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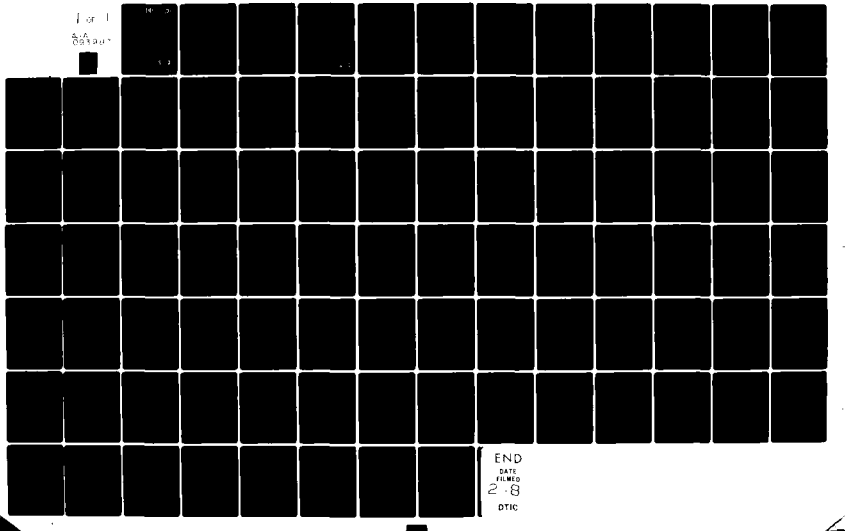

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HENRY L. STIMSON AND THE JAPANESE DILEMMA, 1931-1932

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

HARRY T. NEWMAN, MAJ, USA
B.A., Mount Saint Mary's College, 1972

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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Henry L. Stimson and the Japanese Dilemma, 1931-1932

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ABSTRACT

HENRY L. STIMSON AND THE JAPANESE DILEMMA, 1931-32, by Major Harry T. Newman, USA,

This study addresses Henry L. Stimson, as Secretary of State under President Herbert Hoover, and his influence on American foreign policy toward Japan following the Japanese military action in China that has become known as the Manchurian Incident. Specifically examined are the questions of when and why Stimson's attitude toward Japan changed from one of support for the civilian government in their effort to control the military to one of leading a determined effort toward international moral condemnation of Japan.

As background, the study examines in detail, the U.S. and Japanese foreign policies the decade prior to 1931, the character of Stimson, and then Stimson and Japan during the period, 1931-32. Research, using especially Stimson's personal diaries, suggests that the cumulative effect of probably five separate events contributed to the change in attitude rather than a single instance. And coupled with these five events, Stimson's friendship and confidence in Japanese leaders hindered his decision to adopt a stronger position against Japan sooner than he ultimately did.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Studies of the United States foreign policy toward Japan in the decade prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor usually concentrate on why Pearl Harbor occurred, and if war could have been prevented. This paper examines Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of State under Herbert Hoover, and his efforts during 1931 and 1932 to formulate a foreign policy in response to Japanese military activities in China.

Originally Stimson seems to have been confident of the real possibilities of international peace based on "gentlemen's" international agreements. Yet by early 1932, he led a determined effort to stop Japanese "aggression" in China. The major questions addressed in this paper are when and why Secretary Stimson changed the direction of U.S. foreign policy toward Japan.

A new phase of Japanese military action in China began in Manchuria on the night of September 18, 1931. Unilateral military action conducted by the Kwantung Army (the designation for the Japanese forces stationed in Manchuria at that time) and the events following, have become known as the "Manchurian Incident." Eventually the Japanese went on to occupy all of Manchuria and to create the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo. The unilateral Japanese military action in China had international repercussions as it threatened world peace and the agreed upon international order in East Asia. Secretary of State, Henry L. Stimson, brought the United States to the forefront of international politics when he championed the cause of world peace by condemning the Japanese actions

in China and attempted to marshal world opinion against Japan, based on the tenets of the Nine Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

Henry L. Stimson served his country in high public office under seven Presidents and influenced United States foreign policy through at least the mid-twentieth century. The morality and decisive nature of his character are admired to this day. He was and is controversial in regard to the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, but with the possible exception of Henry Kissinger, there has never been a more influential Secretary of State.

In assessing Stimson and his influence on U.S. foreign policy during this critical era in American history, the foreign policy of both the U.S. and Japan, leading up to the Manchurian Incident in September, 1931, will be discussed in Chapter I as background information. The specific international agreements affecting the foreign policy of both countries are key to a study of Stimson. Further, a detailed examination of the internal power struggles within the Japanese government during the late 1920's and early 1930's, is necessary to comprehend Japanese actions.

Henry L. Stimson, as an individual, is briefly examined in Chapter II. His education, political background, and the influences in his life that affected his reaction to Japan are detailed. In Chapter III, the main chapter of the thesis, Stimson's diplomacy and Japan will be discussed beginning with the Chinese-Russian dispute of 1929, which may have encouraged the Japanese Army in their plans of military action in Manchuria. The changes in Stimson's views of Japan, which culminated in the well-known "Non-Recognition" policy toward Japan, will be focused upon in detail. This policy was enunciated in Stimson's letter to Senator William E. Borah of February 24, 1932.

Chapter IV, the conclusion, specifically addresses the questions of when and why Secretary Stimson altered his belief and hope that the "Moderates" of the Japanese government would restore order and control over the "radical" elements of the military who were inclined to take independent action in China. It appears that no single specific event changed Stimson's views, but rather that the cumulative effect of several events led Stimson to the conclusion that the Japanese government had reached a point of being controlled by the "radical" military.

The Manchurian Incident was the first major test of the soundness of the concept of an international body of nations--the League of Nations--and gentlemen's international agreements of the time--the Nine-Power Treaty and Kellogg-Briand Pact. Additionally, it was the first major diplomatic crisis for Stimson as Secretary of State and raised doubts regarding the enforceability of those "no-war" international agreements of the period. The latter could well be a lesson in foreign policy applicable today.

CHAPTER I: COMPETITION IN EAST ASIA: U.S. AND JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY, 1920-1930

The analysis of any historical event requires a foundation or background in order to address properly the event in question and place them in the proper perspective. The Manchurian Incident of September, 1931, is no different in this respect. Manchuria, the northeast part of China proper, had throughout history been an area of conflict among the Chinese, the Russians, and the Japanese. Ruled by independent warlords even into the early 1930's, Manchuria held the interest of both Russia and Japan because of its raw materials, export markets, and strategic importance for Russian and Japanese national defense. The western powers--Great Britain, France, and the United States--had significant economic and commercial interests in China as a whole--not just Manchuria. These interests were founded on economic principles articulated in the U.S. "Open Door" policy of 1899. Stability in East Asia was most important in insuring the maintenance of free access to the China market.

The Manchurian Incident threatened the stability of the region and, as initially perceived only by the U.S., the "open door" to China as well as world peace since the action of Japan in Manchuria were contrary to international agreements. The complexity of the situation from the standpoint of the United States, and especially from that of Japan, must be addressed in sufficient detail to understand the underlying reasons or causes for increased American-Japanese enmity. Greater emphasis will be placed on Japan's role and the reasons for her foreign policy to include the internal conflicts of her government. Addressed first will be the

basis of U.S. foreign policy in East Asia followed by that of Japan--all leading up to this pivotal event in history, the so-called Manchurian Incident.

United States Foreign Policy in East Asia

From the rise of the United States to a world power in 1898 until World War II, fluctuations from active interest to indifference characterized foreign policy toward East Asia. In 1898 the United States assumed responsibility for the Philippines, and in 1899 the then Secretary of State, John Hay, announced his "Open Door" policy. Hay's main points were: one, equality of commercial opportunities among all nations in dealing with China; and two, as necessary to that equality, the preservation of China's territorial and administrative integrity.[1] This policy was to be the foundation of future U.S. foreign policy in China, and significantly, the U.S. regarded the preservation of China as a recognized national state. This policy also identified the U.S. as having world-wide interests and implied that military power could be used to protect those interests. In 1900 the United States was involved in the Boxer Rebellion[2] and, the Boxer Settlement resulted in increased influence and control over the activities of China by all the imperialist powers including the "new" imperialists, the U.S. and Japan.[3] In the following years the United States was to become increasingly involved with East Asia, and particularly Japan. Hay's policy then started an important diplomatic era for the U.S. whose newly acquired world-wide interests and influence brought it into direct competition with Japan. However, the U.S. policy in general vacillated between East Asia, Latin American, and East Asian concerns.

While World War I temporarily diverted U.S. attention from East Asia to Europe, the postwar era witnessed a return to an ambiguous U.S. policy. Three important international agreements influenced U.S. foreign policy during this period and demonstrated U.S. interests in East Asia. The 1921 Washington Conference, motivated by a desire for world peace through disarmament, limited the size of naval fleets of the world's major powers.[4] More pragmatically, the U.S. Navy became the equal of Britain's navy, and Japan was recognized as a contending power in East Asia. Interestingly, Japan agreed to the "Open Door" policy (implicit in the Washington accord) which included recognizing China as a national state, in order to obtain a degree of naval security against the western powers.[5] The Conference also recognized Japan's competitive challenge to the U.S. and the major Western European powers over commercial interests in China.

Also in 1922, the Nine-Power Treaty was signed by the major imperialist powers and China. It restated the "Open Door" policy to insure that the major powers of the world did not fight commercially or militarily over China. Significantly by signing this treaty, Japan again formally acknowledged the existence of China as a national state, whereas a few years later Japan would dispute exactly that fact in order to justify her army's actions in Manchuria in 1931.

In 1929, the signatories of the Pact of Paris, or so-called Kellogg-Briand Pact, renounced war as an instrument of national policy and proposed that only peaceful means be used in the settlement of all disputes arising among them. The agreement lacked enforcement powers,[6] since it was a gentleman's agreement among those involved nations with no formal sanctions. Its problems paralleled those of the League of Nations (established in 1920) which also lacked enforcement powers. Yet the U.S.

and the League of Nations would invoke this treaty in 1931-32 as a legal basis to demand that Japan remove her troops from Manchuria. These three treaties then formed the legal and moral basis for U.S. East Asian diplomacy.

United States' goals in East Asia at that time were to support and maintain the status quo, especially in China, Japan, and Korea, in order to insure equal opportunities for trade with those nations.[7] During the 1930's the U.S. became increasingly concerned with what it viewed as a Japanese expansionist policy in China, a policy seemingly driven more by the military than the civilian moderates of the Japanese government.[8]

A common U.S.-Japanese interest in East Asia was economic, and the U.S. government and public encouraged a tremendous missionary effort whose influence was perhaps more far reaching in the U.S. than in China itself. Japan on the other hand, was inclined to see China--Manchuria in particular--as a buffer between Japan and Russia in addition to significant economic considerations. Manchuria, from the Japanese perspective, was a vital national defense consideration because it was positioned between Soviet Russia and Japan's colony of Korea. In contrast, Manchuria was far removed from the U.S.--especially in the eyes of the American public--and hence not a perceived vital interest. Also there were four problem areas not conducive to unilateral U.S. intervention in any East Asian crisis:

1. The U.S. was not a member of the League of Nations
2. Other major world powers did not want to become involved with any crisis in East Asia
3. The U.S. public had an isolationist view

4. The Hoover Administration feared intervention with Japan would indirectly start another world war.

Such was the political setting in the U.S. leading up to the Manchurian Incident; but just as important, if not more so, was what was occurring in Japan during the same period.

