

FOREIGN POLICIES OF THE GREAT POWERS

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Kasumigasaki to Miyakezaka

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Reader in International History
London School of Economics



Routledge & Kegan Paul
London, Henley and Boston

1977 1st ed.

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the present generation. Like Bismarck he could be callous and calculating and devious.

Komura the man is elusive. Whereas Mutsu took up the pen and wrote extensive memoirs and other writings, Komura left no writings and no archives. This reflected his character: he was serious-minded and reticent; he refused to court popular favour by artificial politeness. As a bureaucrat he did not have to be popular and he avoided being so to his countrymen. At Portsmouth and elsewhere he did not cultivate the foreign Press. Perhaps inadvertently he gave the impression of being haughty and self-important; but this may only have been the consequence of his shyness. Despite his years at the Harvard Law School and his American roots, he had, we are told, a warm regard for England and English institutions. The two books which he was reading during his last illness and were found at his bedside after his death on 26 November 1911 were: Tennyson and the 'Oxford Book of English Verse'. (24) They were buried with him.

Chapter 5

The Katō Period, 1911-15

Katō Takaaki (1860-1926) was already a power in the land while Komura was foreign minister. (1) He had been foreign minister in 1900-1 as the successor to Aoki and served for an even shorter period of two months in 1906 resigning because he disapproved of the army's policies in Manchuria. In retirement he returned to act as proprietor (shachō) of the 'Nichi-Nichi' newspaper, of which more anon. Rather unexpectedly he was appointed by Komura as his ambassador in London and presided over the embassy there from August 1908 until December 1912, including a period of furlough. He was then recalled to Tokyo by Katsura with the invitation to become his foreign minister; but the scheme went wrong for no sooner had he returned to the capital than the Katsura ministry had to resign because of trouble in the Diet. Katō had the opportunity to stay on in Kasumigaseki but declined. As in the rest of his career, he never seems to have wanted office merely for the sake of power or the fulfilment of his ambitions. He, therefore, took a period of rest in order to equip himself for his entry into party politics and to make a visit to China. In April 1914 he was recalled to the Foreign Ministry under the premiership of Okuma Shigenobu. (2) He took advantage of the lethargy of the prime minister to control rigorously Japan's policy towards the First World War and towards China. His decisions at that period left the Japanese a large legacy which gave a great significance to his years of office. It is his last two periods as foreign minister rather than the earlier two periods which come under scrutiny here.

Katō belonged to the pre-examination group of Japanese career diplomats and had had a varied experience abroad in the Meiji period. He was too young to

be involved in the Restoration but he had gone overseas as a journalist and businessman. As a man of talent and ambition, he came to be attracted by the prospects of the foreign service. In particular, he came to know that independent spirit, Mutsu. He therefore joined the Foreign Ministry and served as secretary to Okuma during his period as foreign minister (1888-9). He went to London as minister at a low point in Anglo-Japanese relations during the war with China and, by using the Press and cultivating British opinion, he improved Japan's image greatly. From this time he became specially associated with the cause of friendship with Britain and of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-23). He himself claimed to be the originator of the alliance through his conversations with Joseph Chamberlain in 1898 and his actions as foreign minister in 1901. (3) Be that as it may, he remained to the end of his days a symbol of Japan's involvement with the powers and of her search for international status.

Katō's independence of spirit was almost legendary. As ambassador, he often felt himself to be equal in stature with those in Tokyo and acted in ways which were diplomatically indiscreet. In this he closely resembled Aoki Shūsō. He did not hesitate to dispute his instructions, if he disagreed with them. His four years at the London embassy contained many disagreements between him and the Foreign Ministry. Katō was later to become a very opinionated member of a Cabinet and fought hard for his views to be adopted. If they were not, he was quick to resign. Partly he had independent means and partly he married one of the daughters of the Iwasaki family which brought him close to the Mitsubishi fortunes. Being an independent agent, he had little concern for time-serving. As a consequence he was short-tempered and did not suffer fools gladly.

One factor in Katō's independence of spirit lay in his newspaper connections. As a diplomat, Katō had, like his contemporaries, Aoki and Hayashi Tadasu, 'played' the Press - a not uncommon practice for bureaucrats in the Meiji period. This involved feeding the newspapers with articles, sometimes anonymous, sometimes under pseudonyms, which advocated a certain line of policy. In appropriate cases, this was done not only to Japanese papers but also to foreign papers. It will be clear from the events of 1895 and 1905 that the Press, if it moved in an anti-government direction, could be a dangerous irritant to the Cabinet of the day. It was, therefore, necessary for ministers to placate and influence the Press and its proprietors.

After Katō resigned as foreign minister in 1901, he worked hard to attain the goal of an anti-Russian agreement with Britain and present the public with the case for this alliance. In October 1904 he became proprietor of the 'Tokyo Nichi-Nichi' newspaper, a leading daily. From that point on, Katō became more critical of the Katsura-Komura ministry. People began to talk of 'Komura diplomacy' as being separate and distinct from 'Katō diplomacy'. Although one was in office and the other had no official function, they came to be regarded as rivals. This hostility came to the boil with Komura's actions at the Portsmouth conference, even though, as we have shown, he was completely authorized in the last stages to accept a 'second-best' peace treaty. Here Katō's dilemma was that he had been called in by Premier Katsura and expressed his approval of the government line but that, on the other hand, there was a large outcry of popular annoyance at the terms of the peace, which Katō could not ignore, if he were to sell his newspapers. In the event, the 'Nichi-Nichi' seemed to side with the popular party and side on the crest of the anti-government agitation. (4)

The other special characteristic of Katō's power was his party political connections. Since 1890 the foreign ministers had (with the sole exception of Okuma) been professional diplomats, recalled from their posts to head the ministry. In many cases they were well qualified to do so because of previous service as vice-minister. Generally they were subservient to the Cabinet, though in those of Mutsu and Aoki that was far from being the case. When Katō returned from London in 1913 to become Katsura's foreign minister, he associated himself with the prime minister's newly-formed party, the Dōshikai. When Prince Katsura died of cancer on 10 October 1913, the presidency of the Dōshikai was offered to Katō who, despite his inexperience of party matters and the compromises which it necessitated, accepted the office. In this, he followed the path of another ambitious ex-diplomat, Raza Kei. In accepting, Katō was taking a grave gamble: he might not have the right temperament for the job and might not succeed in attaining the summit of his political ambitions. But he took the risk and showed courage and tenacity. When Okuma was forming his Cabinet in April 1914, Katō was invited to bring his party into coalition. He agreed to do so, providing he was offered the portfolio of foreign affairs. When this was accepted, he carried some party weight into the

Foreign Ministry, which probably enjoyed more influence in policy-making than under any previous foreign minister. Katō had other attributes; he was a Westernized Japanese who spoke good English; a clear thinker with a direct manner. But he was inclined to be gruff. As one observer summed it up, 'he is very different from his chief, Count Okuma, who never fails to please anybody who comes in touch with him.' (5)

AUTONOMY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

Let it be remembered that the Foreign Ministry was still a developing institution. It had a comparatively small staff and occupied a small two-storeyed building until it was burnt in the Great Kantō earthquake of 1923. It still operated on an informal and personal basis. Thus, there is the authenticated story of the prime minister going down from his residence to play a game of billiards with junior officials at the British embassy. The British ambassador, calling in to speak to Katsura at a crucial point in the Portsmouth talks, was surprised to find that the acting foreign minister produced a large bundle of telegrams, some 150 in number, which were wrapped up in a furoshiki for security. It was the bundle of telegrams from the delegates at Portsmouth and was produced at 4-5 separate meetings. (6) The picture of Katsura rummaging through these telegrams reminds us that the Foreign Ministry still had much to learn of Western standards of organization. Although there was much protocol and formality, there was also much rough-and-ready informality.

It was in these circumstances that genro interference - or control - operated. It impaired the speedy development of the Gaimushō. Naturally not everyone in the Cabinets of the time was prepared to accept this outside interference. Those who had journeyed and studied abroad knew that this was a primitive and unconstitutional arrangement. Moreover the genro were becoming old and were tending to become more domineering after they had retired from the front of the stage and began to operate behind the scenes. It was, however, dangerous to have a brush with the genro. They had the power to penalize those who did not conform. One significant victim was Hayashi Tadasu, the foreign minister (1906-8), who crossed the genro, especially Yamagata, and suffered from this hostility for the rest of his career and was hardly given the financial rewards which he expected. (7)

The establishment figure who most clashed with the genro was Katō. In the name of Foreign Ministry autonomy, he stood out at various points in his career against the interference in foreign affairs of the genro and the military oligarchy. When he was invited to join the Cabinet in 1900, he accepted on certain conditions which were granted: that senior officials of the ministry should not be changed on each occasion there was a change of foreign minister and that all diplomatic business with officials of foreign states should be conducted through him. (8) Having gained more authority than most of his predecessors, he proceeded to exploit it by withholding papers normally circulated to the genro. He became unpopular with the genro and Yamagata in particular.

A decade later Katō knew that genro power was already on the wane. When he was asked to be foreign minister for the third time in January 1913, Katō insisted on receiving assurances from General Katsura that the practice of two-tier diplomacy (genro and Cabinet) should be abolished and that Katsura would keep the military party in order if it disagreed with Katō's foreign-policy objectives. In short, he sought complete responsibility for the foreign minister and Kasuigasaki. (9) This could only make the genro suspicious and critical of any of his shortcomings. The result was that Katō was associated with several feuds: the first with the genro and Yamagata, which worsened when Katō took over the leadership of a political party and was to prevent him from becoming prime minister until after Yamagata's death; the second, within the Foreign Ministry, with Kosura which was claimed to be a clash of policies but seems to have been much more a clash of personality or philosophy. The existence of these feuds - from which Katō ultimately emerged triumphant in both cases - attests to his strong will. There were few Meiji or Taishō statesmen - even Hara - who were prepared to take on the genro and wage a campaign against them.

