(November-December, 1935)**

In late October, rumours of subversion in North China were replaced by a violent outburst in Xianghe county, 40 *li* south-east of Beiping in the War Zone. The Xianghe incident marked a new phase in the Japanese armies' management of the autonomy movement: to the overtures to North China political figures was now added the leadership of a 'popular' pro-autonomy lobby. At the same time, the hostility towards the last vestiges of the centre's authority in the North - in particular the BMC - culminated in the presentation of formal demands for its dissolution, and pressure on Song Zheyuan and the provincial governors in North China openly to dissociate themselves from the central government.

On October 21st, the Xianghe county head (*xianzhang*), Zhao Zhongpu, reported that a crowd of over 1,000 people led by Ju Shenwu of Xianghe and including Japanese special services personnel attempted to occupy the county town on the pretext of opposing tax increases. Zhao rejected the rebels' demands that he and all other county officials resign and leave the county town and made preparations for the defence of the town. The first attack on the town was driven back, but Zhao warned that further trouble seemed inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

As the Chinese authorities in the War Zone sent Zhang Qingyu, a Peace Preservation Corps (PPC) commander, to Xianghe to investigate the incident, a group of Japanese military police simultaneously arrived from Beiping. Zhang Qingyu had received a telephone call before going to Xianghe informing him that the Japanese were sending officials to investigate reports of Japanese involvement in the incident, and urging him to cooperate with them and allow them access to Xianghe town. As the Japanese investigation team entered the town, the rebels camped outside followed them. The rebel leaders, Wu Yiting, held a pro-autonomy rally in front of the county government offices. Zhang Qingyu's report to the BMC, dated October 22nd, noted the rebels' tax grievances, and also recorded that their demands, as explained to the Japanese by one representative, Cao Guiyun, now included economic cooperation with the Japanese and local autonomy. After a short time, the Japanese military police left

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1. Telegram Branch Military Council to Foreign Ministry, 28.10.1935; ZRWJ4, p.163.

Xianghe, taking with them two of the four Japanese who had accompanied the rebels, as well as Cao Guiyun and Wu Yiting. The remaining two Japanese said that they had come from Tianjin with Wu Yiting to promote economic cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

Zhao Zhongpu had by now disappeared<sup>3</sup> and the head of the public security bureau was under surveillance; by the time Zhang Qingyu reported again on October 24th, all the county officials had fled Xianghe, and Zhao had been replaced by one An Houji, chosen by the rebels,<sup>4</sup> and Liu Huidong, a counsellor of the provincial government sent to Xianghe on October 22nd to supervise county affairs, was arrested and taken at gunpoint to the public security bureau the following evening and was being held there; PPC units stationed near Xianghe were told to leave the area lest their presence lead to a diplomatic incident.<sup>5</sup>

Cheng Xigeng, the Foreign Ministry's special representative in Beiping, warned of the consequences of non-resolution of the Xianghe incident:

"The popular uprising in Xianghe actually falls within the sphere of domestic policy and has no diplomatic significance... The problems of the masses' petition and the occupation of the county town could be resolved on the spot, but given the present situation in Hebei, and the long-standing instability in many counties, if the Xianghe incident is not resolved, I fear that it may affect other counties or even that it may affect diplomacy: the situation is therefore serious..."<sup>6</sup>

Despite the acknowledged gravity of the situation in Xianghe, the authorities in Beiping were, as in the dispute over the Chaha'er-Rehe border in January,<sup>7</sup> ill-equipped to respond, as Cheng pointed out:

"... the line of troop withdrawal stipulated by the Tanggu truce passes through Xianghe, but I have no documentation to confirm whether the county town actually falls within the War Zone; I have investigated this at length and the truth of the matter is not clear."<sup>8</sup>

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2. Telegram Branch Military Council to Foreign Ministry, 28.10.1935; ZRWJ4, p.163.

3. He was sheltered by Qin Dechun, governor of Chaha'er province. Qin Jiyun, Zhao Zhongpu, (A), p.245.

4. Telegram Branch Military Council to Foreign Ministry, 28.10.1935; ZRWJ4, p.163.

5. Telegrams Branch Military Council to Foreign Ministry, 25.10.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.156-7; 28.10.1935; ZRWJ4, pp.163-4.

6. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 26.10.1935; ZRWJ5, p.158.

7. See Chapter II.

8. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 26.10.1935; ZRWJ5, p.158.

A further report from the Branch Military Council stressed the apparent involvement of Japanese in the incident and suggested a possible link between the Xianghe rebels and Bai Jianwu, who was known still to be active in Tianjin; the protests against tax increases are seen as a cover used by Japanese-controlled rebels in fomenting mass unrest.<sup>9</sup> The Japanese authorities denied any involvement in the Xianghe uprising, but clearly even the civil authorities in Tokyo intended to take the incident seriously: the Japanese Foreign Ministry announced its intention to send Morishima Goro, chief of the Ministry's Asia section, to North China to investigate the situation.<sup>10</sup>

The Japanese survey of 'pro-autonomy' groups in North China<sup>11</sup> describes Wu Yiting's organisation, the People's Salvation Society (*Guomin zijiuhui*), as dedicated to the promotion of North China autonomy, the liberation of the masses and East Asian brotherhood (*Tōa dōhōshugi* or *Dongya tongbao zhuyi*) having 500,000 members in North China alone, and 3 million in all of China through its influence in religious, cultural and intellectual organisations.<sup>12</sup> The Xianghe incident is therefore to be seen not as a relatively minor peasant uprising either fomented or hijacked by the Japanese and their Chinese supporters for their own subversive purposes, but as a manifestation of specific and clearly-articulated popular grievances and an attempt to redress those grievances by an organisation attracting national support.

The grievances mentioned by the Xianghe rebels - excessive taxation, a government insensitive to the needs of the people, and the desire for greater local control over local affairs<sup>13</sup> - were traditional causes for rural discontent, and similar in spirit to the charges brought by the Japanese against Nanjing's rule in North China as a whole, as in Tada's assertion that China was governed by 'extortion' by a coalition of warlords (*gunbatsu*), financiers (*zaibatsu*) and political factions (*tōbatsu*).<sup>14</sup> Whereas the autonomy movement has since been portrayed as a struggle between

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9. Telegram Branch Military Council to Foreign Ministry, 28.10.1935; ZRWJ4, p.164.

10. 'Xianghe shijian jingguo' GWZB, XII, 42; reprinted in HBZJSL, pp.563-6.

11. See pp.140-141 above, and Appendix V.

12. Himeno Tokuichi, (1936), pp.43-46.

13. 'Xianghe xianmin renmin zijue zijiu xuanyan', 'Xianmin zijue zijiu liyou ji banfa', 'Xianmin zizhi zijue zhuandan', 'Qingyuan heping fendou', ZRWJ4, pp.158-163.

14. 'Ribei duihua jichu guannian' ZYSL3, p.17.

abstract forces of nationalism and loyalty on one hand, and Japanese aggressive neo-imperialism on the other, the immediate appeal of the movement at the time to its supporters appears to have been the closeness of the ostensible programme of the movement to standard rural and regional concerns such as tax levels, regional economic development and the maintenance of traditional commercial and personal links between the provinces of North China and Manchuria, and distrust of a geographically and ideologically distant central government.

The popular unrest at Xianghe was followed closely by a renewal of the attack on the representatives of Nanjing's authority in the North. Despite the repeated denials of the Chinese authorities of any involvement with 'anti-Japanese' bodies and repeated undertakings to control manifestations of anti-Japanese feeling, it was impossible to guarantee that there would be no action against the Japanese or those associated with them, and the Chinese authorities were held responsible for every outbreak.

In an incident in August at Luanzhou in the War Zone, a PPC commander, Liu Zuozhou, who had close links with the Japanese, a Japanese official and Chinese PPC member were shot; Liu later died.<sup>15</sup> Both the Chinese and Japanese authorities began investigating the incident; the Japanese concluded that the shooting was the work of the Blue Shirts and that Tao Shangming, a War Zone official and member of the PAC, was closely involved.<sup>16</sup> Tao was detained by the Japanese military authorities in Beiping on August 6th and, despite formal protests from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, was released only on August 17th after talks between Wang Kemin, chairman of the PAC, and the military attaché in Beiping, Takahashi Tan.<sup>17</sup> The matter appeared to be closed, but in late August it was raised again as part of a determined attack on the Branch Military Council. On October 30th, Shang Zhen received a letter signed by Shimizu Tōzō, a counsellor of the Japanese Embassy in Shanghai, and passed on via the consul-general in Tianjin, Kawagoe Shigeru.

"Concerning the suppression of all anti-Japanese, anti-Manzhouguo

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15. Shimada, (1983), p.122; *HYBNP*, p.891; Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.8.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.698-9.

16. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.8.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.698-9. There is no recorded connection between Tao and the Blue Shirts other than this allegation.

17. *HYBNP*, pp.892-3. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.8.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.698-9.



organisations in Beiping and Tianjin including the Blue Shirts, we have noted your previous agreement to this at the time of the last North China incident. After investigations undertaken by us at the time of the Luanzhou incident and since, [it has been revealed that] despite the agreement mentioned above, anti-Japanese and anti-Manzhouguo organisations continue to exist secretly or under changed names: there is clear evidence that many continue their activities in secret. Moreover the effort you have put into their suppression is negligible and shows an obvious lack of sincerity; at times we even suspect you of supporting these organisations, which is most regrettable. On September 2nd, the consul issued a stern warning on the matter of utterly eradicating anti-Japanese elements, stating that he has seen no trace of any efforts on your part to eradicate these bodies; this is in contravention of all agreements between China and Japan affecting North China, and risks causing even greater conflict. Therefore we must repeat our demand that you take immediate and thorough steps to prohibit the existence and activities of all kinds of anti-Japanese and anti-Manzhouguo organisations within your jurisdiction."<sup>18</sup>

The same day, Shang Zhen reported, he was visited by Takahashi Tan, the military attaché and Nakai, a representative of Sakai Ryū of the NCGA. They presented him with demands similar to those contained in the letter from Shimizu on anti-Japanese and anti-Manzhouguo organisations and activities, as well as the following demands: the Mayor of Beiping, Yuan Liang, was to be dismissed for contravening the He-Umezu agreement by supporting local Guomindang branches and Blue Shirt units; the Branch Military Council and its dependent organisations were to be abolished for sponsoring secret anti-Japanese activities and leading the Luanzhou incident; the Tanggu truce agreement and the He-Umezu agreement were to be fully implemented and all anti-Japanese and anti-Manzhouguo elements were to be expelled from North China. None of these demands, Takahashi warned, were to be released to the Press. He asked Shang Zhen to pass the demands on directly to Nanjing: the Japanese authorities no longer recognised the Branch Military Council and would in future deal with Nanjing only through Shang Zhen. Nakai assured Shang that these demands did not constitute an attempt to interfere in China's domestic policies, but were merely intended to secure China's full adherence to existing agreements with Japan. He warned that if China did not comply, Japan would not hesitate to take whatever steps it thought necessary in

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18. Text of letter Shimizu Tōzō to Shang Zhen via Kawagoe Shigeru, as transmitted in telegram Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan, 29.10.1935; ZYSL1, pp.705-8.

response.<sup>19</sup>

Japanese Embassy staff in Shanghai appeared to be supporting the initiative,<sup>20</sup> and despite protests from the Chinese Embassy to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, the Japanese authorities in Tokyo were unwilling to become involved in the matter, suggesting that the Chinese government take steps of its own initiative to ensure that obstacles to friendly relations in the North were removed.<sup>21</sup> Yuan Liang and Shang Zhen both replied to the charges raised by Sakai and Kawagoe, assuring the Japanese that the promotion of friendly relations with Japan was an unwavering policy of the central government which they personally and actively supported, that no trace could be found in Beiping-Tianjin of the anti-Japanese organisations to which reference had been made, but that they would continue investigations into the matter and suppress any organisations so uncovered.<sup>22</sup>

These responses, the repromulgation on November 1st of the 'Goodwill Mandate' by the Branch Military Council, and the resignation on November 3rd of Yuan Liang,<sup>23</sup> failed to pacify the Japanese: they were overshadowed by assassination attempt on Wang Jingwei and the announcement on November 3rd of the currency reform, which were followed by an immediate intensification of autonomy work. The attack on Wang Jingwei was widely seen as a protest against his Japan policy, and his removal lost Japan almost the only politician in Nanjing it felt it could do business.<sup>24</sup> As for the currency reform, given the determination of the Japanese armies to exclude the political and economic authority of the Chinese central government from North China, the prospect of such a consolidation of central financial control and of British intervention in Chinese financial and economic affairs was particularly unwelcome. The

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19. Telegram Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan, 30.10.1935; *ZYSL*1, pp.705-8; *ZRWJ*5, pp.394-6; *ZYSL*6, pp.114-6.

20. Record of conversation, Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi, 6.11.1935; *ZRWJ*5, pp.403-5, *ZYSL*6, pp.123-4.

21. Telegram Ding Shaoji to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 1.11.1935; *ZRWJ*5, p.396; *ZRWJ*4, pp.33-4; dated 31.10.1935 *ZYSL*6, p.116.

22. Telegram Bao Wen Yue to Chiang Kai-shek, 1.11.1935; *ZYSL*6, p.117; telegram Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan, 2.11.1935; *ZRWJ*5, pp.400-1, *ZYSL*6, pp.119-20.

23. *HYBNP*, pp.905-6; on the 'Goodwill Mandate' see Chapter III, p.69.

24. Israel, (1966), pp.111-2. See also Chapter IV.

British Treasury mission led by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross had arrived in Japan on September 6th.<sup>25</sup> Leith-Ross's proposals - especially his suggestions that the reformed Chinese currency be linked to the pound sterling, that the Bank of China employ British advisers and that some compromise be reached on the status of Manzhouguo - alarmed the Japanese military and made it imperative that the separation of North China be completed before the realisation of any of these proposals could be attempted.

On October 30th, as the reply to the Japanese demands for the dissolution of the BMC was issued, Chiang Kai-shek had warned Song Zheyuan:

"This latest agitation in North China is not something that can be resolved as if it were an isolated incident, and cannot be ended with a partial, fudged solution..."<sup>26</sup>

In Nanjing, the North China issue had by now been taken up by Japanese diplomatic personnel; Chiang assured Song that the central government was making all possible efforts to deal with the North China problem as part of its reassessment of its relations with Japan,<sup>27</sup> and urged Song to consider the consequences for this reassessment of any imprudent action on his part.

"... we hope that North China will be resolute and not itself be the cause of further disturbances, as you would thereby fall in with their movements and allow them to achieve their goals; if you are duped, and give in to empty words and threats, and want to make a declaration in order to avoid war and gain time then who knows but that this may in itself lead to war and make useless all the efforts of the centre?"<sup>28</sup>

Despite Chiang's assurance that a solution had been decided and was soon to be implemented, there was as yet no sign of substantive action from Nanjing.

On November 4th, Shang Zhen reported that he had received another visit from Nakai and Takahashi, who declared themselves dissatisfied with the Chinese response

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25. On the Leith-Ross mission, see Chapter IV.

26. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 30.10.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.708; see also telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 4.11.1935; *HYBNP*, p.906.

27. Record of conversation Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi, 6.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.403-5, *ZYSL6*, pp.123-4; record of conversation Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 3.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, pp.353-4; *ZYSL6*, pp.151-3.

28. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 30.10.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.708; see also telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong, 4.11.1935; *HYBNP*, p.906.

to their recent demands. There was, they argued, clear evidence that Yuan Liang and the Branch Military Council were ringleaders of the anti-Japanese movement.<sup>29</sup> Nanjing's refusal to take this complaint seriously was proof of lack of sincerity in its dealings with Japan, and any further delay in complying with Japan's requirements would provoke Japan to take drastic unilateral steps to remedy the situation. Shang warned Nanjing that Japan would not now be deflected from its goals.<sup>30</sup> A formal protest at this ultimatum was issued to the Japanese Embassy by the Chinese Foreign Ministry, but this had no visible effect.<sup>31</sup> The Japanese authorities in Beiping-Tianjin had ordered the provincial authorities to arrest a number of prominent people - including the Principal of BeiDa, Jiang Menglin - alleged Blue Shirt connections;<sup>32</sup> angered at the Chinese failure to do this, and perhaps suspecting that Chinese authorities had tipped off the targets of the arrests, the Japanese arrested Chinese journalists, officials of the provincial government, and others including Xuan Jieqi, head of political education in the 29th Army. At the same time, reports were received that the pro-autonomy agitation in Xianghe had spread to other counties of the War Zone including Yongqing, Qingyun and Sanhe.<sup>33</sup>

According to a telegram intercepted on November 9th by the postal censors in Tianjin, important figures in North China were now arriving in Tianjin for talks with 'certain Japanese officials'; while there was now no hope of securing the participation of Yan Xishan in the new order, the participation of Han Fujun, Shang Zhen and Song Zheyuan in the talks and their support in the formation of an autonomous league of Hebei, Chaha'er and Shandong was expected.<sup>34</sup> This implies that the movement was

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29. There is no indication that Yuan Liang was excessively provocative in his dealings with the Japanese during his time as Mayor of Beiping, and it is unclear why he was targeted. By one account he had close links with Japan in the past, and had fought on the Japanese side in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, adopting the name of Shimizu. Xiang Xintang, (A), p.52.

30. Telegram Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan, 4.11.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.397-8, ZYSL6, pp.118-9.

31. Protest Chinese Foreign Ministry to Japanese Embassy, 7.11.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.401-2, ZYSL1, pp.709-10, ZYSL6, pp.121-2.

32. There is no reason to suppose that Jiang had anything to do with the Blue Shirts.

33. HYBNP, pp.906-8.

34. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 9.11.1935; HYQSI, p.446. An editorial note points out that this may have been a deliberate leak by the Japanese; postal censorship was used not only by the Chinese authorities as a source of information but also by other groups - reported to include the Japanese and the CCP

further advanced than other accounts suggest,<sup>35</sup> but seems to give a reasonably accurate account of Japan's hopes for the movement.

Doihara Kenji, emboldened by the assumption that the government in Nanjing was too concerned with Party matters to intervene in the North, increased pressure on Song Zheyuan's subordinates to support the autonomy movement. In a cable of November 13th, Minami Jirō, commander of the Guandong Army, signalled to Military Headquarters his intention to use force if necessary to secure the separation of North China from the economic control of the Nanjing government.<sup>36</sup>

It was feared that Song and his followers might be on the verge of yielding to that pressure.<sup>37</sup> Song had refused to relinquish the North's silver reserves despite orders from Nanjing and, on November 11th, cabled the Fifth National Congress to urge the Guomindang to end tutelage and return government to the people (*huan zheng yu min*); this could be seen either as a simple espousal of the constitutional cause and in this Song would differ little from other critics of Party rule, except that in North China the slogans of ending Party rule and hearing the voice of the people were being put to more sinister use. The currency reform did cause genuine hardship to the 29th Army: Song cabled Feng Yuxiang to complain that the resulting price rise made it impossible to feed his troops.<sup>38</sup> As Japanese air and ground forces massed on the Great Wall, and the Japanese units in Tangshan, Luanxian and Beiping-Tianjin practised street warfare (*xiangzhan*),<sup>39</sup> He Yingqin cabled Song from Nanjing urging him not to give in to Japanese threats:

"... now the various actions of a certain power, such as the troop movements at Yuguan, are pure threats: they now have no reason or excuse for using military force against us... the centre is most concerned with relations between China and Japan in North China and has a plan which it will implement after

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as an important means of spreading disinformation. See also Zhang Ziyang, (B), 'Wo yu Song jiangjun de yi duan gongzuo jingyan ji qi baoguo de juexin' *SZYYJ*, pp.1090-1.

35. Telegram Lei Sishang to He Yingqin, 10.11.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.711.

36. The Minami cable is translated in full in Shimada, (1983), pp.146-7.

37. Telegrams Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.11.1935; *ZYSL*6, pp.56, 80.

38. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Feng Yuxiang, 22.11.1935, *SZYWJ*, pp.177.

39. Kahn, (1978), p.189; *HYBNP*, p.909.

the [Guomindang National] Congress...<sup>40</sup>

Song replied that he was dealing with situation as best he could and that he had no intention of doing anything which might erode Chinese sovereignty, but warned that the situation was extremely unstable and that he was unlikely to be able to keep control for much longer.<sup>41</sup> On November 18th, Doihara warned that if autonomy was not declared by November 20th, the Japanese armies would resort to military action, and the launch of the North China Autonomy Movement was announced simultaneously in the Japanese-language press.<sup>42</sup>

The exact attitude of Song Zheyuan and the extent of his personal involvement in talks with Doihara at this point is not clear. It was obviously to Song's advantage to keep his own attitude as ambiguous as possible in order to maintain a maximum of freedom to manoeuvre between Nanjing and the Japanese armies. Contact between Doihara and Song's followers was now maintained chiefly via Xiao Zhenying and Chen Juesheng - thought to have reasons of their own for cultivating the Japanese military<sup>43</sup> - and although Song and Doihara met, it is possible that discussions of matters of substance were held only with Xiao and Chen. Wang Shijiu, Song's secretary, suggests that before his own meeting with Chiang Kai-shek in October Song was an informed participant in talks with the Japanese; Song's role may have diminished as the talks

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40. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun, 16.11.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.447-8. See also He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun, 17.11.1935; *HYQSJ*, pp.448-9, Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 16.11.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.711.

41. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 17.11.1935; *HYQSJ*, p.448; *ZYSL1*, pp.711-2; *ZYSL6*, p.79.

42. Kahn, (1978), p.189, Shimada, (1983), p.149.

43. Xiao Zhenying, (1886-1947) *zi* Xian'ge. Born Fuyu, Jilin. Involved in military political circles in the North-East, later became follower of Shi Yousan. In 1926 appointed head of legal affairs section (*fawu chu chuzhang*) of Feng Yuxiang's West Route Army (*Guominjun xi lu jun*) and aide of Song Zheyuan. Promoted to post of Mayor of Xi'an in June 1926. In 1930 became chief adviser (*zong canyi*) to 29th Army. In 1933 appointed to Beiping Branch Military Council and Political Affairs Commission; appointed in Mayor of Tianjin in November 1935; sacked in August 1936. Moved into commerce during war; died bankrupt in Beiping in 1947. *RMDCD*, p.628. See also Wang Zhenzhong (A), 'Wo suo zhidao de Xiao Zhenying' *Tianjin wenshi ziliao*, 29, pp. pp.161-166, and Hou Xinping, Wang Weinong, (A) 'Xiao Zhenying dui ershijiu jun de fenhua huodong' *Tianjin wenshi ziliao*, 29, pp.167-171. No biographical material can be found on Chen Juesheng in the standard sources. Various *Wenshi ziliao* pieces suggest he was born in Japan and was possibly half Japanese: Wang Shijiu, (A), p.44; Xu Nianhui, (A), 'Tufeyuan (Doihara) cedong "Beiyang pai da tongmeng" de neimu' *WSZLXJ*, IX, 29, p.150; Liu Zhensan, (A), and (B), *SZYYJ*, p.1083, 1086.

progressed;<sup>44</sup> by November 23rd, Song was able to reject Doihara's demands by claiming that Xiao Zhenying, Chen Juesheng and Qin Dechun had not sought his approval for their discussions with Doihara.<sup>45</sup>

If the impenetrability of Song's attitude gave Nanjing cause for concern, the apparent declaration by Xiao Zhenying in favour of autonomy was more worrying. On the day the launch of the autonomy movement was announced, the Branch Military Council reported to He Yingqin a statement made in Tianjin by Xiao Zhenying referring to the imminent establishment of a Republic of China North China People's Anti-Communist Autonomous Council (*Zhonghua Minguo Huabei renmin zizhi fanggong weiyuanhui*) to supervise the five provinces of Hebei, Chaha'er, Shandong, Shanxi and Suiyuan and the three special cities of Beiping, Tianjin and Qingdao;<sup>46</sup> this was to be followed by other reports linking Xiao explicitly to 'pro-autonomy' organisations.<sup>47</sup>

A report from the BMC described the problems faced by Song Zheyuan and showed little faith in his ability to respond to them:

"... [the Japanese] are now putting pressure on Song independently to agree to the establishment of a structure to oppose Bolshevisation and the realisation of autonomy in North China... as Song and his colleagues have decided to wait for a senior official to represent the opinions of the centre (*zhongshu*) and are preserving a strictly non-committal attitude, [the Japanese] have not been able to achieve their designs... [Song] is using the excuse that he does not have the authority to undertake such a step, but [because of] the extreme difficulty of his position and the crudity of his intellect he is already being shaken by what is happening around him."<sup>48</sup>

The efforts of China's diplomatic personnel in Nanjing and Tokyo to secure respect for Nanjing's authority in North China or at least to restrain the actions of the Japanese military had no visible effect on developments in the North: there is no evidence that

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44. Wang Shijiu, (A), pp.44-6. The available primary material - in the *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao* collections gives evidence that Song was involved - most significantly Song's admission of November 19th, but says little about the extent or nature of that involvement.

45. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 23.11.1935; *HYQSI*, p.457. This may of course be a lie for the benefit of either the Japanese or the BMC.

46. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 18.11.1935 (1); *HYQSI*, p.449.

47. Telegrams Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 20.11.1935; *ZYSL*, p.715; BMC to He Yingqin, 20.11.1935; *HYQSI*, p.453.

48. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 18.11.1935 (2); *HYQSI*, p.449.

Song Zheyuan had by this time received a more specific indication of Nanjing's attitude and intended response to the North China problem. Chiang Kai-shek and He Yingqin's assurances that the central government had a solution to the North China problem. In January, he had appealed for the support of the centre in responding to the Japanese advance across Eastern Chaha'er, yet no support had been given. In June, after pressure on Nanjing by the Japanese, he had been summarily dismissed from his post as governor of Chaha'er. Now in November, as the forces of the Guandong army massed on the Great Wall and as Doihara demanded that Song declare autonomy or face the consequences, the central government could only order Song to obey orders, resist Japanese pressure without provoking the Japanese armies, and wait for an unnamed central official to travel to the North at an unspecified date to transmit an unspecified solution.

Despite reports that Doihara would be stalled no more after the end of the Guomindang Congress on November 23rd, Nanjing still delayed publishing a solution or providing greater reassurance for Song. On November 19th, He Yingqin informed Song of the projected meeting between Chiang Kai-shek and Ambassador Ariyoshi, and promised a solution to the North China problem 'within ten days',<sup>49</sup> and Chiang Kai-shek passed information received from Ding Shaoji in Tokyo suggesting that influential Japanese politicians opposed the use of force in North China, fearing that it might lead to an international incident.<sup>50</sup> In these circumstances Song might reasonably have felt that Nanjing was unaware of the gravity of the situation as it might appear to him in Beiping, and that he could not rely on support from the central government when he needed it.

Song was by now aware of the speculation surrounding his activities, and in a telegram dated November 19th, he admitted to contacts with the Japanese.

"The situation in North China is very clear and [the autonomy movement] does not seem to be the independent initiative of a minority of the Japanese armies... they demand that we secede from the centre and establish an alternative regime (*ling cheng jumian*); we have repeatedly refused, but they are putting increasing pressure on us, and we have had no choice but to decide to begin exploratory discussions with them while supporting the centralised

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49. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 19.11.1935; *HYQSI*, p.451.

50. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 19.11.1935; *ZRWJ4*, p.81; *ZYSL1*, p.713.



system and, within the following limits: non-intervention in China's domestic politics; non-infringement of China's territory; equality and mutual amity, to make a preliminary expression of friendship. Other than this, we have had no contact with them; you must not listen to the rumours... "51

Chiang replied immediately to assure Song that he understood the difficulty of his position and was aware of his loyalty to the centre before ordering him to break off all contacts with the Japanese and refer further complaints to the centre, rebuking him:

"... you said in your telegram that you had decided to negotiate with them on the basis on non-intervention in domestic affairs, non-infringement of territorial integrity, equality and mutual amity. This cannot but give us cause for concern. In your efforts to take an indirect route to victory (*weiqu qiuquan*), you have fallen in with their poisonous plans, because talk of non-intervention in domestic affairs and so on is the language of negotiation between one state and another; negotiation with them on this basis is incompatible with support of the centralised system and you are exceeding your status as a local official... "52

Even after this order, reports from North China seemed to indicate that discussions between Song's followers and Doihara had already gone beyond the point where anything could be salvaged. Shang Zhen reported to Chiang that he had twice been invited to join the talks in Beiping on the establishment of the new political organisation: once by a representative of Doihara who assured him that Song Zheyuan and Han Fujū fully endorsed the new regime,<sup>53</sup> and once by staff officer Nakai of the North China Garrison Army who stated that the North China Autonomy Movement was the policy not only of the Japanese armies but also of the Tokyo government.<sup>54</sup>

Chiang urged Shang not to join Song in Beiping, and warned him

"If Beiping-Tianjin decides independently to seek victory by surrendering to the enemy (*xiang di qiuquan*), the centre cannot tolerate this and we must make the final resolution [for war]... "55

Chiang's next communication with Shang Zhen, Song Zheyuan and Han Fujū reporting the results of recent talks with Ambassador Ariyoshi was not encouraging.<sup>56</sup> Chiang

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51. Telegram Song Zheyuan, Qin Dechun, Xiao Zhenying to Chiang Kai-shek, 19.11.1935; ZYSL1, p.714.

52. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 19.11.1935; ZYSL1, pp.714-5.

53. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 20.11.1935; ZYSL1, p.715.

54. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.11.1935; ZRWJ5, p.470, ZYSL6, pp.84-5.

55. Reply, Chiang Kai-shek to Shang Zhen, 20.11.1935; ZYSL1, p.715.

56. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Han Fujū, Shang Zhen, Song Zheyuan, 22.11.1935; ZYSL1, pp.719-20.

confirmed that Nanjing was to send a senior official to North China to oversee the establishment of a new organisation with full powers to oversee the affairs of the region, yet gave neither the name of the official nor any indication of when he would be sent, and in describing the immediate work of the new organisation, referred only to economic relations with Manzhouguo and the defence against Bolshevism, matters raised by the Japanese, giving no hint of an independent Chinese agenda.<sup>57</sup> He does not appear to have told Song and Han that he had moved central forces up to the south bank of the Yellow River and ordered the authorities in Henan to prepare to defend the river.<sup>58</sup> Whether Song hoped that the centre would support him in resisting Japanese pressure, or that he could use that pressure to win greater powers and freedom of action from Nanjing to deal independently with the crisis, the prospect of central intervention along these lines cannot have been welcome. Chiang assured Song that, according to Ariyoshi, the Guandong Army would not use force to impose autonomy on North China, and that if only he, Shang and Han could make some unequivocal declaration against autonomy for the North, the agitators on the Japanese side would have no further basis for putting pressure on them.<sup>59</sup> As the Guandong army transferred its forces from within Manzhouguo to Shanhaiguan and Yuguan on the Great Wall, threatening military action against anyone acting to thwart the autonomy movement, Song may have found this unconvincing.<sup>60</sup>

By now organisations supporting the autonomy movement, under Japanese direction, were responsible for a series incidents calculated to disrupt order in Beiping-Tianjin; the destabilising effect of these incidents and the atmosphere of uncertainty they created now combined with a direct attack on the peace and unity of China. Disturbances in Beiping-Tianjin had begun, carried out by members of Chinese organisations such as the Universal Peace Society (*Pu'an xiehui*) and allegedly

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57. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Han Faju, Shang Zhen, Song Zheyuan, 22.11.1935; ZYSL1, pp.719-20.

58. Chang Kai, Cai Dejin, (1985), 'Shilun JiCha zhengwu weiyuanhui.' *Jindai shi yanjiu*, 1985, 4, p.144.

59. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Han Faju, Shang Zhen, Song Zheyuan, 22.11.1935; ZYSL1, pp.719-20.

60. On troop movements, see p.153 above and telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 22.11. 1935, ZRWJ5, p. 474, ZYSL6, p.86; on threats to Shang Zhen see telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.11.1935; ZRWJ5, p.470, ZYSL6, pp.84-5.

orchestrated by Doihara.<sup>61</sup> On October 24th uniformed 'guards' from the Universal Peace Society were stationed outside the Tianjin-Dagu PPC headquarters (*Jin-gu bao'an silingbu*) and the Tianjin city government, and a 'dare-to-die' squad from a self-styled 'self-defence unit' (*ziweituan*) occupied a public library in the city.<sup>62</sup> The same day Yin Rugeng declared autonomy for the War Zone in Eastern Hebei and announced the establishment of the Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Council (*Jidong fanggong zizhi weiyuanhui*) at Tongxian. It was rumoured that Song Zheyuan and Doihara visited Yin at Tongxian that day.<sup>63</sup>

Yin - educated partly at Waseda and married to a Japanese woman<sup>64</sup> - was a relatively junior official, and did not, unlike Song, Shang Zhen and Han Fujun, control significant military forces other than the War Zone PPC. Although his open support of the cause of autonomy had been noticed,<sup>65</sup> it appears to have worried Nanjing much less than the more ambiguous attitude of Song Zheyuan. His declaration of 'autonomy' caused outrage in Nanjing and throughout China; at an emergency meeting of the Executive Yuan on November, Yin's dismissal and arrest were ordered,<sup>66</sup> and Shang Zhen cabled Nanjing, urging the government to take military action against Yin Rugeng.<sup>67</sup>

The defection of Yin Rugeng to the Japanese camp marks a watershed in Nanjing's handling of the North China Autonomy Movement: the realisation that it was not enough simply to order Song Zheyuan and the provincial governors to resist Japanese pressure without provoking reprisals, and the fear that, just as the refusal of

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61. Telegram Branch Military Council to He Yingqin, 23.11.1935; *HYQSI*, p.457.

62. Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry, 25.11.1935; *ZRWJ4*, pp.182-3; see also Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek, 25.11.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.720.

63. Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry, 25.11.1935; *ZRWJ4*, pp.182-3.

64. Yin Rugeng, (1885-1947). Born Zhejiang, studied in Japan and graduated from Waseda University. After returning to China, worked between the various warlord factions before allying himself to Huang Fu. In 1927 became a representative of the government in Japan, liaising between Chiang and Japan. Took part in the negotiations over the Shanghai ceasefire agreement in 1932 and the Tangu truce in 1933. Arrested by the Nationalists after the Japanese surrender and executed in 1947. *RMDCD*, p.577.

65. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.11.1935; *HYQSI*, p.456.

66. Text of order in *ZRWJ5*, pp.427-8, *ZYSL1*, p.723, *ZYSL6*, pp.190-1.

67. Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry, 26.11.1935; *ZRWJ5*, p.427; Kahn, (1978), p.193. See also open telegrams from non-governmental bodies *ZYSL6*, pp.192-3.

the BMC to fall in with the plans of the Japanese armies for the North had led the Japanese to withhold recognition of the Council, so any further intransigence from Song Zheyuan might not stop the Japanese military in their tracks but merely encourage them to bypass him, seem finally to have galvanised Nanjing into action. At the same meeting at which Yin's arrest was ordered, the Executive Yuan also formally resolved to abolish the Beiping Branch Military Council, to appoint He Yingqin as its special representative in Beiping with responsibility for restoring administrative order to the troubled north and to promote Song Zheyuan to the post of Pacification Commissioner of Hebei-Chaha'er (*Ji-Cha suijing zhuren*).<sup>68</sup>

Yin Rugeng's actions also, according to one account, provided Song Zheyuan with a pretext for resisting further Japanese pressure. When the news of Yin's defection reached Nanjing, Liu Jianqun, an aide of Chiang Kai-shek and former head of the North China Propaganda Team (*huabei xuanzhuan zongdui*) a front organisation for political work with the northern armies,<sup>69</sup> was sent to Beiping for detailed talks with Song.<sup>70</sup> Liu found Song and his aides aggrieved at the attitude of the central government: Chiang had refused to send military support against Japan without, Song complained to Liu, realising the impossibility of maintaining their present position while neither fighting nor negotiating with the Japanese military, and on the verge of making 'a declaration' concerning the future of North China.<sup>71</sup>

Liu accepted Song's assurance that he was determined to protect China's national interests without apparent question, but urged him to consider the consequences if Song himself made the declaration expected by Japan. The North-East, he reminded Song, was irretrievable, and as the south-western leaders were already

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68. Chen Mingzhong, (1989), p.111.

69. Liu Jianqun, (A), p.1134; Liu Jianqun, (1902-1972). Born Zunyi, Guizhou, of Jiangxi family. Educated Guizhou Legislative Academy (*Guizhou sheng lifa zhuanmen xuexiao*), and from 1923 served as head of legal section of He Hougung's Guizhou army. Joined Northern expedition in 1925 and became confidential to He Yingqin, then Commander-in-Chief of East Route Army. In 1931 became head of political education division of Military Affairs Commission and of political section of Central Military Academy. During civil war, became deputy and acting Chairman of Legislative Yuan; appointed Chairman of Executive Yuan after retreat to Taiwan. *RMDCD*, p.177. Said to have inspired the founding of the Blue Shirts. Chang, (1985), *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*, Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, p.17.

70. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 25.11.1935; *ZYSL*1, p.722. None of the details given below by Liu of his discussions with Song are reported in the published primary materials.

71. Liu Jianqun, (A), p.1139.

involved in the autonomy movement,<sup>72</sup> any move away from the centre by the North might well be followed by similar moves from the south-west: more than half of China's territory would be lost. Chiang Kai-shek would have no choice in these circumstances but to take military action against North China, to resign or to be overthrown.<sup>73</sup> Song agreed to ask Doihara to accept a modification of the declaration.

A first request that Song's declaration be postponed and its content revised was rejected by Doihara; it was the publication in Beiping of Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy which allowed Song a means of escape. Xiao Zhenying was sent to Doihara with the message that, while Song had not changed in his opposition to the centre and his desire for greater independence, he was deeply offended at the assumption that he was to play second fiddle to Yin Rugeng in the autonomous order; in the circumstances he would only consider making a declaration on other terms.<sup>74</sup> Doihara agreed to this. Song's negotiations with the Japanese apparently did not lead Liu - at the time or in retrospect - to question Song's loyalty to the principle of unity and centralised government: Liu saw the prospect of a punitive expedition by Chiang against North China as unacceptable precisely because Song is working for the interests of Nanjing.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, while anxious for confirmation that Song was still on the side of the central authorities, Liu was not equally anxious to give the impression to Japan of close cooperation between Song and the centre.<sup>76</sup>

On November 30th, Chiang Kai-shek, President Lin Sen and the other chairmen of the five Yuan - Sun Ke (Legislative), Dai Jitao (Examination), Yu Youren (Control) and Ju Zheng (Judiciary) - met and decided a six-point plan for a form of autonomy in North China under the leadership of He Yingqin. In a report to the CEC given after the final resolution of the crisis, Chiang outlined principles underlying the plan as follows:

"1. If circumstances allow, [He Yingqin] is to assume the post of Executive

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72. Li and Bai had sent two representatives, Chen Zhongfu and Ren Shoudao, to Beiping. Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, 8.10.1935; ZYSL6, pp.75-6.

73. Liu Jianqun, (A), pp.1139-1140.

74. Liu Jianqun, (A), p.1140.

75. Liu Jianqun, (A), pp.1139-1140.

76. cf. Xuan Jieqi, (B), p.1077.

Yuan representative in Beiping. Otherwise he is to participate in the establishment of a Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council modelled on the South-West Political Council;

2. The organisation of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council is to be appropriate to the special circumstances of North China; its members are to be appointed by the centre; the chairman is to be Song Zheyuan;
3. All matters of domestic, diplomatic, military and financial policy are to be conducted through normal channels, and may not exceed the scope of laws and regulations issued by the centre;
4. Any nominal autonomy or actual independence is to be strictly avoided."<sup>77</sup>

The 'Guidelines for autonomy in North China' (*Huabei zizhi banfa*) were as follows:

- "1. Joint anti-Communist measures to be decided;
2. Appropriate modifications to be made in currency policy in North China;
3. Consideration to be given to the question of relations, especially economic relations, between North China (*guannei*) and Manchuria (*guanwai*);
4. A relatively large degree of autonomy to be given to North China in economic affairs;
5. Outstanding foreign policy issues to be settled locally;
6. Just government to be pursued according to the will of the people."<sup>78</sup>

These guidelines, which would satisfy some of Japan's demands, for example, for the development of an anti-Bolshevism strategy in the North and the exemption of the North from the full reform of the currency as imposed nationally, represented substantial concessions to the demands of the Japanese while narrowly maintaining the principle of at least nominal central control over North China as long as He Yingqin's return to Beiping was accepted. However, Consul-General Suma had already expressed Japanese opposition to He Yingqin's appointment,<sup>79</sup> and He Yingqin himself categorically refused the new post; he nonetheless went North with Xiong Shihui, Yin Tong and Chen Yi, on December 1st, officially to oversee the establishment of a Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and support Song Zheyuan in his response to the Japanese.<sup>80</sup> Liu Jianqun's return to Nanjing was delayed in Qingdao by bad weather; by the time Liu arrived in the capital, He Yingqin had already left for Beiping by train, presumably without being briefed on Liu's discussions with Song.<sup>81</sup>

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77. Chiang Kai-shek to Central Executive Committee, 12.12.1935; ZYSL1, p.740.

78. Chen Mingzhong, (1989), pp.111.

79. Chen Mingzhong, (1989), p.111.

80. Telegrams Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 1.12.1935, 2.12.1935; ZYSL1, pp.726-7.

81. Liu Jianqun, (A), p.1140.

He Yingqin's arrival in Beiping was greeted with no visible enthusiasm from Song Zheyuan and his associates and the Japanese military refused to deal with him.<sup>82</sup> Japanese planes and troops had been moved to the south of the Great Wall in parts of Hebei, and Japanese planes were flying over Beiping to drop leaflets advocating autonomy.<sup>83</sup> On December 4th, after discussions with Song, Qin Dechun and Xiao Zhenying, He informed Chiang Kai-shek of his intention to leave responsibility for specifically regional matters with Song Zheyuan, passing on diplomatic problems to the central government: he warned Chiang that the Guandong army, frustrated at the delay in producing a solution, was reported to be contemplating the use of non-uniformed paramilitary groups (*bianyidui*) or even of actual military force to put further pressure on the Chinese authorities if something was not done soon.<sup>84</sup> On December 5th, he informed Chiang that if a solution was not found within forty-eight hours, Song Zheyuan might have no choice but to leave the region. Song's own opinion, passed by a representative of Song to He Yingqin suggests that Song himself would have preferred either to let the impending confrontation with the Japanese take its course or return all responsibility for calming the situation with the central authorities.<sup>85</sup>

He Yingqin concluded that the best way out was to order the establishment of a Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council in line with the four basic principles proposed by Chiang.<sup>86</sup> The same day, Song Zheyuan left Beiping for the Western Hills, stating that the resolution of the North China problem was entirely He Yingqin's responsibility.<sup>87</sup> By December 6th, He Yingqin had been visited by delegations presenting petitions demanding autonomy for the North, and had received reports that Doihara's plans for an autonomous North China were nearing completion, even the administrative divisions within Hebei having been finalised.<sup>88</sup> After further talks in Tianjin, Xiao Zhenying

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82. Shimada, (1983), p.157.

83. *HYBNP*, p.462.

84. Telegrams He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 4.12.1935; *ZYSL6*, pp.92-3.

85. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 5.12.1935; *ZYSL1*, pp.730-1.

86. See above p.162.

87. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.12.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.731-2.

88. Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, 6.12.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.731-2.

and Qin Dechun reported that He Yingqin's proposals for the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council might be acceptable; Chiang Kai-shek endorsed this, with amendments limiting the independent powers of the Council.<sup>89</sup>

The Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council was therefore created under severe pressure: it was essential that Nanjing produce an organisation having powers and personnel which would serve its own ends yet be acceptable to the Japanese and to Song Zheyuan and his colleagues. Having begun by sending He Yingqin to Beiping to represent the Executive Yuan in administering the affairs of the North, the central government was forced within a very short space of time to backtrack: to justify to its domestic critics the appointment of Song Zheyuan to a key post in North China military and political affairs, and to Japanese military and diplomatic personnel the restriction of Song's powers once he was appointed.

The government was initially successful in neither of these: Suma, the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing, protested immediately at the restrictions placed on Song Zheyuan's powers;<sup>90</sup> and to the disruption caused in Beiping-Tianjin by 'pro-autonomy' organisations was added student unrest in protest against the autonomy movement and what was seen as Nanjing's refusal to take a principled stand in defence of North China. In response to the growing uncertainty over the future of the North, the Beiping Student Union was reformed on November 18th,<sup>91</sup> and on December 3rd voted to petition He Yingqin for an end to the autonomy movement, arbitrary arrests and civil war, and for open diplomacy, protection of territorial integrity, and freedom of speech, the Press, assembly and association.<sup>92</sup>

On December 9th, a student delegation marched on the Jurentang, He's official residence, and presented the petition, only to be informed that He Yingqin was not in Beiping.<sup>93</sup> After clashes with police and units of the 29th Army at Xidan, the students turned towards the Legation Quarter, where the Japanese legation and barracks were

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89. Telegrams Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 7.12.1935, *ZYSL*1, p.734; 8.12.1935, *ZYSL*1, p.735.

90. Record of conversation Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 10.12.1935; *ZRWJ*5, p.356, *ZYSL*6, pp.153-4.

91. Israel, (1966), *Student Nationalism in China, 1927-1937* Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.117.

92. Israel, (1966), p.119.

93. Israel, (1966), p.121.



situated; they were dispersed by police units with fire-hoses on the approach to the area.<sup>94</sup>

The December 9th demonstration was followed by student strikes and, on December 16th, by an attempt to prevent the inauguration of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. An estimated 7,775 students joined the December 16th demonstration, and although the students were denied entrance to the walled centre of Beijing,<sup>95</sup> the demonstration succeeded at least in forcing the postponement of the Council's inauguration until December 18th, when it was held in strict secrecy.<sup>96</sup> The unrest in Beijing sparked off a wave of student activity throughout China: in the week of December 9th-16th there were demonstrations in Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Xi'an and Jinan; by the end of December, there had been over sixty demonstrations in thirty-two areas of China.<sup>97</sup> The Beijing activists moreover had the sympathy of prominent academics such as Jiang Menglin, Principal of Beijing University, and Hu Shi, and the aims of the movement were recognised beyond student circles and beyond the North. By the end of December, 'national salvation' associations (*jiuguohui*) were springing up in Shanghai and other parts of China, and criticism not only of the government's approach to Japan policy but also of the issues of popular political participation such as freedom of speech and association gained a wider circulation through periodicals such as *Life of the Masses* (*Dazhong Shenghuo*).<sup>98</sup>

The Nanjing government, faced with Japanese protests at the student movement, at first refused to give the undertakings it had given in the past to suppress manifestations of 'anti-Japanese' feeling: vice-minister Tang Youren and Foreign Minister Zhang Qun both dismissed complaints from Japanese Embassy personnel over the student movement.<sup>99</sup> In January, Chiang addressed a conference of student and

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94. Israel, (1966), pp.121-2; Qin Dechun, (1967), pp.42.

95. Israel, (1966), pp.125-8.

96. Chang and Cai, (1985), p.148.

97. Israel, (1966), p.129.

98. See Coble, (1985), pp.293-310.

99. Record of conversations Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō, 10.12.1935 and 12.12.1935; ZRWJ5, p.483, ZYSL6, p.94 and ZRWJ5, p.484, ZYSL6, pp.94-5; record of conversation Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi Akira, Foreign Ministry Archive, XVIII, #1217; published in YGZQ, pp.19-21.

academic delegates in Nanjing, apparently in an attempt to ensure that student activism was harnessed to the goals of the central government. However, while a certain level of visible protest at the autonomy movement was useful to Nanjing, excessive unrest risked provoking retaliation by the Japanese military: as the movement progressed, and particularly as suspicions of CCP involvement in the movement grew, Nanjing not only became less inclined to defend the students but actively moved to suppress the movement.<sup>100</sup>

The establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council was followed by a brief lull in Beiping-Tianjin; pro-autonomy activity died down and the Foreign Ministry representative in Beiping, Cheng Xigeng, reported that the Japanese forces which had massed on the Great Wall had begun to withdraw. Although Cheng reported Song Zheyuan to be confident of success in his new post he warned that North China remained unstable: factors such as the continuing student unrest in Beiping-Tianjin might give the Japanese a pretext for further intervention,<sup>101</sup> and Japanese-sponsored Mongolian forces led by Li Shouxin had taken advantage of Nanjing's preoccupation with Hebei and the withdrawal in June of the 29th Army from Chaha'er to occupy part of Northern Chaha'er around Guyuan.<sup>102</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek, in his speech to the students' conference in Nanjing in January 1936, insisted that in establishing the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, the centre had in no way sacrificed control over the North:

"... the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council... is in fact an administrative body responsible to the central government... and it is wrong to see it as an autonomous, independent government... Song Zheyuan's 29th Army, is in fact a central army; and Song Zheyuan is utterly obedient to the centre and follows our orders!"<sup>103</sup>

In the circumstances Chiang could not be seen to express less than total confidence in Song Zheyuan's abilities and his loyalty: Song now held the posts of Chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, governor of Hebei, and Pacification Commissioner

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100. Israel, (1966), pp.142-5.

101. Report Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 24.12.1935; ZRWJ5, pp.356-7; dated 21.12.1935, ZYSL6, pp.57-9.

102. *HYBNP*, p.920.

103. Speech Chiang Kai-shek to student delegates, 15.1.1936; ZYSL1, p.746.

of Beiping-Tianjin, and all political and military power over Hebei and Chaha'er now lay in the hands of Song and his subordinates. Chiang had not wanted to leave this much power with the regional leaders, and had tried repeatedly persuade He Yingqin to return to Beiping precisely to avoid this state of affairs. Moreover, of the regional leaders in the North at the time of the autonomy movement, it was Song whose behaviour had given Nanjing most cause for concern, and Song who had admitted to independent negotiation with the Japanese. Whatever Song's intentions, the central authorities cannot have found this penchant for independent action reassuring.

**Chapter VII**  
**Song Zheyuan**  
**and the**  
**Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council**  
**(January-June, 1936)**

The establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council (*Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui*) in December 1935 provoked the largest student demonstrations seen in Beiping since 1931, demonstrations which forced the inauguration ceremony of the Council to be first postponed and then carried out in secret under heavy security, and which were echoed in demonstrations throughout China.<sup>1</sup> In the aftermath of the North China Autonomy Movement and the establishment of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government in November 1935 this further relaxation of central control over North China was seen as embodying all the weaknesses of the Nanjing government's Japan policy, representing a capitulation to Japanese pressure, a renunciation by the central government of responsibility for the fate of North China and an admission that Nanjing could no longer exercise even nominal control over the frontline provinces of Hebei and Chaha'er.

The establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council formalised the north-south division already visible in the Chinese response to Japan in 1935, divorcing the response in the North to political and economic encroachment by the Japanese military from the formal efforts of the Chinese central government to 'normalise' relations with Tokyo. To the diplomatic problems experienced by Nanjing was added the issue of domestic political cohesion: diplomatic advances in the capital were meaningless if the central government was unable to impose its authority in the North. Despite the stated intention of Foreign Minister Zhang Qun to resolve all outstanding problems by formal diplomatic negotiations, the key issue in North China was not the success or failure of talks between Nanjing and Tokyo but the extent to which the interests of the government coincided with and were served by the position adopted by Song Zheyuan in his contacts with the Japanese military. Whereas in 1935 attempts to deal with the Japan problem in North China had been dogged by political disagreements over the limits of acceptable concessions and the division of responsibility between the centre

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1. Israel and Klein, (1976), p.1; Chang and Cai, (1985), p.148; Israel and Klein, (1976), p.95.

and its representatives in the North, by 1936 even the shared perception that centre-region consensus must be reached was apparently dissolving. In this context is essential not merely to examine the attempts of the Japanese armies to influence Song, but to investigate how and with what success Nanjing tried to exercise its nominal authority over Song and his activities, how much control over Song it ceded through inattention, indifference or inability to deal with the problems of the North, and how much was lost because of poor communication, distrust or hostility between Song and the central government.<sup>2</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek had insisted that the establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council did not constitute a renunciation of sovereignty in North China and that Song Zheyuan as chairman remained accountable to the Nanjing government.<sup>3</sup> In practice the absence of clear limits to Song's powers and the pressures to which he was subject undermined this nominal authority. As chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, Song occupied a post - originally intended for He Yingqin - to which wide-ranging discretionary powers over political, diplomatic and military matters had at first been attached.<sup>4</sup> These powers were withheld from Song Zheyuan at Chiang Kai-shek's insistence; Song was therefore in principle unable to deal with the Japanese military without reference to the central authorities. However, Nanjing's failure explicitly to define the limits of Song's competence meant that this reaffirmation of Nanjing's authority over the affairs of North China had little practical effect.

While Nanjing's sovereignty in North China was in theory protected by the Council's draft regulations, it was in practice compromised by the apparent independence of central control - and thus the scope for Japanese intervention -

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2. On Archives: Staff of the Second Historical Archive in Nanjing, which holds those archives of the central governments for the period 1911-1949 remaining in the People's Republic of China say that as the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council was a local body, all its archives are in Beijing. Staff of the Beijing City Archives say that as the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council was under the direct control of the central authorities, all its archives are in Nanjing, except for material on underground work on the Council by the Chinese Communist Party which is not open to researchers. Chinese researchers with whom I discussed the problem of sources in December 1990 confirmed that there was some confusion concerning the location of the archives. Personal communication *source*, December 1990. It is of course possible that the archives were lost or destroyed during the War, or that they are still held in Taiwan.

3. See Chapter VI.

4. See Chapter VI.

tolerated by the central authorities, who further failed to enforce existing measures to prevent actions violating the spirit of the Council's mandate. Song may have resented the snub which the limitation of his powers implied; he was also under severe pressure from the Japanese armies to exceed those powers. The powers given to the specialist foreign affairs and economic affairs committees (*waijiao weiyuanhui*; *jingji weiyuanhui*) exceeded the limits set by the draft regulations: whereas the draft regulations gave the sub-committees the power only to discuss matters within their remit, the regulations for the foreign affairs sub-committee gave it powers also to administer foreign affairs affecting Hebei and Chaha'er; the powers given to the economic affairs committee were similarly extensive.<sup>5</sup> More importantly, the scope of Song Zheyuan's discussions with the Japanese military throughout 1936 was far greater than that which the central government formally allowed him.

The departure of He Yingqin from Beiping had severed the strongest link between Song and the central government, and the dominant political presence in Beiping beyond Song's immediate circle was that of the Japanese. Despite the flourishing student movement opposing further compromise with Japan, a significant minority of Chinese allegedly sympathised with or supported the Japanese cause; the presence on the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council of an alleged 'pro-Japanese faction' (*qin Ri pai*) is commonly cited by Chinese secondary and memoir sources as evidence of Japanese efforts to control the Council and of the degree of potential control which the central government was willing to tolerate.<sup>6</sup> Of the original Council members,<sup>7</sup> Wang Yitang, Wang Kemin, Li Tingyu, Jia Deyao, Hu Yukun, and Gao Lingwei, all of whom had served in the Beijing governments of the 1920s, and Leng Jiaji are described as 'pro-Japanese', as are Cao Rulin, Li Sihao, Lu Zongyu and Qi Xieyuan who joined the Council in March 1936. All of these except Li Tingyu, Jia and Leng, whose wartime activities are not clear, worked in Japanese-sponsored regimes during

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5. See "Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui waijiao weiyuanhui zuzhi guicheng": *Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui gongbao*, (hereafter *JCZWHGB*) 5, 22.2.1936. Note however that the foreign affairs committee is not specifically granted the power to *decide* matters of foreign affairs.

6. Tada Hayao, commander of the NCGA, had presented He Yingqin with a list of thirty names from which the members of the Council were to be drawn. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 8.12.1935; *ZRWJ5*, p.352, *ZYSL6*, p.109; Cai and Chang, (1985), p.149.

7. Membership listed in *JCZWHGB*, #1, 5.2.1936; Cai and Chang, (1985), p.149; Long Dai, (1987), p.199.

the war.

Although the memoir literature records misgivings held by Song's subordinates concerning the role of 'pro-Japanese' elements and their efforts to influence Song,<sup>9</sup> documentary evidence of their influence is sparse. A report to Nanjing in mid-1936 suggests that Qi Xieyuan was involved in attempts to drive Song Zheyuan towards the Japanese by playing on his distrust of the centre; Chen Juesheng, as director of the Beiping-Liaoning railway bureau in Tianjin, supported Japanese interests by authorising land sales and the suspension of anti-smuggling measures along the railway.<sup>10</sup> Cao Rulin and Lu Zongyu among others were in 1935 and 1936 targeted by the Japanese military as possible leaders of an autonomous North China regime, although it is far from clear whether they personally encouraged these overtures; it was however reported in January 1936 that, in the month after the establishment of the Council, unnamed North China political figures had been trying to exploit Japanese dissatisfaction at the form of the Council and persuade the Japanese military forcibly to replace it.<sup>11</sup> The presence of a presumed 'pro-Japanese' element served as a reminder to Song that he was not indispensable, that if he refused to cooperate with Japan he would and could be replaced. It was therefore in Song's interests to accommodate the ambitions of potential rivals as far as possible, and this may provide an explanation for their presence on the Council and their prominence on the sub-committees, where they could exercise some limited power and allow Song to avoid too frequent contact with the Japanese. However, Song was involved in all formal negotiations with Japan and, according to contemporary Chinese assessments, kept the powers of decision in his own hands.<sup>12</sup> The inconstancy of Japanese patronage further confuses the situation: some prospective members of the Council described as 'pro-Japanese', such as Cao Rulin, Wang Yitang and later Wang Kemin, were supposedly

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9. Xuan Jieqi, (B), p.1075; Xie Liben, (A), 'Xie Liben xiansheng koushu' SZYYJ, p.1003.

10. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 26.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.382, ZYSL6, p.128; Order #48, JCZWHGB, #2, 23.1.1936.

11. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 17.1.1936; ZRWJ5, p.359.

12. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 11.2.1936; ZRWJ5, p.360.

rejected by the Japanese because of their close links with Nanjing.<sup>13</sup>

The abundant memoir literature on Song Zheyuan<sup>14</sup> has much to say on Song's orientation at this time. Accounts from Taiwan predictably portray Song as the loyal servant of the Nanjing government, assuming the painful task of holding back the Japanese in North China to buy time for Chiang Kai-shek's war preparations. These accounts virtually ignore Song's contacts with the Japanese armies and, where they do mention them, at times leave the reader with the impression that Song was being quite actively exploited by the central government, referring to his dislike of the ambiguous position of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council,<sup>15</sup> and recounting attempts by Guomintang officials to exaggerate the differences between Song Zheyuan and Nanjing to encourage the Japanese military to trust Song and allow him to remain in the North.<sup>16</sup> Accounts from the PRC show a proto-nationalist Song distancing himself from Nanjing to avoid implication in its policy of compromise while paradoxically exploiting his position between the Japanese and the central government to maximise and consolidate his own power.<sup>17</sup>

The evidence of the primary sources is ambiguous. Whereas the North China crises of 1935 are relatively well-documented, showing Song in direct communication with the central authorities and through the eyes of other North China political figures, there is much less evidence of his position in 1936. The little evidence of direct correspondence between Song Zheyuan and the central government in 1936 consists entirely of reports from Song to Nanjing, and does not include instructions from Nanjing to Song. In the early part of the year Song is shown only in contact with his former commanding officer, Feng Yuxiang, now vice-chairman of the Military Affairs Commission; his correspondence with Feng is largely formulaic but supports the portrayal of Song as loyal of subordinate of Nanjing.<sup>18</sup> For security reasons, matters

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13. Long Dai, (1987), p.199; Cai and Chang, (1985), p.149.

14. From the various *Wenshi ziliao* and *Zhuanji wenxue* collections.

15. Xuan Jieqi, (D), p.1150.

16. Xuan Jieqi, (B), p.1077.

17. Qi Xiemin, (A), p.53.

18. Telegrams Song Zheyuan to Feng Yuxiang, 4.2.1936, 2.5.1936, 4.5.1936, 26.5.1936; *SZYWJ*, pp.180-2.



of importance may have been transmitted in person by representatives of Song and the central government. Li Shijun, the 29th Army's liaison officer, visited the capital to give reports and receive instructions in person, possibly for security reasons; Zhang Yueting, chief of staff of the 29th Army, also went to Nanjing for discussions on national defence and received instructions from Chiang and He Yingqin;<sup>19</sup> Song's cables to Feng Yuxiang frequently refer to meetings with Feng's representatives. These personal communications were supplemented by regular reports of Song's activities sent to He Yingqin by one Yan Kuan, and to the Foreign Ministry by its representative in Beiping, Cheng Xigeng, and occasionally by its representative in Shanghai, Fang Weizhi.<sup>20</sup>

Song Zheyuan may have welcomed the freedom of overt central control which the Japanese presence in Beiping gave him: there was now no higher Chinese authority in Hebei-Chaha'er. In his public statements of early 1936 Song refers to 'the nation' and its future but not to the Nanjing government, and does not in speaking of policies affecting Hebei-Chaha'er refer to a broader context of national policies or central authority. This includes diplomacy, despite the fact that he was rebuked by Chiang in November 1935 for exceeding his powers in his dealings with the Japanese in precisely this way.<sup>21</sup> However, in a cable to Feng Yuxiang in February, Song acknowledges at least the principle of central control while pointing, possibly unconsciously, to the question of central responsibility:

"I have always made it clear that first I will not submit to others, second I will obey the centre, and third I will protect the territory of the nation; *as long as the centre has a policy, the region will follow it...*"<sup>22</sup>

In 1935 North China officials - from He Yingqin to Yu Xuezhong and Yin Tong - had

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19. Li Shijun, (A), pp.128-134 *passim*; Zhang Yueting, (A), 'Qiqi shibian qianhou wo zai Song Zheyuan bu de jingli he jianwen.' *WSZLXI*, XIX, 54, pp.40-42 *passim*.

20. It is not made clear what Yan Kuan's post was or in what capacity he reported to He Yingqin. Cheng Xigeng was also known as Cheng Bo'ang; Fang Weizhi presumably gleaned his information on Song from Japanese military sources in Shanghai. Yang Jie later complained to the Foreign Ministry of the problems caused by relying on intelligence officers lacking adequate knowledge and contacts for the work but does not clarify whether this included intelligence on Song or the three officials named above. Telegram Yang Jie to Chiang Kai-shek, 19.11.1936; *ZYSL6*, pp.205-6.

21. See telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek, 19.11.1935; *ZYSL1*, p.714, *ZYSL6*, p.81.

22. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Feng Yuxiang, 4.2.1936; *SZYWJ*, p.180.

repeatedly urged the central government to take a more active role in the response to the Japanese military in the North:<sup>23</sup> while reports of independent dealings between Song and the Japanese in autumn 1935 had alarmed Nanjing, there was no sign that the central government had developed a strategy for preventing such dealings other than urging the northern generals to remain loyal and threatening reprisals if they did not. If the Chinese government was hampered in its discussions with Japanese diplomats in Nanjing by continuing talks in North China, the failure of the centre to reassert itself in the North left Song Zheyuan little choice but to continue talks with the Japanese.

To avoid provoking the Japanese military, Song was forced to show a certain distance from the central government; to retain public support in Beiping and the trust of the central government, he needed to avoid too close an association with the Japanese: at no point in 1936-1937 was he free to express an unequivocal attitude to Nanjing or Japan.

As Japanese Embassy officials in Nanjing continued to press the Foreign Ministry for a formal extension of Song Zheyuan's powers and a clarification of the ambiguous status of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council,<sup>24</sup> the Japanese armies in Beiping put greater pressure on Song Zheyuan to detach himself more clearly from Nanjing politically and economically. Talks between Song and officers of the NCGA and GDA began with discussions of the future of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei regime and the status of the six counties of Northern Chaha'er occupied by Mongol forces at the height of the autonomy movement in December;<sup>25</sup> Song's demands for the dissolution of the Yin Rugeng regime brought the future administration of North China to the forefront of discussions and the issue of full 'autonomy' for Hebei-Chaha'er as a whole was again raised. Later talks were extended to cover Japanese wishes for greater involvement in the economic development of North China and for cooperation with the Chinese authorities in action against the spread of Communism in the North; reports appearing in the press and those received in Nanjing suggested the scope of

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23. See Chapters II, III, *passim*.

24. Conversation Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi Akira, 20.11.1935; Foreign Ministry Archive 1217 and YGZQ pp.19-21; ZRWJ5, p.364.

25. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 17.2.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.359-360.

discussions on all these matters exceeded the limits observed by the Foreign Ministry in Nanjing.

Talks on the future of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei regime between the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and the Japanese, led by Doihara Kenji and Itagaki Seishirō, vice chief of staff of the GDA and co-conspirator of Ishiwara Kanji in the occupation of Manchuria, began in December 1935. Formal discussions were the responsibility of Song Zheyuan, but Chen Zhongfu, chairman of the foreign affairs committee, Chen Juesheng, director of the Tianjin Beiping-Liaoning railway bureau and later chairman of the Council's communications sub-committee, and Xiao Zhenying, mayor of Tianjin, were also in constant contact with the Japanese.<sup>26</sup>

The talks were interrupted immediately in January 1936 by further incidents in the Beiping-Tianjin area. On January 4th, Japanese troops occupied the station at Tanggu, near Tianjin, and replaced the Chinese flag with a Japanese one.<sup>27</sup> On January 5th, three Japanese soldiers without proper documentation tried to gain entrance to Beiping at Chaoyangmen after the gate had been closed for the night and were made to wait while the Chinese guards phoned their superiors for instructions. When the Japanese were let in, they beat a Chinese guard and then leapt onto a bus and disappeared into the night after firing three shots. The Japanese authorities in Beiping claimed that the shots must have been fired by the Chinese - despite the fact that the Chinese guards on the gates were unarmed - and that this was therefore to be treated as an anti-Japanese incident.<sup>28</sup> When Song Zheyuan's talks with Doihara Kenji and Itagaki Seishiro resumed in Tianjin on January 13th, the Japanese refused to continue discussions of the Eastern Hebei or Northern Chaha'er questions until the Tanggu and Chaoyangmen incidents were settled. Song Zheyuan apologised and the incidents were considered settled, but the talks were again stopped and Itagaki and Doihara left Tianjin on January 16th.<sup>29</sup>

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26. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 17.1.1936; ZRWJ5, p.360, ZYSL6, pp.61.

27. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.150.

28. Zhou Kaiqing, (1985), *Kangzhan yiqian zhi Zhong-Ri guanxi*. Taipei: Xuesheng shuju. [Reprint of 1936 *nian zhi Zhong-Ri guanxi*, (1937)] pp.212-3.

29. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.153.

By now there seemed to be little possibility of a rapid settlement of the Eastern Hebei question. Cheng Xigeng reported on recent developments to the Foreign Ministry on January 17th. The Japanese military was still seeking a more openly independent status for the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council:

"[the Japanese armies] had originally expressed dissatisfaction with the Council, saying that it was not really what they had hoped for and that it could not survive for long... now they have declared themselves satisfied. Doihara said that if the Council were in fact independent, the Japanese could gradually develop ways of sincere cooperation with it..."<sup>30</sup>

The Japanese armies now resisted demands that the Eastern Hebei regime should be dissolved or absorbed into the Hebei Chaha'er Political Council, arguing that, as the Yin regime was based in the War Zone, any decisions on its future must, under the terms of the Tanggu truce, be approved by Japan.<sup>31</sup> Doihara still held to the goal of autonomy for the five provinces of North China.<sup>32</sup> A report from Yan Kuan confirmed that the dissolution of the Eastern Hebei regime would be accepted by Japan only as a prelude to its amalgamation with an equally 'autonomous' Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, not as a concession but as an overt extension of the Japanese sphere of influence.

"Doihara has stated: 1) the Hebei-Chaha'er regime must develop, and retain all customs revenues from North China and all national salt, wine and tobacco taxes instead of handing them over to the south; it must be formally and practically self-governing in all nationalised communications, including postal matters, air transport and railways. After achieving this self-governing status, if it experiences unexpected difficulties or shortage of funds, Japan has resolved to provide material assistance. 2) Local assemblies at city and county level in Hebei and Chaha'er must select members of the pro-autonomy faction as members to oversee political affairs in Hebei and Chaha'er. 3) Once the above have been implemented, Japan will at once order the dissolution of the Eastern Hebei regime to bring about the integration of the administration of Hebei-Chaha'er..."<sup>33</sup>

Doihara warned Xiao Zhenying and Chen Juesheng on February 5th that Japan could

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30. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 17.1.1936; ZRWJ5, p.358.

31. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 17.1.1936; ZRWJ5, p.358. *cf* text of Tanggu truce, Chapter II, which makes no specific mention of political matters.

32. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 1.2.1936; ZYSL6, pp.195-6.

33. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin dated 30.1.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.460-1, dated 6.2.1936; ZYSL6, p.96.

not change its policy on the Eastern Hebei question.<sup>34</sup>

*Central Weekly (Zhongyang zhoubao)* reported on January 20th that initial agreement had been reached, allowing for the dissolution of the Yin Rugeng regime, the reversion of county (*xian*) administration in the War Zone to the provincial authorities, and command of the War Zone PPC to the Hebei-Chaha'er Pacification Commission (*Ji-Cha suijing gongshu*) and the adoption of 'appropriate measures' to deal with Yin Rugeng were to be decided.<sup>35</sup> At no time does it appear from the reports received by the central government from North China that such optimism was justified. The Chinese Foreign Ministry's public repudiation on January 22nd of Hirota's Three Principles had emphasized the remaining distance between formal Chinese and Japanese positions,<sup>36</sup> and the prospects for agreement in North China were no better.

Song Zheyuan left Beiping at New Year and went to Leling to sweep his family graves;<sup>37</sup> talks continued in his absence between Doihara, Xiao Zhenying, Chen Zhongfu and Chen Juesheng.

"On the future of diplomacy between China and Japan, we hold to the precondition that both sides must be equal; if one side is the oppressor and the other the oppressed, it is hard to achieve a satisfactory result. Next, there must be mutual trust; we cannot talk of friendship if there is suspicion... Now China and Japan are considering and researching for talks on the Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er problems; as for when we will hold specific talks and embark on a solution, this is not something we can speak of hastily, within a few days..."<sup>38</sup>

Song made no reference at all to a role or interest for the central government in the affairs of North China, yet the implicit reference to Japan as an 'oppressor', and the admission that it would take time to resolve the Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er problems suggest that his relations with the Japanese were also strained at this time.

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34. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.158.

35. *Zhongyang zhoubao* #398, 20.1.1936, in Li Yunhan (1982), p.727-8.

36. Liu (1950), pp.181-2.

37. *HYBNP*, p.944.

38. Statement made by Song Zheyuan, 7.2.1936, 'Pingdeng huxin reng Zhong-Ri qinshan zhi yaodao' from *Zhongyang zhoubao* 402, 17.2.1936, reprinted in *Song Zheyuan xiansheng wenji*. Zhongguo Guomindang zhongyang weiyuanhui dangshi weiyuanhui, eds., Taipei: 1985, (hereafter *SZYWJ*), pp.27-8.

Cheng Xigeng reported again on February 11th.<sup>39</sup> No progress had been made in the talks since mid-January, and the Japanese seemed to be in no hurry to force a settlement. Cheng saw Japanese intervention in its current form as an independent initiative by Doihara Kenji, whose methods were not universally approved by his colleagues. The North China authorities had found no way of exploiting these divisions, and were forced to approach the talks cautiously despite the need for a rapid resolution:

"The authorities fear that if they treat it as a very urgent matter, this may give rise to further incidents, so they have as yet found no solution. But they genuinely fear that if this state of affairs is prolonged, the Eastern Hebei regime will consolidate its position and... the Japanese and puppet armies will be able to move freely through Northern Chaha'er..."<sup>40</sup>

Talks were continuing via Song and the mayors of Beiping and Tianjin, Qin Dechun and Xiao Zhenying; Cheng undertook to remain in close contact with all of these.<sup>41</sup>

Cheng's fears concerning the future of the North were not unfounded: as the talks dragged on, the Yin Rugeng's regime gradually consolidated itself. Large numbers of Japanese advisers were attached to the regime, and work on rail construction was planned.<sup>42</sup> Cheng Xigeng also reported that Yin was expanding his military capacity, reinforcing the peace preservation corps previously under his command with militia units funded by the tax revenues appropriated from the railway, and developing plans for road construction and water control. Negotiations in early January between Chen Juesheng, of the Bei-Ning railway, and Yin Rugeng had led to tax revenue from the railway within Eastern Hebei being formally ceded to Yin. The appropriation of Bei-Ning railway revenues by Yin in January had panicked Nanjing into sending the Rail Minister to Beiping to resolve the problem, but there is no indication whether Chen was acting on his orders.<sup>43</sup>

By their interference in the affairs of Hebei and sponsorship of Yin Rugeng,

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39. Report in *Zhong-Ri waijiao shiliao*, vol. V, pp.359-60.

40. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 11.2.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.358-360, ZYSL6, pp.60-1.

41. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 11.2.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.358-360, ZYSL6, pp.60-1.

42. Telegrams Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, i) dated 17.2.1936; ZRWJ5, p.424, dated 16.2.1936; ZYSL6, p.201; ii) 28.2.1936; ZRWJ5, p.424, dated 26.2.1936; ZYSL6, pp.201-2; HYBNP, p.941.

43. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.150.

Doihara and Itagaki were encroaching on the traditional sphere of influence of the NCGA. Although the Guandong army's influence in Eastern Hebei would appear to have been assured by the establishment of a special services agency<sup>44</sup> the opposition to Doihara's intervention in the affairs of Hebei mentioned by Cheng Xigeng surfaced in a statement by Nagami, staff officer of the Tianjin army in mid-February: negotiations on the future of North China were, he announced, to be the responsibility of Imai Takeo, Japan's military attache in Beiping; other military personnel were not to interfere.<sup>45</sup> Doihara, recalled to Tokyo, issued a statement shortly before leaving Beiping in which he alluded to the 'progress' made recently in the North; he noted however that there was still work to be done on the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council if Japan's aims were to be achieved, and that there were still obstacles to the amalgamation of the Eastern Hebei regime with the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council.<sup>46</sup>

Negotiations on the Eastern Hebei question were taken over by the NCGA and the military attache, Imai, immediately: after preliminary discussions between Chen Zhongfu and Tada Hayao, commander of the Tianjin army, talks between Tada, Nagami and Song Zheyuan began on February 21st.<sup>47</sup> Despite declarations that these talks were expected to achieve a final solution to the problem, this seemed most unlikely. The failed military coup on February 26th in Japan, while leading to greater central control over the army in the field, did not produce any softening in the attitudes to China held in military or civil circles in Tokyo, and although the Japanese War Ministry and General Staff expressed strong disapproval of further independent action by the Guandong and Tianjin armies this did not encourage them to renounce any gains already made. The existence of the Eastern Hebei regime might be at worst an embarrassment to Japan, however, the official Japanese line was that this was purely a problem of Chinese domestic politics. The dispute between Tokyo and the armies in the field appears to have been more a matter of method and timing than of aims.

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44. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.159.

45. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 14.2.1936; ZRWJ5, p.481.

46. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 14.2.1936; ZRWJ5, p.481.

47. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.160.

The military appointments for North China after the February 26th incident have been described as a sign of Tokyo's determination to improve discipline in the field armies: Tashiro Kan'ichirō took over the command of the Tianjin army from Tada Hayao, and the commander of the Guandong Army, Minami Jirō, who, like Tada, had been active in promoting the North China autonomy movement, was recalled to Tokyo and replaced with Ueda Kenkichi. Itagaki Seishirō was replaced as chief of staff of the Guandong Army with Nishio Toshizō.<sup>48</sup> It was unfortunate for Nanjing that the Army's control over China appointments appears to have extended to the choice of ambassador: the Foreign Ministry's choice, Shigemitsu Mamoru, who had held the post before, was forced out and Kawagoe Shigeru, the former consul-general in Tianjin who had cooperated closely with the Tianjin Army throughout 1935, was appointed in his place.<sup>49</sup> The new military appointments did not signal any moderation of the Army's stance in North China: if anything, growing frustration at Song Zheyuan's intransigence contributed to a more aggressive approach.

As talks in Beiping-Tianjin reached stalemate, the political pressure on Song Zheyuan was aggravated by the threat of military disturbances in the North.<sup>50</sup> Since the expulsion from Chaha'er province of Song Zheyuan and the 29th Army in June 1935,<sup>51</sup> most of the province north of the Great Wall had been garrisoned by local peace preservation corps, leaving the region west of Manzhouguo towards the GDA's traditional targets of Outer Mongolia and the Soviet Union unprotected.<sup>52</sup> As attention in China and abroad focused on the Beiping-Tianjin area in late 1935, the 'bandit' forces supported by the Guandong Army and led by Li Shouxin occupied six counties in Northern Chaha'er. In February 1936 a Mongol government (*Chameng zhengfu*), with substantial Japanese involvement, was established at Zhangbei, led by Zhuo

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48. Kahn, (1978), p.198; Liu, (1950), p.169.

49. Liu, (1950), p.169.

50. Shimada Toshihiko, (1983), p.212.

51. After the Qin-Doihara 'agreement'. See Chapter III.

52. Coox, (1989), Coox, Alvin, (1989), 'The Kwantung Army Dimension.' in Duus, Myers, Peattie, eds., (1989), *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, p.423.



Shenhai and Li Shouxin;<sup>53</sup> by now the rebels occupied the territory west of Shangdu and north of Zhangjiakou, and threatened the Fengzhen-Jining-Xinghe area in Suiyuan. Fu Zuoyi and army commanders from Shanxi had begun moving troops to defend the area in January. As in the case of Yin Rugeng, Doihara denied any responsibility for the problems of Northern Chaha'er. These were, he said, caused by the independent actions of Li Shouxin and the Mongolian Political Council (*Mengzhenghui*), led by De Wang.<sup>54</sup> Nanjing, to gratify some of the wishes of the Mongol leaders for greater independence and thereby win them away from the Japanese, agreed to the establishment of an autonomous council for the Mongols in Suiyuan and Chaha'er. The draft regulations for the council ('*Suiyuan sheng jingnei Menggu ge mengqi difang zizhi zhengwu weiyuanhui zanxing zuzhi dagang*') were promulgated on January 25th,<sup>55</sup> and the Council was officially inaugurated on February 23rd.

The situation was complicated in late February by the Red Army, which after arriving in the North-West in November 1935, advanced across the Yellow River from Shaanxi into western Shanxi. The declared aims of the Eastern Expedition (*dongzheng*) were to overthrow Yan Xishan and Chiang Kai-shek and to promote resistance to Japan in Shanxi; the need to look for food and other supplies and to expand the army's territorial base was arguably equally important.<sup>56</sup> The Communist forces established bases in the Luliang mountains in western Shanxi and resisted Yan Xishan's attempts to expel them until driven back by a joint offensive of Yan's forces and the central armies commanded by Chen Cheng in May.<sup>57</sup>

The volatile combination of the Red Army, the disaffected Mongols of Suiyuan and Chaha'er, and the GDA was to have a profound effect on future developments in the North.<sup>58</sup> Despite the efforts of the Nanjing government to pacify the Mongols,

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53. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.159.

54. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 14.2.1936, ZRWJ5, p.480-1.

55. JCZWHGB, 2, 12.2.36.

56. For a fuller account of the Eastern Expedition (Shanxi campaign) February - May, 1936, see Shum Kui-Kwong (1988), pp.60-70; on the implications of the expedition for China's domestic politics and relations between China, Japan and the Soviet Union, see J.W.Garver (1989), pp.47-53.

57. Garver, (1989), p.47.

58. Garver, (1989), pp.49-50.

Northern Chaha'er and Suiyuan remained unstable. The eastwards advance of the Red Army provided a pretext for the further advance of the Mongol forces towards Shanxi and Suiyuan: Cheng Xigeng reported in early March that Li Shouxin's forces were again moving west towards Yingmen on the pretext of anti-Communist action.<sup>59</sup> The NCGA also saw the Eastern Expedition as possible grounds for action in Hebei: in late March, Fang Weizhi reported:

"The commander of the NCGA has cabled the General Staff in Tokyo to say 'If the Communist armies advance as far as north-western Shanxi, we have decided to support Song Zheyuan in attacking them. Also, if the central armies launch a punitive expedition against the Communist armies, and advance into Shanxi, this may obstruct our future work in Shanxi; we must do all we can to prevent this and, if we cannot, it seems we will be forced to send troops into Shanxi to resist them...' "<sup>60</sup>

Tokyo's rejection of independent and extreme actions by the armies seems in this case to have worked: although a division commanded by Guan Linwei, expelled from Hebei in June 1935 at the demand of the NCGA, was sent to Shanxi,<sup>61</sup> Tada's proposals were not carried out.

Even after Doihara's recall, a report to the Chinese foreign ministry by Wang Hongnian of China's Yokohama consulate, indicated that he had ambitious plans for the future of Japanese influence in China. China was divided into five areas: Manzhouguo, Mongolia, North China, the Yangzi river basin and Liang-Guang (the southern provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi). In the North, the Japanese military - supposedly in the interests of defence against the spread of Communism - was to manage all diplomatic, economic and military matters; in the two southern regions, extreme actions might provoke an alliance between the United States the Soviet Union and Britain which would hamper Japan's freedom of action in North China, so there should be no open intervention in the south.<sup>62</sup> The military monopoly over North China affairs advocated by Doihara seems to have been accepted and supported by the Japanese embassy in Nanjing: pressure was put on the Foreign Minister Zhang Qun by

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59. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 6.3.1936; *ZRWJ5*, p.410-1.

60. Report from Fang Weizhi, Shanghai, to Foreign Ministry intelligence section, 25.3.1936; *ZRWJ5*, p.407.

61. See Chapter III; telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan, 15.3.1936; *HYQSI*, pp.472-3

62. Telegram Wang Hongnian (Yokohama) to Foreign Ministry, 14.3.1936: *ZRWJ5*, p.406.

both Suma Yakichirō, the consul-general, and later by the new ambassador, Kawagoe, to make 'voluntary' changes in the administration of the North.<sup>63</sup>

Song Zheyuan's refusal to consider a settlement to the Eastern Hebei question not based on the abolition of the Yin Rugeng regime, and rejection of a proposal in March from Pan Yugui and Zhang Bi, two advisers of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council to amalgamate the two organisations into one 'autonomous government'<sup>64</sup> led to the stalling of the talks on Yin Rugeng. Dialogue continued on other matters, both in Beiping and in Tokyo: Song Zheyuan's chief of staff, Shi Jingting, visited Japan as a representative of the 29th Army in late February.<sup>65</sup> However, there was growing dissatisfaction with Song at this time. After a visit to North China, the military attaché in Shanghai, Isogai Rensuke, reportedly cabled the Army Minister in mid-March:

"Song Zheyuan obeys only Nanjing: we cannot exercise our authority and it has been impossible to pursue our autonomy work as planned; the situation is most discouraging. If we want to put autonomy work back on course, we must force Song to obey us, and to do this we must increase troop strength in the Tianjin army [NCGA]... by mid-April... In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to drive out Song Zheyuan..."<sup>66</sup>

Despite repeated protests by Nanjing and by Song Zheyuan, the Tianjin army expanded from 2,000 men to approximately 10,000 in the first half of 1936.<sup>67</sup> With the advance of the Red Army into Shanxi province in February, Japan's demands for joint action against Communism in the North had become more urgent; Song was now faced with the prospect of a substantially increased military presence in Hebei and of a Japanese initiative to replace him if he did not comply with Japanese demands. In his public statements, Song remained apparently unmoved; while affirming his adherence to principles of peace and good faith in diplomacy, he made no effort to conciliate the Japanese by claiming progress in their talks:

"As for the question of North China diplomacy, nothing has been done since the establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, and progress on all matters has stalled. It seems that Japan has not yet resolved a clear policy

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63. See Chapter VIII.

64. Chang and Cai, (1985), p.152.

65. *HYBNP* p.948.

66. Report from Fang Weizhi, Shanghai, to Foreign Ministry intelligence section, 25.3.1936; *ZRWJ5*, p.407.

67. Chang and Cai, (1985), p.154.

towards North China, and those responsible for North China policy are now being transferred... "68

He seemed similarly detached from Nanjing: in referring to North China diplomacy, he spoke not as a subordinate of the central government but as a fully independent diplomatic actor:

"The diplomatic policy of North China is still to respond to everything with an attitude of 'peace and good faith'. It is not yet decided whether I will meet Ambassador Arita when he comes North, but if there is a need for talks, I will express to him the desire of the North China authorities to maintain peace... and our hopes that [China and Japan] may pursue genuine mutual support and cooperation... in foreign affairs I will at all times hold to peace and good faith to maintain peace in East Asia jointly with all friendly powers... "69

Despite this show of independence, Song was threatened by rebel Mongol forces in Chaha'er, an increasing NCGA presence in Hebei and may have been aware of Japanese plans to replace him as chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council if he did not become more cooperative; these combined pressures seem to have driven him in March 1936 to begin talks with officers of the NCGA on joint action against Communism.

It was reported in *Sanmin zhuyi yuekan* that in March, Chiang Kai-shek had delegated full responsibility for anti-Communist action in Hebei and Chaha'er to the Pacification Commission, and had given permission to seek Japanese help if necessary.<sup>70</sup> This was not consistent with the position taken in Nanjing by foreign minister Zhang Qun in his talks with the Japanese consul-general, Suma Yakichirō:<sup>71</sup> Zhang had resisted any suggestion that Japan might become involved in action against the Communists in Shanxi, and it was obviously not in the interests of the central government to allow any movement of Japanese troops into North China. Moreover, the reports received by the Nanjing government on the progress of the talks were vague; if Nanjing had instigated the discussions it might have been better-informed as to their results.

In early April, Cheng Xigeng had reported to the Foreign Ministry that Song

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68. Statement by Song Zheyuan, 'Tan huabei neizheng waijiao jinkuang' 24.3.1936; *SZYWJ*, pp.31-3.

69. Statement by Song Zheyuan, 'Tan huabei neizheng waijiao jinkuang' 24.3.1936; *SZYWJ*, pp.31-3.

70. *Sanmin zhuyi yuekan* (Guangzhou): vol VII, #4, 15.4.1936. In Chang and Cai, (1985), p.153.

71. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 7.4.1936; *ZRWJS*, pp.362-66.

Zheyuan and a representative of Han Fujun had begun talks with Tada and Matsumuro on an eight-point plan for anti-Communist action, and were considering allowing Japan to station troops south of Baoding as far as Shunde; no agreement had yet been signed.<sup>72</sup> By late April there were further reports in the press: *Guowen zhoubao* reported agreement on the following points: i) the central armies were not to enter Hebei-Chaha'er for anti-Communist action; ii) if necessary, the local authorities were to seek support from Japan; iii) Japanese troops were to be stationed along all railway lines in Hebei-Chaha'er; iv) a railway line was to be built from Funing to Cangzhou (Eastern Hebei) and Chengde, to facilitate troop movements; v) Sino-Japanese anti-Communist cultural organisations were to be established for the surveillance of anti-Japanese elements; vi) all armies in North China were to employ Japanese military and political advisers.<sup>73</sup>

Song Zheyuan declared on April 29th that discussions on the issue of anti-Communist action had ended because of irreconcilable differences between Chinese and Japanese terms.<sup>74</sup> A General Staff report, 'On the Establishment of a Hebei-Chaha'er Committee for Defence against Communism' (*Ji-Cha fanggong weiyuanhui*), dated April 21st noted the degree of proposed overt Japanese involvement in the Committee: Matsumuro Takayoshi of the Beiping special services agency was proposed as vice-chairman of the Committee. Song rejected this proposal, pointing out that it would not be accepted by the Chinese public. The Committee was also seen by the Japanese as a possible vehicle for cooperation between Song and the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government;<sup>75</sup> it seems improbable that Song, having so far held out for the abolition of the Yin regime would now accept cooperation with it.

Nonetheless, rumours that an agreement had been or was about to be concluded persisted. In May the General Staff passed a second report 'The Agreement on Joint Defence against Communism in North China' (*Huabei Zhong-Ri fanggong xieding*

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72. Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry, 8.4.1936; ZRWJ5, p.407.

73. *Guowen zhoubao* 26.4.1936, quoted in Chang and Cai, (1985), p.152; cf. HYBNP, p.954.

74. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.169; Shen Yunlong, (1976), p.954.

75. Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 21.4.1936, ZRWJ5, p.409.

*neirong*) to the Foreign Ministry.

"1) The committee for defence against Communism shall remain subordinate to the Hebei-Chaha'er [Political] Council; personnel is to be decided by the Chinese; Japanese may act only as advisers.

2) Until the Communist armies enter Hebei-Chaha'er, all anti-Communist work is to be carried out by the Committee, with only the support of the Japanese.

3) If the Communist armies should enter Hebei-Chaha'er, the Chinese armies shall move immediately to defend the provincial borders. Order in Beiping-Tianjin shall be maintained by a force composed of a minority of Chinese troops and a majority of Japanese troops.

4) Japan may be given access when necessary to airfields in Hebei-Chaha'er.

5) After mutual agreement, Japan may supply the military equipment necessary for defence against Communism."<sup>76</sup>

While the alleged agreement reduced the initial involvement of the Japanese forces in anti-Communist action, the freedom of action allowed to the Japanese armies in the event of an advance by the Red Army on Hebei-Chaha'er was far in excess of anything previously suggested: the free access to airfields and the major role in maintenance of order in Beiping-Tianjin would give Japan almost total control over the two provinces while dispersing Chinese forces to the extensive provincial boundaries.

However, if such an agreement existed, the Japanese seemed anxious to play down its importance to Nanjing. Japanese officials denied that an agreement on anti-Communist action had been signed: an unnamed Japanese source informed Fang Weizhi that the rumours referred to a political agreement containing supplementary provisions for action against Communism by Tada and Song Zheyuan at the end of March. The Japanese official in question declined to reveal more details on the content of the agreement without payment.<sup>77</sup>

It seems probable that the talks were begun under pressure from the Japanese military rather than on Chiang Kai-shek's orders. By May, however, the apparent probability of the Red Army advancing far enough east to threaten Hebei and thus forcing Song actually to implement an agreement on anti-Communist action was not great, and it may have seemed easier to give in to Japanese demands to conclude an agreement and hope to be able to avoid implementing it later. Nanjing's specific

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76. *Huabei Zhong-Ri fanggong xieding neirong*: report from General Staff to Foreign Ministry (copy to He Yingqin) 5.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.410.

77. Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry Intelligence Section, 19.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.410. There is no reference in Chinese government sources to such a political agreement.

reaction to these reports is not recorded, but in talks with Japanese diplomatic personnel, Zhang Qun repeatedly rejected the proposals made for anti-Communist action in North China, demanding a clear definition of the scope of such action and of Japanese involvement, and prior guarantees of respect for Chinese sovereignty.<sup>78</sup>

Japan's anti-Communist initiative was not restricted to the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. A conference of Japanese special services personnel in April discussed the establishment of mass anti-Communist organisations in Northern Chaha'er and Eastern Hebei: anti-Communist action seems to have been used in areas occupied by the Japanese or their puppets as a focus for mass organisations whose broader aim was the elimination of anti-japanese sentiments. The proposal in the agreement reported in *Guowen zhoubao* that 'anti-Communist cultural organisations' be established<sup>79</sup> presumably referred to Japanese plans to secure Song Zheyuan's agreement to the establishment of similar organisations in Hebei-Chaha'er as means of extending Japanese control complementary to the expansion in troop numbers.

The growing dissatisfaction of the Japanese armies with Song Zheyuan suggests that, in the talks on anti-Communist action as in earlier discussions on the Eastern Hebei regime, Song had failed to show sufficient pliability. Rumours of plans to remove him continued to arrive in Nanjing, and in contrast to the enforced calm in the capital, where the prolonged absence of a Japanese ambassador had halted substantive talks, North China remained unstable. In mid-May it was reported that the Japanese armies were trying to force to Song to assume a purely military role, and hand control over political affairs to Wu Peifu, Mayor of Tianjin Xiao Zhenying or Yin Rugeng;<sup>80</sup> by late May the expulsion Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying and the 29th Army altogether from Hebei was rumoured to be included in a plan originating in the military authorities in Tokyo. The Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council would in this case be replaced by a regime led by the supposedly 'pro-Japanese' Cao Kun, or by a coalition of Lu Zongyu, Li Houji and Qi

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78. See Chapter III.

79. See above, p.185.

80. Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry 13.5.1936; ZYSL6, p.197.

Xieyuan.<sup>81</sup> Having, in June 1935, secured the exclusion of central army units from Hebei and Chaha'er,<sup>82</sup> the Japanese reportedly went further, planning that Yan Xishan and Fu Zuoyi, governor of Suiyuan province, were to be ordered via Song Zheyuan to withdraw their forces south of the Fen River;<sup>83</sup> this would effectively extend the zone from which forces allied to the central government were excluded west from the coast across Shanxi and Suiyuan, preventing further interference from Fu and Yan in the western advance of Li Shouxin's forces from Northern Chaha'er, and allowing direct confrontation between Japan, Outer Mongolia and the Communist forces in the North-West. A series of conferences of Japanese military personnel were held in Tianjin to discuss the future of North China, and Song Zheyuan was visited by Tashiro, Matsumuro, and Sugiyama Gen of Tokyo military headquarters.<sup>84</sup>

Tension in the North was aggravated by the problem of smuggling, which caused not only grave economic damage - in May, losses to customs since August 1935 were estimated at 30 million yuan, with losses of 8 million yuan in April 1936 alone<sup>85</sup> - but also serious disorder. There were numerous attacks by smugglers, often openly protected by Japanese militia, on customs officials on the chief smuggling route from Manzhouguo through Eastern Hebei to central China and on the coast, and an exchange of fire near Tanggu between a Japanese vessel suspected of smuggling and a Chinese customs boat provoked not only official protests from the Japanese consul-general in Tianjin and the embassy in Nanjing but also an attempt to burn down the customs building in Qingdao.<sup>86</sup> In June, the Finance Ministry drew up a series of measures against smuggling, 'Provisional regulations for sanctions on tariff evasion' (*Chengzhi*

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81. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry 26.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.382, ZYSL6, p.128. cf Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry dated 29.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.382, dated 25.6.1936, ZYSL6, pp.127-8, in which Xiao Zhenying is still seen as a possible ally of Japan in the formation of a North China buffer zone between Manzhouguo and the Nanjing regime. On Cao Kun *et al* see above, p.171.

82. See Chapter III.

83. Telegrams Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, i) 26.5.1936; ZRWJ5, p.382, ZYSL6, p.128; ii) dated 29.5.1936 ZRWJ5, p.382, dated 25.6.1936, ZYSL6, pp.127-8.

84. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.173, 176; Shen Yunlong, (1976), p.979.

85. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.172, 174.

86. Zhang Pengzhou (1985), pp.178-9.



*toulou guanshui zanxing tiaolie*),<sup>87</sup> but the withdrawal in January 1936 of the Bei-Ning railway authorities from action against smuggling<sup>88</sup> and the protection of the smugglers by the Japanese military made it impossible to suppress the trade. The economic effects of the trade reached the whole country: in July, the Shanghai chamber of commerce established a special committee to investigate the problem of smuggling.<sup>89</sup>

In late May, Song Zheyuan resigned his post as governor of Hebei, having had little time for provincial duties,<sup>90</sup> and appointed Feng Zhi'an as his successor. He replaced Feng with Liu Ruming as governor of Chaha'er, and sacked Xiao Zhenying as mayor of Tianjin - supposedly for being too close to the Japanese - appointing Zhang Zizhong in his place.<sup>91</sup>

As national concern over the situation in Hebei and Chaha'er grew, the national salvation movement gained momentum: on May 30th an All China National Salvation Federation (*Quanguo gejie jiuguo lianhehui*) was established in Shanghai; other national salvation associations were formed in other parts of China, for example the North-West National Salvation Association (*Xibei jiuguohui* founded in June 1936) which was to make Xi'an a centre of pro-resistance activism.<sup>92</sup> Anti-imperialist demonstrations on the anniversary of the May 30th incident led predictably to protests from the Japanese authorities in Beiping and Tianjin and also to the arrest by Japanese militia of student demonstrators; Song rejected the protests and negotiated with the Japanese to have the students released.<sup>93</sup>

In Beiping, talk of anti-Communist agreements with the Japanese was followed by persistent rumours that the 29th Army was to withdraw south from Beiping. Public confidence in Song and the local authorities was being eroded: it was essential that Song make his position clear. On May 30th he issued a statement repudiating current

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87. Promulgated by Executive Yuan 2.6.1936. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.175.

88. See above, p.171.

89. *Quanguo jiancha sihuo zonghui*, established Shanghai, 22.7.1936. Zhang Pengzhou (1985), p.182.

90. 'Tan Huabei neizheng wajiao jinkuang' statement by Song Zheyuan, 24.3.1936; *SZYWJ*, pp.31-3.

91. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 26.5.1936; *ZRWJ5*, p.382, *ZYSL6*, p.128; Cai and Chang, (1985), p.155.

92. Wu Tien-wei, (1976), p.53.

93. Cai and Chang, (1985), p.155.

rumours that Japan was to station troops at Fengtai and Nanyuan and restating the underlying principles of his talks with Japan:

"Most of the rumours are deliberate propaganda intended to create an atmosphere of terror, and we hope that everyone will remain calm... What we now seek in diplomacy in North China is the preservation of our national sovereignty; we will do anything which does not infringe sovereignty and which is compatible with our principles of equality and mutual amity; I will assume full responsibility for this as far as I can or should..."<sup>94</sup>

His assurance that the subject of his discussions with Matsumuro Takayoshi, special services officer in Beiping, was international affairs since World War I seems unconvincing.<sup>95</sup>

The Foreign Ministry was now apparently concerned enough about the North China situation to send Gao Zongwu, chief of the Foreign Ministry's East Asia Section, to Beiping.<sup>96</sup> Song appeared to welcome central involvement at this point, telling Feng Yuxiang:

"All major problems are now awaiting conclusion of a national policy; they are not of a kind which can be solved locally..."<sup>97</sup>

Hu Shi replied to Song Zheyuan's statement in an article in *Duli Pinglun*. Hu noted the general relief which had resulted from Song's declaration of his position yet seemed unconvinced by the statement. He referred to Song's past as follower of Feng Yuxiang and hero of the resistance at Xifengkou to the Japanese invasion of Rehe in 1933, and urged Song to abandon evasion and declare his position clearly.

"We hope that Song Zheyuan will state in clear terms his attitude to our 'friendly ally' and 'neighbour'. Only those who speak the truth can be respected by friend or enemy... Ambiguous talk and equivocal attitudes are a snare of one's own making..."<sup>98</sup>

He pointed to the weakness and isolation of those such as Yin Rugeng who had chosen to seek Japanese protection, and concluded with a warning:

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94. Statement by Song Zheyuan, 30.5.1936 'Huabei waijiao fangzhen zai li bao zhuquan'; *SZYWJ*, pp.35-6.

95. Statement by Song Zheyuan, 30.5.1936 'Huabei waijiao fangzhen zai li bao zhuquan'; *SZYWJ*, pp.35-6. Matsumuro had allegedly worked with Feng Yuxiang in 1924 in the coup which overthrew Wu Peifu and expelled Pu Yi from the Forbidden City. Sheridan, (1966), pp.144-145.

96. Statement by Song Zheyuan, 30.5.1936 'Huabei waijiao fangzhen zai li bao zhuquan'; *SZYWJ*, pp.35-6.

97. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Feng Yuxiang, 26.5.1936; *SZYWJ*, p.181.

98. Hu Shi, (1936), 'Jinggao Song Zheyuan xiansheng' *DLPL*, 204, 7.6.1936, p.2.

"Looking at all the military leaders who have risen to prominence in the last twenty years, from Zhang Zuolin to Sun Chuanfang, all of them had particular talents; their successes are all attributable to these talents, and their defeats arose from their presuming too far on these talents, and were brought down and replaced by lesser men and spurned by the people of the whole nation..."<sup>99</sup>

Song had so far narrowly succeeded in balancing the conflicting pressures to which he was subject; although unable to secure the abolition of the Eastern Hebei regime or prevent its consolidation he had escaped damaging open concessions to the Japanese demands for the amalgamation of a fully autonomous Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council with the Yin Rugeng regime and for full-blown joint anti-Communist action. As the persistent rumours of talks and agreements between Song and the Japanese armies eroded public confidence in him, his continued evasion of explicit agreement had nearly exhausted the patience of the Japanese armies, and his position looked increasingly insecure.

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99. Hu Shi, (1936), p.2.

**Chapter VIII**  
**Zhang Qun as Foreign Minister**  
**(January-December, 1936)**

The Nanjing government had by early 1936 abandoned the passive diplomatic stance of previous years. In contrast to the early months of 1935, there was now no talk of 'rapprochement' (*qinshan*) but only of 'normalisation' (*tiaozheng*). Japan policy had acquired a sense of purpose lacking under the ministry of Wang Jingwei. The formal diplomatic advances made in 1935 - the exchange of ambassadors, the proposal to the Tokyo government of a full 'normalisation' of relations between China and Japan, and the formal statement of Nanjing's terms for normalisation - had produced no visible, practical effect on the Sino-Japanese relationship. The efforts of Foreign Minister Zhang Qun to secure normalisation - first through a formal Sino-Japanese conference in Nanjing, then in discussions with Ambassador Kawagoe Shigeru - were similarly unproductive: the political and economic intervention of the Japanese military in the affairs of North China continued, and the Japanese agenda dominated discussions in Nanjing between the Chinese Foreign Ministry and the Japanese Embassy.

There was considerable attention in the Chinese Press to the issue of Sino-Japanese relations: numerous articles were published discussing the prospects for improved relations, and the January issue of *Riben Pinglun* (*Japan Review*) carried a series of two dozen articles by Chinese and Japanese journalists and academics on the future of Sino-Japanese relations.<sup>1</sup> Some of the problems which were to hinder the talks throughout the year were already visible: Japanese press reports on the proposed conference stated that negotiations were to be conducted on the basis of the conditions presented by Foreign Minister Hirota to Jiang Zuobin in October 1935, and made no reference to Chinese terms, and noted the scepticism of the Japanese Army Ministry over the conference.<sup>2</sup> Press attention to the Sino-Japanese question and associated issues such as open diplomacy put further pressure on Nanjing to produce results.<sup>3</sup>

The split between the North and the centre on relations with Japan was now more marked than ever and had been tacitly recognised in the establishment of the

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1. 'Lun Zhong-Ri bangjiao' *RBPL*, VIII, 1, pp.1-76.

2. 'Zhong-Ri jiang kai Nanjing de huiyi', *RBPL*, VIII, 1, pp.140-1.

3. See especially Hu Shi, 'Women yaoqiu waijiao gongkai' *DLPL*, 184, pp.10-12.

Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council in December 1935; this division further undermined the efforts of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. The Japanese armies in the North continued to intervene in the administration of North China, and Japanese Embassy staff, in their insistence on the 'special status' of North China, implicitly supported this intervention. In Tokyo, General Okamura Neiji, one of the Army's China experts, commented that

"China is not a country controlled by one sovereignty....A diplomacy which is built on negotiations with only the Nanjing government is a castle built on sand."<sup>4</sup>

expressed an attitude which seemed to be widely accepted in the Tokyo government, and Japan was not alone in not thinking of China as a sovereign state.<sup>5</sup>

Nanjing's insistence that the economic cooperation and joint action against Communism demanded by Japan would not be contemplated without adequate guarantees of Chinese sovereignty and prior consideration of the Chinese terms for an improvement in relations seemed empty as reports of talks on these issues between Song Zheyuan and the Japanese on terms unacceptable to the central government reached the capital. At the same time, the failure of the Foreign Ministry to fulfil its promise for a high-level conference on Sino-Japanese relations, or to progress even to the point of getting a Japanese ambassador to the negotiating table, increased pressure on Song Zheyuan to continue the talks, maximised the damage that could be done by his contacts with the Japanese, and undermined public confidence in the central and North China authorities as reports of the stalemate in Nanjing and talks in Beiping appeared in the press.

For Nanjing, 'normalisation' meant the repudiation of the old pattern of relations with Japan: no normalisation, and no consideration of Japan's further wishes could be considered until Chinese grievances had been addressed and the causes of those grievances eradicated. A firm commitment by Japan to respect Chinese sovereignty, and resolution of the North China problem on terms acceptable to China were essential to this.<sup>6</sup> However, the Japanese government saw the talks not as a

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4. Quoted in Crowley, (1966), p.242.

5. Crowley, (1966), p.242; see also British comments on China in Chapter XIII.

6. Crowley, (1966), p.239-40. cf Zhang Qun's conversation with Nemoto, 7.1.1936.

vehicle for a reassessment of the Sino-Japanese relationship and a revision of its basic principles, but as an opportunity to advance existing goals of China policy, goals which were based on those very assumptions to which the Chinese authorities most vehemently objected.

The official Chinese approach to Tokyo met immediate resistance from the Japanese government: after the presentation of Nanjing's terms for an improvement in relations to Foreign Minister Hirota in October 1935,<sup>7</sup> the question of a conference in Nanjing on the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship had been discussed on several occasions by Ding Shaoji, counsellor of the Chinese Embassy and Shigemitsu Mamoru, vice foreign minister. Shigemitsu raised fundamental objections to the principles and procedures for the conference.<sup>8</sup> On January 8th 1936, he warned a meeting of the Japanese Foreign Ministry that the aims of the Chinese government in proposing a conference on relations with Japan were to check the activities of the Japanese armies in North China and to force discussion of Chiang Kai-shek's principles for the normalisation of the Sino-Japanese relationship; it would be more in Japan's interests to secure an agreement with China on the basis of Hirota's Three Principles: no further reliance on third powers to restrict Japan; recognition of Manzhouguo, or at the least close economic links between North China, Japan and Manzhouguo; and joint action against Bolshevisation.<sup>9</sup> Details of the implementation would only be provided after China's acceptance 'in principle' of the Japanese principles. Shigemitsu proposed suspension of discussions on North China, as these would rapidly lead to deadlock.<sup>10</sup>

When, on January 21st in a speech to the Diet, the Japanese foreign minister Hirota Kōki outlined his Three Principles for relations with China - as cooperation and friendship between China and Japan, normalisation of relations between China, Japan and Manchuria to ensure stability in East Asia, and joint defence against Communism - and claimed that China had already accepted the principles as the basis of a normalisation of relations, this drew an immediate denial from the Chinese Foreign

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7. See Chapter IV.

8. See Chapter IV, pp. 119-120; Chen Mingzhong, (1989), p.112

9. See Chapter IV.

10. Crowley, (1966), p.239-40.

Ministry.<sup>11</sup> Zhang Qun explained the following day to Suma Yakichirō, Japanese consul-general in Nanjing, that Chiang's acceptance was 'in principle' only;<sup>12</sup> it did not imply any relaxation of Nanjing's terms.

Japan was not merely trying to conceal a China policy which Nanjing would find unacceptable: tensions within the Japanese government, particularly the uneasy relationship between the foreign ministry and the military, made Japan's 'China policy' a sensitive issue. Japan's 'China policy' was constantly being renegotiated, and any agreement reached was short-lived. The key problem was the coordination of China policy between the Foreign Ministry and War Ministry. Hirota's 'Three Principles' had been developed specifically as a basis for cooperation between the war and foreign ministries on China policy; their vagueness suggests that although there was broad acceptance of the Principles as principles there was as yet no agreement on their interpretation.<sup>13</sup> Nanjing's insistence that Tokyo provide details of the substance of the 'Principles' was an embarrassment to Japanese diplomats briefed to seek unconditional acceptance of the Principles as a basis for future relations before their implementation could be discussed.

In late January the appointments of the new ambassadors were officially announced. The Japanese ambassador, Arita Hachirō, was a former head of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Asia section and had first met Zhang Qun at the time of the Jinan incident in 1928.<sup>14</sup> Xu Shiying, the Chinese ambassador, was, like Zhang Qun, appointed apparently because of his contacts with Japanese political figures. Talks continued between Nanjing and Japanese military and diplomatic personnel; Isogai Rensuke, the Japanese military attache, met Zhang Qun and Chiang Kai-shek on January 24th and 25th before returning to Tokyo to report to the War Ministry.<sup>15</sup> Before leaving for Japan, Xu Shiying was briefed by Zhang Qun and Chiang Kai-shek, and also by Huang Fu who, although officially retired, still had some influence on

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11. Liu, (1950), p.156.

12. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 22.1.1936; Foreign Ministry archives in Second Historical Archive of China, Nanjing, XVIII; 1217, also published in *YGZQ*, pp.21-2.

13. See Chapter IV.

14. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.53.

15. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.156.

Japan policy. En route for Tokyo, Xu also visited Beiping to discuss the North China problem with Song Zheyuan.<sup>16</sup>

In a letter written on February 22nd to Zhu Hexiang, the Chinese minister in Belgium, Huang expressed more optimism over China's position than he had done at any time since his departure from Beiping in February 1935:

"Although there are rumours abroad that we are still disunited, as far as I can see, we are still working hard for peace while positively preparing for unexpected mishaps. Recently Japan's attitude and views have been milder; there are three reasons for this: first, their intention to withdraw from the naval limitation treaty; second conflicts over selection of the Diet; and third, the realisation that we are slightly better-prepared, and that they cannot, as they could before, satisfy their ambitions without firing a single shot, spending a single yen, simply by threatening us..."<sup>17</sup>

The Foreign Ministry seemed anxious to dissociate the diplomacy of 1936 from the failures of the past five years: the criticisms of Chinese diplomatic behaviour made in 1935 were now echoed by the Ministry itself.<sup>18</sup> Apparently unwilling directly to attack its own officials, the Ministry reprinted in *Waibu Zhoukan* an article from *Beiping Chenbao* in which the failings of the past were openly condemned:

"Our diplomats saw 'diplomacy' as formal negotiations between two powers, and paid no attention to anything else... Non-action (*wu wei*) is the old practice of diplomats; they had little contact with the government, and less with people outside government, so even after many years in one posting they still did not understand the country..."

Because China was weak, our diplomats easily became fearful and retiring... and did not dare dispute those things they should done...

Our diplomatic missions have never provided correct intelligence... and the government could not assess tendencies in foreign powers. How could they fail to make mistakes in *ad hoc* responses based only on subjective speculation?"<sup>19</sup>

While critical of Chinese diplomats abroad, the article did not suggest any failings on the part of the Ministry in Nanjing. If the intention in reprinting the article was to emphasize a break with the past, the view of the future, that is of Xu Shiying himself, is uninspiring. There was, the writer admits, no 'predestined relationship' between Xu

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16. *HYBNP*, p.943; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.162.

17. Letter Huang Fu to Zhu Hexiang, 22.2.1936; *HYBNP*, pp.946.

18. See Wei Chen, Zhang Zhongfu *et al* quoted in Chapter I.

19. 'Suo wang yu Xu dashi zhe' *Beiping Chenbao*, 19.2.1936, reprinted *WBZK*, 103, pp.15-16.



and diplomacy. He comments:

"Theorists may say that Mr Xu is not a diplomat, and fear that he cannot bear this heavy responsibility. We feel that China now has very few diplomats, and at this time of scarce talent, because of Mr Xu's experience, we cannot state categorically that he may not succeed..."<sup>20</sup>

This was hardly effusive praise of the new ambassador, and seems misplaced in a Foreign Ministry publication.

The attempted military coup on February 26th in Tokyo caused a shift in the balance of power in the Japanese government which was to have a significant effect on China policy. While, with Hirota's move from the foreign ministry to the premiership, there was some continuity in foreign policy, the execution of North China policy was handed over to the Army.<sup>21</sup> The Control faction (*Tōsei-ha*), which emerged dominant from the crisis, traditionally favoured 'southern advance' into China over 'northern advance' towards the USSR preferred by the Imperial Way faction (*Kōdō-ha*).<sup>22</sup> It was decreed that war and naval ministers were to be appointed from officers on active service: this brought the authorities in Tokyo closer to the armies in the field which had ominous implications for China. The Army also had more influence over civil political appointments.<sup>23</sup> For China, there was apparently closer coordination between Japanese Embassy staff in Nanjing and the armies in North China, with a more open promotion by the diplomats of North China's 'special status' in the aftermath of the attempted coup, which became particularly marked with the appointment in April of Kawagoe Shigeru as Ambassador.<sup>24</sup>

Arita Hachirō had left Japan before the attempted coup and arrived in Shanghai on 26th February. He remained in Nanjing until March 22nd, and had informal discussions with both Zhang Qun and Chiang Kai-shek. A joint statement was issued, stating that although China and Japan still held different opinions and no firm

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20. 'Suo wang yu Xu dashi zhe' *Beiping Chenbao*, 19.2.1936, reprinted *WBZK*, 103, p.15.

21. Crowley, (1966), p.293.

22. Crowley, (1966), p.294.

23. As for example in the appointment of Kawagoe as Ambassador to China. Liu (1950), pp.168-170; Connors, (1976), p.176.

24. See below, p.201.

conclusions had been made, the talks were not without benefits for both sides.<sup>25</sup> Zhang Qun felt that although substantial differences remained between China and Japan, the discussions allowed both sides to clarify their positions.<sup>26</sup>

Zhang had informed Arita that a satisfactory resolution of the North China problems was essential if any lasting improvement in relations was to be achieved, a view shared by Huang Fu, who did not however feel that such a resolution would be easy.<sup>27</sup> Returning to Tokyo to take up the post of Foreign Minister, Arita left China via Tianjin and Changchun, where he convened a North China consuls' conference and had meetings with Tada Hayao of the Tianjin Army, with the new commander of the Guandong army, Ueda Kenkichi, and possibly also with Song Zheyuan.<sup>28</sup>

Arita's visit to the North confirmed the importance of the North China issue in relations between China and Japan. Despite the decision by the Japanese foreign ministry to avoid raising the North China question, it again became the focus of attention because of Chinese objections to smuggling and to the increase in Japanese forces in the North announced in April, and because of Japanese concern at the Eastern Expedition (*dongzheng*) by the Red Army, which had advanced into Shanxi province in late February, and whose move eastwards threatened the promotion of the 'autonomy movement' in Inner Mongolia.<sup>29</sup>

When Zhang Qun met Consul-General Suma on April 7th and April 16th, the issues and problems which dominated Sino-Japanese contacts for the rest of the year were already beginning to emerge. The discussions between Zhang and Suma, described as 'exchanges of opinions', appear from the available records to be no more than that: opinions are exchanged on a given topic, points of difference and - rarely - concurrence noted, and the topic is abandoned for another. No argument is developed,

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25. *HYBNP*, p.971.

26. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.54.

27. Letter Huang Fu to Zhang Qun, 19.3.1936; *HYBNP*, p.971.

28. Song refers to a possible meeting with Arita in his statement of March 24th, 1936, but it is unclear if the meeting took place. See Chapter VIII. Liu, (1950), p.168.

29. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 29.3.1936; *HYQSI*, p.472.

no concessions are offered and no progress is made.<sup>30</sup> The discussions are generally sterile and tedious, and their conclusions can be summarised in brief with no disservice to the level of debate: these are therefore contained in tables in Appendix VII.

It seems probable that these early meetings were intended by Nanjing as *ad hoc* discussions of matters arising rather than as preliminary informal talks on normalisation: the question of normalisation was raised by Suma, not Zhang. However, Zhang's defence of China's principles is unimpressive. He restates China's terms as wholly negative ones: non-infringement of sovereignty, non-intervention in Chinese domestic administration and no attacks on Chinese unity, and although Nanjing had previously stated that no discussions could begin on normalisation without Japan first accepting China's principles for future relations<sup>31</sup> - mutual respect for independence and sovereignty, mutual amity and resolution of disputes by diplomatic means - the discussions were increasingly dominated concerned with issues associated with Hirota's 'Three Principles', particularly economic cooperation between China and Japan. While Zhang Qun rejected Japanese proposals incompatible with Chinese terms, he was unable to impose the Chinese agenda on the talks: Suma, and Japanese requirements, dominate the conversation.

Japan's stance throughout the year - as it appears in the Chinese records - is determined by the need to consolidate its position in North China: this is revealed both directly in Japanese attitudes towards Song Zheyuan and the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and indirectly in proposals for economic cooperation and, later, joint action against Communism. From December 1935, Japanese Embassy staff had openly argued for wider powers for Song Zheyuan, and despite Zhang Qun's insistence that any semblance of independence or greater autonomy for Hebei-Chaha'er was unacceptable, Suma continued to argue for further powers for Song, and more financial independence

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30. See conversation between Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi Akira, Chapter IV, record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 7.4.1936; *ZRWJ5*, pp.362-6; record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 16.4.1936; *ZRWJ*, pp.366-71; Kawagoe memorandum, Appendix VIII.

31. See Chapter IV.

for the North.<sup>33</sup> This would further separate Song Zheyuan from the central authorities, making him more vulnerable to pressure to accept Japanese proposals for economic and anti-Communist measures, and create a military and political buffer between Eastern Hebei and Manzhouguo and the rest of China. Suma's other chief concern in April was the Red Army's Eastern Expedition into Shanxi province: the feelings of 'unease' experienced by the Japanese at the advance was given as justification for troop increases in Hebei against which the Nanjing government protested in vain.<sup>34</sup> While Suma's complaints to Zhang could be vague - feelings of 'unease' (*bu an*) on the part of Japan at the situation in North China or misgivings over the 'atmosphere' (*kongqi*) between China and Japan - the concessions demanded to allay the feelings of unease or improve the atmosphere were quite specific concessions, such as agreement to an increase of several thousands in the Japanese troop presence in North China or the creation of an air link between Shanghai and Fukuoka. Any attempt by Zhang Qun to secure concessions of equal value from Japan, for example an end to illegal flights over North China in exchange for the Shanghai-Fukuoka link, was rejected.<sup>35</sup>

On April 14th, Arita Hachiro announced a new China policy: problems concerning North China were to be resolved by direct negotiations with the authorities in Hebei-Chaha'er; cultural, political and military support was to be given to the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities so that they could forge close links with Japan; formal talks were to be begun with the Nanjing government on the normalisation of economic relations, especially the introduction of a tariff rate favourable to Japan. This was to be followed by the promotion of a tariff league including Japan, China and Manchuria although formal recognition of the Manchurian 'state' was not essential. Effective joint measures must be taken to prevent the spread of Communism eastward from Outer

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33. Records of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 7.4.1936; ZRWJ5, p.364, ZYSL6, p.63; 16.4.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.368-8; 25.7.1936; ZRWJ4, p.154.

34. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 7.4.1936; ZRWJ5, pp.362-3 ZYSL6, pp.

35. Records of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 22.1.1936; Archive 1217, YGZQ, p.22; 26.8.1936, ZRWJ5, p.371; Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936; Archive 1217 and YGZQ, p.; see also telegram Yang Shuxuan to Chiang Kai-shek, 27.10.1936; ZRWJ4, pp.52-3.

Mongolia and Xinjiang.<sup>36</sup> The policy appears to owe more to the increased influence of the military authorities than Arita's talks with Zhang Qun in March.

Suma returned to Japan after the talks to brief the newly-appointed ambassador, Kawagoe Shigeru. In a statement issued on his arrival in Kōbe on April 29th, Suma said that the Chinese government should decide whether to cooperate with Japan or to go to war; Nanjing should not try to do both at once.<sup>37</sup> It appeared that Japan was willing to consider 'normalisation' only if China unconditionally accepted Japan's own terms. The appointment of Kawagoe was significant: his promotion from consul-general in Tianjin to ambassador was a major leap in status, and owed much to the influence of the military: the Foreign Ministry's first choice was Shigemitsu Mamoru, but he was forced to resign in the face of the Army's disapproval.<sup>38</sup> Shigemitsu had served as Minister in China in 1930-32 and was seen by the Japanese Army - although probably not by the Chinese authorities - as soft in his views on China.<sup>39</sup> In Tianjin, Kawagoe had supported Japanese military initiatives against the Chinese central authorities in the Hebei and Chaha'er crises of May and June 1935 and later in the North China Autonomy movement.<sup>40</sup> The appointment of Kawagoe instead of Shigemitsu, who later became Ambassador to the Soviet Union, was a further reflection of the importance of North China and of the dominance of the military's views over those of the Foreign Ministry.

Meanwhile Nanjing again protested to the Japanese authorities in Tokyo over the troop increases and smuggling.<sup>41</sup> The Japanese authorities denied that there was anything irregular about the troop increases, yet it was reported that the Japanese garrison in China was to be increased to about 10,000.<sup>42</sup> The Executive Yuan also

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36. Lin Jidong, 'Youtian Balang (*Arita Hachirō*) lun' *RBPL* VIII, 4, pp.75-6; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.168.

37. Shen Yunlong, (1976), p.957.

38. Liu, (1950), p.169.

39. Hunter, (1984), p.198.

40. See Chapter III, and Chapter VI.

41. Full text of protest against smuggling 'Waibu wei Huabei zousi wenti zhi Ri zhengfu kangyi wen' dated 15.5.1936; *WJYB*, VIII, 6, pp.135-6.

42. Secret report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 21.4.1936; *ZRWJ5*, p.375.

passed measures for dealing with the smuggling which were promulgated in early June ('*Chengzhi toulou guanshui zanxing tiaolie*')<sup>43</sup>. Smuggling had been discussed in Tokyo by the British ambassadors in China to Japan in April, and by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross when he returned to Tokyo in June: Tokyo seemed inclined to prohibit the trade only if China first revised tariffs in Japan's favour.<sup>44</sup> British concern about smuggling was not entirely altruistic - China's foreign loans, many of which from Britain secured by customs revenue which was by now being significantly eroded by smuggling.<sup>45</sup>

Leith-Ross continued discussions with the Japanese foreign and finance ministries on Anglo-Japanese investment in China, but his proposals were rejected.<sup>46</sup> Despite the effects of smuggling - customs revenue was a substantial proportion of the government's income - the Chinese economy now seemed more stable. An agreement between the United States and China partly counteracted the effects of US silver policy on China and allowed China to acquire a gold reserve. Britain granted China credit guarantees which supported Chinese trade and internal reconstruction and allowed Nanjing to buy arms, mostly from the United States and Germany.<sup>47</sup>

By late May, when Zhang Qun had been in office for half a year, the prospect of substantive talks with Japan seemed no nearer. In a speech to the Foreign Ministry, he reiterated his determination to work for the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations and to secure Japanese respect for China's sovereignty and unity, as if to convince the Ministry that he had not lost momentum:

"As for China, any issue [whose resolution] can advance the prosperity of China and Japan and consolidate peace in East Asia, may be used as a vehicle for normalisation; any method which takes mutual amity, equality, and mutual respect for sovereignty as its basis may be used as a means for normalisation... we hope the responsible authorities will take a broad view and use all their energies to establish friendly understanding, eradicate enmity and above all clarify their respective positions and areas of difficulty, and seek frank

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43. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.175; Shen Yunlong, (1976), p.957. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.55.

44. See also record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 16.4.1936; ZRWJ5, p.371; 25.7.1936; ZYSL6, p.157.

45. Liu, (1950), p.172.

46. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.175-6.

47. Liu, (1950), pp.176.

discussions through formal channels... "48

However, Zhang had no achievements to report to the Ministry and little to offer in terms of concrete plans for the future. In the light of the experiences of the past year, and the absence of visible progress in relations with Japan, his assessment of the current state of affairs is so optimistic as to cast doubt on his judgement of future prospects:

"Although, in the year since ex-Foreign Minister Hirota expounded to the Diet his policy of 'no invasion, no threat' his plans for improvement [of relations] have not yet been fully clarified, and have so far had no effect, most people deeply sympathise with his pains and diligence in seeking to maintain peace... Since becoming Foreign Minister, I have, with the greatest resolve, advocated the normalisation of relations between China and Japan through diplomatic channels; Japan shares that resolution, and it is a matter of great regret that we have not yet undertaken specific talks on the problems and methods for such a normalisation... "49

For the future, Zhang could only assert that if Japan genuinely desired cooperation with China, the remaining obstacles need not present a great problem. It was not until September that he was to be forced to confront Japan's unwillingness to 'cooperate' with China on any terms but its own.

At a time when Nanjing needed to be seen continuing the political struggle against Japan, this dismal performance did little to revive confidence in the central government. In June, in the revolt of the Liang Guang (Guangdong-Guangxi) leadership against the Nanjing government, protest at the weakness of Japan policy combined with regional grievances at the growing power of the central government in an explosive threat to Chinese unity and stability. The South-West Political Council (*Xinan zhengwu weiyuanhui*), the power base of Liang Guang leaders Li Zongren, Bai Chongxi and Chen Jitang, was the model for the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. Like Hebei-Chaha'er, Guangdong-Guangxi had a strong tradition of regional independence, and were the subject of Japanese political overtures;<sup>50</sup> unlike Song Zheyuan, Li, Bai and

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48. Zhang Qun speech to Foreign Ministry, 25.5.1936; *WJYB*, VIII, 6, pp.136-7.

49. Zhang Qun speech to Foreign Ministry, 25.5.1936; *WJYB*, VIII, 6, pp.136-7.

50. Hu Hanmin and the south-western leaders were visited in April 1935 by Army Minister Hayashi Senjurō and in March 1936 by General Matsui Iwane, seeking support for Hirota's Three Principles on pan-Asianist grounds. Hu Hanmin rejected any comparisons between the pan-Asianism espoused by Sun Yat-sen and that supposedly embodied in the Principles, and the South-West Political Council openly dissociated itself from Matsui's ideas by sending an open telegram to Nanjing rejecting Hirota's Three Principles as a basis for

Chen were free from any immediate military threat from the Japanese armies, and were protected from the encroachment of central power by their association with Hu Hanmin, whose support Nanjing was anxious to win back.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the South-West was a source of rumour and criticism of Nanjing's handling of the Japan question.<sup>51</sup>

The death of Hu Hanmin in May 1936 deprived the south-western leaders of this protection, and Nanjing moved to restrict their former independence. Chiang Kai-shek had begun negotiations for the reform of the currency, abolition of the Political Council, the reorganisation of the south-western military under the Military Affairs Commission, and the appointment of Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi to posts which would force them to leave the South-West and come to Nanjing. This provoked an immediate revolt. Li, Bai and Chen sent an open telegram to Nanjing on June 1st demanding resistance to Japan; on June 2nd, a second open telegram advocated an advance on the North to retake lost territories (*Bei shang kang Ri, shou fu shi di*); on June 4th, Li, Bai and Chen established the South-Western Military Affairs Commission (*Junshi weiyuanhui*) and the Anti-Japanese Army of National Salvation (*Kang Ri jiuguo jun*), and began mobilising their forces for an advance on Hunan.<sup>52</sup> Chiang immediately moved extra forces into Hunan but also began attempts to secure a peaceful resolution of the revolt, warning Bai Chongxi that national salvation was impossible in a divided nation.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the anti-Japanese rhetoric there was little support for the South-Western leaders: Feng Yuxiang and Long Yun, the Yunnan warlord, cabled Li and Bai, opposing the revolt, as did Song Zheyuan and Han Fujun.<sup>54</sup> The revolt ended peacefully with the defection of the South-Western airforce of 48 planes to Nanjing on

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normalisation, and also demanding an end to secret diplomacy. After leaving the South, Matsui then went on to Nanjing where he met Chiang Kai-shek and Dai Jitao; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.163-4.

50. Eastman, (1974), pp.253-4.

51. As for example in the allegations in *Sanmin zhuyi yuekan* that Chiang was behind the talks between Song Zheyuan and the Japanese armies on anti-Communist action in North China. See Chapter VII, p.

52. See Eastman, (1974), pp.251-262, for another account of the revolt emphasizing the regionalist aspects.

53. *HYBNP*, p.958; *SJRWL*, p.267.

54. Telegram Song Zheyuan and Han Fujun to *Guomin zhengfu*, 21.6.1936; *SZYWJ*, p.182; Shen Yunlong, (1976), p.961.



July 4th. On July 13th, the second plenum of the fifth central committee voted to dissolve the South-West Political Council and the South-West executive organisation (*Xinan zhixingbu*), to appoint Yu Hanmo Pacification Commissioner of Guangdong, to appoint Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi Pacification Commissioner and deputy Pacification Commissioner of Guangxi, and to dismiss Chen Jitang from all his posts.<sup>55</sup> Zhang Qun cites the peaceful resolution of the incident as proof that by mid-1936 Chinese internal disputes were no longer to be allowed to affect the unity necessary for self-defence;<sup>56</sup> however, the re-emergence of Japan policy as a focus not just for liberal opposition but for regional rebellion created further pressure on Nanjing to act.

On July 13th in a speech on foreign policy to the second plenum Chiang Kai-shek repeated the commitment first made at the Fifth National Congress to make the greatest possible efforts in the quest for peace while preparing for war if war became inevitable, emphasizing he would go to war that if any further encroachments on China's territory were made. This was Chiang's most positive statement so far on resistance to Japan.<sup>57</sup>

The Japanese government was again revising its China policy. The proposals for China - the suppression of anti-Japanese activities, recognition of the special position of North China and its relations with Japan as a prerequisite economic cooperation, and tariff reduction as a prerequisite for the prohibition of smuggling - were incorporated into the foreign policy passed by the Four Ministers' Conference on June 20th, which also advocated expansion in North China to defend against the threat of Soviet advances and further measures to reduce the influence of Britain and the United States in the region. Foreign Ministry proposals were influenced by Kuwashima Kazue, chief of the East Asia section, who visited North China and Nanjing, where he met Chiang Kai-shek and Zhang Qun, in June.<sup>58</sup> Xu Shiyong's report to the Chinese Foreign Ministry on June 21st noted that the changes in North China policy, were forced by the inability of the Japanese military either to oblige Song Zheyuan to do as

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55. *Zhongguo Guomindang dashi ji*, Li Songlin *et al* eds. Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1998, p.259.

56. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.55.

57. Full text in *Kangzhan qian guojia jianshe shiliao*, *Geming wenxian* 72, pp.165-8.

58. Liu, (1950), p.180.

he was told or drive him from Hebei-Chaha'er. It was now thought best to promote the economic development of North China - concentrating on communications, mining and textile production - in the hope of achieving the degree of economic penetration that Japan had in the North-East of Zhang Zuolin and only then to continue political moves.<sup>60</sup> On July 2nd, Ambassador Kawagoe Shigeru finally arrived in China and immediately informed Nanjing that mere acceptance of Hirota's Three Principles was not enough to ensure normalisation of relations; China must first display its 'sincerity' by producing a concrete set of proposals for cooperation with Japan, for example the introduction of tariffs favouring Japanese goods in North China in return for Japanese technical and economic aid in the development of the area.<sup>61</sup>

Kawagoe's arrival in Nanjing in September should have been the opportunity for Nanjing to engage in the protracted, formal discussions on the future of relations. Instead, the talks produced no concrete result other than to demonstrate the incompatibility of the aims of the two governments and their motives for participating: by December, it seemed clear that the likelihood of reaching agreement not on an acceptable solution to the Sino-Japanese problem but on the nature of the problem itself was slight. Once this had been brought into the open it is difficult to see how, even discounting the excesses of the Japanese armies in the North, even a superficial or temporary reconciliation of the two governments could be achieved.<sup>62</sup> Whereas the traditional assumption is that the Xi'an incident of December 1936 was the 'pivotal point' of the pre-War period, a closer examination of Sino-Japanese contact in the preceding months suggests that however dramatic the incident, even had it not happened there was by now no hope that serious conflict could be avoided.

After arriving in China in July, Kawagoe went almost immediately to Tianjin for discussions with Japanese consular and military personnel in North China on the Japanese government's new China policy and, it was reported, with Song Zheyuan on

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60. Telegram Xu Shiying to Foreign Ministry, 21.6.1936; ZRWJ5, p.383, ZYSL6, pp.128-9.