Japanese Foreign Policy in East Asia

Modern Japanese foreign policy dates from Commodore Perry's opening of the western trade door to Japan in 1853. The new-found trade made Japan aware of the world and perhaps both anxious about the ambitions of other countries and envious of their successes. As Japan's trade and industries grew, new problems appeared. She had a growing population and a growing industrial complex but lacked enough raw materials to support them. However, just as important as these demographic and economic considerations was Japan's concern for her national security. Not only was she distressed over the naval and commercial powers of the western nations, Japan was equally concerned with Russian designs on the northern Japanese territory. Additionally, as her economic interests in China grew during and after the First World War, she was confronted with and frustrated by the ever increasing influence of the Chinese nationalist movement which advocated, among other things, no foreign interests of any kind inside China. All of these influences impacted on the foreign policy of Japan during the period; however, perhaps the most influential factor was the domestic Japanese political struggle.

Conflict Within the Japanese Government

Throughout the late 1920's and early 1930's, there was increasing conflict within the Japanese government. The changing political power structure significantly influenced the events that were to occur in

Manchuria in 1931. All segments of the Japanese leadership generally agreed on the overall national goals of economic independence and national security; however, the means to achieve these goals were at times violently contested. It would be an oversimplification to suggest that a militarist clique was pitted against a civilian moderate clique (identified as liberals or businessmen) of the government. The situation was much more involved and complex. The power struggle within Japan involved the lower ranking military officers, the existing military leadership, and the civilian element of government--each with a different perspective regarding what was important to Japan in East Asia. This was especially true concerning the means to achieve such goals.

The younger lower-ranking military officers wanted immediate action; the senior military leadership was content to be more cautious; and the civilian leadership was inclined toward an even more conservative approach. Even within the civilian element there were hawks and doves whose opinions covered the spectrum from the use of force against China, if necessary, to applying economic pressure. The political power struggle within Japan in the late 1920's and early 1930's also reflected economic and social pressures. Japan prospered during World War I and fared well economically during the immediate post-war period. Not all Japanese benefited because there was not an equal distribution of wealth as financial conglomerates dominated the economic life of the nation. Additionally, three major crises plagued the Japanese economy:

--in 1923 the devastation of the Tokyo-Yokohama earthquake

--in 1927 the bank crisis and financial panic

--continued adverse balance of payments throughout the 1920's.

These economic crises were significantly aggravated by the 1929 Great Depression and the government's decision to revert to a gold standard in 1930. By 1931 Japan was in a severe depression which was blamed on the political element in power at the time--the Minseito Cabinet (and big business). These economic factors fostered a radical reform movement of the 1920's which demonstrated the anxieties and dissatisfaction resulting from perceived economic, political and ideological crises.[9]

Radical Nationalism in Japan

These internal conflicts and problems--coupled with the western competion in China, the Russian threat, and the rise of Chinese nationalism--created an atmosphere of turmoil in Japan. Many Japanese felt that radical reform was the only way to change the existing situation. Japan's economic interests in Manchuria (the South Manchuria Railway, raw materials, and export markets) dictated a commitment to preserve her influence in the area. Major differences of opinion over just how to accomplish the task, the timing, and to what degree Japan should expand in Manchuria existed within the Japanese decision making system.

Although economics appeared to play a major part in the interest in China, particularly Manchuria, Japan's national security concern was certainly as important, particularly when one considers the rising influence of the Japanese Army during this period. The Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) were fought on the Chinese mainland, not on Japanese soil. These successful wars were followed by the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1911. The military in general believed that a sphere of influence as a barrier to possible adversaries was needed. Not only the young radical officers but the senior military

leadership as well, shared this seemingly obvious article of strategic faith. The radical military element ultimately had the most influence over the means with which to accomplish this goal.

The Japanese military's steady encroachment on civilian governmental institutions was facilitated by the radical reform movement of the 1920's. Following World War I, Japanese domestic politics were in great flux because of the influence of western democratic ideals together with the influence of socialist Marxist concepts from the Russian revolution. With these influences, liberal intellectuals, and the working classes rapid growth, a party government was established.[10] The political parties, however, had been touched by corruption and charges of misconduct which had the effect of degrading trust in the democratic representative principles and fostered unrest especially among agrarian and labor groups.[11] A communist party was started but was immediately banned by the government. Eventually this radical reform movement evolved to a radical nationalist movement directly opposed to capitalism and party government. Ideally the nationalist movement meant a form of socialism at home and expansionism abroad.[12]

Key spokesmen for Japanese Nationalism during the 1920's and early 1930's were Kita Ikki and Okawa Shumei whose writings inspired others in the nationalist reform movement. Major themes were a strong Japan independent of foreign influence, and external expansion in order to perpetuate the national strength. Kita and Okawa purposely tried to influence young, lower-ranking military officers to carry out violent acts against government officials because they believed that the main source of power was the lower-ranking military officers,[13] officers who were more radical and idealistic, and hence more easily influenced. Such

radical military elements were to have a great influence in the political arena, and such officers assigned to the Kwantung Army stationed in Manchuria contributed most to the highly independent character exhibited by that army.

These middle grade staff officers advocated radicalism in the form of methodical change in foreign and domestic policies. For the military, this change would include the modernization of the military. The lower-ranking military officers had their own ideas regarding how rapidly this change was to occur. The more conservative military leadership hoped to canalize the more radical young officers to accomplish in moderation the same goal of a much stronger China policy and a more modern national armed force.[14] The division within the civilian government is equally important and the two individuals having the most impact on Japanese foreign policy during this period deserve attention.

Of the civilian side of Japanese government during this turbulent period, Baron Kijuro Shidehara, Minister of Foreign Affairs 1924-1927, was typical of the "soft policy" moderates and their effort to further Japan's interests in a peaceful manner. He attempted to pursue a principle of cooperation internationally, based upon the Washington Conference (1921) and Nine-Power Treaty of 1922. He was a delegate to the Washington Conference, and it was his belief that moderation in foreign affairs through economic advancement and non-interference with China's civil war would increase markets for Japanese exports.[15] Shidehara attempted to insure that China (as a whole) was a market for Japan, and as a result he regarded China in a larger context than did his political opponents (civilian and military) who concerned themselves only with Manchuria. His government, however, fell in

April, 1927, mainly as a result of his continued friendly policy toward China despite the Nanking incident of that same year.[16] The government of Baron General Tanaka Giichi assumed power and pushed a more "positive policy." Although a retired general and an advocate of a much stronger attitude toward China, even Tanaka did not act with the force that the Kwantung Army thought was necessary. Like Shidehara, Tanaka favored Chiang Kai-shek over the communists in China; however, unlike Shidehara, he was more than willing to become involved at least indirectly in China's civil war to insure that Japan's interests were protected. The fear and hatred of communism, whether Russian or Chinese, was great among Japanese leaders. However, where Shidehara looked at China as a whole and Manchuria a part of that whole, Tanaka thought of Manchuria as a separate entity, and he did not want the Chinese civil war to disrupt Japanese interests there. Tanaka's major policy theme was simply military expeditions together with an aggressive pursuit of Japan's rights and interests. The Kwantung Army, of course, supported this rather positive or hard-line approach to foreign affairs--especially where Manchuria was concerned. In addition to the Japanese economic interest in Manchuria, Tanaka also saw Manchuria as a barrier to Communist Russia. As much as the military agreed with his basic foreign policies, Tanaka was undermined by the actions of the Kwantung Army when the Manchurian Warlord, Chang Tso-lin, was assassinated on June 4, 1928.[17]

The Kwantung Army and Manchuria

The assassination of Chang Tso-lin and subsequent ascension of his son Chang Hsueh-liang as the major warlord in Manchuria, are certainly significant events of the period. Its immediate result

was the resignation of Tanaka, but more important, the assassination ended chances for a Japanese political solution in Manchuria.

The Japanese Army in Manchuria (Kwantung Army) had been cultivating its relationship with Chang Tso-lin since 1916. Until that time he had been simply just another warlord in Manchuria. Chang was overly ambitious, however, and he wanted control over all of China--not just Manchuria. His ambitions were contrary to the wishes of the Japanese Army and Tanaka. They envisioned a separate state of Manchuria, independent of China proper, with which Japan could deal directly. It was assumed, of course, Japanese trade and internal influence would not be impaired by whomever acted as overlord of Manchuria.

Tanaka had two immediate problems to solve regarding Manchuria. First, the Chinese Kuomintang Party's army had to be prevented from assuming control over Manchuria, and second, Tanaka had to convince Chang to be satisfied with only Manchuria--not all of China.[18] Tanaka sent three military expeditions to the Shantung Peninsula to handle the Kuomintang situation. He also conferred with Chiang Kai-shek. Chang Tso-lin proved more difficult to influence as time passed. By 1928 Tanaka had decided it was necessary to disarm Chang's army, and he directed the Kwantung Army on 18 May 1928 to advance to Mukden to accomplish this.[19] The Japanese Army (as would be expected) was more than ready to take military action in Manchuria. However, there was a political side of the situation that the Kwantung Army chose to ignore, thus producing a significant setback in Tanaka's efforts in China. Through the Japanese Minister in Peking, Tanaka arranged an agreement from Chang to withdraw his forces back to Manchuria from North China and consolidate his position under the protection of the Kwantung Army.

This political effort was not a simple process, and the agreement did not come until Chang was hard pressed by the Nationalists and threatened by Japan simultaneously. Not until June did Chang decide to withdraw back to Manchuria, and on 26 May Tanaka ordered the Kwantung Army to abandon plans to disarm Chang's army;[20] however, the Kwantung Army had other ideas. As Chang's train returned to Mukden, it was blown up by order of a Kwantung Army colonel, Daisaku Kawamoto.[21] Chang's assassination clearly violated Tanaka's purpose and took him totally by surprise.

Following Chang's assassination, the Kwantung Army expected to take advantage of the ensuing confusion and chaos to restore order. Such did not occur. Chang Hsueh-liang, the new Manchurian strongman, did not announce his father's assassination until almost two weeks later as he feared the announcement would cause Japan to lose face and push her into war.[22] Knowing the Japanese Army was responsible for his father's death, Chang Hsueh-liang was not the least inclined toward any alliance with Japan; and in December of the same year, he declared openly Manchuria's allegiance to the Nationalists at Nanking. Interestingly enough, neither Japan nor the Nationalist Chinese wanted to push the issue as it was in their individual interests not to do so. The Chinese Nationalists were content to have eliminated such a powerful adversary as Chang Tso-lin, while the Tanaka cabinet refused to admit publicly that the Kwantung Army acted without Tokyo's authorization. Tanaka, as a result of the incident, resigned as he was unable, due to Army pressure, to punish the guilty officers. This was the most serious example to date of independent action by the Kwantung Army extremists. This incident eliminated not only Chang Tso-lin, but also any possibility of a successful Japanese political solution to the Manchurian situation.[23]

Conclusion

Henceforth, the only alternative the Kwantung Army officers felt Japan had left in Manchuria was military action, and Chinese actions strengthened their convictions. A systematic approach by the Chinese toward the Japanese in the form of transgressions on her treaty rights in Manchuria, violence against her people, and a continuous anti Japanese propaganda effort seemed apparent. By the summer of 1931, violence was on the increase and the Chinese government had already announced goals of recovering Lushun, Dairen, and the South Manchuria Railway. Both military and civilian Japanese were demanding military action to protect their rights and interests in Manchuria.[24] The timing was right for the Manchurian Incident, and when it occurred on that September night, this one event resulted in other actions and reactions that were to have significant impact on the world. During the insuing confrontation between Japan and the United States, Japan had multiple personalities involved, army officers, prime minister, and foreign minister. For the U.S., however, one individual stands out as most influential in the making of foreign policy regarding Japan. That man was Henry L. Stimson, then Secretary of State.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER I

[1]Sammuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1942), p. 484.