At other times in his career, Katō had also come up against another threat to Foreign Ministry autonomy which was still on a minor scale but was gradually to assume greater significance - military interference. In the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese war, the Japanese army of occupation in Manchuria had no wish to be subject to the supervision of the Gaimushō which it regarded as too much under the hostile influence of foreign governments. By devising a body called the Manshū Kyōgikai, the army hoped to continue, if not

perpetuate, military rule in the territory. The Kyōgikai was a blatant attempt at cutting out the Foreign Ministry from the decision-making process. Katō, finding it impossible to get his way, offered his resignation in 1906, allegedly over railway nationalization, which may have been a genuine consideration but was probably secondary. (10) His successor, Hayashi, also fought the Kyōgikai which he claimed to be a challenge to the proper system of operating through consuls. Hayashi stuck out for his convictions, made himself unpopular with the army and was never forgiven by the genro. (11) But the concept of military government was successfully beaten. The army continued to be powerful in Manchuria; and the South Manchurian Railway company was a force to be reckoned with, though its power should not be exaggerated. But the Foreign Ministry held out for the paramountcy of civilian control. In the climate of 1906, it was still possible for such a campaign to be sustained. It was an important victory which was not seriously challenged until 1914 and not effectively reversed until the Manchurian crisis of 1931 itself. But Katō was unquestionably under pressure from the army in the 1910s over everything related to Manchuria and China.

THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

Between his short spell as foreign minister in 1913 and his longer stint in 1914-15, Katō visited China to make an on-the-spot survey from April to June 1913. This was natural because China was the subject which dominated Japan's Foreign Ministry activities and thinking from 1910 onwards. Immigration and trading problems and international diplomacy could be tricky; but it was China which increasingly engaged the attention of diplomats.

Diplomacy towards China was from the start a most complex process. Japan is to China as Britain is to the continent of Europe. Just as Britain's diplomacy towards Europe tends to be more complicated than other aspects of her diplomacy, so Japan's towards China tends, by reason of her more frequent contacts, the greater number of lobbies operating, the activities of the army and navy, to have been a most complicated business, sometimes a baffling one. Since China was in the period under review a divided country, the process of diplomacy was a confused one. Throughout the

1910s, the Japanese government boasted of its 'intimate ties' with all shades of Chinese opinion, though this was in some cases an illusion since the Chinese were sometimes more frank to non-Japanese foreigners and were ready to hoodwink the Japanese. There is also an element of 'double-talk' or 'double-think' in discussions of China in Japan, since much of the Japanese approach to China was said to be aimed at 'improving Sino-Japanese friendship', which was certainly not a realistic basis likely to appeal to many Chinese politicians. This was not uncommon in the age of imperialism because there was a common illusion that the imperialist power was indeed striving for the 'friendship' of the lesser country - on its own conditions. Thus, Katō had told Sir Edward Grey, frankly in 1913 that he saw Japan's role in east Asia as one of protecting China.

It seems necessary to assess the forces operating behind foreign policy towards China. On all problems of north-east Asia, the officers of the Kwantung army - not necessarily the commanders but the staff officers - had a view and had the power to ensure the support of the general staff. Then there were the civilian adventurers (like Kawashima Naniwa in Manchuria, Kita Ikki in the Yangtze in 1911-12 and the Shina rōnin) who operated their own strategies among revolutionaries, local bosses and warlords in Japan's interest as they conceived it but not always with success. Then there were the merchants and industrialists who were anxious to establish China as a source of much-needed raw materials. These groups rarely operated as a coordinated whole; nor were they under the control of Tokyo. In some cases their efforts conflicted one with the other. Very often they embarrassed the home government and were bitterly criticized by the consuls in their reports. But sometimes they provided a convenient device for the government to act through without commitment. The fact that China's provinces acted in the 1910s and 1920s as units independent of central government naturally encouraged these actions.

It is necessary also to speak of Japan's interests in the area. Since the Russo-Japanese war, the main focus of these had been the South Manchurian railway company. The line from 'the Japanese frontier' at Changchun to 'the Russian city' (or so it seemed to many observers) of Dalren (Dalny) was running well. But it had to be patrolled by guards and the bridges to be well watched. The line from Mukden to Antung was completed in 1911. Since Korea had been annexed in

July 1910 and the Korean rail link from Pusan to the Yalu was in operation, the arterial lines were secure. But, in fact, the route via Dairen was more popular than the line through Antung and had been double-tracked for almost all the distance between Dairen and Mukden by 1909. As the situation improved, the railway company had raised considerable overseas capital. It floated four debenture issues, amounting to £14 millions, in the London money market with full government guarantee during the period from 1907 to 1911. Moreover the railway had elaborate plans for extension which were only hampered by lack of funds.

Katō inherited an ambiguous Japanese policy towards China. From the outset of the Chinese revolution in October 1911, Japan agreed to adopt a policy of neutrality. In high-level discussions with the Cabinet, the Elder Statesmen and the general staff agreed to a policy document which laid down that Japan should try to maintain the status quo in Manchuria, 'awaiting the most propitious moment to make a basic settlement of the position there to our own advantage. From now on we must endeavour to establish our influence in China proper and take steps to get the other powers to recognize our ascendancy in that area.' This should be achieved without alienating China or any of the interested powers. (12) But, with the evident appeal of the revolution to the Chinese people and the return to Qing service of Yuan Shih-k'ai, it became necessary for Japan to decide which of these forces she supported. On 16 November Japan agreed that, if Yuan requested assistance, she would be prepared to grant him considerable aid. When Yuan stated that China's unity could best be secured by setting up a constitutional monarchy, this certainly accorded with the thinking of most Japanese leaders, who were not inclined to give tangible support to those revolutionaries who favoured a republic. (13) The Hankow armistice of 1 December and the north-south peace conference at Shanghai forced the Japanese reluctantly to give up their hopes for a solution through a constitutional monarchy. Left to settle their own destiny, the Chinese declared a republic and Yuan, having successfully manoeuvred for the abdication of the Qing monarchy, was himself appointed interim president on 12 February 1912. Since Yuan was no friend of Japan, this development was viewed by some as a failure of her diplomacy. In the Diet, criticisms were heaped on the heads of the unfortunate ministers and diplomats. However much the critics complained about the vacillation of the Cabinet,

the fact remains that Japan like other outside countries was taken unawares by the first revolution.

The southern revolutionaries again rose up against Yuan in mid-July 1913 in what is generally known as 'the second revolution'. In a way, this further north-south confrontation for which outsiders had been waiting revealed the divergent opinions in Japan better than the outbreaks of 1911 which had taken them unawares. In a note of 9 June, Japan stated her unequivocal neutrality in any conflict that arose. (14) But, when the outbreaks took place, it appears that many unofficial Japanese assisted the southern party with arms and money. The Foreign Ministry issued orders that consuls should take strict measures against Japanese joining in the disturbances and supplying either party with war funds or arms. The pro-south party, spear-headed by the Kokuryūkai, was deeply implicated in this traffic. The revolution collapsed with the capture of Nanking on 1 September, but the Kokuryūkai stirred up public criticism of the government for its weak policy over the assaults on Captain Kawasaki at Yenchow (5 August) and Lieutenant Nishimura at Hankow (11 August). Especially vehement was the opposition over the Nanking incident when General Chang Hsun's forces had insulted the Japanese flag and killed three civilians. The Cabinet decided to make a formal protest to President Yuan, demanding that General Chang should be made to apologize. Yuan bowed before the wind and reprimanded his general. Japan indicated that she desired, but did not insist on, Chang's dismissal. (15) This was ignored. President Yuan emerged from the crisis, intact but greatly weakened. The defeated southern leaders were in the main given asylum in Japan.

In the aftermath of the revolution there was a flurry of Japanese commercial activity in China which was going through a period of turmoil. Merchant-houses and industrialists, knowing that Japan was a country without great natural resources, saw what a valuable contribution China's raw materials could make to the Japanese economy. There was a widespread and deep-rooted feeling that Japan's interests in the Yangtze valley were equal, if not superior, to those of Britain and should be pursued whatever the cost. There were also expansionists who thought it politic to abet the activities of Sun Yat-sen. Sun had been in Japan in February and March 1913 and had put out feelers for loans. It was not that Japan was unique in this; he was putting out similar feelers in Britain, France and

the United States at the same time. What was special about the Japanese was that they were more ready to accede to his requests and, in doing so, the bankers were prepared to take the risk of investing in anticipation of Sun's ultimate triumph in China. But this view was by no means universal since Katō, for one, formed a poor impression of Sun and the southern party.

It was the object of Japan's diplomacy to ease the passage of Japanese interests into south China. She hoped to enter into commercial bargains to capitalize on the political goodwill she had acquired by the support given to the south in the 1913 revolution by some Japanese. Although she was a member of the five-nation consortium, this did not exclude her from offering industrial - and possibly railway - loans to China. (American bankers had left the consortium in March 1913.) But she could only enter the south by encroaching on the Yangtze, the traditional British sphere of influence. She was entitled to do this by appealing to the doctrine of the Open Door but risked incurring the hostility of Britain. There were various options open to the government which ultimately decided to steer clear of British antagonism and try to negotiate some deal to obtain Britain's approval for her activities there.

Meanwhile, in the north a coalition of the Kwantung army, the general staff and the Shina rōnin associated with them sought to exploit the independence movements in Manchuria and Mongolia by establishing there a government based on the Ching dynasty. It was assumed that the Ching regime, which would have a natural appeal in Manchuria, would, if restored, be friendly and subservient to Japan. The first endeavour, made in the last months of 1911, collapsed when the scheme reached the ears of the Saionji Cabinet. (16) In the following year General Tanaka Giichi, the vice-chief of the general staff, visited Manchuria and declared it was indispensable for Japan's security to obtain 'the management of the continent'. It was he more than any other who master-minded the second Manchuria-Mongolian independence movement in 1915. But this ended in failure because of a basic difference of view over who should be given the leadership of the independence movement. While there were still those who saw it as a means to Ching revival, there were others including Tanaka himself who saw the up-and-coming Chang Tso-lin as the more efficient and promising collaborator in Manchuria. While these movements were

by military intrigue, it is hard to trace the relations between them and the Cabinet or the army. They are evidence that the army, by the Kwantung army, was an active agent in policy-making which tended to go its own way of risks and thrived in the unsettled conditions of China and Manchuria. Their bold actions, however, evidence of their subtle methods, in the main did not seek a leader for themselves; they looked for good material among politicians and they supported them by their own initiative.