61. Liu, (1950), pp.168-9.

62. Lin Hansheng's assertion that the talks were on the brink of success when they were halted by the Xi'an incident seems eccentric to say the least. See Lin Hansheng, (1978), 'A New Look at Chinese Nationalist 'Appeasers'.' in Coox and Conroy, eds., *China and Japan, a Search for Balance since World War I*. Santa Barbara: ABC Clio Press, p.175.

economic cooperation and anti-Communist action.<sup>63</sup> The beginning of discussions in September, ten months after the appointment of Zhang Qun as Foreign Minister, implied no recognition on Japan's part of a need to normalise relations. Were it not for the murder of two Japanese in Chengdu in August, the resumption of high-level talks would have been further delayed. While the Chengdu incident brought Kawagoe back to Nanjing, it provided the Japanese Ambassador with a ready-made grievance against the Nanjing government and ensured that the talks began in an atmosphere of hostility and distrust.

The Chengdu incident was another Japanese attempt to extend informal influence to the Chinese provinces, not now in the North but in Sichuan. Japan had had a consulate in Chongqing in the late Qing, and had opened a sub-office - described as a consulate by the Japanese, but without official consular status - in Chengdu, which was otherwise closed to foreigners, to facilitate communication with the provincial authorities. The Chongqing consulate and the Chengdu office had been closed in 1927 after the Hankou incident; the Chongqing consulate later reopened. In July 1936, the Chinese Foreign Ministry rejected the Japanese Embassy's request that a consulate be opened in Chengdu, but the Embassy decided to reopen the office anyway, and a consul, Iwai Eiichi, was appointed.<sup>64</sup>

The Embassy's claim that the Chinese government had accepted the legality of a Chengdu consulate was, Nanjing insisted, based on a misunderstanding.<sup>65</sup> There was not a large Japanese community in Chengdu, and the Nanjing government was alarmed at the prospect of Japanese expansion into a region of strategic importance. Japan's abuse of consular status elsewhere in China - as in the involvement of the Zhengzhou

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63. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.185-6.

64. *HYBNP*, p.965; Shimada, (1983), p.182. Zhang Pengzhou gives the name of the consul as Nomura. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.185. Iwai was the embassy clerk (*shokisei*) in Shanghai who escalated the New Life Incident in June 1935 by revealing to Colonel Kagesa Sadaaki that the censorship of magazine articles was the responsibility not of the Shanghai municipal authorities but of the Guomindang; this led to demands by some Japanese military types for the dissolution of the Guomindang, and put the ambassador, Ariyoshi, and the consul in Shanghai, Ishii Itaro, under serious pressure for their 'weak' handling of the matter. Iwai and Kagesa later worked with the Wang government in Nanjing during the war. Brooks, (1989), 'China Experts in the Gaimushō, 1895-1937.' in Duus, Myers, Peattie, eds., (1989), *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895-1937*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp.391-2.

65. Shimada, (1983), p.181.

consulate in smuggling - was both systematic and profound in its effects, and Japanese smuggling in Sichuan was beginning to destabilise the Sichuan economy.<sup>66</sup> Although Chiang Kai-shek had spent much of 1935 and 1936 in the South-West, strengthening central ties with the Sichuan authorities as he directed the pursuit of the Red Armies, central control over Sichuan was still tenuous.<sup>67</sup> Chiang had already decided on Sichuan as a potential retreat in case of war; Japanese interference would put the relationship between centre and region under further strain.<sup>68</sup>

Rumours of the impending reopening of the Chengdu 'consulate' reached Sichuan in June.<sup>69</sup> Despite Chinese attempts to stop him, including the refusal by the China National Aviation Corporation to sell him a ticket,<sup>70</sup> Iwai arrived in Chongqing on August 20th, two days after a large anti-Japanese demonstration in the city was suppressed by the local authorities.<sup>71</sup> Liu Xiang cabled the Chongqing municipal authorities asking them to warn the consul in Chongqing, Kasuya Renji, that public opinion in Chengdu was set against the opening of the consulate and that if officials were sent to Chengdu their safety could not be guaranteed.<sup>72</sup> Iwai did not go to Chengdu himself, but on August 24th four other Japanese - Tanaka Takeo of the Shanghai office of the South Manchurian Railway; Seto Takashi, a merchant from Hankou; Watanabe Kōsaborō, a correspondent of the *Osaka Mainichi* in Shanghai, and Fukagawa Tsuneji, of the *Shanghai Mainichi* - arrived in Chengdu; it was reported in

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66. On Japanese consulates in China, see Foreign Ministry Archive XVIII, 180. 'On the establishment of a Japanese consulate at Zhengzhou.' ('*Riben zai Zhengzhou sheli lingshiguan jiaoshe jingguo.*') (Dated December, 1936.) translated in Appendix VI; on Zhengzhou consulate, see material from *Waijiaobu gongzuo baogao* in *Minguo Dang'an*, 1988, 3, pp.13-28; 'Waijiaobu guanyu Chengdu shijian zhi jie jue duice cao'an', Nov. 1936, *YGZQ*, p.38.

67. On Sichuan provincial autonomy, see Kapp, (1973).

68. Shimada, (1983), p.182. Relations between Sichuan and the centre seem to have remained hostile even in the early stages of the War: it has been alleged that Liu Xiang, governor of the province, was involved in a plan to undermine Chiang by refusing him access to Sichuan in December 1937 and to seek peace with the Japanese armies. Zhang Yueting, (B). According to Zhang, Han Fujun was working with Liu on this and Song Zheyuan's support was sought; it was Song who revealed the plot to Chiang Kai-shek. Han Fujun was executed on the charge of failing to resist the Japanese and Liu, who was pleading illness to avoid a confrontation with Chiang, died in hospital in Hankou in mysterious circumstances.

69. Zhou Kaiqing, (1985), p.225.

70. Shimada, (1983), p.183 suggests that this may have been on official advice.

71. 'Waijiaobu guanyu jie jue Chengdu shijian zhi duice cao'an', November 1936, *YGZQ*, p.38.

72. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.185.

the Chinese press that they had been sent ahead to prepare for the opening of the consulate.<sup>73</sup> Their presence provoked a riot in which their hotel was stormed and Watanabe and Fukagawa were beaten to death. Tanaka and Seto suffered minor injuries.

On hearing of the incident, Zhang Qun returned from Lushan to Nanjing for talks with Suma Yakichirō, the consul-general; he instructed the Foreign Ministry representative in Sichuan and Xikang, Wu Zexiang, to accompany the Chongqing consul to Chengdu to investigate. Two men, Su Desheng and Liu Chengxian, were arrested the day after the incident by the provincial authorities and sentenced to death.<sup>74</sup> Liu Xiang cabled Nanjing that the killings of the Japanese had been ordered by Ye Jieren, an associate of Kang Ze, directly implicating the Blue Shirts - and therefore the Guomindang - in the incident.<sup>75</sup> Japan decided against a local settlement of the incident.<sup>76</sup>

The Japanese delegation of inquiry arrived in Chengdu on August 27th to interview the survivors and inspect the bodies of the victims; two Chinese Foreign Ministry officials, Shao Yulin and Yang Kaijia, were sent to investigate on behalf of the Foreign Ministry.<sup>77</sup> On August 29th, Nanjing reissued the 'Goodwill Mandate' (*dunmu bangjiao ling*),<sup>78</sup> emphasizing that the Chengdu incident was incompatible with the stated policy of the government.<sup>79</sup> On September 3rd, a Japanese resident in Beihai (Pakhoi), Guangdong province, was killed by rioters during an anti-Japanese demonstration.<sup>80</sup> As Zhang Qun and his vice-minister, Gao Zongwu, met Suma to discuss this latest incident in Nanjing, the Japanese navy sent warships south to lie off

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73. Shimada, (1983), pp.184-5.

74. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.187.

75. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.187. Kang Ze, (1904-1967). Born Anqiu, Sichuan; graduate of Whampoa Military Academy. Worked for Guomindang in 'special services' and youth work; later high up in 'Blue Shirts' (*Fuxingshe*), also did propaganda work. Official of Three Peoples' Principles Youth Corps (*Sanmin zhuyi qingnian tuan*) and member of Central Executive Committee of Guomindang. *RMDCD*, p.642.

76. Shimada, (1983), p.187.

77. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.187; Zhang Qun, p.56.

78. See Chapter III.

79. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.189.

80. Shimada, (1983), p.188.

the Guangdong coast, and martial law was declared in Beihai by Weng Zhaoyuan, a division commander of the 19th army, which was stationed in the area.<sup>81</sup> On September 12th, at Zhang Qun's request, the Guangdong provincial authorities urged Weng to withdraw. He declined to do so and on September 14th, the day after Kawagoe arrived in Nanjing to begin talks with Zhang Qun, refused permission for the Japanese mission to land and make its enquiries. These were hardly auspicious circumstances in which to begin serious talks on the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship.

What did the Nanjing government expect to achieve by these talks? Zhang Qun described the decision to begin formal talks with Japan towards normalisation of the Sino-Japanese relationship as a distinct and deliberate departure from the more conciliatory and less active policy of Wang Jingwei.<sup>82</sup> Any optimism felt at this departure might have dissipated as a result of the eight-month delay in beginning the talks, and the abandonment at the insistence of the Japanese authorities of the proposals for a formal conference. After the attempted coup of February 1936, the growing influence of the Japanese Army over China policy added to scepticism over Nanjing's ability to influence the Japanese central government. However, despite the ominous developments in Japan, having in January 1936 presented the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations as his mission as Foreign Minister, Zhang Qun could not in August be seen to give up the idea without even having brought a Japanese Ambassador to the negotiating table.

Yet engaging Japan in talks which might reasonably be thought futile was not merely a face-saving exercise for Zhang Qun. If Nanjing could not expect to change Japan's position by diplomatic means, the prospects for military resistance were even more depressing; Nanjing could not delay further aggression by negotiation, yet a refusal even to pay lip-service to the promised normalisation was a clear declaration that if Japan was to gain anything more from China it must use military force. Even if war was inevitable, time was needed for defence preparations: it could not be in Nanjing's interests to hasten the outbreak of that war.

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81. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.51; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.191-2.

82. See Chapter IV.

Moreover, if Nanjing was to avoid a swift and decisive defeat, foreign support, material and political, was essential. The western powers were still absorbed with their own problems: isolationism and the Depression made the United States unwilling to contemplate active involvement in Asia, and Britain and France were preoccupied with the situation in Europe. None appeared inclined to back China in a doomed war against Japan; the guiding principle of European China policy manifested even in the Leith-Ross mission of 1935-1936<sup>83</sup> appeared to be that the most sensible course of action for China was to accept the *status quo*, even if that meant renunciation of sovereignty. Any suggestion that China had failed to do everything possible to avert war, any suggestion that Japanese aggression was not entirely unprovoked might deprive China of support without which effective resistance would be impossible.

Zhang Qun had cited economic cooperation as a possible way forward for relations with Japan,<sup>84</sup> and in talks with Suma Yakichirō in July and September had expressed enthusiasm for the development of the North China economy under Wang Kemin, appointed chair of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council economic affairs sub-committee after the dismissal of Xiao Zhenying.<sup>85</sup> While Zhang remained adamant that any further separation of Hebei-Chaha'er from the centre was entirely unacceptable to Nanjing, he saw Wang's appointment as an opportunity to involve the central government more closely in economic developments in the North. With the failure of Wang's efforts and the deterioration in relations which followed the Chengdu and Beihai incidents, the possibility even of minor advances on economic matters faded: moreover, a wave of incidents followed Zhang and Kawagoe's first meeting. On September 17th, a Japanese merchant in Shantou found an unexploded bomb in his kitchen,<sup>86</sup> and on September 19th, a Japanese marine, Yoshioka, was murdered in Hankou.<sup>87</sup> On September 23rd, a Japanese marine was shot dead in Shanghai.<sup>88</sup>

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83. See Chapter IV, pp.

84. Zhang Qun speech to Foreign Ministry, 25.5.1936, *WJYB*, p.137.

85. Records of talks, Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 25.7.1936; *ZYSL6*, p.154; 1.9.1936; *ZYSL6*, pp.161-2. On Song's response see Chapter IX.

86. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.193.

87. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.194.

88. *HYBNP*, p.974.

When the Japanese Foreign Ministry next redefined its China policy, a new strand was added to the familiar aims of autonomy for the five northern provinces, revision of anti-Japanese textbooks, and economic cooperation: Japanese troops were to be stationed in the Yangtze valley and on Hainan island to protect Japanese nationals.<sup>89</sup>

When Kawagoe and Zhang Qun met on September 15th, the atmosphere was tense and, contrary to Zhang Qun's expectations,<sup>90</sup> the emphasis of Japan's demands had changed from economic matters to anti-Japanese feeling in China and joint action against Communism. Suma, who had on September 1st assured Zhang that "[Kawagoe's] opinions on the North China situation are entirely clear and no different from before: he feels that if we are to improve the situation in North China, we must begin with economic affairs... ",<sup>91</sup> now declared that defence against Communism lay at the heart of the North China question.<sup>92</sup> Despite Zhang Qun's protest that anti-Japanese feeling in China was a direct result of Japanese aggression, Kawagoe insisted that Nanjing take more effective steps to restrain anti-Japanese feeling.<sup>93</sup> The scope of Kawagoe's demands was extended: Sino-Japanese economic cooperation was to be pursued not only in the North but in all China, as was action against Communism; he refused to discuss the Chinese proposals: the abrogation of the Shanghai and Tanggu truces, the dissolution of the Eastern Hebei regime and the 'bandit' forces in Chaha'er and Suiyuan, and an end to smuggling and illegal flights over North China.<sup>94</sup>

Zhang sent Gao Zongwu, Wang Shijie and Zhang Jia'ao<sup>95</sup> to Chengdu for further instructions from Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>96</sup> On October 8th, at the insistence of the Japanese authorities, Chiang Kai-shek met Kawagoe for talks. According to Zhang

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89. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.194; Zhang Qun, (1977), p.51.

90. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 26.10.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.31.

91. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 1.9.1936; *ZYSL6*, p.161.

92. Record of talks, Zhang Quna and Kawagoe Shigeru, 15.9.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.26.

93. Record of talks, Zhang Quna and Kawagoe Shigeru, 15.9.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, pp.24-5.

94. Summary of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe, 23.9.1936; Archive, 1217, *YGZQ*, p.23.

95. Wang Shijie was Minister for Education from 1933, and later (sometime before 1939) jurist of International Court of Justice at The Hague. Zhang Jia'ao was Minister for Railways from 1935 and later Minister of Transport. *RMDCD*, pp.33, 380. This the first sign that either of them actively involved in dealing with the Japan problem.

96. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.52.



Qun, it was hoped that the meeting would encourage Tokyo to confine contacts between China and Japan to diplomatic personnel.<sup>97</sup> Nanjing received reports from Wu Tiecheng, Mayor of Shanghai, that a refusal by Chiang to meet the Ambassador would be seen as grounds for a decisive break,<sup>98</sup> and Xu Shiying reported from Tokyo that the Army and Navy were preparing plans for the occupation of strategic areas if this happened. Xu had received a confirmed report that Song Zheyuan had been presented with an ultimatum demanding that he secede and accept Japanese supervision.<sup>99</sup> This may have been a deliberate attempt by Tokyo to intimidate the Chinese government or to provoke action inviting retaliation, but Nanjing could not afford not to take it seriously. While the Foreign Ministry assured Gu Weijun, China's delegate to the League of Nations of its determination not to submit to threats,<sup>100</sup> Chiang Kai-shek allowed himself to be summoned to Nanjing by the Japanese Ambassador.

After Chiang's meeting with Kawagoe, talks were resumed between Kawagoe and Zhang Qun. Gu Weijun, then Chinese delegate to the League of Nations, had cabled Zhang Qun offering to raise the Sino-Japanese question with the League Congress and warning him

"... Kawagoe's proposals of anti-Communist action and economic cooperation, and his insistence that they cover all China exceed even the Twenty-One Demands in scope; this is exactly how Japan destroyed Korea..."<sup>101</sup>

Gu's efforts to secure the support from the Western Powers continued as rumours spread that Japan was to conclude alliances with Germany and Britain. In late September in a speech to the League, he warned that Europe would not escape the consequences of its inattention to the Far East.<sup>102</sup>

As the Zhang-Kawagoe talks continued, talks on economic cooperation in North China were now being held in Beiping: to Zhang's protest at this, Kawagoe retorted

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97. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.54-5.

98. Telegrams Wu Tiecheng to Foreign Ministry, 27.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.59, 30.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.62.

99. Telegram Xu Shiying to Foreign Ministry, 24.9.1936; ZYSL6, p.98; Foreign Ministry to Gu Weijun, 27.9.1936; ZRWJ4, pp.57-8

100. Telegram Foreign Ministry to Gu Weijun, 27.9.1936; ZRWJ4, pp.57-8.

101. Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry, 26.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.59.

102. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.53; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.196.

that this was a result of the failure of the talks with the central government.<sup>103</sup> In Nanjing, the issue of joint action against Communism assumed increasing importance, and Kawagoe's demands became more extreme. In North China, it was proposed to establish measures to guard against the spread of Communism in Hebei, Chaha'er and Shanxi; anti-Communist forces were to be stationed as far south as Yingmenguan in Shanxi, and methods were to be devised by a specially-formed commission; in the rest of China anti-Communist action was to be managed jointly by the Chinese authorities in Shanghai and the Japanese consulate-general supervising the exchange of information and coordinating popular mobilisation.<sup>104</sup> Kawagoe also insisted that Foreign Minister Arita's agreement to postpone implementation of anti-Communist action represented a significant concession on Japan's part.<sup>105</sup> Zhang Qun rejected these proposals: while admitting that Nanjing felt some need for measures to prevent the spread of Communism into North China, Zhang envisaged action only on a line between Shanhaiguan and Baotou in Mongolia. He insisted that Japan must first provide specific details of action proposed including troops dispositions and guarantees of respect for Chinese sovereignty, and undertake to resolve the Eastern Hebei and Chaha'er-Suiyuan problems before any actual cooperation could be considered by China.<sup>106</sup>

The talks deadlocked on this issue: on October 26th, Zhang Qun proposed suspending discussions on anti-Communist action as Chinese and Japanese positions were so different.<sup>107</sup> The question of joint action against Communism is significant in the light of opposition to Chiang's pursuit of the Bandit Suppression Campaigns by campaign commanders Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng. Although Chiang had reportedly consented to secret exploratory talks with the Communists from autumn 1935, he had not suspended the military campaigns against the Red Army in Shaanxi and publicly held to the goal of complete annihilation of the CCP. From early 1936, reports had begun to emerge that a Sino-Japanese anti-Communist alliance in the North

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103. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.29.

104. Records of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.28, 21.10.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.30.

105. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 26.10.1936; Archive, 1217, *YGZQ*, p.31.

106. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 21.10.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.30.

107. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 26.10.1936; *YGZQ*, p.31.

had been mooted,<sup>108</sup> and Kawagoe was soon to claim that Zhang Qun had agreed to joint action against Communism. Zhang had in the past been apparently sympathetic to Japan's misgivings over the CCP, telling the Foreign Ministry in May:

"... because of the closeness of modern relations between nations, if order in one country is disturbed, this affects all neighbouring powers... Therefore in recent years the government of China has made the greatest possible efforts in Bandit Suppression.. in no circumstances can China abandon the Bandit Suppression policy..."<sup>109</sup>

In acknowledging the legitimacy of Japanese concern at Communism in China, and restating Nanjing's commitment to the policy of suppressing Communism without making clear that this was a problem of Chinese domestic politics, Zhang leaves the government vulnerable to allegations of seeking foreign support against the CCP. However, his position in talks with Japanese diplomatic and military personnel is less ambiguous and closer to the stance adopted in the talks in Tokyo in autumn 1935.<sup>110</sup> He informed the Japanese military attaché Kita Seiichi on November 23rd that fundamental normalisation of the Sino-Japanese relationship was necessary before joint action could be contemplated,<sup>111</sup> and told Kawagoe on November 10th that in agreeing to discuss anti-Communist action at all before addressing the problem of Manchuria, Nanjing had made all the concessions it could.<sup>112</sup>

There were no further substantive talks until early December. The anti-Japanese 'national salvation' movement and associated groups increased pressure on Nanjing to adopt a less conciliatory line with Japan as the invasion of Suiyuan gained momentum, and there was a wave of strikes in Japanese-run textile mills in Shanghai in protest at working conditions as well as at Japan's actions in the rest of the country. The Japanese consul-general in Shanghai accused the national salvationists of deliberately fomenting anti-Japanese feeling and demanded the arrest of seven prominent figures of the movement. The Shanghai Seven (*qi junzi*)<sup>113</sup> - Zou Taofen, Shen Junru, Zhang

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108. See Chapter VII.

109. Zhang Qun speech to Foreign Ministry, 25.5.1936; *WJYB*, VIII, 6, pp.137.

110. See Chapter IV.

111. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kita Seiichi, 23.10.1936; *ZRWJ4*, pp.46-9.

112. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe, 10.11.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.32.

113. Otherwise known as the 'Seven Gentlemen'. (Shi Liang was female.)

Naiqi, Sha Qianli, Li Gongpu, Shi Liang, and Wang Zaoshi - were arrested on 23rd November, bailed the same day, and rearrested on November 24th. The arrests provoked predictably vehement and widespread protest, rallying people to the 'National Salvation' cause; Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, who were already connected to the National Salvationists through their acquaintance with Du Zhongyuan, were soon to make the release of the Shanghai Seven one of their demands for the release of Chiang Kai-shek at Xi'an.<sup>114</sup> The unrest in Shanghai sparked off a series of strikes in Qingdao textile mills: ten Japanese warships gathered off the coast, and 2,000 marines landed in the city between December 3rd and December 5th; there were rumours of imminent involvement by the NCGA.<sup>115</sup>

As China's domestic divisions increased, so did Nanjing's international isolation. On November 25th, rumours of an impending agreement between Germany and Japan were confirmed with news of the Anti-Comintern pact. This effectively freed Japan from the fear of Soviet intervention in the Sino-Japanese problem, and marked a change by Germany from the relatively balanced Far Eastern policy of the past to a policy which definitely inclined towards Japan.<sup>116</sup> Germany, in supplying Nanjing with military advisers, had previously given more practical support than China's other Western allies, including Britain and the United States, signatories of the Treaty of Washington, which included a pledge to protect the territorial integrity of the Chinese Republic. Nanjing, alarmed by the loss of such an ally and possibly angered at denials by German diplomats of the impending treaty between Berlin and Tokyo,<sup>117</sup> protested immediately to the German embassy. The anti-Comintern pact made meaningless Nanjing's recent attempts to improve relations with the Soviet Union in the hope of restraining further Japanese advances across North China. Moreover, Nanjing had since autumn 1935 been engaged in sporadic attempts to come to terms with the CCP itself; there was thus a possibility that Nanjing might, as Japan had threatened, be seen not

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114. Coble, (1985), 'Chiang Kai-shek and the anti-Japanese Movement in China: Zou Taofen and the National Salvation Association, 1931-1937.' *Journal of Asian Studies*, XLIV 2, p.306.

115. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.208.

116. Fox, (1984), p.204.

117. Telegram Xiao Shuxuan to Chiang Kai-shek, 17.11.1936; ZRWJ4, p.69.

as an ally but as an enemy of Japan in a fight against world Communism.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry had warned Tokyo that if Japan continued to support forces hostile to Nanjing in Suiyuan and Chaha'er it would be impossible to continue discussions of the normalisation of relations;<sup>117</sup> Chiang had cabled He Yingqin to arrange for the defence of Shanghai in case of escalation of the Suiyuan conflict,<sup>118</sup> and a Foreign Ministry statement was issued stating the government's determination to defend Suiyuan:

"At the time of this major attack on Suiyuan by bandit and puppet armies, the government has the responsibility to defend its frontiers and territory and suppress disorder... this is the action which any sovereign state should take, and no third power has any grounds for protest... integrity of territory and sovereignty are essential conditions for the survival of a nation, and no third power may intervene or infringe [sovereignty] on any pretext; if unfortunately any such illegal intervention or infringement should occur, the government will use all its strength to defend against this and fulfil its responsibilities to the nation."<sup>119</sup>

Kawagoe was summoned to the Foreign Ministry on December 3rd to receive a protest at Japanese actions in Qingdao. When challenged over Japanese actions in Qingdao, Kawagoe refused to discuss the matter, and read out a long document which he then handed to Zhang Qun, saying that it should serve as a memorandum of the talks. Zhang refused to accept the document, saying that it did not accurately reflect the content of the discussions and entirely neglected China's terms.<sup>120</sup> In his memoirs Zhang recollects that the ambassador threw down the memorandum and walked out; Zhang sent Gao Zongwu after him with the memorandum, but he had already gone, so Gao was driven to the Japanese embassy where he left the memorandum. The following day, the embassy returned the memorandum to the Foreign Ministry; the Foreign Ministry sent it back to the Embassy. There was, Zhang remembers, no

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117. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.205.

118. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin, 26.11.1936; *HYQSJ*, p.486.

119. Foreign Ministry statement on Suiyuan as transmitted to Chiang Kai-shek by Zhang Qun, 28.11.1936; *ZYSL6*, p.230.

120. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe, 3.12.1936; Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, p.33-4; Kawagoe memorandum (copy of Chinese translation) Archive 1217, *YGZQ*, pp.35-38; Japanese version of memorandum in *GDSSR8*, pp.299-304; translation in Appendix VIII.

possibility of continuing the talks.<sup>121</sup>

The Kawagoe memorandum covered the questions of concern to Japan - joint action against Communism, economic cooperation and tariff reform, anti-Japanese feeling and incidents, air transport and the employment of Japanese advisers - but referred only to Chinese concerns as 'matters which have nothing to do with the present discussions'. There are repeated references to Chinese hostility towards Japan as the underlying cause of the incidents of the autumn, and it was stated that full responsibility for these incidents was to lie with the Nanjing government. The memorandum also alleged that Nanjing had agreed to the employment of Japanese advisers and, more damagingly, to joint action against Communism,

"The Foreign Minister believes that it is necessary for China and Japan to cooperate in formulating a policy to prevent the spread of Red power (*chihua shili*) to China; at the same time the Minister affirmed that the government of China would change its past policy and decide in principle on adopting measures for joint defence against Communism with Japan."<sup>122</sup>

On North China, Kawagoe advocated the establishment of "administrative organisations fully appropriate to the special status [of the five northern provinces]" with broad powers. On tariffs, he asserted that Zhang Qun had undertaken to have tariffs revised to accord with Japan's wishes and to have effect within a few months. Finally, he claimed that the Chinese government had undertaken thoroughly to suppress the anti-Japanese movement, adding

"Japan will establish a permanent body with the express purpose of supervising and investigating the efficacy of these measures [against anti-Japanese activity], which will when necessary convey warnings to China. If China ignores a warning issued after investigation and evades its responsibilities to Japan, Japan will have no choice but to take the steps necessary to defend itself."<sup>123</sup>

If Zhang Qun or any of his colleagues had felt any doubt over the futility of talks with Japan, the Kawagoe memorandum finally dispelled them. This last stipulation would reduce all China to the status of the North China War Zone in the aftermath of the Tangu truce; in the light of the goals outlined in the memorandum, any attempt to pursue the talks in the hope of achieving or even approaching 'normalisation' of

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121. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.56.

122. Kawagoe memorandum, Archive 1217, YGZQ, pp.35-38.

123. Kawagoe memorandum Archive 1217, YGZQ, pp.37-38.

relations would be futile in terms of diplomacy and disastrous in terms of domestic politics. A denial of Kawagoe's statement on the talks was issued giving Nanjing's version of events, but this could not fully repair the damage done to the credibility of the Nanjing government by the episode.

The central government had yet to recover from this apparently irrevocable breakdown when news of Chiang Kai-shek's arrest by Zhang Xueliang in Xi'an was received in the early hours of December 12th. The Xi'an incident understandably had a powerful effect on the Japanese authorities, both civil and military. Any rapprochement, however artificial and temporary, between Nanjing and the CCP would be damaging to Japan's interests; moreover the crisis appeared to expose serious divisions within the Chinese central authorities. While the incident was significant in that it at last forced Nanjing openly to declare its position, after the acrimonious collapse of the Zhang-Kawagoe talks this declaration could not have been postponed much longer.

**Chapter IX**  
**Stalemate in North China**  
**(July-December, 1936)**

By the summer of 1936 the struggle between Song Zheyuan, the Japanese and the Nanjing government for control over Hebei-Chaha'er had resumed. It was by now obvious that the Japanese armies were determined as far as possible to act as if the autonomy movement of 1935 had been a total success, planning the amalgamation and expansion of the Song Zheyuan and Yin Rugeng regimes and demanding that Song discuss matters such as joint action against Communism and economic cooperation with Japan independently of the central government. As Nanjing awaited the arrival of the Japanese Ambassador and the start of formal talks on the 'normalisation' of relations with Japan, the need to assert central authority in the North became more urgent, firstly in reaffirmation of full restoration of sovereignty in the North as an essential condition of normalisation, and secondly to prevent continuing discussions in North China undermining the position of Foreign Ministry in the talks with Kawagoe.

Thus the Chinese central government was still visibly concerned to involve North China in matters to be discussed with Kawagoe as well as to extend measures being prepared for implementation in China as a whole - including elections for the National Assembly - to the North. These efforts met with resistance from the Japanese armies and from Song himself. Communications between Song Zheyuan and Qin Dechun, then Mayor of Beiping, and He Yingqin show Song and Qin willing to accept arms from Nanjing and send envoys to discuss defence plans for Hebei and Chaha'er<sup>1</sup> but less ready to consider problems such as elections for the National Assembly. Qin Dechun reminded He Yingqin of the conditions in Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er - now virtually controlled by Japan - which would make the administration of elections difficult;<sup>2</sup> it seems probable that any such open declaration of continued allegiance to the central government would provoke retaliation from the Japanese.

The Japanese ambassador, Kawagoe, was expected to visit North China in

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1. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin and He Yingqin's reply, 5.8.1936; *HYQSI*, p.478; telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan and Song Zheyuan's reply, 16.8.1936; *HYQSI*, p.480.

2. Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin 5.8.1936; *HYQSI*, pp.478-9.



August,<sup>3</sup> to discuss matters including economic cooperation in the region. Sino-Japanese economic cooperation was then seen by Nanjing as the best chance of securing a general improvement in Sino-Japanese relations, and Nanjing seemed anxious to encourage any initiative which allowed adequate central involvement, yet central involvement was precisely what Japanese armies hoped to avoid in the economic development of Hebei and Chaha'er. The conversation between Zhang Qun and Consul-General Suma Yakichirō on July 25th again shows the differences between the views of the Chinese central government and the Japanese authorities on the issue. Wang Kemin, member of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and recently-appointed chairman of its economic sub-committee, was to visit Beiping and Tianjin in late July and August to examine the prospects for development. Zhang affirmed his approval of the Wang mission and of Sino-Japanese economic cooperation in the North, apparently as a means of linking the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities more closely to the centre. Suma on the other hand showed more concern for measures which would render Hebei-Chaha'er more independent of central support and control: he asked why central subsidies to the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council had been reduced and rejected Zhang's insistence that the Council continue to remit tax revenues to the centre as before.<sup>4</sup>

Song Zheyuan too was suspicious of Wang Kemin's visit to the North. There was continuing friction between the Japanese military and the 29th Army after the Chaoyangmen and Fengtai incidents, the stalemate in the talks on Yin Rugeng, the Japanese troop increases and the apparent lack of progress on defence against Communism;<sup>5</sup> in a telegram to the Foreign Ministry, Cheng Bo'ang suggested that Song was feeling unsure of his position:

"The Japanese authorities have issued a statement that they all support Mr. Wang, with the intention of promoting him to manage all political affairs of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, and have openly asked for the cooperation of the 29th Army... to prevent Song from intervening. This has aroused the suspicions of the 29th Army, and they fear that the Japanese will cooperate

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3. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.184.

4. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 25.7.1936; *ZYSL*6, pp.155-8.

5. See Chapter VII.

with the centre to deprive them of their political power... "6

Wang's mission came to nothing. Japanese hostility to Wang and suspicion of his closeness to the centre surfaced even before he left for the North: Fang Weizhi reported in early September that Japanese military headquarters in Tianjin saw his appointment as a deliberate and provocative attempt to increase central government influence in the North; moreover, the Japanese doubted whether Wang had the 'vigour and resolution' for the task.<sup>7</sup> It was rumoured that Xiao Zhenying was to be asked to return as chair of the economics affairs committee in Wang's place.<sup>8</sup> When Kawagoe arrived in Beiping, he publicly stated his support for Song Zheyuan, and Suma urged Zhang Qun not to consider personnel changes in North China, as this would cause 'misunderstandings' with the 29th Army.<sup>9</sup> This support for Song marked a change from the exasperation shown earlier in the year, which had produced the troop increases. There is no evidence that the central authorities actually intended to transfer Song at this time, and it seems unlikely that they would have chosen Wang Kemin to replace him.<sup>10</sup> It was not in Nanjing's interests to make Song suspicious of the centre: reports arriving in Nanjing pointed out that however much Song might resent any suspected joint Nanjing-Japan effort to depose him, the efforts he made in response to consolidate his position would necessarily involve improving relations with the Japanese.<sup>11</sup>

After the failure of the Wang mission, the Japanese armies resumed talks on the economic development of the North with Song Zheyuan. A report to the Chinese Foreign Ministry dated September 15th, entitled 'Japan's specific plan for the execution of Sino-Japanese economic cooperation' (*Riben zhixing Zhong-Ri jingji tixi juti*

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6. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 28.7.1936; ZYSL6, pp.158-9.

7. Telegrams Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry, 4.9.1936; ZYSL6, pp.162-3; 5.9.1936; ZYSL6, pp.162-3.

8. Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry, 20.8.1936; ZYSL6, pp.161.

9. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 20.8.1936; ZYSL6, p.160; record of talks, Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 1.9.1936; ZYSL6, pp.161-2.

10. He Jifeng *et al* (A), 'Qiqi shibian jishi' WSZLXJ, I, 1, p.8 and Qin Jiyun, (A), p.237 both refer to deliberate attempt(s) by Zhang Qun to persuade the Japanese to expel Song Zheyuan from North China, but it is unclear when the attempt(s) allegedly took place. On Wang Kemin, see Chapter V.

11. Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry, 20.8.1936; ZYSL6, p.161.

*fang'an*'), gave the key areas as the exploitation of mineral resources, the development of agriculture, and railway and port construction<sup>12</sup> and, perhaps significantly, indicated that cooperation was not to be restricted to Hebei-Chaha'er, but was to cover the seven provinces of Hebei, Chaha'er, Suiyuan, Shandong, Shanxi, Shaanxi and Henan. Even the North China Autonomy Movement at its height had targeted only five provinces.<sup>13</sup> Although Zhang Qun advocated economic cooperation as the way forward for relations with Japan, and although economic measures were less immediately damaging to Chinese sovereignty than, for example, action against Communism, Japan's economic plans for North China were nonetheless seen with some suspicion. Foreign Ministry special representative Fang Weizhi had warned in August:

"The Japanese have a major and a minor plan for North China, with one goal: to exclude the centre from [the affairs of] North China. The major plan... is to seek the political clarification of the status of North China, completing the Inner Mongolian puppet organisation while forcing Shanxi, Suiyuan and Shandong to accept a high degree of autonomy and independence in tariffs and financial matters; the minor plan ... is to create a Japan-Manchuria-North China economic bloc, while politically maintaining a peaceful appearance..."<sup>14</sup>

Between early September and late October, talks between Song Zheyuan and Tashiro Kan'ichiro, commander of the NCGA, resulted in the conclusion of four principles for economic cooperation: co-existence and co-prosperity; mutual friendship and equality; mediation of loans to China by the Japanese military; progress to promote popular welfare. Eight areas were to be targeted for joint development: air transport; railways; coal-mining; harbour construction; electricity; agriculture and fisheries and postal services.<sup>15</sup>

On October 12th, Li Sihao, appointed chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council's economic affairs sub-committee after the unceremonious departure of Wang

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12. Note that in early November Japan brought railways in Manchuria and Korea under control of Mantetsu, supposedly to simplify troop movements in the North-East. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.200.

13. '*Riben zhixing Zhong-Ri jingji tixi juti fang'an*', Chinese Foreign Ministry Archives, Second Historical Archive, Nanjing, XVIII, #184.

14. Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry, 17.8.1936; ZYSL6, p.130.

15. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Executive Yuan copied to Foreign Ministry, copy dated externally 6.10.1936, telegram dated internally 27.10.1936 or 27.09.1936; ZYSL6, p.164, ZRWJ5, pp.464-5; with copy dated externally 28.10.1936, HBJJ, p.54.

Kemin, issued a statement to the effect that the guiding principles of Tashiro and Song's negotiations were that any step taken must benefit North China and that China's sovereignty must not be infringed.<sup>16</sup> The steps taken all attacked central economic prerogatives, including air transport, mining and the government salt monopoly. The nationalisation in October of the Longyan iron mine was seen as a first step towards joint Sino-Japanese management, and Lu Zongyu was appointed director. There were also substantial salt exports, and on October 6th the Tanggu and Changlu salt marshes were occupied by the Tianjin army.<sup>17</sup> On October 17th 1936, an agreement (*'Zhong-Ri Huabei hangkong xieding'*) on a jointly managed airline within North China and between North China and Manzhouguo was signed.<sup>18</sup> The planned routes were: Tianjin-Dalian; Tianjin-Jinzhou; Tianjin-Beiping-Chengde; Tianjin-Beiping-Zhangjiakou. The airlink was to be managed by a company established on October 23rd, the *Huitong gongsi*, whose nominal head was the commander of Peace Preservation Corps in Hebei province, Zhang Yunrong; all important matters were run by the Japanese.<sup>19</sup> Japan had been pressing for agreement on a airlink for some time; Suma Yakichirō, the consul-general in Nanjing, had complained to Zhang Qun in April that an agreement reached with Wang Jingwei in 1935 had not yet been formalised. When Zhang protested to Kawagoe about the irregular manner in which the airlink was eventually established, the ambassador replied that the intransigence of the Nanjing government left Japan no other choice.<sup>20</sup> By now Kawagoe and Suma were excluding all matters affecting North China from the agenda of the talks in Nanjing.

As in case of the talks on anti-Communist action earlier in the year, there were reports of the talks and speculation concerning their conclusions. By early October, the demands made by the NCGA had exhausted Song's tolerance, and he issued a statement dissociating himself from talks with the Japanese, which made it clear that economic demands were accompanied by broad political demands:

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16. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.198.

17. Chang and Cai, (1985), p.151; Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.197.

18. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.198.

19. Zhou Kaiqing, (1985), p.194; Chang and Cai, (1985), p.151.

20. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936; Archive 1217 and YGZQ, p.29.

"... the content [of these demands] is nothing other than to force us to establish a North China state (*Huabeiguo*), declare tariff autonomy and establish air traffic between China and Japan. These demands were presented by Tashiro after continuing talks on the terms proposed by Tada and I have resolutely refused to consider them..."<sup>21</sup>

According to one Japanese source, the details of joint economic development were finalised on October 1st, but not immediately reported to Nanjing.<sup>22</sup> When Song finally did report the economic demands on October 27th,<sup>23</sup> he informed the Executive Yuan:

"The Japanese proposed economic cooperation between China and Japan some time ago, but we did not discuss it with them immediately. Last month in Tianjin I met Tashiro to exchange opinions on economic development and we achieved an understanding on the principles of equality and mutual amity, co-existence and co-prosperity. For the sake of future enterprises, it seems that we have no choice but to publish an agreement..."<sup>24</sup>

He then outlined the four principles and eight target industries discussed with Tashiro. The amount of detail given and the recorded reactions of the Nanjing government suggest that Song had not warned the central government of these talks or of their probable outcome; it seems that, as in his contacts with the Japanese in autumn 1935,<sup>25</sup> he had independently pursued discussions of which he might reasonably assume the central government would disapprove before presenting Nanjing with a near *fait accompli*: in neither case is it clear whether Song hoped this would force Nanjing into accepting the results of the talks or whether it was a last resort to extricate himself

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21. On the Tada statement, September 24th, 1935, see Chapter V; Song's statement reported by Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, dated 5.10.1936; *ZYSL6*, p.163.

22. Nakamura, (1980), p.234; the original source is a telegram by the naval attaché Kubota in Tianjin to various naval offices, dated October 3rd, 1936.

23. Song Zheyuan to Executive Yuan, 27.10.1936. Note that this telegram is published in four collections of documents: two (*ZYSL6*, pp.164-5, *ZRWJ5*, pp.464-5) are dated by the editors to October 6th, and two (*SZYWJ*, p.184, which takes the telegram from *ZRWJ5*, and 'Guomin zhengfu xingzhengyuan youguan "Huabei jingji kaifa" zhi shiyebu han ling san jian' *MGDA*, 1986, #4, pp.54-5) give the date, as in the telegram itself, as October 27th. While the Japanese did (apparently falsely) claim in negotiations to have concluded agreements or secured consent to contentious matters to put pressure on the negotiators, and used leaks to the press suggesting that agreements were imminent or had been concluded, it is less probable, although not impossible, that Kubota's report - presumably intended for official consumption only - was inaccurate.

24. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Executive Yuan copied to Foreign Ministry, 27.10.1936; *ZYSL6*, p.164, *ZRWJ5*, pp.464-5, *SZYWJ*, pp.183-4.

25. See especially his telegram to Chiang Kai-shek, dated 19.11.1935, quoted Chapter VI.

from the toils of the Japanese military. Given the scope of the measures proposed, the delay of over three weeks between accepting, formally or otherwise, the demands presented by the Japanese as inescapable and informing the central government is significant.

Relations between Song and Nanjing were still strained. While his statement of October 5th rejecting the Japanese demands was published in the press, other comments he made at the same press conference were not, but reached the Foreign Ministry through a General Staff report.

"Song said there was no need for elections under a one-party system: the Party had made no contribution to North China, therefore North China... would not participate in the elections... on unity in good faith (*jingcheng tuanjie*), Song said that in a one-party system, there could be no talk of unity in good faith; if people wanted that, they should abolish the one-party system... On the general political problems of North China, Song said that if the centre had a solution to North China's problems, he would follow it, but if the centre had no specific solution, North China had no choice but to think of a solution for itself."<sup>26</sup>

The General Staff report took the resentment and hostility revealed in Song's outburst as a sign that there was a genuine possibility of secession by Hebei-Chaha'er. A second General Staff report on October 11th noted that Song had agreed in principle to Tashiro's demand for the establishment of a Hebei-Chaha'er autonomous government (*Ji-Cha zizhi zhengfu*); disagreements among the Japanese over the form this was to take and the possibility of developments in the Zhang-Kawagoe talks in Nanjing had led Song to decide to delay any declaration on the subject.<sup>27</sup>

There are parallels between this episode and Song's contacts with the Japanese armies in the North China Autonomy Movement of 1935: in both cases, Song appears to have begun talks with the Japanese willingly and to have concealed these talks from the central government; in both cases, Song informed Nanjing of the full scope of the talks only when a compromising agreement was on the point of conclusion; in both cases, Song used divisions among the Japanese to escape commitment; in neither case is it immediately obvious what Song hoped to gain from the talks. Song had emerged from the autonomy movement apparently strengthened and established as chair of the

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26. Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 8.10.1936; ZYSL6, p.99.

27. Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 11.10.1936; ZYSL6, p.197.

Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council yet at the same time more exposed to further overtures from the Japanese military. He could not now refuse talks altogether for fear of angering the Japanese; he could not become too closely involved in the talks for fear of losing his already precarious independence.

According to Xu Shiying's report from Tokyo, Tashiro presented Song with an ultimatum demanding the creation of a North China autonomous organisation in Hebei, Chaha'er, Suiyuan, Shandong and Shanxi on September 23rd, the day on which the Zhang-Kawagoe talks in Nanjing stalled after two meetings.<sup>28</sup> Reports arriving in Nanjing suggested that if the meeting between Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese Ambassador failed substantially to improve matters, the Japanese Army and Navy might resort to military action;<sup>29</sup> Song was probably aware of this through his Japanese contacts. He would also have been exposed to Japanese accounts of the progress of the talks in Nanjing; it is not clear whether he was also kept informed by the Chinese Foreign Ministry. Nanjing had given Song responsibility with limited power and little central support: there was no sign that the talks in Nanjing would address the problems of the North. Song's assertion that if the centre could not resolve North China's problems North China could only fend for itself might have been a convenient excuse for seeking agreement with the Japanese; on the other hand it could equally be a genuine expression of grievance.

While disputes between the GDA and the NCGA over the future of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei regime under the proposed new arrangement remained unresolved there was little prospect of rapid changes, reports continued to arrive in Nanjing of plans for reorganisation of the North China regimes and of attempts to play on Song's insecurity over his position *vis-à-vis* the Nanjing government in order to persuade him to side definitely with the Japanese.<sup>30</sup>

The talks on economic and political affairs took place against a background of military threats. Throughout the autumn the Japanese forces in Beiping-Tianjin

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28. Telegram Xu Shiying to Foreign Ministry, 24.9.1936; ZYSL6, p.98; Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry, 25.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.58.

29. Telegrams Wu Tiecheng to Foreign Ministry, 27.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.59; 30.9.1936; ZRWJ4, p.62.

30. Telegram Yang Jie to Foreign Ministry, 19.11.1936; ZYSL6, pp.205-6; Telegram Tianjin (sender unnamed) to Foreign Ministry, 26.12.1936; ZYSL6, p.202.

maintained a high profile. Units stationed at Fengtai staged autumn exercises near Lugouqiao and Changxindian and along the Beiping-Hankou railway.<sup>31</sup> On the fifth anniversary of the September 18th incident, Japanese troops from Fengtai clashed with Chinese forces: the Chinese commander (*lianzhang*), Sun Xiangting, was captured by the Japanese and, although talks between Song and Tashiro led to a swift resolution of the incident, Chinese forces were forced to withdraw from Fengtai, leaving the Japanese occupying the town and in position to move on Beiping itself via Wanping and Lugouqiao.<sup>32</sup> Tension in the Beiping-Tianjin area remained high as on October 26th Japanese forces began further exercises, during which they occupied houses, cut off communications to the area and did significant damage to crops.<sup>33</sup> The Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a protest on October 30th, and on November 2nd martial law was declared in Tianjin. Undeterred, the following day the Japanese armies staged exercises simulating the invasion of Beiping.<sup>34</sup>

The Foreign Ministry's final response to Song Zheyuan's report as given to the Executive Yuan on November 21st expressed alarm at the vagueness and scope of the principles and measures reported by Song, and speculated that the talks had gone farther than he admitted, as well as noting that "... although the eight target industries are managed by the central government, there is no reference to the centre [in the report]."<sup>35</sup> The formal response of the Nanjing government was expressed in a Foreign Ministry statement on the status of Hebei-Chaha'er,

"Hebei and Chaha'er, like all other provinces, are part of the territory of the Republic of China; all administrative affairs of the provinces are to be managed by the government of China according to Chinese law and may not be the subject of any external intervention... if there are those who would use traitors (*hanjian*), create puppet organisations (*kuilei zuzhi*), or agitate and collaborate with bandits to infringe our sovereignty, threaten our existence and covertly invade our territory, the government of China will use all its strength in

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31. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.190.

32. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.193; Li Yunhan, (1977), p.19.

33. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.199, 200.

34. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.200.

35. Letter Foreign Ministry to Executive Yuan, 21.11.1936; ZYSL6, p.166.



responding, even to the point of sacrificing everything... "36

and in an Executive Yuan order of December 5th, reaffirming that no jointly-financed economic ventures might be made without the involvement and approval of the central government.<sup>37</sup>

Nanjing had been aware since July that the GDA and the NCGA were resolved to support 'autonomy' for Inner Mongolia.<sup>38</sup> According to one account,<sup>39</sup> Japan's efforts to gain control of Inner Mongolia were facilitated by tension between Chinese and Mongols in the region created by the the Nanjing government's 'minority' policy, particularly by attempts to extend Chinese settlement and government into Mongol land, which were pursued vigorously by Northern provincial governors including Yan Xishan in Shanxi, Fu Zuoyi in Suiyuan and, until his dismissal as governor of Chaha'er, Song Zheyuan. The establishment in 1934 of the Mongolian Political Council for Regional Autonomy (*Menggu difang zizhi weiyuanhui*)<sup>40</sup> and the declaration of eight principles for Mongolian regional autonomy were a response by Nanjing to Mongol grievances over Chinese encroachments on grazing lands and inequitable tax distribution. These concessions satisfied in principle moderate Mongol leaders, yet Fu Zuoyi, Yan Xishan and to a lesser extent Song Zheyuan refused to comply with Nanjing's instructions and continued to encourage Chinese settlement in Mongol lands and to extend the system of *xian* government over Mongol territory.<sup>41</sup>

There were clashes between Fu Zuoyi and Mongol forces in late 1935 over tax disputes and unspecified 'political conflicts'. After the exclusion of the central armies from Chaha'er province under the terms of the Qin-Doihara agreement (June 1935) cut off Northern Chaha'er from central control, Fu retaliated by imposing a grain embargo and other economic sanctions on the Mongols. The winter of 1935 was particularly

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36. 'Declaration of sovereignty over Hebei-Chaha'er' as given in telegram Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek, 26.11.1936; ZYSL6, pp.73-4.

37. Executive Yuan order 07136, 5.12.1936; ZRWJ5, p.467; ZYSL6, p.167; HBJJ, p.55.

38. Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 23.7.1936; ZRWJ5, p.384; Crowley, (1966), p.293; on the Suiyuan incident in general see Shimada, (1983), pp.212-24, and Coox, (1989), pp.417-20.

39. Sechin Jagchid, (1987), 'Inner Mongolia under Japanese occupation, 1935-1945: An Eye Witness Report.' *Zentralasiatische studien*, #20, pp.140-172.

40. To be distinguished from the Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs (*Mengzangweihui*).

41. Sechin Jagchid, (1987), p.144.

severe, and these measures caused serious hardship; relief, with encouragement and the promise of material support for Mongol independence, was provided by the Guandong army.<sup>42</sup> This support, and disaffection with the Chinese authorities made the Mongol leaders more amenable to Japanese overtures. Sechin Jagchid argues that:

"... some of (the Mongol leaders) realized that Japan would not present as great a threat in terms of immigration as the Chinese would, and that it might be able to utilize the Japanese power to expel the Chinese settlers, or at least stop their further encroachment. This was probably the main reason that Prince De and the Mongol leaders did not consider the Japanese their primary enemy. ... the concept that they could be of more help than harm facilitated Japanese action."<sup>43</sup>

It was the Guandong army who encouraged the association between De and Li Shouxin.<sup>44</sup> Li Shouxin's Mongolian Border Defence Army (*Menggu bianfang zizhi jun*), active in Northern Chaha'er since 1934 was now increasing pressure on eastern Suiyuan. Despite incurring heavy losses in clashes with troops led by Fu Zuoyi, governor of Suiyuan, in the summer of 1936, Li's forces regrouped, absorbing first the 'Great Han Righteous Army' (*Da Han yijun*) led by Wang Ying of eastern Suiyuan and forces under Yan Dongwu of northern Chaha'er, and later armies raised in the Beiping-Tianjin area by Liu Guitang and Bai Jianwu.<sup>45</sup> That Shigemitsu Mamoru, recently appointed Ambassador to the Soviet Union, left for Moscow via Beiping for a briefing on Suiyuan and North China in general might suggest that Japan expected significant developments in the area.<sup>46</sup>

The 'puppet' armies in Suiyuan and North Chaha'er appeared to be consolidating their position in the Neihong-Jiabusi area by late October, alarming the Nanjing government as well as the Northern leaders: as Fu Zuoyi went to Taiyuan to discuss the problem with Yan Xishan<sup>47</sup> Zhang Qun repeatedly warned Kawagoe

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42. Sechin Jagchid, (1987), p.147.

43. Sechin Jagchid, (1987), p.146.

44. Sechin Jagchid, (1987), p.147.

45. Liu had been living in Tianjin in the Japanese concession, where he had recently survived an assassination attempt. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.190. On Liu and the Eastern Chaha'er incident (January 1935), see Chapter II, and on Liu in the autonomy movement see Chapter VI.

46. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.195-6.

47. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.199.

Shigeru that Japanese interference in Suiyuan might jeopardise the talks in Nanjing, and complained to Kita Seiichi, the military attaché, that Japan's activities in the North could only cast doubt on its sincerity in seeking a normalisation of relations with China.<sup>48</sup>

Support for Fu Zuoyi and his forces grew: students in Beiping fasted for one day to raise money for the resistance in Suiyuan; patriotic organisations in Shanghai and among the overseas Chinese also actively supported the campaign.<sup>49</sup> There were reports of reconnaissance flights by Japanese planes over Suiyuan, and on November 3rd Fu Zuoyi issued a statement warning that he would retaliate against any attack on Suiyuan.<sup>50</sup> The 29th army began exercises 'simulating war of resistance' in Beiping-Tianjin under the personal command of Song Zheyuan.<sup>51</sup> According to Liu Ruming, Japanese preoccupation with Suiyuan at this time encouraged the 29th Army to contemplate an attack on Yin Rugeng, and the East Hebei PPC commanders were approached and encouraged to mutiny.<sup>52</sup>

On November 18th, as Mongol forces attacked Hongor,<sup>53</sup> the Chinese Foreign Ministry formally instructed Kawagoe to tell his government that, if the Japanese government continued to support 'puppet' regimes and forces, talks on the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations could not possibly continue.<sup>54</sup> The Japanese Foreign Ministry replied that the Suiyuan problem was purely an internal affair of China and that Japan had no intention of intervening; if there were any Japanese involved they were in no way connected with the Japanese government.<sup>55</sup> This cannot have seemed convincing in the light of the discovery of documents in Japanese

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48. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.55.

49. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.203, 206.

50. The same day, Kawagoe sent a memo to the Chinese Foreign Ministry asking that the talks be temporarily suspended. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.201.

51. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), pp.202-3.

52. Liu Ruming, (A), p.1168; see also Chapter XI. *cf* Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry, 8.10.1936; ZYSL6, p.100, in which it is alleged that Song tacitly supported the invasion of Suiyuan.

53. Shimada, (1983), p.222.

54. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.56.

55. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.56; Coox, (1989), p.418 points out that the Japanese Foreign Ministry probably was unaware of the extent of GDA involvement.

pertaining to the establishment of a 'Great Yuan Empire' (*Da Yuan diguo*) at Bailingmiao, and by the statement of the GDA and the Manzhouguo authorities on November 27th which applauded the Suiyuan incident as an anti-Bolshevik campaign, declaring that the 'rising' by the Mongolian army was identical in aim to the national policies of Japan and Manzhouguo, and expressing hopes that it would succeed. The GDA statement warned that if China appeared to be in danger of sliding towards Bolshevism, or threatened the national security of Manzhouguo, they would take any steps they thought necessary.<sup>56</sup> The Chinese Foreign Ministry's reply reasserted China's right to defend its own territory against invaders and rejected the right of third parties to intervene.<sup>57</sup> The recapture of Bailingmiao on November 23rd and the collapse of the Mongol forces was hailed as a great victory; a bilateral ceasefire was concluded on December 12th at the request of De Wang,<sup>58</sup> although Japanese troops north of the Great Wall continued to concentrate near Weichang and Chifeng, and the threat of further invasion attempts had by no means disappeared.

The euphoria occasioned by the victory at Bailingmiao made the shock of the events of December 12th all the greater. Chiang Kai-shek, having gone to Xi'an to exhort his anti-Communist forces to greater efforts against the Red Army, was arrested with his aides by Zhang Xueliang, commander of the Bandit Suppression Forces. Song's reaction to the Xi'an incident, as described by his secretary Wang Shijiu, was necessarily circumspect. It was very much in Song's interests to support a swift and peaceful resolution to the incident. Whatever Song's personal feelings about Chiang Kai-shek and the wisdom of the campaigns against the Communists, he could not risk support for Zhang Xueliang - with whom he had long-standing personal and political connections - and therefore by extension for the CCP without some guarantee that this would not leave him isolated in the face of Japanese displeasure. If Japan concluded either that Nanjing was sliding or being pushed towards an alliance with the Communists, or that the present authorities would be superseded by factions with leftist sympathies, or that China's preoccupation with the incident could provide an

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56. Telegram Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek, 28.11.1936; ZYSL6, pp.229-30.

57. Declaration quoted in Chapter VIII.

58. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.210.

opportunity for a further military advance via Hebei-Chaha'er or Suiyuan, Song and his forces were, as Qin Dechun pointed out, in the front line.<sup>59</sup>

Like other provincial governors in the North, Song received a telegram from Zhang Xueliang asking him to come to Xi'an 'to discuss the future of the nation' in the early hours of December 13th. Unlike others - such as Fu Zuoyi and Han Fujun - he did not commit himself to an immediate response, but called a meeting of his advisors and cabled Nanjing expressing his shock at the incident and his hopes for a rapid resolution.<sup>60</sup> Opinions were divided as to the best course of action: although some felt that Chiang as a leader paid no attention to others and that Zhang Xueliang had done the right thing in removing him, others, such as Qin Dechun and Song himself took a more cautious line and it was decided to do nothing until the response of Nanjing and the attitudes of other political figures had become clear.<sup>61</sup>

As soon as news of the incident broke, Japanese representatives were sent to demand a clear statement of Song's position, and to prevail on Song to increase action against the CCP in Hebei-Chaha'er. In an attempt to pacify the Japanese, Song issued a statement on December 14th to the effect that he would make every effort to maintain peace and order in Hebei-Chaha'er, that he would continue action against the CCP and that whether Chiang Kai-shek was in Nanjing or not he would obey the centre's orders 'as usual.' This statement was criticised by the Japanese armies as insufficiently 'specific', and the last item appeared to cause the Japanese some concern, so on December 16th, Song issued 'Emergency Orders on Public Security' (*Jinji zhi'an mingling*): assemblies and demonstrations were strictly forbidden; distribution of leaflets and the issue of special editions by the Press was prohibited; the authorities would guard against the spread of alarm or disorder by 'bad elements', and protect the life and property of foreign nationals.<sup>62</sup>

Ge Dingyuan was sent to Nanjing to assure the central government of the loyal

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59. Wang Shijiu, (B), 'Song Zheyuan dui Xi'an shibian de taidu.' in *Xi'an shibian qinli ji*. Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1986, p.310.

60. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 13.12.1936; *SZYWJ*, p.185.

61. Wang Shijiu, (B), pp.306-7.

62. Wang Shijiu, (B), p.308.

support of the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities, and although he did not explicitly attack Zhang Xueliang for his actions, Song made no direct contact with him, resisting pressure from subordinates to send a representative to Xi'an.<sup>63</sup> Song's primary concern, Wang suggests, was for his own safety, not that of Chiang Kai-shek, and his greatest fear was that the situation in Hebei-Chaha'er might be influenced by events in Xi'an.<sup>64</sup> It was not until December 23rd that Song fully stated his position in an open telegram, affirming the need to preserve unity and ensure the safety of Chiang Kai-shek, urging the government to seek a peaceful resolution of the incident.<sup>65</sup>

While Song had not fundamentally changed his position between Nanjing and the Japanese, by late 1936 he had substantially less room for manoeuvre. He had avoided actual concessions resulting from his talks with the Japanese, but this was no more than a temporary solution. The demands of the Japanese military for 'economic cooperation' were tantamount to economic colonization in support of Japan's war effort and a demand that Song commit the resources of his region to its own destruction; the proposals that Song support the establishment of a regime invited him to make his position clear, yet his survival depended on avoiding an unequivocal declaration of his position. In the atmosphere of mistrust and hostility which underlay relations between China and Japan for much of 1935 and 1936, the failure of either side categorically to define its position did much to postpone a complete break; in the aftermath of the Suiyuan incident, the Xi'an incident and the collapse of the Zhang-Kawagoe negotiations, as both Japan and Nanjing's positions were clarified, Song's chances of continuing to survive between the two on evasions and ambiguity became correspondingly sligher.

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63. Wang Shijiu, (B), p.309.

64. Wang Shijiu, (B), p.307.

65. Open telegram Song Zheyuan and Han Fujun, 23.12.1936; *SZYWJ*, pp.187-8.

**Chapter X**  
**Sino-Japanese Diplomacy: the Final Phase.**  
**(January-June, 1937)**

The first half of 1937 was a period of diplomatic exhaustion on the part of both China and Japan.<sup>1</sup> After the acrimonious collapse of the Zhang-Kawagoe negotiations, the trauma of the Xi'an incident and the renewed political instability in Japan, neither side seemed to have the political will or the energy to resume what might be expected to be futile attempts to change the status quo. In Tokyo, the Hirota cabinet resigned on January 23rd. In Nanjing, with the withdrawal of Zhang Qun and Chiang Kai-shek, control over the making of Japan policy shifted once again after the end of 1936. While this did not produce any radical departure from the policy pursued by Zhang and Chiang, there was a visible lull in the early months of the year, an apparent interruption in what might have been expected to be a steady slide towards war.

On the Chinese side, it might seem that the events of late 1936 left no further reason for optimism concerning the future. Determined and sustained efforts to secure a diplomatic settlement with Japan at central government level had failed; Japanese economic encroachment in North China continued; despite the temporary victory in the Suiyuan campaign, reports were still being received that the 'puppet' forces in Northern Chaha'er were regrouping for further advances on the province. Euphoria over the victory in Suiyuan was dampened by the realisation that when the puppet armies regrouped and continued to move westwards, their advance might now, in the aftermath of the Xi'an incident, be substantially facilitated by divisions between the Chinese forces in the region. Furthermore, as the Japanese Ambassador attempted to gain Nanjing's consent for Japan's formal inclusion in action against the CCP in North China,<sup>2</sup> the protestations of the Nanjing government that action against Communism was an matter of Chinese domestic politics, and that anyway Nanjing's own campaigns were successful enough to make Japanese intervention superfluous, were overshadowed by the mutiny in Xi'an of the central government's anti-Communist forces and the imprisonment of Chiang Kai-shek by the leaders of those forces.

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1. Hata, (1988), 'Continental Expansion, 1905-1941.' in Duus, Peter, ed., (1988), *Cambridge History of Japan, vol VI: The Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.304; Wu Dongzhi, (1990), *Zhongguo waijiaoshi: Zhonghua minguo shiqi, 1911-1949*. (Second revised edition.) Henan renimin chubanshe, pp.394-7; Zhang Qun, (1977).

2. Chapter VIII.

While Nanjing had grounds for relief that the Xi'an incident had not resulted in greater upheaval, the government was still shaken by what some saw as the betrayal of the central authorities by Zhang Xueliang. Far from paving the way for unity in resistance to Japan, the Xi'an incident not only exposed and exacerbated divisions between the centre and the North-West but weakened the centre by the removal of Chiang Kai-shek from its head. Moreover as Japanese pressure on the vulnerable North-West increased, the mere fact of the divisions between centre and region might be expected to alarm the government; the suspicion that the CCP was not merely involved in the negotiations to secure Chiang's release but in fact orchestrated the Xi'an incident only invited further attempts by the Japanese armies to intervene in affairs of the region. Although Zhang Xueliang had been court-martialled and stripped of all his posts, the questions of how resolve the problems between the North-West and the centre and of how to fill the gap in China's defences with forces loyal to Nanjing remained.<sup>3</sup>

On returning to Nanjing from Xi'an Chiang Kai-shek had offered his resignation to the standing committee of the Central Executive Committee;<sup>4</sup> it was rejected. However, while officially retaining his posts as Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission and of the Executive Yuan, Chiang spent much of the early part of the year at home in Fenghua in Zhejiang. He returned to Nanjing to receive a Japanese economic delegation which visited China in March, yet his active political rôle appears to have been substantially diminished. Chiang attended the Third Plenum in February to report on the Xi'an incident but did not play any other significant role. At the plenum he again offered his resignation,<sup>5</sup> but the second refusal did not seem to convince him that it was time for him to return to political life; an order of the Executive Yuan in early April noted that he had not yet fully recovered from the injuries he received at Xi'an and granted his request for a further two months sick leave.<sup>6</sup> Pleading illness is often assumed to be a cover for political embarrassment, and was thus used most notably by Wang Jingwei - not only when he retreated to Europe for medical treatment after the attempt on his life in November 1935, but also after his resignation in the

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3. *HYQSJ*, pp.542-553, *passim*.

4. Mackerras, (1982).

5. *GMDLS*, p.283.

6. *Waijiaobu gongbao*, X, #1. Order number 1840 of the Executive Yuan, dated April 6th.



summer of the same year - and also by Hu Hanmin. Chiang's prolonged absence might indeed have been the result of ill-health; it has however been suggested that resignation in times of crisis was a favourite ploy of Chiang's to convince Nanjing of his indispensability.<sup>7</sup>

Chiang was temporarily replaced as the senior Guomindang figure in the capital by Wang Jingwei. Wang had left Europe for China on hearing news of the Xi'an incident, and now, having arrived in Nanjing on January 3rd, officially assumed the position of Chairman of the Central Political Council to which he had been appointed in November 1935 after the Fifth National Congress. While the extent of Wang's actual influence at this time is open to question, he was certainly visible: his speeches on returning to China are reprinted in the *Waibu Zhoukan*, giving Wang's opinions greater prominence than those of either Zhang or Chiang. These opinions may however not have been representative of the views of Nanjing as a whole: the impression left by Wang's utterances is that his view from Europe of the situation in China was considerably less bleak than from Nanjing. Despite the efforts of Gu Weijun, the Chinese delegate to the League of Nations, to secure recognition by the Western powers of the gravity of the Far Eastern situation, Europe in 1935 and 1936 was preoccupied with other matters and this may have affected Wang's outlook.