[2]The Boxer Rebellion, fueled by fanatical members of a secret society, resulted in many thousands of Chinese Christians and over 200 missionaries and other foreign civilians in North China and Manchuria being killed. The Boxers resented foreign imperialism and the new class of Christian converts symbolizing foreign influence in China.

[3]William L. Tung, China and the Foreign Powers: The Impact of and Reaction To Unequal Treaties (New York: Oceana Publication, Inc., 1970), p. 53.

[4]Alfred W. Griswold, The Far Eastern Policy of the U.S. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), p. 270; Felix Gilbert, The End of the European Era, 1890 to the Present (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1970), p. 142.

[5]James B. Crowley, "A New Deal for Japan and Asia: One Road to Pearl Harbor," James B. Crowley, ed., Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1970), p. 240.

[6]Ibid., p. 389.

[7]Bemis, Diplomatic History, p. 480.

[8]The Japanese internal conflict in national policy between the military and the moderates will be addressed in detail in subsequent discussion.

[9]Sadako N. Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria: The Making of Japanese Foreign Policy, 1931-1932 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. XIII.

[10]Ibid., p. 20. [11]Ibid., p. 21. [12]Ibid., p. 23.

[13]Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria, p. 23.

[14]A somewhat different approach is presented by David Bergamini, Japan's Imperial Conspiracy, Vol I (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1971). He suggests that Emperor Hirohito was directly instrumental in leading and directing military actions that led to the downfall of the party system and the rise to a position of great influence by the military.

[15]Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria, p. 7.

[16]During the Nanking Incident, the Japanese consulate was fired on by Chinese troops, and several Japanese nationals were wounded.

[17]With the assistance of the Japanese Army, Chang Tso-lin had, by 1928, gained control over all of Manchuria and North China as referred to in Robert J. C. Butow, Tojo and the Coming of the War (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 29.

[18]Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria, p. 11.

[19]Bergamini, Japan's Imperial Conspiracy, p. 469.

[20]Ibid., p. 470.

[21]Butow, Tojo and the Coming of War, p. 29.

[22]Bergamini, Japan's Imperial Conspiracy, p. 473.

[23]It is interesting to note here that U.S. intelligence did not perceive Chang's assassination to be of great significance. In fact, upon initially reporting the incident, Chang was not believed killed and later when he was determined to have been killed in the incident, his death was mentioned only in passing. See U.S. War Department General Staff, Military Intelligence Division (G-2). Intelligence Summaries Nos. 398-410, Jan-June, 1928, p. 12, 105 (Jun 8), and Intelligence Summaries Nos. 411-423, July-Dec, 1928, p. 12, 190 (Aug 31).

[24]Ogata, Defiance in Manchuria, p. 50.

CHAPTER II. HENRY L. STIMSON'S POLITICAL CAREER

Introduction

At the beginning of the 1930's the United States based its foreign policy in East Asia on the gentlemen's agreements contained in the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Enforcement of the obligations of each was not really considered since nations were honor bound to uphold them. When Henry L. Stimson entered his office as Secretary of State in 1929, he shared with the western world a confidence that permanent peace had finally come to the world which need fear war never again. Yet these idealistic visions of international relations were defied by the Japanese soon after Stimson assumed his duties in Washington. Although he was not initially overly alarmed by it, the Manchurian Incident brought Stimson to the forefront of U.S. foreign policy. His aggressive reactions, stamped by his moral convictions, during this crisis helped shape American history during the 1930's and beyond.

Stimson's Early Career

Henry L. Stimson (1867-1950) was a prominent figure in the United States politics for half a century. He began his career of public service as U.S. Attorney in New York state; served as Secretary of War under President William Howard Taft's administration (1909-13); applied himself as a special executive agent to Nicaragua and Governor General to the Philippines under Calvin Coolidge's administration (1923-29); served in the office of Secretary of State under Herbert Hoover

(1929-33); held the office of Secretary of War again under Franklin D. Roosevelt (1940-1945); and he continued in the latter office for a short time under Harry S. Truman (1945).

Stimson was known as a man of high moral principles and firm convictions. Although opponents disagreed with him concerning his policies toward Japan, they could not question his character.

Stimson was born in New York City just two years after the Civil War ended in 1867. At the age of thirteen, he was placed in the Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts, because his father did not think very highly of New York City schools. He went on to graduate from Yale and then Harvard Law School. In June, 1891, he was admitted to the bar in New York County and later, with the influence of his father, went to work for the law firm of Root and Clark. Beginning in 1894, Stimson worked diligently for the Republican Party and against the Democratic Party, which he believed controlled by a party machine. He soon discovered that both parties had elements of corruption, and he set about to right his party's shortcomings. Stimson's early concerns regarding party corruption are indicative of his unyielding moral convictions which he demonstrated later during his involvement in international politics and especially in his political dealings with Japan following the Manchurian Incident.

In his early years of political work, Stimson grew knowledgeable of American politics and met the leading politicians of the time. Theodore Roosevelt influenced him greatly. Roosevelt was a neighbor of Stimson on Long Island, and their friendship was founded on a love for the outdoors as well as Stimson's respect for Roosevelt as a strenuous, self-confident, assertive individual. Theodore Roosevelt perhaps

influenced him more than any other individual in his being a decisive political actor and his belief in American righteousness.[1]

When the United States declared war on Spain in 1898 Stimson was thirty years old, but he enlisted as a private soldier in the National Guard, demonstrating a commitment to service of his country that shaped his public life. After the war he remained in his unit, Squadron A, Troop 2 of the New York National Guard, for nine years and achieved the rank of first lieutenant. Even at age forty-seven, he quickly volunteered for active service when the U.S. entered World War I in 1917. Stimson always considered himself a soldier, even in his civilian pursuits and prided himself in what he called "combat psychology." His thought process was more military than civilian in nature, evident in his decisive nature. The First World War also turned his interests to international politics.[2]

Stimson's Political Career

In addition to his military experiences, Stimson's close friendship with his senior law partner, Elihu Root,[3] gave him an excellent background for "opportunities which many years later unexpectedly came my way in 1911 (Secretary of War), 1917 (World War I), 1928 (Governor General to the Philippines), and 1940 (Secretary of War)."[4] Root gave to Stimson the benefit of his experience as a lawyer and statesman in addition to his conservatism, idealism, imperialism and internationalism.[5] Root and T. Roosevelt, in conjunction with the influence of World War I, were to shape the international decisions he would later make for his country. Stimson's career certainly benefited from the friendship and respect of a man of Root's stature who was a

confidant of presidents, cabinet members, and senators. It was actually Root who gave Stimson his first opportunity to serve the public when he encouraged Theodore Roosevelt to name Stimson U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York.[6] Later Root was also to support Stimson as Hoover's Secretary of State. Henry L. Stimson, however, did not participate in the making of three basic international agreements that underpinned United States policy during the 1930's. He used these policies as guideposts during his tenure as Secretary of State.

As Secretary of State under President Hoover, Stimson soon discovered that "diplomacy was a more delicate and demanding business than imperial administration, even in the Philippines."[7] He did, however, carry to the State Department certain perceptions as a result of previous diplomatic positions, not only in the Philippines but also in Nicaragua as Special Executive Agent. In Nicaragua, the task was to restore order and develop a democratic society. His efforts and successes led him to believe:

> if a man was frank and friendly, and he treated them as the equals they most certainly were, he could talk turkey with the politicians and other leaders of Latin America as he could with his own colleagues.[8]

Stimson pursued this personal philosophy in his follow-on assignments as Governor General to the Philippines and Secretary of State. However, this personal political philosophy was somewhat contradictory because he also believed, as did T. Roosevelt, Root, Taft and Wilson, that "America must be its brother's keeper,"[9] a policy of "paternalism." Simultaneously, he felt that the democratic process could be applied on a world scale to achieve international order and stability. In other words, democracy is best, and the U.S. still had to lend a guiding hand to insure the development of "undemocratic" nations.

Domestically, Stimson did not approve, per se, of big business, but if one had big business, one must have big government to regulate and to control big business. Stimson also stressed the concept of a strong executive in state governments. "Poor old Jefferson," he once wrote; how ridiculous his "fear of any strong Executive."[10] Stimson went a step further in advocating the combining of the executive and legislative functions for the states. His political activity had been confined to State government until his experience as Secretary of War in 1909; however, his basic concept of State government--that of a strong Executive--carried over to his concept of the federal government. As Secretary of State, this desire for a strong Executive conflicted with President Hoover and warrants consideration.

Stimson and Hoover

In understanding the Hoover/Stimson relationship, one must realize that Stimson was not high on Hoover's list for Secretary of State. Only after Senator Borah and Charles Evans Hughes declined, did he offer the appointment to Stimson, because of the support of Hughes, Root and Taft.[11] Stimson, for his part, felt that loyalty to the President was paramount; however, that is not to suggest there were not serious differences regarding principles and attitudes.[12] Each was always candid with the other, but it was always understood by Stimson that the President's decision was final, and he respected it. Several reasons exist for the differences between these two men. As Secretary of State, Stimson was charged with foreign affairs; and due to the depression as well as the public's isolationist position, Hoover was preoccupied with domestic and economic matters. This preoccupation caused him to be cautious regarding approval of Stimson's foreign policy

suggestions. Perhaps the key to the relationship was that Stimson looked for strong leadership from President Hoover and did not receive it. Stimson with his "combat psychology" was a fighter, tending to make a decision and aggressively follow through. Hoover considered all angles and was a careful step by step planner. He took an intensely pessimistic view of every situation,[13] and he thought Stimson to be too militant in his views.[14] Stimson believed in aggressive leadership and could never understand Hoover's careful assessment of a situation from all angles based on a consideration of expected criticism such a decision might generate. This thought was probably influenced by Hoover's Quaker upbringing; and indeed Stimson did not think Hoover understood the "psychology of combat" because of his Quaker background.[15] Significant in the differences was Stimson's desire for a stronger President willing to assert himself and his country on the international front and Hoover's reluctance to do so. Furthermore, Hoover was an elected official whereas Stimson was not, and as a result, Hoover paid more attention to public opinion than did his Secretary of State.

From October 1929 President Hoover concentrated on the economic plight of America. As a result, foreign policy largely fell on the shoulders of Secretary of State Stimson. Hoover remained involved in decisions on foreign policy, but he and his Secretary of State differed drastically at times.

The differences between them were publicly well known, and their relationship was characterized by mutual frankness. Stimson maintained great respect for Hoover and always understood the President would have the final say.[16] Often Hoover's policy decisions were necessarily more in tune with public opinion than Stimson. Stimson, as would be expected

as Secretary of State, was more in tune with international opinion as opposed to public opinion at home. Hoover was a non-interventionist always, but he was never a complete isolationist. During the early thirties, this could not be said of the American public.

Morality and Diplomacy

As a man of high moral principles, Stimson's foreign policy was characterized by his trust in people. He felt to make a man trustworthy, one should let him know you trust him. This guideline was carried over to his activities in foreign relations. His statement, "Gentlemen do not read each other's mail,"[17] was a result of his strong convictions of honor that naturally precluded use of the Black Chamber,[18] the State Department's codebreaking office, because it was "dishonorable." Foreign relations for Stimson then were very personal--a gentleman representative of one country rationally negotiating problems with a gentleman representative of another country.