FIRST WORD

On 15 August 1914, Japan declared war on Germany, threatening to force Britain not to comply with. (17) The cabinet for the Okuma Cabinet which had been chosen as reliable and likely to keep the army and navy in the crises of these days. The newly formed cabinet was headed by the Dōshikai, was used to Okuma's and as its president and to be minister. The circumstances of Okuma made him dependent on the Dōshikai and Katō who therefore enjoyed a good deal of influence at the Foreign Ministry.

(When war was declared between the powers Japan declared her neutrality. Within a few days she was approached by Britain for limited action in the Japanese navy in searching out the German ships in the north Pacific, though it was recognized that this would come close to being a belligerent act. On 8 August, following an emergency Cabinet, a conference of the genro and ministers was held where it was decided in principle to enter the war on the allied side. In this they accepted the plea of Katō that Britain was certain to emerge on the winning side and, even if she did not, Japan had nothing to lose; to enter a European war would redound to Japan's credit internationally and improve her standing in east Asia, even if she was not required by the terms of the British alliance to intervene.) Although questions were asked, the Cabinet and Elder Statesmen did not dissent.

Japan had with the force of an electric shock (as Katō's biographer describes it) decided informally to enter the war on Britain's side. It was a personal triumph for Katō who was the leading sponsor of this course. But it was also a grave risk to take and the responsibility was largely his. (18) It was ultimately decided that the best course would be to send an ultimatum to Germany and allow a period of seven days for receipt of the reply; the essence of the ultimatum would be that Germany should transfer her Tsingtao leased territory to Japan, whatever its ultimate fate (Document 14). It is important to observe that Katō told his colleagues that Japan had to take part in the war under an obligation imposed by the alliance but rather that 'obligations of friendship' existed under the alliance. He did not profess to take Japan in because of the specific terms of the alliance but because of the friendly sentiments to which it gave rise. He was more concerned to demonstrate the advantages of raising Japan's status through obliterating German bases from east Asia and to argue that the practical risks from European quarters whatever the outcome of the war need not cause too much anxiety. By his advocacy, he overcame the doubts of the Elder Statesmen as to whether this was the best time for Japanese entry. (19)

The Japanese decision, like that of all the belligerents in 1914, was not simple and straightforward. Many factors played a part. It would be wrong to imagine that the Balkan crisis was taken seriously in Japan. The Foreign Ministry, to be sure, received a wide range of reports on developments there after Sarajevo, as befitted a country with a broad diplomatic representation in Europe. But this information played little part in decision-making among the Japanese leadership. (20) More important was the perilous domestic position of the government. It faced the opposition of business men to the Business Tax (Eigyō zei); and the Diet session in June had been difficult. It did not escape the ministers that the outbreak of war in Europe might lead to boom conditions in Japanese industry and restore the lesser businessmen to a quieter frame of mind. More serious were the long-standing demands for expansion of the army and navy which Okuma had inherited along with the bitter parliamentary opposition of the Seiyūkai. Okuma set up a committee of national defence (bōmu kaigi) in June. The coming of war put this problem in a completely new perspective. The committee reported in favour of an

increase of the army by two divisions for Korea and the completion of the 8-8 programmes for the navy. When the Diet met late in December, it voted down this proposal and was dissolved. In the general election in March 1915 Okuma won a victory which improved his position in the Diet and the Dōshikai, in particular, emerged successfully at the expense of the opposition Seiyūkai. There were pressing domestic reasons for wanting Japan to be a belligerent and to be actively engaged in the war as she was in the successful Tsingtao campaign from 2 September till 7 November.

Entry was a bureaucratic decision. Public opinion and the Press did not fully understand the issues though the papers reported the European front extensively. Within the policy-élite there was only limited consultation. The Elder Statesmen hesitated without applying a veto. (At the outbreak of war) one of them, Inoue Kaoru, wrote: 'This is the divine aid of the new Taishō era for the achievement of Japan's destiny. We must grasp this opportunity by showing solidarity with the Powers (Britain, France and Russia) and on this foundation (we must act as the unifier of China.)' (21) This attitude was accepted by the genro who did not differ from the government on the issue of entering the war. They did, however, have doubts about the advisability of such early entry. On this point, they were overruled.

It was not that Japan had great animus against Germany. There was the old complaint about Germany's actions in 1895 and about the kaiser's indiscretions over the Yellow Peril. But the state of diplomatic relations was satisfactory. (22) There was, of course, the British alliance whose focus had since 1907 moved further away from Russia. In so far as the alliance was tending to become in British eyes anti-German, so it would tend to a lesser extent to become anti-German in Japanese eyes. But it could not be said that the terms of the alliance predisposed Japan to make war against Germany in 1914. (23)

The person who promoted Japan's immediate entry into the war was Katō. He felt that Japan could suffer no loss from becoming a belligerent, though he himself was confident that ultimate victory would go to the British side; and he told his colleagues that Japan should use the occasion to build up even more strongly her position in east Asia. This implies that Katō thought in terms of making war on Germany with a view to gains which Japan could make in the Pacific and in China, especially in Manchuria.

In these circumstances Japan issued her ultimatum to Germany on 15 August (Documents 13 and 14) calling for the handing over of Kiaochow. There is a common fallacy that this ultimatum was patterned on the remarks of Freiherr von Gutschmidt, the German minister in Japan at the time of the Dreibund crisis in 1895. Certainly his intemperate language on that occasion had been deeply resented by the Japanese ever since. But it can be said, from a comparison of the Japanese and German texts, that there is little warrant for such an assertion. It is true that in both cases they are framed in the form of an advice, even a friendly advice, to hand over territory. Had the ultimatum of 1914 been a request to Germany to return territory to China, the resemblance might have been closer. In fact, it was a demand that the leased territory of Kiaochow, where China had sovereignty, should be ceded to Japan, and this differentiates it from the 1895 formula. Both in 1895 and in 1914 the demanding power professed to be acting for the maintenance of permanent peace in east Asia; but this is diplomatic jargon and does not amount to a similarity of substance. In sum, the resemblance between the two documents in length, in terms and in language is small. Any deduction that Japan's motive was purely vengeance for 1895 is over-drawn and superficial.

Judged by international precedents, Japan's ultimatum to Germany contained unusual features. It allowed a time-limit of seven days, which was longer than the 24 or 48 hours which had been allowed by European powers earlier to Germany. This was necessary because Ambassador Count Rex was not in direct communication with his home government so that Japan did not know how soon after the issue of the ultimatum the Germans would receive it; it was therefore desirable to allow a generous interval. But there was also the underlying object that Germany should be given an opportunity to settle with Japan direct without any necessity for a resort to force. Some Japanese ambassadors abroad asked Tokyo for an explanation of the procedure which seemed to be more amenable to Germany than other ultimatums. (24)

THE TWENTY-ONE DEMANDS

The text of the ultimatum makes clear that Japan's interest in the war lay in the German possessions in the east and especially Tsingtao. Katō had spoken to Grey

in January 1913 of Japan choosing a 'psychological moment' to sort out her position with the Chinese; and he probably reckoned that this was the moment. (Down to 1914 Japan's problem had been to promote her interests without exciting opposition from competing powers. Now that war had come, the European powers had lost their power, if not their interest, in China.) There is reason to believe that Inoue too, when he used the extravagant language about the outbreak of war in Europe being 'an act of divine grace' for the new Taishō reign, had much the same in mind. At the same time, the earlier parts of this chapter have shown that for Japan to consolidate her position in China at this juncture was more to follow in the footsteps of her actions in 1913 than to realize some new brainwave, dreamt up at the start of the war. It could have been a psychological moment for China as well but she was less adroit and less prepared to take instant action.

Japan's demands took shape slowly but deliberately. On 20 August a new minister to China, Hikioki Hiki, was appointed after the sudden death of Yamaza from excess of alcohol. His instructions anticipated just such a tidying up operation, covering the outstanding bones of contention with Peking. (25) Later when the Elder Statesmen discussed foreign affairs with Premier Okuma on 24 September, it was agreed inter alia that Japan should take steps to win over and secure the confidence of President Yuan, if necessary by force. (26) The customary ambiguity! By this time the military campaign was under way against Germany. But the attack on the German lease, avowedly in the name of ridding China of the German presence, had, if it was to avoid a direct assault on the leasehold, to cross Chinese territory. Under pressure China agreed to declare a war zone. Then, after the attack on the leasehold, the Japanese used the argument that Tsingtao was being reinforced from Shantung province along the German Shantung railway and troops proceeded to occupy parts of it.

After Tsingtao fell to Japanese arms on 7 November, Katō recalled Hikioki to Tokyo. Hikioki had already been working to prepare some comprehensive settlement with Yuan Shin-kai and the purpose behind his recall was that he should dovetail his local knowledge with that of interested groups in Japan. By early December a detailed policy towards China had been worked out and agreed. It appears that its real authors were Hikioki and the head of the political affairs section of the Foreign Ministry with special responsibility for China,

Koike Chōzō, who was thought to have connections with the military. But the documentary evidence for its dependence on the army is slight though there is a memorandum in November from the war minister, Ōka Ichinosuke, containing 'points for negotiation with China'. It is probable that, in the exhilaration of the Tsingtao victory, many in the army and navy and financial and private circles supplied ideas which it was politically undesirable to reject, even though Katō himself did not rate them highly. They were compiled into two categories, demands and desires. Before Hiki returned to Peking, he was given the approved document and received instructions on 3 December to present Japan's demands at an appropriate moment.

Sino-Japanese relations had deteriorated fast since the Shantung campaign: the Chinese could not look on with equanimity at the virtual occupation of Shantung province and its capital Tsinan by Japan.