After the failure of the talks in 1936 between Foreign Minister Zhang Qun and the Japanese Ambassador Kawagoe Shigeru to effect any change in Japan's attitude and policy towards China, serious efforts to establish direct, substantive discussions ended and were not resumed before the outbreak of war; indeed, according to Zhang Qun, there was virtually no formal diplomatic contact during the following months.<sup>8</sup> One source states that Kawagoe approached Zhang Qun on January 6th to propose resumption of the talks on normalisation; on January 11th, the Chinese Foreign Minister suggested that resumption be postponed until after the revision of policy at the forthcoming plenum.<sup>9</sup> It is unclear, if this exchange indeed took place, why, when and by which side the offer to continue talks was withdrawn. Zhang Qun himself makes no reference in his memoirs to this exchange and records no further meetings with Kawagoe between December 1936 and his own resignation as Foreign Minister on February 25th except for a courtesy visit paid by the Ambassador on February 9th before

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7. cf. Chiang's resignation after the invasion of Manchuria.

8. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.58.

9. Wu Dongzhi, (1990), p.394. No reference to primary source.

returning to Japan. Zhang had met the departing consul-general in Nanjing, Suma Yakichirō, and military attaché, Amamiya Tatsumi, on January 20th, and warned them:

"The problem of North China is the central question of work on the normalisation of relations; although it is not essential to discuss the problem of Manchuria<sup>10</sup> the present situation in North China is in urgent need of improvement; this is our minimum demand for work on normalisation. Only if this work is successful, can we then consider equal and legal cooperation (*tixie*). If Japan can actually carry out this preliminary step for normalisation then our people and our armies' suspicion of your invasive intentions can be dispelled, and the mood of resistance will dissolve; the influence of Japan's attitude to China is enormous. We are determined to pursue normalisation through diplomatic channels, yet at the same time we cannot abandon preparations to resist Japan."<sup>11</sup>

After this, Zhang states, the foreign policies of both China and Japan changed, and relations became increasingly tense until the War broke out. This judgement seems plausible enough with hindsight, and given Zhang's position there are grounds for accepting that this was his opinion at the time; however it seems that the political developments in Japan and a reluctance to believe that war could finally break out blurred the perceptions of some Chinese of the problem; there was still no visible consensus on the issue.

Of his talks with Kawagoe in late 1936, Zhang writes that the positions and ambitions of China and Japan were so different that meaningful discussion of a 'normalisation' of relations was impossible, and that it was therefore natural that they should fail to get any satisfactory results to negotiations other than the resolution of a few minor problems. It seems from the archival records of the talks that Zhang and Kawagoe that the discussions stalled at the initial statements of each side's negotiating stance, and that neither Zhang nor Kawagoe progressed even as far as securing acceptance by the other of their own position as a possible basis for further discussion. The 'resolution' of the Chengdu and Beihai incidents referred to by Zhang seems to have been an afterthought rather than a negotiated settlement, and the broader issue of consular rights and responsibilities underlying the Chengdu incident was not apparently addressed. Tensions between Chinese provincial governments and Japanese consulates remained, and Japanese attempts to develop relations

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10. As Zhang gives no time limit for non-discussion, it is not clear whether this is meant as a tacit acceptance of the status quo in Manchuria or as an offer to deal first with less contentious problems. Insistence by Nanjing on the solution of the Manchurian problem before other questions could be addressed would inevitably lead to the breakdown of talks.

11. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.57.

with the Sichuan provincial authorities continued.<sup>12</sup>

It was suggested at the time in a report to the German Foreign Office by the Ambassador in Nanjing, Oskar Trautmann, that Zhang Qun was 'abandoned' by Chiang Kai-shek to pacify those in or close to the the Nanjing government favouring alliance with the Soviet Union or with the West.<sup>13</sup> Advocates of rapprochement with the CCP now included such potentially influential figures as Song Qingling, and Feng Yuxiang; in a conversation with Suma Yakichirō, the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing, Zhang Qun referred to a growing tendency favouring alliance with the CCP in early 1937.<sup>14</sup> The suggestion that Zhang was forced out of office seems to have been influenced by the perception of Zhang as a 'pro-Japanese' (*qin Ri*) Foreign Minister<sup>15</sup> who could only be considered an embarrassment once the 1936 talks had collapsed. This in turn would seem to depend on seeing the Zhang-Kawagoe talks as an attempt by Nanjing to conciliate Japan rather than to achieve an equitable settlement and in the process to secure concessions of the magnitude that Zhang actually demanded.<sup>16</sup>

The partial eclipse of Chiang at this time may have left Zhang Qun politically exposed; Zhang does not appear to have been on good terms with Wang Jingwei in the past - his refusal to cooperate with Wang's Japan policy in the summer of 1935 had arguably been a significant factor in forcing Wang's resignation - <sup>17</sup> and his most significant political ally other than Chiang Kai-shek, Huang Fu, had died in December 1936. However, it is not at all clear that he was in fact dismissed. An official account of his resignation states that he offered his resignation three times before it was finally accepted by the Central Political Council on March 3rd,<sup>18</sup> and his subsequent posts suggest that it was not considered desirable or possible to exclude him completely from positions of influence. At the plenum he was appointed Chief Secretary of the Central Political Council and he remained a member

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12. See Chapter VIII.

13. Fox, (1982), p.214.

14. Shimada, (1983), p.228.

15. Gu Weijun, (1985), p.326.

16. *i.e.* the revocation of the Shanghai and Tanggu truces. See Chapter VIII.

17. Chapter IV.

18. *WBZK*, #156, 8.3.1937, p.1.

of the Specialist Committee on Foreign Affairs (*waijiao zhuanmen weiyuanhui*) and was later appointed secretary to the Military Affairs Commission after the outbreak of war, and vice-chairman of the Executive Yuan in 1938.<sup>19</sup>

Zhang Qun was after all a single-issue Foreign Minister: on taking office he had declared his mission to be the normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations by formal diplomatic means. Despite Japan's evasions and procrastinations he had, by 1937, demonstrated firstly that he had made a genuine effort to achieve this and secondly that it was not going to be possible. He attributes this failure in part to the rise in the *de facto* political power of the Japanese military after the attempted military coup of February 26th 1936 and to the Japanese insistence on Hirota's Three Principles as a basis for Sino-Japanese relations.<sup>20</sup> The Three Principles seemed most vague in theory yet alarmingly specific in application in ways detrimental to Chinese sovereignty. Since the introduction of the principles in October 1935, the Foreign Ministry had tried repeatedly to secure a satisfactory explanation of the practical implications of the Principles for China and failed;<sup>21</sup> on the other hand, while Japanese officials denied that there was anything in the Principles which might lead to the infringement of Chinese sovereignty, they were most often cited as a justification for measures - such as joint Sino-Japanese defence against Communism - which it could not be in China's interests to accept.

Although claiming to have undertaken the work with some initial optimism, Zhang appears in retrospect to have seen his time as Foreign Minister as a painful experience, and in his memoirs claims still to regret his failure to improve relations. Zhang was not a career diplomat and did not claim to have been appointed for anything other than his past experience of dealing with the Japanese.<sup>22</sup> If he felt - as he claims to have done - that by early 1937 there was no point in pursuing illusory hopes of a diplomatic settlement, then he had offered all that he claimed to be capable of offering, and it would not seem eccentric of him to wish to renounce the undoubtedly stressful position of Foreign Minister, leaving it to someone who could pursue China's broader interests internationally. The appointment of Wang Chonghui

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19. *SJRWL*, p.634.

20. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.58.

21. See Record of talks Zhang Qun and Nemoto Hiroshi, 21.1.1936; Archive 1217 and *YGZQ*, pp.19-21.

22. Zhang Qun, (1977), p.58.

appears to have been a tacit acknowledgement by Nanjing that relations with Japan had reached a stage where the efforts of 'Japan experts' would be of less value than the skills of a career diplomat who could command more attention from the Western Powers.

The collapse of the Zhang-Kawagoe talks also had significant political effects in Japan. The credibility of the Hirota cabinet was seriously damaged by its failure to impose its will on the Nanjing government. Kawagoe had warned Zhang Qun during negotiations that tensions over domestic as well as diplomatic problems left the Hirota cabinet in a precarious position.<sup>23</sup> This was no mere negotiation tactic: the Hirota cabinet was indeed under severe pressure at home and, after confrontation with the Diet at the first session of the new year on January 21st, the entire cabinet resigned on January 23rd. The implications for Nanjing of further instability in Japan were alarming.

It appears however that Nanjing had begun 1937 as it began 1935 and 1936 in an almost optimistic mood. It is unclear whether this was simple New Year buoyancy or relief at having survived the crises which ended the previous year. It is possible that the Foreign Ministry expected the failure of the Zhang-Kawagoe negotiations to be followed by hostile action from Japan, and that the silence from Tokyo was taken as a sign that Nanjing's determined stance had produced some effect on the Japanese government, not that the beleaguered Hirota cabinet and its successors were temporarily unable to take any action at all. This relatively positive attitude is reflected in the *Waibu Zhoukan*.

The *Waibu Zhoukan* differs from the *Waijiaobu Gongbao* in that whereas the *Gongbao* publishes orders and regulations from the whole government, the *Zhoukan* reprints speeches from mostly Foreign Ministry personnel, reports from Chinese representatives abroad on a wide range of topics and articles from the unofficial Press, Chinese and foreign,<sup>24</sup> selected presumably - if we assume that there was a conscious editorial policy - for the significance and interest of their subject matter and the suitability of their political stance. I assume that the reprinting of an article indicates, if not whole-hearted agreement, then at the very least overall acceptance of the validity of the views expressed, and that the selection of articles reprinted therefore indirectly and partially reflects the current official thinking of the Foreign

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23. Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936, Archive 1217 and YGZQ, p.27.

24. Mostly Chinese. Some translations from European and Japanese sources. Note also: "In fact, during the six months before the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, fewer newspaper articles appeared on the subject of Sino-Japanese relations than at any time since 1935." Hata, (1988), p.304.

Ministry; it seems improbable that the Ministry would risk corrupting or demoralising its own officials by exposing them to radical and convincing dissident views of official policy. The publication therefore potentially casts light on government or Foreign Ministry thinking on three levels: in the general speeches of the most senior officials such as Wang Jingwei, or Wang Chonghui, then Foreign Minister; in the reports from mid-level officials on practical issues affecting the work of the Ministry such as the speech on political developments in Japan by Shao Yulin detailed below, and in the reprints from the unofficial press which show the overlap between official government and popular opinion, and which can be seen as an attempt, however superficial, to acknowledge the voice of non-governmental sectors, albeit in sanitised form.

In late 1936, before the official end of the talks, the *Zhoukan* appeared to be preparing the Foreign Ministry personnel for war, reprinting articles from the unofficial Press on preparations for a war of resistance;<sup>25</sup> in early 1937, the tone had changed and there was much examination of the 'new understanding' of China displayed by some groups in Japan. While the articles were not uncritical of the Japanese position their general view of the future was less pessimistic than in previous months. The Press - and possibly the Ministry - seemed to be consoling itself with the knowledge that there were those in Japan who advocated a more equitable China policy than that supported by some sections of the military, and neglecting the awkward question of whether these people might have any influence. Advocates of a less expansionist policy toward China included not only intellectuals, such as the Shōwa Research Association (*Shōwa kenkyūkai*)<sup>26</sup> but also elements within the military command led by Colonel Ishiwara Kanji. Ishiwara was moved to warn against war with China by the conviction that the 'Final War', when it came, would be against the Soviet Union, and that premature moves on China would needlessly dissipate Japan's resources for this inevitable conflict.<sup>27</sup>

This vision of impending apocalyptic conflict - even against the USSR - was dangerous for China. The General Headquarters in Tokyo, remained hostile to China,

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25. 'Kangzhan ying you zhengpan jihua.' reprinted from *Yishibao*, Tianjin, 24.11.1936 in *WBZK*, #143, 7.12.1936, pp.22-3.

26. Crowley, (1971). According to Najita, (1988), p.740, the Association was not formed until 1938.

27. Peattie, (1975), *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p.286.

especially in the light of the suspicions of alliance between Nanjing and the CCP after the Xi'an incident, and the contempt with which much of the Japanese army regarded the Chinese forces did not lead them to fear, as Ishiwara did, that Japan would get bogged down in war against China. This is not to say that the China war was the planned outcome of a conspiracy by the Japanese army supported at the highest levels, but the apparently widespread belief that Japan could crush Chinese resistance, overthrow and replace the Nanjing government *en passant* before turning to the 'real' enemy can have done little to make drastic action without regard for the consequences less appealing to the army.

The problem of Japan's domestic divisions was explored in a report to the Foreign Ministry by Shao Yulin of the Intelligence Section on January 26th.<sup>28</sup> The immediate cause of the conflict, Shao stated, was the objection of the Japanese Diet to the budget; it was reported that efforts of the Navy Minister secured a temporary compromise between cabinet and Diet, yet finally the intransigence of the military, led to the breakdown of mediation and, after the resignation of the War Minister, Terauchi Hisaichi,<sup>29</sup> the whole cabinet had no choice but to resign.<sup>30</sup> Rumours concerning the possible eventual outcome of the crisis included predictions that the Diet would be dissolved, presumably at the demand of the military.<sup>31</sup> It had been felt for some time, explained Shao, that the Hirota cabinet would fall; apart from the budget problem, the cabinet was also under pressure for the failures of its foreign policy, specifically of its policy towards China and the Soviet Union.

According to Shao's analysis, Japan had seen the South-Western Revolt of June 1936 as a possible first step towards renewed civil war in China.<sup>32</sup> Japan had hoped to take advantage of this to advance its own interests in China: civil war, it was apparently assumed, would force the Nanjing government to cooperate with Japan in return for support in order to preserve its own position.<sup>33</sup> Thwarted in this design, Japan had then hoped to use the

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28. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, 'Cong Riben yihui zhi fengchao guance Riben neizheng waijiao zhi dongxiang.' in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, pp.10-13.

29. Berger, (1988), 'Politics and Mobilization in Japan, 1931-1945.' in Duus, Peter, ed., (1988), *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol VI: *The Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.121.

30. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.10.

31. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.10.

32. On the South-Western Revolt of June 1936, see Chapter VIII; the disorder which followed the Beihai Incident (September 1936) suggests that Nanjing's control over the region was still tenuous.

33. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, pp.10-11.

Chengdu and Beihai Incidents to force China into making further concessions; this second failure had, Shao noted, been widely and openly criticised in the period preceding the reconvention of the Diet. Shao appears here to take 'Japan's' China policy to be inherently expansionist, which is at odds with the 'new understanding' assumptions elsewhere reported. While Shao recognises divergences of interest between the political parties, the *zaibatsu*, the bureaucracy and the military and the implications of those divergences for Japanese domestic politics, he does not here examine in any great detail the function of these varying interests in the formulation of foreign policy.

The question of relations with the Soviet Union was arguably seen to be as important for the future of Japanese interests on the mainland as relations with China: since the occupation of Manchuria in 1931, Japan and the Soviet Union had been facing each other on a long and, on the Soviet side, heavily-defended land border; the Soviet land forces in the Far East, numbering over 300,000, were supported by a substantial naval and airforce presence. In 1936 alone there had been several hundred incidents on the Manchurian border of varying degrees of severity between Japanese and Soviet forces, and the USSR could not be expected merely to sit and watch as the Japanese armies' influence extended into Mongolia. It was therefore essential that the Soviet threat to Japanese control of the border be neutralised, yet the Hirota cabinet's handling of the Soviet Union was no more successful than its approach to China.<sup>34</sup>

A military solution was unfeasible. It was not possible to increase the Japanese military presence in the region without either withdrawing forces from Korea, Taiwan or North China, which would be opposed by the Army, or expanding the armed forces and thereby increasing the already excessive budget, which would not be accepted by the Diet.<sup>35</sup> Hirota's diplomatic approaches to Moscow were interrupted by the conclusion of the anti-Comintern pact in November 1936.<sup>36</sup> The pact, possibly intended in theory to strengthen Hirota's negotiating position, backfired: Moscow was not intimidated but enraged. The Soviet Union refused to sign a fishing treaty which had already been negotiated with Japan, and halted all exports of oil and iron ore to Japan; by January 1937, it was reported, construction

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34. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, pp.10-11.

35. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.11.

36. Fox, (1982), p.199-208.



of some steel-framed buildings in Tokyo had already been suspended as a result. Shao made no reference to the effect of the pact on Nanjing: China's alarm at the conclusion of the pact - specifically Nanjing's fears that China might be seen as a target rather than an ally in the fight against Communism - paradoxically increased the incentive for Nanjing to intensify the talks with Moscow, making more likely the Sino-Soviet alliance which the government in Tokyo was so anxious to prevent.<sup>37</sup>

Diplomatic defeat was compounded by domestic difficulties. The conclusion of the anti-Comintern pact also exacerbated the Hirota cabinet's domestic problems, attracting opposition from some Japanese as a further import of fascism from Europe, at a time when the control of the military over politics in Japan was causing increasing unease.<sup>38</sup> The budget which brought down the Hirota cabinet was produced by Finance Minister Baba Eiichi to underwrite a package of measures put forward by Ishiwara Kanji to support the development of a national defence state (*kokubō kokka*)<sup>39</sup> to prepare Japan for the 'Final War'. Shao refers to a number of matters included in the package. The government, at the insistence of the Army, was trying to force the nationalisation of electricity production. This would involve the amalgamation under national management of more than one hundred and thirty independent electricity companies, a move which, although presented to the nation as a means of securing more and cheaper electricity for the people and facilitating central control over the system in a crisis, was opposed by the political parties and the *zaibatsu* as an infringement of the right of private ownership and therefore unconstitutional.<sup>40</sup>

At the same time, commerce and industry - other than the specifically military industries - were in decline and disposable income was falling. Tariff barriers blocked Japanese exports to Europe and the United States; the wave of smuggling in China was, Shao asserted, a reflection of the desperation felt by Japan at the state of its foreign trade. Yet, despite the fall in government revenues, the budget had more than trebled since the occupation of Manchuria, increasing from a maximum of ¥900 million per annum before 1931 to a proposed ¥3040 million for 1937, more than half of which was destined for the

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37. Garver, (1988), p.

38. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.11.

39. Berger, (1988), p.121.

40. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.12.

Army and the Navy.<sup>41</sup> Finance Minister Baba had proposed to pay for the budget by increasing borrowing and raising taxes, again incurring widespread opposition.

Moreover, Shao noted, the Army had incurred further opposition from the Diet by demanding reform of the executive to meet the needs of wartime government. Shao does not explicitly suggest that the budget was opposed not merely for the vast expenditure which it would involve but also for its place in a radical reform plan which effectively militarized Japanese government and made the contribution to national defence a primary criterion in the evaluation of future measures,<sup>42</sup> nor does he appear to take issue with the implied assumption that war was imminent.<sup>43</sup> In all these questions the fundamental problems of Japanese politics in the pre-War years - the tensions between the military and the political parties and the drift, uninterrupted except by the Inukai cabinet, away from constitutional government - were clearly visible.<sup>44</sup>

Shao did not offer any hope that these conflicts would be resolved by Hirota's successor, yet he was less overtly pessimistic than one might expect concerning the potential effects of the fall of the Hirota cabinet - and the underlying trends in Japanese politics which the fall revealed - for the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship. It had been announced that day that Ugaki Kazushige, former governor-general of Korea, had been asked to form a cabinet. Ugaki was a military man, but had relatively close links with the political parties and with the *zaibatsu*, and was not a noted extremist. The Ugaki cabinet, Shao predicted, would not be dominated by the military, the political parties or the bureaucracy, nor would it be able to resolve the tensions between the three elements. The new cabinet might be obliged, he continued, at first to adopt tougher policies to secure the cooperation of the Army, but the opposition of the *zaibatsu* and political parties would block the full implementation of those policies. He concluded:

"As for Japan's China policy, generally speaking, it will naturally not be changed by the formation of the Ugaki cabinet, and Sino-Japanese relations may of course deteriorate at any time. Recently however, because China is becoming stronger internally since the South-Western Incident and the Xi'an Incident, people from all

41. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.12. ¥3.13 billion according to Berger, (1988), p.121.

42. Berger, (1988), p.123.

43. See Peattie, (1975), pp. *passim*.

44. Report by Shao Yulin to Foreign Ministry, 26.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.12.

sectors in Japan are already gradually beginning to feel that a change in China policy is necessary. ... As for Ugaki himself, he does not seem one to advocate a radical China policy, and in the present climate of public opinion it is possible that he may be relatively mild in his attitude. It is of course still inevitable that he will use other methods to put (Japan's) basic China policy into effect. In the coming year, if there are no unexpected changes in the domestic politics of China and Japan, it is to be feared that talk of 'economic cooperation' (*jingji tixie*) will fill the Press."<sup>45</sup>

It should be considered whether the Foreign Ministry assumed that Japan would be diverted from further encroachments on China by its internal difficulties, and whether Japan's undoubted domestic problems blinded the Chinese authorities at this time to the real dangers still posed by the Japanese military. Shao's failure here to discuss at length some of the issues underlying Japan's problems leads one to ask whether Nanjing failed to see these or appreciate their significance, or whether the dangers for China in these issues were so obvious that they needed no further exploration.

Although Ugaki received the support of the political parties and the military, he was unable to form a cabinet because of the refusal of the military to supply an Army Minister. On February 8th, in a report to the Foreign Ministry Feng Fei<sup>46</sup> addressed the question of the new cabinet to be formed under Hayashi Senjurō, a senior figure in the Control Faction (*Tōseiha*). The Hayashi cabinet contained no politicians of the major parties, *Seiyūkai* and *Minseitō*, and only one from the minority *Shōwakai*,<sup>47</sup> Hayashi having made it a condition that members of the political parties must voluntarily renounce party membership before joining the cabinet. Feng pointed out that the cabinet did contain a significant number of representatives of the bureaucracy and the *zaibatsu*, groups having interests in common with the political parties: it was therefore, he argued, effectively no different from a cabinet including members of the political parties and could not be seen as a purely military cabinet. Nanjing of course could not without hypocrisy condemn military participation in government *per se*; many senior figures in central government, including Chiang Kai-shek and Zhang Qun, came from the army, and all provincial governors owed their positions to their military followings.

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45. Report by Shao Yulin to the Foreign Ministry, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, p.13.

46. Report by Feng Fei to Foreign Ministry, 'Ribei xin neike zhi zhanwang', 8.2.1937, in *WBZK*, #153, 15.2.1937, pp.17-9.

47. Composed mostly of people expelled from the *Seiyūkai* for accepting posts from a previous cabinet. Berger, (1988), p.115.

It appeared that the Hayashi cabinet was making some effort to smooth over the problems which had led to the downfall of its predecessor; the budget had been withdrawn for revision and it was rumoured that the army and navy allocations were to be reduced. China policy, Feng argued, was determined more by Japan's 'objective circumstances' than by the composition of the cabinet - it is far from clear what he means by this - and was unlikely to change fundamentally. He noted however the growing advocacy of 'economic cooperation' as an element of China policy; this indicated greater understanding in Japan of the new China, and was, he suggested, to be cautiously welcomed.

"... but what they describe to us as 'economic cooperation' is not necessarily what we would call 'economic cooperation on the principles of equality and mutual amity ... (yet) the word 'cooperation' is pleasanter to hear than 'drastic measures' (*duanran chuzhi*) or 'reprisals' (*yingcheng*) ..."<sup>48</sup>

These modifications were apparently cosmetic. Hayashi had been forced to dissociate himself somewhat from the Ishiwara faction after it became clear that the level of parliamentary opposition to the alliance might prevent him forming a cabinet. The budget was reduced from ¥3.13 billion to ¥2.77 billion, and the controversial proposals of executive reform were dropped, yet the cooperation between the military and the *zaibatsu* which Feng Fei saw as a potentially moderating influence on the army, had the effect, in bringing the *zaibatsu* closer to the army, of distancing them from the political parties and therefore dividing opposition to the army. The split between *zaibatsu* and the political parties was widened by the exclusion of the parties from the cabinet, and Hayashi's refusal to employ parliamentary vice-ministers further eroded the role of the parties in government.<sup>49</sup> The move away from the Ishiwara plan should be seen as a potential reduction of the influence of Ishiwara within the army, and not as a reduction of the influence of the army in government.

Nanjing was not at this time entirely complacent: confidence in the support and loyalty enjoyed by the government and in the wisdom and rectitude of its policies had been shaken, and it could be that there was as great a need to reassure as to enlighten. This need to reassure government and Party that it was pursuing the correct line in domestic and foreign policy and to emphasize positive aspects of policy as a means of distracting attention from dissident voices within the Party on important matters seen seems to surface in the

48. Report by Feng Fei to Foreign Ministry, 8.2.1937, in *WBZK*, #153, 15.2.1937, p.19.

49. Berger, (1988), pp.123-4.

speeches of Wang Jingwei.

On January 18th, Wang Jingwei returned to the Guomindang Headquarters and spoke to the Party.<sup>50</sup> He reiterated his faith in the policy of internal pacification before resistance to external threat (*annei rangwai*) as the only answer to China's problems, emphasizing the impossibility of mounting an effective defence against external threat while substantial domestic divisions remained. He also spoke out against the growing tide of opinion which appeared to favour alliance with the Communists, contrasting the Popular Front in France to the People's United Front advocated by the Communists, pointing out that the French Communist Party had retained neither quasi-governmental structures in competition to the Paris government nor an independent armed force beside the army of France. He also alluded to military campaigns by the CCP in central and southern China during the Shanghai and Great Wall campaigns of 1932 and 1933 respectively, portraying the CCP as saboteurs of the government's attempts at resistance. If the Communists had changed and were offering an alliance in good faith, it could be accepted, he said, but Nanjing must seek guarantees of reliability before accepting the offer.<sup>51</sup> Wang also restated his vision of China's foreign policy:

"We are willing to join hands on the principles of coexistence and development with any state, any race; we are prepared to work on the principle of mutual benefit with those nations which do not have invasive ambitions; even with those nations which do have invasive ambitions and where it is visible in their actions, we are willing to exercise the greatest sincerity and restraint to bring them to their senses and lead them to the path of coexistence and development ..."<sup>52</sup>

Wang did not assume that China could escape war even by this display of sincerity and restraint, yet did not address the question of how, as Japan persistently rejected China's calls to renounce aggression, China could apply that sincerity and restraint to any effect; nor did he imagine that war could be painless, yet his naïve and bizarrely romantic vision of the pain of war is less than reassuring.

"... apart from offering our hearts, we are also prepared to spill our blood, because in times of invasion there can be no talk of friendship. We need a great deal of bloodshed, blood shed without stopping until the invaders put down their butchers knives and say 'You have shed enough blood'; then is the end of invasion and the

50. Speech by Wang Jingwei to Central Political Council, 18.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, 1.2.1937, pp.24-6.

51. Speech by Wang Jingwei to Central Political Council, 18.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, p.25.

52. Speech by Wang Jingwei to Central Political Council, 18.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, p.24.

beginning of friendship ... <sup>53</sup>

Predictably, this gory vision was absent from his speech to the nation broadcast several days later; Wang spoke instead of the victory in Suiyuan, made possible by the Nanjing government's efforts for unity. He also dwelt on the evils of Communism and the destruction which the adoption of or flirtation with Communism had brought to states in Europe;<sup>54</sup> however in the examples he cited, which include Hungary, Italy, Germany and Spain, the destruction appears arguably to have been wrought not by the Communists themselves and their policies but by the domestic fascist oppositions - or in the case of Hungary, invading forces - which rose to counter them.

Several days later, Wang addressed the problem of collective security and the maintenance of peace in a speech to the government.<sup>55</sup> China's experiences in the past with the organs of collective security had not been happy. After the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, the League of Nations had declined to take action; passing the matter on to the signatories of the Treaty of Washington, of which one was Japan. Although the treaty included a pledge to defend the territorial integrity of China, no attempt was made to impose sanctions or otherwise enforce respect for the extremely conciliatory conclusions of the sole outcome of Western intervention in the matter, the Lytton report.

Wang seemed anxious to emphasize that things had changed. The European powers had reevaluated the concept of collective security and it was now felt that it was not the deficiencies collective security itself but the failures of responsible powers to show sufficient commitment to the concept that was responsible for the past breakdowns of the system. Nor, he insisted, was adherence to the principle of collective security to be seen as a sign of weakness or an evasion of a state's responsibility to defend itself.

"Revulsion against war and hope for peace is a commonly-held feeling, yet the responsibility for the preservation of peace cannot be left with those who seek temporary comfort while living in degradation; it must be given to those who are prepare for war and are constantly willing to fight ... the more we prepare for war, the harder it is for peace to break down ... <sup>56</sup>

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53. Speech by Wang Jingwei to Central Political Council, 18.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, p.24.

54. Wang Jingwei speech 22.1.1937, in *WBZK*, #151, pp.26-7.

55. Wang Jingwei speech 1.2.1937, *WBZK*, 152, 8.2.1937, pp.26-8.

56. Wang Jingwei speech 1.2.1937, *WBZK*, 152, 8.2.1937, pp.26-8.

This appears to reveal a new recognition that war was a real threat for which preparations must be made, yet beyond the rejection of appeasement there is no offer of positive action. In the past when he placed his faith in Japanese responsiveness to exhortations to respect international standards, Wang, like so many of those involved in the appeasement-deterrence debate, appeared to ignore the crucial question of whether Japan shared his frame of reference. Just as the actions of the Japanese armies in Manchuria and North China revealed their indifference to 'international standards' and therefore to Wang's pleas that they uphold them, so they were apparently unperturbed at the prospect of war, and indeed so earnestly expected war to take place that attempts at 'deterrence' were largely meaningless in terms of their influence on the armies' behaviour. Any preparations for war were more likely to invite accusations from the Japanese of aggressive intentions and to provoke further attack from the armies in the North.<sup>57</sup> The discrepancy between Japanese and Chinese military capability was still so great that any suggestion that the Japanese military might be deterred even momentarily by anything China could do to resist can only be a rhetorical device.

" ... and if by some misfortune war should break out, then it is essential that everyone know who was the aggressor; not only those abroad but also that country's own people must know that the face of wanton military aggression cannot be concealed beneath a mask of self-defence. The aggressor may be able to maintain his arrogant and domineering stance temporarily but finally he will be rejected by the world and by his own population ... "<sup>58</sup>

Wang did not suggest that the European powers would descend *deus ex machina* to save China from destruction, yet he offers little hope that anything can be achieved from China's own efforts, and China is portrayed, if not as an entirely passive, then as non-controlling and largely as the object of the actions of others, as a political and military space in which others take actions and on which others pass judgement. China under threat of Japanese invasion, he seems to suggest, can use conventional - futile - diplomatic and military means to counter Japan; these will achieve nothing other than to prove that China was the victim of unprovoked aggression; there is no suggestion of resistance or of counter-attack, only of sacrifice.

It is manifestly unfair to take these speeches by Wang as hard statements of actual or

57. See Japanese version of Datan agreement, Appendix II; Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 16.4.1936; ZRWJ5, p.370.

58. Wang Jingwei speech 1.2.1937, WBZK, 152, 8.2.1937, pp.26-8.

intended policy; while their overt primary function was no doubt partly to educate and explain, they were also most probably intended to revive the Party's confidence, which had been shaken by the failure of the Zhang-Kawagoe talks and the Xi'an incident. Moreover the secondary function of the speeches - that of reestablishing Wang in the eye of the government and Party as a man of vision and influence, not as a failed Foreign Minister, but as a returnee from Europe, an experienced observer of international political tendencies - must not be ignored. If we assume that that is what Wang was claiming to be when he made these speeches, it is by those standards that he must be judged. Wang appears to have a dangerously unrealistic vision of Japan and of China's predicament. Rhetoric has its place in politics, and one could argue that an unmitigated pessimism for the future of China would have been more demoralising than is strictly useful, but Wang's vision of the nobility of China's sacrifice seems with hindsight hollow and self-deceiving.

The Third Plenum of the Fifth Central Committee of the Guomindang was held in Nanjing on February 15th-22nd. Chiang Kai-shek attended to report on the Xi'an incident and to offer his resignation for a second time. It was once more refused. Foreign policy attitudes were restated in the report on foreign affairs delivered by Zhang Qun. A motion proposed by Wang Jingwei on the continuation of the military campaigns against the Communists was vehemently opposed before being passed in substantially modified form under the title 'Resolution on the Eradication of the Red Menace' (*Guanyu genjue chihuo zhijueyi'an*). Support for alliance with the Communists and a restoration of the 'Three Great Policies' (*San da zhengce*) of Sun Yat-sen<sup>59</sup> was gaining momentum under the leadership of Song Qingling, Feng Yuxiang and He Xiangning.

The appointment of Wang Chonghui as Foreign Minister on March 3rd coincided with the arrival in Tokyo of the new Japanese Foreign Minister, Satō Naotake, former Ambassador to France.<sup>60</sup> The Press at first noted similarities in approach between Satō's and Wang Chonghui's inaugural speeches, yet Satō's first address to the Upper House of the Japanese Diet was different in tone from his later speech to the Lower House, which was more hawkish and in which he recommended firm adherence to Hirota's Three Principles and

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59. *i.e.* alliance with the Soviet Union, alliance with the Communist Party, and support for the peasants and workers, first raised at the Guomindang First National Congress in Guangzhou in January 1924. *GMDLS*, p.263.

60. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.217. Before Satō's appointment, Hayashi, the Prime Minister, had acted as Foreign Minister.



refusal to renounce Japanese interests in China.<sup>61</sup> Satō's appointment was at first seen by Nanjing as a good thing, but nothing was done to capitalize on this.

Xu Shiyong, Chinese Ambassador in Tokyo, returned to Nanjing to report on the situation in Japan on March 6th<sup>62</sup> and was still there at the time of the Lugouqiao incident. Xu appears to have been less active as Ambassador than his predecessor, Jiang Zuobin, but his absence from Tokyo cannot have been helpful. Kawagoe left Nanjing in late April and returned to Tokyo for new instructions. Just as the inability of the Tokyo government after February 1936 to develop a China policy acceptable to the Army and the Foreign Ministry had delayed Kawagoe's arrival in China, so the political tensions of 1937 delayed his return: he was still in Tokyo on June 29th. Had the new Foreign Ministers been willing or able to resume discussions on the Sino-Japanese relationship, and had it been possible - which seems unlikely in either case, but particularly Japan's - to agree on a basis for that resumption, neither Minister had an Ambassador to discuss anything with.

It seems reasonable to assume no diplomatic discussions on terms which would be acceptable to Nanjing would be capable of satisfying the Japanese Army, yet it could be argued that in theory the mere fact that talks were being held had a diversionary function. The Zhang-Kawagoe talks, while they did not prevent the Guandong Army's Suiyuan campaign, arguably increased embarrassment in Tokyo at such independent efforts. The complete suspension of talks, in giving the clear message that even a partial solution to the Sino-Japanese problem as perceived by the military was not going to be provided by the civil government, undoubtedly made the prospect of irregular military initiatives more attractive.

In March a Japanese economic delegation led by Kodama Kenji arrived in China to attend the inaugural meeting of the Sino-Japanese Trade Council (*Zhong-Ri maoyi xiehui*) in Shanghai. The delegation spent much of its time in China in informal meetings with Shanghai commercial bodies but also met government officials, including the Finance Minister, Kong Xiangxi, Lin Sen and Chiang Kai-shek, who lectured the delegation on the *Lunyu* principle of 'Do not do unto others as you would not have them do to you' (*Ji suo bu yu, wu shi yu ren*).<sup>63</sup> On his return to Tokyo, Kodama was positive about the prospects for the future of

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61. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p. 218-9.

62. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.218.

63. Chen Bulei, (1981), p.120; Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.219.

unofficial Sino-Japanese economic cooperation. His more liberal attitude to China was noticed in Nanjing: it was at his recommendation that the Japanese banks in Shanghai exchanged the silver reserves they still held with the Chinese central bank;<sup>64</sup> this was a marked departure from Japan's previous stubborn resistance to the Chinese currency reform of 1935.<sup>65</sup> Reports that his opinions on China policy were solicited by Foreign Minister Satō again led some to hope that Japan's China policy was being moderated, yet nothing more came of the mission, and by early April the Press in China and Japan was declaring that economic cooperation was a lost cause.<sup>66</sup>

This was to a very great extent the result of Chinese suspicions of Japan. Despite the encouragingly rational approach displayed by Kodama Kenji, any formalisation of Sino-Japanese economic cooperation at governmental level would open the process to government interference in Tokyo, and there was no guarantee that Tokyo would show more respect for Nanjing's position than it had done in the past. Wang Chonghui expressed scepticism concerning Japan's efforts to promote 'economic cooperation' in a speech to the Central Political Council on April 5th:

"... what we call cooperation (*tixie*) is bilateral; 'cooperation' in which the hands and feet of one party are fettered cannot be called cooperation."<sup>67</sup>

Should Nanjing have seized on the opportunity of economic cooperation as a means of improving the 'atmosphere' between China and Japan? Might economic cooperation have benefitted China directly and also indirectly, by establishing a more amicable climate in which the complex and contentious problems of North China and Manzhouguo might have been resolved? This is the assumption which appears to underlie some Western writing on the Sino-Japanese relationship. It is suggested for example that

"... there is peculiar tragedy in the drift toward war that overtook both China and Japan in the spring of 1937. While Japan, ... seemed ready to moderate its aggressive activities in China, the Chinese Nationalists, though they too did not actively seek such a war with Japan ... began to assume an increasingly tough and uncompromising

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64. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.218.

65. See Chapters IV and VI.

66. Article, 'Jingji tixie yu kang di zhunbei.' *Shanghai shishi xinbao*, 1.4.37. Reprinted *WBZK*, #161, 12.4.1937, pp.20-1.

67. *WBZK*, #161, pp. 1-2.

stand."<sup>68</sup>

If Nanjing had paid attention only to the superficial change in methods used by Japan in pursuit of China policy and ignored the basic policy which it believed to be unchanged, it risked entangling China in further economic agreements with Japan with no certainty that opinion in Tokyo would not again shift to favour more overtly aggressive methods, for example those outlined in the Kawagoe memorandum presented the previous December:

"On the suppression of anti-Japanese activity ... Japan takes this most seriously and expects that China will pay constant attention to the items above and take appropriate and effective measures. Japan will specially establish a permanent body with the express purpose of supervising and investigating the success of these measures, which will when necessary convey warnings to China. If China ignores a warning issued after investigation and evades its responsibilities to Japan, Japan will have no alternative but to take whatever steps are necessary in self-defence."<sup>69</sup>

The Japanese armies had justified successive encroachments on North China since 1933 under the apparently much vaguer reference to supervisory powers in the Tangu truce;<sup>70</sup> unless this arrogation by Japan of the right to intervene at will in China's domestic affairs throughout the country was dropped and the assumptions underlying it abandoned it is difficult to see how any progress could be made between Nanjing and Tokyo. By early May, there seemed to be less perceived reason for conciliatory behaviour towards Japan: Wang Jingwei in a speech to the Central Political Council explained China's Japan policy as a policy not of exclusion of Japan (*pai Ri*) but of resistance to Japan (*kang Ri*);<sup>71</sup> this is in marked contrast to his earlier advocacy of reliance on "the greatest sincerity and restraint" as the means of leading Japan towards a reformed foreign policy.

With both Xu Shiying and Kawagoe Shigeru at home reporting on recent work and receiving instructions there was little apparent direct contact on matters of importance between Nanjing and Tokyo in May, other than a presumably unofficial visit to the Foreign and Army Ministers by Wang Zhengting, China's Ambassador in the United States.<sup>72</sup> In North China the Japanese military appeared to be moving towards the realisation of its plans for the 'economic development' of the region, with plans for the construction of harbours at

68. Peattie, (1975), pp.285-6.

69. Kawagoe memorandum, 3.12.1936. Archive 1217; see Chapter VIII and Appendix VIII.

70. See text of Tangu truce, Chapter II.

71. Wang Jingwei speech to Central Political Council, 3.5.1937. WBZK, #165, 10.5.1937.

72. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.224.

Tanggu and Dagu and, despite the protests of the central government at the inauguration of direct flights between Tianjin and Tokyo.<sup>73</sup> This appeared to be in line with the North China policy adopted by the Japanese cabinet.<sup>74</sup> The Japanese military attaché in Nanjing, Kita Seiichi, visited Liu Xiang, the governor of Sichuan, in Chengdu, and there were disturbances at Shantou in Fujian between Japanese consular officials and the local police.<sup>75</sup>

In June, a delegation of financial and military figures led by Kong Xiangxi, Chen Cheng and He Yingqin were invited to visit Germany. Before the conclusion of the anti-Comintern pact, Germany had pursued fairly even-handed if uncoordinated China and Japan policies, and supplied Nanjing with military advisers and credit for arms purchases. If China was not lose its closest European ally as a result of the pact, deliberate cultivation of Germany was essential; strong links between Nanjing and Berlin might also make it less easy for Tokyo to invoke the anti-Comintern pact as a pretext for further action against China. While the Foreign Ministry in Berlin might have been receptive to this, control over China and Japan policies was divided between the pre-fascist bureaucracy of the Foreign Ministry and elements within the National Socialist Party: while the Foreign Ministry inclined slightly towards a pro-China policy, the Party naturally favoured Japan; the Japanese Ambassador in Tokyo, Herbert von Dirksen, was closer to Party circles, and was also at the time putting pressure on Satō Naotake to show more respect for the anti-Comintern pact - which Satō had publicly stated he regretted - and to adopt a clear policy of friendship with Germany.<sup>76</sup>

This heresy on Satō's part, which presumably aroused the hostility not only of the German Ambassador but also of the Japanese Army, added to the already severe pressure on the Hayashi cabinet, which resigned *en masse* on June 2nd. Hayashi was succeeded as Prime Minister by the ineffectual Konoe Fumimaro, with Hirota Kōki as Foreign Minister. Hirota's initial statements that Japan's 'new' China policy need not adhere strictly to Hirota's Three Principles, and that there was to be an effort to improve Sino-Japanese relations starting with unspecified key issues were apparently contradicted by the time Kawagoe was presented with new instructions for his return to China.

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73. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), pp.225-6.

74. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.222-3.

75. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.225.

76. Fox, (1982), p.215.

At a press conference for Japanese reporters on June 18th Wang Chonghui gave his reaction to the return of Hirota to the Foreign Ministry and the impending arrival of Kawagoe in Nanjing.<sup>77</sup> On the future of the Sino-Japanese relationship and the North China question, while he avoided detailed discussion of specifics, he was unequivocal on the principles behind China's foreign policy stance, and apparently more outspoken on the question of Japan's guilt than was the case in the past. No progress on any matter could be made, he stated, unless the political problems besetting the Sino-Japanese relationship were resolved. Asked whether Nanjing was planning to open negotiations with Japan on the resolution of North China's political problems, and whether the time was in fact right to do so, he retorted that once Japan was determined to resolve the problems it had caused, North China would be the simplest of problems to deal with. Wang declared himself willing to facilitate the approach to a normalisation of relations between China and Japan by dealing with the 'easier' problems first, citing the dissolution of Eastern Hebei regime as an example, and warning that if these simple problems could not be dealt with there was little hope of a satisfactory resolution of any other matters.<sup>78</sup> Nanjing argued that the simplicity of the problem of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei regime lay in the fact that the regime owed its existence to Japan's support, which had no conceivable justification and no benefits for China or Japan; Japan had only to recognise this and withdraw its support and there would be no problem.

The fall of the Hayashi cabinet had reportedly been preceded by a wave of anti-Chinese propaganda in the Tokyo Press, and was followed by complaints of increased anti-Japanese feeling from all sectors in China. In Tokyo, a General Staff report concluded that " ... the New Life Movement led by Chiang Kai-shek has now become a movement for national military mobilisation ...".<sup>79</sup> There is however little indication that tension was higher than it had been at, for example, the time of the North China Autonomy Movement, other than a report from a Japanese civilian warning that the Tianjin Army was planning an 'incident' near Beiping.<sup>80</sup> It is not known whether similar reports had reached Nanjing; the

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77. 'Wang buzhang dui Ri jizhe tan tiaozheng Zhong-Ri bangjiao.' 18.6.1937. In *WBZK*, #172, pp.1-3; 28.6.1937.

78. 'Wang buzhang dui Ri jizhe tan tiaozheng Zhong-Ri bangjiao.' 18.6.1937. In *WBZK*, #172, pp.1-3; 28.6.1937.

79. Zhang Pengdan, (1985), p.227.

80. Peattie, (1975), p.294.

central authorities must anyway have been used to them by then. There is no clear progress from the tensions of December 1936 to the acknowledged if undeclared war of July 1937. However, an emphasis on the 'accidental' nature of the Lugouqiao incident should not obscure the fact that, if there was no premeditated move towards all-out war on either side, the events of recent months had seriously discredited the alternatives to escalation.

## **Chapter XI**

### **North China on the Eve of War**

#### **(January-July, 1937)**

The North-South divide in perceptions of the Sino-Japanese problem is at its most evident in the months which preceded the Lugouqiao incident. An unnatural calm prevailed in Nanjing; Beiping was under relentless and increasing pressure from the Japanese. Japanese diplomatic officials remained reticent on the future of relations between China and Japan as successive Tokyo governments sought stability and a clear policy direction; the Japanese military suffered from no doubts on its aims in the North and did not hesitate to demand that they be accepted. Nanjing and Tokyo failed to engage politically with each other in the aftermath of the collapse of the Zhang-Kawagoe talks; the Japanese military in North China responded to the deadlock at the centre with a determination to push through the measures they saw as necessary to secure their position in North China regardless of the consequences.

Between January and July 1937 the deterioration of relations between the Japanese and local authorities in North China continued as the unresolved conflicts of interest between the two impeded the progress hoped for by the Japanese military. Frustrated by the failure of the talks in Nanjing to sanction greater Japanese involvement in the North Chinese economy and freedom of action against real or imagined Communist advances across China from Shaanxi province, the Japanese armies again increased pressure on the Hebei-Chaha'er local authorities, only to be met again with evasion from Song Zheyuan. The Japanese armies seem to have seen growing determination and hostility behind this evasiveness, as have Chinese historians: Song Zheyuan's previously relatively conciliatory attitude is generally taken to have changed decisively in the early part of 1937. The NCGA and GDA were no longer satisfied by Song's ambiguous stance and demanded a clear declaration of his position: as their frustration with Song increased, so their conditions became more extreme, and Song was left with no room for independent manoeuvre and no middle way between commitment to Japan and commitment to Nanjing.

Assessments of the nature and significance of this change vary: writers from the PRC see Song, inspired by the Chinese victory in Suiyuan and the perception of increased national unity which followed the resolution of the Xi'an incident and

encouraged by the CCP and the National Salvation Movement,<sup>1</sup> moving towards a 'pro-resistance' stance; Li Yunhan argues that Song, explicitly rejecting the 'special status' (*teshuhua*) of North China (*i.e.* the special relationship between the region and Japan), made a deliberate move at last towards a closer relationship with the central government.<sup>2</sup> If it is unclear what Song was moving towards, it seems clear that he moved away from Japan, and moved far enough and in substantive enough ways to alarm and anger the Japanese armies in the North.

A change in attitude on the part of Song and his subordinates is obvious from the very beginning of the year. While the official New Year speech during the Nanjing decade tended to be heavier on pious exhortation than on political argument, the first issue of the official bulletin of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council reprinted two speeches by Song and Ge Dingyuan in which a new spirit of independence is visible.<sup>3</sup> In his New Year address to the people of Hebei-Chaha'er and Beiping-Tianjin, Song called on the people to 'transform the old and establish the new' to cast aside old bad habits and move towards self-reliance, self-strengthening and self-awareness. In contrast to his bland inaugural speech as Chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council fourteen months before, he made none of the conventional references to Japan or to the importance of the Sino-Japanese relationship. He cited an example of the bad habits he hoped to see eradicated:

"... there are those who do not strive for self-strengthening, but simply rely on other people; who do not think realistically but simply hope for good fortune; and who nourish habits of idleness and pursue opportunistic actions. As a result they become daily more decadent and become parasites on society."<sup>4</sup>

At a time when Japan's demands emphasised Chinese reliance on Japanese financial and technical support for the development of its industries, and Chinese reliance on Japan for support in the campaigns against the CCP, this insistence on self-reliance and self-strengthening was a clear rejection of Japan's terms for the future of the Sino-

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1. Chang and Cai, (1985), pp.156-7.

2. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.179.

3. 'Zhonghua minguo ershiliu nian yuandan yu Ji-Cha-Ping-Jin ge jie tongbao gongmian si.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.1.

4. 'Zhonghua minguo ershiliu nian yuandan yu Ji-Cha-Ping-Jin ge jie tongbao gongmian si.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.1.



Japanese relationship, and a blunt condemnation of those Chinese who would accept those terms. While not exactly a call to arms, the speech was framed more as a positive suggestion for action than a warning that times were hard and prudence was called for, which would suggest to Japan that Song was now inclined to act as well as react, and that any steps he took might therefore require a decisive response. In addition to his speech to the people at large, Song offered three resolutions for 1937 to the 29th Army, each beginning 'We are citizens of the Republic of China...', an unequivocal rejection of Japan's efforts to secure recognition of the 'special status' of the North.<sup>5</sup>

Song's speech in the bulletin is followed by the speech by Ge Dingyuan.<sup>6</sup> More outspoken than Song, Ge expressed optimism for the future of China and praised the nation's achievements in recent years, yet he made no effort to gloss over the conditions in which those achievements had been made:

"... as a result of our bitter struggles in odious circumstances, we have made no little progress in recent years. Spiritually, the knowledge of the masses is daily increasing; national consciousness is daily more distinct and the people pay more attention to politics. Materially, in construction in areas such as transport, railway and road construction, water management, hygiene and electricity supply we have made great advances. We can only say that in all of these China is now rushing towards modernisation."<sup>7</sup>

There was no comfort for the Japanese armies in Ge's vision. The growth of national consciousness and popular attention to politics was not something which Japan could happily contemplate in the Chinese people, and in his references to material advances Ge avoided all mention of Japanese support or involvement in areas where both the military and the civil government were anxious to promote concerted action. Japan's contributions in the past were ignored; the possibility of Japanese participation in the future was excluded, and Japan was thus by implication included among the 'odious circumstances' in which China's struggles took place. He continued,

"... if all the people of the nation ... use all their strength in the great goal of creating a new nation and reviving the race, then ... it is not difficult to turn poverty to riches, weakness to strength, and to enter the forest of great

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5. 'Lujun di ershijiu jun ershiliu nian guan bing xin juexin.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.2.

6. 'Ying Minguo ershiliu nian jian yi liu shi yu guoren gongxu.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.3.

7. 'Ying Minguo ershiliu nian jian yi liu shi yu guoren gongxu.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.3.

nations ..."<sup>8</sup>

This was not at all what Japan had in mind for China. Even the 'respectable' end of Japanese China policy was openly directed at persuading China to weaken its links with foreign powers other than Japan, yet Ge was speaking not of a North China enjoying a close yet subordinate relationship with Japan beside Manzhouguo, but of an independent China made strong by its own efforts and using that strength to pursue its own aims in both domestic and international spheres. Ge urged unity between government and people as the only road to strength, reminding his listeners of the consequences of internal disunity, and pointing to the case of Spain, where the protracted civil war had exposed the nation to external interference by the fascist powers. For Ge, China's need for unity and strength was heightened by the external threat with which it was confronted:

"A nation's international position depends entirely on its strength. Therefore the way of avenging insults and saving the nation from destruction primarily lies in the people of the whole nation, even in extreme hardship, putting their shoulders to the wheel and developing their capabilities, fulfilling their responsibilities and planning the enrichment of every aspect of the nation's strengths. No weak and withered nation can become strong and prosperous by raving or empty talk, by calls for 'striking down' or 'overthrowing' ..."<sup>9</sup>

Song Zheyuan's emphasis on self-reliance was echoed by Ge in an pointed exhortation to revive the nation by its own efforts (*zili gengsheng*) by following the example of Stalin in practising frugality and avoiding foreign loans. This again, not only by citing Stalin as an example but also by arguing against foreign loans, seemed almost calculated to offend the Japanese military.

Ge's exhortation to cast out the false and retain the true (*qu wei, cun cheng*) cannot have failed to alarm the Japanese armies. Rumours reached the Japanese armies in North China in January 1937 that Song Zheyuan was sponsoring plans to subvert Yin Rugeng's 'puppet' (*wei*) government in Eastern Hebei. A telegram from Tianjin to the Intelligence Section of the Chinese Foreign Ministry<sup>10</sup> reported that Japan had recently reinforced the Eastern Hebei region's defences after hearing that Song was

8. 'Ying Minguo ershiliu nian jian yi liu shi yu guoren gongxu.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.3.

9. 'Ying Minguo ershiliu nian jian yi liu shi yu guoren gongxu.' *JCZWHGB*, 95, p.3.

10. Telegram, Tianjin (unnamed sender) to Foreign Ministry, 6.1.1937. *ZRWJ5*, pp.431-2.

entertaining proposals by Shi Yousan and Zhang Bi<sup>11</sup> to retake the area and overthrow Yin Rugeng. Shi Yousan had offered to lead a section of the 29th Army in a military attack on Eastern Hebei: if the attack was successful, Song was to propose to Nanjing that Shi himself be appointed senior official in the area to divert Japanese displeasure from Song and the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities; if the attack failed, Shi would personally assume responsibility. Zhang Bi had advocated fomenting further divisions within the Eastern Hebei regime to provoke a defection of the PPC; the 29th Army could then step in to recapture Tongzhou and take over the administration. According to the report, Song rejected both plans, fearing firstly that any intervention in Eastern Hebei would provoke retaliation by the Guandong Army, and secondly that merely replacing Yin Rugeng with either Zhang or Shi would not significantly improve matters as neither had proved trustworthy in the past. Zhang Bi's plan was not as wild as it might have seemed in some respects: PPC commanders from Eastern Hebei including Zhang Qingyu had approached Shang Zhen, then governor of Hebei, and Song Zheyuan as early as December 1935 to ask for guidance and support in action against Yin Rugeng.<sup>12</sup> Japan's hold on the North was threatened not only by the plans of Shi and Zhang: opposition to the forces in Northern Chaha'er supported by Japan was rising, and even in areas where Japan might have expected to be well-entrenched, such as in Zhangbei in Chaha'er where there was a long-established Special Services Agency, there were incidents in which the local population rose and disarmed or massacred rebels.<sup>13</sup>

Repeated efforts by the central government in Nanjing to clarify its position to Tokyo had not brought about any change in basic Japanese policy; in January, the Foreign Ministry received a report from Tokyo that Japan's Military Headquarters continued to press for the extension of Japanese control over the five Northern provinces and the promotion of Inner Mongolian independence, with the use of force

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11. The memoir literature refers to Zhang as a 'traitor' (*hanjian*) but there is little biographical data available on him; see Chapter IX on plans by the 29th Army to attack Yin Rugeng.

12. Zhang Qingyu, (A), pp. 71-2. Zhang does not refer to Zhang Bi's plan of 1936-7, but records a meeting with Song Zheyuan in Tianjin in late 1935; Song gave Zhang Qingyu and Zhang Yantian money (¥10,000 each) to train their forces for eventual resistance to Japan, but there was no further coordination of action, and their attempted uprising in Tongzhou after the Lugouqiao incident was defeated by Japan.

13. For example, Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.226.

in the event of intervention by Nanjing.<sup>14</sup> Ignoring Nanjing's rejection in the Zhang-Kawagoe talks of joint anti-Communist action in North and Central China, Japanese military and consular personnel seemed determined to establish a framework for action in defiance of the Chinese government's objections; reports were coming in from early January of the establishment of covert anti-Communist organisations in the Japanese and British concessions in Tianjin and in Eastern Hebei.<sup>15</sup> In February, the Hebei police arrested two Chinese men who confessed to posing as Communists at the instigation of the Japanese armies with the intention of causing an incident and thus providing a pretext for further pressure by the Tianjin army on the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities. While the organisations appeared to be led by Japanese military or consular personnel, there were a significant number of Chinese involved. More worryingly, this initiative was not restricted to North China: the Military Affairs Commission in Nanjing had received a letter from the Hunan provincial governor, He Jian, that the Japanese consul in Hunan, Takai Sueyoshi, had established a Central China Sino-Japanese Anti-Communist Amity Branch Association (*Zhong-Ri fanggong kenqinhui huazhong quhui*) in Changsha with branches at Changde and Hengzhou.<sup>16</sup> This appeared to be accompanied by initiatives to extend Japan's influence culturally as well as militarily, politically and economically; Tamura of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's cultural enterprise bureau visited Tianjin in early February to investigate expansion of joint educational initiatives.<sup>17</sup>

Song Zheyuan was by this time under extreme pressure from Tashiro Kan'ichirō to abandon Nanjing and side with Japan. Accompanied by Chen Juesheng and Lu Zongyu, Song met Tashiro on February 5th in Tianjin; a report of the meeting reached Nanjing the following day.<sup>18</sup> Tashiro tried to convince Song that Nanjing had already,

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14. Telegram, Chinese Embassy in Tokyo to Chinese Foreign Ministry, 7.1.1937; ZRWJ5, p.386-7.

15. Telegrams from Tianjin (unnamed sender) to Foreign Ministry, 6.1.1937, ZRWJ5, pp.387-8; 31.1.1937, ZRWJ5, p.411; 14.2.1937, ZRWJ5, p.411-2; telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 11.1.1937, ZRWJ5, p.388; 18.1.1937, ZRWJ5, p.386; telegram Zhang Zizhong to Foreign Ministry, 10.4.1937, ZRWJ5, p.426-7.

16. *Guominzhengfu junshi weiyuanhui* document dated 23.2.1937, in ZRWJ5, pp.413-4.

17. Telegram, Tianjin to Foreign Ministry, (unnamed sender); ZRWJ5, p.468.

18. Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry (unnamed sender), 6.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.487.

in the aftermath of the Xi'an incident, adopted a policy of toleration of the Communists, and that it was therefore imperative immediately to establish anti-Communist organisations in Hebei-Chaha'er to prevent the spread of Communism to the region. He further asserted that Nanjing had already decided to pass a resolution dissolving the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council at the forthcoming plenum. He Yingqin or Liu Zhi, then governor of Henan, was to be sent North to administer the affairs of the region; Nanjing hoped thereby to undermine the power of Song and Han Fujū, and intended to divide up the 29th Army and move Song to the position of Pacification Commissioner of Henan and Anhui. Tashiro urged Song to make a clear decision in favour of Japan, offering him military support against the centre if necessary. Song, according to the report, suspected that this was purely a ploy to provoke discord with the centre, but felt that what Tashiro said was not implausible and therefore could not entirely disbelieve it. Tashiro was presumably aware of a recent conversation between the Chinese Foreign Minister, Zhang Qun, and the Japanese consul-general in Nanjing, Suma Yakichirō, in which Zhang Qun summarised Nanjing's policy on North China as the abolition of illegally-created conditions and the suppression of behaviour likely to cause disturbances; the situations of Eastern Hebei, Northern Chaha'er and Hebei-Chaha'er all constituted divisions of China's administrative integrity and should therefore be corrected at once.<sup>19</sup> Zhang did not expand on what was to replace the present form of the Council; it is unclear whether Tashiro had received further information or whether his comments on He Yingqin were speculation or fabrication.

Tashiro thus presented Song with a choice: he could either cooperate with Japan in the establishment of a separatist North China regime, or he could declare his continued support, however qualified, of Nanjing, lose all hope of securing Japanese support for the development of the region or expanding his personal power-base, and remain at constant risk of being removed unceremoniously from North China by the Nanjing government. This supposed uncertainty over the future of the Hebei-Chaha'er administrative structure provided a pretext for stalling by Japan on the return of four disputed *xian* from the control of the Eastern Hebei regime to Song.<sup>20</sup>

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19. Record of talks Zhang Qun, Suma Yakichirō, 20.1.1937; ZRWJ4, p.100.

20. Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry, 6.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.487.

Song appears either not to have believed Tashiro or to have felt that although there were benefits in playing Nanjing off against Japan to extend his own freedom of action, the full cooperation with Japan which Tashiro now demanded carried too high a price. Song refused to make any statement in reply to Tashiro's demands on economic cooperation until received instructions from Nanjing via Ge Dingyuan, despite Tashiro's suggestion that he could divert revenue from salt and customs taxes from the centre - as had the Eastern Hebei regime - and finance North China's economic development without the support of the central authorities.<sup>21</sup> If this refusal to act on economic development without the permission of the central government irritated the Japanese military, they were further angered by Qin Dechun's attendance of the plenum in Nanjing.<sup>22</sup> Before leaving Beiping, Qin was visited by numerous Japanese officials and only finally decided to go south after advice from Song Zheyuan. Japan's reaction did prevent Lei Sishang and Song himself from accompanying Qin, but the attendance of Qin, Song's second in command, at the plenum confirmed Hebei-Chaha'er's continuing adherence at least in form to the centre.<sup>23</sup> The Japanese military seem to have showed their displeasure by attacking those who linked Song to the centre, in particular Ge Dingyuan, who offered his resignation after the Japanese undermined his position; although Ge's resignation was not officially accepted, there was no way he could continue to fulfil his duties, and Song ordered that he be temporarily replaced with Yang Chaogeng, head of the political affairs division of the Council.<sup>24</sup>

By mid-February, talks on economic matters appeared to have ground to a halt, and Tashiro's own position was under threat. A report from Tianjin to the Foreign Ministry suggested that recent economic and political initiatives by the Army in North China were seen as having resulted in total failure.<sup>25</sup> Japanese-dominated 'joint' ventures such as the airline company, the *Huitong gongsi* and the Tianjin electricity

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21. Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry, 6.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.487.

22. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 12.4.1937; ZRWJ5, p.488-9.

23. Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, (Intelligence Section), 17.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.388-9.

24. Telegram, Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 17.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.388-9.

25. Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry (unnamed sender), 17.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.487-8.

company suffered from under-capitalization or were too small in their scope of operations and had therefore failed to develop as it had at first been hoped. The Hebei-Chaha'er authorities had delayed developments by making any concessions dependent on the dissolution of Yin Rugeng's Eastern Hebei regime; this had aggravated friction between Hebei-Chaha'er and Eastern Hebei to such a point that the *zaibatsu* declared themselves unwilling to invest in the region until it was more stable politically. Tashiro became unpopular for his role in these failures and was seen as unreliable for at first consenting in principle to the dissolution of the Eastern Hebei regime. It was therefore decided that Tashiro and his chief of staff, Hashimoto Gun, be transferred at the next round of appointments in March 1937; the Hayashi cabinet decided to replace Tashiro with Okamura Yasuji, the Japanese signatory of the Tanggu truce, and Hashimoto with Itagaki Seishirō, Ishiwara Kanji's co-conspirator in the September 18th incident. These appointments, according to the report, were opposed by the Tianjin Army, and were in the end not made.<sup>26</sup> However, the report, if accurate, that they were proposed and accepted, albeit temporarily, suggests that there was still a substantial weight of opinion in Tokyo in favour of taking an extremely firm line with China; Katsuki Kiyoshi, Tashiro's successor, must have been under severe pressure to produce rapid results in North China.

By this time, however, Song appeared to have begun to resist Japanese pressure. Li Yunhan cites a number of factors indicating a growing rift between Japan and official and unofficial bodies in North China including Song, which he interprets as also indicating greater closeness to the central authorities.<sup>27</sup> In early March, Song ended the talks in Tianjin with the Japanese armies on economic cooperation. He publicly denied discussing economic and political matters with the Japanese, insisting he had no power to do so, and stating that if the Japanese authorities wanted to discuss these issues, they should raise them with the central government in Nanjing. His refusal to continue the talks was accompanied by positive steps to curb Japanese actions: following an attempt by the Japanese military to purchase land near Beiping, Song had also repromulgated the orders forbidding the fraudulent sale of land to

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26. Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry, 17.2.1937; ZRWJ5, p.487-8.

27. Li Yunhan, (1973), pp. 183-4.

foreign powers, which was subject to the death penalty. The land, 6,000 *mou* between Fengtai and Lugouqiao, was to be the site of a barracks and airfield; the land had been surveyed and the sale negotiated with the help of Chen Juesheng, head of the Bei-Ning railway office.<sup>28</sup>

Song also made moves to intensify military training in the 29th Army, establishing military training units (*junshi xunlian tuan*) and, in June 1937, a military training committee (*junshi xunlian weiyuanhui*) patterned on Chiang Kai-shek's Lu Shan committee for the training of military officers (*junguan xunlian weiyuanhui*), the aim being to advance the integration into the national forces of the 29th Army.<sup>29</sup> A number of officers of the 29th Army were sent to Nanjing for further training, and graduates of the Central Military Academy (*Zhongyang Junxiao*) were accepted into the 29th Army; thus the experience of the officer level of the 29th Army was broadened as the previously regional recruitment base was expanded. Military training was also extended beyond the regular army, as Song reintroduced the military training for students at middle school level and above which the Guomindang had initiated in 1933 and then been forced to suspend in 1935 after the He-Umezu agreement.

In political terms, the most significant move was Song's agreement to hold elections to the National Assembly (*Guomin Dahui*) provided for in the Constitution of May 5th, 1936. The formation of the Assembly signalled the passage from the period of tutelage to that of constitutional government; the Assembly was to be convened on November 12th, 1937, and Hebei-Chaha'er and Beiping-Tianjin were the only regions which had not yet consented to the election of delegates: the abstention of a key region from the process was of enormous symbolic importance. After Jiang Zuobin, former Chinese Ambassador in Japan and now Minister for Domestic Affairs, visited the Hebei-Chaha'er authorities in May 1937, Song capitulated and progress towards the elections began: from June 10th local offices of the Hebei and Chaha'er provincial governments and the Beiping and Tianjin municipal governments were established to oversee the elections; on July 2nd an overarching office for the whole region (*Ji-Cha-Ping-Jin guoxuan zhidao banshichu*) was formed; it was headed by Liu

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28. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.183.

29. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.183.



Chunlin, and Song Zheyuan was a member.