During Secretary of State Stimson's first two years of office, he was confident, as was most of the world, that lasting peace had finally come, and World War I was literally the war to end all wars. This illusion seemed shattered in the summer of 1929 when a sharp border conflict erupted between China and Soviet Russia over interests and treaty rights in North Manchuria. Stimson took credit for initiating an international plea, based on the Kellogg-Briand Pact, for both nations to settle their dispute peacefully.

Stimson came away from this first invocation of the Pact with the feeling that it was a success and these idealistic treaties, on which world peace was then based, would persevere. The Kwantung Army would prove him wrong on 18 September 1931.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

[1]Richard N. Current, Secretary Stimson (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1954), p. 10.

[2]Robert H. Ferrell, The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, Vol. XI, Frank B. Kellogg-Henry L. Stimson (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), p. 148.

[3]Elihu Root, American lawyer and statesman; Secretary of War (1899-1904), Secretary of State (1905-1909), U.S. Senator (1909-1915), Nobel Peace Prize (1912), 1845-1937.

[4]Henry L. Stimson, McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. XXI.

[5]Current, Secretary Stimson, p. 9.

[6]William Kamman, "Henry L. Stimson: Republican Internationalist" (Makers of American Diplomacy) in Frank J. Merli and Theodore A. Wilson, eds. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), p. 409.

[7]Drew Pearson; Robert S. Allen, Washington Merry-Go-Round (New York: Liveright, Inc., 1932), p. 110; Ann O'Hare McCormick, "Hoover's Right Hand in a Great Task," New York Times, Dec 15, 1929, p. 3.

[8]Kamman, "Henry L. Stimson," p. 414.

[9]Ibid., p. 415.

[10]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 61.

[11]Kamman, "Henry L. Stimson," p. 417.

[12]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 195.

[13]Ibid., p. 196.

[14]Kamman, "Henry L. Stimson," p. 417.

[15]Ibid., p. 426.

[16]It is interesting to note that although there were significant differences between the two men, Stimson believed Hoover to be a great American and "unjustly maligned" regarding his contributions to his country.

[17]Stimson and Bundy, On Active Service, p. 188.

[18]See David Kahn, The Codebreakers (New York: MacMillan Company, 1967), p. 157, for an insight into the activities of the Black Chamber.

CHAPTER III: STIMSON AND JAPAN: 1931-1932

Introduction

Henry L. Stimson became President Herbert Hoover's Secretary of State on March 28, 1929, and he had confidence regarding the possibilities of international peace. The international gentlemen's agreements developed in the 1920's seemed to be working. However, a portent of the most significant international problem that Stimson was to address as Secretary of State came within months of the time he took office.

The Dispute Between China and Russia

A dispute between China and Soviet Russia over the control of the Chinese Eastern Railway in North Manchuria came to a head in July, 1929. Stimson was not very knowledgeable regarding the history of this area and the potential for turmoil that could, and later did, develop there.

The root cause of the dispute between China and Soviet Russia was the rising nationalism within China associated with the Chinese Kuomintang Party's or Nationalists' efforts to extend their control over all of China, including Manchuria. Chinese nationalism would be a potent force in creating the basis for a conflict between China and Japan.

As a result of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, Russia and Japan divided Manchuria into respective spheres of influence centering on the railways.[1] Both Russia and Japan had significant economic and strategic interests in Manchuria--Soviet Russia in North Manchuria and Japan in South Manchuria. For both, too, the railway systems were key to their economic success. These rail networks were actually holding companies

which also controlled all the industries and utilities along specified boundaries of the tracks.

The Chinese Nationalists conversely were intent on forcing all foreign interests and influence out of China, which, according to international agreements, included Manchuria. The Nationalists after their rise to power in the late 1920's, did not consider previous international treaties involving China as valid and thus they wanted foreign concerns and influence specified by the treaties out of China. Manchuria was the final bastion not under Nationalists control, and therefore they naturally attempted to extend their control to that region. By December, 1928, the most powerful Manchurian warlord, Chang Hsueh-liang aligned himself with the Nationalists, following the Japanese Kwantung Army officers' assassination of his father the previous summer. The Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek moved, through the Manchurian warlord to extend its control over North Manchuria. Chiang's thought was that after his success there against Russia, Japan would see how serious the Nationalists were and leave Manchuria voluntarily.[2] The outbreak of fighting in July, 1929, between Russia and China relieved Chiang of his misconceptions regarding such overly optimistic notions.

President Hoover was also disturbed by the fighting as he proclaimed on 24 July that the Kellogg-Briand Pact should serve as an example of how nations should peacefully resolve their differences. The Chinese-Russian conflict was obviously in contravention to the Pact, and significantly both China and Russia were signatories of the Pact. In apparent consideration of the Pact, neither country seemed willing to expand the conflict; however, on November 17, Soviet Russia--after building up her forces on the border--attacked and seized several Chinese towns. China appealed to

the U.S. as sponsors of the Kellogg-Briand Pact to mediate the dispute. Stimson felt something had to be done to resolve the problem peacefully. He hoped that the major powers of the world, along with the U.S., would pressure China and Russia to resolve their differences within the "sacred promises of the Kellogg Pact."[3] This diplomatic effort by Stimson to arouse world opinion against China and Russia in order to force them to settle their differences peacefully failed because only Italy (with no interests in East Asia) agreed with Stimson's proposal. As a result, Stimson attempted a bluff by issuing a statement implying that the U.S. already had the support of the Pact signatories to invoke the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Even this effort was not altogether successful since only thirty-seven of the fifty-five signatories sent statements or notes to China and Russia urging them to resolve their differences under the Pact's provisions. Importantly, Japan did not participate, perhaps wishing to observe just how enforceable the Pact was in an international armed dispute.

On December 3, 1929, China and Russia reached agreement, probably more as a result of China not being willing to continue to fight against a militarily stronger Russia then over any concern by either country regarding the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

The conflict between China and Soviet Russia was the first of many similar problems Secretary Stimson would have in 1931 when tension reached a flashpoint between China and Japan. The first experience in 1929 pointed out that international public opinion was not as easily mustered as Stimson thought it could be, and it was perhaps an initial indicator that gentleman-type international agreements drawn up primarily among the established powers were not enforceable when applied to other

expanding nations. The incident may have also encouraged the Japanese Army in South Manchuria in regard to possible international repercussions (or the lack thereof) of future Japanese actions in Manchuria--military action in Manchuria may not be contested. Publicly, Japan did not take part in urging China and Soviet Russia to settle their differences peacefully according to the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Furthermore, although Russia actually invaded Manchuria to restore her control over a treaty concession, the Chinese Eastern Railway, Russia seemingly suffered no punitive action by an aroused community of nations as a result. Moreover, despite China's initially using military force to eject the Russians from the railway zone, no international action against China was forthcoming. Apparently, only the aggrieved party, the Russians, had the right to re-establish their interests along the rail system.

Following Stimson's first diplomatic crisis, he and the world again fell into the former confident feeling regarding world peace through international agreements. After all, the Chinese-Russian conflict was resolved by the parties involved, and one could make a convincing argument that the Kellogg-Briand Pact and world opinion were factors in the resolution of armed conflict. Once again Stimson's ideals would be shattered.

The Manchurian Incident

The night of September 18th and 19th, 1931, was the beginning of the end of Stimson's confident feeling about international peace. Chinese forces were attacked by the Japanese Kwantung Army. This military action occurred as a result of a contrived independent effort on the part of the Kwantung Army to establish a pretext to attack the Chinese forces in Manchuria leading to eventual Japanese control of all Manchuria. As part

of an elaborate Kwantung Army plot, a bomb was detonated on the South Manchuria Railway tracks. Damage was so slight that a train passed over the same tracks shortly afterwards, but the Kwantung Army used the incident to justify military action against the Chinese in the area or near the railway. This action proved to be what became known as the first step in the ensuing Japanese aggressive expansionism in China. This so-called expansionism, by military means, was not a clear-cut decision within the formulation of Japanese foreign policy regarding China--Manchuria in particular. There were many disputes among Japanese leaders, civilian and military, at all levels. Additionally, there were differences of opinion in the formulation of the proper U.S. reaction to these events in China.

First Steps in U.S. Foreign Policy Reaction

Following the beginning of the so-called Manchurian Incident, there was much debate within the U.S. government, the State Department, and especially between Secretary of State Stimson and President Hoover regarding the proper U.S. response to Japanese military action in China. Moral, economic, and military sanctions were considered. Appealing to Japan on moral grounds was certain not to work, because Japan had already violated the three international agreements forbidding such military actions that she previously had signed. Hoover feared the outbreak of a general war and was preoccupied with the economic crisis, and the political climate in the U.S. precluded economic or military sanctions. It is doubtful that the latter would have worked if applied unilaterally by the U.S., as Japan was superior militarily in East Asia. An ambiguous doctrine, based mainly on the Kellogg-Briand Pact, that became known as the "Non-Recognition Policy" resulted. Even this policy was not successful,

because the League of Nations' pursuit of the same policy later resulted in Japan's withdrawal from the Leage which culminated a decade of post World War One Japanese diplomacy. A key player in the 1931-32 world crisis was the U.S. Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson. Stimson was to become personally involved in formulating U.S. foreign policy toward Japan.

Paradoxically, Stimson initially was not greatly concerned about the Manchurian Incident. On September 19, he told a press conference that the Kellogg-Briand Pact would not be violated unless governments acted, and in his perception the incident was a mutiny by the Japanese soldiers "taking revenge on the Chinese."[4] He was aware of the internal problems of the Japanese government which he identified as between the civilian moderates and the militarists where each was attempting to gain control. But Stimson did not initially believe the military action in China by Japanese forces had the authorization of Tokyo. However, the Japanese military activity in China did concern him, as well as President Hoover, but neither felt that United States treaty rights would be affected. Stimson was to learn later that Japanese efforts in Manchuria were more extensive than previously thought, and although it was difficult to assess Japanese government involvement, it was clear that the "Ministry of War" was very involved and this made "a very serious situation."[5]

The Idea of Moderates Versus Militarists

Stimson and his State Department subordinates were prone to see Japan in terms of black and white. Although the situation was not as simple as the Japanese civilian moderates versus the militarists, such beliefs colored Stimson's appraisal of the situation within the Japanese government. Within each group it would be expected that differences of

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opinion would exist, but the most "visible" conflicts to the outside world were those between the two major groups--the civilian cabinet and Diet, and the Army generals and radical young officers. Conflicts between those in positions of authority are always more visible, hence the popular opinion (as well as that of Stimson) of civilian moderates struggling against Army elements determined to destroy parliamentary democracy in Japan.

At this point Stimson maintained a belief that the civilian moderates were in control of the Japanese government, as well as the military, and he took a "wait and see" attitude. His initial policy consisted of a posture,

> to let the Japanese know we are watching them and at the same time do it in a way which will help Shidehara (the Japanese Foreign Minister and a Moderate), who is on the right side, and not play into the hands of any Nationalists (Militarists) agitators. . . .[6]

This position was reinforced after talking with the Japanese ambassador in Washington, Katsuji Debuchi, who assured Stimson that Foreign Minister Shidehara was not even aware of the so-called "incident" until after the fact. Although China and the League of Nations asked the U.S. to take joint action with the League against Japan, the U.S. refused. Stimson thought the League was trying to "pass the buck" to the U.S.,[7] and he also idealistically maintained the hope that the Moderates would retain control over the Militarists. In addition, the Japanese objected to the involvement of either the U.S. or the League, because Japan felt the conflict should be settled between the two parties involved directly, namely China and Japan. However, China refused to negotiate as long as Japanese troops remained outside the South Manchurian Railway zone as prescribed in the Boxer Protocol.