Knowing that Japan would be useful in achieving his imperial ambitions, President Yuan retaliated in the only way he could: on 7 January 1915 he withdrew his original war-zone proclamation, thus indicating that he expected Japanese troops to be recalled to Germany's leased territory. Japan protested; it was even more necessary now to regulate the relationship between the Japanese 'liberating troops' (as they saw it) and the Chinese. (On 18 January Hiki presented Japan's requirements - 16 demands and 5 'desires' - to Yuan in person at the presidential palace and swore him to secrecy. (27).)

Foreign Minister Katō envisaged the twenty-one demands as an attempt at an 'across-the-board' settlement of outstanding problems in exchange for Japan's promise to return Shantung. They were divided into five groups: Group I dealt with Shantung where large numbers of Japanese troops were stationed and an administrative arrangement of some sort would have to be negotiated between Japan and China; Group II referred to Manchuria where Japan's leases were due to run out in 1923 and she wanted to obtain an extension to ninety-nine years. The other demands covered industries, arsenals, railways, harbours and dockyards, the whole spectrum of China's modernization. Group V was considered by the Japanese to be different in character from the rest, containing only 'desirable items' whose adjustment would be beneficial to both countries. It included the 'desire' that China should employ Japanese political, financial and military advisers, while, in areas where disputes had arisen

between Japanese and Chinese nationals, policing should be arranged jointly by the two countries. These 'desiderata' appear to have been compiled as the result of representations by sectional interests. If it was a bureaucratic triumph to codify them in one document, it would surely have been better to reserve them until after the main demands had been negotiated. In any event, China - and the rest of the world when the terms leaked out - did not believe that Group V was in any way secondary. To the Chinese, the demands seemed to portend a serious interference in their domestic affairs. To the Japanese, they were a reward for the Shantung campaign and were not illiberal in so far as Japan was not demanding territory so much as economic privileges, especially in the railway and industrial fields.

China was, needless to say, opposed to these overtures. But, with Japanese forces poised in Shantung and Manchuria so near to Peking, she was not in a strong bargaining position. In the first round, China's negotiators hoped to temporize by accepting some of the terms and rejecting others. But the Japanese insisted on their being regarded as a package deal which had to be accepted en bloc. This meant that China's only hope of withstanding Japanese pressure was to enlist support from abroad. (All foreign countries were disturbed over the twenty-one demands and over Japan's secretiveness in pretending that they did not exist. But, with the majority being fully stretched in the European war, they were not anxious to strike a pose of protest. The United States, which was not so involved, initially reacted weakly to the crisis: Secretary of State Bryan in March issued a message which, while condemning some of Japan's demands, conceded that 'proximity creates special relationships'. This could only mean that Japan because of her closeness to China, especially Shantung and southern Manchuria, could be expected to have some special relationships there. Late in April President Wilson became less satisfied with the earlier line and sent a circular letter to the Powers, reasserting the Open Door doctrine with a view to enlisting international support for Chinese resistance to the demands.) Secretary Bryan revealed his intention to the Japanese who were thoroughly alarmed. Katō appealed to Britain not to pay attention to the American overtures. The Whitehall view was that Washington's move, being at the eleventh hour, was ill-timed and came far too late in the proceedings. Hence, the United States, the only Power which could have assisted

China wanted to avoid acting on her own and failed to muster any outside support. So more from good luck than diplomatic skill Katō was able to deal with the crisis without outside interference.)

It was the eleventh hour in the sense that the negotiations between Japan and China had ended on 15 April and Japan had prepared a statement of modified demands (still including Group V) ten days later. While some progress was made in the negotiations, the longer they lasted the more intractable both sides became on central issues. (In China movements opposing Japan were making protests: in Shanghai an anti-Japanese Association (dōshikai), organized by students returned from Japan, was campaigning in favour of boycotting Japanese trade; some southern groups were even urging Yuan to resist Japan.) But Sun Yat-sen who was in Japan throughout the crisis was too hostile to Yuan to suspend his opposition and may even have encouraged the Japanese. Despite his military weakness and Japan's increased garrisons, Yuan adopted a harder attitude, clinging to the foreign hope that he would finally obtain help from abroad. At the 25th meeting of delegates on 26 April, Minister Hioki presented his revised demands; but these were turned down by China on 1 May. Hioki, therefore, asked Tokyo for an ultimatum backed by the threat of force, acting on the assumption that Yuan with his monarchical ambitions would be ready to yield if only he could be seen to be capitulating to an ultimatum.)

Katō was in a mess and took his time in deciding over Hioki's suggested use of strong-arm tactics. The foreign minister told his advisers that he wanted a peaceful settlement and did not see the urgency of sending an ultimatum, while Hioke, and with him the army, thought that there was no alternative to sending a strong ultimatum. Meanwhile domestic criticism was mounting among the opposition parties, warming up after their electoral defeat for the opening of the Diet on 20 May. The Elder Statesmen were also up in arms, attacking Katō's clumsiness rather than the principle of the Demands. They had been lobbied by the Japanese constitutional adviser to Yuan, Ariga Nagao, a former employee of the Foreign Ministry, who had been sent over from Peking to present China's case. Elder Statesman Inoue was kept in touch with the intensity of foreign reactions by his son, the ambassador in London, who felt Tokyo's handling of the affair to have been so inept that he offered to resign. (28)

Without necessarily being hostile to the policy of

the Demands, the genro were infuriated that they had not been adequately consulted by Katō. Already at odds with Katō, they were determined to exploit his embarrassment in order to teach him a lesson. On the afternoon of 4 May, the genro, excepting Inoue who was confined to bed, had a meeting with the Cabinet, at which Matsukata spoke up against the duplicity of not passing Group V to foreign countries and Yamagata expressed his extreme dissatisfaction with the foreign minister's handling of China. After the meeting broke up without agreement, a critical telegram arrived from Britain and so needed the Cabinet that it agreed at its meeting later that day to the more extreme course of sending a threatening ultimatum while at the same time removing Group V from it. (29) It took two more days of mediation before agreement was reached with the genro on the terms of the final document (see Documents 15 and 16).

Finding that there was little prospect of foreign support, China had already taken fright. Yuan, acting through Tseao Ju-lin, made it known that he would welcome a reopening of the conference. Tseao informed Hioki on 7 May that China was ready to accept Groups I-IV and was prepared to discuss Group V further. It was ironic to find China's attitude so amenable and Hioki advised Tokyo that better terms could be obtained. But the Cabinet, having suffered from the asperity of a genro intervention, decided that there was no going back on Group V. If Japan had abstained from an ultimatum or had delayed sending it, as Katō had suggested, her gains from the settlement might have been greater. By the same token, Yuan had to concede less than he envisaged under threat of military attack. (30)

Katō passed over the final ultimatum to China on 7 May, giving her forty-eight hours to reply. Japanese troops which were estimated at 20,000 in Manchuria and 30,000 in Shantung were placed at the ready. On 9 May China accepted the revised drafts. On 25 May Japan and China signed several treaties which contained the fruit of these four bitter months of negotiation. The essence of the settlement was embodied in two treaties, one relating to Shantung province, the other to south Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia. By the first, China promised to accept all matters which Japan might agree with the German government, pertaining to German rights, interests and concessions in Shantung and to give Japanese capitalists first option on loans for the building of ancillary railway lines in the province. By the second treaty, which Japan held to be

the most desirable part of the settlement, the Chinese agreed to extend to ninety-nine years the leases which Japan held for Port Arthur and Dairen - the so-called Kwantung Leased Territory - and the terms whereby Japan operated the south Manchurian railway and the railway from Mukden to Antung on the border with Korea. These treaties were ratified on 7 June.

There were also more delicate matters which one party or the other did not want to crystallize in treaty form. The most important document exchanged - and later the most controversial - dealt with the fate of the former German leased territory of Kiaochow. Japan stated that 'in the event that the leased territory of Kiaochow is left to the free disposal of Japan after the war, she will restore it to China under various conditions', notably that she should be granted by China a territorial concession in the area for her exclusive jurisdiction. This implied that, while ultimate sovereignty would revert to China after the war, Japan would probably insist on receiving some compensation such as a lease. It was further agreed that Group V should be deferred for discussion at a later date. In this way, the Japanese had received the endorsement of what they call their 'sixteen demands'. The notion that Group V contained 'desiderata' rather than demands was again maintained. Indeed it is still held by certain Japanese historians even today. (31)

Japan got her way but her reputation suffered in China and in the world at large. While Japan had acquired territories before in 1895, in 1905 and in Korea in 1910, her reputation had never dipped on these occasions as they did now. In China she forfeited the goodwill of many who had been educated in Japan and looked to her as a safeguard against Imperialist intrusion; now she too came to be branded by them as an Imperialist Power. Yuan Shih-k'ai took some consolation from the outcome, believing that he had succeeded in modifying Japanese demands by standing firm. While he had received only the minimum of help from foreign countries, he had mobilized world opinion for China in a way that was unprecedented and lingered on beyond the years of the First World War. In the world outside Japan there were few people who did not believe that China had been forced to accept these demands under duress. It was the comprehensiveness of Japan's demands which came as the greatest bombshell and the attempted - and bungled - concealment of Group V which served to discredit Japanese diplomacy. Japan

had had power enough to enforce her will in the last resort by going to war. But she had stopped short of this, not so much because of the influence of the foreign Powers as because of the caution of the Elder Statesmen who stepped in at the eleventh hour and insisted on Japan's climbing down. The whole episode reflects little credit on Foreign Minister Katō, who was either grasping and scheming himself or unable to control his officials in their pattern of negotiations. It likewise confirmed that the Foreign Ministry could be taken over by a lobby and pushed into a false and unrepresentative position.

ASSESSMENT

The bulldozer tactics employed to steer through their Chinese demands are a puzzling feature of the foreign policy of Katō. He had had great experience of the diplomacy of the Powers at the highest level and seemed to have been much influenced by parliamentary and other democratic procedures which he had learnt in London. On the other hand, he had little experience of, and less respect for, China. He was therefore under the influence of 'China experts' in formulating his policy. Instead of controlling the exaggerated demands which the various experts evolved in what was an expansionist atmosphere, he seems to have let them take over policy-making - a feature which seems to be at odds with his character. But China policy seems to have interested him much less than 'haute politique'. (32) It is sometimes the case that a successful ambassador makes a bad administrator. Perhaps there was something of this in the enigmatic Katō.