Evidence suggests that, for some Chinese and presumably for Japanese as well, moves such as Song's agreement to elections for the National Assembly had a powerful effect on perceptions of the situation in North China and the allegiances of those who governed the region: Hu Shi, in an article for *Guowen Zhoubao* hailed the announcement of the elections as proof that Hebei-Chaha'er and Beiping-Tianjin remained an inalienable part of China, that 'conspiracies' to promote the 'special status' of the region were doomed to failure, and that the political and military authorities of the region upheld national unity and would not be seduced by separatist plans.<sup>30</sup> The Japanese military on the other hand seemed apt - particularly in North China - to see actively belligerent intent where there was none, and where the Chinese advocates of resistance saw nothing but appeasement and confusion. Even if Hu's reaction is to be considered excessively optimistic, it cannot safely be assumed that the Tianjin and Guandong armies saw these moves as anything other than deliberate provocation. In the wake of the Tianjin army's efforts to persuade Song to secede from the Nanjing regime and form a North China federal government his decision to participate in the formation of the National Assembly was a significant act of defiance.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, economically, militarily and politically, Song was adopting a line more independent of the Japanese armies. The significance of the actions outlined above, in for example preparing for the election of delegates to the National Assembly, lies not so much in their actual contribution to China's national integration, which was quite possibly negligible - there was in the event little time for any integrative initiatives to take effect - but for the psychological effect they had on Chinese and Japanese perceptions of the situation in North China.

Song was not able completely to prevent further Japanese gains in the North: it was, according to Li Shijun, in March 1937 that he was finally coerced by Tashiro

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30. Hu Shi, 'Ji-Cha Ping-Jin juban Guo Da xuanju' *GWZB*, XIV, 26, 5.7.1937, cited in Li Yunhan, (1973), p.184.

31. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 12.4.1937; *ZRWJS*, p.488-9.

Kan'ichirō into signing a draft agreement on economic cooperation.<sup>32</sup> He repudiated the agreement as it was signed under duress, but considerable damage must have been done to his own standing with the central government and to confidence in the North in general. If Song indeed maintained close and regular social contact with Tashiro until the debacle of the 'agreement' as Li Shijun asserts that he did, this suggests firstly that he remained more confident of his own ability to handle the Japanese armies than was strictly realistic, and secondly that his perception of his own role in contacts with Japan still differed substantially from the views of the Nanjing government. It became obvious also that this perception differed from that held by the Japanese military.

The visit of Zhang Zizhong, Mayor of Tianjin and Commander of the 38th division of the 29th Army, to Japan in April 1937 provides another example of the penchant for independent action displayed not only by Song but by others in the North China local government. Ironically, while it would seem that it was the Japanese insistence on treating the North China authorities as 'independent' - at least of Nanjing - and responsible for their own domestic and foreign affairs which led them to launch the independent mission in the first place, Japan reacted with hostility to the mission.<sup>33</sup>

According to Pan Yushu, then secretary of the third division of the Tianjin municipal government, Zhang was approached in early April by Qi Xieyuan with a proposal that Zhang and Song Zheyuan consider the expansion and reorganisation of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council into a body encompassing also Shandong province. Qi informed Zhang that Tashiro Kan'ichirō had been in contact with the provincial governor, Han Fujū, and that Han, having discussed the matter with Song Zheyuan, had no objections to the scheme.<sup>34</sup>

Zhang discussed Qi's proposal with his subordinate Bian Shoujing, who informed him that it had just been announced in the Press that Chiang Kai-shek, before again leaving Nanjing for Qikou to convalesce, had cabled Han Fujū to go south for

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32. Li Shijun, (A), pp.133-134; there is no trace of this in the primary sources.

33. Zhang Yueting, (A), p.96-7.

34. Pan Yushu, (A), 'Zhang Zizhong fang Ri jingguo jiwen.' *Tianjin wenshi ziliao*, 21, pp.93-4.

talks and that, during Chiang's absence, Zhang Qun was to visit Japan.<sup>35</sup> Bian argued that these events were also related to Japan's proposals for a new administrative order for Shandong-Hebei-Chaha'er, and suggested that the North China authorities should imitate the centre in sending Zhang to Japan in an attempt to pacify the Japanese, while allowing Song to distance himself from the initiative by retiring temporarily to Leling to rest, meeting Han *en route* to seek a clarification of his position.<sup>36</sup>

Reports received by Nanjing from Tianjin suggested that Zhang was sent to negotiate the return of Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er to the control of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council;<sup>37</sup> although the North China authorities made efforts to emphasize the unofficial character of the visit,<sup>38</sup> Chen Zhongfu, former chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council's foreign affairs committee was sent to Tokyo in advance to smooth Zhang's path.<sup>39</sup> Pan does not record the reaction of the centre to the visit; while the visit itself was not secret, it is unclear whether Nanjing was officially informed in advance of the visit and its aims.<sup>40</sup> Zhang's statement before leaving reaffirmed the importance of friendship between Asian nations. In an apparent attempt to reduce the impact of the visit, the delegation to Japan was presented as a counterpart to a delegation visiting south China at the same time: both had the ostensible mission of investigating economic and commercial advances in order to facilitate the economic and commercial development of the North; both avoided any mention of political or military matters.<sup>41</sup> However, the close linkage of Japanese economic, political and military advances in North China could be seen to render this distinction academic.

The personnel of the delegation included Zhang Zizhong, Zhang Yunrong, Hebei provincial *bao'andui* commander, Zhang Jihuan of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political

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35. Pan Yushu, (A), p.94.

36. Pan Yushu, (A), p.95.

37. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 9.5.1937; ZRWJ5, p.490-1.

38. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.184.

39. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 13.4.1937, ZRWJ5, p.489; Pan Yushu, (A), p.96.

40. Pan Yushu, (A), p.93, 95; Li Yunhan, (1973), p.184.

41. Pan Yushu, (A), p.95.

Council foreign affairs committee, Bian Shoujing and Xu Tianhong, chief adviser and adviser of the Tianjin municipal government, Wang Wendian and Zhang Jizheng of the Tianjin and Beiping Chambers of Commerce respectively, Xu Xiancha, Tian Wenqi, He Baosun and Huang Zhencha, brigade commanders of the 29th Army, Deng Wenzhang of the Chaha'er provincial government, and Yao Zuobin and Liu Zhongqiang of the *Huitong gongsi*.<sup>42</sup> The delegation was accompanied by a retinue of interpreters, secretaries, a doctor, Pan Junqian, and various relatives of Zhang Zizhong and Zhang Yunrong.<sup>43</sup>

The mission was an embarrassing failure. On April 25th, the day before the delegation arrived in Japan, the NCGA and GDA met in Tianjin and resolved to support Yin Rugeng against Zhang's attempts to negotiate a dissolution of the regime;<sup>44</sup> on the day that the Zhang delegation arrived in Tokyo, a mission from Eastern Hebei also arrived, displaying the flag of the 'puppet' regime outside its hotel despite the protests of the Chinese embassy.<sup>45</sup> The delegation's secretary, Zhai Weiqi, wrote to Pan Yushu that, on arriving in Tokyo, Zhang learnt that in a trade fair in Nagoya products from Hebei-Chaha'er were being displayed alongside goods from Manzhouguo and Eastern Hebei in a section devoted to Japanese colonies. Moreover, before Zhang had reached Tokyo, the Nagoya authorities had cooperated with Chi Zongmo of the Eastern Hebei authorities to hold an 'Eastern Hebei Day': a speech in Japanese by Yin Rugeng was broadcast on Japanese national radio, the Press was filled with articles supporting Eastern Hebei regime, and the regime's flag was plastered all over the city's trams and buses. Zhang added his protests to the Japanese government to those already made by the Chinese embassy, and ordered the Hebei-Chaha'er representative in Nagoya, Ji Zhongshi, to withdraw the offending exhibition immediately,<sup>46</sup> but his presence and the ambiguity of his position can only have added to the enormous embarrassment and anger which Japanese support of Eastern Hebei

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42. Pan Yushu, (A), p.96.

43. According to Pan Yushu, the doctor was needed to take care of the opium addicts among the delegates, Pan Yushu, (A), p.96.

44. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 28.4.1937; ZRWJ5, p.489-90; ZYSL6, p.104.

45. Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry, 28.4.1937; ZRWJ5, p.436.

46. Pan Yushu, (A), p.98-9.

caused to the Chinese authorities. The visit to Japan was originally intended to last forty days; Song Zheyuan ordered Zhang to return after thirty days.<sup>47</sup>

By the time Zhang returned to China, Song Zheyuan had left Beiping-Tianjin for Leling to avoid Japanese pressure to implement economic cooperation. His duties were delegated to Qin Dechun, Feng Zhi'an and Zhang Zizhong. Song was therefore away from Beiping between late May and the outbreak of the Lugouqiao incident: his absence substantially contributed to the frustration felt by the Tianjin and Guandong armies at the lack of progress of their plans for the North.

It had been reported from Tianjin in early May that Japan's conditions for the return of Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er to the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council included the expansion of the Tianjin army presence to 30,000 men to be stationed at Shanhaiguan, Beiping and on the Tianjin-Nanjing railway, construction of a Tianjin-Shijiazhuang railway by Japan and the reversion of the Longyan mine to Japanese administration.<sup>48</sup> By June the demands had again increased: if the Eastern Hebei regime was to be dissolved, a buffer zone must be established in North China against the spread of Communism; the safety and freedom of the present administration of Eastern Hebei must be guaranteed, and while all future problems concerning North China were to be negotiated locally, the results were to be considered as binding by the central government; moreover, China must acknowledge those rights which Japan already possessed as well as rights which Japan envisaged it would need to deal with the aftermath of the dissolution.<sup>49</sup> Japan was willing to exchange the freedoms enjoyed in Eastern Hebei only for the extension of those freedoms over all of North China. The Hebei-Chaha'er local authorities could not accept these terms even as a starting-point for negotiations without making a decisive break with the centre; Nanjing must have realised that these conditions would eventually emerge again in any negotiations which the centre undertook concerning the North.

To Japanese irritation at Song's avoidance of further contact after May 1937 was added the fear of greater British involvement in the North China region. Anglo-

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47. Li Yunhan, (1973), p.185.

48. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 11.5.1937; ZRWJ5, p.490-1.

49. Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry, 7.6.1937; ZRWJ5, p.436.

Japanese cooperation in China as a whole, including North China, had been suggested by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross in 1935;<sup>50</sup> hard-liners in the military and civil authorities rejected the proposal, wishing to exclude British influence from East Asia altogether in the long term. However, the idea had not died completely and talks were beginning in London on cooperation.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, rivalry between Britain and Japan in the North was apparently beginning to involve the local authorities. Britain had noted Zhang Zizhong's visit to Japan in April and May, and shortly after Zhang's return to China, he was entertained by the British consul-general in Tianjin.<sup>52</sup> The consul-general had been instructed by the British Ambassador in Nanjing, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, to ask whether Zhang had discussed Sino-Japanese cooperation in North China with the Japanese authorities in Tokyo; Britain was then discussing spheres of influence in the North with Japan and, because of British involvement in the Kailuan mines, had reason to be interested in the progress of talks between China and Japan; obviously any bilateral Sino-Japanese agreement might affect Britain's position. Zhang refused to make a statement on the nature and purpose of his visit to Japan. The consul-general informed Zhang that the Ambassador was to come to the North for the anniversary ceremony of the Kailuan mines on July 1st; a personal meeting between Zhang and the Ambassador could be arranged at that time. Zhang reacted with alarm to this suggestion, protesting that this would attract the attention of the Japanese; the consul did not, according to Pan's account, share Zhang's anxiety. Pan does not record whether the meeting actually took place; if it did, one might expect there to have been some adverse reaction from Japan.<sup>53</sup>

In late June, forces of the Tianjin army were engaged in large-scale exercises with live ammunition in the area between Fengtai and Lugouqiao,<sup>54</sup> not far from the land which they had been prevented from purchasing to build an airfield and barracks in April; on June 26th, the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council declared a curfew because

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50. See Chapter IV.

51. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.223.

52. Pan Yushu, (A), p.100. Pan accompanied Zhang and acted as interpreter.

53. Pan Yushu, (A), p.100.

54. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 8.7.1937; '«Qiqi shibian» zhi Ping Jin lunxian Jiang He Song deng midian xuan.' *Lishi Dang'an*. 1986, 1, (hereafter *QQSB*), p.51

of the scale of the exercises. The same day, Kawagoe Shigeru, in a statement before leaving to go back to Japan, declared that Japan intended to continue to pursue its economic aims in North China by cooperation with the local authorities, that it was impossible to consider the revocation of the Boxer treaty (on which the Japanese based their claims to station troops in Beiping-Tianjin) the Tanggu truce, or the He-Umezu agreement and that Japanese flights over North China were now a reality, and that however the Chinese government protested, there was nothing to be done to stop them.<sup>55</sup>

Thus by early July 1937, relations between the North Chinese local authorities and the Japanese armies in the region were deadlocked. Song Zheyuan had either rejected Japan's demands or refused further discussion on economic development and defence against the spread of Communism. He had refused Japan's proposals for a federal government in North China independent of Nanjing, and enjoying a closer relationship with Japan, and advocated independence from external support for the region. He had blocked the sale to Japan of land at Fengtai, a strategic point near Beiping, which would allow the extension and consolidation of Japanese military control over the area. He was known to have entertained, if not encouraged, the plans of semi-independent military figures for the overthrow of the government of Eastern Hebei at a time when Japanese-supported rebel forces were under increasingly frequent attack in other parts of North China. He had sent his second-in-command to the Guomindang plenum in February, allowed the Minister for the Interior to be received in Beiping in May and sanctioned preparations for elections to the National Congress to be convened later that year. He had then retired to Shandong to escape Japan's protests at these measures and, in his absence, his subordinates held informal talks with the British consul-general on British involvement in the North Chinese economy, talks which might eventually lead to meetings between those officials and the British Ambassador. Thwarted in their political, military and economic aims, the Japanese armies had increased their demands; as their demands increased, so did Song's reluctance even to contemplate discussions with the Japanese. Frustration on the Japanese side at the failure of eighteen months of negotiation, and mutual hostility and

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55. Zhang Pengzhou, (1985), p.229.

suspicion made the likelihood of a military incident - planned or unplanned - greater, as the gulf between the expected Chinese and Japanese negotiating positions made the settlement of any incident almost inconceivable.



## Chapter XII

### The Lugouqiao Incident (July-August, 1937)

"... the uncontrolled warlike activities of the Chinese have not ceased... "  
*Japanese Army High Command, July 12th, 1937.*<sup>1</sup>

On the night of July 7th, 1937, Japanese forces exercising near Wanping on the outskirts of Beiping demanded access to Wanping town, claiming that one of their men had been lost. They were refused access by the Chinese garrison in the town. The resulting clashes escalated into a war which was to last eight years. The primary focus for this piece is however not the actual origins of the Lugouqiao incident itself but the perceptions of the Chinese central and local authorities of the incident, and the way in which those perceptions informed their reactions. The response of the Chinese central and regional authorities to the Lugouqiao incident of July 7th, 1937 revealed the extent of China's unpreparedness for a full-scale Japanese assault; lack of preparation was compounded by the near-impossibility of coordinating a response to the incident in the face of the continuing divisions between Nanjing and Beiping-Tianjin, which were now not forgotten but exacerbated: to the existing distrust was added disagreement over practical problems from troop dispositions to basic tactics.

The exact origins of the incident are obscure: fighting began near the town of Wanping after Japanese forces on night exercises in the area demanded access to the town to search for a soldier who had, they claimed been lost. To the predictable charges of 'conspiracy' against the Japanese armies and the government of the time have been added suggestions that the incident was planned by forces close to Feng Yuxiang, possibly led by Shi Yousan, or by the Chinese Communist Party under the direction of Liu Shaoqi. None of these theories is utterly implausible, and none is supported by more than circumstantial evidence. That the incident was to escalate to a war of eight years 'justified' the suspicions of those who saw a full-blown conspiracy underlying the Japanese advances of the past twenty years; yet the problem of 'conspiracy' in connection with the Lugouqiao incident, in contrast with the September

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1. Hata, (1983), 'The Marco Polo Bridge Incident, 1937.' in James William Morley, *The China Quagmire*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.251.

18th incident of 1931, is not one which can be so easily resolved.

The NCGA, after eighteen months of negotiations with Song Zheyuan and the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council on economic cooperation, action against Communism and political reorganisation of Hebei-Chaha'er with no recognisable progress, was undoubtedly losing patience by July 1937, yet frustration and a conviction that the North China authorities had to be taught a lesson do not in themselves constitute a conspiracy. A verdict of 'conspiracy' assumes premeditation and predefined objectives on the part of the conspirators; it also suggests that the incident at Lugouqiao differed *qualitatively* from its predecessors. However, I would argue that it is not at all clear that the first stages of the Lugouqiao incident differed from the Fengtai incident of September 1936<sup>2</sup> or the Eastern Chaha'er incident of January 1935<sup>3</sup> *except in its context*; the crucial factor allowing the Lugouqiao incident to spark off a war lasting eight years was the misjudgment of that context by the Japanese military, not some intrinsic change in the nature of the actions of the army in the field.

If it is inevitably difficult to produce convincing evidence of the *absence* of a conspiracy, much of the evidence which might have cast further light on the events surrounding the incident is unavailable.<sup>4</sup> David Lu points out in his introduction to Hata Ikuhiko's article on the incident that "One should not lose sight of the fact that it was not the incident of July 7th but the developments which took place after that day that turned the incident into a major war."<sup>5</sup> One might also point to the developments which took place before the incident. Thus Crowley's identification of irreconcilable differences in national policy as the key factor in hastening the slide towards war seems a more helpful explanation.<sup>6</sup> Given the contrast between the widespread Chinese

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2. See Chapter X.

3. Chapter II.

4. The majority of the files of the China Garrison Army, which might contain potentially enlightening material, are said to have been lost (Personal Communication, Professor Shao Yunrui, Marxist-Leninist Teaching and Research Unit, Nankai University, Tianjin, December 1990.) The volume on the incident planned for the oral history project conducted by the Japanese *Yomiuri Shinbun* was not published after pressure by the Beijing government. *Shōwa shi no tennō*, Yomiuri, 1967-76. See David Lu's Introduction to Hata (1983), p.241.

5. David Lu, Introduction to Hata (1983), p.236.

6. Crowley, (1966), pp.

resentment of the Japanese presence in North China and the assumptions which appear to underlie the quotation above from the Japanese Army High Command, serious conflict was never far away.

Developments in the early part of the year had hastened the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations, making some kind of outburst more probable. Japanese anger was growing at what the diplomatic and military authorities perceived as a rapprochement between the Nanjing government and the CCP since the Xi'an incident, and also between Song Zheyuan and the Hebei-Chaha'er local authorities and the centre. Song's intensification of military training in Hebei and Chaha'er, his moves to limit Japanese economic interests in the region and his participation in the elections for the National Assembly, would all suggest to the Japanese Army that he had to be brought back into line before his actions seriously undermined Japan's position. Moreover, British efforts to establish contacts with the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council on economic matters<sup>7</sup> raised the prospect of encroachment by the Western Powers in Japan's self-assigned domain in North China. All of this would arguably predispose Japan to be provoked at any further displays of Chinese 'hostility' or intransigence as the escalation of Japan's demands disinclined Nanjing to be flexible in its dealings with Japan.

It was obviously the intention of the China Garrison Army in July 1937 to intimidate the people and government of North China: the incident occurred after a week of exercises with live ammunition by Japanese forces on the Beiping-Hankou railway. Yet if we were to assume that an incident of indeterminate size and gravity was indeed planned by the China Garrison Army in the summer of 1937, we must take into account that the Army may not have been wholly concerned with North China in its management of the events. The incident might have been directed at the Tokyo government, and intended to remind Tokyo that the handling of the North China question remained the prerogative of the military.

The incident may have also have been an attempt - if a large incident were planned - to undermine or prevent a planned visit of the Japanese ambassador, Kawagoe Shigeru, to Beiping and Tianjin. Kawagoe was due in Tianjin on or shortly

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7. See Chapter IX.

after July 9th, and was expected to discuss possible ways of resolving the North China question 'within the year' in cooperation with the Tianjin army, and to meet Song Zheyuan.<sup>8</sup> Before his appointment as Ambassador, Kawagoe, as consul-general in Tianjin, had apparently cooperated closely with the military<sup>9</sup> - indeed he owed his appointment to military pressure on the Japanese Foreign Ministry<sup>10</sup> - but it is unlikely that he would be as favourably viewed by the Japanese armies in the North after the failure of his talks with Zhang Qun in late 1936. It might now be felt that even 'friendly' forces on the civil side were incapable of advancing Japanese interests in North China and were therefore best excluded. On the other hand, if Kawagoe and the China Garrison Army had remained on friendly terms, a small and rapidly resolved incident would strengthen their hand in future talks with Song Zheyuan.

The first reports of the incident to reach He Yingqin, then in Chongqing, and Chiang Kai-shek and his aides in Guling suggested that observers on the spot saw the incident as a major one. It was clearly assumed by some that the incident itself was premeditated, although it remains debatable at what level this premeditation occurred.<sup>11</sup> In a telegram to Army Minister He Yingqin, Yu Feipeng, an aide of Chiang Kai-shek who had some knowledge of the North China situation, suggested that the aim of the incident was to prevent the garrisoning of Chinese troops in Lugouqiao and nearby Changxindian.<sup>12</sup> This would give the Japanese armies control over all major routes out of Beiping - the Beiping-Hankou railway was the last free rail route out of the city - cutting Beiping, and indeed all of Hebei-Chaha'er, off from the rest of China.<sup>13</sup> The choices were obvious: Nanjing could either resist or lose Beiping,

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8. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 5.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.51.

9. See Chapter VI.

10. Liu, (1950), p.169.

11. Peattie, (1975), p.294.

12. Telegram Yu Feipeng (Guling) to He Yingqin, 9.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.53.

13. Other major rail arteries out of Beiping were the two routes into Manchuria, lost in 1931, the Ping-Sui (Beiping-Guisui [modern Hohhot]) railway, increasingly threatened by Japanese forces in Chaha'er and Suiyuan since mid-1935 (Qin-Doihara agreement excluded Chinese forces from Chaha'er north of Wall), the Jin-Pu railway (Tianjin-Nanjing) threatened since the demilitarization of the Eastern Hebei War Zone by the Tanggu truce of 1933, and controlled by the Japanese occupation of Fengtai station by Japanese troops in September, 1936; see Chapter IX and Map.

Tianjin and the provinces of Hebei and Chaha'er.

Although a ceasefire was reached on July 8th, and Lin Gengyu of the foreign affairs subcommittee of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council was sent to negotiate with the Japanese at Lugouqiao, there were reports from Beiping that large numbers of tanks and other military vehicles were being sent from Tianjin towards Beiping,<sup>14</sup> and observers such as He Yingqin's informant, Yan Kuan, were sceptical of the China Garrison Army's denial that it intended to extend the scope of the incident.

"... the Japanese say they don't want the incident to escalate, but demand that Chinese and Japanese troops simultaneously withdraw from Lugouqiao. They plan to take advantage of the lull to repeat the tactics they used when they occupied Fengtai..."<sup>15</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek's immediate response was decisive: he ordered four divisions of the central army - commanded by Sun Lianzhong, Pang Bingsun and Gao Guizi - to go north to the Shijiazhuang-Baoding area and prepare to support Song's 29th Army.<sup>16</sup> He also ordered Song Zheyuan to return from Leling to Baoding at once to take command, and to ensure that the fortifications decided by Nanjing were completed as soon as possible.<sup>17</sup> On July 9th, Song informed Chiang that all fighting around Lugouqiao had stopped that day, that the Japanese forces had been withdrawn, and that in his opinion the incident could be considered closed. He continued by assuring Chiang that the North China armies would be responsible for the defence of North China and undertaking to adhere to the principle of conceding neither sovereignty nor territory. Finally he enquired whether the centre's preparation for war were complete. Song's unwillingness to see large central forces come north was repeated by Qin Dechun:

"... now the situation is relaxing; if the centre has not yet completed preparations for all-out war, (we) fear that this (arrival of four divisions in North China) may affect or lead to the escalation of the incident. Is it possible to order the divisions preparing to be sent north to gather at their original

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14. Telegram Yu Feipeng (Guling) to He Yingqin (Baxian), 8.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.52.

15. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 9.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.52.

16. Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Sun Lianzhong, 9.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.52.

17. Telegrams Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan, 9.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.52; 10.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.53.

positions and allow us to send for them afterwards if they are needed?"<sup>18</sup>

Qian Dajun replied that if this was indeed the case Sun and Pang's forces could remain in their present positions, but demanded a further report on the situation. The central authorities did not seem entirely to share Song and Qin's optimism: on July 10th, a circular telegram was sent to all army units, pacification commissions and provincial and municipal government offices, informing them of the gravity of the situation and warning them to prepare for mobilisation. From July 11th, daily meetings of senior military officials were held in Nanjing to coordinate the response to the incident.<sup>19</sup> In Tokyo, orders for the mobilisation of forces in Korea and Manzhouguo had been suspended when, on July 11th, a report was received from military attache Ōkido that on July 10th China had ordered the mobilisation of its airforce and the concentration of four divisions in northern Henan. The General Staff therefore reinstated the original orders and the movement of Japanese forces south continued.<sup>20</sup>

Nanjing soon received reports of these Japanese troop movements from Manzhouguo to Hebei, and - despite the insistence of Japanese on the spot - of detailed plans for expansion of the incident involving Japanese land air and sea forces from both sides of the Wall, as well as Chinese forces under Japanese control;<sup>21</sup> Qian Dajun cabled Qin Dechun in Beiping:

"Now if the Japanese forces still ... refuse to withdraw, they must be waiting for the arrival of Guandong army units to renew their attack. There is no doubt of this; hope you will intensify preparations for war and in no circumstances be deceived..."<sup>22</sup>

Song Zheyuan had returned to Tianjin from Leling on July 11th, and remained there despite repeated orders from Nanjing to remove himself from the reach of the Japanese armies and their Chinese supporters, and go to Baoding to command the forces massing

18. Telegram Qin Dechun (Beiping) to Qian Dajun (Guling), 10.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.54; cf telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 14.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.57.

19. 'Lugouqiao shibian hou Guomindang zhengfu junshi jiguan changguan huibao di yi zhi shiwu ci huiyi jilu', *MGDA*, 1987, 2, pp.3-17, (hereafter *HYJL1*) 'Lugouqiao shibian hou Guomindang zhengfu junshi jiguan changguan huibao di shiliu zhi sanshi san ci huiyi jilu' *MGDA*, 1987, 3, pp.3-18 (hereafter *HYJL2*).

20. Hata, (1983), p.252.

21. Telegrams Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun, 12.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.56; Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 11.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.54-5.

22. Telegram Qian Dajun to Qin Dechun, 12.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.56.

there. The loss of Song could seriously prejudice the resistance: the 29th Army, at approximately 100,000 men, was still the largest single force in the North, and it would be difficult to secure cooperation between the 29th Army and other forces without Song's leadership. It was therefore essential that no harm come to him; if the situation worsened his personal freedom and safety in Tianjin would be threatened. Moreover in Tianjin he was supported in his dealings with the Japanese by Qi Xieyuan, Zhang Yunrong, Liu Zhizhou and Chen Juesheng, all seen by Nanjing as confirmed 'pro-Japanese' elements (*qin Ri fenzi*) and therefore bad influences. Song was not visibly concerned by Nanjing's anxiety: to He Yingqin's urgent telegram of July 13th, warning him that he was in great danger and urging him to leave secretly for Baoding at once, Song replied dismissively:

"Because the bulk of our forces is near Beiping-Tianjin, and moreover the area is of strategic importance, I first came to Tianjin to organise matters there; when I have done so I will then go to Baoding. I am most grateful for your concern."<sup>23</sup>

Representatives of the centre were sent North at this time: Zhao Xun went to Lugouqiao to inspect and supervise the fortifications, and Xiong Bin, vice-minister for the Army, and Yang Xuancheng of the Military Affairs Commission propaganda department were to go to Baoding to liaise with Song and remind him of the central government's line of not provoking war nor avoiding resistance;<sup>24</sup> there was still at this time no responsible senior officer in Baoding.<sup>25</sup> Not only were key positions unattended to; the military authorities in Nanjing, while aware that Song 'disagreed' with the centre's plans for dealing with the crisis and was therefore not following them, were unable to assess or adapt these plans as they had no idea of what Song's intentions were or even how the situation in Beiping-Tianjin was developing. It is a measure of the lack of communication between the North and the centre that He Yingqin was to cable Qin Dechun on July 12th:

"Now the whole nation longs for news from the front, so it is of the greatest importance to propagate accurate information; the news from the Press and the

23. Telegrams He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 13.7.1937; Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 14.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.56.

24. Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #2, 12.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.4-5.

25. Telegram Zhao Xun to He Yingqin, 14.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.57.

agencies is not reliable, therefore we hope that you will report on the true situation at least three times daily... "26

He's primary concern was not however the problem of relations with the Press: the failure of the authorities in Beiping to keep the centre informed of the handling of the incident was causing serious problems for Nanjing. The Foreign Ministry had been ordered by Chiang Kai-shek to produce a declaration of the government's official position, yet no statement could be made until it was known exactly what was going on in the North:

"... we have received confirmed reports from diplomatic circles that Song signed an agreement acknowledging Japan's conditions on the evening of July 11th. Now when the central authorities have not issued a declaration of war, we must continue to express our hopes for peace, but for local authorities to sign an agreement on peace conditions with the other side while the centre knows nothing of it and continues to move troops and prepare for a war of resistance is a sign of inadequate communication (*tai bu lianxi*) between centre and region... "27

Unable publicly to commit itself to a clear position while developments in the North were unclear, Nanjing appeared weak, indecisive and disunited. The government's need to remain outwardly conciliatory in official dealings with the Japanese sapped public confidence in the government's ability to respond to further advances by Japan at a time when it had apparently been increasing, and cast doubt on Nanjing's determination to resist. There were of course divisions within the Nanjing government, but these might have been more easily overcome had it been possible to rally government and public support around a clear policy.

Reports from North China did not encourage optimism. Xiong Bin reported that he had begun his work of bringing the word of the centre to the North, and that, with the degree of misunderstanding of Nanjing's intentions existing in Hebei, it had been much needed.<sup>28</sup> Other news received by He Yingqin from the North painted a worrying picture: an individual had phoned from Beiping to report that in Tianjin Song Zheyuan, surrounded (and therefore influenced) by the most influential members of the 'pro-Japanese' faction - Chen Juesheng, Zhang Yunrong and Qi Xieyuan - had

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26. Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun, 14.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.57.

27. Meeting of Senior Military Officials, July 12th; *HYJLI*, p.6.

28. Telegram Xiong Bin to Chiang Kai-shek, 14.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.57-8.



concluded an agreement with the Japanese armies agreeing to apologise for the incident at Lugouqiao, suppress 'anti-Japanese' elements such as the Blue Shirts and the CCP and allow the 'demilitarisation' - the removal of Chinese troops - of the area east of the Yongdinghe and west of the Western Hills (an area measuring about 200 *li* north-south and 100 *li* east-west). The Japanese and unnamed 'traitors' (*hanjian*) were trying to foment division between the centre and the North, insisting to anyone who would listen that the Japanese were acting only in the interests of Hebei-Chaha'er in trying to prevent the central armies from coming north to occupy the Hebei-Chaha'er base of the 29th Army. They were also reportedly trying to create divisions within the 29th Army by wooing Zhang Zizhong, Mayor of Tianjin and commander of the 38th division. Zhang, who had visited Japan in April 1937, was seen as less hostile to the Japanese cause, than Feng Zhi'an, commander of the 37th division stationed near Lugouqiao; the Japanese assured him and his forces that the anger of the Japanese armies was directed only at the hostile forces commanded by Feng and that Zhang's own 38th division itself need not be a target.<sup>29</sup>

Opinions within military administration circles in Nanjing remained apparently divided on the best course of action. It was still felt that China was unprepared for war, that until the commercial and industrial base of the lower Yangtze was fully secure it would be unwise to commit China to total war.<sup>30</sup> Although the forces ordered North by Chiang Kai-shek had already reached the southern borders of Hebei there were still those who advocated 'restraint' in the hope of winning more time, suggesting that Song Zheyuan might be given more power to try to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the China Garrison Army.<sup>31</sup> But were the dangers of war with inadequate preparation greater than the dangers posed by the uncontrolled activities of the local authorities in the North? Tang Shengzhi, disagreeing with the more cautious approach, warned:

"Song (Zheyuan) is already pursuing compromise beyond the limits permitted by the centre; if the centre gives him more instructions for peaceful

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29. Report by He Yingqin, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 14.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.6.

30. Opinions of Xu Yongchang and Cheng Qian, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 14.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.7.

31. Opinion of Xu Yongchang, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 14.17.1937; *HYJL1*, p.7.

compromise, the future does not bear thinking about: Hebei-Chaha'er will be lost. Therefore the centre should take a hard line in its declarations; as for Song (Zheyuan)'s activities in pursuit of compromise, if they do not go beyond what the centre wants, then they can be recognised *after the fact*, otherwise the centre must repudiate them. As for military preparations, they must not be neglected."<sup>32</sup>

At later meetings, the problem of Song's attitude continued to concern the authorities in Nanjing: at the July 16th meeting of senior military officials, Tang Shengzhi asked, if Song, surrounded by 'traitors', signed a treaty and withdrew his troops, and divisions resulted within the 29th Army from this, what was the centre was to do about it?<sup>33</sup> The question-mark over Song's position hindered decisions over the point at which Nanjing should go for total war *i.e.* sever diplomatic relations and mobilise all the regions in support of the central forces and North China local forces.<sup>34</sup> Xu Zuyi, head of the second section of the General Staff (*canmou benbu*) discussed the various implications of prolonging the undeclared war as against making an early declaration of war with vice foreign minister Xu Mo on July 17th and their conclusions were passed on to Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>35</sup>

The problem of total or localised war preoccupied the central government as military developments around Beiping became more alarming. He Yingqin cabled Song Zheyuan on July 16th:

"We have received a confirmed report that the Japanese army at Fengtai is now massing around Nanyuan with the primary aim of wiping out the 12,000 Chinese troops stationed there. Although since yesterday the situation in that area has been fairly quiet and talks have restarted, many observers here and abroad believe that the present lull is deceptive, and many believe that the Japanese military authorities are only waiting until reinforcements are complete, and that they will then move to drive the 29th Army out of Hebei. If you look back to Japan's actions at the time of the January 28th Incident (the attack on Shanghai in 1932), they first withdrew their troops and then waited until supporting forces arrived. They do not act in good faith and hope to destroy the 29th Army at a stroke. The (implications of) the situation (are) obvious and most worrying; we hope you will pay the closest attention to this

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32. Opinion of Tang Shengzhi, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 14.7.1937; *HYJLI*, p.7.

33. Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 16.7.1937; *HYJLI*, p.9.

34. Opinions of Chen Tiaoyuan, Cheng Qian, Tang Shengzhi, He Yingqin in Appendix to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 16.7.1937; *HYJLI*, p.9.

35. Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 17.7.1937; *HYJLI*, p.9.

in planning your response."<sup>36</sup>

Song's response was unhelpful: he sounded unimpressed by He's warnings and made no effort reassure him; as He had given no specific instructions for dealing with future developments, so Song gave no explanation of his present actions or of his intentions:

"Since the beginning of the incident I have been first and foremost concerned with the development of the situation as a whole and have been thorough and circumspect in seeking a solution. If the matters in your telegram do by some unfortunate chance happen then we have arrived at the point of no return and we must ask the centre to begin the second stage of preparations..."<sup>37</sup>

On July 17th, He Yingqin again cabled Song Zheyuan, informing him that Japan appeared to be mobilising for war. He listed six divisions from Japan and Korea which were already on the move apparently to North China and reminded Song of the Guandong Army troops crossing the Wall from Manzhouguo. He again cited the January 28th Incident as an example of Japan's tactics of beginning peace talks while waiting for reinforcements, and reproached Song for relying too much on the prospect of a negotiated settlement:

"... It seems that recently you have all been lured into political negotiations and become neglectful of military preparations. If you can secure a peaceful resolution on the principle of sacrificing neither territory nor sovereignty, then this is what we most hope for, but I fear that if a large force crosses the Wall before the talks achieve their goal then you will be under such severe pressure that you will have no choice between peace and war and you will be forced to sign an unequitable settlement..."<sup>38</sup>

A telegram from Xiong Bin confirmed the alienation of Song from the centre. The problem appears to have been a complicated one: Lu Zhonglin and Zhang Yinwu were to fly to Guling to report to Chiang Kai-shek in person, as there were difficulties which could not be explained by letter or telegram.<sup>39</sup>

As Nanjing strove to secure Song's adherence to the centre's line, Japanese civil and military officials in Nanjing tried to ensure that the matter was treated as a local problem: Hidaka Shinroku, counsellor of the Japanese Embassy in Nanjing told Foreign Minister Wang Chonghui that Japan did not wish the scope of the incident to be

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36. Telegram he Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 15.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.59.

37. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 16.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.59.

38. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 17.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.60.

39. Telegram Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, 17.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.60.

extended: if Nanjing would only confer powers of independent negotiation on the Hebei Chaha'er authorities and those authorities could implement the agreement of July 11th with sincerity, then the incident could be peacefully resolved.<sup>40</sup> Nanjing, however, had repeatedly rejected Japanese demands in the past to give these powers to Song Zheyuan, and was not now willing to confer them so that Song could conclude an agreement of which Nanjing had not seen the terms. The military attache, Ōkido Sanji, had presented Cao Haosen, vice army minister, with a written memorandum to the effect that if Nanjing sent ground or air forces north, Japan would take any steps it thought appropriate in response to this; thus any incidents resulting would be the responsibility of the Chinese government.<sup>41</sup>

By now the talks in Tianjin between Song Zheyuan and Katsuki Kiyoshi, the new commander of the China Garrison Army, had ended. Xiong Bin cabled He Yingqin on July 18th that although Song could make no clear statement of his position while in Tianjin, he now had a better grasp of the centre's intentions.<sup>42</sup> When Song himself next contacted He Yingqin, his tone was more conciliatory than in previous telegrams. Song now feared that war was inevitable, and it may have been this assumption as much as the mediation of Xiong Bin and Zhao Xun which prompted his tentative move towards the centre.<sup>43</sup> The prospect of closer contact was presumably welcomed in Nanjing, where the obliquity of some of Song's communications - for example his request that the centre consider its 'second-stage plans' (*di er bu jihua*) - was causing irritation: what, asked one official were these second-stage plans? And how was the centre to formulate them if it had not been informed of Song's own first-stage plans?<sup>44</sup>

After Song Zheyuan left Tianjin on July 19th, things again became confused. He Yingqin was relieved that Song had returned to Beiping,<sup>45</sup> but Nanjing had yet to

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40. Report by He Yingqin at meeting of senior military officials, 17.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.9.

41. Report by He Yingqin, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 17.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.9.

42. Telegram Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, 18.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.61.

43. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 19.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.62.

44. Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 18.7.1937; *HYJL1*, p.11.

45. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 20.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.63.

receive a full account of the situation from Song; Song indicated that there were aspects of the problem which could not be conveyed by telegram.<sup>46</sup> Attempts by Xiong Bin and Li Xin to get to Beiping to see Song in person were foiled by heavy storms which blocked the roads into Beiping.<sup>47</sup> There were a number of matters which Song might not be eager to divulge. First was the apparent division opening within the 29th Army over peace conditions: it was reported that after Song's departure for Beiping, the Japanese military used the threat of military action to impose harsher conditions on Zhang Zizhong, seen as a weak point in the army's political defences.<sup>48</sup> Secondly, there remained considerable apparent resentment of personnel sent from outside the region among local bodies of Hebei-Chaha'er, including the 29th Army.<sup>49</sup> Sun Lianzhong reported that on arriving in Baoding on July 18th he found officials there 'hostile and deceitful'.<sup>50</sup> Sun also urged Nanjing to be careful in dealing with Song Zheyuan, who was in a delicate position. He told Chiang that from the information he had received it appeared that in negotiating with the Japanese Song and his subordinates were merely trying to buy time to prepare for resistance, and that it was fear of provoking Japan rather than complacency or something more sinister which governed the content of Song's public statements. He also asked that the centre not in future publish any of Song's communications lest this cause Japan to put more pressure on him and suggested that in addition handing down instructions to Song, Nanjing would do well to adopt a more encouraging tone, and remind Song of the government's reliance on him.<sup>51</sup>

On July 22nd, Song at last reported to He Yingqin the final conditions discussed between the Japanese military and the representatives of the 29th Army.

"Since the beginning of this incident, I have at all times acted according to the

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46. Telegram Song Zheyuan to Xiong Bin, 16.7.1937; copied in telegram Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, 18.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.62.

47. Telegram Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, 20.7.1937; *QQSB*, pp.63-4; telegram Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.64.

48. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 20.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.63.

49. Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 20.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.63.

50. Telegram Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.64.

51. Telegram Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek, 21.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.64.

wishes of the centre. As for the progress of the talks, we discussed broad conditions on the 11th of this month and decided on the following three conditions: '1. Representatives of the 29th Army will express regret to Japan and will deal with those responsible; the 29th Army will declare its own responsibility for the non-recurrence of such incidents; 2. Because Japanese forces are stationed at Fengtai, in order that proximity may not provoke further incident, the Chinese army will not in future station troops at Lugouqiao and Longwangmiao, and order in the area will be kept by PPC; 3. We believe this incident to be led by the so-called Blue Shirts, the Communist Party and other anti-Japanese organisations; we must therefore develop a policy to counter them in the future and thoroughly eradicate them...' Looking at the content of all these conditions, they are very hollow; I had originally intended to cable at once for instructions but because of the renewed fighting I did not. Although we have made some progress we are still not fully in control of the situation... I fear it may be impossible to escape complications later... "<sup>52</sup>

Song acknowledged receipt of instructions from He Yingqin and of a report on a meeting between He and Kita, at which the talks in the North were mentioned;<sup>53</sup> it is possible that it was this report which finally led Song to give Nanjing his own version of events. The buildup of Japanese troops and materiel and the renewed attacks by Japanese forces on Lugouqiao and Wanping at this time were seen as a deliberate attempt to force the Chinese to accept these conditions,<sup>54</sup> and there seemed to be a shared perception that the events of the next few days would determine the future of the conflict.<sup>55</sup> Views within the 29th Army on the future were said still to be divided, but Song was assumed to be capable of imposing his own views on his forces;<sup>56</sup> opinions differed however over the extent of the influence wielded by those such as Qi Xieyuan over Song.<sup>57</sup>

Yang Xuancheng of the General Staff, who had accompanied Xiong Bin to Baoding, made a written report to He Yingqin (as a supplement to Xiong's more frequent reports by telegram) on July 22nd. Song, as portrayed by Yang, is suspicious

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52. Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.65.

53. Record of talks He Yingqin and Kita Seiichi, 19.7.1937 *ZRWJ4*, pp.216-9.

54. Telegram Zhao Xun to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.65-6.

55. Telegrams Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, Zhao Xun to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, pp.65-6.

56. Telegram Zhao Xun to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, pp.65-6.

57. See Jia Deyao's opinion that Qi had no little influence over Song, telegram Xiong Bin to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.65. Jia appears to disapprove of Qi's designs yet still advocates giving Song full independent powers to deal with Japan.

of the centre and uncooperative, despite repeated explanations by Xiong Bin of central policy. The root cause of ill-feeling towards Nanjing among Song's subordinates appeared to be the fear of central forces coming to Hebei-Chaha'er and encroaching on the territory of the 29th Army. Song had objected that the arrival of large force in Hebei would only provoke the Japanese, and demanded that they stop at the southern borders of Hebei, but it was not true, as some had suggested, that he had entirely been taken in by Japanese propaganda hinting at more sinister motives on the part of the central armies. Song's reluctance to see central forces occupying his territory explained his unhelpful behaviour towards Xiong Bin and Sun Lianzhong in the matter of troop dispositions. He had rejected Nanjing's plan to make Baoding a key point in the defence of the North, objecting that it was too vulnerable against attack from the air, and refusing to go there himself to take charge. He was also, Yang reported, dilatory about liaising with other commanders such as Sun Lianzhong; this confirmed Sun's own report.<sup>58</sup>

Despite his criticism of the centre's plans, he was slow to gather his own troops for resistance: at the time of Yang's report, the 38th division, commanded by Zhang Zizhong, was still stationed in eight separate places and, in the event of a Japanese attack, the dispersed forces of the 29th Army risked being wiped out one by one. He was not simply hostile to the central government but also afraid of it: he allegedly tried to prevent the centre's representatives in North China - Yang gives the example of Lu Zhonglin - from returning south to report in detail to Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>59</sup>

Song's handling of the negotiations with the Japanese armies also gave Nanjing cause for concern: although, Yang assured the centre, Song was by nature too stubborn to accept subjugation by the Japanese military, he had no subordinates with sufficient talent or far-sightedness to advise him wisely, and it was possible that he might fail to realise the limitations of his advisers; Song himself Yang describes as (*tounao jiao jiandan*) 'relatively [*lit* simple-minded] unsophisticated'. The Japanese forces had produced for negotiation two separate sets of conditions: one from Hashimoto Gun, the

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58. Report Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.66; see also Sun Lianzhong on Song, p.289.

59. Report Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.66.

chief of staff of the China Garrison Army, and one from Wachi Takaji, Yang was convinced that harsher conditions would soon be presented, and it was known that among the possible Japanese plans for the future of North China were a number which took Song himself as leader of a new regime.<sup>60</sup>

When Song was asked by Li Xin, sent to Tianjin by Xiong Bin to talk to him, what he would do when the Japanese presented further demands, he retorted that he would continue to adhere to the principle of conceding neither sovereignty nor territory, and that any agreement he negotiated would in any case be less harmful to China than the He-Umezu agreement. Yang appears to feel that Song and his subordinates underestimated the difficulty of their position, noting that when informed of the large-scale mobilisation in Japan, Feng Zhi'an's immediate reaction was to cable Xiong Bin to ask if he was sure his information was accurate.<sup>61</sup> As for Song's angry reaction to Nanjing's concern over talks with the Japanese, it is of course equally possible that if Song felt that, having failed to deal effectively with the North China problem in 1931-1935, the centre had then left him to face the Japanese without coherent instructions or support, he would now resent intervention and criticism, and the distrust that this implied.

Yang's advice to Nanjing was that the central government could not now control Song's actions too closely, but should be content with securing his general cooperation.<sup>62</sup> He Yingqin's next telegram to Song Zheyuan was indeed much milder in its tone, and had none of the reproaches of previous communications, merely expressing appreciation on behalf of the government for his efforts in dealing with the incident and assuring Song that if he reported any problems to the centre he would receive all the support in He's powers in dealing with them.<sup>63</sup>

Even without the difficulties with Song Zheyuan, Nanjing was not finding the situation easy to handle: it was still apparently undecided how the war, when it finally

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60. Report Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.66.

61. Report Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.66.

62. Report Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin, 22.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.66.

63. Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, 23.7.1937; *QQSB*, p.67.



became inevitable, was to be waged.<sup>64</sup> Chiang Kai-shek's obsession with keeping his options open was now leading to confusion among his subordinates. Chinese intelligence gathering was not efficient; as Xu Zuyi pointed out on July 24th, the information available to the Chinese government could suggest either that Japan was unwilling to extend the conflict in the North or that Japan was about to launch a large-scale attack.<sup>65</sup>

By now, Japanese attacks on Beiping were gaining momentum: after the shelling of Langfang on July 25th, a Japanese force tried to enter Beiping by Guang'anmen on July 26th, but was driven back. The assault on Langfang continued, and Song Zheyuan cabled the centre "... there is now no hope of avoiding a major war..."<sup>66</sup> At the meeting of senior military officials in Nanjing on July 26th, a report from Xiong Bin finally revealed Song Zheyuan's own plans for the war against Japan:

"... Song advocates offensive, not defensive operations and therefore opposes the construction of fortifications on the Cangzhou-Baoding railway line; he suggests that we should attack Shanhaiguan from Tianjin with four divisions. As for the ¥500,000 allocated by the centre for fortifications, he has given ¥250,000 to Liu Ruming in Chaha'er; in Hebei he favours attack, not defence."<sup>67</sup>

Xiong's assessment of Song and his immediate subordinates was more favourable than that of Yang Xuancheng; there was, he assured Nanjing, no need to worry about Song Zheyuan's attitude to the conflict, nor about Qin Dechun and Feng Zhi'an, advocates of resistance since the beginning of the conflict and obedient to the centre. Zhang Zizhong on the other hand, was intimidated by the technical superiority of the Japanese army, but would not argue for peace against his colleagues. The morale of the middle and lower ranks of the army was high, in contrast to the Japanese army where morale was low.<sup>68</sup> Xiong also reported that Qi Xieyuan had visited Song on July 24th to urge him to withdraw his forces from Beiping; if he did not, Qi warned, the Japanese would

64. Opinion of Xiong Shihui, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 24.7.1937; *HYJL1*, pp.15-16.

65. Report by Xu Zuyi, Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 24.7.1937; *HYJL1*, pp.15-16.

66. Telegrams Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 25.7.1937, 26.7.1937; Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin and to Chiang Kai-shek, 26.7.1937; *QGSB*, p.68.

67. Report from Xiong Bin to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 26.7.1937; *HYJL2*, p.4.

68. Report from Xiong Bin to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 26.7.1937; *HYJL2*, p.4.

send a large force of planes to bomb the city.<sup>69</sup>

It was now felt that the central armies, concentrated on the Dezhou-Shijiazhuang and Cangzhou-Baoding railway lines, were too far from Beiping to provide effective support for the 29th Army when the Japanese attack came. It was proposed either to move the advance forces on the Cangzhou-Baoding line, forward to the Yongdinghe to give direct support in the defence of Beiping, bringing the main body of troops forward from the Dezhou-Shijiazhuang line, or to leave the forces in their present positions and order Song Zheyuan and the 29th Army to withdraw from Beiping. Most of those present at the meeting preferred the first option; their opinions were to be passed on to Chiang Kai-shek early the next morning for a final decision.

On the morning of July 27th, Chiang ordered Sun Lianzhong's division to move up to the Yongdinghe, and cabled Song Zheyuan to defend and hold Beiping, Baoding and Wanping at whatever cost.<sup>70</sup> Song rejected the Japanese ultimatum to withdraw from Beiping by noon on July 28th, declaring that he and his forces would stand or fall with the city.<sup>71</sup> Japan intensified the attack on July 28th, and in the early hours of July 29th, Song Zheyuan and Qin Dechun withdrew from Beiping. Zhang Zizhong was left in charge of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council until he fled Beiping-Tianjin in August to return to Nanjing; the Council was dissolved on August 18th.

As it became obvious that full-scale war was breaking out in Hebei-Chaha'er, the sections of the PPC of Yin Rugeng's Japanese-sponsored Eastern Hebei regime rose and mutinied against Yin and the Japanese. The corps had been stationed in the area before Yin declared his separation from Nanjing in November 1935 and had been transferred to the command of Yin's regime without reorganisation.<sup>72</sup> Shortly after the establishment of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, two commanders of corps sections, Zhang Qingyu and Zhang Yantian, had approached Song Zheyuan through a go-between to offer to join him in resisting Japan. Song had urged them to train their

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69. Report from Xiong Bin to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 26.7.1937; *HYJL2*, p.4.

70. Appendix to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 27.7.1937; *HYJL2*, p.18.

71. Telegrams Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek, Yan Kuan to He Yingqin, 27.7.1937; *QQSB*, 69-70.

72. Zhang Qingyu's son disowned him because of this, and his wife urged him to rebel. Zhang Qingyu, (A), 'Jidong bao'andui Tongxian fanzheng shimo ji.' *Qiqi shibian: yuan Guomindang jiangling kang Ri zhanzheng qinliji*. Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1986, p.72.

forces well and prepare to for future resistance to Japanese aggression, and ordered that they be given ¥10,000 each to aid their preparations. This combination of vague exhortation and subsidy is reminiscent of Chiang Kai-shek's dealings with Song himself.<sup>73</sup> After the incident of July 7th, Zhang Qingyu sent a friend, Liu Chuntai, to ask Feng Zhi'an for instructions. Feng asked him to do nothing until it was clear that the incident could not be peacefully resolved; if war became inevitable, the corps should stage an uprising at Tongxian and then attack the Japanese at Fengtai. The corps rose on July 28th, with some initial success including the capture of Yin Rugeng, they were attacked by Japanese reinforcements, and two out of the three commanders, Zhang Yantian and Sun Lianzhang, fled with their forces, leaving Zhang Qingyu isolated and outnumbered. He led his forces to Beiping to join the 29th Army, but arrived to find the 29th Army gone and Beiping full of Japanese troops who attacked the corps and rescued Yin. The corps dispersed and made for Baoding; some were disarmed on the way by Sun Lianzhong's forces who believed them to be on the Japanese side. Soon afterwards, Zhang Qingyu was called to Nanjing to report to Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang praised Zhang for his glorious enterprise, and assured him that his forces would be rearmed and returned to the war as soon as possible.<sup>74</sup> He then asked why Zhang had not had Yin Rugeng killed as soon as he was captured. Zhang replied that he had been dissuaded from his original plan of decapitating Yin and displaying his head on a pole by Liu Chuntai, who warned him that as Yin had in the past been close to He Yingqin and Huang Fu, he must, in establishing the Eastern Hebei regime been acting on the orders of Nanjing. It would therefore be better to return him to Nanjing to be dealt with. Chiang did not reply to this; Zhang appears to have got off lightly in being transferred to the post of head of training of the 6th division in Kaifeng.<sup>75</sup>

Song Zheyuan offered his resignation on July 30th, but it was refused; he was, Qin Dechun informed He Yingqin, depressed by the loss of Beiping, and worried about the reception he would receive in Nanjing when he had to report there. He was blamed

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73. Zhang Qingyu, (A), p.72.

74. Zhang Qingyu, (A), p.75.

75. Zhang Qingyu, (A), p.76.

by many for the loss of Beiping: there were attempts in Nanjing to have him impeached by the Control Yuan, and he received letters and telephone calls in Baoding from officials as well as people outside the government reproaching him for failing to defend the ancient capital and accusing him of selling out the nation's interests.<sup>76</sup> Chiang Kai-shek defended Song, saying that he had followed the orders of the centre, and reinstated him as commander of the first war zone.

On July 31st, Chiang Kai-shek had decided that there was no hope of peace, that China had arrived at the final crisis (*zuihou guantou*). His senior German adviser, Falkenhausen, visited the front in August and came back deeply critical of the handling of the resistance. His report was presented to senior military officials in Nanjing on July 9th. Falkenhausen found that morale among Chinese senior commanders was low, Chinese lines were too far away from the actual conflict, insufficient use was made of the air force, and the collection and management of intelligence was inadequate. He also warned that the 29th Army was unable to sustain the major role Chiang had given them: they must be withdrawn from the front line and sent to the rear to regroup, otherwise they could cause a disaster. Falkenhausen realised that this could cause personnel problems, but he felt the problem was too important to be neglected.<sup>77</sup>

The Lugouqiao incident destroyed the precarious balance between Song Zheyuan, the central government and the Japanese military in North China, and it was not to be restored: the attack on Shanghai on August 13th transformed the Sino-Japanese conflict from a North China affair to a national one. The statement on self-defence and resistance (*Ziwei kangzhan shengmingshu*) issued by Nanjing on August 14th was not a formal declaration of war - none was made until after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, but Nanjing was now no longer physically and psychologically distanced from the Japanese threat. Disagreements within the Chinese forces remained to disturb the government and distort the path of resistance, but the lines were now more clearly drawn and the fluidity and ambiguity which had characterised North China politics and the relationships between Song, Japan and the

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76. Wu Xiqi, Wang Shijiu, (A), 'Song Zheyuan ji qi budui zai kang zhan chuqi de huodong' *Qiqi shibian*, Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1986. p.289.

77. Report by Falkenhausen passed on to Meeting of Senior Military Officials, 9.8.1937; *HYJL2*, p.15.

centre before the war had disappeared.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### The Brussels Conference and the Failure of Mediation (October, 1937 - January, 1938)

In the aftermath of the Lugouqiao incident of July 7th, 1937, the Japanese diplomatic authorities in Nanjing and Tokyo joined the China Garrison and Guandong Armies in insisting that the Lugouqiao incident be resolved locally without the intervention of the Chinese central government in Nanjing.<sup>1</sup> There was no support for such a resolution on the part of the Chinese central authorities, and Japanese intransigence on this issue effectively halted formal diplomatic contacts at the level of the central governments. Although Tokyo later proposed direct Sino-Japanese talks, Nanjing no longer believed that this would lead to an acceptable settlement, and from the outbreak of the incident began attempts to involve the western powers, either through mediation between China and Japan or through direct pressure on the Japanese government. This chapter details these efforts.

In the search for foreign support, Nanjing's efforts encompassed Britain and France, the United States, Germany and the Soviet Union. Britain, France and the United States not only had extensive economic interests in East Asia which would be endangered by further Japanese expansion but also, as signatories of the Treaty of Washington (1922), were pledged to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial and administrative integrity of China;<sup>2</sup> Britain and France, as members of the League of Nations, were bound by the Covenant to support China in case of war. Germany was a long-standing ally of China who might, despite recent a rapprochement with Japan, be prevailed upon to moderate Japanese demands; the Soviet Union was the next obvious target of Japan's continental expansion and it was thus arguably in Moscow's interests to help China resist that expansion.

There were however powerful factors likely to discourage all these nations from too close an involvement in the Sino-Japanese conflict. The isolationist lobby was influential in the United States, and the recently-passed Neutrality Act (May 1937) forbade both American involvement in international conflicts and the supply of arms

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1. See Chapter XII.

2. See below, p.300.

or material to powers at war, as this might lead to the escalation of a conflict.<sup>3</sup> However, American participation was seen by the British and French governments as a prerequisite for the success of any attempt to curb Japan, and the improbability of securing that participation made Britain and France most unwilling to undertake any substantive action. Neither Britain nor France appeared optimistic on the prospects of action by the League of Nations; Japan had already demonstrated its contempt for the League at the time of the Manchurian crisis, and after the debacle of League intervention in the war in Abyssinia in 1936, the League seemed chiefly preoccupied with avoiding any action which might lead to further embarrassment. Britain and France were moreover preoccupied by the European situation, particularly with the Spanish civil war, which had become a battleground between Germany and Italy and the Soviet Union. The conclusion in November 1936 of the Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan, and the rumours of Italy's impending inclusion in the pact, made London and Paris even less willing to become involved in an Asian conflict which might have European repercussions.

In Germany itself, while non-Party sections of the government, including the Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*), retained some sympathy for China, the National Socialist Party apparatus, including its foreign affairs sections (which were responsible for the anti-Comintern pact), strongly favoured Japan and, as Party control over government business increased, the pro-Japanese orientation in Berlin became dominant.<sup>4</sup> As for the Soviet Union, some of Chiang Kai-shek's advisers - notably Yang Jie and Sun Ke - favoured closer links with Moscow on the grounds that Moscow might see alliance with China and support of China's resistance to Japan as the best deterrent to a Japanese attack on its eastern frontier,<sup>5</sup> and it was partly with this in mind that Chiang Kai-shek had been trying to improve relations with Moscow on the eve of the war. However, Nanjing's ambassador in Moscow, Jiang Tingfu, was less optimistic than Yang and Sun that Stalin would be willing to become directly involved

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3. *Documents on International Affairs, 1937* Royal Institute of International Affairs, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.604-14.

4. See Fox, (1982), pp., and Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry, 13.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.506-7.

5. Garver, (1988), pp.17-18.

in the war. At the outbreak of the war, Moscow was a strong advocate of collective action in support of China as part of a broader front against fascism which would have obvious benefits for the Soviet Union itself. When these overtures were rejected by Europe, it seemed entirely probable that the Soviet Union, threatened on one frontier by Germany and on the other by Germany's ally, Japan, might prefer to seek rapprochement with those powers rather than with China.

Finally, the very breadth of Nanjing's choice of potential allies counted against the Chinese government: no one power alone could give China the support needed against Japan; none of the powers targeted by Nanjing appeared willing or able to cooperate with other powers, as cooperation had failed in the past, and collective action now seemed less a guarantee of security in action against Japan than a surer way of antagonizing Japan or its allies. Furthermore, tensions between powers meant that securing the aid of one - for example of the Soviet Union or of Germany - would inevitably mean forfeiting the support of the others.<sup>6</sup> China arguably owed the variety of its allies to its past weakness, international insignificance and inability to make demands those allies, to a conviction in fact that alliance with China would entail no substantive action on China's behalf or other embarrassing commitments. China in its present state could offer an ally nothing in terms of political or military support; the only benefits to be gained from China were the privileges allowed to western nations by the unequal treaties. China was in 1937 so weak that the amount of aid required to permit independent resistance to Japan on the lines envisaged by Chiang was beyond the capacity of western powers. Moreover, the creation or promotion of a stronger and more united China would entail measures incompatible with the West's perceptions of its interests in East Asia;<sup>7</sup> western actions throughout the earlier part of the century had contributed to China's continuing weakness, and the assumptions which this fostered about the 'normal' state of China coloured the West's view of what China was entitled to expect in terms of moral and material support.

Nanjing's appeals for international support were based on the Covenant of the

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6. Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry, 13.8.1937; *ZRWJ4*, p.506-7; Garver, (1988), p.26.

7. See below on Sir Frederick Maze, p.309.



League of Nations and the Treaty of Washington. However, by 1937, the failures of the League of Nations to resolve international disputes had rendered the vaguely-worded Covenant virtually meaningless. China's invocation of the Treaty of Washington, while justified in terms of the wording of Article 1, was less in keeping with the spirit of the treaty as a whole than Nanjing might have wished to believe. Article 1 itself begins:

The Contracting Powers, other than China, agree:

- 1) To respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China;
- 2) To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government;

The purpose of this declaration is revealed in the second part of the article:

- 3) To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China;
- 4) To refrain from taking special advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly States, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such States.<sup>8</sup>

Chinese sovereignty, independence and territorial and administrative integrity were to be sought not as China sought them, as necessary conditions of modern nationhood, but as the best guarantee of the equality of commercial opportunity for foreign powers in China, with which the bulk of the treaty is concerned. Successive Chinese governments however, being bound by the treaty to maintain that equality<sup>9</sup>, were denied the fullest exercise of their sovereignty in being allowed to choose their own trading partners and to dispense commercial privileges as they saw fit.

In 1937, Western powers in Asia were by virtue of their position more disposed to be sympathetic to Japan than to China. Friction between western powers and Japan could be seen as that of rival colonial nations; it was not in the interests of the West to attack the position of Japan as a coloniser *per se*, as this would in the end call the position of the West in Asia into question. London was not unaware of Japan's desire to exclude western influence from Asia, but the assumed consequences of this made it

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8. Treaty of Washington (1922), Article I. Tsien Tai, (1964), *China and the Nine-Power Conference at Brussels in 1937*. New York, St. John's University Press, p.21.

9. Treaty of Washington, Articles III, V; Tsien Tai, (1964), pp.22-3.

a painful topic to contemplate. Sir John Pratt, a veteran of the China consular service, had concluded as early as February 1932 that

"Ultimately we will be faced with the alternative of going to war with Japan or retiring from the Far East. A retirement from the Far East might be the prelude to a retirement from India."<sup>10</sup>

In the long-term, the problem of Japan would have to be confronted if British interests in Asia were to be protected; in the short term it was easy enough to assume that Japan was driven to this latest action by exasperation with China - with which the British government could empathise - rather than by the desire for the immediate gratification of hegemonist ambitions; and if British interests in Asia were already doomed, there seemed little point in sacrificing them prematurely over details such as Chinese sovereignty.

The disorder and backwardness of China to Western eyes, the difficulties of dealing with China politically and commercially, the failure of China to achieve sufficient stability to guarantee foreign commercial interests and the suspicion that the first step of a government of a stable and united China would be to eradicate the privileges presently enjoyed by foreigners in China seem to have given western diplomats more than a trace of sympathy for Japan's 'exasperation' with China. It was not until later that direct Japanese action against western interests fully exposed the illusion on which that sympathy was based. This is reflected in the attitudes of British officials towards the Sino-Japanese relationship throughout the 1930s. Just as there were those in Britain who had felt at the time of the Manchurian crisis that while Japan's actions were extreme, its grievances against China were legitimate,<sup>11</sup> so some British diplomats now seemed inclined to blame China for Japan's actions. For example, James Dodds, British chargé d'affaires in Tokyo, believed that the greatest threat to peace in East Asia was Chiang Kai-shek's deliberate exaggeration of the Japanese menace,<sup>12</sup> and argued that the settlement of the incident "... depend[ed] on

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10. Quoted in Thorne, (1970), 'The Shanghai Crisis of 1932: The Basis of British Policy.' *American Historical Review* October 1970, p.1630.

11. Thorne, (1970), p.1627.

12. Lee, (1973), *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.30.

the ability of [the] Chinese government to restrain its nationals."<sup>13</sup> Views such as this appear to have carried some weight, especially as the opinions of China 'specialists' were not correspondingly sympathetic towards China. Sir John Pratt commented on the Lugouqiao incident that the Chinese had

"... as usual acted in a thoroughly irresponsible and idiotic manner. We may consider that Japan has used excessive force to deal with this menace, but we cannot prove it..."<sup>14</sup>

Foreign Office views of China, even when not overtly hostile to China, can at best be described as unhelpfully whimsical. In a memorandum dated July 12th, 1937, Nigel B. Ronald of the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office mused:

"'China' is not a unit susceptible of clear definition: it is rather a vague concept sanctified by long usage. In a sense therefore it is itself a sham, as possessing so little definable reality. Perhaps it is this quality of unreality, quite as much as the Chinese predilection for all sorts of make-believe and self-deception, which so infuriates the Japanese with their passion for the orderly treatment of a recognisable and tangible objective reality..."<sup>15</sup>

British perceptions of China were rather more favourable by 1937 than they had been at the time of the Japanese attack on Shanghai in 1932; while Ronald's opinions may be fatuous he is at least less overtly hostile to China and its government than the British consul-general in Shanghai who in 1932 had declared that:

"I am not interested to rescue China from a position to which she has been brought largely by her own folly. One cannot forget that all foreigners and especially British have suffered in recent years from utter incompetency and unjustifiable pretensions of Chinese nationalism."<sup>16</sup>

The Manchurian crisis had been followed by mass resignations of senior Chinese officials; by the mid 1930s, the greater stability evident in the Nanjing government seemed to have contributed to some moderation of official British attitudes, and encouraged some qualified British action in support of China, as in the Leith-Ross mission.<sup>17</sup> However, Leith-Ross's mission in Asia was not only to advise on the

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13. Dodds to FO, 14.7.1937, FO F4108/9/10; quoted in Lee (1973), p.25.