At this time, Stimson laid down three lines of policy for the U.S. in relation to the League in a September 23rd telegram to the American Minister in Geneva, Hugh Wilson. The first was to oppose the proposed League inquiry into the "incident" and to urge China and Japan to resolve their conflict through direct negotiation. Stimson wanted Japan to have the opportunity to correct its army's wrong. The second directed that if outside action was necessary, the United States would favor China and Japan submitting to the provisions of the League Covenant for settlement. The third was to consider the provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact if the above two proved to be impractical.[8]

On October 4, 1931, China requested that the United States send observers to Manchuria. Stimson denied the request for fear it might indicate the U.S. was taking sides in the conflict.[9] At the same time Stimson wished to encourage the League of Nations in their attempt to resolve the dispute and support the League as much as possible by independent action. He did not want the League, however, to "drop their baby on my lap." Additionally, Stimson discouraged the League from establishing an investigatory committee for fear it would inflame Japanese public opinion and hinder the Shidehara government in regaining control of the Army.[10] His policy included, as he expressed it to the Chinese Charge in Washington, "playing no favorites."[11]

A Change in Perspective

The beginning of a major change in Stimson's view came on October 8, 1931, when the State Department learned that Japanese aircraft had bombed Chinchow in Southern Manchuria. Stimson felt the situation in Manchuria was rapidly getting worse, and in his diary on October 8, he

reflected that he was

> . . . afraid we have got to take a firm ground and aggressive stand toward Japan. It is a very ticklish situation and I am much troubled by it.[12]

On October 9, Stimson spent practically his entire day on the Manchurian situation. During the Cabinet meeting that day, he took nearly three quarters of an hour to explain the situation as he saw it. Hoover did not expect the situation to develop as seriously as it had and was concerned that the U.S. might place itself in a corner if Japan refused to honor the treaties she signed. The President referred to these treaties as "scraps of paper." Stimson agreed that in reality "we have nothing but 'scraps of paper'." Further, Stimson felt that the western derived treaties were not compatible with "the three great races of Russia, Japan, and China." Dispite such a failing, however, those nations had signed the treaties and therefore the U.S. could not treat them as scraps of paper. To do so, Stimson believed, would place the future of world peace in jeopardy.[13]

As the pace of Japanese military action increased in Manchuria, Stimson began to speak more strongly to Ambassador Debuchi to indicate to him that while the U.S. was quite concerned over the events in Manchuria, he still had hope that China and Japan could solve their own problems by themselves. Secretary Stimson premised his efforts on the Kellogg-Briand Pact

> . . . on the basis not of the original violation on September 19th but of the present threatened violation after both parties had promised the League to keep the peace. . . .[14]

This, then, became the focus of his diplomacy. The Nine-Power Treaty he held in reserve as a final means of moving China and Japan toward a settlement of the conflict.

Additionally, in order to remove any possibility of the Japanese feeling threatened, Stimson requested that the Navy Department order elements of the Asiatic Fleet away from the Japanese supply route from Osaka to Manchuria during this period.[15]

The subject of war with Japan naturally came up in Cabinet discussions of the Manchurian situation, because it was a possibility if the provisions of the Kellogg-Briand Pact were to be enforced, not to mention the provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty. Hoover and Stimson decided to wait for the League to act first. Further decisions regarding foreign policy were not as easily made.

Opposition to Stimson's Views

Stimson faced opposition from within the government in establishing a policy toward Japan. President Hoover generally did not agree with Stimson's desire for a strong stand against Japan. Hoover's reason, as well as that of Under Secretary of State William R. Castle, Jr., was the fear of getting the U.S. involved in a war with Japan. Cautious by nature, Hoover realized that militarily in East Asia, Japan held the upper hand. Even Hoover's military advisers (both Army and Navy) felt that in such a war the U.S. would require five to six years to defeat Japan.[16] Additionally, and just as important, the American public had an isolationist frame of mind and did not want to get involved in a war or any situation where there might be the remotest chance of war. Sensitive to public opinion, Hoover, as an elected official, had to proceed cautiously; Stimson did not.

The Bombing of Chinchow

The Japanese bombed the city of Chinchow on October 8, and Stimson entered the event in his diary on the following day. The bombing was an expansion of the Japanese military action in Manchuria and was contrary to what Stimson had been told by Shidehara through the Japanese Ambassador. Simultaneously, the Japanese General Staff issued a bulletin declaring it would be impossible to withdraw their troops back to the railway zone.[17] Stimson sent Shidehara a message asking two questions. The first concerned the statement by the Japanese General Staff regarding the withdrawal of Japanese forces and whether or not it was the civil government position. The second question asked if it was true Chinchow had been bombed by the Japanese.[18] The order in which Stimson presented the questions implies the order of concern. In other words, Stimson, at this point, was more concerned with the relationship between the Army General Staff and the Japanese civil government than he was about reports of the Japanese bombing Chinchow. This changed, however, when he received Shidehara's reply to his "piercing questions." Stimson found the Japanese answers unsatisfactory, and he indicated in his diary he would have to "pin him down on them." He called the Japanese Ambassador and gave him a return message for Shidehara. It is here that he expressed "outrage" at the bombing of Chinchow. A careful reading of his diary indicates that the "outrage" was directed not toward the initial reports of the bombing (although it certainly concerned him), but rather the fact that Shidehara "simply forwarded to me the report of the military authorities . . . and they had minimized it as a matter of no importance,"[19] an evasive reply to his own inquiry about the affair.

Efforts of the League of Nations

Since the beginning of the Manchurian crisis, the League of Nations had wanted the U.S. to take a more active part in seeking a resolution to the crisis. Stimson, however, wanted the League to take the lead instead of the U.S. The League had informally asked the U.S. to sit jointly with League members in discussions of the Manchurian situation. Such a gesture, in their opinion, would show a unity of American and European opinion on the matter. Following the bombing of Chinchow, both Stimson and Hoover agreed it was an excellent idea, but both wanted the invitation from the League to appear to come from the League unprompted by the U.S. government. They did not want to offend the public opinion of either the U.S. or Japan, but primarily they did not wish to place the U.S. in direct opposition to Japan. A consolidated world opinion was what was needed against the Japanese.

The American consul in Geneva, Prentis Gilbert, was sent to the League, but he had no vote, because the U.S. was not a member of the League. He was in Geneva for discussions and to demonstrate the U.S. concern of the Manchurian situation.[20] On October 17, the Council resolved to call upon all signatories of the Kellogg-Briand Pact to remind Japan and China of their obligations as signatories of the Pact.[21] Four days previously, Stimson had discussed with Gilbert the League's plans to invoke the Pact. He felt matters were developing as he wanted. Stimson, then, was not surprised at the League action and was, in fact, in complete agreement with it.

The U.S. government sent the note to Japan and China, as requested by the League Council, but Stimson delayed sending it until three days after the other signatories had sent theirs. So doing, he hoped to

re-emphasize the League's action. Then on October 24, the Council passed a resolution calling on Japan to remove troops from outside the railway zone by November 16.[22] Stimson sent another note to Japan backing this resolution but not mentioning the League's November 16 deadline. This note was sent two weeks after the League had acted. Stimson did not believe it wise to set a specific deadline by which the Japanese troops had to be withdrawn; however, he did want Japan to understand that the U.S. position--without the deadline--was identical to the League's. The unity of world opinion against Japan, he believed, was important.

Stimson operated against a backdrop of pro-Japanese public sentiment present in the U.S. since the beginning of the Manchurian Affair and concentrated mainly in the news media and the business community. Editorials in the New York Times continued to be very generous to Japan even after the bombing of Chinchow. Hugh Byas, the Times Japan correspondent, in a feature article, defended Japan by explaining that her actions were a consequence of the conditions in China. Later, he also criticized the League of Nations for not demanding safeguards by China at the same time it demanded withdrawal by Japan.[23] Herbert S. Houston, a member of the American Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce, told the New York Advertising Club, upon returning from the Orient, that Japan did not want war, and he compared Japan's relationship to Manchuria to that of the U.S. to Latin America. He stated that we could not expect Japan to arbitrate her interests in Manchuria any more than we would the Monroe Doctrine.[24] Even Elihu Root, Stimson's former senior law partner, and Admiral Montgomery M. Taylor, commander of the Asiatic Fleet, were pro-Japan for similar reasons.[25] Admiral Taylor, in

addition to equating Japan's action to the U.S. Monroe Doctrine, also felt sympathy for the outnumbered Japanese fighting successfully against the Chinese.

This public pro-Japanese sentiment in the U.S. certainly influenced Stimson, but he also understood the power of the press and took the time and trouble to insure that his views of the situation were not overlooked. For example, he had fifteen representatives of the most influential newspapers for dinner at his home on September 23 in an "attempt to reorganize the relations of my Department with the Press." The evening ended with an informal agreement among Stimson and the newsmen that such meetings would be held in the future at Stimson's discretion and suggestions of additional meetings by them. Stimson's perception was that his efforts with the press that evening were a "great success."[26] He had, it should be noted, already asked the press to not publish any article that would inflame American sentiment against Japan.[27] Initially then, the pro-Japanese sentiment was not contrary to Stimson's feelings toward Japan. However, Stimson's actions demonstrate not a pro-Japanese feeling but an effort on his part to seek a resolution to the dispute that was fair to both China and Japan. The Japanese Army in Manchuria, unfortunately, did not seem to be interested in a "fair" resolution of the problem.

The Capture of Tsitsihar

Japan did not withdraw her troops as the League resolution called upon her to do. In fact, military expansion continued with the capture of Tsitsihar on November 18. The timing made it appear to be in defiance of the League's resolution for Japanese troop withdrawal by November 16. Significantly, the capture of Tsitsihar is part of the extension of

Japanese military action in Manchuria into Heilungkiang Province--the largest and northern most province of the provinces comprising Manchuria proper and in proximity to the Russian sphere of influence along the Chinese Eastern railway. Stimson, in his diary, seemed more upset at this act of Japanese aggression than when Chinchow was bombed. To him, it was an effort by the Japanese Kwantung Army to destroy what remained of Chang Hsueh-liang's army and a "flagrant violation of the spirit and probably the letter of all the treaties, the Kellogg Pact, and the Nine-Power Pact." Stimson was also convinced that the Japanese Moderates, whom he had attempted to support by giving them time to restore order and control over the military, had apparently lost in their effort. "Power was in the hands of the very elements who were running amok in the army."[28] At this juncture, Stimson told the Japanese Ambassador that he reserved the right to make public his efforts to convince Japan to refrain from their aggression in China as well as promises made by the Japanese government.[29]

As a result of the capture of Tsitsihar, some of the League delegates, probably influenced by China's Dr. Sze, were considering economic sanctions against Japan and inquiring discreetly as to the U.S. attitude toward such sanctions.[30]

Stimson, in a telephone conversation with the U.S. London Ambassador Charles G. Darves, who was in Paris attending the League session, said that the United States would not enforce a trade embargo, although we would not interfere with an embargo by anyone else. It was the feeling of Hoover that an embargo would lead to war, but Stimson as usual believed that a stronger stand was necessary.[31] Perhaps because of a lack of U.S. support from the presidential level for the sanctions,

these sanctions were not formally discussed by the League. Additionally, the Japanese reversed themselves the following day in regard to a commission of inquiry. Earlier China had requested such an investigation and Japan had opposed it. This time Japan supported the inquiry, but she expanded the investigation proposal to include all matters involved in the dispute between the two countries. In addition to expanding the inquiry greatly, the proposed investigation turned attention away from the previous League resolution specifying a deadline for the withdrawal of Japanese troops, which Japan had ignored anyway. The possibility of an inquiry also ended talk of economic sanctions. The unanimous resolution was passed on December 10, establishing the commission which included an American member. The formation of the so-called Lytton Commission mellowed adverse opinion of Japan.