Certainly he was inept in handling the political forces in Japan - and especially the genro. As we have seen from the crucial meetings held early in May, the Elder Statesmen had been disgusted with the prospect of war with China and the way that Katō had handled the negotiations there. He had not consulted them; he had ignored their advice when it was volunteered; he had, as they considered, been insensitive to opinion abroad. The genro had in any case many old scores to settle with Katō and were determined to capitalize on his present failures. It was Inoue who was most insistent on getting rid of Katō and came to Tokyo from his country villa in the middle of June when the crisis had passed in order to arrange the ouster.

Yet it is hard to judge how successful the demands were. Whatever the voice of the elite, the fact remains that the twenty-one demands were popular in Japan. They had given Okuma an electoral victory on 25 March and had boosted the strength of the Dōshikai party. (As against that, when Okuma's ministry resigned at the end of July, Katō took the occasion not to join Okuma's reformed ministry. The story put about was that he resigned because the home minister, Ōura, a member of Katō's Dōshikai, was found to have been involved in the bribery of a number of opposition members of the Diet. (Even after his resignation, Katō remained close to the Okuma ministry.) (He played a major part in the appointment of his successor, Ishii. His Dōshikai continued to support Okuma's government.) When Okuma himself resigned in 1916, he recommended to the genro the name of Katō as his successor. For all these reasons, it cannot simply be said that he had been dismissed because of the failure of his much criticized China policy or the damage that the whole proceedings had done to Japan's reputation abroad. To some degree he was recognized as the scapegoat for a popular policy.

Though it could hardly be justified in the 1970s, the twenty-one demands can be defended. From a Japanese standpoint and within the atmosphere of imperialism in which they were conceived, a case can be made for them. (In one of his writings, Katō makes that case. (33) His successor, Ishii, who was by no means committed to the support of Katō, was also ready to defend them in his better-known writings. They were defended before the Japanese Diet.) They did not result in the collapse of the whole ministry as might have been expected, had they been widely condemned by the Japanese people.

Yet Katō's career received a setback because of the China crisis. The genro, shortly to lose Inoue from their number, believed that he was a man of poor judgment. Yamagata swore that he would never allow Katō to become prime minister and, until his death in 1922, Katō and his party were excluded from power. The other genro, Saionji and Matsukata, also disliked him and feared that his reputation for the events of 1915 would detract from Japan's image if he again came to power. But Katō succeeded in keeping at the head of his party and before the public eye (Documents 17 and 18). Moreover he achieved his ambition by heading a minority coalition cabinet in 1924 at the age of sixty-four. As a reform-minded prime minister, he achieved substantial successes in the twilight of his career.

Chapter 6

The Ishii Period, 1915-19

Ishii's claim to our attention rests on his many-sided career during the war years. First, he was ambassador in Paris (1912-15) and gained a reputation for being anti-German during the critical early months of war. Then, he was recalled to Tokyo to act as foreign minister and took up his appointment on 13 October 1915. After a year in office, he was sent on a special mission to Washington on 13 August 1917, shortly after the United States entered the war, and acted as ambassador there, with breaks, until June 1919. This was a miscellaneous set of appointments but was none the less typical of Japan's many-sided diplomatic interests during the second half of the First World War.

In contrast to Katō, Ishii Kikujiro (1866-1945) was not a politician so much as a distinguished Foreign Ministry bureaucrat and diplomat. Earlier in his career, he had played a notable, if junior, role in the defence of the Peking legations in 1900 and in the negotiation of the Portsmouth treaty. He had been an active vice-minister during Kowura's second term. To become ambassador in Paris in 1912 was the culmination of this part of his career. Indeed, France was probably the place abroad where he was happiest, and he returned there as ambassador from 1920 to 1927.

Ishii's name is probably better known abroad than that of any other Japanese diplomat because of his translated writings. His English writings - 'Diplomatic Commentaries' and his essay on 'Japan' - have a defensive and conservative slant. (1) Yet his personality does not shine through clearly. Foreign observers commented on the limited range of his English and the bluntness of his speech. British diplomats, in particular, found him rather stiff and difficult to deal with as foreign minister. (2)

Ishii was probably called home as foreign minister because of his consistent support from Paris for Japan's entry into the war. (3) His task was to clarify Japan's position now that the campaigns in China and the Pacific had ended. By virtue of her naval exploits, Japan had taken possession of the south Pacific islands formerly possessed by Germany and was in the process of educating and 'colonizing' them.) By virtue of wartime agreements with Britain, her cruisers and destroyers were operating to good effect in the Indian ocean. She was supplying arms to the allies, especially Russia, and offering them financial support.

It was natural that Ishii with his Paris background should be asked to involve his country more in the war in Europe. Militarily Japan had refused all proposals to send a force to the Western front and suggestions that her British alliance be extended to take in France and Russia. But Ishii did make changes. One of his first acts in September 1915 was to agree to Japan's adhering to the Declaration of London. (4) The Entente Powers hoped that Japan's promise not to make peace separately with Germany might lead her to increase her contribution to the allied cause. But any increase was not to be dramatic. Between March and May 1916 Japanese diplomats were engaged in certain devious discussions with German representatives about a separate peace; and, while there is no evidence that Ishii or the Japanese government were disloyal to the London Declaration, it was inevitable that Japan's allies who were able to intercept many of her overseas telegrams should regard it as double-dealing. What would have happened if the German terms had been more attractive cannot be known. But the German Foreign Ministry was reserved in its offers and the Japanese passed on the results of their transactions quite properly to their European allies. (5)

RUSSO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

Ishii found himself pushed in the extraordinary direction of undertaking negotiations with tsarist Russia, the old enemy. The army had not been impressed by the performance of British units which had fought alongside its troops in the attack on Tsingtao (1914). The campaigns in Europe had led it to believe that Germany was likely to be victorious. At any rate, the conviction grew that Japan's admission to the British

alliance was narrowing and dangerous. As early as February 1915 Genro Yamagata had written in favour of increasing Japan's options: since the British alliance was serving its purpose, it might seem that there was no necessity for forming another alliance; but reliance on Britain alone was dangerous and it was the urgent duty of Japan to conclude an alliance with Russia. In his view, a Russian alliance should be regarded not as a substitute for, but as a complement to, the British alliance (Document 15). On receipt of this memorandum, Inoue Kaoru also spoke in favour of negotiations with Russia. But, so long as Katō was foreign minister, this was disregarded in Kasumi-gaseki. After his replacement in August by Ishii, the situation changed. The genro's ideas may have been allowed to leak to the Russians by ambassador Motono who was himself an enthusiast for closer relationships with them. The Russians themselves, especially Foreign Minister Sazonov, favoured this and saw Japan's admission to the London Declaration as the first step towards such an alliance, which would enable Russia to move some of her forces from the Far East.

Those who sought a deepening of the relationship could take advantage of certain favourable features. One was that Japan now had a new and favourable wartime trade with Russia along the trans-Siberian line. Second, the Russo-Japanese agreements of 1907, 1910 and 1912 had prepared the ground.

In January 1916 Tsar Nicholas II sent his uncle, the Grand Duke George Michaelovich, on an honorific mission to the Japanese emperor, which had also a more practical side. The military and industrial members of the fifteen-man delegation carried out exhaustive talks about improving supplies from Japan. To this end, the Grand Duke had special discussions with General Terauchi, the governor-general of Korea and head of the accompanying delegation, and later with Field-marshal Yamagata, when he presented him with the order of St Alexander Nevsky. The Russian demands for more munitions went before the military council. Russia was informed late in February that it would not be easy to meet them unless there were some striking proof of Russian goodwill: could she, in order to make a favourable impression upon Japanese public opinion, offer spontaneously to give up to Japan for a reasonable sum the portion of the Chinese Eastern railway connecting Changchun with Harbin? (6)

Meanwhile the diplomats were at work. The Foreign Ministry representative on the delegation was the head

of its Far Eastern department, Kazakov. During his journey to Tokyo and in parleys in the capital, he put forward the need for some alliance. On 14 January he placed before Foreign Minister Ishii the proposals which he had already mapped out with his own minister, Sazonov. Ishii's reply was discouraging. He apparently calculated that, since Japan had adhered to the London Declaration and thus assured herself of a seat at any peace conference, she had nothing to gain from a new agreement with Russia. Moreover, like his predecessor, Ishii wished to defer any wider proposals for alliance until after the war. The Russians, therefore, interceded for the support of the Elder Statesmen. On 20 January Ishii had talks in the palace with three of the genro. Yamagata was just as much in favour of negotiations for an alliance as he had been the previous year. Like most Japanese military opinion, he was not satisfied that the Entente Powers would defeat Germany; and the British alliance was something that could no longer be relied on. Since, however, Japan was heavily committed to the Entente side, the best course would be to take up the Russian invitation to open negotiations, not so much for the direct advantages she would derive as for the ancillary benefits in Manchuria. With these arguments he convinced his fellow-genro; and the foreign minister had no choice but to recant.

An emergency Cabinet, held in the Diet building on 14 February, decided to take up negotiations with Russia. The proposal was that Japan should supply arms to the Russians - as she would probably do in any case - and should in return ask for concessions in Mongolia and Manchuria, especially the sale of the Eastern railway south of Harbin. The decision was passed on to the Elder Statesmen who were absent from Tokyo at the time and also to General Terauchi, who was a strong advocate of a bargain with Russia.

The Russians responded in March that they were anxious not to make a casus foederis of attempts by any one Power to dominate China politically; it would be prudent for the signatories not to engage in arms except in cases where they could get the aid of their other allies, France and Britain. The new agreement was therefore to coexist with the British alliance, to last as long as it lasted and to be amended if it were amended. In short, Russia fought shy of offering the Japanese blanket support for 'the defence of their territorial rights and their special interests' in China.)