14. *Aide-memoire*, Pratt to American Ambassador, 30.7.1937, FO F4890/9/10, quoted in Lee, (1973), p.31

15. Memo by Nigel B. Ronald, Far Eastern Department of Foreign Office, 12.8.1937; FO F5393/9/10; quoted in Lee, (1973), p.31; cf Okamura Yasuji, quoted in Chapter VIII.

16. Quoted in Thorne (1970), p.1631.

17. See Chapters I, IV.

Chinese currency reform as a means of stabilising Chinese finances and advancing China's economic integration under the Nanjing government but also thereby to create a stable economic order in which British interests could be pursued. A precondition for this was Chinese recognition of the *status quo* in Manchuria.<sup>18</sup>

To say that China was not seen by westerners as worthy of preservation from Japanese aggression would be an over-simplification: firstly, to see Japan's actions as 'aggression' rather than retribution required a leap of consciousness which few with a stake in the colonial order can have been willing, even had they been able, to make; similarly, if British traders and diplomats are to be taken as representative, some foreigners in China experienced difficulty identifying as an entity, let alone considering as viable and deserving to survive, the 'China' against which Japan was acting. To this ingrained prejudice was added China's disadvantage in the propaganda war: foreign governments did not receive only China's version of events: reports from diplomatic representatives in Tokyo were predictably influenced by and sympathetic to the Japanese line, and, as Cheng Tianfang, China's ambassador in Berlin, reported to Nanjing, the fact that China did not have press agency facilities in Europe and America gave Japan an advantage in propagating its own version of events.<sup>19</sup>

Western perceptions of the state of China and of the international order reveal in the statements above were not views which would encourage any government to take meaningful action in support of the Chinese cause. Chiang Kai-shek and his government were not optimistic of their chances of securing a rapid resolution to the conflict brokered by the western powers on the basis of the League Covenant and the Treaty of Washington. However, if the war against Japan was to be sustained, western support - moral and material - was essential. While failure to try all possible ways towards a peaceful solution might suggest to the West that China was not the innocent victim of aggression - a belief to which some western observers of China seemed predisposed - an appeal to the League or to the Washington signatories at a time when support for China was - to their eyes - impossible risked embarrassing and alienating

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18. See Chapter I, and Chapter IV.

19. Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry, 16.7.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.504-5.

the powers on whose goodwill China was dependent.

However, it was decided within a few days of the initial clashes at Lugouqiao to solicit the opinions of western governments on a possible appeal to the League, invoking Article 17 of the Covenant, which reads:

1. In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership of the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16<sup>20</sup> shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

3. If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the provisions of Article 16 [*ie blanket economic financial and military sanctions by whole League*] shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.<sup>21</sup>

The responses were predictably discouraging. After preliminary talks with the French Foreign Minister, Gu Weijun, Nanjing's ambassador to France, cabled Nanjing on July 13th that, given the weakness of the League, the French government was not optimistic concerning the appeal, but had no objections in principle to an approach being made. The French Foreign Minister suggested however that it might be more appropriate to invoke Article 11 of the Covenant, which declared all wars or threats of war to be 'a matter of concern' to all members of the League and provided for discussions by the League Assembly or Council, but prescribed no specific action from the League. He also pointed out that any action taken without American participation was most likely to fail, and suggested that the United States should be approached before decisions were taken. The US Ambassador in Paris had by now heard that China intended to appeal to the League and contacted Gu for confirmation, sounding - to the Chinese Ambassador - less than enthusiastic.<sup>22</sup> In Washington, the United States government had proposed a separate American approach to China and Japan, urging both to

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20. Articles 12-15 deal with the settlement of disputes by arbitration, judicial settlement and discussion by the League Council.

21. See Appendix IX.

22. Telegrams Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry, 13.7.1937; ZRWJ4, pp. 489-90, 490-1; 15.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.491.

exercise 'restraint'.<sup>23</sup> Britain also seemed concerned that the peace in the East should not be jeopardised by excessive Chinese resistance, instructing the Ambassador in China, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, to seek assurances from the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Chonghui that China's troop mobilisation was purely for the purposes of defence and that China had no intention of going on the offensive against Japan. Even the Soviet Union, which in June 1937 had proposed a treaty of mutual security with China, was now much less willing to risk provoking Japan by seeking closer links with Nanjing.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the unenthusiastic response from Europe and the United States, Nanjing's initial diplomatic response was rather less hesitant and confused than its military response to the crisis. Chiang Kai-shek, in conversations with the British Ambassador, continued to press for mediation from Britain and the United States. The mildest version of Japanese demands current at that time were: an apology to Japan for the incident; an undertaking not to station regular troops at Lugouqiao but to replace the present garrison with peace preservation corps; suppression of the 'anti-Japanese movement' and the acceptance of action against Communism; Chiang stated in his conversation with Hugessen on July 21st that he might have accepted these terms had he been confident that Japan would attach no further conditions to them. On July 24th, by which time he had received Song Zheyuan's report on the talks in Tianjin and Japan's terms for a ceasefire,<sup>25</sup> he confirmed that he had replied to Song that, if no formal agreement had been made, modification of the terms should be sought; if however an agreement had been concluded, then the centre could approve the terms. This may have been less a genuine statement of willingness to make further concessions to Japan, than a ploy to secure the early involvement of Britain and the United States. If Chiang had accepted and been held to these terms it would have represented a greater concession on the part of Nanjing than had been made since the Tanggu truce, and given the climate of opinion at the time it seems unlikely that Chiang could have

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23. Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry, 15.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.491.

24. Telegram Jiang Tingfu (Ambassador to Moscow) to Foreign Ministry, 15.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.484-5; Garver, (1988), p.19-20. Note that Moscow had already made and then withdrawn this proposal in late 1936.

25. See Chapter XII.

retained his credibility as leader after such a retreat. The movement to Hebei of four divisions of the central armies in defiance of the He-Umezu agreement does not suggest that Chiang was in a conciliatory mood, and indeed within days of the start of the incident Japanese Military Headquarters in Tokyo was convinced that Chiang was prepared to go to war.<sup>26</sup> Chiang and He Yingqin both seemed convinced that the terms offered to Song by the Japanese would soon be superseded by far more sweeping demands. According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry's report on Chiang's conversation with Hugessen, the British Ambassador:

"[Chiang Kai-shek] repeated that since the 22nd of this month the Japanese had been preparing for major action, and said that the Japanese might in the next week present demands to Song Zheyuan and the centre which we could not accept; these demands would be presented abruptly, and he feared they might take the form of a final ultimatum. We could agree to the three points on which Song had asked instructions, [but] in this had reached our final limit; if the Japanese presented more conditions, we must refuse them at that time it would not be possible to avoid war. Now we must ask Britain and the United States to make greatest efforts to avert the calamity of war..."<sup>27</sup>

Acceptance of the original terms might gain Chiang more time, and convince the West of Nanjing's desire for a peaceful resolution of the incident, while having little practical significance, *if that acceptance could be kept secret from the general public*. It has been noted elsewhere that Chiang used offers of compliance in foreign mediation attempts or threats of surrender to the Japanese on terms unfavourable to foreign powers to keep his allies involved in the Sino-Japanese question;<sup>28</sup> while this had benefits in the short term, it appear to have been counter-productive in the long-term, leaving his domestic and foreign critics with the impression of Chiang as vacillating, uncommitted to resistance, or manipulative.

It was in Nanjing's interests at this point to keep the conflict alive while appearing willing to end it as soon as Japan could be persuaded to negotiate. Western governments were receiving news of Song Zheyuan's talks with the China Garrison Army in Tianjin, and appeared to hope that these would end the conflict in a

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26. See Chapter XII, and Hata, (1983), p.252.

27. Chiang Kai-shek with Hugessen, 24.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.485.

28. Garver, (1988) Sino-Soviet Relations, p.24.

satisfactory manner.<sup>29</sup> Chiang was anxious that these talks should be not seen as an acceptable solution to the conflict in the North, as this would concede an important point of principle - the formal involvement of the central authorities in all such resolutions - to the Japanese. Neither Britain nor the United States seemed willing to get actively involved at this stage: both Foreign Ministers had summoned Chinese and Japanese Ambassadors to remind them that their governments took the preservation of peace most seriously; this, said Hugessen, was all that the British government felt capable of doing.<sup>30</sup> The American Foreign Minister, Hull, when approached by Nanjing's ambassador in Washington, Wang Zhengting, reminded him of the constraints placed on the Washington government's actions by the Neutrality Act (1937).<sup>31</sup> This meant in effect that if a state of war were recognised as existing between China and Japan the United States could give no support to either side, regardless of whether Japan was seen as an aggressor; this provided further incentive for Nanjing to postpone formal recognition of the conflict, as the United States, being the only power not now threatened by conflict in Europe and therefore concerned with its own rearmament, was the power most likely to be able to provide Nanjing with the resources it needed to face Japan. Nor did the American Foreign Minister support the convention of a conference of the signatories of the Treaty of Washington, warning Wang Zhengting that in his opinion this was more likely to provoke war than resolve the Sino-Japanese problem.<sup>32</sup>

Nanjing's diplomatic initiative faltered in the face of this discouragement. Shortly after the Japanese attack on Shanghai on August 13th, Kong Xiangxi cabled the Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang from Europe, urging Party and government not to abandon diplomatic efforts. Kong reminded the government of the diplomatic options which remained open:

"1. The League of Nations meets again in September: we should report Japan's

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29. Xu Mo conversation with Knatchbull-Hugessen, 17.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.473; Chiang Kai-shek conversation with Knatchbull-Hugessen, 25.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.424.

30. Chiang Kai-shek conversation with Hugessen, 24.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.474.

31. Wang Zhengting to Foreign Ministry, 17.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.445.

32. Wang Zhengting to Foreign Ministry, 17.7.1937; ZRWJ4, p.445.



recent acts of aggression to the Assembly and demand the imposition of economic sanctions; this will make it impossible for the other nations to find excuses to look on with folded hands, and will allow us to attract moral support and the sympathy of the world;

2. At the same time we must ask the United States to convene a Pacific Conference on the basis of the [Treaty of Washington] and seek a resolution with the signatories of the treaty... With Gu [Weijun] and Guo [Taiqi] I have repeatedly asked the government to invoke the [Treaty of Washington] and received no reply; we fear the government is vacillating... we must be prepared not only to sacrifice everything in the search for final victory but also to use diplomatic methods... "33

Kong's anxiety that diplomatic efforts be sustained was increased by the awareness that the western powers' priority was to end the fighting; the cost to China at which that was achieved was of little importance. He reminded Nanjing of the speed with which western objections to the Japanese occupation of the North-East had been forgotten:

"President Roosevelt secretly says that Manzhouguo was established six years ago; we should not quibble over legal principles as it is now a *fait accompli*. Now [although] most nations have not recognised [Manzhouguo], it is quite possible that in the future they will exchange conditions with Japan and recognise it... "34

If the West could not be expected to support China in an effort to regain lost rights and territory, but only to stabilise the *status quo*, it was imperative that western help be enlisted *before* China had made further serious losses. From the preamble of a resolution passed by the Central Political Committee on August 26th, it at first appears that this point had been taken by the Guomindang. It declared:

"... questions of international politics must be treated as of no less importance than military matters, otherwise we fear that we may make great sacrifices on the battlefield without making commensurate political gains... "35

However, the political measures outlined in the resolution marked a return, at least in form, to the 'revolutionary diplomacy' of the 1920s which had so alienated the foreign powers in China. It was resolved to abolish all extraterritorial rights for Japanese in China and to repossess the Japanese concessions, and it was stated that:

"Once Japan's rights [of extraterritoriality] have been abolished, if America, Britain, and France wish to show goodwill, they may of course consider the

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33. Kong Xiangxi to Central Executive Committee of Guomindang, 16.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.345.

34. Kong Xiangxi to Central Executive Committee of the Guomindang, 16.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.345.

35. Central Political Committee resolution on War of Resistance to Japan, 26.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.347-8.

voluntary renunciation of their own rights [of extraterritoriality], and then the greatest obstacle to economic, financial and democratic development will have been abolished... " <sup>36</sup>

Britain's position in China, specifically the holding of the office of Inspector-General of the Chinese Maritime Customs by an Englishman, Sir Frederick Maze, was also attacked. The Chinese authorities saw Maze's appointment as an infringement of China's administrative integrity, and resented what they saw as Maze's advancement of foreign interests - not only British but also Japanese - over Chinese.<sup>37</sup> The British government saw its control of Customs revenue as a means securing an 'efficient and honest Customs administration',<sup>38</sup> of protecting revenues from Japan, and of preventing the Nanjing government from diverting its main source of income away from the service of foreign loans and into the war effort. However, British officials were no better than Chinese at withstanding Japanese pressure: in October, the Customs Commissioner in Tianjin, W.R. Myers - negotiating directly with the Japanese at London's insistence despite Nanjing's protests - allowed all Tianjin customs revenues to be deposited in the Yokohama Specie Bank where Japan alone had access to them pending the resolution of the conflict in North China.<sup>39</sup> Revocation of the unequal treaties and regularisation of the position of foreign powers in China was a reasonable aim in itself, but was not now enough solve China's problems, and would positively impede the search for much-needed foreign support.

China's formal appeal to the League of Nations was presented on August 30th. The appeal detailed Japan's actions since the outbreak of the Lugouqiao incident, concluding:

- "1. Japanese armed forces have invaded China's territory and are extensively attacking Chinese positions by land, sea and air, in Central as well as North China. It is thus a case of aggression pure and simple.
2. China is exercising her natural right of self-defence, the failure of all other means of repelling violence having compelled her to resort to force, which is against China's wish.

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36. Central Political Committee resolution on War of Resistance to Japan, 26.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.347-8.

37. Central Political Committee resolution on War of Resistance to Japan, 26.8.1937; ZRWJ4, p.347-8.

38. Sir John Pratt, quoted in Lee, (1973), p.117.

39. Lee, (1973), pp.117-8.

3. Japan's present action is the continuation of her aggressive programme started in Manchuria in September 1931... She is attempting to destroy all the work of reconstruction which the Chinese nation has so steadily and assiduously undertaken during the last ten years.

4. In thus deliberately disturbing the peace of the Far East, Japan has violated the fundamental principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Using war as an instrument of national policy... she has violated the Paris Peace Pact of 1928. Acting contrary to her pledge to respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China, she has violated the Nine-Power Treaty concluded at Washington in 1922.<sup>40</sup>

Guo Taiqi cabled from London on September 8th to warn that, according to legal experts of the British Foreign Office, invoking Article 17 would constitute a recognition that war existed between China and Japan, provoke Japan to exercise its powers as a belligerent by blockading the China coast and searching all shipping in the area, and cause the United States to apply the Neutrality Act to the Sino-Japanese conflict. Guo had protested that in case of aggression there could be no possibility of League powers preserving neutrality or allowing Japan such freedoms, but was reminded that at the time of the Italo-Abyssinian war, League members were allowed to decide for themselves whether to recognise Italy as an aggressor, and it was now unclear what steps had to be taken to have Japan, a non-member of the League, recognised as an aggressor.<sup>41</sup>

A second appeal, specifically invoking Articles 10, 11, and 17 of the Covenant, was submitted on September 12th,<sup>42</sup> one month after the Japanese offensive on Shanghai began. It was feared that the West would abandon China altogether if Shanghai were lost before measures to deal with Japan were in place, and that the city must therefore be held at any cost until the League's consultations had produced some result. The League of Nations did not appear to share this sense of urgency. The Assembly voted to refer the Sino-Japanese question to the Far Eastern Advisory Committee, of which the United States, despite having left the League itself, was still a member.<sup>43</sup> The Committee appointed a Sub-Committee<sup>44</sup> to discuss the Sino-

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40. *DIA*, 1937, p.673.

41. Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry, 8.9.1937; *ZRWJ4*, p.477.

42. Full text of appeal, see *DIA*, 1937, p.674; relevant clauses of Covenant in Appendix IX.

43. Established February 24th, 1933. *DIA*, 1937, p.700, fn2.

Japanese question; the Sub-Committee which met on September 16th and presented its entirely predictable conclusions on October 5th. These included a resolution condemning the bombing of civilian targets in China;<sup>45</sup> and a report confirming that in the opinion of the Sub-Committee, Japan's actions were indeed in violation of the Treaty of Washington and the Pact of Paris (1928); the Sub-Committee further noted that Article 11 of the Covenant provided that 'the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations' and therefore voted to refer the matter to the signatories of the Treaty of Washington.<sup>46</sup> A resolution passed by the Committee and the League Assembly on October 5th adopted the reports and the proposals embodied therein and went on:

"[The Assembly] expresses moral support for China, and recommends that Members of the League should refrain from taking any action which might have the effect of weakening China's powers of resistance and thus of increasing her difficulties in the present conflict, and should also consider how far they can individually extend aid to China;..."<sup>47</sup>

As an expression of intention to 'safeguard the peace of nations' this is far from ideal and, given the pains taken by representatives of western governments to impress upon Chinese diplomats that only joint action against Japan could have any chance of success, the emphasis here on *individual* action could be taken as a clear statement that Nanjing should expect no effective help.

The omens for the conference of the Washington signatories were not good; Britain and the United States refused to host the conference, believing it was likely to fail; France and the Netherlands also refused, as their defences in the Far East were weak and they were unwilling to risk offending Japan; finally, Belgium was prevailed upon to allow the conference to be held in Brussels. The original signatories of the treaty,<sup>48</sup> the five adhering powers,<sup>49</sup> Germany and the Soviet Union - as powers

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44. Members: Latvia (Chair), Australia, Belgium, United Kingdom, China, Ecuador, France, New Zealand, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, USSR, USA.

45. Resolution passed September 28th, 1937; text in *DIA*, 1937, p.686.

46. *DIA*, 1937, p.698.

47. *DIA*, 1937, p.701.

48. China, Belgium, Britain, United States, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Portugal. Qian Tai, (1964), p.3.

having substantial interests in the Far East - were invited; Germany and Japan declined. The treaty provided for no specific action in the case of violations except for 'full and frank communication' between signatories, and thus allowed the awkward question of sanctions - or any other positive action - against Japan to be shelved temporarily. It was apparently feared that this full and frank communication might be inhibited by China's presence at discussions, and on October 12th, Roosevelt proposed to Wang Zhengting and Hu Shi that, after presenting the Chinese report on the Sino-Japanese problem, the Chinese representatives should assure the other delegates of their faith in the conference's ability to arrive at a just conclusion, and withdraw from the session. Roosevelt also felt that there was room for further accommodation by China, suggesting that, as Japan had given pressure of population as a reason for its advance into China, Nanjing might be expected to resume talks on economic questions in order to deal with Japan's 'difficulties' in this sphere.<sup>50</sup>

Thus the Chinese Foreign Ministry was not being excessively pessimistic in instructing Gu Weijun, Guo Taiqi and Qian Tai on October 25th

"1. Given the present situation, there is no hope of the Conference succeeding; we must be clear on this.

2. However, our attitude to the various powers must be positive and conciliatory, especially towards Italy and Germany, so as not to increase our difficulties. We must express hope for the success of the conference and for a resolution in the spirit of the Treaty of Washington; this is one principle of our response...

3. We must ensure that each power recognises that the responsibility for the failure of the conference is to be borne by Japan; other states cannot be allowed to blame China for having too hard an attitude.

4. The Shanghai question is to be resolved at the same time as the whole Sino-Japanese question; we cannot allow resolution of the Shanghai question alone.

5. Our aim at the conference is to ensure that the powers impose sanctions on Japan after the failure of the conference; and

6. At the same time we must make the greatest efforts to encourage Britain and the United States to approve and encourage military involvement by the Soviet Union against Japan."<sup>51</sup>

These instructions were followed by a list of eighteen violations of the Treaty of

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49. Bolivia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Mexico. Qian Tai, (1964), p.3.

50. Telegrams Wang Zhengting to Foreign Ministry, Hu Shi to Foreign Ministry, 12.10.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.362-3.

51. Foreign Ministry to Gu Weijun, Guo Taiqi, Qian Tai, 24.10.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.402-3.

Washington committed by Japan since 1931,<sup>52</sup> the minimum terms on which Nanjing was prepared to consider mediation<sup>53</sup> - substantially the same as the Chinese terms in the Zhang-Kawagoe negotiations - and a response to Roosevelt's proposals of October 12th - which had been raised again by the American conference delegates - which displays willingness to comply but little faith in the ability or intention of the conference powers to safeguard China's interests:

"... if the United States, Britain, and France are willing to mediate, *and we can ascertain in advance that their plan is not disadvantageous to us*, then our representatives may ... after explaining the facts and our hopes, when others begin discussions on mediation, voluntarily declare our intention to withdraw from the session. *But we must a. reserve the right to return at any time, and b. stipulate that no final resolution may be taken without prior consultation with the Chinese representatives and approval by China.*"<sup>54</sup>

The conference, undermined from the start by Japan's refusal to attend, foundered on procedural details and was adjourned *sine die* on November 24th. The declaration adopted by the Conference 'strongly urged' that hostilities be suspended, but made no proposals for action beyond the exchange of views between participating governments.<sup>55</sup> Nanjing continued to press Britain and the United States for loans, but again western reluctance to anger Japan impeded progress.

Japan had at first been unwilling to accept mediation by Britain when it was proposed earlier but had in October begun attempts to reach Nanjing through Colonel Eugen Ott, the German military attaché in Shanghai.<sup>56</sup> Specific terms were presented to Chiang Kai-shek in early November; he rejected them, saying that as the Sino-Japanese question was now being considered in Brussels, if Japan and Germany wished to try for a mediated settlement, they should do so through the Brussels conference, to which both had been invited. Chiang also insisted that the restoration of the *status quo ante* be the basis of any mediation terms.<sup>57</sup> A telegram from a Chinese official

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52. Foreign Ministry to Chinese Embassy in Paris, 27.10.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.403-4.

53. Foreign Ministry to Chinese delegation in Brussels, 2.11.1937; ZRWJ4, p.405.

54. Foreign Ministry to Chinese Embassy in Brussels, 1.11.1937; ZRWJ4, p.404 (Emphasis added)

55. Full text of Report of the Conference, November 24th, 1937, in Qian Tai, (1964), pp.25-37.

56. Fox, (1982), p.262.

57. Fox, (1982), pp.265-6.

in Brussels to the Chinese Foreign Ministry informed Nanjing that there was talk in Brussels of Japan seeking German mediation, and described this initiative as an attempt by Japan to undermine the conference;<sup>58</sup> presumably if Nanjing wished to retain the goodwill of Britain and the United States, and persuade them that their intervention was essential to the resolution of the Sino-Japanese question, it was inadvisable to be seen to pursue other means towards a resolution of the conflict, especially in cooperation with pariah states such as Germany.

In early December, China was in severe difficulties militarily: Shanghai had fallen on November 12th, and the city of Nanjing itself was threatened; on November 20th, the removal of the government to Chongqing had been announced. It was now decided to pursue a German offer of mediation first made in November. Hirota had warned in November when he passed the terms rejected by Chiang on to von Dirksen, the Japanese Ambassador in Tokyo, that the longer China delayed acceptance, the harsher Japan's terms would become.<sup>59</sup> By this time, China's position had been disastrously weakened and it clear from the Japanese terms when they were finally presented that only total capitulation by China would be seen as an acceptable starting point for negotiations.

Chiang Kai-shek and his government were now in an extremely difficult position. If a settlement were to be reached it had to be done soon: Suzhou had fallen to the Japanese armies on November 19th, and the advance on Nanjing continued. If any hint that the government was negotiating, even indirectly, with Japan leaked out, public opinion would be outraged, and the Soviet Union, still seen by some as China's greatest hope of foreign support, would be alienated. To be generally acceptable, any agreement concluded as a result of mediation firstly would have to be more equitable than all previous agreements concluded by China under duress from Japan and secondly would have to abandon a basic tenet of Japan's China policy, that of joint Sino-Japanese action against Communism. Wang Jingwei, who had tried to involve Germany in the 'normalisation' of Sino-Japanese relations in late 1935, feared war and therefore

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58. Jiang Fangzhen to Foreign Ministry, 7.11.1937; ZRWJ4, p.397.

59. Fox, (1982), p.265.

favoured German mediation; Chiang Kai-shek accepted mostly because he was unwilling to reject any offer of help, although he was becoming suspicious of Germany. Despite the insistence at first of the Chinese side that no negotiations could begin until after a ceasefire, the Japanese advance continued and, after the fall of Nanjing on December 12th, China appeared to have little choice but to begin talks without a break in hostilities. German participation was not without its own difficulties: the German Foreign Minister, von Neurath, was anxious that the German Foreign Office should not be accused of collusion with Japan in persuading China to accept obviously inequitable terms or terms which were so vague that Japan could later reinterpret them as it wished. German participation was thus not 'mediation' in the strict sense of the word, but merely the transmission of terms and responses between the two parties. China was thus deprived of the support which more active and sympathetic participation, yet it is most unlikely that Japan would have been willing to accept mediation of this kind.

Japan's terms were passed on to von Dirksen by the Japanese Foreign Minister, Hirota, on December 22nd, and transmitted via Berlin to Trautmann on December 26th. The terms were as follows: China must abandon its pro-Communist, anti-Japanese and anti-Manzhouguo policies and cooperate with Japan and Manzhouguo in action against Communism; demilitarised zones and 'special regimes' (*teshu zhengquan*) were to be established where necessary; there must be close economic cooperation between China, Japan and Manzhouguo; and China must pay an indemnity to Japan.<sup>60</sup> According to Dirksen, there was a widespread feeling in the Japanese civil and military authorities that the terms were - for Japan's purposes - excessively lenient, and that it would be to Japan's advantage if the Chinese government rejected them and thus allowed Japan to continue the war. Trautmann passed on the terms, but not Dirksen's additional comments to Song Meiling and Kong Xiangxi (Chiang Kai-shek was 'ill'). The following day, he informed them of Hirota's insistence that there be no ceasefire until a peace treaty had been concluded.<sup>61</sup> The terms represented no radical

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60. Foreign Ministry to Chinese Embassy in Moscow, 28.12.1937; ZRWJ4, p.496-7; Fox, (1982), p.277.

61. Fox, (1982), p.278.



departure from Japanese terms in the past for the 'normalisation' of relations between China and Japan, with the vague reference to the establishment 'where necessary' of the demilitarised zones and special regimes whose abolition had been a basic condition of China's terms for normalisation; terms of this type had been repeatedly rejected by China in the past two years on the grounds that they were too vague and embodied no guarantee of respect for China's sovereignty. The Foreign Ministry passed the terms on to the Embassy in Moscow, commenting that there was 'no room for consideration' of the terms, and asking the Embassy to solicit the opinion of the Soviet government, possibly in the hope of luring Moscow into the war.<sup>62</sup>

Clarification was sought via Trautmann; after discussions with Dirksen, Hirota agreed that his unofficial comments explaining Japan's terms might be transmitted to the Chinese on the condition that they were presented as Dirksen's personal impressions of the significance of the terms and not as a direct communication from the Japanese government. Trautmann informed Wang Chonghui of 'Dirksen's' explanations on January 2nd. The reference to the abandonment of the anti-Japanese, anti-Manzhouguo, pro-Communist policies was chiefly concerned with the recognition of Manzhouguo; abrogation of the Sino-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty and adherence to the Anti-Comintern Pact was desirable but not essential; China must however give unspecified proof of sincerity in the fight against Communism. Demilitarised zones were to be created in 'North China', Inner Mongolia and the area around Shanghai presently occupied by the Japanese armies; 'special regimes' were to be established in all of these areas; by Dirksen's account, opinions in Tokyo seemed to vary significantly on the powers to be enjoyed by these regimes and their relationship with the Chinese central government; the indemnity to be paid by China was to cover financial losses to Japan resulting from the war and the expenses of the occupation.<sup>63</sup>

While these 'impressions' gave sufficient detail to confirm the suspicions of the Chinese, they were far from being specific enough for China to give a formal response and, despite growing pressure from Japan to reply, the Chinese authorities refused to

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62. Foreign Ministry to Moscow Embassy, 28.12.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.496-7.

63. Conversation, Wang Chonghui and Trautmann, 2.1.1938; ZRWJ4, pp.497-8; Fox, (1982), p.281.

do so. Kong Xiangxi described the terms as a 'blank cheque'; Tokyo threatened that if China insisted on pressing for clarification and withheld unconditional acceptance, the Japanese government would 'reserve its right to freedom of action'.<sup>64</sup> Fox has suggested that Japan's evasiveness arose from a fear that China would, as it had when Japan presented the Twenty-One Demands, publish details of Japan's conditions to rally international support; it is equally possible, if Dirksen was correct in thinking that influential groups in Tokyo wanted to see the terms rejected,<sup>65</sup> that this vagueness was a deliberate ploy to make Nanjing suspicious of the terms, or indeed that divisions within groups favouring the prolongation of the fighting made it impossible to produce one detailed set of conditions. Wang Chonghui however insisted - despite the German Ambassador's misgivings - that Trautmann pass on a demand for further and more specific explanation of Japan's terms. This was not acceptable to Tokyo: on January, Konoe Fumimaro issued a statement that the Japanese government would 'no longer deal with' the present Chinese government (*kokumin seifu o aite to sezu*). The Chinese and Japanese Ambassadors were recalled and formal contacts between the government led by Chiang Kai-shek and Japan ceased.

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64. Conversation, Wang Chonghui and Trautmann, 13.1.1937; ZRWJ4, pp.500-2; Fox, (1982), p.285.

65. See above, p.315.

## Conclusions

The refusal by Japanese civil and military authorities to deal with Nanjing as an equal and as the sovereign government of a unified China was the decisive factor in the failure of Nanjing's efforts to normalise relations with Japan. The Nanjing government was not alone in being unable to secure Japanese cooperation, and the failure in itself is not revealing. Formal diplomatic relations between Nanjing and Tokyo were not the core of the Sino-Japanese problem. The complexities of the Japan problem forced the Chinese authorities to address Japan not only through the Foreign Ministry but also through the various special administrative organisations in North China. This multi-layered response was reflected in the apparently collective nature of formal policy-making at central government level between Foreign Minister Wang Jingwei, Chiang Kai-shek and PAC chairman Huang Fu. This might have been a realistic approach to relations with Japan, combining diplomatic, military and North China expertise, had there been a working consensus between the three on basic approaches to the issues involved and the range of responses available to China. This was not the case. Communication between the three was hampered by the fact that, for much of 1935, Chiang was in Sichuan, Wang in Nanjing and Huang in Moganshan, north of Hangzhou: even at the very centre there was no apparent coordination of the response to Japan.

By 1935 there was a remarkable degree of devolution of control over the conduct of relations with Japan from the Foreign Ministry to other sections of the central government and from central government to regional authorities, to the extent that, most notably mid-1935, the Foreign Ministry's role in the process was purely symbolic. The Foreign Ministry had no formal involvement at all in the most pressing problem of the Sino-Japanese relationship: the North China question. Central control over North China was merely nominal before 1933, tenuous from 1933 to 1935 and virtually disappeared thereafter, leaving actual control over contacts with the Japanese military in the hands of Song Zheyuan who, while paying lip-service to the principle of central control, gave few practical signs of adherence to Nanjing.

The late introduction of China into the international system and the low status

accorded to foreign affairs had not encouraged the development of an effective and dynamic Foreign Ministry, or the full exploitation of foreign ministry methods and structures. Under pressure to defend China's interests while led by a Minister, Wang Jingwei, who professed no faith in diplomacy, the Foreign Ministry was unable to assert itself within the Nanjing government just as individual Chinese diplomats were unable to assert themselves in their contacts with the Japanese. Despite the need for constant contact with the Japanese authorities and information on developments in Japan, for much of 1935-1937 the Tokyo embassy was left in the hands of junior officials; criticisms of negligent practices of this kind, appearing in the non-governmental press in early 1935, had reached the Foreign Ministry's own *Waibu Zhoukan* by early 1936. Apart from the failure to provide proper representation for China, the Ministry's management of intelligence was also inadequate, leaving officials under-prepared in contacts with the Japanese. The appointment after Wang's departure of a new minister, Zhang Qun, with no prior experience of foreign affairs was a further blow to the status of the Ministry.

Any evaluation of the diplomatic efforts of the Nanjing government must be made in full recognition of the abnormality of the Sino-Japanese relationship at the time. Nanjing could use neither military force, the promise of concessions nor pressure from its western allies to sway Japan. The humiliating defeats by Japanese forces in 1931 and 1933 made the avoidance or postponement of military conflict a guiding principle of Nanjing's Japan policy; the offer of concessions was useless, as the Japanese demanded major concessions from the Chinese authorities with no acknowledgement that these might be rewarded with reciprocal concessions by Japan, and China had in any case by 1935 ceded all it could; even after the outbreak of war in the North and the attack on Shanghai in 1937, China's western allies were unable to offer meaningful support, and Nanjing's attempts to involve western powers in the Sino-Japanese dispute only antagonized the Japanese.

In this abnormal context it is of limited use to measure gains and losses by Nanjing in terms of interests served and objectives achieved. No substantive progress was made on the positive requirements outlined in the 1935 discussions between Jiang

Zuobin and Hirota Kōki, which formed the basis of Zhang Qun's talks with Kawagoe Shigeru in 1936. It was found impossible even to secure Japanese recognition of Nanjing's demands as a valid basis for discussion; instead of providing an opportunity for a full resolution of outstanding disputes between China and Japan, the Zhang-Kawagoe talks underlined the impossibility of securing a diplomatic settlement. In the context of the Nanjing government's 'negative' interests, such as the prevention of further infringements of sovereignty or the postponement of war with Japan, the maintenance of an uneasy peace between June 1935 and July 1937 can be seen only as a limited achievement. The sacrifices of Chinese sovereignty made to secure this under the He-Umezu and Qin-Doihara agreements, and the acceptance of the highly irregular state of North China after December 1935, were no less significant - and no less enforceable by Japan - for being concealed behind 'voluntary measures' taken by the Nanjing government and deliberately informal acceptance of demands made by the Japanese military. These concessions were not made lightly, but in the conviction that Japanese threats of reprisals would be acted upon in the event of a Chinese refusal to accept the demands. However, acceptance of these demands was also a tacit admission that the Japan policy of central authorities could not encompass the North China problem. Apart from a short-lived effort to involve the centre in joint economic measures in the North in 1936, Nanjing's response to the North China problem rarely went beyond protests at the repeated interventions by the Japanese armies in the region and demands that sovereignty be respected. The Nanjing government showed little confidence in confronting the 'normal' problems of the Sino-Japanese relationship, and seemed to find the abnormal problems of North China impossible even to approach.

The initiative in the North therefore passed from the representatives of the centre to regional officials. As governor of the frontier province of Chaha'er, Song Zheyuan appeared in early 1935 only as an irritant to the central authorities, an army commander whose inability to restrain his forces provided the Japanese with pretexts for further encroachments and attacks on North China. By January of the following year he had become chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, with full formal military and political control over the two provinces and *de facto* independence in his

contacts with the Japanese military, a position he held until the outbreak of the war in 1937. For this period, the central government was wholly dependent for the defence of North China and the preservation of what unity could be salvaged in the aftermath of the autonomy movement on Song Zheyuan, whom the Executive Yuan had sacked for antagonizing the Japanese in summer 1935, then appointed to a key post in Beiping-Tianjin only to hear rumours that he was entertaining Japanese proposals to secede and lead an 'autonomous' North China regime.

Song's relations with the Nanjing government are therefore of central importance to this study, yet his attitude remains impenetrable. The memoir literature on Song is largely anecdotal and only rarely converges with events recorded in the primary sources; predictably, it is influenced by later perceptions of the events of the 1930s to an extent which renders the explanations it offers of Song's actions contradictory and unhelpful. The evidence of the primary sources is incomplete: while it is clear that at times, particularly in autumn 1935 during the autonomy movement and immediately after the outbreak of the Lugouqiao incident, the Nanjing government itself was deeply unsure of Song, the evidence for the intervening period is inconclusive. It appears that for much of 1936 there was little communication between Song and Nanjing, and it is possible that the central government was forced to rely on second-hand reports of Song's activities from its remaining representatives in Beiping; even if there were direct correspondence between Song and the centre, the fact that the Foreign Ministry and the General Staff felt compelled to collect intelligence on Song from other sources might in itself suggest that he was not fully trusted.

Distrust of Song in Nanjing was aroused by the central position which 'autonomy' for North China occupied in the China policy of the Japanese military: throughout 1936-1937 the central government received reports of Japanese initiatives to secure the establishment of an independent North China government, and Song's attitude to Nanjing and the pressures on him to secede are scrutinised. There is however little to indicate whether Song actively sought greater independence from the central government and tried to use Japanese plans for North China to further regionalist aims of his own or whether he was simply tied to the North China region

and therefore obliged to reach some accommodation with the Japanese forces in order to survive. Representatives of the central government reporting to Nanjing in the immediate aftermath of the Lugouqiao incident seem quite convinced - as they had not done before - that Song feared the encroachment of the central armies on his territory and was willing to obstruct resistance to Japanese invasion to prevent this.

Song suffered the typical constraints of a regional leader. He was dependent on his territorial base for the maintenance of the 29th Army, in which his power was rooted: loss of that base in Hebei-Chaha'er could mean either exile to Gansu, like Yu Xuezhong, or the dismemberment of his forces and the end of his own political and military career, sinking him to the level of the 'retired' political and military leaders of the Beijing governments of the 1920s, dependent on the patronage of the Japanese and his successors as relics of the warlord era such as Cao Kun, Jia Deyao and Lu Zongyu were dependent on him, reduced to leading futile rebellions against the authorities like Bai Jianwu - promised the premiership by Wu Peifu in 1924 and denied it by the defeat of Wu by Duan Qirui - who led the abortive revolt from Fengtai in June 1935 which allowed the 29th Army to become reestablished in Beiping. Yet if to leave Hebei-Chaha'er meant losing independence, to remain was to accept the need to balance constant pressure to side with either the central government or the Japanese.

Song's grievances against the central government were also typical of the regions, yet made more acute by his position in the North. The centre's assertion of power in the currency reform of 1935 and the elections to the National Assembly of 1937 undermined Song's financial base and political prestige and exposed him to the anger of the Japanese armies. His reported assertion in October 1936 that the centre had 'made no contribution' to North China echoed the Japanese rhetoric of autonomy and made the centre fear that he would succumb to pressure to secede, yet might also reflect the natural disillusionment of an official whom the central government had first sacked and then reinstated only to leave confronting an overwhelmingly powerful enemy with little or no support.

Song was criticised for failing to report often enough to the central government, and Nanjing often seems unsure of what he was doing or why; it is far from clear how

much Song knew of the actions and intentions of the central authorities. Even officials close to the centre such as He Yingqin appeared to find the lack of central guidance on the management of North China frustrating, and Song is unlikely to have been kept as well-informed as He. It is obvious from accounts of Song's activities that conflicting reports and rumours abounded in the press, and it is obvious from records of discussions between Chinese and Japanese diplomats that Japanese accounts of the progress and conclusions of such discussions - for example in the Kawagoe memorandum of December 1936 - differed substantially from accounts emanating from the Nanjing government. Isolated from the central authorities and struggling to maintain his own position and general order in a North China which successive agreements acknowledged however unwillingly by the central government rendered increasingly disordered and vulnerable to encroachment, Song was obliged to remain in constant contact with the Japanese in Beiping. He was therefore constantly exposed to Japanese accounts of the intentions of the Nanjing government: that Nanjing intended to dismiss him as chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council; that Nanjing had accepted Japanese demands over the special status of North China, none of which encouraged trust of the central government.

Song's refusal to clarify his position might have been part of a policy of non-cooperation with the central government, yet it can also be seen as a product of the constraints under which he operated. Known to the Chinese public as the hero of the battle of Xifengkou (1933) in the resistance to the Japanese invasion of Rehe, Song nonetheless owed his position as chairman of the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council to the Japanese drive to exclude the influence of the Guomindang and the central authorities from the North. Given the determination of the Japanese armies to separate Hebei-Chaha'er, economically and politically, from the rest of China, Song could not risk too close an overt association with the central government, yet at the same time an open declaration of a desire for greater regional independence would render him defenceless against Japanese demands that he secede; if formally separated from Nanjing, he would be drawn entirely into Japanese control. Thus if he was to survive, he needed to retain distance from the Japanese and from Nanjing. He had begun his



career at a time of strong provincial independence and had legitimate grounds for resenting and fearing the central government, yet he did not formally dissociate himself from Nanjing; he had risen to prominence through resistance to Japan, yet reached a *modus vivendi* with the Japanese forces in the North when relations between China and Japan were daily deteriorating and maintained it for eighteen months; he accepted talks throughout this time with the Japanese military on economic and military measures which could result in the virtual colonisation of the North without apparently allowing those talks to reach any enforceable result. In these circumstances, 'regional independence', like a diplomatic resolution of outstanding Sino-Japanese disputes, was a chimera.



**Song Zheyuan, the Nanjing Government  
and the North China Question  
in Sino-Japanese Relations, 1935-1937**

[-(two-volumes)-]

[Volume-II:-]

Maps and Appendices

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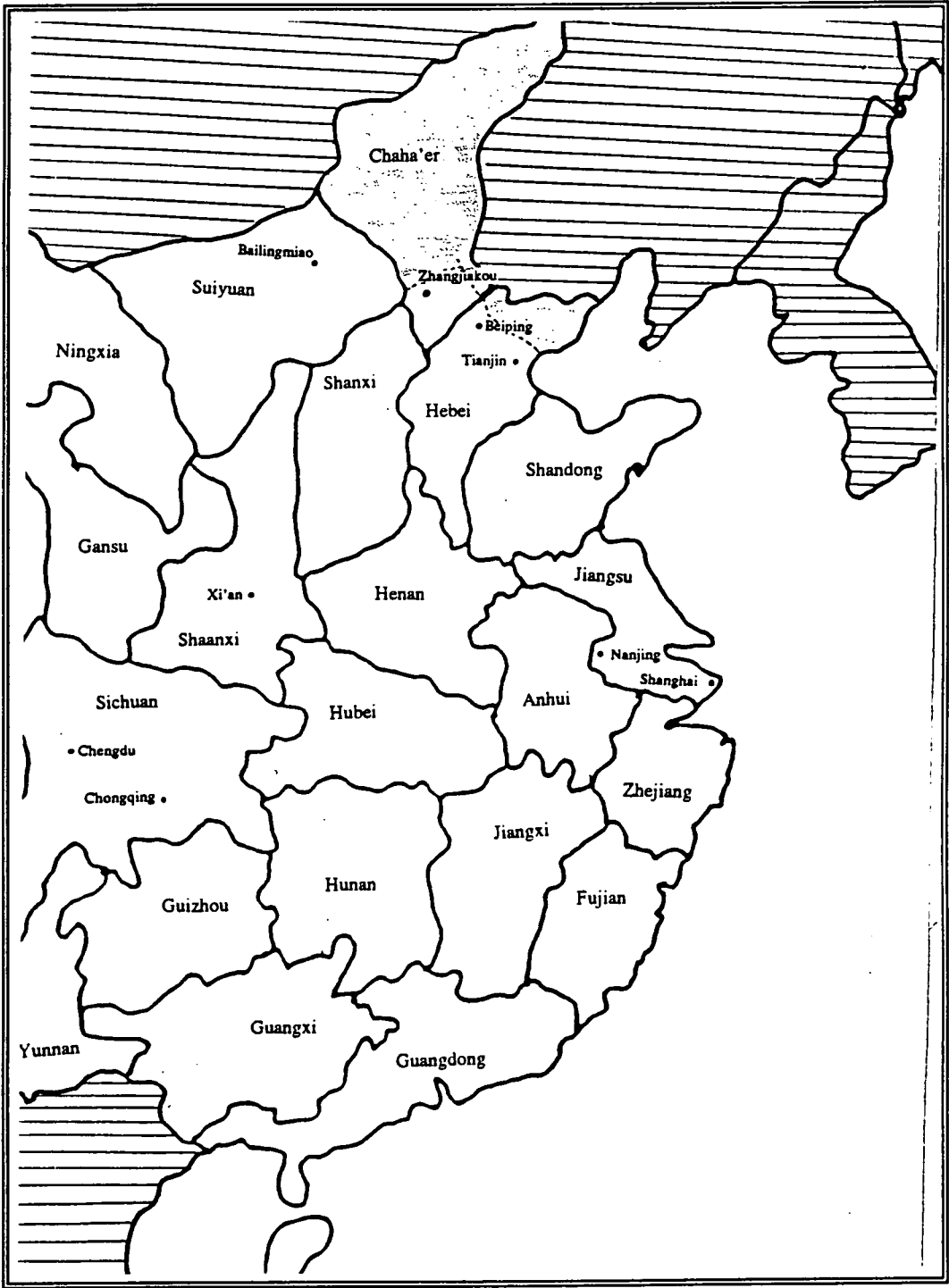
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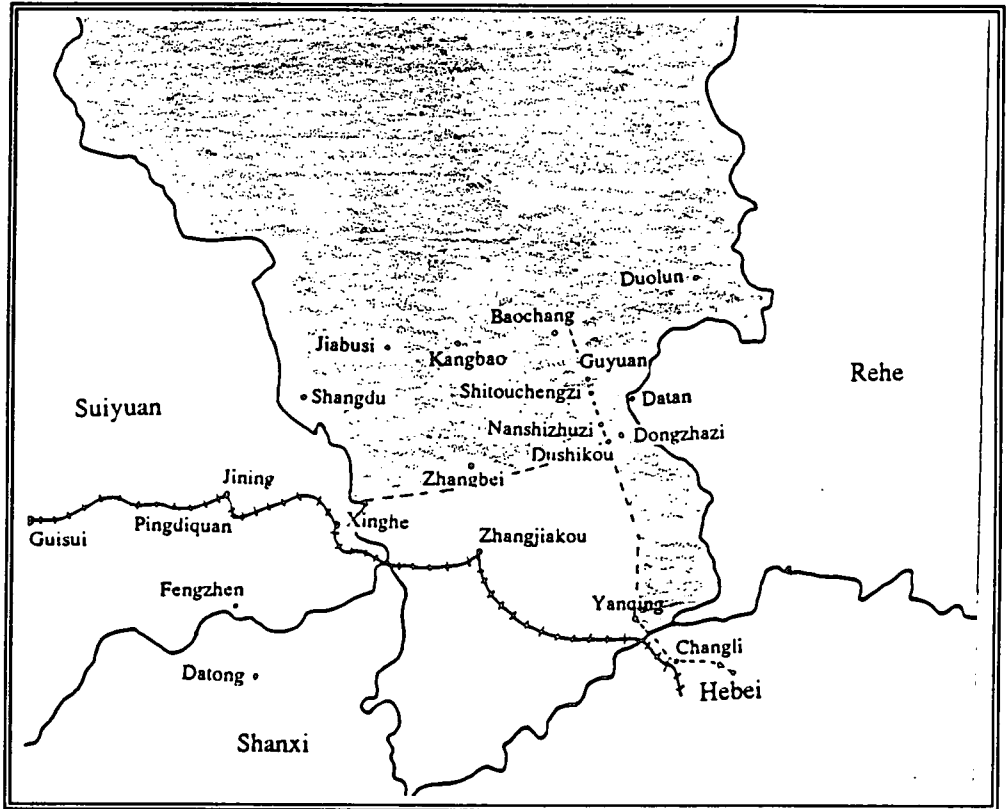


Hebei Province, 1935-1937



Chinese forces excluded from shaded areas under terms of Tanggu truce, (May 1933).

Chaha'er Province, 1935-1937



Chinese forces excluded from shaded areas under terms of Datan agreement (February 1935) and Qin-Doihara agreement (June 1935).

**Appendix I**  
**Special Administrative Structures in North China, 1932-1937.**

**Beiping Branch Military Council**

Established: 20.8.1932 (succeeded Beiping Pacification Commission)  
Dissolved: 3.12.1935 (succeeded by Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council)

Chairman: Zhang Xueliang (August, 1932 - March, 1933)  
He Yingqin (March, 1933 - December, 1935)

**Original  
membership:**

Wang Shuhan,	Yu Xuezhong,
Wan Fulin*,	Shang Zhen,
Zhang Zuoxiang,	Rong Qin*,
Zhang Qun,	Pang Bingsun,
Han Fujun,	Shen Honglie,
Xu Yongchang,	Tang Yulin,
Wang Shuchang,	Jiang Bocheng*,
Song Zheyuan,	Liu Yifei,
Bao Wenyue,	Xiao Zhenying.
(* member of standing committee)	

**Appointed May, 1933:**

Fu Zuoyi,	Wei Zonghan,
Sun Kuiyuan,	Qin Dechun,
Wu Guangxin,	Men Zhizhong.

Regulations drawn up by Military Affairs Commission.

**Beiping Political Affairs Commission**

Established: 3.5.1933 (succeeded Beiping Political Council)  
Dissolved: 28.8.1935 (duties passed to Beiping Branch Military Council)

Chairman: Huang Fu (May, 1933 - July, 1935)  
Acting Chairman: Wang Kemin (April, 1935 - August, 1935)

**Original  
membership:**

Huang Fu,	Yu Xuezhong,
Huang Shaohong,	Xu Yongchang,
Li Yuying,	Wang Boqun,
Zhang Ji,	Song Zheyuan,
Han Fujun,	Wang Yitang,

Wang Shuhan,  
Fu Zuoyi,  
Zhou Zuomin,  
En Ke Ba Tu,  
Jiang Menglin,  
Zhang Jitan,

Wang Kemin,  
Zhang Boling,  
Liu Zhe,  
Zhang Lisheng,  
Tang Erhe,  
Ding Wenjiang,  
Lu Tangping.

## Regulations

Article 1: In order to reorganise political affairs in the provinces and municipalities of the North, the Executive Yuan has resolved to establish a Political Affairs Commission in Beiping.

Article 2: The Commission shall be composed of 23 members, of whom one is to be appointed Chairman; members shall be proposed by the Executive Yuan for ratification by the Central Political Council and appointment by *Guomin zhengfu*.

Article 3: The Chairman shall be responsible for all the business of the Commission.

Article 4: The Commission shall be called by the Chairman to meet once every month; regulations for meetings shall be set elsewhere. The Chairman may call *ad hoc* meetings if he feels it necessary.

Article 5: The following divisions shall be established:

- i, secretariat;
- ii, political affairs division;
- iii, financial affairs division.

Article 6: A chief secretary shall be appointed to supervise the business of the secretariat. A chief of the political affairs division shall be appointed to supervise the business of the political affairs division. A chief of the financial affairs division shall be appointed to supervise the business of the financial affairs division. If necessary each section may appoint a deputy; detailed organisational guidelines to be set out separately.

Article 7: Depending on its needs, the Commission may appoint counsellors, advisers and experts.

Article 8: The Commission may independently draw up its own regulations provided that these do not conflict with central laws, and may ask for their ratification by the Executive Yuan.

Article 9: Detailed guidelines concerning the activities of the Commission to be set out separately.

Article 10: These provisional regulations shall be effective from the date of its publication.



## Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council

Established: 9.12.1935 (succeeded Branch Military Council)

Dissolved: August 1937

Chairman: Song Zheyuan (9.12.1935 - .8.1937)

Acting

Chairman: Zhang Zizhong (28.7.1937 - .8.1937)

Original membership:

Song Zheyuan,  
Wan Fulin,  
Wang Yitang,  
Liu Zhe,  
Li Tingyu,  
Jia Deyao,  
Hu Yukun,  
Gao Lingwei,

Wang Kemin,  
Xiao Zhenying,  
Qin Dechun,  
Zhang Zizhong,  
Cheng Ke,  
Zhou Zuomin,  
Men Zhizhong,  
Shi Jingting,  
Leng Jiaji

## Regulations

Article 1: In order to facilitate the administration of political affairs in the provinces of Hebei and Chaha'er and the cities of Beiping and Tianjin, the *Guomin zhengfu* shall specially establish the Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council to oversee the political affairs of these provinces and cities.

Article 2: The Council shall consist of between seventeen and twenty-one members, one of whom shall be appointed Chairman. A standing committee of between three and five members shall be appointed. The personnel of the Council is to be selected and appointed by the *Guomin zhengfu*.

Article 3: The Chairman shall have full responsibility for the business of the Council.

Article 4: The standing committee shall support the Chairman in managing the business of the Council.

Article 5: Regulations for the meetings of the Council shall be detailed elsewhere.

Article 6: The following sections shall be established: secretariat; political affairs; financial affairs.

Article 7: The Council may appoint one chief secretary to manage the affairs of the secretariat; one chief of the political affairs section to manage the affairs of that section; and one chief of the financial affairs section to manage the affairs of that section. If necessary, deputy section chiefs may be appointed. The organisation and detailed regulations of these sections shall be detailed elsewhere.

Article 8: When necessary, the Council may establish specialist committees to research and discuss various questions; the personnel of these committees to be decided by the Council.

Article 9: The Council may decide its own regulations within the scope of the laws and

regulations of *Guomin zhengfu* and refer these to the central government for approval.

Article 10: The Council is to be based in Beiping.

Article 11: If necessary, the central government may be asked to revise the provisional guidelines of the Council.

Article 12: These provisional guidelines to be effective from the date of their promulgation.

## Appendix II

### Chinese and Japanese Versions of the Datan 'Agreement'

*From Waijiao Yuebao, VI, 2, 1935.*

*Datan kouyue*  
2.2.1935 in Datan

According to a report from the commander of the 29th Army and governor of Chaha'er province, Song Zheyuan, after talks at Datan at 11am on February 2nd between chief of staff of the 37th division of the 29th Army, Zhang Yuefeng, accompanied by the county head of Guyuan, Guo Yukai, and Zhang Zude of the Chaha'er provincial government, and Tani Hisao, commander of the 13th brigade of the 7th division of the Japanese Army, Nagami Toshinori, commander of the 25th *liandui* and Lt.-Col. Matsui, oral agreement on the resolution of the incident was reached as follows:

The Eastern Chaha'er incident arose from a misunderstanding; now, both sides desiring a peaceful resolution, the Japanese army is to retire to its original positions. The 29th Army will not cross to the east of the line between Shitouchengzi, Nanshizhuzi and Dongzhazi (villages on the east side of the Great Wall). The 37 rifles and 1,500 cartridges previously taken by the 29th army from the Rehe militia will all be returned on the 7th of this month by the county head of Guyuan.

*Datan xieding*

Statement issued by Guandong Army Headquarters,  
Changchun, 10.30am, 4.2.1935.

Representatives of China and Japan met at 11am on February 2nd at Nanweizi to discuss the aftermath of the Chinese army's incursion (into Rehe) near Datan. Both sides discussed the matter with sincerity and it was peacefully resolved by midday. The Japanese representative, Major-General Tani, first described how the incident was entirely the fault of China and then presented the following demands:

1. In future, China is strictly forbidden to send troops into Manzhouguo, and must abandon all actions likely to provoke the Japanese army by threatening Manzhouguo such as its secret surveillance of the actions of the Guandong Army;
2. In the future, if China contravenes this agreement, the Japanese armies will take resolute and independent action, and the responsibility will be China's. Japan will take any actions by China such as the increase of troops on the front line, or any strengthening of the line as a provocative action;
3. All arms seized by the Chinese army from the Manzhouguo militia are to be returned by the Guyuan county head to the Japanese army on February 7th. In reply to the above conditions, Zhang Yuefeng, representing Song Zheyuan, stated that he accepted Tani's account of the incident and expressed his regrets, (and stated) that in future there would be no recurrence of such illegal behaviour; he further acknowledged the three conditions above and undertook that condition 3 would be fulfilled without delay.

Thus the mopping-up of Western Rehe was completed; the Guandong army's supervision of China's sincerity in fulfilling these conditions in order to prevent the repetition of such incidents is advanced and it is hoped that friendly relations may be restored between China and Japan.

**Appendix III**  
**Understanding between Foreign, Army and Navy Ministries**  
**on China Policy**  
**Adopted October 4th, 1935.**

Japanese version (excluding appendix) in  
*Nihon gaikō nenpyō nara ni shuyō bunsho*, pp.303-4;  
translated in Shimada, (1983), pp.131-2.

The establishment and development of stability in East Asia, based on cooperation between Japan, China and Manzhouguo, with Japan at the centre, lies at the root of our foreign policy and forms the objective of our China policy. In order to achieve this objective on the basis of the following outline, China (that is, both central and regional authorities) must forthwith, by just means adjust their relations with Japan and Manzhouguo so as to allow the establishment of basic relations between Japan, Manzhouguo and China.

- 1) China should thoroughly suppress anti-Japanese activities, abandon its policy of reliance on Europe and the United States, and adopt a policy of amity toward Japan. As well as putting this policy into practice, China should cooperate with Imperial Japan on specific issues.
- 2) China will eventually be obliged to grant formal recognition to Manzhouguo; until then China must give tacit *de facto* recognition of the independence of Manzhouguo, abandon its anti-Manzhouguo policy, and at least, in areas of North China bordering on Manzhouguo, ensure the development of economic and cultural relations with Manzhouguo.
- 3) The threat of the spread of Bolshevism from Outer Mongolia and other places being a common threat to China, Japan and Manzhouguo, it is hoped that China will cooperate in the region bordering Outer Mongolia on measures to eliminate this threat.

When the above points have been implemented and Japan recognizes China's sincerity concerning cooperation with Japan and Manzhouguo, we shall first conclude comprehensive agreements on amity and cooperation between China and Japan, and thereafter draw up the agreement necessary for the regulation of new relations between Japan, Manzhouguo and China.

**Appendix: Concerning the understanding of each Ministry**  
**October 4, 1935**

In carrying out this policy, although we may utilize the political situation in China by such means as playing the regional and the central political authorities against each other, our primary aim is neither to assist nor to obstruct the division or the unification of China. The main aim is to ensure the realisation of the points stated in the general outline.

In implementing this policy, Army Navy and Foreign Ministry officials should maintain extremely close liaison.

The policy agreed upon by concerned officials of the Army, Navy and Foreign Ministries on December 7, 1933, will remain in effect, together with this understanding of October 4, 1935, until, after further study, another decision replaces them.

**Appendix IV**  
**Probable Origins of Thirteen Demands presented to China by Japan**  
*Dated November 21, 1935, Foreign Ministry Archive.*  
*Published in Zhonghua Minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian, VI: Kuilei zuzhi*  
*(Original source not given)*

Demand	Origin
1. End of talks with Leith-Ross.	Hostility to Leith-Ross mission expressed by Hirota Kōki, 7.9.1935; by Shigemitsu, 8.11.1935; 18.11.1935.
2. Financial independence of Shandong, Shanxi, Hebei, Chaha'er and Suiyuan.	Demanded by Suma Yakichirō, 10.12.1935; aim of North China autonomy movement.
3. Resignation from League of Nations.	Inferred by Chiang Kai-shek from Hirota's terms for improvement of relations, 13.10.1935.
4. Recognition of Manzhouguo.	Condition of improvement of relations, presented 7.10.1935, by Hirota Kōki.
5. Formation of economic bloc of China, Japan and Manzhouguo.	Implied by condition of improvement of relations, presented 7.10.1935, by Hirota Kōki.
6. Demilitarisation of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiansu and Shandong.	Origin unknown. Possible assumption by Nanjing that Japan intended to extend demilitarised zone created by Shanghai truce as they were now extending War Zone created by Tanggu truce?
7. Creation of transport links between Manzhouguo and Yangtze valley; management by Mantetsu of North China railways.	Origin unknown. Possible inference from Japan's known wishes concerning communications development.
8. Abolition of War Ministry under He Yingqin and concentration of military powers in Executive Yuan.	Origin unknown. Possible extrapolation from Japanese hostility to He Yingqin?
9. End to anti-Japanese movement.	Long-standing Japanese demand.
10. Dismissal of Zhang Xueliang and transfer of his forces from North-West	Origin unknown. Evident remaining hostility to Zhang shown during attacks on his former subordinates, including Yu Xuezhong, in May 1935. Japanese allegations reported 10.10.1935, 4.11.1935 on Bandit Suppression Forces's relations with CCP.
11. Sino-Japanese cooperation on suppression of CCP.	Condition for improvement or relations presented by Hirota Kōki, 7.10.1935.
12. Japanese observers to attend GMD National Congresses.	Origin unknown.
13. Renunciation of American-British political, financial and economic support.	Implied in conditions for improvement or relations presented by Hirota Kōki, 7.10.1935.

**Appendix V**  
**Pro-Autonomy Organisations in North China,**  
**December, 1935.**

From Japanese survey, published in Himeno, (1936), pp.43-6.

*Huabei renmin zizhi jijinhui* (Tianjin Japanese concession, Qiushanjie 31.)

Members: Yao Fuchang (Chairman), Qiu Tianheng (general affairs), He Haiming (propaganda), Zhu Ziqi (guidance of autonomy movement), Wang Jingwu (mass organisation), Xu Fengguo (finance investigation), Zhao Yangsan (research: agriculture/mining), Zhang Fanjiu (research: industry/commerce).

Aims: Promotion of autonomy at provincial, municipal and *xian* level in North China; rural regeneration; normalisation of finances.

Influence and activities: Organised in mid-November. Controls Tianjin autonomous area and about half of professional organisations there; has contacts and certain degree of influence in 29th Army and in mass armed organisations. Now extending influence to *xian* level with no significant results as yet.

1. November 21st: Completed preparations to mobilise about 2,000 people in Tianjin area in pro-autonomy petition movement, but stopped by circumstances.
2. Thereafter used open telegrams promoting autonomy and other documents as well as research to become a serious movement.
3. December 8th: took over Tanggu public security bureau and established Tianjin Provisional County Government in Dagu public security bureau. Secured resignation of county head of Jinghai county and appointment of own candidate; overturned the same day. Established Southern Hebei People's Allied Autonomous Council (*Jinan renmin zizhi lianhe weiyuanhui*) to control the autonomous zone.
4. December 7th: organised petition movement of about 500 people in Beiping and distributed about 6,000 copies of autonomy manifesto.

*Huabei gongmin zijiuhui* (Tianjin Japanese concession, Yanlujie, Yongleli, 4)

Members: Qian Chongkai (Chair of Executive), Chen Bai (Secretary), Dong Shaoxuan, Ou Daqing, Wang Molin, Zhang Qiufu.

Aims: Opposition to nationalisation of silver reserves; economic independence for North China; prevention of spread of Communism; realisation of Sino-Japanese economic cooperation; realisation of popular autonomy.

Influence and activities: Established November 19th. Has a degree of influence in one in three professional associations in Tianjin autonomous zone.

1. November 27th: Planned mass petition movement in Tianjin, but stopped by circumstances; other than open telegrams promoting autonomy, no activities of note.

*Zhonghua minzhu tongmenghui* (Tianjin Japanese concession, Fujianjie)

Members: Liu Datong, Xie Jiaju, Han Ziqing, Hao Peng.

Aims: Abolition of Party rule, restoration of democracy and implementation of federalism. Eradication of Communist Party to ensure peace in East Asia; realisation of co-existence and co-prosperity.

Influence and activities: Mostly in southern Hebei and Shandong and Henan in mass military organisations.

1. October 25th: Organised petition movement demanding popular autonomy by about 1,000 people in Yongqing *xian*. Now planning undercover work.

*Da Xingya Dang* (Tianjin Japanese concession, Matsushimakai)

Members: Yi Liang, Tian Zhiping, Bao Zhen, Zheng Yanhou.

Activities: November 25th: With about 200 people occupied Tianjin public security bureau; now dissolved.

*Guomin Zijiuhui* (Tianjin Japanese concession, Ishiyamakai)

Led by Wu Yiting for promotion of North China autonomy, liberation of masses and Asian brotherhood.

Influence and activities: Liaison with religious organisations, self-cultivation and intellectual organisations, of 3,000,000 members in all China, 500,000 in North China.

1. October 20th: Occupied Xianghe town. Has since used peaceful means to carry out petition movement in Hebei province as a whole.

*Xingyahui* (Tianjin Japanese concession)

Chief Secretary: Lin Mingzhe.

Aims: Efforts towards unity and liberation of peoples of East Asia on basis of equality of all people and national self-determination; eradication of concepts of racial difference; rectification of material culture of west, and dissemination of eastern culture in order to create true civilisation; realisation of co-existence and co-prosperity.

*Zhongguo Dayaxiya xiehui* (Tianjin)

Officers: Huang Yu, Wu Yulin, Gao Lingwei<sup>a</sup> (co-vice-president), Li Shengduo (President), Qi Xieyuan<sup>a</sup> (co-vice-president), Jiang Chaojia, Lao Zhichang, Wang Yongquan, Lu Jin, Lu Zongyu,<sup>a</sup> Liu Pengshou, Wang Guilin, Sun Runyu, Du Xijun, Lu Xiangting, Chen Zhiji, Yang Wenkai, Ma Yingjun, Qin Hua.

Patrons: Han Fujun, Song Zheyuan, Qin Dechun,<sup>ab</sup> Xiao Zhenying,<sup>ab</sup> Sun Zerang, Liu Ruming,<sup>b</sup> Feng Zhi'an,<sup>b</sup> Zhang Zizhong,<sup>ab</sup> Zhao Dengyu,<sup>b</sup> Zhu Jingzhan, Chen Juesheng.<sup>a</sup>

Aims: Amity between all Asian nations; cultural, political, economic and social advancement in cause of unity of all Asian nations.

Note:

a. Later became member of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council.

b. Senior officer of 29th Army.

## Appendix VII

### 'On the establishment of a Japanese consulate at Zhengzhou.'

'Ribei zai Zhengzhou sheli lingshiguan jiaoshe jingguo.'

Document from the Second Historical Archive of China, Nanjing,  
Foreign Ministry Archives: XVIII, #180. (Dated December, 1936.)