Occupation of Chinchow and Non-Recognition

The U.S. foreign policy to date had been based on the assumption that U.S. forbearance would enable the Moderates in Japan to retain control of the Japanese army and government. After the Japanese occupied Chinchow on January 2, 1932, Stimson began to discard this assumption.

As early as November 7, President Hoover had proposed to Stimson that the U.S. recall its ambassador from Japan but later reconsidered because he thought that he had a better idea. Hoover proposed that the U.S. make an announcement that if a treaty were made between Japan and China under military pressure, the United States would not recognize it.[32] Stimson agreed, but thought Hoover's idea should be carried even further in that if non-recognition "when concurred in by the entire world would manifestly have a more powerful deterring influence upon an aggressor than

when used by a single nation."[33] Thus, Hoover's proposal on November 7 was the genesis of the policy of non-recognition.

On January 3, 1932, Stimson drafted a note to Japan and China informing them of the major change in the policy of the United States. However, by the time Hoover approved the draft, the tone of the note was softer than Stimson's original draft. On January 7, 1932, the U.S. State Department sent copies of the revised note to China and Japan.[34] This was a unilateral act on the part of the U.S., but Stimson did, as a result of a suggestion of Under Secretary Castle, invite the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty to send similar notes.[35]

The note was a significant change in United States policy toward Japan. Not only was the U.S. opposing Japanese expansion publicly and strongly, but the U.S. also was taking an action unilaterally, something heretofore unprecedented. Previously, the United States diplomacy favored support for action taken collectively by the League of Nations. Now the U.S. was asking for support from the members of the League. This support was not forthcoming.

Great Britain publicly refused to send a similar note to Japan, and in fact issued communique to Japan indicative of a rebuff to the U.S. It was Stimson's view that what the British note did not say was most important. The British managed to avoid mention of China as a nation-state, of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and of non-recognition of results of "unlawful aggression."[36] In short, the British note might be considered a tacit acceptance of the Japanese fait accompli. Great Britain's foreign office reasoned that China was in a disorganized condition and Japan de facto controlled Manchuria. In addition, Britain felt that Japan would continue to honor the "Open Door" policy in China despite the Manchurian

episode and she was seeking assurances to that effect.[37] Great Britain placed the continuation of her trade in the area before the territorial integrity of China.

In view of Great Britain's refusal to endorse wholeheartedly Stimson's plan, France also declined to send the type of note Stimson wanted.[38] Clearly, a significant difference of opinion existed among the U.S., Great Britain and France. Stimson understood France's refusal in light of the fact that her interests in China commercially were much the same as Great Britain's contrast to those of the U.S.[39] In fact, Britain, France, and even Germany, Russia and Portugal, had accomplished earlier, that which Japan was attempting now--that of dividing up China into commercial spheres of influence. So in effect, neither Great Britain nor France were in a position to tell Japan she was wrong in her expansionist activities in Manchuria. Although Great Britain and France were the most important, the other signatories of the Pact likewise refused to endorse Stimson's idea.

Stimson was disappointed but not surprised at Great Britain's refusal to support the U.S. He understood that she had problems at home with the depression, that she held a conservative if not imperialist approach toward East Asia, and that a new government had taken office in September. Britain was also having difficulties abroad such as in India at the time. At this point she did not need another problem. Perhaps an interesting (if not limited) analogy can be drawn between the problems and immediate concerns of Great Britain and those of President Hoover in the form of the depression and all that such a state or condition of a country incurs. Upsetting to Stimson, however, was Great Britain's apparent concern solely for her commerce with China instead of support

for the main provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty; i.e., the territorial integrity of China and by extension world peace. Stimson viewed this as a moral question with an important principle involved. One should support that which is morally right and condemn that which is wrong.

The Japanese Reply to the U.S.

As would be expected, Japan then could reply to the U.S. note feeling confident of the support of Great Britain. Japan's note of January 16, in fact, used the same idea as the British; namely the disorganized state of China as justification for Japanese attempts to re-establish order there. Significantly, the Japanese note did not mention the "Open Door" policy in China, but the use of the term "self-determination" by Japan regarding Manchuria was indicative of Japanese intention to establish an independent state separate from China.[40]

The Shanghai Incident

An unexpected confrontation provided the U.S. the support she had been seeking in an effort to curb Japanese expansionism. On January 28, 1932, the so-called Shanghai Incident erupted. Previously, only the Japanese Army had been involved in the fighting in China. In Shanghai, the Imperial Japanese Navy received its baptism of fire when Admiral Koichi Shiozawa ordered his marines (actually no more than a lightly armed security element) into the Chinese quarter of the international city in an effort to disrupt the Chinese boycott then in effect. The admiral perhaps thought that it was time for the navy to receive some of the glory for fighting the Chinese, heretofore monopolized by the Kwantung Army.[41] He also had pressure from the Japanese citizens there to provide protection from the ever increasing perceived Chinese threats.

Contrary to expectations, the Chinese troops put up much more resistance than was expected, and the admiral reacted by ordering an aerial bombing attack disregarding civilians in the immediate area. Additionally, when the marines could not handle the Chinese forces, some 50,000 Army troops were sent in, and intense house to house fighting resulted. Japanese forces finally forced the Chinese forces out of Shanghai, only because they were numerically superior. A truce was established on May 5, 1932.

The Shanghai incident, beginning on January 28, 1932, and continuing until March 3, brought about a drastic change in international as well as American public opinion. At the same time, it revealed a split between Stimson and Hoover regarding the proper U.S. response. Stimson, from the time it was evident that Shanghai was going to be threatened by the Japanese, wanted to curb that aggressive action through the use of U.S. military force or the threat of that force. He believed that the latter would be sufficient. During a cabinet meeting on January 26, 1932, Manchuria was discussed at length, and Secretary of War Patrick Hurley stated that Japan was intent on pursuing her aggression in China, and that nothing short of military force would stop Japan. Furthermore, he did not think Stimson's efforts in writing notes of protest had been or would be effective. By implication, Hurley was certain it meant war with Japan if the U.S. was to be successful in halting Japanese aggression in Manchuria.

The use of force or the possibility of war as a result of threats of force was where Hoover drew the line. He would fight for the defense of the continental U.S., but not for Asia. The President also believed that Secretary Stimson had resolved the Chinese-Russian conflict in Manchuria two years earlier by mobilizing world public opinion in support

of the Kellogg-Briand Pact. This of course was not true (China ceased to fight a militarily stronger Russia, and Russia saw no need to continue), but it was the perception by Hoover and even Stimson at the time.[42] Hoover thought, of course, that the same course of action could be pursued profitably to end the conflict between China and Japan.

The real difference between Stimson and Hoover was "in respect to the reliance which I [Stimson] felt we could put upon America's strength both economically and militarily."[43] Stimson had in mind a bluff--an implied threat as he was "against putting any threat into words."[44] But Secretary Stimson was becoming increasingly disturbed and agitated over Japanese actions in China.

Stimson completely reversed his attitude of the previous September and began to consider the Japanese military action almost as a personal outrage. He continued to be assured by the Japanese Foreign Minister that the Japanese civilian government would regain control over the army and restore stability in Manchuria. Stimson had been patient for four months, yet the result was ever-expanding Japanese aggression. His outrage was demonstrated so much that his under secretary observed on January 25:

> The Secretary is in a high state of excitement about the situation in Shanghai. [and a week later] The Secretary is feeling very belligerent, and nobody can blame him for his fury against the Japanese, but he must be restrained from saying things which we have got to follow up no matter where they lead.[45]

China also gained more sympathy world wide, because the Chinese were fighting to defend their rights from the Japanese. The Manchurian fighting was less fully reported than that in Shanghai, and hence, less understood in the West. Shanghai was part of the accessible Orient for the West in a way Manchuria was not. Not only was Shanghai the chief

commercial city of China, it was also an international port. It was the center of Britain's as well as the U.S.'s and other Western powers' commerce in China. The population of the city was over three million, and in volume of trade it was one of the five or six largest ports of the world. British interests were great there as evidenced by a direct business investment of $737.4 million in early 1932 (almost equaling Japan's investments in Shanghai and Manchuria). Most of the other major powers had significant investments in Shanghai as well--Japan, $215 million and the U.S. $97.5 million, as examples.[46] So this threat by the Japanese to Shanghai disturbed the British and others due to the investment of not only property but also of personnel. But the Japanese did not find fighting the Chinese quite as easy as in previous engagements.

No longer did the Chinese flee from Japanese military units of any size. Almost overnight, the Japanese became identified as the aggressive bully, and underdog China became identified as fighting for a just cause. Shanghai was an international city with large numbers of foreigners (approx. 58,000) in the separate International Settlement and the French Concession. Now Japanese military action could be observed and reported by western press on a first hand basis. From the rooftops of the International Settlement, the systematic destruction and bombing of the Chapei section, which was the Chinese residential area, could be seen as it occurred. Shanghai, and by extension, Japanese aggression, became "more real" to the West via the newspaper photographs, eye-witness accounts, and newsreels than remote reports datelined "somewhere in Manchuria."

Stimson was able, with the President's approval, to send part of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet to Shanghai to protect American nationals, but he

did not issue a threat to Japan or initiate economic sanctions. In late January, just prior to the Japanese Navy's attack, Stimson decided on a military bluff coupled with a strong restatement of the non-recognition policy to forestall what he thought to be a real Japanese threat to Shanghai. He based his bluff upon what he believed to be the Japanese perception of the U.S. political and military strength in the world, and in particular, East Asia. Stimson's belief regarding Japanese perceptions of U.S. strength was not necessarily accurate. The Japanese, for example, already had concluded that the U.S. was in no position in East Asia to worry them. From the beginning, Stimson's bluff was a weak one, and even though he received strong support for the strong protest to Japan and the movement of naval assets to the area, President Hoover made it clear that there would be no war between the U.S. and Japan.[47] This then was the major difference between the President and Stimson; Stimson was prepared to follow through on his bluff while Hoover was not. On this point Hoover was perhaps the more realistic of the two.

The Bluff and Restatement of Policy

The bluff involved the use of the American Fleet, which had planned exercises off the shores of Hawaii. The original plans called for the Fleet to return to bases on the West Coast of the U.S. upon completion of the exercise, but Stimson changed that, suggesting that the Fleet remain at Hawaii. The movements of the American Fleet and the deployment of the cruiser Houston and six destroyers along with the Thirty-first Infantry Regiment (1,000 men), and four hundred marines of the Fourth Marine Regiment, two days after the Japanese naval attack on Shanghai,[48] perhaps had an effect on Japan. World opinion, however, cancelled out the effect desired by Stimson, because neither Great Britain

nor France really were willing to confront Japan on the basic issue of violation of the treaties involved. Britain did ask Japan to honor the International Settlement in Shanghai, and the Japanese did honor that request.

Public support in the U.S. for some action short of war against Japan was better now after the publicity afforded the Shanghai fighting. There began a debate in Congress about an embargo of war material destined for Japan. In both the House and Senate, members introduced resolutions to halt the flow of munitions to violators of the Kellogg-Briand Pact and to boycott their products.[49] Clearly this was aimed at Japan. The American Friends of China Association called upon American women to boycott Japanese products such as silk and cotton.[50] This organization as well as other anti-Japanese groups certainly influenced the subsequent decline of Japanese imports to the U.S., but they should not be overrated because they were only one factor of many. The international depression, silk competition by the new synthetic fiber rayon, and new U.S. tariff restrictions, all contributed to a sharp decline in imports from Japan.[51]

Thus Stimson enjoyed support at home but not abroad, and without world opinion behind the U.S. actions, his bluff proved ineffective. Japanese fear of the U.S. did not appear as Stimson had hoped, because Japan had the strongest navy in the region and was not impressed by the shifting of a few U.S. warships.