The treaties were finally signed in Petrograd on 3 July. The open agreement was a simple document, whereby the two Powers promised each other co-operation in maintaining their territorial rights and special interests in the Far East. The secret agreement which accompanied it contained the meat of the understanding: it provided that, if one party became involved in war with a third power, the other party would, upon demand, come to its aid; and that the two parties should not make a separate peace without previous consultation. (7) (It was further agreed that the sale of the railway line between Changchun and Harbin should be settled by a local commission.) When the alliance was published five days later, the Japanese received it with jubilation. There were lantern processions by thousands of Tokyo inhabitants, who were able to obtain a lantern and 25 sen from the police for taking part. (8)

Why was Japan with her strong bargaining position content to sign an agreement which imposed great obligations and offered meagre benefits? Under it she was committed increasingly to the allied side, and especially to Russia whose government was unstable, though this only confirmed her obligations under the Treaty of London. On the other hand, she gained so little: while Russia recognized Japan's position in Manchuria, she did not acquiesce in her actions in China, over which she was highly suspicious. It can only be concluded that the prospect of purchasing an extension to her railway lines in Manchuria was an attractive one, which overcame her reserve. The rail talks, as might be imagined, moved at a snail's pace and fell into abeyance with the revolution in 1917. Japan did benefit strategically from the withdrawal of Russian troops from Asia to the European front. The alliance was an indication that tsarist Russia was ready to disinterest herself from east Asia, more markedly than in 1905. This suited Japan; and there was the possibility that, if Germany were to be victorious, there would be a friendly Russia to interpose a barrier in the path of Germany against Japan.)

The case of the Russo-Japanese alliance is an interesting example in Japan's policy-making. The alliance was pushed through by the pressure of Yamagata and his Chōshū group (including Terauchi) and despite the better judgment of the Foreign Ministry. The group in the ministry to which Katō and later Ishii belonged was content to rely for Japan's security on the British alliance and her remoteness. But it was

not really possible for any Cabinet to overrule the genro; and the Okuma ministry was no exception. So it proceeded with the negotiations. The puzzle is that one so shrewd, worldly-wise and cautious as Yamagata, should advocate alignment with a country as unstable as Russia where the Petrograd strikes had taken place in January 1916. The Russo-Japanese alliance was overtaken all too soon by revolutions of cataclysmic magnitude which prevented Japan's advantages from materializing. In the light of this, it can only be said that the genro line was wrong, that the outcome should have been predictable and that the alliance placed Japan in the false position of being tied to a crumbling tsarist government which it was not a Japanese interest to shore up. It is perhaps a sign that the Japanese tended to be more sure-footed in dealing with China than with a European state. (The only defence which can be offered is that those Japanese who favoured the Russian alignment looked at it in Far Eastern, and not in European, far less in Russian domestic, terms.) For them it represented the possibility of increased power in Manchuria and the guarantee of Russian support in the Far East against Germany, possibly in the postwar period. Japan also had commercial hopes which were not fulfilled. From 1916 onwards the eastern section of the trans-Siberian became a tremendous bottleneck so that the alliance did not usher in an era of expanded trade as Japan may have hoped.)

It is probable that Foreign Minister Ishii was less than enthusiastic about the alliance and had been forced into it against his better judgment. He did not have the strong personality of Katō nor his power base in the political parties. In his memoirs which do not have a great reputation for frankness, he justifies the alliance because of Japan's fear of Russian treachery towards her wartime allies and her determination to prevent it. By this, he seems to imply that he was aware from the start of his term as foreign minister of the possibility of Russia's defection and was afraid that, after making a separate peace, she might enter into an alliance with the Germans. This would destroy the security of Japan and harm the position of the entente of which Japan was a member. Ishii does not admit that there were disagreements or that he was under pressure from the genro. (9) The public record suggests that Ishii did not have a major say in the many-sided 'negotiations' which took place on the occasion of the Russian mission and that, when

he was involved, he tended to place obstacles in the way of the speedy conclusion of the Russian alliance. There were those in the foreign service like Ambassador Motono who thought he was being unnecessarily dilatory. In any case, Ishii does not reveal the whole truth about Japan's motives by emphasizing only her fear of Russian treachery. A more enlightening statement of her aspirations is contained in the following note:

By concluding the alliance with Russia, we have established with her a relationship of complete cooperation for the final settlement of our policy towards Manchuria and Mongolia and have cemented our defensive policy towards China. By using the British and Russian alliances conjointly [literally, like a two-horse carriage] we can maintain permanent peace in the east; and our great aim of developing our power there can be even more strongly reinforced. (10)

The focus here is on national self-interest and on Japan's opportunity during the war to improve her position in north-east Asia.)

MISSION TO WASHINGTON

Ishii resigned with the Okuma ministry in October 1916 and enjoyed a short spell of retirement. The prime minister'ship passed to General Terauchi whom we have spoken about as a protagonist of the Russian alliance. He was nominated by Genro Yamagata in the hope that he would introduce some new policies which would remedy the shortcomings of the party policies which had gone before. The foreign minister appointed was Motono Ichirō, who had for many years been ambassador in Russia. Motono had a deep knowledge of European diplomacy and of Russia which was to give him a special approach to the problems he would face. But he was innocent about affairs in the two countries which were to loom largest for Japan in the second half of the war, China and the United States. Over the first, Terauchi stepped in and took China affairs and especially the plans for financial aid there out of the hands of the Foreign Ministry to a great extent. Over the second, some of the responsibility passed to Ishii who was to conduct a special mission to Washington after the United States entered the war in April 1917. The issues which divided Japanese and Americans in the run-up to the Ishii mission were global. They related especially to China and Siberia. In China the problem

was that the Americans tended to support the Chinese in their resistance to Japan's gains there earlier in the war. It was necessary for Japan to sort out her position by consultations with the Americans and by overtures to China which was herself to enter the war in August 1917. In Siberia, the problem was created by the collapse of the tsarist government during 1917. This posed special difficulties for Japan, who was Russia's ally and naturally looked to Russia's possessions in Siberia. But it was clear from the Bolshevik revolution in November onwards that President Wilson would not welcome Japanese expansion in Siberia. These were the problems which Ishii was to encounter in Washington; it will not be possible to explore them here in depth.

But we should turn briefly aside to observe a change which was made in the process of diplomatic decision-taking. In June 1917 Terauchi set up the temporary council on foreign affairs (Rinji gaikō chōsakai) with a view to unifying the making of foreign policy and eliminating party strife over it. This was thought to be necessary because of the need for consensus. Terauchi's was a non-party government: he came to power with the Kenseikai party ascendant in the Diet but, after the general election in April 1917, the Seiyūkai became predominant. So the idea of achieving a consensus between the parties on foreign policy was attractive to Terauchi and his sponsor, Yamagata. The council consisted of nine members: four from the Cabinet; three from the privy council; and two from political parties. (It might have been three but Katō, now the leader of the Kenseikai, was not wholeheartedly invited and did not agree to join (Document 17).) Looked at in a non-institutional way, the council might be said to include representatives for the army, the navy, the Chōshū and Satsuma clans, the bureaucrats, conservatives and liberals. It did not include the genrō themselves, though they were in favour of a 'national foreign policy' and had their own ways of influencing the council. (11)

Over the four years of its 'temporary' existence, the council greatly affected the position of the Foreign Ministry. Hitherto the ministry had been the originator of a 'bureaucratic' foreign policy which was in the main adopted uncritically by the Cabinet and only rarely repudiated by the genrō. It now had to fight its case first through the Cabinet and then the new council. Often the result was that its policy recommendations were torn to shreds. The Kasumigaseki

staff complained that they were becoming mere cyphers. The new body brought to light differences of view on foreign affairs. There had been differences in the past but these had been swept under the carpet. During the war period Japan had faced new and difficult problems; and there was diversity of opinion on the way they should be handled. Now these diverse views were debated in the council. Policy-making became more difficult; but the policy, once made, was more representative.

Perhaps unexpectedly Ishii himself seems to have favoured the establishment of the Advisory Council with a view to formulating a foreign policy which transcended narrow views. He wrote: 'The failure [of politicians] to draw a line between national polity and party politics cannot but be branded as unpatriotic. Care should be taken to keep questions of foreign policy apart from domestic issues.' (12) He seems to imply that opposition over foreign policy merely to gratify party hostility is unpatriotic and therefore undesirable. This tends to confirm the difference between the bureaucratic and rather conventional approach of Ishii and the more unconventional and individualistic approach of his predecessors like Katō, Komura, Aoki and Matsu.

The existence of the Council created one more hurdle which stood in the way of the fulfilment of Kasumigaseki policy. To some extent, this had advantages. The ideas of a political leader like Inukai Tsuyoshi (KI) were a breath of fresh air (see his views in Document 18). Over the three great issues with which it had to deal in its four-year history, Siberia, the Paris Peace conference and the Washington conference, it gave the liberals a voice which they might not otherwise have had. On the other hand, one cannot import vocal outsiders into the decision-making process without running risks. One can see in the outcome the result of personal jealousies, haphazard and unpredictable decisions over policy and, of course, delays. The procedure was bureaucratically inconvenient but may have had beneficial elements for the long-term development of the Foreign Ministry.

The Advisory Council was barely in existence when Ishii was given the assignment which was to become one of the highpoints of his career. (In April 1917 the United States entered the war against Germany; and thus became involuntarily Japan's ally. This was awkward for Japan because Washington had shown itself to be hostile to her doings in China during the war.)

It was not the active defender of China so much as the force which was most likely to impede Japan's progress there. (The United States was in a strong position to make things difficult for Japan which was dependent on American materials for her war production and rapid economic growth.) If Washington were to cut off the export of steel, pig iron etc., on the ground that it was needed for her own industrial war effort, the weakness of Japan's wartime industrialization would be exposed. Moreover, if the Americans were to embark on heavy armament programmes and were to tip the balance in favour of the allies in the war, the world would be more likely to pay attention to them at a peace conference than to the exhausted European Powers. Japan would, therefore, have to change her tactics towards the United States because of the suspicion and fear which she now felt. (13)

(It was necessary for Japan to improve her relations with the United States. Relations between the Foreign Ministry and the American ambassador in Tokyo, Roland Morris, were specially cultivated. Both Motono and his successor after April 1918, Gotō Shizpei, spoke to Morris of the fact that their two countries would be the leading members of the alliance at the end of the war. (14) An industrial mission under Baron Negata crossed the Pacific at the end of 1917 to draw attention to Japan's needs.