In July 1929 in accordance with the plan of establishing more consulates abroad it was decided to establish consulates in Tainan and Taibei, and to move the Renshan consulate to Qingjin. The Japanese government was consulted and did not refuse, but at the same time they asked that Japanese consulates be established at Taonan,<sup>1</sup> Mao'ershan,<sup>2</sup> and at Zhengzhou.

The Chinese government did not consent to the immediate opening of consulates at Taonan and Mao'ershan; Taonan was in the interior and establishing a consulate there might give rise to disturbances, but agreed in principle that a consulate might be opened at Mao'ershan in the future. Discussions began on the establishment of a consulate at Zhengzhou, where there was a substantial Japanese community, but the talks ended without result because Japan wanted to open all three consulates at once.

In January, 1931, Japan agreed to allow China to establish a consulate in Taibei. Permission to open consulates at Tainan and Qingjin was to be withheld until China accepted Japanese consulates in Taonan and Mao'ershan. When the Chinese consul arrived in Taibei, the Japanese consul from Hankou, Tanaka, was sent to Zhengzhou to open the consulate there. This was opposed by the Henan Party branch and the China Cotton Union (*Zhonghua mianye lianhehui*), but as official permission had already been granted nothing could be done in case of repercussions for the Taibei consulate. The consul left Zhengzhou after the North-Eastern Incident (*dongbei shibian*).<sup>3</sup> The consulate was formally restored in October, 1935.

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1. Taonan, originally established under the Qing, was in Inner Mongolia; under the Republic it was counted as part of Taichangdao, Fengtian. It was an important economic and political centre and a hub of communications between the Three North-Eastern Provinces and Inner Mongolia. *DMDCD*, p.646.

2. In Heilongjiang, halfway between Wudangjiang and Ha'erbin.

3. *i.e.* the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.



**Appendix VII**  
**Summary of Discussions between Zhang Qun and Japanese Embassy Personnel, 1936.**

Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 22.1.1936 ( <i>Record incomplete</i> )	Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 7.4.1936	Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 16.4.1936	Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 25.7.1936
Sino-Japanese economic cooperation	Suma proposed Shanghai-Fukuoka airlink as evidence of good faith; rejected link with illegal flights over North China.	Suma urged Zhang to strengthen trade links with Japan; Zhang confirms that economic measures basis for rapprochement.	Zhang and Suma both express enthusiasm for economic cooperation in North China under guidance of Wang Kemin as basis for normalisation. Zhang rejects 'excessive' tariffs as justification for smuggling.
'Anti-Japanese' feeling		Zhang denies government exploitation of 'national consciousness' to foment anti-Japanese feeling.	
Sino-Japanese action against Communism		Concern over CCP expansion into Shanxi given as grounds for troop increases in Hebei; Zhang denied CCP a serious problem.	
North China		Zhang's opinions over form of Hebei-Chahar Political Council solicited; Suma urges extension of Song Zheyuan's powers.	Suma expresses concern over North China finances; Zhang rejects special tax benefits as move towards financial separation from centre.

Appendices

Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 26.8.1936		Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichirō, 1.9.1936		Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 15.9.1936	
Sino-Japanese economic cooperation	Suma passes on Arita's hopes for airlink and again rejects linkage with illegal flights over North China; reminds Zhang that treaty on point of conclusion in 1935.	Suma advocates economic measures as first step to improve North China situation and expresses optimism for Wang Kemin mission to Beijing and cooperation between Wang and Song Zheyuan.		Shanghai-Fukuoka airlink demanded by Kawagoe; Zhang states that this is no problem in principle if Japan will end illegal flights. Zhang rejects creation of 'open port' in Chengdu as incompatible with Nanjing's policy of repudiating unequal treaties. Zhang reports Finance Ministry's willingness to consider voluntary readjustment of tariffs.	
'Anti-Japanese' movement				Chengdu and Beihai incidents cited by Kawagoe as evidence that unable to restrain anti-Japanese feeling and improve relations with Japan; Nanjing now to be held responsible for all anti-Japanese actions by GMD; textbooks must be revised to exclude anti-Japanese material; anti-Japanese organisations to be dissolved; Zhang replied that anti-Japanese activities caused by Japanese aggression, but confirms willingness to seek rapid resolution of Nakayama and Beihai incidents.	
Sino-Japanese action against Communism				Joint anti-Communist action demanded by Kawagoe; seen by Suma as central issue of North China problem.	
North China	Suma urges Zhang to make no personnel changes in North China; Zhang denies that these planned.	Suma reports that Kawagoe has talked with Song Zheyuan; urges Zhang to avoid personnel changes in Hebei-Chahar.		Suma demands further powers for North China authorities, warning that refusal will create financial problems for North.	

	Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 23.9.1936 (Summary only)	Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 19.10.1936	Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 21.10.1936
Sino-Japanese economic cooperation	Kawagoe insists that economic cooperation must cover all China.	Kawagoe expresses hope for swift and unconditional resolution of airlink problem. Zhang protests at persistence of Japanese armies in discussing economic cooperation with North China authorities; Kawagoe attributes to failure of Nanjing to reach agreement.	Zhang protested at conclusion of agreement on airlink between Japanese and North China authorities; Kawagoe justified on grounds of lack of progress on this issue in Nanjing.
'Anti-Japanese' feeling	No reference by Kawagoe to Chengdu or Beihai incidents; Zhang emphasized that Nanjing wished to resolve incidents according to international practice.		
Sino-Japanese action against Communism	Kawagoe insists that anti-Communist measures must cover all China.	Kawagoe proposes treaty on exchange of intelligence at all levels of government, joint popular mobilisation and cooperation on suppression of Communist movement; to be jointly implemented by authorities in Shanghai; this a precondition of improvement in relations. Zhang warns that public opinion will not accept this. In North China, proposes establishment of commission to manage anti-Communist action; Zhang protests at extent of proposed field of anti-Communist action.	Zhang emphasized that Nanjing's position had not changed and that Nanjing did not understand Japan's intentions for anti-Communist action. Kawagoe repeated proposal for Sino-Japanese committee in Shanghai supervising exchange of intelligence and coordinating popular mobilisation; Zhang rejected. Zhang rejected proposal for commission in North China to coordinate anti-Communist action on grounds that aims and scope of commission's powers not clear; rejected Japanese proposal that area for action to extend to Yingmenguan in Shanxi, but allowed that China felt a need for measures along Shanhaiguan-Baotou line. Insisted that guarantees of respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic policy, and details of projected troop dispositions be provided before discussions continued. Kawagoe agreed to provide outline; denied link between anti-Communist action and Suiyuan problem; refused to postpone discussions on anti-Communist action.
North China	Zhang proposes abrogation of Tangu truce, dissolution of Eastern Hebei regime and bandit armies in Chaha'er and Suiyuan; Kawagoe refuses to discuss.	Kawagoe suggests that some change to the Eastern Hebei regime may be possible, but warns that insistence on discussion of Chaha'er and Suiyuan may lead to breakdown of talks. Zhang repeats request for abrogation of Tangu truce.	Zhang insisted that Eastern Suiyuan and Eastern Hebei issues be resolved simultaneously, and pointed to involvement of Japanese nationals in Suiyuan; Kawagoe refused to deal with E. Suiyuan, N. Chaha'er or E. Hebei questions or to link with anti-Communist action.

Zhang Qun and Kita Seiichi, 23.10.1936		Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 26.10.1936	
Sino-Japanese economic cooperation			
'Anti-Japanese' movement	Kita emphasized effect if Chengdu and Beihai incidents on Japanese perceptions of China and Chinese attitudes towards Japan.	Kawagoe cited Chengdu incident and effect on 'atmosphere' between China and Japan as one reason for emphasis on anti-Communist measures.	
Sino-Japanese action against Communism	Kita asked if Chinese Army Ministry indeed opposed joint action against Communism; Zhang stressed that joint action impossible until Sino-Japanese relations fundamentally 'normalised'; Kita insisted that normalisation impossible unless joint measures against Communism adopted at once. Zhang complained that details provided by Kawagoe on joint anti-Communist measures unclear and could only arouse suspicion of Japan's intentions; alluded to fears that would be used as a pretext for intervention in China's domestic affairs; emphasized that centre had dedicated large forces under own command to eradication of Communists and that campaigns on verge of success.	Kawagoe stressed that Foreign Minister Arita's agreement to postpone implementation of anti-Communist measures was a major concession; replied to Zhang's question that motives for anti-Communist action were: a) concern at spread of Bolshevism; and b) desire to create common goal through pursuit of which relations might be improved; warned Zhang that if China could not make progress on anti-Communist action, Japan would doubt sincerity. Zhang proposed suspending discussions as opinions so different; told Kawagoe that Nanjing not prepared for such talks; had foreseen talks on economic matters. Kawagoe informed Zhang that transport and communications for anti-Communist action be responsibility of commission, and repeated proposal that area be extended to Yingmenguan; Zhang refused.	
North China	Zhang reminded Kita of GDA's activities in Suiyuan; Kita replied that Suiyuan 'need not be a problem'. Kita informed Zhang that if general situation in Hebei-Chaha'er improved, restoration of Eastern Hebei regime could be considered, but that this could not be done as a precondition of concessions by China.	Kawagoe refused to discuss Eastern Hebei; claimed that Chiang Kai-shek sympathised with Japan's views on this matter: Zhang denied.	

Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru, 10.11.1936		Kawagoe memorandum presented 3.12.1936 (translated in full in Appendix VIII)	
Sino-Japanese economic cooperation			
'Anti-Japanese' feeling			Notes effect of Chengdu and Beihai incidents on Japanese public opinion; states full responsibility for incidents lies with Chinese government.
Joint action against Communism	Kawagoe informed Zhang that Japan sympathised with China's problems with action against Communism, and would be prepared to discuss matter later; this represented a great concession on Japan's part and China must be prepared to make equal concessions. Zhang replied that he had agreed in talks with Arita in March to discuss joint action against Communism before the resolution of the Manchurian problem: China could go no further. Kawagoe threatened to publish contents of talks and declare that China had given way on anti-Communist action; Zhang unmoved.		Declares that Zhang Qun believes common policy on anti-Communist action is necessary, and that China would change past policy and adopt measures for joint action; that Chiang Kai-shek would in no circumstances ally with Soviet Union; that Zhang Qun feels that because of complexities of China's internal situation, it was not possible immediately to accept Kawagoe's proposal. Memo notes Kawagoe's hopes that talks could be resumed once obstacles eradicated.
North China	Kawagoe agreed to discuss N. China's problem but not E. Hebei problem.		On North China memo says essential that Nanjing establish 'appropriate' administrative bodies in five northern provinces, including special political commission ( <i>tezhenghui</i> ) with broad powers; states that Nanjing has recognised this need.

## Appendix VIII

### The Kawagoe memorandum.

Second Historical Archive of China, Foreign Ministry Archives, XVIII, 1217.

Japanese version published in *Gendaishi shiryō*, 8, pp.299-303.

The version of the memorandum held in the Second Historical Archive is a copy of the Chinese translation, the Japanese original having been returned to the Japanese Embassy. This copy has been annotated in pencil by person unknown, but there is little to indicate when or by whom this was done; some other documents in the Archive have obviously recent markings in the margins. Annotations are given here in square brackets [ ] in italics. There are no substantial discrepancies in the content of the Chinese and Japanese versions, but the various sections are presented in a different order.

#### I

- , In the present round of Sino-Japanese talks focusing on the Chengdu incident, since the preliminary meeting between Foreign Minister Zhang and Consul-General Suma on September 8th there have been seven meetings between the Foreign Minister and the Ambassador, and more than ten meetings between Gao Zongwu of the Asia Section and Consul-General Suma; each meeting was conducted with the agreement of the Minister and the Ambassador. Therefore the as a result of these meetings the opinions of both sides have been fully explained and each is fully aware of the opinions of the other. Japan believes that the Chengdu incident, occurring unexpectedly just as Japan was planning a normalisation of Sino-Japanese relations and as the two peoples of China and Japan sincerely anticipated its success, to be most inauspicious incident for both China and Japan; the responsibility must of course lie with the Chinese government. The Chinese government must swiftly accept Japan's demands and seek a satisfactory solution to the incident. The greatest reason for the recurrence of this type of incident is in fact that anti-Japanese feeling has not yet been eradicated. Japan therefore hopes that the Chinese government will give this point the deepest reflection and take fundamental and specific steps in good faith to control the anti-Japanese movement in the aftermath of this incident. Moreover the occurrence of the incident is in contrary to the Chinese government's desire for a normalisation of diplomatic relations. Therefore from the point of view of the general situation in holding the talks it is hoped to allow the Chinese government voluntarily to make specific proposals in order to demonstrate the normalisation of diplomatic relations. The above desire of Japan's is most proper, and is an essential condition for a normalisation of diplomatic relations; it is felt that this will be fully appreciated by China.
- , As for the various issues addressed by the above talks, the opinions of the two sides were already fairly close at the beginning of the talks; now for the most part they are converging, and there are no other differing opinions. To go over items already discussed and nothing more, is only to

repeat each side's hopes concerning each question, and even though these hopes are repeated, there is now nothing that can be done about them. *[By 'hope', is he referring to our proposal that the Shanghai and Tanggu truces be revoked?!]*

- , Moreover, since the beginning of the talks, because of the incidents in Beihai, Shanghai, Hankou etc., Japanese national opinion has become much tougher as is well known. The Japanese government is determined to conduct itself with dignity and is striving to guide national opinion, having faith in China's sincerity and expecting that China can voluntarily and swiftly resolve all issues under discussion. *[The issue of normalisation or the issue of the Chengdu and other incidents?]* but recently China has raised issues which have nothing to do with the present discussions *[Is that Suiyuan and the truces?!]*, bringing the talks to a point from which there is no way of continuing them. Truly it is impossible to advance further than we have done so far. Thus if we let things go on as they are, time will pass quickly and it will give outsiders the impression that China and Japan are in confrontation and that the talks have lapsed, which is indeed in contradiction with the basic intention and desire of the governments of the two countries which is for a normalisation of diplomatic relations. It may moreover give rise to misunderstandings between the people of the two countries which third parties may find an opportunity to exploit for senseless stirrings-up this is cause for serious concern. Thus it is proposed that in the course of the present discussion the points of coincidence of the opinions of the Foreign Minister and the Ambassador and those under their approval of Department Chief Gao and Consul-General Suma be *zhengli* in order to clarify them and also clearly to express the attitude of the Ambassador.
- , We herewith read aloud the results of the talks to date according to issue, this being the material of a pamphlet, and, according to diplomatic practice present a transcript thereof.
- , 1) Concerning action against Communism. The Ambassador has clearly stated that, in view of the propagation of Red power (*chihua shili*) from Outer Mongolia and its western neighbour *[The Soviet Union?]* the security not only of China but of the whole of East Asia is under threat. The governments of China and Japan must decide on a common policy jointly to guard against this. Thus it is hoped that China and Japan can gradually move towards a military alliance, giving first priority to the establishment of a joint committee which will discuss specific methods to deal with North China. The Foreign Minister believes that it is necessary for China and Japan to cooperate in formulating a joint policy to prevent the spread of Red power to China; at the same time, the Minister stated that the government of China would change its past policy and decide in principle on adopting measures for joint defence against Communism with Japan. Chairman Chiang resolutely opposes Communism, and will in no

circumstances cooperate with the Soviet Union. *[Whether such a concrete declaration has been made remains to be verified]* the talks on this issue have not yet reached any conclusion; in the future there must be more detailed discussion *[From consideration of the next section (it appears that) this section refers to a joint Sino-Japanese response to the Soviet Union.]* Concerning the prevention of Communist thought, in view of the fact that the activities of the Communist International are sufficient to destroy the national organisation and social structures, the Ambassador believes that, in the interests of defence, China and Japan must cooperate closely. So we wish at all times for the frank exchange of opinions on the mutual provision of intelligence concerning the activities of the Communist International, and on methods by which to expose and defend against the Communist International; on the basis of this proposed objective we should at this time conclude and promulgate an agreement fully (in accordance with principles of) mutual amity and equality, which will clarify for the peoples of China and Japan their common interests and aims, and will encourage the development of relations between the two countries. Although the Minister sympathised with the objective proposed with the Ambassador, he replied, because of the complexities of China's internal situation, it would not be possible immediately to accept the Ambassador's proposal concerning the conclusion of an agreement opposing Communism. The matter could be discussed again after the problems mentioned above could be eradicated. Thus when an opportunity arose, the Ambassador hoped it would be possible to resume discussions.

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- 2) On the North China Question. In view of the necessity of increasing the closeness of the special relationship between China and Japan in the five Northern provinces, the Ambassador hopes that both China and Japan will join efforts to strive for their realisation. Because of it plans that economic developments in that region including the exploitation of communications and (mineral) resources will increase the prosperity of the region and thereby improve relations between the two countries, the Japanese government is now giving the greatest support to promote the success (of the economic developments). The *Chinese* Government should at the earliest date create in the five Northern Provinces administrative organs fully appropriate to its special status, for example a Special Political Commission (*tezhenghui*) and provide these bodies with broad powers. If by any chance China should experience difficulty in this, then (the government) should as a matter of priority cause the local authorities in the area to adopt jointly with Japan any measures necessary to the fulfilment of the above goal, *[Which goal?]* for example, (the government) should confer on the local authorities the necessary powers, or should take steps towards the regularisation of the region's financial and monetary situation, and so on. China *[Who?]* replied that in view of the close relations between China and Japan in North China, *[Acknowledgement that China and Japan have a special relationship in North China?]* concerning the matters mentioned above, Japan hoped it would be permitted to take the necessary



steps to ensure their smooth development in Hebei-Chaha'er. As for the provinces bordering on Hebei-Chaha'er, cooperation between China and Japan was a prerequisite of their economic development; specific items were henceforth to be the subject of instructions from the *Chinese* government to the relevant local authorities. The Ambassador stated that close relations in the region between China and Japan were to be developed in this spirit. This point would be specially restated later.

- , 3) On coordinated air transport. Given the closeness of transport links between China and Japan, the Ambassador hopes that a jointly managed Sino-Japanese aviation company similar to the China and Eurasia aviation companies can be established. China agreed to allow the company not only to manage air transport between China and Japan but also to be responsible for the development of air transport in all China. China *[Who?]* should comply with the wording of the draft treaty of October 13th last year and of the present draft that (coordinated air transport) should 'be carried out from May 1st next year',<sup>1</sup> immediately sign the agreement and adhere to the above date without conditions. At the same time as signing (the agreement) China raised an objection to Japan concerning flights not provided for by this agreement; although Japan had expressed the intention not to reply to this, the Ambassador agreed to consider the matter in the light of China's internal conditions *[Is that an acknowledgement that China had proposed an end to flights not provided for by agreement?]*
- , 4] On the question of methods of improving economic relations between the peoples of China and Japan, the promotion of trade is of the greatest importance for the interests of both countries. An important issue is that China's import duties place too great a burden on goods imported from Japan. Therefore Japan hopes that the government of China will agree to reduce import duties to lighten the burden on Japanese goods and to sign a treaty of mutual amity, *[A treaty on rates of duty?]* and to organise a syndicate (*touzituan*; also in English in the text) with the aim of Sino-Japanese economic cooperation in all China. The Foreign Minister replied that with reference to Japan's proposal of September 21st, the Chinese Government would where possible revise tariffs according to Japan's wishes to have effect within three or four months. Japan sees the speedy realisation of this as extremely important for the economic relations between China and Japan, and would again draw the attention of the Chinese Government to it.
- , 5) On subversive (*bucheng*) Koreans. As the Chinese Government's protection of subversive Koreans has a profound effect on relations between China and Japan, the Ambassador demands immediate amendment of this. The Foreign Minister stated that although the Chinese Government had no

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1. i.e. May 1st, 1937.

treaty obligation to consent to this, in order to show goodwill towards Japan, the Chinese Government would no longer extend protection to Koreans living within Chinese jurisdiction who have violent or subversive behaviour [*In the past there have been no cases of protection being given.*] but will inform the Japanese authorities and arrest and extradite them. Thus the Ambassador relies upon this statement. Moreover, among these subversive Koreans there are some who have committed crimes against the Imperial Household so from the point of view of the feelings of the nation, the Imperial Government places the greatest emphasis on this item.

--, 6) Japan, the Ambassador hopes that the Chinese Government will employ a majority of Japanese among its foreign advisers. The Foreign Minister stated that the various ministries of the Executive Yuan of the Chinese Government and the various bodies now employing foreign advisers had no objection to considering ways of employing Japanese advisers, and would put these into action by March of next year. [*Not true.*] The Ambassador hopes that the Chinese Government will inform Japan of the Ministries employing foreign advisers and of the numbers and other requirements by March of next year.

--, The most unfortunate result of the provocation of the recent incidents is entirely the product of Chinese discrimination against Japan (*pai Ri*). Therefore the Imperial Government feels it essential to cause the Chinese Government to reflection and self-awareness on this point. Thus the Ambassador would ask the Foreign Minister as a matter of great importance to take note of the following matters, and to adopt appropriate and effective measures thoroughly to suppress anti-Japanese activity and strive to remove the basic factors obstructing relations between the two countries. [*What are these basic factors?*] This is to be a matter for voluntary action on the part of the Chinese Government. Henceforth, i) the Chinese Government must make the greatest efforts thoroughly to suppress anti-Japanese activity, thus ii) the Chinese Government will take responsibility for the prohibition of all anti-Japanese activism, no matter whether it is by sections of the Guomindang or by other organisations; iii) henceforth the policies of the Chinese Government must guide the Chinese masses with all its strength and strive to improve relations between China and Japan, but as for specific measures connected with the above matters, other than the Goodwill Mandate (*mu lin ling*) promulgated August 29th, and the orders of the Executive Yuan dated September 10th on the full implementation of the Mandate, the order of September 14th from the Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission<sup>2</sup> to all military authorities prohibiting anti-Japanese activities and the establishment of a committee to censor textbooks, the Chinese Government has decided in the near future to take the following steps:

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2. Chiang Kai-shek.

i) Fully to implement the orders prohibiting anti-Japanese activities:

a) the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Guomindang Central Political Committee must in the immediate future promulgate orders prohibiting anti-Japanese activities to Party branches at all levels (all local Party branches, branches overseas, special professional Party branches, branches attached to military units and others) and to Party members.

b) Mr. Chiang Kai-shek must in the immediate future make a statement to the nation prohibiting anti-Japanese activities.

ii) Revision of anti-Japanese textbooks. The committee already established by the Ministry of Education to promote the revision of textbooks should within the shortest period withdraw all textbooks used by schools having anti-Japanese references (*secai*) without exception.

iii) Suppression of anti-Japanese opinions. Closest attention should be paid to newspapers (including tabloids?), magazines (including children's magazines), works of art, paintings, films and plays having anti-Japanese tendencies; at the same time efforts should be directed to promote relations between China and Japan.

iv) In the past, to guarantee the safety of Japanese nationals travelling in the Chinese interior, there have been restrictions on their freedom of action which were resented. Therefore henceforth, in order to secure the freedom and safety of Japanese nationals travelling in China it will be necessary strictly to prohibit the Chinese masses.

The Ambassador sympathises with these proposals [*By whom?*] and hopes that the Chinese Government will sincerely implement each of the above items.

--, Because of the matters outlined above and the reasons given by the Ambassador, we hereby end the formal talks to date. Specific matters such as those raised at the beginning of the talks not reached by these discussions are to be left for future talks. Concerning other matters [*Which matters?*] from now on (talks will deal with) the completion of the necessary routine procedures; the Ambassador will participate when necessary, but in general Consul-General Suma will negotiate with China; it is hoped that the necessary formalities will be swiftly completed. It is firmly believed that China can have no reason to object to this. As for the matters already concluded [*Which matters?*] these are mostly things which China must do; the Ambassador expects that the Chinese Government will do so with sincerity, and firmly believes that the normalisation of relations between China and Japan will be advanced by this.

--, On the suppression of anti-Japanese activity, as has often been stated before, the important thing is to get results; Japan takes this most seriously, and expects that China will pay constant attention to the items above and

take appropriate and effective measures. Japan will specially establish a permanent body with the express purpose of supervising and investigating the success of these measures, *[Is this to be an internal organisation of Japan?]* which will when necessary convey warnings to China. If China ignores a warning issued after investigation and evades its responsibilities to Japan, Japan will have no alternative but to take the steps necessary to defend itself.

- , Moreover, since the Chengdu incident, there has been a series of inauspicious incidents including the Beihai incident, the Shanghai incident, the Hankou incident and others; all have been raised in discussion with China. Today we again present to the Foreign Minister the conditions previously proposed for the resolution of the incidents to Section-Head Gao by Consul-General Suma; these incidents must be resolved soon. In the interests of a swift resolution of the incidents, it is hoped that talks can be resumed.

Shôwa 11, December 3rd.

## II

- , The method for the resolution of the Chengdu incident transmitted to China is on record. China appears to have no objection, but as for the apology from the Chairman of the Sichuan provincial government,<sup>3</sup> if that creates difficulties and it is proposed instead to punish the governor and offer guarantees for the future, the Ambassador has no objection. Secondly, there is no objection to the sums of money to be paid in compensation, therefore it is hoped that the necessary formalities for the resolution of this incident can be taken swiftly. For the sake of prudence, (the notes resolving the incident will be exchanged after revision),<sup>4</sup> *[We can tell from this that the Japanese have not yet prepared their note; there is no need to say that they are expecting further negotiation.]* after the formalities have been completed by China, the preparations necessary for the reopening of the Chengdu consulate will be taken at once in accordance with the declaration accepted several times by China. *[Declaration of what date? Of what?]*

Shôwa 11, December 3rd.

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3. i.e. Liu Xiang.

4. Brackets in archive copy.

**Appendix IX**  
**China's Appeal to the League of Nations**  
**From The Covenant of the League of Nations<sup>1</sup>**

**Article 10**

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression, or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

**Article 11**

1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take such action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, summon a meeting of the Council.
2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations on which peace depends.

**Article 16**

1. Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its Covenants under Articles 12, 13, or 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a League Member or not.
2. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the Covenants of the League.
3. The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic losses which are taken under this article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from these measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of them by the Covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are cooperating to protect the Covenants of the League.
4. Any member of the League which has violated any Covenant of the League may be declared to be no more a Member of the League by a vote of Council concurred in by the representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

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1. Northedge, (1986), Appendix A, pp.317-27.

**Article 17**

1. In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership of the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16<sup>2</sup> shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

2. ...

3. If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

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2. Articles 12-15 deal with the settlement of disputes by arbitration or judicial settlement and by the League Council.

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**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu Repeating June 10th report to CEC and Wang Jingwei.** (*HYBNP*, p.879)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu Urging Huang Fu to return to North China.** (*HYBNP*, p.879)

**On Japanese demands to Song Zheyuan in Chaha'er.** (*HYQSJ*, p.405)

**12.6.1935: On Japanese demands to Song Zheyuan in Chaha'er.** (*HYQSJ*, p.405)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu On rejection of written agreement.** (*HYBNP*, p.880)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin On withdrawal of central armies.** (*HYQSJ*, p.414) marked very urgent, (*ZYSL1*, p.683)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Jingwei On decision to return to Nanjing.** (*ZYSL1*, p.684)

**13.6.1935:** Letter Zhang Houwan to Executive Yuan On continuing Japanese pressure on authorities in aftermath of Hu-Bai murders; copy of letter from Kawagoe appended. (Archive, II, 901)

**Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai** On desire to resign. (HYBNP, p.881)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On need to refuse written agreement on Hebei. (ZYSL1, p.684)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On Chaha'er problem. (ZYSL1, p.684-5)

**14.6.1935:** Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek (Wuchang) On second Zhangbei incident. (ZYSL1, p.685)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** on need for swift resolution to North China problems. (ZYSL1, p.685) Also in (HYQJSJ, p.416) dated 15.6.1935.

**15.6.1935:** He Yingqin statement to reporters on arrival in Pukou. On peaceful resolution of North China incident. (HYQJSJ, p.415)

(National Defence Commission) *Guofang huiyi linshihui* resolution Rejecting written agreement to North China situation. (HYQJSJ, p.416)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On continued Japanese pressure on BMC. (ZYSL1, p.686)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese designs on North China. (ZYSL6, p.74-5)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu** On situation in North China. (HYBNP, p.881)

**17.6.1935:** Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek (Chengdu) On second Zhangbei incident and Japanese demands to Chaha'er authorities. (HYQJSJ, p.417)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Shang Zhen** On Japanese demands to Chaha'er authorities. (HYQJSJ, p.417-8)

**Telegram Men Zhizhong, Qin Dechun to He Yingqin.** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQJSJ, p.418-9)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei** Proposing appointment of He Yingqin as governor of Chaha'er. (ZYSL1, p.686-7)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** Urging He to accept appointment as governor of Chaha'er. (ZYSL1, p.687)

**Letter Zhang Qun to Tang Youren** (as chief secretary of CPC) On meeting with Matsumoto and refusal to go to Japan. (HYBNP, p.882)

**18.6.1935:** Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Nanjing Foreign Ministry: On Japan's plans to divide China. (ZRWJS, pp.347-8) Another (ZYSL6, p.125) Another, dated 19.6.1935, (ZYSL1, p.694)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek (Chengdu)** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQJSJ, p.419-20)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQJSJ, p.420)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQJSJ, p.420)

**Telegram Wang Jingwei to Chiang Kai-shek** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (ZYSL1, p.687-8)

**19.6.1935:** Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQJSJ, p.421)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.420-1)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** On appointment of Qin Dechun as governor of Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.421)

**Song Zheyuan reply** On appointment of Qin Dechun as governor of Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.421)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek (Chengdu)** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er and future of Song Zheyuan. (*HYQ SJ*, p.422)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On future of Song Zheyuan and Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.422)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** On Song's future. (*ZYSL1*, p.688)

**Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On visit from Takahashi concerning Chaha'er question. (*HYQ SJ*, p.423)

**20.6.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to BMC (Qin Dechun)** On response to Japanese demands over Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.423)

**21.6.1935: Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On acceptance of Japanese demands concerning Hebei. (*HYQ SJ*, p.424)

**Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** On Japanese conditions for resolution of Chaha'er problem. (*HYQ SJ*, p.424-5)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On future of North China. (*ZYSL1*, p.688-9)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Jingwei** On personnel questions in Hebei. (*ZYSL1*, p.689) *WJW reply 24th.*

**22.6.1935: Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** On response to Japanese demands. (*HYQ SJ*, p.325-6)

**Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** On changed Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.426)

**23.6.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun** On talks with Japan over Chaha'er (*HYQ SJ*, p.427)

**24.6.1935: Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin cc WJW** On discussions with Japanese over Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.428)

**Telegram Wang Jingwei to Chiang Kai-shek** On personnel arrangements in Hebei. (*ZYSL1*, p.689-90)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek reply** On personnel arrangements in Hebei. (*ZYSL1*, p.690)

**25.6.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.428)

**Telegram Wan Fulin, Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** On arrangements for demilitarised zone in Chaha'er; He Yingqin reply Fully approve DMZ arrangements. (*HYQ SJ*, p.429)

**Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.430)

**26.6.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On future response to Japan. (*ZYSL1*, p.690-1)

**He Yingqin reply to Qin Dechun** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (*HYQ SJ*, p.430)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun** On response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er.

(HYQSI, p.430-1)

**27.6.1935: Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** Giving details of response to Japanese demands concerning Chaha'er. (HYQSI, p.431-3)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Liu Zhi** Ordering defence construction on Yellow River. (ZYSL1, p.691)

**28.6.1935: Umezu Yoshijirō statement on North China incident** (HYQSI, p.433-4)

**Ariyoshi Akira statement on North China incident** (HYQSI, p.434)

**30.6.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to CPC, National Defence Commission** ON response to North China incident. (HYQSI, p.435-9)

**3.7.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai** On China's position in aftermath of North China crisis. (HYBNP, p.885)

**6.7.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On written agreement to Japanese demands concerning Hebei. (ZYSL1, p.692)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu** On renewed Japanese demands for North China airlink. (HYBNP, p.886)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Huang Fu**

**8.7.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** Demanding modifications to written response to Japanese demands concerning Hebei. (ZYSL1, p.692-3)

**9.7.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** Informing Chiang that written response to demands already received by Japanese. (ZYSL1, p.693)

**18.7.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On response to Japanese demands by Chaha'er authorities. (ZYSL1, p.694)

**19.7.1935: Telegram Song Zheyuan, Zhang Zizhong to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese demands that 29th Army leave Northern Chaha'er and Japanese designs on Mongolia. Chiang Kai-shek reply. (SZYWJ, p.174; ZYSL1, p.695) Similar shorter without reply dated externally 19th and 21st, (ZYSL6, p.216)

**22.7.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai** On general political matters in China and Japan. (HYBNP, p.888-9)

**23.7.1935: Letter, General Staff to Foreign Ministry** On Japan's plans for economic cooperation. (ZRWJ5, p.437-9) Another (ZYSL1, p.695-7) (ZYSL6, p.135-7)

**24.7.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Kemin** On handling of North China affairs. (HYBNP, p.889)

**25.7.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong** On handling of North China affairs. (HYBNP, p.889-90)

**5.8.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On North China airlink and political structures. (ZYSL1, p.697-8)

**6.8.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On North China political structures and Japanese attitudes. (ZYSL1, p.698)**

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Luanzhou incident. (ZYSL1, p.698-9)**

**15.8.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong ON future of North China. (HYBNP, p.892-3)**

**2.9.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong On dissolution of PAC. (HYBNP, p.896)**

**4.9.1935: Telegram Yin Tong to Huang Fu On dissolution of PAC. (HYBNP, p.896)**

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan Urging Song Zheyuan to take up post as garrison commander of Beiping-Tianjin. (HYBNP, p.896)**

**5.9.1935: Telegram Huang Fu to Wang Jingwei Resigning as Minister for Domestic Affairs. (HYBNP, p.897)**

**8.9.1935: Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry ON talks with Foreign Minister Hirota. (ZRWJ4, p.31-2) (ZYSL3, p.640-1)**

**1.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On reports that Japan planning changes in structure in North China. (HYQ SJ, p.440)**

**Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin Asking for details of Japanese plans for North China. (HYQ SJ, p.440)**

**3.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On rumours of increased contacts between Japanese and Chinese 'warlords', and Japanese denial of this.(ZYSL6, p.74-5)**

**4.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese plans for autonomous regime in North China. (HYQ SJ, p.441)**

**5.10.1935: Telegram BMC to He Yingqin On Japanese plans for North China. (HYQ SJ, p.442)**

**6.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin On response to Japanese plans for North China; urging He to go to Beiping. (ZYSL1, p.700)**

**7.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek (Xi'an) On Japanese overtures to North China political authorities. (HYQ SJ, p.442)**

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese designs on North China. (ZYSL1, p.700)**

**8.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan Arranging meeting. (ZYSL1, p.701)**

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese plans for North China and threat to BMC. (HYQ SJ, p.442)**

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese plans for North China. (HYQ SJ, p.442-3)**

**Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry On talks with Hirota Kōki on North China and improvement of relations. (ZRWJ4, p.32-3) (ZYSL3, p.641-2)**

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese contacts with North China political-military figures and plans for action. (ZYSL6, p.75-6)**

**9.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese plans for North China and threat to BMC. (HYQSI, p.443)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy On protests to Japanese Embassy on Japanese flights over North China and smuggling. (ZRWJ4, p.186)**

**10.10.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Yin Tong Asking for confirmation of Japanese plans for North China. (HYQSI, p.443)**

**Yin Tong reply On Japanese plans for North China and response. (HYQSI, p.444)**

**Telegram Yuan Liang to Chiang Kai-shek On rumours concerning Japanese plans for North China. (ZYSL6, p.76-7)**

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese plans for North China and rumours of GMD-CCP alliance. (ZYSL6, p.77)**

**12.10.1935: Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry Long report on Japanese attitudes to China. (Archive, II, 745)**

**Telegram Xiao Zhenying (Tianjin) to He Yingqin On Doihara and Japanese plans for North China. (HYQSI, p.444)**

**He Yingqin reply 14th Urging low-key response to Japanese. (HYQSI, p.444-5)**

**13.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Bao Wenyue Urging secrecy and pacific response to Japanese. (ZYSL1, p.701)**

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Shang Zhen Ordering Shang to discuss North China problems with Xiong Bin. (ZYSL1, p.701-2)**

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Han Fujun Ordering Han to discuss North China problems with Xiong Bin. (ZYSL1, p.702)**

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek (Kaifeng) to Wang Jingwei On Hirota's conditions for improvement of Sino-Japanese relations. (ZYSL3, p.642-3)**

**Telegram Yang Yongtai to Jiang Zuobin On inability of Japanese to restrain military. (ZYSL3, p.643)**

**14.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Shen Honglie On attitude of Yan Xishan. (ZYSL1, p.702)**

**15.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Xiong Bin ON attitude of Yan Xishan and future of North China. (ZYSL1, p.703)**

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek Reporting conclusions of Japanese conference on North China. (ZYSL1, p.703-4)**

**Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong ON North China, Japan and general political matters. (HYBNP, p.902-3)**

**Telegram Huang Fu to Yuan Liang On Chiang-Wang discussions in Nanjing. (HYBNP, p.903)**

**Telegram Liu Zhi to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese overtures to Shang Zhen. (ZYSL6, p.78)**

**16.10.1935: Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek On discussion with Tada Hayao on North China. (ZYSL1, p.704)**

**18.10.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan On Japanese conference on North China. (ZYSL1, p.704-5)**

**19.10.1935: Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek On talks with Xiong Bin. (ZYSL1,**



p.705; SZYWJ, p.175)

**20.10.1935: Telegram Jiang Zuobin note to Hirota** China's terms for improvement of relations and response to Japan's conditions. (ZYSL3, p.643-5)

**23.10.1935: Telegram Jiang Zuobin to Foreign Ministry** On wording of note to Hirota. (ZRWJ4, p.33)

**24.10.1935: Telegram Cheng Ke to Executive Yuan** passed on to Foreign Ministry, 24.10. On Japanese sponsorship of commercial organisations including East Asia Economic Association (*Dongya jingji xiehui*). (ZYSL6, p.141-8)

**Telegram Wang Jingwei to Cheng Ke** On East Asia Economic Association. (ZYSL6, p.149)

**25.10.1935: Telegram BMC to Foreign Ministry** On Xianghe incident. (ZRWJ4, p.156-7)

**26.10.1935: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Xianghe incident. (ZRWJ4, p.158)

*Xianghe xian renmin zijue ziji xuanyan* (ZRWJ4, p.158-160)

*Xianmin zijue ziji liyou banfa* (ZRWJ4, p.160-1)

*Xianmin zizhi zijue ziji zhuandan* (ZRWJ4, p.161-2)

*Qingyuan heping fendou* (ZRWJ4, p.162-3)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting statement by Takahashi that consular conferences in Dalian Shanghai and Tianjin approve of North China Autonomy Movement. (ZYSL6, p.79)

**28.10.1935: Telegram Deng Youde to Xiao ?? and Chen Lifu** On Japanese arrest of Chinese censors in Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.390) (ZYSL6, p.110)

**Telegram BMC to Foreign Ministry** On Xianghe incident. (ZRWJ4, p.163-4)

**29.10.1935: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On demands presented by Japanese consul-general, Kawagoe, and Xianghe incident. (ZRWJ5, p.390) (ZYSL6, p.110)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Nanjing** On Xianghe incident. (ZRWJ4, p.164-5)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry** Giving text of Kawagoe letter demanding dissolution of BMC. (ZYSL6, p.114-6)

**30.10.1935. Telegram Cheng Ke to Foreign Ministry** On release of censors arrested by Japanese. (ZRWJ5, p.391) (ZYSL6, p.111)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan** On Kawagoe letter and similar demands presented by NCGA. (ZRWJ5, p.394-6) Another, dated 29.10.1935 (ZYSL1, p.705-8)

**Executive Yuan to Foreign Ministry** On East Asia Economic Association: report, manifesto and organisational guidelines. (ZRWJ5, p.444-453)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** On situation in North China and need for caution and obedience to centre. (ZYSL1, p.708)

**1.11.1935: Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On talks with Hirota Kōki over Kawagoe letter and North China. (ZRWJ5, p.396) (ZRWJ4, p.33-4) dated 31.10.1935 (ZYSL6, p.116)

**Telegram Bao Wen Yue to Chiang Kai-shek** On Kawagoe letter from Yuan Liang. (ZYSL6, p.117)

- 2.11.1935:** Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan (copy passed to Foreign Ministry 6.11.1935) On response to Kawagoe letter and NCGA demands. (ZRWJ5, p.400-1) another (ZYSL6, p.119-120)
- 3.11.1935:** Record of talks Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō On North China situation, political structures and finances. (ZRWJ5, p.353-4) (ZYSL6, p.151-3)
- 4.11.1935:** Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japanese economic aims in China. (Archive, II, 745)  
 Telegram Huang Fu to Yin Tong On North China situation. (HYBNP, p.906)  
 Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan (copy passed to Foreign Ministry 6.11.1935) ON demands from NCGA. (ZRWJ5, p.397-8) another (ZYSL6, p.118-9)  
 General Staff, Intelligence ON rumours in Tokyo of GMD-CCP alliance supported by Chiang Kai-shek. (ZRWJ5, p.406)
- 5.11.1935:** Telegram Yin Tong to Huang Fu On aftermath of Yuan Liang's departure. (HYBNP, p.906)
- 6.11.1935:** Record of talks Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi On political structures in North China. (ZRWJ5, p.403-5) (ZYSL6, p.123-4)
- 7.11.1935:** Foreign Ministry protest to Japanese Embassy On Kawagoe letter and demands presented by NCGA. (ZRWJ5, p.401-2) another (ZYSL6, p.121-2) another (ZYSL1, p.709-10)
- 8.11.1935:** Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry On meeting with Shigemitsu on improvement of Sino-Japanese relations and problem of North China. (ZRWJ4, p.34-5)  
 Letter Tianjin city government to Foreign Ministry On response to Kawagoe letter and arrest of official. (ZYSL6, p.111)  
 Letter Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin On developments in North China. (HYQ SJ, p.445)
- 9.11.1935:** Foreign Ministry note to Japan On arrest by Japanese of Chinese officials and citizens. (ZRWJ5, p.392) (ZYSL6, p.112)  
 Telegram BMC to He Yingqin On reports of contacts between Japanese and Chinese officials. (HYQ SJ, p.446)  
 Telegram BMC to He Yingqin On reports of contacts between Japanese and Chinese officials. (HYQ SJ, p.446-7)
- 10.11.1935:** Telegram Lei Sishang to He Yingqin On Doihara's contacts with Chinese officials. (ZYSL1, p.711)
- 11.11.1935:** Telegram Bao Wen Yue to Chiang Kai-shek On Kawagoe letter and Yuan Liang's response. (ZRWJ5, p.398-9)
- 13.11.1935:** Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry passing on thanks of head of recent Japanese econ delegation for warm reception in China. (ZRWJ5, p.453)
- 16.11.1935:** Telegram BMC to Foreign Ministry Xianghe incident nearly over. (ZRWJ4, p.165)  
 Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun On central government's response to North China problem. (HYQ SJ, p.447-8)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Emphasizing gravity of North China situation and urging caution in response. (ZYSL1, p.711)

**17.11.1935: Telegram Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** Emphasizing loyalty to central government and urging centre to respond rapidly to North China problem. (HYQSI, p.448) almost the same (ZYSL6, p.79) (ZYSL1, p.711-2)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun** On Japanese designs on North China. (HYQSI, p.448-9)

**Telegram Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek** On report on attitude of North China leaders to North China problem. (ZYSL6, p.56)

**Telegram Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek** On North China situation. (ZYSL6, p.80)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Xiao Zhenying** On response to North China situation. (ZYSL1, p.712)

**18.11.1935: Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On statement by Xiao Zhenying on autonomy. (HYQSI, p.449)

**Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On Japanese pressure on Song Zheyuan to participate in autonomous regime. (HYQSI, p.449)

**Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese plans for new North China regime. (ZRWS, p.469) (ZYSL6, p.80) (ZYSL1, p.712)

**Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On talks with Shigemitsu on activities of Japanese armies in North China and conditions and procedures for talks on improvement of relations. (ZRWS, p.35-6)

**Telegram Wu Dingchang to Chiang Kai-shek** On attitudes of North China leaders to Japanese. (ZYSL6, p.57)

**19.11.1935: Chiang Kai-shek's report to Guomindang Fifth National Conference on foreign affairs** Full text. (HYBNP, p.909-11) (ZYSL3, p.647-56)

**Chiang-Kai-shek proposal to Guomindang Fifth National Conference** On extending government powers over foreign policy formulation and execution. (ZYSL3, p.657-9)

**Record of talks Tang Youren and Amamiya Tatsumi** On the 'atmosphere' between China and Japan. (ZRWS, p.348-9) (ZYSL6, p.126)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Shang Zhen, Han Fujun** On attitudes of Japanese central authorities to autonomy movement. (HYQSI, p.450) Gram to Han Fujun same.

**Shang Zhen reply** (by return) Declaring non-involvement in autonomy movement. (HYQSI, p.450)

**Han Fujun reply** (20th) Declaring non-involvement in autonomy movement. (HYQSI, p.450)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Urging resolution and calm in response to Japanese pressure. (HYQSI, p.451)

**Song Zheyuan reply next day.** On response to Japanese overtures. (HYQSI, p.451)

**Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese central government attitudes to North China situation. (ZRWS, p.469)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Requesting report on situation. (ZYSL6, p.80) (ZYSL1, p.713)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Reporting Japanese central government attitudes to North China situation. (ZYSL6, p.81) (ZYSL1, p.713)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting situation and proposing talks with Japanese. (ZYSL6, p.81) Another (ZYSL1, p.714)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Ordering Song to cease contact with Japanese military. (ZYSL1, p.714-5)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek** On press coverage of Xiao Zhenying statement. (ZYSL6, p.173) (HYQSI, p.452-3)

**20.11.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Shang Zhen and Han Fujun** On Chiang-Ariyoshi talks. (HYQSI, p.452)

**Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On meeting between Xiao Zhenying, Qin Dechun and Chinese academics in North China. (HYQSI, p.453)

**Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** Plans of Chinese bodies for autonomy. (HYQSI, p.453)

**Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On developments in North China situation. (HYQSI, p.454)

**Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Xiao Zhenying's breaking contact with Japanese. (ZRWS, p.469) (ZYSL6, p.82) (ZYSL1, p.716)

**Record of talks: Chiang Kai-shek, Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi** On North China and terms for improvement of relations. (ZRWS, p.471-4) (ZYSL6, p.82-4) (ZYSL1, p.716-8)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek** On pressure from Doihara to participate in talks on autonomy. (ZYSL1, p.715)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Shang Zhen** Warning that centre will take military action if autonomous regime established. (ZYSL1, p.715)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Shen Honglie** On situation in North China. (ZYSL1, p.716)

**21.11.1935: Thirteen demands presented to China by Japan** (ZRWS, p.349) Marked from Foreign Ministry archives. (ZYSL6, p.126-7)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to He Yingqin** On visit from officer of NCGA and declaration that autonomy movement policy of Japanese central government. (HYQSI, p.455) *see also* (ZRWS, p.470) (ZYSL6, p.84-5)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Shang Zhen, Han Fujun** On Japanese Foreign Ministry attitudes to North China situation. (HYQSI, p.455)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, Kong Xiangxi, He Yingqin** On Yin Rugeng's advocacy that local authorities retain central tax revenues. (HYQSI, p.456)

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy** On Chiang-Ariyoshi talks. (ZRWS, p.471) (ZYSL6, p.84) (ZYSL1, p.716-7)

**22.11.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan, Han Fujun** On Japanese pressure on Shang Zhen. (HYQSI, p.455)

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy** On statement by officer of NCGA that autonomy movement policy of Japanese Foreign Ministry. (ZRWS, p.470-1) (ZYSL6, p.85)

**Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese troop movements in Rehe and activities of Doihara. (ZRWS, p.474) Another (ZYSL6, p.86)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Han Fujun, Shang Zhen, Song Zheyuan** On talks with Ariyoshi. (ZYSL1, p.719-20)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to Feng Yuxiang** On currency reform. (SZYWI, p.177)

**23.11.1935: Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On contacts between Song Zheyuan and Japanese and activities of Chinese groups. (HYQSI, p.457)

**Report from General Staff** On attitudes to China in Tokyo and London. (ZRWS, p.474-5) (ZYSL6, p.86-7)

**Report from General Staff** On Japanese attitudes to Chiang Kai-shek. (ZRWS, p.476-7) (ZYSL6, p.87-8)

**24.11.1935: Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy for Eastern Hebei** Full text and list of Council members given (ZRWS, p.420-4) (ZYSL6, p.183-6)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to He Yingqin** On Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (HYQJ, p.458)

**He Yingqin reply** On Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (HYQJ, p.458)

**25.11.1935: Foreign Ministry note to Japanese Embassy** On Japanese armies' involvement in autonomy movement. (ZYSL1, p.720-1)

**Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (ZRWJ5, p.419) (ZYSL6, p.187)

**Telegram Qin Dechun to Chiang Kai-shek** On Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (ZYSL6, p.188)

**Telegram Bao Wenyue to Chiang Kai-shek** On Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (ZRWJ5, p.419) (ZYSL6, p.188)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry** Details on Yin Rugeng. (ZRWJ5, p.419-20) (ZYSL6, p.188)

**Telegram Shen Honglie to Chiang Kai-shek** On Yin Rugeng. (ZYSL6, p.189)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to He Yingqin** Details on Yin Rugeng. (HYQJ, p.458)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to He Yingqin** On resistance to Yin Rugeng. (HYQJ, p.458-9)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to He Yingqin** On response to Yin Rugeng. (HYQJ, p.459) (ZYSL6, p.190)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry** On 'pro-autonomy' activities in Tianjin. (ZRWJ4, p.182-3)

**Telegram Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek** Recommending dismissal and arrest of Yin Rugeng and protest to Japanese. (ZYSL6, p.189-90)

**Telegram Kong Xiangxi to Chiang Kai-shek** On tax losses caused by Yin Rugeng's declaration of autonomy. (ZYSL6, p.194-5)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On 'pro-autonomy' activities in Tianjin. (ZYSL1, p.720)

**26.11.1935: Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese plans for autonomy. (ZYSL6, p.183)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Chiang Kai-shek, Kong Xiangxi, He Yingqin** On Yin Rugeng. (HYQJ, p.459)

**Telegram Shang Zhen to Foreign Ministry** On response to Yin Rugeng. (ZRWJ5, p.427)

**Government order for arrest of Yin Rugeng** Text given. (ZRWJ5, p.427-8) (ZYSL6, p.190-1)

**Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On pro-autonomy activities in Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.478) (ZYSL6, p.88-9)

**Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On talks with Shigemitsu on North China and terms and procedures for improvement of relations. (ZRWJ4, p.37-8)

**27.11.1935: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese troop increases in Beiping-Tianjin and activities of Yin Rugeng. (ZRWJ5, p.424-5)

**Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese troop increases in Beiping-Tianjin and Song Zheyuan's reluctance to take up post as Pacification Commissioner of Beiping-Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.478-9) (ZYSL6, p.89)

**Shang Zhen to Executive Yuan** Urging dismissal and arrest of Yin Rugeng. (ZYSL6, p.191)

**Telegram Chen Jitang to Chiang Kai-shek** Urging effective response re Yin Rugeng. (ZYSL6, p.191)

**28.11.1935: Telegram BMC to He Yingqin** On meeting with Song Zheyuan. (HYQJ, p.460)  
**He Yingqin reply** On Song Zheyuan. (HYQJ, p.461)

**29.11.1935: Foreign Ministry official protest to Japanese embassy (ZRWJ5, p.428)**  
**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan Urging him to take up post as Pacification Commissioner of Beiping-Tianjin. (HYQSJ, p.461)**  
**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy On protests to Japanese government. (ZRWJ5, p.479-80) (ZYSL6, p.90)**  
**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Japanese Embassy Official note declaring Yin Rugeng's actions ineffective. (ZYSL6, p.194)**  
**Telegram Shen Honglie to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese troop increases in Beiping-Tianjin and intentions for Song Zheyuan. (ZYSL6, p.91-2)**

**30.11.1935: Report from General Staff On situation in Shanghai and Japanese views of North China problem. (ZRWJ5, p.477-8) (ZYSL6, p.90-1)**  
**Telegram Shen Honglie to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese pressure on Song Zheyuan. (ZYSL6, p.92)**  
**Telegram Wang Jingwei to Shang Zhen On response to North China problem. (ZRWJ5, p.399) (ZYSL6, p.122-3)**  
**Jiangxi quan sheng shanghui lianhehui to Party and GMZF Urging punitive expedition against Yin Rugeng. (ZYSL6, p.192)**  
**Guoli Sichuan daxue quanti staff to Party and GMZF Urging punitive expedition against Yin Rugeng. (ZYSL6, p.192) And more and more.**

**1.12.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan On He Yingqin's mission in Beiping. (ZYSL1, p.726)**  
**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On North China situation. (ZYSL1, p.727)**  
**He Yingqin statement to reporters on North China situ (HYQSJ, p.461-2)**

**2.12.1935: Telegram Guo Taiqi London to Foreign Ministry On British attitudes to China. (ZRWJ5, p.350) (ZYSL6, p.107)**  
**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan On future personnel arrangements in North China. (ZYSL1, p.727)**  
**Telegram Shen Honglie to Chiang Kai-shek On Xiao Zhenying's statement on future arrangements in North China. (ZYSL1, p.728)**

**3.12.1935: Telegram Xiao Zhenying to Chiang Kai-shek; Chiang's reply On meeting between Xiao and He Yingqin. (ZYSL1, p.728)**

**4.12.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin On role in Beiping. (ZYSL1, p.729)**  
**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek; Chiang's reply Recommending that Song Zheyuan be given responsibility for political affairs in Beiping. (ZYSL1, p.729)**  
**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin On report from Tokyo on intentions of NCGA and attitudes in Tokyo. (ZYSL1, p.730)**  
**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On activities in Beiping. (ZYSL6, p.92-3)**  
**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On advocacy of military force to encourage autonomy of North China. (ZYSL6, p.93)**

**5.12.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On attitude of Song Zheyuan and response to crisis. (ZYSL1, p.730-1)**

**6.12.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On Doihara's plans for North China and response. (ZYSL1, p.731-2)**

**Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On response to North China crisis. (ZYSL1, p.732)  
**US Secretary of State statement to Press** on North China situation Long. (ZRWJ5, p.350-1)  
(ZYSL6, p.107-8)

**7.12.1935: Telegram Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek** On Mongolian autonomy movement. (ZYSL6, p.225-6)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On Xiao Zhenying's account of North China situation. (ZYSL1, p.733)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On handling of North China situation. (ZYSL1, p.733)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On regulations for Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZYSL1, p.734)

**Telegram Yu Junji (New York) to Foreign Ministry** On public opinion on China in United States. (ZYSL6, p.108-9)

**8.12.1935: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek** On resignation of Shang Zhen. (ZYSL1, p.734)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek; Chiang's reply** On expected Japanese reactions to establishment of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZYSL1, p.734-5)

**Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On influence of international situation on Japanese actions in North China; on personnel arrangements for Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZRWJ5, p.352) (ZYSL6, p.109)

**9.12.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On powers of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZYSL1, p.735)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On status of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZYSL1, p.735)

**Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese attitudes to Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and student protests. (ZRWJ5, p.482) (ZYSL6, p.93)

**10.12.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Chen Jitang, Li Zongren and Bai Chongxi** On central government's response to North China situation. (ZYSL1, p.736)

**Record of talks Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō** On administrative arrangements for North China. (ZRWJ5, p.356) (ZYSL6, p.153-4)

**From same conversation, above** On the student movement in Beiping. (ZRWJ5, p.483) (ZYSL6, p.94)

**11.12.1935: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On personnel arrangements for North China. (ZYSL1, p.737)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek; Chiang's reply** On publication of regulations for Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council. (ZYSL1, p.737)

**Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui zuzhi dagang Text.** (ZYSL1, p.738)

**Telegram Huang Fu to Yang Yongtai** On Yin Tong's resignation. (HYBNP, p.917-8)

**12.12.1935: Chiang Kai-shek report to CPC** On resolution of North China problem. (ZYSL1, p.739-41)

**Railway Ministry to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese activities in Beiping-Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.391-2) (ZYSL6, p.112-3)

**Record of talks Tang Youren and Suma Yakichirō** On student movement in Beiping. (ZRWJ5, p.484) (ZYSL6, p.94-5)

**13.12.1935: Record of talks Lin Dingping and Suma Yakichirō.** On Japanese arrests of Chinese citizens. (ZRWJ5, p.393) (ZYSL6, p.113-4)

**20.12.1935: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Ariyoshi Akira** On North China, powers of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, terms and procedures for improvement of relations and student movement in North China. (YGZQ pp.19-21)

**21.12.1935: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** Reporting slight improvement in North China situation. (ZYSL6, p.57-9)

**23.12.1935: Letter Huang Fu to Zhu Hexiang** Affirming that Chiang Kai-shek's speech to Fifth National Congress fully represents government policy. (HYBNP, p.920-1)

**24.12.1935: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Minister and Vice-Minister** End of year report on North China. (ZRWJ5, p.356-7) Another dated 21.12 (ZYSL6, p.57-9)

**Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On talks with Shigemitsu on procedures for talks on improvement of relations. (ZRWJ4, p.37)

**27.12.1935: Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry** On discussion with Shigemitsu on talks for improvement of relations. (ZRWJ4, p.38-9)

**31.12.1935: Chiang Kai-shek comment on 1935** On relations with Japan, CCP and pursuit of domestic unity. (ZYSL1, p.742)

**7.1.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Nemoto Hiroshi** On Hirota's Three Principles. (YGZQ, pp.21-22)

**11.1.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On impending Japanese talks with Song Zheyuan; on Li Shouxin advance on Suiyuan. (ZRWJ5, p.480) (ZYSL6, p.95)

**13.1.1936: Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On conclusion of Manzhouguo-Eastern Hebei treaty, Japanese arms sales to Yin Rugeng, seizure of salt revenues, criticism of Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and Chaoyangmen incident. (ZYSL6, p.200)

**14.1.1936: Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On Manzhouguo-Eastern Hebei treaty. (ZYSL6, p.200-1)

**17.1.1936: Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council, consolidation of Eastern Hebei regime, Dagou and Chaoyangmen incidents and Northern Chaha'er bandit activity. (ZRWJ5, p.357-9)

**19.1.1936: Telegram Dai Li to Chiang Kai-shek** On Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement. (ZYSL6, p.217)

**22.1.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro** On Hirota's Three Principles, air transport and talks on normalisation. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ, pp.22-4)

**25.1.1936: 'Suiyuan sheng jingnei Menggu ge meng qi difang zizhi zhengwu weiyuanhui zhanxing zuzhi dagang'** (JCZWHGB, 2, 12.2.1936)

**29.1.1936: Telegram Yan Xishan to Military Affairs Commission** Reporting establishment



of Mongol government under De Wang and impending attack on Suiyuan. (ZYSL6, p.217)

**31.1.1936: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On talks between Song Zheyuan and Japanese on abolition of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.195)

**Telegram Chen Cheng To Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese support for Mongol forces and military preparations for attack on Suiyuan. (ZYSL6, p.218)

**1.2.1936: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On talks between Song Zheyuan and Japanese on abolition of Eastern Hebei regime and encouragement to seize tax revenues. (ZYSL6, p.195-6)

**6.2.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On talks between Song Zheyuan and Japanese on abolition of Eastern Hebei regime and encouragement to seize tax revenues. (ZRWJ5, p.460-1) (ZYSL6, p.96)

**11.2.1936: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On differences in Japanese approaches to North China, Eastern Hebei, Northern Chaha'er and tax problems. (ZRWJ5, p.360) (ZYSL6, pp.60-1)

**13.2.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Doihara-Song talks and abolition of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.196)

**14.2.1936: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Doihara statement on future of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZRWJ5, p.481)

**Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On Doihara statement on future handling of North China question. (ZYSL6, p.96-7)

**17.2.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On appointment of Japanese advisers to EHR and militia reorganisation. (ZRWJ5, p.424) Dated 16.2.1936. (ZYSL6, p.201)

**Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin.** On Doihara statement to foreign reporters on all issues affecting North China. (ZRWJ5, p.481) Dated 15.2.1936. (ZYSL6, p.97)

**19.2.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On impending establishment of *Xing Zhong gongsi* office and continuing tensions between Manzhouguo and Outer Mongolia. (ZYSL6, p.150)

**25.2.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On Doihara's plans for North China. (ZRWJ5, p.482) Dated 18.2.1936. (ZYSL6, p.97-8)

**28.2.1936: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On Japanese pressure on EHR to build railways. (ZRWJ5, p.424) Dated 26.2.1936. (ZYSL6, p.201-2)

**6.3.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Mongol troop movements in Chaha'er. (ZRWJ5, p.411) (ZYSL6, p.245)

**14.3.1936: Telegram Wang Hongnian to Foreign Ministry** On Doihara's plans for China and fears of Western intervention. (ZRWJ5, p.406) (ZYSL6, p.168-9)

**15.3.1936: Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan** On response to Eastern Expedition. (HYQJ, p.472-3)

**19.3.1936: Letter Huang Fu to Zhang Qun** On need to resolve north China question if relations with Japan to be normalised and impossibility of doing this. (HYB, p.971)

**25.3.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese anger with Song Zheyuan as motive for troop increases in North China and determination to prevent central armies entering Shanxi to attack the Red Army. (ZRWJ5, p.407) (ZYSL6, p.173-4)

**29.3.1935: Telegram Yan Kuan to He Yingqin; He Yingqin reply** ON Japanese expressions of alarm at advance of central army units into Shanxi. (HYQJ, p.472)

**7.4.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro** On the North China question; the advance of the CCP into Shanxi; Japanese desires for greater powers for Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council; Japanese troop increases in North China and rumours of Chinese arms purchases from Italy. (ZRWJ5, p.361-366) (ZYSL6, p.62-67)

**8.4.1936: Telegram Cheng Xigeng to Foreign Ministry** On rumours of anti-Communist agreement between Song Zheyuan and the Japanese. (ZRWJ5, p.407) (ZYSL6, p.174-5)

**16.4.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro.** On North China question; treaty between USSR and Outer Mongolia; Manchuria-Mongolia conflict and Japanese suspicions of China's relations with USSR and Britain; Japanese complaint of Chinese hostility; smuggling in North China and tariff problem. (ZRWJ5, p.366-371) (ZYSL6, p.67-71)

**17.5.1936: Weng Wenhao to Chiang Kai-shek** Passing on report from Fu Zuoyi on Mongol organisation. (ZYSL6, p.226-7)

**21.4.1936: Secret report from the General Staff to Foreign Ministry.**

i) *Riben zai Hua huodong zuijin yixing jiji.* On reports of Japan's activities in North China and demands for anti-Communist action; on troop increases (to 10,000 in Tianjin) and demands that Song Zheyuan withdraw his forces from southern Hebei; Song's threat to resign if pressure continues. (ZRWJ5, p.375)

ii) *Chengli JiCha fanggong weiyuanhui.* Reporting agreement on establishment of anti-Communist council. (ZRWJ5, p.409) (ZYSL6, p.175-7)

**1.5.1936: Bai Yundi to Chiang Kai-shek** On Mongol moves towards autonomy and plans to attack Suiyuan. (ZYSL6, p.218-9)

**4.5.1936: General Staff to Foreign Ministry.** '*Riben duihua zuijin zhi qitu*' On Japanese advocacy of economic cooperation in North China tariff reform and demands for recognition of Manzhouguo; Chinese counter-proposals included restoration of full powers over Hebei and dissolution of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.138-9) Foreign Ministry response (ZYSL6, p.140)

**7.5.1936: Report General Staff to Foreign Ministry.** *Huabei Zhong-Ri fanggong xieding neirong.* Reporting conclusion of agreement on establishment of anti-Communist committee subordinate to Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council and troop dispositions in event of Communist incursions into Hebei, and Japanese support for anti-Communist action. (ZRWJ5, p.409-10) (ZYSL6, p.178)

**11.5.1936: Telegram Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting plans of De Wang for independent Mongol government and Japanese support. (ZYSL6, p.219)

**13.5.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese demands that Hebei-Chaha'er become 'fully autonomous', that Song Zheyuan hand responsibility for political matters to by Wu Peifu, Xiao Zhenying or Yin Rugeng and replace officers hostile to Japan. Notes tha Wu Peifu unwilling to participate. (ZYSL6, p.197)

**19.5.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On reports that no anti-Communist agreement has yet been concluded between Song Zheyuan and the NCGA, but that a political agreement was made in late March. (ZRWJ5, p.410) (ZYSL6, p.179)

**21.5.1936: Telegram Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek** On Mongol autonomous organisations and plans to establish Mongol state. (ZYSL6, p.219-20)

**Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek** On meetings between De Wang and on autonomy and attack on Suiyuan. (ZYSL6, p.220)

**22.5.1936: Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek** On reports of Mongol anti-autonomy opinions. (ZYSL6, p.227)

**26.5.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** Reporting Japanese Military HQ plans for reorganisation of North China including expulsion of Song Zheyuan 29th Army and establishment of regime centred on Cao Kun, Qi Xieyuan *et al* with fiscal independence; Song's resignation as governor of Hebei; Japanese land purchases at Fengtai. (ZRWJ5, p.382) (ZYSL6, p.128)

**29.5.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to He Yingqin**

On reports of Japanese plans to amalgamate Hebei-Chaha'er and Eastern Hebei regimes or create buffer between Manzhouguo and central China. (ZRWJ5, p.382) Dated 25.6.1936. (ZYSL6, p.127-8)

**21.6.1936: Telegram from Xu Shiyong in Tokyo to Foreign Ministry.** ON Japanese Military HQ's recognition that it cannot expel Song Zheyuan from North China and decision to increase region's economic dependence on Japan. (ZRWJ5, p.382-3) (ZYSL6, p.128-9)

**26.6.1936: Telegram He Yingqin, Cheng Qian, Zhu Peide, Tang Shengzhi and Chen Tiaoyuan** Open telegram to South-Western clique. (HYQSJ, p.475-6)

**Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to South-Western clique** (HYQSJ, p.476-7)

**23.7.1936: Report from General Staff to Foreign Ministry**

Reporting NCGA-GDA meeting in Tianjin, resolving on matters of North China politics, Inner Mongolian autonomy, exclusion of anti-Japanese organisations from North China and road-building. (ZRWJ5, p.384) Dated 22.7.1936. (ZYSL6, p.129-30)

**Telegram Dai Li to Chiang Kai-shek** On Mongolian autonomy movement. (ZYSL6, p.245-6)

**25.7.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro** On Wang Kemin mission to Beiping and economic cooperation; on North China finances and tariff reform. (ZYSL6, p.154-8)

**28.7.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On tensions between 29th Army and Japanese over Wang Kemin mission to North and attitude of 29th Army; recommendation that centre seize opportunity to regularise relations with Japan after successful resolution of South-Western revolt. (ZYSL6, p.158-9)

**Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Kawagoe visit to Tianjin and statement on

economic cooperation in North China as basis for normalisation. y(ZYSL6, p.159-60)

**5.8.1936: Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** Acknowledging receipt of arms shipment, promising full report on situation in North. (HYQSJ, p.478)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Expressing appreciation of report and asking Song to come to Nanjing. (HYQSJ, p.478)

**Telegram Qin Dechun to He Yingqin** Explaining difficulties of holding National Assembly elections in Hebei-Chaha'er. (HYQSJ, p.478-9)

**Telegram He Yingqin to Qin Dechun** Insisting that elections must be held in Hebei-Chaha'er. (HYQSJ, p.479)

**16.8.1936: Telegram He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** On national defence plans. (HYQSJ, p.480)

**Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** ON national defence plans and Zhang Yueting visit to Nanjing. (HYQSJ, p.480)

**17.8.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** Warning that Japan's economic and political plans for North China both aimed at domination of region; warning of hostility towards Wang Kemin. (ZYSL6, p.130)

**19.8.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Kawagoe visit to Song Zheyuan and statement on economic cooperation. (ZYSL6, p.140)

**20.8.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On Kawagoe statement on economic cooperation, anti-Communist talks with Song Zheyuan and opinions on normalisation of relations with China. (ZYSL6, p.160)

**Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Song Zheyuan's attitude towards talks on economic cooperation. (ZYSL6, p.161)

**22.8.1936: Telegram Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On Zhang Yueting visit to Nanjing. (HYQSJ, p.480-1)

**26.8.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro.** On air transport and Japanese illegal flights over North China. (ZRWJ5, pp.371-373) (ZYSL6, p.71-73)

**1.9.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Suma Yakichiro** On Kawagoe visit to North China and prospects for Wang Kemin's management of economic cooperation (ZYSL6, p.161-2)

**4.9.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese efforts to foment anti-Chiang Kai-shek feeling in North China. (ZYSL6, p.131)

**5.9.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese hostility to Wang Kemin. (ZYSL6, p.162-3)

**6.9.1936: General Staff (Xiao Shuxuan) to Foreign Ministry** Isogai statement on Chinese disunity and hostility to Japan.(ZRWJ4, p.61-2)

**15.9.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru** On Chengdu and Beihai incidents, Japanese demands for government action against anti-Japanese feeling, and North China. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ pp.24-27)

**21.9.1936: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japanese attitudes to Zhang-Kawagoe talks. (ZRWJ4, p.59-60)**

**23.9.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru Zhang's response to Kawagoe's demands and presentation of China's conditions. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ p.23)**

**24.9.1936: Telegram Xu Shiying to Foreign Ministry Reporting NCGA demand for full autonomy for Hebei-Chaha'er. (ZYSL6, p.98)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Gu Weijun On Zhang-Kawagoe talks. (ZRWJ4, p.60-1)**

**25.9.1936: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On reports in Europe on progress of Zhang-Kawagoe talks. (ZRWJ4, p.58)**

**26.9.1936: Telegram Washington Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.66)**

**Telegram Gu Weijun et al to Foreign Ministry Reporting threat of despatch of major forces by Japan and noting scope of Japanese demands. (ZRWJ4, p.59)**

**27.9.1936: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Geneva On Japanese demands, expressing pessimism on talks. (ZRWJ4, p.57-8)**

**Telegram Wu Tiecheng to Foreign Ministry On threats of military action by Japanese military and naval attachés. (ZRWJ4, p.59)**

**28.9.1936: Moscow Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.66-7)**

**29.9.1936: Telegram Washington Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.67-8)**

**30.9.1936: Telegram Wu Tiecheng to Foreign Ministry Reporting Japanese determination to get Chiang Kai-shek to participate in talks and to use force if relations do not improve. (ZRWJ4, p.62)**

**5.10.1936: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry On Song Zheyuan press statement on rejection of Japanese demands. (ZYSL6, p.163)**

**Telegram Zhou Ban to Foreign Ministry On arrival of Kuwashima in Shanghai. (ZRWJ4, p.69-70)**

**7.10.1936: Telegram London Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.68-9)**

**8.10.1936: General Staff to Foreign Ministry On Japanese efforts to separate Song Zheyuan from centre and Song's expression of dissatisfaction with Nanjing. (ZYSL6, p.99-100)**

**Foreign Ministry to Embassies On Chiang Kai-shek talks with Kawagoe. (ZRWJ4, p.49)**

**9.10.1936: General Staff to Foreign Ministry On Kuwashima visit to China and fears of incident on October 10th. (ZRWJ4, p.70-1)**

**General Staff to Foreign Ministry On conversation with Umezu Yoshijirō; Japanese Army determined to secure position in North China. (ZRWJ4, p.64-5)**

**11.10.1936: General Staff to Foreign Ministry On NCGA plans for Hebei-Chaha'er autonomous government. (ZYSL6, p.197-8)**

- 12.10.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry On Japanese Foreign Ministry opinions of Chiang-Kawagoe meeting, and developments in North China.**
- 13.10.1936: Beiping Academics to Executive Yuan etc On sovereignty in North China. Foreign Ministry reply. 23.10.1936. (ZRWJ4, p.129-32)**
- 15.10.1936: General Staff to Foreign Ministry On Kuwashima visit and attitudes of Powers. (ZRWJ4, p.71-81)**
- 16.10.1936: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin On meeting with Zhang Yueting. (HYQ SJ, p.485)**  
**Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek On Mongol autonomy movement. (ZYSL6, p.246)**
- 17.10.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry On Japanese Army-Navy divisions on China policy. (ZRWJ4, p.81-2)**
- 18.10.1936: Telegram He Yingqin to Chiang Kai-shek On meeting with Zhang Yueting. (HYQ SJ, p.485)**
- 19.10.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru Mostly anti-Communist measures; also on airlink and Suiyuan problem. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ p.23, pp27-9)**
- 21.10.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru Mostly on anti-Communist measures. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ pp.23-4, pp29-30)**
- 23.10.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kita Seiichi, On anti-Communist action, normalisation and Suiyuan. (ZRWJ4, pp.46-9)**  
**Liu Tianfu (naval attaché) to Foreign Ministry Reporting that Japanese Foreign Ministry has not yet given up on talks, but has plans in case of break. (ZRWJ4, p.53-4)**  
**Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry On removal of North China from agenda of Zhang-Kawagoe talks. (ZRWJ4, p.82)**
- 26.10.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru On anti-Communist action; geographical extent, exchange of intelligence, purpose thereof. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ p.24, pp30-31)**
- 27.10.1936: Telegram Yang Shuxuan to Chiang Kai-shek On conversation with Isogai Rensuke on future of Zhang-Kawagoe talks and anti-Communist action. (ZRWJ4, p.52-3)**  
**Telegram Song Zheyuan to Executive Yuan Reporting Japanese plans for economic development of North China and suggesting agreement imminent. (ZYSL6, p.164-5)**
- 30.10.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry Confirming that Zhang-Kawagoe talks to concentrate on anti-Communist action. (ZRWJ4, p.82)**
- 2.11.1936: Li Jingming to Foreign Ministry Citizen of Hebei protesting that reports in North China give 'special status' of North as main focus of Zhang-Kawagoe talks. (ZRWJ4, p.83)**
- 3.11.1936: Telegram Yan Xishan to Chiang Kai-shek Warning that attack on Suiyuan imminent. (ZYSL6, p.228)**  
**General Staff to Foreign Ministry Summarising Kawagoe report on talks and Japanese opinions. (ZRWJ4, p.49-52)**

**10.11.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe Shigeru** on anti-Communist action: Kawagoe demands unconditional acceptance of Japan's conditions. (Archive, XVIII, 1217; YGZQ, pp.32-3)

**13.11.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese views of Chinese position in talks. (ZRWJ4, p.83)

**15.11.1936: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On advocacy in Japanese press of breaking off talks with Nanjing. (ZRWJ4, p.83-4)

**16.11.1936: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to Fu Zuoyi** Ordering attack on Bailingmiao and Shangdu. (ZYSL6, p.228)

**Tang Enbo to Chiang Kai-shek** On consolidation of Mongolian organisation. (ZYSL6, p.231)

**17.11.1936: Xiao Shuxuan to Chiang Kai-shek *et al*** On conversation with German military attaché, who denies Germany on point of concluding treaty with Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.69)

**19.11.1936: Telegram Yang Jie to Chiang Kai-shek** On anniversary celebrations of Eastern Hebei regime and inadequacy of intelligence structures in North. (ZYSL6, p.205-6)

**Telegram Weng Wenhao to Chiang Kai-shek** On declaration of loyalty to Republic by De Wang and complaints about Suiyuan authorities. (ZYSL6, p.228-9)

**21.11.1936: Foreign Ministry to Executive Yuan** On objections to economic cooperation as outlined by Song Zheyuan in 27.10.1936 telegram. (ZYSL6, p.166)

**Telegram Cheng Qian to Chiang Kai-shek** On Eastern Hebei anniversary celebrations, Japanese dissatisfaction with Yin Rugeng and overtures to Wu Peifu. (ZYSL6, p.206)

**25.11.1936: Telegram Dai Li to Chiang Kai-shek** On Eastern Hebei anniversary celebrations, and plans for future of regime. (ZYSL6, p.206-7)

**26.11.1936: Telegram Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** ON response to Suiyuan problem. (HYQSI, p.486)

**Telegram Wu Zhongxin to Chiang Kai-shek** On Suiyuan. (ZYSL6, p.250)

**Telegram Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek** Full text of declaration of sovereignty over Hebei and Chaha'er. (ZYSL6, p.73-74)

**27.11.1936: Telegram Xu Shiyong to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese government attitudes to Suiyuan incident. (ZRWJ4, p.84-5)

**28.11.1936: Telegram Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek** On GDA statement in support of Mongol autonomy. (ZYSL6, p.229-30)

**Foreign Ministry statement on Mongolia as given in Zhang Qun to Chiang Kai-shek** (ZYSL6, p.230)

**30.11.1936: Telegram Fang Weizhi to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese Army and Navy advocacy of ending talks in Nanjing and growing hostility towards Suma Yakichirō. (ZRWJ4, p.85)

**1.12.1936: Telegram Chen Cheng to He Yingqin** Urging caution on attack on Suiyuan. (HYQSI, p.486-7)

**2.12.1936: Telegram Cheng Qian to Foreign Ministry ON anniversary celebrations of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.207)**

**3.12.1936: Record of talks Zhang Qun and Kawagoe; Kawagoe memorandum (YGZQ, Archive, XVIII, 1217)**

**5.12.1936: Executive Yuan order on economic cooperation Affirming that no measure will be legal unless approved by central government. (ZYSL6, p.167)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy On Kawagoe memorandum and prospects for future talks. (ZRWJ4, p.56-7)**

**21.12.1936: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On GDA-NCGA talks on future of North China. (ZYSL6, p.169)**

**24.12.1936: Telegram Xu Shiyong to Foreign Ministry On advocacy of caution on China policy and insecure position of Hirota cabinet. (ZRWJ4, p.86-7)**

**26.12.1936: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On plans for expansion of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.202)**

**Telegram Ding Shaoji to Foreign Ministry On Japanese perceptions of China in aftermath of Suiyuan and Xi'an incidents. (ZRWJ4, p.87)**

**30.12.1936: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On Japanese military plans for North China. (ZYSL6, p.169-70)**

**6.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry. On 29th Army plans to attack Eastern Hebei. (ZRWJ5, pp.431-2) (ZYSL6, p.198-9)**

**7.1.1937: Telegram Chinese Embassy in Tokyo to Foreign Ministry On Japanese Foreign and Army Ministries criticism of China's 'reliance' on Soviet Union to restrain Japan, and plans for North China. (ZRWJ5, p.386-7)**

**Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On personnel changes in Japanese Foreign Ministry Asia section. (ZRWJ5, p.387)**

**Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On anti-Communist action by Japanese-sponsored Chinese groups in Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.387-8) (ZYSL6, p.134)**

**11.1.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry. On Japanese plans for further disturbances in Beiping; on Beiping student associations' support of Zhang Xueliang. (ZRWJ5, p.388) (ZYSL6, p.134-5)**

**Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry. On plans for expansion of Eastern Hebei regime and fishing rights. (ZRWJ5, p.433) (ZYSL6, p.209-10)**

**Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council talks with NCGA on dissolution of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZYSL6, p.199)**

**18.1.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry On NCGA-GDA discussions on future of North China and warning of continuing aggressive intentions. (ZRWJ5, p.386) (ZYSL6, p.170)**

**22.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry On Song meeting with Tashiro: Song demanded return of four *xian* to Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council; Tashiro demanded anti-Communist action, economic cooperation and eradication of anti-Japanese activities. (ZRWJ5,**



p.486-7) (ZYSL6, p.100)

**24.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry** On continuing Japanese pressure on Song Zheyuan to accept joint action against Communism. (ZRWJ5, p.408) (ZYSL6, p.175)

**27.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry** On conference called by Japanese Military Headquarters and Mantetsu in Tianjin on economic development of North China. (ZYSL6, p.150-1)

**29.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry** Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China (*zai hua shanggong huiyi*) to hold inaugural meeting 1.5.37 in Shanghai; on plans for extension of activities to Shanghai, Tianjin, Jinan, Qingdao, Hankou and Fujian. (ZRWJ5, p.454)

**31.1.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On anti-Communist action by Chinese groups in Tianjin. (ZRWJ5, p.411) (ZYSL6, p.171)

**3.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese investment plans for North China and intended cultural enterprises. (ZRWJ5, p.468) (ZYSL6, p.151)

**4.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On arrest of Japanese-sponsored provocateurs posing as Communists in Hebei. (ZRWJ5, p.412) (ZYSL6, p.171-2)

**6.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On meeting of Song Zheyuan with Tashiro; attempts to sow distrust between Song and centre and persuade Song to accept economic cooperation and anti-Communist activity. (ZRWJ5, p.487) (ZYSL6, p.101)

**Telegram Guo Dianlu to Military Affairs Commission** On Mongolian autonomy. (ZYSL6, p.232)

**8.2.1937: Letter He Jian to Military Affairs Commission** On Japanese promotion of anti-Communist measures in central China. (ZRWJ5, p.413-4)

**13.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On meeting between Yin Rugeng and NCGA-GDA, and Japanese plans to extend autonomous zone and promote economic cooperation in North. (ZRWJ5, p.433) (ZYSL6, p.202-3)

**14.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On anti-Communist activities by Eastern Hebei regime. (ZRWJ5, p.411-2) (ZYSL6, p.172)

**15.2.1937: Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry** On loan to Eastern Hebei for arms purchases. (ZRWJ5, p.434) (ZYSL6, p.210)

**17.2.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On arms shipments to De Wang; on Japanese hostility to Ge Dingyuan (secretary to Hebei-Chaha'er Political Council) and reaction to Qin Dechun's attendance of Guomindang plenum. (ZRWJ5, p.388-9) (ZYSL6, p.246)

**Telegram Tianjin to Foreign Ministry.** On frustration at lack of progress on economic cooperation and other matters and decision to replace Tashiro as NCGA commander. (ZRWJ5, p.487-8) (ZYSL6, p.102)

**18.2.1937: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry.** On Amamiya Tatsumi speech on

China and demand for reassessment of policy. (ZRWJ5, p.389)

**27.3.1937: Telegram Tang Enbo to Chiang Kai-shek On Mongolian autonomy.** (ZYSL6, p.232-3)

**6.4.1937: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry.** On Japanese press support for Eastern Hebei regime. (ZRWJ5, p.434) (ZYSL6, p.203)

**10.4.1937: Telegram Zhang Zizhong to Foreign Ministry.** Passing on reports of secret organisations established by Yin Rugeng and anti-Communist activities in Tianjin with Japanese support. (ZRWJ5, p.426-7) (ZYSL6, p.207-8)

**12.4.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** On pressure of Song from Japanese to establish autonomous North China government, and fears of central policy of alliance with Communists. (ZRWJ5, p.488-9) (ZYSL6, p.103)

**13.4.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** Reporting that Song Zheyuan has tacitly consented to economic cooperation with Japan and sent Chen Zhongfu to Japan as his representative. (ZRWJ5, p.489) (ZYSL6, p.103-4)

**28.4.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** On NCGA-GDA meeting in Tianjin and resolutions to support Eastern Hebei and Northern Chaha'er organisations and reorganise intelligence structures. (ZRWJ5, p.489-90) (ZYSL6, p.104)

**Telegram Embassy in Tokyo to Foreign Ministry** On protest to Japanese Foreign Ministry over visit from Eastern Hebei delegation and display of five-colour flag. (ZRWJ5, p.436) (ZYSL6, p.209)

**29.4.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** On NCGA support of Eastern Hebei regime and renewed activity in Suiyuan. (ZRWJ5, p.435) (ZYSL6, p.203-4)

**Telegram Embassy in Tokyo to Foreign Ministry** Reporting removal of five-colour flag. (ZRWJ5, p.436) (ZYSL6, p.209)

**7.5.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** On continuing talks without progress between Song Zheyuan and NCGA on economic cooperation. (ZRWJ5, p.490) (ZYSL6, p.105)

**11.5.1937: Military Affairs Commission to Foreign Ministry** Secret report from Shanghai on Japanese plans for North China. (ZRWJ5, p.435) dated 10.5.1937 (ZYSL6, p.204)

**21.5.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** On NCGA plan for economic cooperation and conditions for progress on Eastern Hebei regime, and overtures by De Wang to Chinese authorities. (ZRWJ5, p.490-1) (ZYSL6, p.105-6)

**5.6.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry.** Reporting NCGA insistence that Song Zheyuan give early reply on economic development, and departure of Song from Beijing; statement by Yin Rugeng that Eastern Hebei regime would not be dissolved. (ZRWJ5, p.491)

**7.6.1937: Telegram Cheng Bo'ang to Foreign Ministry** Reporting severe Japanese conditions for dissolution of Eastern Hebei regime. (ZRWJ5, p.436) (ZYSL6, p.204-5)

**25.6.1937: Telegram Taiyuan Pacification Commission to Military Affairs Commission**

Reporting treaty of mutual defence between Yin Rugeng and De Wang. (ZYSL6, p.210)

**9.7.1937: Telegram Song Zheyuan to Foreign Ministry Reporting conflict at Lugouqiao.** (SZYWJ, pp.189)

**5.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin, Chongqing.** Reporting planned visit to Tianjin by Kawagoe, and Japanese exercises near Changxindian and Lugouqiao. (QGSB, p.51)

**8.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin:** Reporting conflict at Lugouqiao on night of July 7th. (QGSB, p.51)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin:** Reporting continuing confrontation at Lugouqiao and Qin Dechun's assertion that incident premeditated. (QGSB, p.51-2)

**Yu Feipeng to He Yingqin:** Reporting Japanese troop movements and continuing confrontation at Lugouqiao. (QGSB, p.52)

**9.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting continuing confrontation at Lugouqiao, and expressing suspicion of Japanese requests for ceasefire. (QGSB, p.52)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Sun Lianzhong** Ordering despatch of two divisions to Shijiazhuang or Baoding. (QGSB, p.52)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Informing of troop movements and ordering back to Baoding to command. (QGSB, p.52)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting lull in conflict and negotiations. (QGSB, p.52-3)

**He Yingqin to Feng Zhi'an:** Informing of own return to Nanjing to coordinate response to incident. (QGSB, p.53)

**Yu Feipeng to He Yingqin:** Reporting Japanese wishes to exclude Chinese forces from Changxindian and Lugouqiao, as evidence that conflict premeditated; reproting continuing conflict and declaration of martial law in Beiping. (QGSB, p.53)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting suspension of fighting and assuring of own determination to defend territory. (QGSB, p.53)

**10.7.1937: Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Ordering construction of fortifications. (QGSB, p.53)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting ceasefire conditions. (QGSB, p.53)

**Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun** Asking that central forces' move North be halted to prevent escalation. (QGSB, p.54)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting deterioration of Lugouqiao situation, arrival of Japanese reinforcements, and defence preparations in Beiping. (QGSB, p.54)

**He Yingqin draft gram intended recipient unknown** On renewed conflict at Lugouqiao and reported Japanese reinforcements from Manchuria. (QGSB, p.54)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** Urging resolute resistance. (QGSB, p.54)

**Qian Dajun to Xu Yongchang** Ordering issue of circular telegram to all military units that Japanese provoking conflict in North and Nanjing prearing for resistance. (QGSB, p.54)

**11.7.1937: Qian Dajun to Qin Dechun** Agreeing to hold back central forces and uasking for updated report on situation. (QGSB, p.54)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting Japanese plans for resolution of incident and ceasefire conditions; pessimistic. (QGSB, p.54-5)

**He Yingqin draft gram intended recipient unknown** On report from Qin Dechun of renewed fighting. (QGSB, p.55)

**Qin Dechun, Zhang Zizhong, Feng Zhi'an to Chiang Kai-shek** Asuring of resolution to

resist. (QQSB, p.55)

Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #1, 9pm. (HYJL1, p.3-4)

**12.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting Japanese conditions for resolution of incident. (QQSB, p.55)

**Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun** Reporting meeting with Japanese and beginnings of troop withdrawal. (QQSB, p.55)

**Qin Dechun to Chiang Kai-shek and Feng Yuxiang** Reportin temporary solution but expressing scepticism of its durability. (QQSB, p.55)

**Qian Dajun to Qin Dechun** Warning that Japanese apprently awaiting reinforcements and urging preparation. (QQSB, p.56)

**Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun** Reportin major Japanese troop movements from Manchuria. (QQSB, p.56)

**He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Urging Song to leave Tianjin for Baoding. (QQSB, p.56)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #2, 9pm.** Resolved to send Zhao Xun, Xiong Bin and Yang Xuancheng to North, to urge Song Zheyuan to go at once to Baoding and admitted possibility of negotiations with strict limits. (HYJL1, p.4-5)

**13.7.37: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting that most Japanese troops at Lugouqiao had not withdrawn, that Japan building fortifications in War Zone and that Japanese reinforcements arriving in Tongzhou, urging He to send central army units north. (QQSB, p.56)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting on renewed fighting at Nanyuan and air activity; also arrival of more Japanese reinforcements; people in Beiping alarmed; peaceful in daytime with attacks at night. (QQSB, p.56)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #3, 9pm.** On diplomatic strategy, and meeting of Japanese military attache with vice army minister. (HYJL1, p.6)

**Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry** On conversation with Cadogan on Lugouqiao incident; proposed mediation via Britain and United States and League appeal. (ZRWJ4, p.475-6)

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** On meeting with French Foreign Minister, on China's determination to resist and to appeal to League; Japanese statement to western governments on conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.489-90)

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** On prospects for League intervention in Sino-Japanese dispute. Notes American suspicion of China's intentions. (ZRWJ4, p.490-1)

**14.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** Explaining why has not yet moved to Baoding. (QQSB, p.56)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reportin continued air activity but no air-raids; attacks on Beipiug suburbs. (QQSB, p.56)

**Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin** On armaments to be sent to Baoding and Shijiazhuang; requesting meeting with Ge Dingyuan. (QQSB, p.57)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting transfer of negotiations to Tianjin and intervention of Qi Xieyuan, Chen Juesheng *et al.* (QQSB, p.57)

**He Yingqin to Qin Dechun etc** Demanding more frequent reports from frontline. (QQSB, p.57)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** On arrival in Baoding, and absence of senior officer there; on rumours of Japanese advance, and capture of fortified area. (QQSB, p.57)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting arrival of Manchurian troops to fight with Japanese, and activites of 'traitors' (*hanjian*) in Tianjin; arrival of Kawagoe in Tianjin. (QQSB, p.57)

**Xiong Bin to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting arrival in Baoding; morale very high and no

evidence to support rumours of impending compromise; northern authorities do not understand centre's intentions; warning that air-raid protection in Baoding and Shijiazhuang inadequate; on troop dispositions. (QGSB, p.57-8)

**Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun** Major Japanese troops and armament advance on Beiping, conflicts in suburbs of Beiping. General situation that of preparation of major war. (QGSB, p.58)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #4, 9pm.**

On situation in North and fear that if central forces arrive, incident will escalate. On need to issue Foreign Ministry statement and difficulty of doing so until rumours of Song Zheyuan agreement with Japanese cleared up. On problems of centre-north liaison. On efforts of 'traitors' to divide Song Zheyuan's forces. On reported conditions of alleged agreement. On strategy and diplomatic policy. (HYJL1, p.6-7)

**Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On efforts to explain China's side of conflict to German Foreign Minister; on German impartiality. (ZRWJ4, p.504)

**Japanese government statement on Lugouqiao** (ZRWJ4, p.511-2)

**15.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On divisions within 29th Army on response to incident. (QGSB, p.58)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On reports of efforts to establish 'puppet' (*wei*) government. (QGSB, p.58)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** Expressing concern over Song Zheyuan's attitude. (QGSB, p.59)

**Xiong Bin to Chiang Kai-shek** Urgent On negotiations in Tianjin and Song's reaction to conditions passed on by centre. (QGSB, p.59)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** Urgent On negotiations in Tianjin and recent casualties in fighting. (QGSB, p.59)

**He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Most urgent On report that Japanese massing around Nanyuan and warning that present lull deceptive, as in 1932 attack on Shanghai. (QGSB, p.59)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #5, 9pm.** (HYJL1, p.7-8)

**Wang Chonghui** conversation with Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen. On future of conflict: Hugessen asked for guarantees that China would use forces only in self-defence; proposed mediation. (ZRWJ4, p.470-3)

**Telegram Jiang Tingfu to Waijiaobu** On meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister and discussion of League intervention. (ZRWJ4, p.484-5)

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** On discussion on mediation with French Foreign Minister and US ambassador; problems of joint action. (ZRWJ4, p.491)

**16.7.1936: Appendix to HYJL** On ammunition and air defences. (HYJL2, p.17)

**Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** Assuring Nanjign of own caution in approaching solution to Lugouqiao incident, and urging further preparations by centre. (QGSB, p.59)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On contacts with representative in Tianjin. (QGSB, p.59-60)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #6, 9pm.** Report that had warned Song Zheyuan and Qin Dechun of Japanese preparations and asked for their reports.

Appendix: Opinions on extension (*quanbuhua*) vs. localisation (*jubuhua*) of war. (HYJL1, p.8-9)

**Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese attempts to spread rumours in Germany and Cheng's efforts to counter; problems of publicising Chinese version of events. (ZRWJ4, p.504-5)

**17.7.1937: He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** On Japanese mobilisation, commandeering of commercial shipping and troop movements. Warning that peace negotiations aimed at slowing Chinese war preparations and that protracted war must be expected. (QGSB, p.60)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On fierce fighting near Beiping, Japanese troop movements and consolidation of defences. (*QQSB*, p.60)

**Zhang Yueting to He Yingqin** Agreeing to report by telephone and informing of state of conflict. (*QQSB*, p.60)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** Reporting that Song alienated from centre; unable to explain details by telegram. (*QQSB*, p.60)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** On Chinese troop movements. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Xu Yongchang** On command arrangements for Chinese forces. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Xiong Bin** Denying that 10th division to be sent to Baoding. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On Japanese fortification construction. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #7, 9pm.** On meeting between Hidaka of Japanese Embassy and Wang Chonghui, and between Cao Haosen and Japanese military attaché. On procedures for severance of relations and declaration of war and their advantages and disadvantages. On Xiong Bin's recommendation that Song Zheyuan's appointment as commander-in-chief be announced forthwith. (*HYJL1*, p.9-10)

**Telegram Wang Zhengting to Nanjing** On attempts to get support from US Foreign Minister; Minister refers to agreement which Wang denies. (*ZRWJ4*, p.445)

**Record of talks Wang Chonghui and Knatchbull-Hugessen** Huegessen refers to reports of five-article agreement between Chinese and Japanese in North China; Wang denies. (*ZRWJ4*, p.470-3)

**18.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On Japanese reinforcements; slight relaxation of tension in Beiping. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On improvement of relations with Song Zheyuan and Song's attitude to conflict. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** On reports that Tianjin feels there is no hope for peace. On Chinese and Japanese fortification construction. (*QQSB*, p.61)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #8, 9pm.** On problems of assembly of forces and inadequate central coordination of plans. (*HYJL1*, p.11)

**19.7.1937: He Yingqin to Qin Dechun** Assuring of Nanjing's appreciation of Qin and Song's efforts and informing that total war most probable. (*QQSB*, p.62)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On Song Zheyuan and Lin Gengyu's opinions on current situation. (*QQSB*, p.62)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On communications with Song Zheyuan. (*QQSB*, p.62)

**Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On talks with Katsuki. (*QQSB*, p.62)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** On end of Song-Katsuki talks in Tianjin and return of Song to Beiping. (*QQSB*, p.62)

**Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On Song's partial account of talks with Katsuki. (*QQSB*, p.62-3)

**Qin Dechun to Qian Dajun** On Japanese troop movements and meeting with Katsuki. (*QQSB*, p.63)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #9,** On talks with Hidaka of Embassy and Kita Seiichi, military attaché, and removal of important documents for storage out of capital. (*HYJL1*, p.11-12)

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** On attempt to secure French government's moral and material support. (*ZRWJ4*, p.492-3)

**20.7.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On atmosphere in Beiping and continuing conflict in

suburbs. (QQSB, p.63)

**He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Expressing relief at Song's return to Beiping, appreciation of efforts and requesting frequent reports on developments. (QQSB, p.63)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On Japanese attempts to divide 29th Army, bombardment of Lugouqiao, and plans to occupy area north-west of Beiping. (QQSB, p.63)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On (?Song's) resistance to movement of central armies north. (QQSB, p.63)

**Xiong Bin to Chiang Kai-shek** On report from Changxindian of Japanese attack and continuing Japanese troop movements; on own unsuccessful attempt to get to Beiping. (QQSB, p.63-4)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #10**, On greater vigilance on illegal Japanese activities in Chinese territory. (HYJL1, p.12)

**21.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On fear that cannot avoid war. (QQSB, p.64)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On bombardment of Lugouqiao and flights over Beiping. (QQSB, p.64)

**Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek** Complaining of hostility encountered from Baoding officials; on Song Zheyuan and talks with Japanese. Recommending that correspondence between Song and centre be kept secret to avoid turning Japanese against Song. (QQSB, p.64)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On exchange of frontline forces; on future of incident. (QQSB, p.64)

**Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek** On situation in North and reported ceasefire conditions. (QQSB, p.64)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #11**, 9pm. On general mobilisation; immediate implementation to be ordered to all relevant bodies. (HYJL1, p.13)

**Record of talks Chiang Kai-shek and Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen**. Chiang trying to secure British mediation, and Hugessen warning of consequences of conflict with Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.473)

**22.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** Assuring He that he acted at all times according to the wishes of the centre and passing on the conditions agreed with Japanese. (QQSB, p.65)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Passing on Jia Deyao's report on political situation in North. (QQSB, p.65)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting restoration of traffic across Lugouqiao but noting obstacles to final resolution. (QQSB, p.65)

**He Yingqin to Liu Zhi** On command arrangements. (QQSB, p.65)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** On meetings with Qin Dechun and Jia Deyao, and impending meeting with Song. (QQSB, p.65-6)

**Yang Xuancheng to He Yingqin** Long report on divisions between Song and centre and reasons for this; Song's misjudgement of situation and dangers of resulting under-preparation; continuing efforts by Japanese to secure separate North China regime. (QQSB, p.66)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #12**, 9pm. On propaganda war with Japan. (HYJL1, p.13)

**23.7.1937: Yan Kuan to He Yingqin** On troop movements. (QQSB, p.66-7)

**Zhao Xun to He Yingqin** On meeting with Song Zheyuan; reporting that returning to Nanjing as no need to stay in North. (QQSB, p.67)

**He Yingqin to Song Zheyuan** Expressing appreciation of efforts; urging more frequent reports and assuring of support. (QQSB, p.67)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #13**, On education in wartime, steel production and

fortifications at Shijiazhuang. (HYJL1, p.14-15)

**24.7.1937: Ji Xingwen to He Yingqin** Written from hospital. (QQSB, p.67)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On Katsuki-Ueda meeting on conflict; continuing conflict in Beiping suburbs. (QQSB, p.67)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On suppression of anti-Japanese writing and surveillance of schools and colleges. (QQSB, p.67)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #14, 9pm.** On future of conflict, transport problems, Yangtze river defences and mass mobilisation. (HYJL1, p.15-16)

**Record of talks Chiang Kai-shek and Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen.** On prospects for British mediation and possible terms of settlement. (ZRWJ4, p.474-5)

**Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On German views on Sino-Japanese conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.505)

**25.7.1937: Xiong Bin to He Yingqin** On projected meeting with 29th Army chief of staff. (QQSB, p.68)

**Feng Zhi'an etc to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese troop movements. (QQSB, p.68)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On renewed conflict near Langfang. (QQSB, p.68)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #15, 9pm.** On estimates of Japanese troop strength in North China and Liaoning/Rehe; on protests at Chinese flights over concession areas; on fortification at Baoding, on need for more frequent report to centre from 29th Army. (HYJL1, p.17, 62)

**Record of talks Chiang Kai-shek and US Ambassador.** On prospects of mediation and problem of US Neutrality Act. (ZRWJ4, p.422-4)

**26.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On Japanese attack on Guang'anmen. (QQSB, p.68)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese attack on Chinese forces at Langfang. (QQSB, p.68)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On Japanese attack on Chinese forces at Langfang. (QQSB, p.68)

**Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On Japanese attack on Chinese forces at Langfang; warning that traffic between Beiping and Tianjin cut off and Tianjin difficult to hold. (QQSB, p.68) *Chiang Kia-shek reply: should at all costs hold Beiping, Baoding and Wanping.* (QQSB, p.69)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting that Langfang overrun by Japanese and that more conflict in environs of Beiping. (QQSB, p.69)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #16, 9pm.** Xiong Bin's report on differing attitudes of 29th Army to conflict and talks with Japanese; Song's advocacy of attacking war; Japanese troop movements; Chinese troop dispositions; Japanese propaganda and state of conflict. (HYJL2, p.3-5)

**Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry** On conversation with Eden and fear that outbreak of war would end possibility of mediation. (ZRWJ4, p.476)

**NCGA ultimatum to 29th Army** (ZRWJ4, p.512-3)

**27.7.1937: Song Zheyuan open telegram to all military and civil bodies.** On preservation of peace and sovereignty and allegiance to centre. (QQSB, p.69)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Reporting Japanese ultimatum for withdrawal from Beiping. (QQSB, p.69)

**Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** Warning that Beiping-Tianjin in danger. (QQSB, p.69)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On Japanese attack on 29th Army. (QQSB, p.69)

**From Appendix to HYJL Resolutions of meeting chaired by Chiang Kai-shek** On support



for 29th Army. (HYJL2, p.17-18)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On defence of Beiping. (QQSB, p.69-70)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** On defence of Beiping. (QQSB, p.70)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On renewed serious fighting. (QQSB, p.70)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Most urgent Passing on Qin Dechun's report on Japanese ultimatum on withdrawal from Beiping and requests for support. (QQSB, p.70)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #17, 9pm.** Report from Shanghai on Japanese plans to destroy international transmitter; on mobilisation; on transfer of offices to safer places; on arms reserves. (HYJL2, p.5-6)

**Record of talks Chiang Kai-shek and Trautmann** Chiang requesting that Germany use influence with Japan to end conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.495-6)

**Chiang Kai-shek and Italian Ambassador conversation** (ZRWJ4, p.496)

**Chiang Kai-shek and French Ambassador conversation** (ZRWJ4, p.486)

**28.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On rejection of Japanese ultimatum. (QQSB, p.70).

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin Urgent** On fierce fighting near Beiping. (QQSB, p.70)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Song Zheyuan** On response to Japanese advance. (QQSB, p.70-1)

**Chiang Kai-shek to Pang Bingsun** On preparations to resist Japanese advance, (QQSB, p.71)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On major Japanese attack on Beiping suburbs. (QQSB, p.71)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin Urgent** On Japanese general offensive on Beiping suburbs, and Song's determination to resist. (QQSB, p.71)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** Most urgent On Chiense counter-attack. (QQSB, p.71)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #18, 9pm.** On meetings with Japanese naval and military attachés. (HYJL2, p.6)

**29.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to He Yingqin** On fighting near Beiping; request for reinforcements. (QQSB, p.71)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin xianjikedao** On fighting near Beiping; on Japanese proposals for new political appointments; on criticism of Song for failing in duty to nation. (QQSB, p.71-2)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** On own departure from Beiping and continuing defence of city. (QQSB, p.72)

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin** On mutiny of puppet PPC; on Japanese bombing of schools. (QQSB, p.72)

**Sun Lianzhong to Qian Dajun** On withdrawal from Cangzhou; poor morale of 29th Army; absence of fortifications between Cangzhou and Baoding; rumors that Song Zheyuan to resign. (QQSB, p.72)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #19, 9pm.** On food supplies and civilian evacuation; prevention of espionage and expansion of armies. (HYJL2, p.7)

**Telegram Moscow Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On Soviet government perceptions of Nanjing in Sino-Japanese conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.487)

**Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On propaganda. (ZRWJ4, p.506)

**30.7.1937: Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** Presenting resignation. (QQSB, p.72)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting situation in Tianjin. (QQSB, p.73)

**Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek** Reporting mutiny of Tongzhou PPC. (QQSB, p.73)

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #20, 9pm.** Ordering appointment of officer to supervise defences on Beiping-Guisui railway; on arrangements to deal with Japanese concessions and residents in China. (HYJL2, p.8)

**Telegram Moscow Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Soviet Press on Sino-Japanese conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.486-7)**

**Record of talks Xu Mo and Trautmann On impossibility of German intervention. (ZRWJ4, p.496)**

**31.7.1937: Qin Dechun to He Yingqin Reporting that Song under great stress and therefore immoderate in speech; reporting that Feng Zhi'an now acting commander of 29th Army. (QQSB, p.73)**

**Qin Dechun to Chiang Kai-shek Reporting battles of Beiping-Tianjin and advocating all-out war of resistance. (QQSB, p.73)**

**Feng Zhi'an to Chiang Kai-shek On arrangements for defence of Beiping-Hankou railway. (QQSB, p.73)**

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin On situation in occupied Beiping. (QQSB, p.73-4)**

**Yan Guan to He Yingqin On mutiny of Tongzhou PPC; on Liu Ruming; blaming complacency on Song's part for failure of defence. (QQSB, p.74)**

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #21, 9pm. (HYJL2, p.9)**

**1.8.1937: Song Zheyuan to Chiang Kai-shek On new troop dispositions. (QQSB, p.74)**

**Zhang Yueting to Qian Dajun 1. On troop dispositions and resistance in Tianjin. (QQSB, p.74)**

**Sun Lianzhong to Chiang Kai-shek On Japanese troop movements. (QQSB, p.75)**

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #22, 9pm. (HYJL2, p.9)**

**2.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #23, 9pm. Resolution to notify news agencies that names of military officers above rank of brigade commander and their movements must not be reported in Press. (HYJL2, p.10)**

**3.8.1937: Yan Guan to He Yingqin On occupied Beiping. (QQSB, p.75)**

**Zhang Yueting to Qian Dajun Reporting increased puppet movements in Chaha'er, projected guerilla attacks on Changxindian by Sun Lianzhong's forces; blaming loss of Beiping on lack of resolution by senior officers. (QQSB, p.75)**

**He Yingqin to Feng Zhi'an Requesting information. (QQSB, p.75)**

**Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #24, 9pm. On slowness of dissemination of important information. (HYJL2, p.10)**

**4.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #25, On reorganisation of 29th Army and movement of government and industry during war. (HYJL2, p.11-12)**

**6.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #27, 9pm. Appendix - Yan Xishan's comments on protracted war. (HYJL2, p.13)**

**8.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #29, 9pm. On preparations for attack on Shanghai; on restoration of political education in 29th Army. (HYJL2, p.13-4)**

**9.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #30, 9pm. On situation in Shanghai; Falkenhausen report on war in North China. (HYJL2, p.14-15)**

**10.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #31, 9pm. 1-3 on mobilisation and balance of power. (HYJL2, p.15)**

**11.8.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry On Kong Xiangxi visit to Berlin and meetings with Ministers. (ZRWJ4, p.506)**

**12.8.1937: Meeting of Senior Military Officials, #33, 9pm. (HYJL2, p.16-17)**

**13.8.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry On more pro-Chinese attitude shown by German press; on talks with vice foreign minister and impossibility of getting German and British-American support. (ZRWJ4, p.506-7)**

**15.8.1937: Sun Lianzhong to He Yingqin On new political appointments in Beiping. (QQSB, p.75)**

**16.8.1937: Telegram Liu Ruming to Chiang Kai-shek On Li Shouxin. (ZYSL6, p.251)**  
**Telegram Kong Xiangxi to CEC On talks with western governments and need to act decisively in seeking support. (ZRWJ4, p.345)**

**18.8.1937: Telegram Wang Zhengting to Nanjing On support from overseas Chinese in United States. (ZRWJ4, p.446)**

**19.8.1937: Japan's refusal to British proposal of neutral zone in Shanghai. (ZRWJ4, p.513-4)**

**20.8.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On meeting with French Foreign Minister, and probable attitudes of League members to appeal by China, provision of material support and imposition of sanctions against Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.493-4)**

**21.8.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On meeting with President on League support. (ZRWJ4, p.492-3)**

**26.8.1937: CPC resolution on War of Resistance to Japan On dismissal of Japanese advisers and repeal of extra-territorial rights. (ZRWJ4, p.347-8)**

**8.9.1937: Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry On conversation with Cadogan on attitude of US government, and implications of British intervention for Hong Kong; problem of neutrality in face of Japanese aggression. (ZRWJ4, p.477)**

**13.9.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry On meeting with German Foreign Minister: on China's relations with USSR; position of CCP; Mussolini visit to Berlin; prospects for League intervention. (ZRWJ4, p.507-8)**

**18.9.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun (Geneva) to Foreign Ministry On efforts to draw attention of press and League of Nations to China's position. (ZRWJ4, p.345-6) Repeated (ZRWJ4, p.349)**

**19.9.1937: Japanese Navy demand that all foreign diplomatic missions withdraw from Nanjing (ZRWJ4, p.514-5)**

**22.9.1937: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Moscow Embassy Asking that China's resistance to Japan be recognised as essential to stability of Far East and therefore to security of Soviet Union. (ZRWJ4, p.488)**

**1.10.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry On Mussolini visit to Germany; German government assurances that Japan warned over bombing of civilians but to no effect; on German suggestion that it was too early for mediation. (ZRWJ4, p.508-9)**

**6.10.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On divided opinions and general apathy of Far Eastern Advisory Committee. (ZRWJ4, p.350)**

**League of Nations Resolutions on Sino-Japanese Conflict Chinese versions in ZRWJ4, pp.359-62.**

**9.10.1937: Telegram Yu Ming + Zhou Ban (Shanghai) to Foreign Ministry On Japanese contacts with United States government and insistence that not an aggressor in China. (ZRWJ4, p.350-1)**

**Intelligence report, Military Affairs Commission. On Italian support for Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.509-10)**

**12.10.1937: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Chinese Embassy in Paris On conference of signatories of Nine-Power conference. (ZRWJ4, p.351)**

**Telegram Wang Zhengting (Washington) to Foreign Ministry On reactions to Roosevelt speech on Sino-Japanese conflict. (ZRWJ4, p.351-2)**

**Telegram Wang Zhengting to Chiang Kai-shek On Hu Shi's meeting with Roosevelt; on Roosevelt's suggestion that China should accommodate Japanese economic needs; on suggestion that Nine-Power conference discuss Sino-Japanese dispute in absence of Chinese delegates; on China's capacity for prolonged war. (ZRWJ4, p.362)**

**Telegram Hu Shi to Foreign Ministry On meeting with Roosevelt. (ZRWJ4, p.362-3)**

**Telegram Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry On discussion with British Ambassador on procedures and agenda of conference; on ignorance of League of situation in Far East. (ZRWJ4, p.376)**

**14.10.1937: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japanese attitudes to Nine-Power conference and reservations of League. (ZRWJ4, p.377)**

**15.10.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On conversation with French Foreign Ministry on Nine-Power conference, and problems of participants and venue. (ZRWJ4, p.377-8)**

**18.10.1937: Telegram Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry On talks with Foreign Minister on Nine-Power conference. (ZRWJ4, p.378)**

**Telegram Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry On possibility of German participation in Nine-Power conference, and reservations of other powers. (ZRWJ4, p.379)**

**19.10.1937: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry On Japanese press comments that Nine-Power conference will perpetuate non-recognition of Manchouguo. (ZRWJ4, p.364)**

**Wajiaobu to Executive Yuan On appointment of Nine-Power conference delegates. (ZRWJ4, p.402)**

**21.10.1937: Telegram Jiang Tingfu (Moscow) to Foreign Ministry On meeting with US Ambassador; China's genuine desire for peace; impossibility of accepting Japanese demands on North China. (ZRWJ4, p.379)**

**23.10.1937: Telegram Copenhagen to Foreign Ministry (ZRWJ4, p.363)**

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** On meeting with US ambassador on France's provision of material support to China; on plans for Brussels Conference; on concern over German, Italian and USSR attitudes to dispute. (ZRWJ4, p.364)

**Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On British protest at attack on attachés. (ZRWJ4, p.477-8)

**Foreign Ministry proposal to National Defence Commission** ON question of ceasefire. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**Army Ministry proposal to National Defence Commission** ON question of ceasefire. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**24.10.1937: Telegram Yu Hongjun (Mayor of Shanghai) to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese activities in Shanghai. (ZRWJ4, p.365)

**Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On reports that Italy to join anti-Comintern pact. (ZRWJ4, p.365-6)

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to GWJ, GTQ, QT** On prospects for Brussels Conference and attitude China should adopt. (ZRWJ4, p.402-3)

**26.10.1937: Telegram Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry:** On Japan's refusal to attend Conference. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**Telegram Moscow Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On USSR Foreign Minister's pessimism over Conference. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**27.10.1937: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Chinese Embassy in Paris** Listing 18 infringements of Chinese sovereignty by Japan since 1931. (Archive, XVIII, 1289; ZRWJ4, p.403-4)

**28.10.1937: Telegrams (2) Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese refusal to attend Brussels conference. (Archive, XVIII, 1289; ZRWJ4, p.385-6)

**29.10.1937: Foreign Ministry documents on Japan's refusal to attend Brussels Conference.** (ZRWJ4, p.382-5)

**Tokyo Embassy to Foreign Ministry** On Japanese attitudes to conflict and Conference. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry** On conversation with Davies. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**30.10.1937: Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry** Warning that rumours of informal Sino-Japanese peace talks harming prospects for Conference. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry** Warning that British and American governments have no specific plans for resolution of Sino-Japanese dispute. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**31.10.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On German willingness to consider methods other than Conference of resolving Sino-Japanese dispute. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**1.11.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang to Foreign Ministry** On German attitudes to Brussels Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.390)

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Brussels** On mediation and extent to which willing to accommodate Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.404)

**Proposal made by Foreign Ministry to National Defence Commission** Recommending compliance with Davies request that Chinese delegation withdraw from discussion of dispute. (Archive, XVIII, 1289)

**2.11.1937: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Brussels Principles on which must reply to any points raised at Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.405)**

**3.11.1937: Fu Sinian on Brussels Conference (no date); (ZRWJ4, p.408-10); "On the Attitude and policy which China should adopt towards the Brussels Conference" (no date); (ZRWJ4, p.410-16)**

**Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry On meeting with Eden; on Japanese participation in Brussels Conference and sanctions; on perceptions of Japan's attitude. (ZRWJ4, p.393-4)**

**4.11.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun (Brussels) to Foreign Ministry On opening session of Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.394-5)**

**6.11.1937: Telegram Cheng Tianfang and Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On talks with Davis on German mediation. (ZRWJ4, p.396-7)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Brussels Supplementary instructions for Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.406)**

**7.11.1937: Telegram Jiang Fangzhen to Foreign Ministry On tensions at Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.397)**

**8.11.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On time constraints on Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.395-6)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Brussels On need to seek solution to dispute via Conference and issue of German mediation. (ZRWJ4, p.406-7)**

**10.11.1937: Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry On meeting with Eden and response to Japanese non-attendance at Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.398)**

**Telegram Gu Weijun Guo Taiqi Qian Tai to Foreign Ministry On progress of Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.398-9)**

**12.11.1937: Fall of Shanghai. (CMC)**

**Japanese Government's Second Statement on Brussels Conference; Conference's Reply (ZRWJ4, p.387-90)**

**13.11.1937: Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry On progress of Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.399-400)**

**Telegram Foreign Ministry to Brussels Suggesting that if Japan unwilling to attend Conference, unlikely to accept mediation from Washington signatories. (ZRWJ4, p.407)**

**14.11.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On progress of Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.400-1)**

**22.11.1937: Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry in Hankou On dissatisfaction with declaration of Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.401-2)**

**1.12.1937: Telegram Guo Taiqi to Foreign Ministry On western satisfaction with results of Brussels Conference. (ZRWJ4, p.478)**

**Telegram Gu Weijun to Foreign Ministry On meeting with French vice-president on Italian recognition of Manzhouguo and prospects for western pressure on Japan. (ZRWJ4, p.494-5)**

**10.12.1937: Telegram Wang Zhengting to Foreign Ministry On difficulty of securing material support from United States. (ZRWJ4, p.447)**

**28.12.1937: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Moscow Embassy On Japanese mediation terms passed on by Trautmann, for opinions of Soviet government. (ZRWJ4, p.496-7)**

**1.1.1938: Trautmann conversation with Wang Chonghui On implications of Japanese terms. (ZRWJ4, p.497-8)**

**2.1.1938: Telegram Foreign Ministry to Tokyo Embassy On mediation terms passed on by Trautmann; noting misgivings and asking for clarification through German ambassador in Tokyo. (ZRWJ4, p.498-9)**

**12.1.1938: Record of talks Wang Chonghui and Trautmann Trautmann urging Wang to make formal response to Japanese terms. (ZRWJ4, p.499-500)**

**13.1.1938: Wang Chonghui visits Trautmann Wang asks for further clarification of Japanese terms. (ZRWJ4, p.500-2)**

**Foreign Ministry report on German mediation *dated January, 1938.* (ZRWJ4, p.502-3)**

Glossary.

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Bei-Ning tielu	北寧鐵路
bei shang kang Ri, shou fu shi di	北上抗日收復失地
Beiping zhengwu zhengli	北平政務整理委員會
weiyuanhui	
Cangzhou	蒼州
Cao Kun	曹錕
Cao Rulin	曹汝林
Chaha'er	察哈爾
Chameng zhengfu	察蒙政府
Changping	昌平
Chaoyangmen	朝陽門
Cheheqiao	澈河橋
Chen Bulei	陳布雷
Chen Cheng	陳誠
Chen Gongbo	陳公博
Chen Jitang	陳濟棠
Chen Juesheng	陳覺生
Chen Lifu	陳立夫
Chen Weizhou	陳維周
Chen Yi	陳義
Chen Zhongfu	陳中孚
Cheng Bo'ang	程伯昂
Cheng Ke	程克
Cheng Xigeng	程錫庚
Chengde	承德



Chengzhi toulou guanshui zanxing  
tiaolie

chihua shili

Chiang Kai-shek

Da Han yijun

Da Yuan diguo

Dai Jitao

Datan

Dazhong shenghuo

De Wang

Ding Shaoji

Doihara Kenji

Dongbei zhengwu weiyuanhui

Dongjiaomin xiang

Dongjuzi

Dongzhazi

dongzheng

Du Zhongyuan

Dushikou

Duan Qirui

dunmu bangjiao ling

Duolun

fanzheng

Fang Weizhi

fei

Feng Ti

Feng Yuxiang

Feng Zhi'an

Fengtai

Fengzhen

Fu Zuoyi

Fuxingshe

Fukagawa Tsuneji

Gao Lingwei

Gao Zongwu

Gaoliying

Ge Dingyuan

Giga Seiya

goujie

Gu Mengyu

Gu Weijun

懲治偷漏關稅暫行條例

赤化勢力

蔣介石

大漢義軍

大元帝國

戴季陶

大灘

大眾生活

德王

丁紹及

土肥原賢爾

東北政務委員會

東交民巷

東局子

東柵子

東征

杜重遠

獨石口

段祺瑞

敦睦邦交令

多倫

反正

方維智

匪

鄧悌

馮玉祥

馮治安

豐台

豐鎮

傅作義

復興社

深川經二

高凌<sub>霄</sub>尉

高宗武

高麗營

戈定遠

儀我誠也

勾結

顧孟余

顧維鈞

Guandong Army	關東軍
guanhua	官話
Guling	
Guo Yukai	郭育凱
Guomindang	國民黨
Guomindang zhongyang zhengzhi huiyi	國民黨中央政治會議
Guyuan	沽原
Haiguangsi	海光寺
Han Fujū	韓復榘
hanjian	漢奸
Hayashi Senjuro	林銑十郎
He Yingqin	何應欽
He-Mei xieding	何梅協定
Hebei	河北
Hebei sheng zhi'an huiyi	河北省只治安會議
Hirota Koki	廣田弘毅
Hu Enpu	胡恩溥
Hu Hanmin	胡漢民
Hu Shi	胡適
Hu Yukun	胡毓坤
Huabei fanggong xieding neirong	華北防共協定內容
Huabei xuanzhuān zongdui	華北宣傳總隊
Huabei zizhi fang'an	華北自治方案
Huabei zizhi yundong	華北自治運動
huanbing beizhan	緩兵備戰
Huang Fu	黃郛
Huitong gongsi	惠通公司
Imai Takeo	今井武夫
Isogai Rensuke	磯谷廉介
Itagaki Seishiro	板垣征四郎
Ishii Itaro	石射猪六郎
Ishiwara Kanji	石原莞爾
Iwai Eiichi	岩井英一
Ji-Cha suijing gongshu	冀察綏靖公署
Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui	冀察政務委員會
Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui zuzhi dagang	冀察政務委員會組織大綱
Jidong fanggong zizhi weiyuanhui	冀東防共自治委員會
Jidong fanggong zizhi zhengfu	冀東防共自治政府
Jining	集寧
Jixi Yaoshan xingzhengqu	冀西堯山行政區

Jia Deyao  
Jiang Menglin  
Jiang Zuobin  
Jin-Shi tielu gongchengju  
Jin Wensi  
jinji zhi'an mingling  
jingji weiyuanhui  
Junshi weiyuanhui Beiping fenhui  
Kagesa Sadaaki  
Kahoku chuton gun  
Kang Ri jiuguo jun  
Kang Ze  
Kanto gun  
Kasuya Renji  
Kawagoe Shigeru  
Kita Seiichi  
Konoe Fumimaro  
Kong Xiangxi  
kongqi  
Kuwashima Kazue  
Leling  
Leng Jiaji  
Li Dijun  
Li Houji  
Li Shouxin  
Li Sihao  
Li Tingyu  
Li Zeyi  
Li Zongren  
lianzhang  
liansheng zizhi yundong  
Lin Shu'en  
Lintingkou  
Ling Shifen  
Liu Chengxian  
Liu Guitang  
Liulihe  
Liu Ruming  
Liu Xiang  
Liu Zhe  
Liu Zuozhou

賈德耀  
蔣夢麟  
蔣作賓  
津石鐵路工程局  
金文泗  
緊急治安命令  
經濟委員會  
軍事委員會北平分會  
影佐禎昭  
華北駐屯軍  
抗日救國軍  
康澤  
關東軍  
糟谷廉二  
川樾茂  
喜多誠一  
近衛文彥  
孔祥熙  
空氣  
桑島主計  
樂陵  
冷家驥  
李迪俊  
李厚基  
李守信  
李思浩  
李廷玉  
李擇一  
李宗仁  
連長  
連省自治運動  
林樹恩  
林亭口  
凌士芬  
劉成先  
劉桂堂  
琉璃河  
劉汝明  
劉湘  
劉哲  
劉佐周

Long Yun	龍雲
Lu Jianzhang	陸建章
Lu Zhonglin	鹿鐘麟
Lu Zongyu	陸宗輿
Luanzhou	灤洲
Lugouqiao	蘆溝橋
Luo Jiaheng	羅家衡
Lutai	蘆台
Malanyu	馬蘭峪
Manzhouguo	滿洲國
Matsui Gennosuke	松井源之助
Matsui Iwane	松井石根
Matsumuro Takayoshi	松屋孝郎
Men Zhizhong	門致中
Menggu bianfang zizhi jun	蒙古邊防自治軍
Menggu difang zizhi zhengwu weiyuanhui	蒙古地方自治政務委員會
Mengzhenghui	蒙政會
mianhua xiehui	棉花協會
Minami Jiro	南次郎
Minzhong kang Ri jiuguojun	民衆抗日救國軍
Morishima Goro	守島伍郎
Muto Akira	武藤章
Nagata Tetsuzan	永田鐵山
Nanshizhuzi	南石柱子
Nemoto Hiroshi	根本博
Ninghe	寧河
Nishio Toshizo	西尾壽造
Okada Keisuke	岡田啟介
Okamura Nei'ji (Yasuji)	岡村寧次
Pan Yugui	潘毓桂
Ping-Jin weishu siling	平津衛戍司令
Qi Xieyuan	齊燮元
Qin Dechun	秦德純
qin Ri pai	親日派
Qin-Tu xieding	秦土協定
qingbaosi	情報司
qu wei cun cheng	去偽存誠
Quanguo gejie jiuguo lianhehui	全國各界救國聯合會
Rehe	熱河
Sakai Takashi (Ryu)	酒井隆

Sanmin zhuyi yuekan	三民主義月刊
Seto Takashi	瀬戸尚
Shang Zhen	商震
Shangdu	商都
Shanghai Mainichi	上海每日
Shao Yulin	邵毓麟
Shao Yuanchong	邵元冲
Shi Jingting	石敬亭
Shi Yousan	石友三
Shigemitsu Mamoru	重光葵
Shimizu Tozo	清水董三
shokisei	書記生
Shunyi	順義
Song Zheyuan	宋哲元
Song Ziwen	宋子文
Su Desheng	蘇德盛
Sugiyama Gen	杉山元
Suiyuan	綏遠
Suiyuan sheng jingnei ge mengqi difang zizhi zhengwu weiyuanhui zuzhi dagang	綏遠省境內各盟旗地方自治政務委 員會組織大綱
Suma Yakichiro	須摩彌吉郎
Sun Chuanfang	孫傳芳
Sun Fengming	孫鳳鳴
Sun Ke	孫科
Sun Xiangting	孫香亭
Sun Yongqin	孫永勤
Suzuki Yoshiyuki	鈴木美通
Tada Hayao (Shun)	多田駿
Takahashi Korekiyo	高橋是清
Takahashi Tan	高橋坦
Tanaka Takeo	田中武夫
Tanaka Ryukichi	田中隆吉
Tang Enbo	湯恩伯
Tang Youren	唐有壬
Tanggu xieding	塘沽協定
Tani Hisao	谷實夫
Tao Shangming	陶尚銘
Tashiro Kan'ichiro	田代皖一郎
tepaiyuan	特派員
tewu jiguan	特務機關

tiaozheng	調整
tokumu kikan	特務機關
Tongxian	通縣
Tongzhou	通州
Toseiha	統治派
Ueda Kenkichi	植田謙吉
Umezu Yoshijiro	梅津美治郎
waijiao weiyuanhui	外交委員會
Wan Fulin	萬福麟
Wang Chonghui	王寵惠
Wang Hongnian	王鴻年
Wang Jingwei	汪精衛
Wang Kemin	王克敏
Wang Shijie	王世傑
Wang Shijiu	王式九
Wang Ying	王英
Wang Yitang	王揖唐
Wang Zaoshi	王造時
Wang Zhengting	王正廷
Watanabe Kosaburo	渡邊光三郎
wei	偽
Wei Zonghan	魏宗瀚
Weixian	雒縣
Weng Wenhao	翁文灝
Weng Zhaoyuan	翁照垣
Wu Zexiang	吳澤湘
Xiao Zhenying	蕭振瀛
xian	縣
xiang	鄉
Xianghe	香河
"Xianhua huangdi."	"閑話皇帝."
Xibei jiuguohui	西北救國會
Xinan junshi weiyuanhui	西南軍事委員會
Xinan zhengwu weiyuanhui	西南政務委員會
Xinan zhixingbu	西南執行部
Xing Zhong gongsi	興中公司
Xinghe	興和
Xinsheng zhoukan	新生周刊
Xiong Bin	熊斌
Xiong Shihui	熊式輝
Xu Daolin	徐道鄰

Xu Mo  
Xu Shiyiing  
Xu Shuzheng  
Yan Dongwu  
Yan Xishan  
Yang Kaijia  
Yang Yongtai  
Yang Yunzhu  
yangwu yundong  
Yangyuan  
Yanping  
Yantai  
yantaο  
Ye Chucang  
yi-er-jiu yundong  
Yin Rugeng  
Yin Tong  
Yingmen  
Yu Feipeng  
Yu Hanmou  
Yu Xuezhong  
Yuguan  
Yuan Liang  
Yue Kaixian  
zaibatsu  
Zhang Bangchang  
Zhang Bi  
Zhang Boling  
Zhang Jia'ao  
Zhang Qun  
Zhang Ting'e  
Zhang Xueliang  
Zhang Yueting  
Zhang Yunrong  
Zhang Ziyang  
Zhang Zizhong  
Zhang Zuolin  
Zhangbei  
Zhangjiakou  
zhanqu  
Zhao Hengti

徐謨  
許世英  
徐樹錚  
顏東五  
閻錫山  
楊開甲  
楊永泰  
楊雲竹  
洋務運動  
陽源  
延平  
煙台  
驗討  
叶楚傖  
一二九運動  
殷汝耕  
殷桐  
應門  
俞飛鵬  
余漢謀  
于學忠  
榆關  
袁良  
岳開憲  
財閥  
張邦昌  
張璧  
張伯苓  
張嘉敖  
張群  
張廷諤  
張學良  
張樾停  
張允榮  
張子揚  
張自忠  
張作霖  
張北  
張家口  
戰區  
趙恒惕

Zhong-Ri heban dianli youxian gongsi	中日合辦電力有限公司
Zhong-Ri huabei tonghang hangkong xieding	中日華北通航航空協定
zhongyuan dazhan	中原大戰
Zhou Zuomin	周作民
Zhu Hexiang	朱鶴翔
Zhuo Shenhai	卓什海
zili gengsheng	自力更生
Zou Taofen	鄒韜奮
Zunhua	遵化



### Abbreviations used in Notes

<i>DFZZ</i>	<i>Dong Fang Zazhi</i>
<i>DIA</i>	<i>Documents on International Affairs</i>
<i>DLPL</i>	<i>Duli Pinglun</i>
<i>GMDDS</i>	<i>Zhongguo Guomindang da shi ji</i>
<i>GMDLS</i>	<i>Zhongguo Guomindang lishi shijian renwu ziliao jilu</i>
<i>GWZB</i>	<i>Guowen Zhoubao</i>
<i>HBZJSL</i>	<i>Kangzhan qian Huabei zhengju shiliao</i>
<i>HYBNP</i>	<i>Huang Yingbai xiansheng nianpu changbian</i>
<i>HYJL</i>	'Lugouqiao shibian hou Guomindang zhengfu junshi jiguan zhangguan huibao di yi zhi shiwu ci huiyi jilu.'
<i>HYQSJ</i>	<i>He Yingqin shang jiang jiu wu jishi changbian</i>
<i>JCZWHGB</i>	<i>Ji-Cha zhengwu weiyuanhui gongbao</i>
<i>MGDA</i>	<i>Minguo Dang'an</i>
<i>QQSB</i>	'«Qiqi shibian» zhi Ping Jin lunxian Jiang He Song deng midian xuan.'
<i>RBPL</i>	<i>Riben Pinglun</i>
<i>RMDCD</i>	<i>Zhongguo jinxiandai renming da cidian</i>
<i>SJRWL</i>	<i>Zhonghua minguoshi shijian renwulu.</i>
<i>SZYWJ</i>	<i>Song Zheyuan xiansheng wenji</i>
<i>SZYYJ</i>	<i>Song gu shangjiang Zheyuan jiangjun yiji</i>
<i>WBZK</i>	<i>Waibu Zhoukan</i>
<i>WJBGB</i>	<i>Waijiaobu Gongbao</i>
<i>WJPL</i>	<i>Waijiao pinglun</i>
<i>WJYB</i>	<i>Waijiao Yuebao</i>

*XZTJG*

*Xian zongtong Jiang gong sixiang yanlun zongji*

*YGZQ*

'You guan Zhang Qun chu ren Nanjing Guomin Zhengfu  
waijiaobuzhang qijian Zhong-Ri jiaoshe de yi zu shiliao.'

*ZRWJ*

*Zhong-Ri waijiao shiliao congbian*

*ZYSL*

*Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian*

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901: 河北省主席于學忠報告日方借口白逾桓、胡恩溥在天津日租界被刺事件要挾北平軍分會撤消憲兵團等性情。Collection of documents on He-Umezu agreement, including letters from Yu Xuezhong and He Yingqin to Executive Yuan on contacts with the Japanese, a Tianjin police report on the murders of Hu Enpu and Bai Yuhuan, and letter by Huang Fu.

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