The importance of Stimson's strong restatement of policy was that it sharply defined the division between the United States and Japan. Stimson knew, too, that the U.S. would require world opinion in their favor on any action against Japan in China. To achieve this end, he

desired approval of the restatement of policy. The British supported Stimson's plans in principle, but in practice their support was not forthcoming. Britain was a League member, and hence, felt that any action Britain would take should conform to action taken by the League. Another reason--and not as reasonable to Stimson as the first--was that Britain did not view Japanese aggression in Manchuria as seriously as it did in Shanghai. This double standard diplomacy was based on British commercial interests rather than the legalities underpinning the Nine-Power Treaty.

Another League Action

On February 16, the League appealed to Japan to take no measures calculated to impair the territorial integrity of China.[52] Although diplomatically worded, the note implied support of the non-recognition policy of the U.S. and called on Japan to honor the provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty. In apparent direct challenge to the policy of non-recognition, the Japanese formed state of Manchukuo declared its independence on February 18, 1932--a Japanese puppet state.

Manchukuo

The Japanese concept of a separate and independent state originated with Japanese citizens residing in Manchuria. Over time, they tried to influence the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchuria to assist them in creating a new Manchuria, and the Kwantung Army, in turn, eventually convinced Tokyo, mainly through public opinion, to support their efforts.[53]

A Renewed Attack by Japan

A frustrated Stimson had almost decided to forget about a restatement of non-recognition policy because of the lack of strong

British support for such a position. Then the Japanese launched yet another attack in Shanghai on February 20,[54] and this attack was contrary to orders of both the Japanese Ministers of the Army and Navy who had ordered their subordinates "to avoid aggravation and expansion of the situation . . . especially in the Shanghai area."[55] These orders reflect Japan's realization that a perceived threat to either the Shanghai International Settlement or French Concession, or both, would probably result in adverse world opinion directed against Japanese actions in China. Japan was interested only in Manchuria and not China proper. Consequently, Japan did not want to give the reverse impression of her intentions to the international community. However, as a result of the February 20th attack in Shanghai, feelings against Japan both in the U.S. and Europe were at a new high. On February 21, Stimson decided to capitalize on those new anti-Japanese sentiments.

The Borah Letter

The strong restatement of U.S. policy had its origin in Stimson's displeasure at President Wilson's lack of action in 1914 when Germany invaded Belgium. Stimson would have liked Wilson to stand up for what was morally right and denounce that which was wrong. His thoughts on the restatement of policy provide an insight into the man:

> As I reflected upon it, it seemed to me that in future years I should not like to face a verdict of history to the effect that a government to which I had belonged had failed to express itself adequately upon such a situation.[56]

Stimson's character dictated that he stand firm for principles which he believed to be morally right. Japan, in turn, he felt was morally wrong and had to be taken to task for it--with or without the rest of the world's support.

Stimson also remembered that Theodore Roosevelt had used the idea of a public letter to express national policy. He believed this was one way to insure that the public fully understood the U.S. position and the reasons for it. Stimson then sent a public letter to Senator William E. Borah, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The Borah Letter, as it came to be known, was meant for at least five unnamed addressees with a specific purpose for each. It was for China, to encourage; the American public, to enlighten; the League of Nations, to exhort; the British, to stir up; and the Japanese, to warn.[57] These things the letter accomplished in varying degrees but to no avail. China was encouraged by the surge of mustered world public opinion against Japan and by the British support for the non-recognition concept which resulted in the League's coming out firmly for it. Japan, even though warned, did not change her ways. However, Japan was now aware of the risks she had to accept if she pursued her expansionist policy.

The letter, sent to Senator Borah on February 24 and released to the press in every country of the civilized world for publication the next day, began with a restatement of the "Open Door" policy, and denied the Japanese contention that the Nine-Power Treaty needed to be revised as a result of conditions in Asia that had developed since 1922. It also indicated that if Japan persisted in violating Chinese integrity, the United States would consider itself released from the limitations on its navy as a result of the Washington Conference of 1922 because the U.S. considered all of that Conference's agreements to be interrelated and valid, including the Nine-Power Treaty.[58]

On February 22, preceeding the Borah Letter by a day, the Japanese replied to the League's appeal of February 16. If the Borah Letter was

to define clearly U.S. policy in East Asia, then the Japanese reply clearly defined Japanese policy in the same area. The two sharply conflicted--as the Japanese reply stated in part,

> . . . the Japanese Government do(es) not and cannot consider that China is an 'organized people' within the meaning of the Covenant of the League of Nations. China has, it is true, been treated in the past by common consent as if the expression connoted organized people. But fictions cannot last forever. . . .[59]

Although Japan was then using and had in the past used this argument, in addition to that of protecting her nationals, to justify her military actions in China, it was not an ingenious one. Great Britain once used similar logic in explaining her decision not to support U.S. efforts to censure Japan. It was also true that Japan had extreme difficulty finding a seat of authority in China willing to address seriously Japanese grievances regarding conflicts between Japanese residing in Manchuria and the Chinese there. After the Shanghai Incident, however, world opinion now sided with Stimson and the U.S.--not Japan. Japan was viewed as an aggressor who had to be halted. Stimson himself believed war with Japan was "inevitable" as he reflected in his diary on March 9, 1932, "it is, in my opinion, almost impossible that there should not be an armed clash between two such different civilizations."[60] This entry seems to imply that world opinion alone will not stand up to aggression. In the end, one will have to fight.

The Borah Letter, as it has become known, was well received by the majority of newspapers in the United States.[61] Although President Hoover had enthusiastically approved the letter, Stimson brought this to the President's attention on February 24 when Hoover was on the verge of telling the American people that the U.S. would not go to war under any circumstances. Hoover still had very strong feeling against a war, but

Stimson told him that a no-war statement would indicate he did not endorse the Borah Letter when in fact, he fully supported it. Additionally, it would negate any effect the letter might have in curbing Japan's activity in China. The following day, Stimson again had to convince the President not to make a no-war statement. Even then Hoover remained reluctant to consider the possibility of war, but Stimson was able to show him that even pacifists or "peace people," as Stimson referred to them, had reacted favorably to the letter.[62]

Initially, world reaction to the Borah Letter was mixed, but the influence of this strong restatement of policy became apparent when Britain's Sir John Simon, who previously had refused to support Stimson's efforts, did support the non-recognition principle before the League of Nations. Significantly, on March 11, 1932, the League Assembly adopted a resolution supporting the non-recognition principle. Stimson had the force of world opinion that he felt was so necessary and important in his cause.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

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[14]Ibid. [15]Ibid., Oct 13, 1931.

[16]Herbert Hoover, Memoirs, 1920-33 (New York: MacMillan, 1952), p. 368.

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[27]Henry L. Stimson, The Far Eastern Crisis (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1936), p. 74.

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[51]Wilkins, "The Role of U.S. Business," in Borg and Shumpei, Pearl Harbor as History, p. 342.

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CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION:

THE MAN WHO PASSED BY ON THE OTHER SIDE

The political climate of the decade preceeding the Manchurian Incident was characterized by the great powers' pursuit of independent courses of action to achieve individual national goals and interests in East Asia. Simultaneously, China attempted to establish a centralized government and to insure for herself a recognized position in the international community. Her attempts resulted in civil war and a conflict with the major powers' interests in China. The perceived threat to western interests in China initially caused the Western powers to sympathize with Japan after the Manchurian Incident.

Henry L. Stimson, as Secretary of State, was the most influential figure in molding U.S. foreign policy during this critical era in American history. As a man of high moral principles and firm convictions, he conducted a foreign policy characterized by trust in people and nations. Foreign relations were a personal venture--one man to another, each honor bound to uphold the trust that each expected. Stimson then was caught up in a classic dilemma of ideals versus reality. He believed that the international political community had seen the agony of World War I and had learned its lesson; disputes must be settled peacefully. In Stimson's opinion, international agreements resulting from the Washington Conferences of 1921-22 were the foundation of world peace and order.

Following the Manchurian Incident, it soon was apparent that the Japanese Kwantung Army had acted on its own without the sanction of the Tokyo government. Secretary Stimson initially perceived the incident as

simply a mutiny by the Japanese soldiers in Manchuria, and he felt obligated to support the civilian government in Japan in their efforts to restore order and control. His personal acquaintance with the Japanese Prime Minister Wakatsuki and especially Foreign Minister Shidehara influenced his support of their cabinet because he believed that they, like himself, were committed to peace. Additionally, Stimson's belief in a strong central government and his high moral principles influenced his diplomacy. The Japanese civilian government (Stimson's Moderates) was on the "right side" and the Japanese Army in Manchuria (Stimson's militarists) was wrong not only in its actions in Manchuria but also in its apparent "rebellion" against the Tokyo government. Thus Stimson's initial reaction to Japanese military adventures was to adopt a "wait and see" attitude.

When and why Secretary Stimson abandoned the above position and gave up his belief and hope that the "Moderates" of the Japanese government would be able to restore order and control over their internal problems, did not hinge on a single event. Stimson's diaries make this quite clear. The cumulative effect of several specific events, following the September, 1931, bombing of Chinchow, changed Stimson's confidence and support of the civilian Japanese government to a determined effort to stop Japanese "aggression" in China.

There were probably five separate events that caused Secretary Stimson to come to the final conclusion that the civilian "Moderates" had in fact lost control of the "radical" elements of the Japanese Army. These events were: the bombing of Chinchow; the capture of Tsitsihar; the capture of Chinchow; the Shanghai Incident; and the renewed attack in Shanghai on February 20, 1932. Throughout the relatively short period

(Oct 8, 1931 to Feb 20, 1932) that these events occurred, Stimson verged on wanting to take stronger action against Japan, but constraints by President Hoover and in particular, assurances by the Japanese Foreign Minister Shidehara, convinced him there was still hope that the Moderates of the Japanese government would take change of the situation and resolve differences with China and the world. His friendship with Shidehara caused him to be more reluctant in taking a firmer stand against Japan than perhaps he intended. Stimson's concern that Shidehara's reassurances were credible suggests that a series of events, as opposed to a single instance, caused Stimson to change his views of the Japanese.

Traditiona` historiography stresses the "moral outrage" of Stimson following the Japanese bombing of Chinchow. Stimson's diary, however, reflects "outrage" only "after" he sent a message through diplomatic channels to Shidehara, asking him if the reports of the bombing were true. Shidehara's reply was a simple restatement of the Japanese Army's report indicating the incident was of "no importance." Shidehara's apparent lack of concern for what Stimson considered serious brought the remark of "outrage" to the Japanese ambassador who was relaying Shidehara's reply. Perhaps it is a fair interpretation that the "moral outrage" expressed by Stimson was directed more toward the breach of trust by Shidehara than the actual bombing of Chinchow. Otherwise, it seems Stimson would have expressed this "outrage" in his diary entry of the day before, when he first heard of the Japanese bombing of Chinchow.