A more positive approach than these was tried (in June 1917) when Ishii was selected to head a war mission to Washington. Following the example set earlier by Britain and France, Japan sent a 'mission of solidarity' (to welcome the United States as one of the wartime allies). Ishii, now a viscount, thus undertook the most delicate diplomatic assignment of his career. Ishii performed well at the propaganda side of the mission; he had some success in winning over the Press to a greater understanding of Japan's position; and he attended many social functions across the country which assisted the image of Japan. Another aspect of his task was to arrange for supplies, especially American steel. The embargo which had been placed on the export of this commodity had seriously affected the twenty-eight shipbuilding yards which had been established for the war effort. On this count, his mission obtained little. On another front, the United States was anxious to work out some arrangement whereby Japan would assume patrol responsibilities, even in the eastern Pacific. The two sides arranged for joint defensive operations to be conducted throughout the

North Pacific; and Guam, Midway and the Philippines which were feeling the coldness of isolation were able to breathe again.

What subsequently assumed a major importance for the Ishii mission was the secret discussion on China. This was not a subject which arose out of the war effort so much as direct American-Japanese relations. On 13 June Ishii received instructions to make clear Japan's special relations with China and work for co-operation between the two countries in the future. Since the twenty-one demands, the Americans had befriended the Chinese more and more as the European countries were seen by Chinese eyes to be powerless giants. It was therefore desirable for Japan to have the opportunity of discussion with the Wilson Administration. European countries advised Washington strongly against inviting the Japanese for discussion; but it had naval reasons for its invitation. Ishii's function was to ask for concessions which the United States was reluctant to give but could not in the circumstances withhold. Over China the intention was probably to do a deal in the name of the Open Door, whereby existing spheres of influence would be disregarded as Wilson was understood to believe necessary and American and Japanese development funds would cooperate. These proposals for China proper did not apply to Manchuria or Inner Mongolia where foreign governments could do nothing with the Chinese authorities without Tokyo's approval. This was the case which Ishii was to put forward in Washington in the turmoil of the early months of America's entry into the war.

Ishii reached Washington on 22 August and began negotiations on 8 September. He was overwhelmed by the warmth of the public welcome he received and was delighted to hear from President Wilson himself the statement that he would like to see the abolition of spheres of influence in China. Considering his own instructions as vague and regarding Wilson's remark as an opening which could lead to an American-Japanese understanding on Japan's role in China, he asked for fresh instructions from Tokyo. The Foreign Ministry did not share his enthusiasm for the abolition of spheres of influence which could hardly be done on a bilateral basis without consultation with the European Powers, especially Britain. At the Gaikō chōsakai (15) on 15 September, the party politicians, Hara, Itō Miyoshi and Inukai were all opposed to Ishii's proposals and stressed that he did not understand Japan's policy

in China. Premier Terauchi, however, secured agreement for the proposal that Japan should enquire more into America's thinking. As a result Motono on 18 September instructed Ishii simply to get recognition for Japan's special position in China without becoming involved over spheres of influence.

Since the reply was so delayed, Ishii entered into negotiations on his own initiative with Secretary of State Robert Lansing. Difficulties soon arose over Japan's claim to have 'special interests' not to say 'paramount interests' in China. But eventually a formula was reached in an exchange of notes on 2 November. In their notes, Ishii and Lansing affirmed that 'territorial propinquity creates special relations between countries, and consequently the Government of the United States recognizes that Japan has special interests in China, particularly in the part to which her possessions are contiguous.' In a supplementary understanding which was exchanged but remained unofficial and unsigned, it was laid down that the two countries 'agree to refrain from taking advantage of the present state of affairs in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects of other nations'. While Secretary Lansing later told the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate that the terms had no political significance, Japan held that they had political as well as economic significance, otherwise there would have been no point in the notes inasmuch as the Open Door in China was already upheld in several documents. Ishii took the line that the core of Japan's special interests in China was political. Despite this divergence of view, the Japanese considered that they had received Washington's moral support for their claims in China. On the other hand, they were limited by their voluntary declaration of self-restraint, albeit a secret one. Lansing, who was authorized in his acts by the president and administration, took some consolation from this. But he knew that, though the United States was not required to take some of the threats which Ishii used too literally, she was not playing a strong hand. He sought, therefore, to be realistic and to show the Japanese that his country, while it befriended China, had no intention of disputing Japan's treaty rights in China. (16)

One is bound to conclude that the Ishii-Lansing notes are one of those cases where basic disagreements between the negotiators were concealed in an ambiguous form of words. So far as Lansing was concerned, he did not feel that he was giving away more than had been given

in the Bryan note of 1915. From Japan's standpoint, she held that the Open Door did not extend to Manchuria and further that the 'special interests' mentioned covered political as well as economic rights. In effect, therefore, the negotiators agreed to differ. Later they pleaded the case for their interpretation of the notes in their writings. The result was that there were no real beneficiaries from the agreement; both sides claimed to be the moral victor and to have secured the better of the bargain (Document 19).

There are similar disagreements over the significance of the notes. In the American view, they were far from being the basis for the long overdue relaxation of tensions with Japan. They were only a peculiar offshoot of wartime diplomacy whereby the United States was hoping to establish the status quo in east Asia while she diverted her naval forces to the Atlantic. Whatever else they were, the notes were only temporary in their consequences. Secretary Lansing interpreted them thus before a Senate committee in 1919. In Ishii's interpretation they were something of a personal triumph. After all, was he not invited at the conclusion of his mission to return to Washington? When, in January 1918, the Washington embassy fell vacant, the government appointed Ishii to that office, deducing that he had done great things in the previous year. In accepting, Ishii found himself enmeshed in one of the first serious fracas with the United States over the Siberian intervention. When he presented his credentials in Washington at the end of April, relations were in the doldrums and he had to reassure Lansing and Wilson, who were both suspicious that Japan wanted to send large forces to Siberia to prevent the spread of Bolshevism there. It was largely his tact and the caution of the government leaders in Tokyo which prevented open opposition developing in Washington and led to the verbal compromises which authorized both American and Japanese troops to be sent to Siberia.

In later years, the handiwork of Ishii's war mission rankled in Washington. Although Japan had been careful to describe the result as the 'American-Japanese Joint declaration' rather than the 'Ishii-Lansing declaration', the Republican administration which governed from 1921 had no commitment to it and no liking for it. It asked Japan in May 1922 whether it could be mutually cancelled now that a new set of Washington treaties for the Far East had been signed. Needless to say, it was not Japan's wish that Ishii's declaration should be reversed; and the matter occupied the

attention of the gaisō chōsakai and the Cabinet for some time without any compromise solution offering itself. Finally Japan accepted the cancellation of the note in April 1923. At the same time, she continued to hold that 'special interests', once recognized on the basis of territorial propinquity, could not be set aside by this cancellation and that they still held good. She safeguarded herself by informing Washington that her readiness to renounce the Ishii-Lansing declaration did not indicate any change in Japan's position in China. Ishii, who was not consulted over the renunciation, would, one suspects, have objected strenuously. He depicts himself and Lansing as no more than photographers of a real situation, Japan's established rights in China; even if the prints or the negatives are discarded because they do not suit the Americans, the fact of Japan's 'special interests' remains (17) (Document 19).

* This whole episode has to be seen in the context of Japan's war aims. She had, as she thought, obtained the acceptance by Britain, France and Russia, of her position in China. She now sought to capitalize on her war mission by securing America's agreement. In view of the Root-Takahira agreement of 1903 and the Bryan statement of 1915, it was not expected to be difficult. Ishii's favourable reception, especially in New York, led to the ambiguous note signed with Lansing under the aegis of the Terauchi ministry. But, even after Terauchi's China policy had become discredited, there was no intention to depart from Japan's approach to a China which was suffering from the dark night of the warlords.

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

(After the First World War ended in victory for the allies, the peace conference for which Ishii had been sedulously preparing the way in the United States, opened in Paris in January 1919. Ishii had been wooing Washington in the knowledge that Japan's relations with the European allies were much closer than those with the United States, even allowing for the Ishii-Lansing agreement. Despite some successes, Ishii had to concede that the drift of President Wilson's speeches in 1918 from the Fourteen Points onwards was favourable to China and held out hopes for backing in the future, while impressing upon the Chinese the need to mend their north-south split. It was not

really good news for him when Wilson announced that he would personally go to Paris for the conference.

Japanese representation at Paris was a delicate matter. She was represented in the early stages by her ambassadors in London and Paris, Chinda and Matsui. At Tokyo Prime Minister Hara was too recently in office to go overseas, while Foreign Minister Uchida was not in good health. Baron Makino was therefore chosen as delegate and took part in lengthy briefings before he set off via the United States on 10 December. He was a politician, a liberal and a former foreign minister. He identified himself with the new diplomacy and advocated that Japan should accept the fourteen points and the concept of a league of nations. When, however, it was clear that other countries would appoint plenipotentiaries at the level of prime minister and president, Japan chose as head of delegation Prince Saionji Kimochi, a veteran politician of seventy who had for five years been inactive in party affairs. Since he did not reach Paris until 3 March, Saionji seems to have played largely a titular part. But he had been educated in France and claimed to have a long-standing friendship with Georges Clemenceau. Following his lead, the delegation tried to secure their ends by informal contacts with the leaders rather than by rhetoric at sessions.

This was the first multi-nation peace conference at which Japan had been represented. Certainly it was the first at which she enjoyed such high status, being recognized as one of the five Great Powers. As long as decision-making was concentrated in the five, Japan was well contented; but gradually decisions were concentrated in the Council of Four and Japan was excluded.

The Japanese delegates were kept on a tight rein by the Hara government. This was not only exercised by the Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet but also - and most penetratingly - by the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs. In five lengthy sessions in November-December 1919, the Council had discussed the mandates to be given to the delegates. After the negotiations got under way, it met regularly to debate the instructions to be sent to Paris. For this reason, the Japanese delegates probably had less flexibility in their bargaining position than any other negotiators.

Japan's demands encountered such opposition from the start. Her ambitions in China were harshly attacked from a quarter which she thought she had won over in advance - the Chinese. The Japanese delegates were unequal to the challenge of Dr Wellington Koo, who

gradually took over the effective leadership of the Chinese group in Paris. Makino, who bore the brunt of presenting the case in various committees, had an imperfect knowledge of English. While some writers, including the secretary-general, Maurice (later Lord) Hankey, praised him for the lucidity and brevity of his arguments, his English was not adequate for the cut-and-thrust of debate at a conference. It was no surprise, therefore, that the Japanese tended to avoid confrontation by absenting themselves from sessions at which the Chinese were presenting their case. On the other hand, the Japanese were not unskilled in appealing beyond the delegations to public opinion by wooing the Press and may have out-smarted the Chinese in this field where they were active. The Japanese 'paper warfare' became especially effective after Matsuoka Yōsuke became head of the information section in Paris. (18)

Ishii's absence from the list of delegates will immediately be obvious. By reason of his seniority and his experience, he would have been a natural choice. In view of Wilson's decision to attend the deliberations in person, it would not have been exceptional for the Washington ambassador to accompany him. There were two reasons for his exclusion. First, he had accepted the post of foreign minister under the Okuma ministry, which was a ministry composed of parties opposed to the Seiyūkai, the party that had come to power in September 1918. The present prime minister, Hara, tended not to forgive his political opponents and gave indications that he did not like Ishii. It is probably for this reason that no room was found for Ishii among the eighty-man delegation which Japan sent to Paris. (19)

There is a second reason which may account for Ishii's rejection. It is that not all the terms of the Versailles treaty were completed in the smoke-filled rooms of Paris. There is a sense in which the Versailles treaty was - or seemed likely to be - influenced by a struggle for world opinion. In Japan's case, her struggle was likely to be with the Chinese and their supporters in the United States. It was clear that Wellington Koo and the Chinese delegates were anxious to obtain assurances from the American president in advance of the conference. In that context it was valuable to have an experienced ambassador in Washington in order to bring to bear what influence was possible on the president and the State Department. Before Wilson set off for Europe

and when he returned in mid-conference, Ishii tried to influence him. Also in his speeches he sought to convince American opinion - no easy job - of the rightness of Japan's demands in Paris. (20)

(The Japanese demands in Paris were mainly two. The first concerned the Japanese-occupied area of Kiaochow. Japan could have asked for permanent occupation of the territory; but she decided instead to ask for the transfer of the German lease to herself and to promise to return the territory to China. At the same time she wanted to receive the unconditional surrender of German rights in Kiaochow and Shantung and to secure the transfer of railway and other rights from Germany, according to the Sino-Japanese treaties of 1915 and 1918. The second was the transfer of the German islands in the Pacific north of the equator which Japanese units had occupied in 1914. This was an issue where Japan would have to act in line with the delegates of the British empire who were hopeful of acquiring the German islands in the south Pacific and also the German colonies in Africa.) Apart from these two overriding demands, it was necessary for Japan to decide her policy on the proposal for a league of nations being coupled with the peace settlement. Japan's leaders, with the notable exception of Makino, took the view that a league was likely to be restrictive and prejudicial to her interests: it might act unfavourably against a yellow race; it might hinder Japan's military agreements such as the naval alliance with Britain. Japanese opinion had genuine reservations about the proposed institution. While there was no real question of Japan not joining any organization which was set up, she had no intention of doing anything positive to encourage it. Tokyo's instructions were that, if it came up for discussion, her delegates should try to defer or delay any resolution for its practical accomplishment; but, 'if it none the less came into being, they should seek suitable guarantees as far as circumstances permit to prevent damage to Japan which would result from racial considerations'. (21) On all other matters where Japan's interests were not affected, it was left to Makino to adapt to the conference mood.

It is possible here to deal only with the terms of the settlement so far as Japan was concerned, not with the debates as they arose. The first issue was her desire to incorporate within the covenant of the League of Nations words which would remove disadvantages deriving from racial considerations. While Wilson was

back in Washington in March. Ishii submitted a note emphasizing his government's desire for the removal of racial discrimination. In Paris Makino proposed on 11 April that the preamble to the covenant should recognize the principle of equality of nations and of just treatment of their nationals. Eleven out of seventeen members supported the motion; but President Wilson, holding that it required a unanimous vote (being an issue of principle), declared from the chair that the resolution was lost. Undaunted, Makino, in a speech to a plenary session on 28 April, placed on record that the Japanese government and people regretted their failure to have the racial equality formula adopted and promised to press the issue through the League when it came into being.

Japan's failure here may have worked to her advantage over her other demands. Over the German Pacific islands, she had a modest success. These islands became C-class mandates of the League, which implied that they could not be fortified. The Japanese received the mandate for the islands north of the equator which they had earlier occupied, while the British Empire received the mandate for those to the south. There was some disappointment in Japan over this, but she recognized that Japan had not been less well treated than Britain. Over Shantung, the Japanese delegation received instructions that they were to defer signing the covenant if Japan's demands were not conceded. It was generally agreed by other delegates that the Paris conference was not supposed to set aside the Sino-Japanese agreement of 1918, whatever view it took of that of 1915. It was therefore expected that Japan might succeed to German rights as stated in the original Sino-German agreement of 1898 about the accretions which had been added later. Japan's blackmail about walking out of the conference (paid dividends.)

The peace treaty with Germany was signed at Versailles on 28 June. By its terms Germany granted Japan the entire portion of the lease of Kiaochow without exception, together with such railway and mining rights as she had held. In consequence, Japan promised to hand back the Shantung peninsula in full sovereignty to China though she set no time limit for this. Over racial equality she gained nothing, although she had put her views on record. For the German islands in the Pacific, she obtained a class C mandate from the League of Nations, rather less than she had hoped. Her achievements were less than her aspirations; but this

was true for all the victor powers. On the other hand, Japan had much to be thankful for. As Makino admitted in his report, the Japanese could not have accomplished their wishes in total. The Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs was often critical of the actions of the Japanese delegates who, when they returned home in August, were given a mixed reception. The historian must record it as a modest success for Japan (Document 20).

* It was widely said in 1919 that the powers had favoured Japan rather than China. It seemed as though Britain and France had been overruled in their judgment by the 1917 undertakings and Wilson had reneged on his promises to China. But these judgments underestimate the conditions on which Kiaochow had been granted to Japan -- the 'small print' as it were of the Versailles treaty. It was not that Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau were hostile to China but that they found it legally difficult and politically impossible to resist the Japanese. Had time permitted, it might have been possible to bring Japan down more. But as Secretary-General Haakey wrote, this Far Eastern imbroglio had been 'an almost intolerable strain' to all concerned coming on top of the Italian claims and a spate of urgent questions pouring in about the compilation of the German Peace Treaty'. (22) Within the context of the world-wide problems which they were handling, there was a limit to the time they could devote to the Far East. Instead, Britain and the United States resigned the issue in July as soon as the Versailles treaty was settled. (23)

Ishii was never at ease in the Washington embassy. American opinion was hostile to Japan and the Press never seemed to lose its suspicions of the early war years. Ishii had found it impossible to build on the cordiality which he thought he had created in 1917. It was the China question which soured relations and the Sakatani incident which brought the matter to a breaking point. From the summer of 1918 the Japanese government wanted to appoint Baron Sakatani Yoshirō (1863-1941) as Japanese financial adviser to China, the first such appointment. Sakatani was eminently well qualified, having been minister of finance (1906-8) and Japan's representative to the allied economic conference in Paris in 1917. He had, moreover, many foreign friends. It was not the man but the post which annoyed the State Department. Ishii reported that he had secured Lansing's approval of the appointment.

ment - or, at least, a statement of his disinterest. His government, therefore, went ahead with overtures to China which promptly consulted the American minister in Peking. But the Americans denied all knowledge of their having given advance approval, and, when pressed, stated that the proposals of 1919 for the renewal of the consortium for China radically changed the situation and that Japan should not appoint a financial adviser to that country until the consortium proposals were worked out. Since this fundamental disagreement only emerged after Secretary Lansing and the American establishment had moved to Paris for the peace conference, it was doubly frustrating for Ishii. He resigned in the spring on the ground that he had 'intimate relations' with Sakatani which made it embarrassing for him to stay on. (24) But he was clearly bitter over the administrative sloppiness of the State Department. Both the United States and Japan asked him to reconsider his decision. But Ishii was adamant and was truly glad to leave - a victim perhaps of the inevitable American-Japanese tensions.

Ishii was also increasingly depressed and unhappy over his treatment from Tokyo. To have been passed over for the Paris conference had been deeply wounding to him. He was annoyed at the anti-American tone of the Japanese Press. He was also acutely aware that Japan, despite all his efforts, was unpopular throughout the United States; he was conscious of swimming against the tide of Wilsonian thinking and American public opinion as shown in a hostile Press. Speculation about his future abounded from April 1919 onwards. An American official ruminated:

I do not believe that Ishii is going home because of the Sakatani incident. My mind is slowly coming to the conclusion that our relations are not as good as they should be and that he sees they are drifting away and that he does not want to be held personally or politically responsible for the turn things are taking. (25)

Be that as it may, he returned to Japan in July.

Although Ishii left Washington and wartime diplomacy with a sense of failure, it would be wrong to suggest that his later years were not full of honour and distinction as a diplomat and public servant. In October 1920 he became his country's ambassador in Paris and delegate to the League of Nations (1920-27). As president of the League of Nations Association (Japan), he was a frequent representative at international conferences, notably at the world economic conference in

1933. But his speeches and remarks suggest that his thinking was moving to the right; he had, as his publications in the 1930s indicate, become an apologist for his country. The atmosphere of fear and the prospect of poverty for officials on the point of retirement drove men in this direction. But Ishii went far by any standards.