Stimson's frustration regarding Shidehara, demonstrated in the bombing of Chinchow, was indicative of his frustration involving the other four events described earlier. It was only after the Feb 20 renewed Japanese attack in Shanghai that Stimson finally discarded his belief that

Japanese civilian moderates would re-assert control over the Army. He had given the civilian "moderates" their chance to right the army's wrong; now the Japanese had to be taken to task for their actions--with or without the support of world opinion. Stimson felt strongly that he, at least, had to make his position, as well as that of the U.S., clear not only to Japan, but to the world and the American people. Thus occurred his shift from a foreign policy of non-public action to one of non-recognition.

There is no question that the doctrine of moral condemnation and non-recognition did not deter Japanese aggrandizement, but the non-recognition policy remains a cornerstone of U.S. policy in East Asia today. However, Stimson even admitted in retrospect in 1947, that his policy was inadequate:

> What happened before World War II was that we lacked the courage to enforce the authoritative decision of the international world. We agreed with the Kellogg Pact that aggressive war must end. We renounced it and we condemned those who might use it. But it was a moral condemnation only. We thus did not reach the second half of the question: what will you do to an aggressor when you catch him? If we had reached it, we should easily have found the right answer. But that answer escaped us for it implied a duty to catch the criminal and such a choice meant war. . . . Our offense was thus that of the man who passed by on the other side.[1]

The international community today would do well to heed Mr. Stimson's words of over three decades ago. It is as applicable today as it was then.

END NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

[1]Henry L. Stimson, "The Nuremberg Trial," Foreign Affairs (January, 1947), p. 184.

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS

1853	Commodore Perry opens trade door to Japan.
1867	Birth of Henry L. Stimson. Restoration of Imperial Authority in Japan.
1894	Sino-Japanese War.
1898	U.S. assumes responsibility for the Philippines.
1899	Secretary of State John Hay's Open Door policy on China stated.
1900	U.S. Marine detachment sent to China during Boxer Rebellion.
1904	Russo-Japanese War.
1905	President Theodore Roosevelt helps to arrange the Russian-Japanese peace.
1911	Annexation of Korea by Japan. Chinese 1911 Revolution.
1914-18	World War I.
1915	Japanese Twenty-one Demands. Sino-Japanese treaties.
1920	League of Nations established.
1921-22	The Washington Conference. The Nine-Power Treaty signed by major western powers, Japan and China.
4 June 1928	China's Chang Tso-lin (Ruler of Manchuria) assassinated by Kwantung Army.
Dec, 1928	Manchuria declares allegiance to the Nationalist government at Nanking under Chang Tso-lin's son, Chang Hsueh-liang.
1929	Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Pact). Henry L. Stimson becomes Secretary of State under Hoover. China-Russia disputes.
18 Sep 1931	Manchurian Incident (Japanese occupation of Mukden and other cities in South Manchuria).

21 Sep 1931	Formal appeal to League of Nations by China.
4 Oct 1931	China requests that the U.S. send observers to Manchuria.
8 Oct 1931	Japanese bombing of Chinchow.
16 Oct 1931	U.S. formally invited to sit on the Council of the League of Nations.
17 Oct 1931	The Council calls upon all signatories of the Kellogg Pact to remind Japan and China of their obligations as signatories of the Pact.
24 Oct 1931	Council resolution calling on Japan to remove troops by 16 Nov.
5 Nov 1931	U.S. note to Japan and China supporting League resolution but not mentioning the 16 Nov. deadline.
17 Nov 1931	Japanese capture of Tsitsihar.
10 Dec 1931	League establishes commission of inquiry (Lytton Commission).
11 Dec 1931	Resignation of Minseito Cabinet in Japan.
2 Jan 1932	Japanese occupation of Chinchow.
7 Jan 1932	Stimson note to Japan and China stating Non-Recognition policy. No support from other major powers.
16 Jan 1932	Japanese reply to U.S. note stating in part that China was not an organized state and this fact relieved Japan from any obligation of the Nine-Power Treaty or covenants of the League of Nations.
28 Jan - 3 Mar 1932	Japanese attack on Shanghai (bombing of Chinese quarter, Chapei).
31 Jan 1932	Part of U.S. Asiatic Fleet sent to Shanghai to protect Americans (England also sent ships).
16 Feb 1932	League of Nations appeals to Japan.
18 Feb 1932	Japanese formed state of Manchukuo declares independence.
20 Feb 1932	Japanese renew attack in Shanghai.
22 Feb 1932	Japan replies to the League of Nations.

23 Feb 1932	Stimson's Borah Letter published.
11 Mar 1932	League of Nations adopts resolution of non-recognition.
4 Sep 1932	Lytton Report presented to League of Nations.
23 Feb 1933	Japanese delegation walks out of League of Nations. By coincidence, the first anniversary of Stimson's Borah Letter.
24 Feb 1933	League of Nations approves Lytton Report and advises all members not to recognize Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo.
27 Mar 1933	Japan officially withdraws from League of Nations.

APPENDIX B

KEY POINTS OF MAJOR U.S. POLICIES

AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

U.S. OPEN DOOR POLICY

- first stated by U.S. Secretary of State John Hay in 1899.
- supported equality of commercial opportunity in China.
- defended China's territorial and administrative integrity.
- was the foundation for the Nine-Power Treaty.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

- attending at the request of the U.S., were Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, China, Portugal and the Netherlands.
- held in 1921-1922.
- decided on limitations on the size of navies of the major naval powers of the world.
- motive was to promote world peace through disarmament.
- recognized Japan as a contending power in East Asia and rate the U.S. Navy as equal to Great Britain's navy.

NINE POWER TREATY

- signed in 1922 by the major western powers, Japan and China (during Washington Conference).
- restated Hay's "Open Door" policy.
- agreed to respect the "sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China" and to assist China in forming a stable government.

PACT OF PARIS

- also known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact.
- signed in 1928 initially by fifteen powers, and in succeeding months by practically all other nations.
- outlawed war as a means to settle disputes between nations, or "as an instrument of national policy."
- stated that consideration of world conditions cannot exist without considering China's problems.
- other than world public opinion, it lacked enforcement.

U.S. NON-RECOGNITION POLICY

- made public in Stimson's Borah Letter, dated February 23, 1932.
- restated the "Open Door" policy.
- denied Japan's contention that the Nine-Power Treaty needed to be revised.
- stated the U.S. would consider itself released from the naval limitations established at the Washington Conference of 1922 if Japan continued to violate the Nine-Power Treaty in regard to China.
- stated the U.S. considered all treaties that resulted from the Washington Conference to be interrelated and valid.

APPENDIX C

BORAH LETTER

February 23, 1932.

My dear Senator Borah:

You have asked my opinion whether, as has been sometimes recently suggested, present conditions in China have in any way indicated that the so-called Nine-Power Treaty has become inapplicable or ineffective or rightly in need of modification, and if so, what I considered should be the policy of this government.

That policy, enunciated by John Hay in 1899, brought to an end the struggle among various powers for so-called spheres of interest in China which was threatening the dismemberment of that empire. To accomplish this Mr. Hay invoked two principles: (1) equality of commercial opportunity among all nations in dealing with China, and (2) as necessary to that equality the preservation of China's territorial and administrative integrity. These principles were not new in the foreign policy of America. They had been the principles upon which it rested in its dealings with other nations for many years. In the case of China they were invoked to save a situation which not only threatened the future development and sovereignty of that great Asiatic people, but also threatened to create dangerous and constantly increasing rivalries between the other nations of the world. War had already taken place between Japan and China. At the close of that war three other nations intervened to prevent Japan from obtaining some of the results of that war claimed by her. Other nations sought and had obtained spheres of interest. Partly as a result of these actions a serious uprising had broken out in China which endangered the legations of all of the powers at Peking. While the attack on those legations was in progress, Mr. Hay made an announcement in respect to this policy as the principle upon which the powers should act in the settlement of the rebellion. He said:

"The policy of the Government of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire."

He was successful in obtaining the assent of the other powers to the policy thus announced.

In taking these steps Mr. Hay acted with the cordial support of the British Government. In responding to Mr. Hay's announcement, above set forth, Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, expressed himself "most emphatically as concurring in the policy of the United States.

For twenty years thereafter the "open door" policy rested upon the informal commitments thus made by the various powers. But in the winter of 1921 to 1922, at a conference participated in by all of the principal powers which had interests in the Pacific, the policy was crystallized into the so-called Nine-Power Treaty, which gave definition and precision to the principles upon which the policy rested. In the first article of that treaty, the contracting powers, other than China, agreed:

"1. To respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China.

"2. To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government.

"3. To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China.

"4. To refrain from taking advantage of conditions in China in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of subjects or citizens of friendly states, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such states."

This treaty thus represents a carefully developed and matured international policy intended, on the one hand, to assure to all of the contracting parties their rights and interests in and with regard to China, and on the other hand, to assure to the people of China the fullest opportunity to develop without molestation their sovereignty and independence according to the modern and enlightened standards believed to obtain among the peoples of this earth. At the time this treaty was signed, it was known that China was engaged in an attempt to develop the free institutions of a self-governing republic after her recent revolution from an autocratic form of government; that she would require many years of both economic and political effort to that end; and that her progress would necessarily be slow. The treaty was thus a covenant of self-denial among the signatory powers in deliberate renunciation of any policy of aggression which might tend to interfere with that development. It was believed--and the whole history of the development of the "open door" policy reveals that faith--that only by such a process, under the protection of such an agreement, could the fullest interests not only of China but of all nations which have intercourse with her best be served.

During the course of the discussions which resulted in the treaty, the chairman of the British Delegation, Lord Balfour, had stated that--

"The British Empire Delegation understood that there was no representative of any power around the table who thought that the old practice of 'spheres of interest' was either advocated by any government or would be tolerable to this conference. So far as the British Government were concerned, they had, in the most formal manner, publicly announced that they regarded this practice as utterly inappropriate to the existing situation."

At the same time the representative of Japan, Baron Shidehara, announced the position of his Government as follows:

"No one denies to China her sacred right to govern herself. No one stands in the way of China to work out her own great national destiny...."

It must be remembered also that this treaty was one of several treaties and agreements entered into at the Washington Conference by the various powers concerned, all of which were interrelated and interdependent. No one of these treaties can be disregarded without disturbing the general understanding and equilibrium which were intended to be accomplished and effected by the group of agreements arrived at in their entirety. The Washington Conference was essentially a disarmament conference, aimed to promote the possibility of peace in the world not only through the cessation of competition in naval armament but also by the solution of various other disturting problems which threatened the peace of the world, particularly in the Far East. These problems were all interrelated. The willingness of the American Government to surrender its then commanding lead in battleship construction and to leave its positions at Guam and in the Philippines without further fortifications was predicated upon, among other things, the self-denying covenants contained in the Nine-Power Treaty, which assured the nations of the world not only of equal opportunity for their Eastern trade but also against the military aggrandizement of any other power at the expense of China. One cannot discuss the possibility of modifying or abrogating those provisions of the Nine-Power Treaty without considering at the same time the other promises upon which they were really dependent.

Six years later the policy of self-denial against aggression by a stronger against a weaker power, upon which the Nine-Power Treaty had been based, received a powerful reinforcement by the execution by substantially all the nations of the world of the Pact of Paris, the so-called Kellogg-Briand Pact. These two treaties represent independent but harmonious steps taken for the purpose of aligning the conscience and public opinion of the world in favor of a system of orderly development by the law of nations including the settlement of all controversies by methods of justice and peace instead of by arbitrary force. The program for the protection of China from outside aggression is an essential part of any such development. The signatories and adherents of the Nine-Power Treaty rightly felt that the orderly and peaceful development of the 400,000,000 of people inhabiting China was necessary to the peaceful welfare of the entire world and that no program for the welfare of the world as a whole could afford to neglect the welfare and protection of China.

The recent events which have taken place in China, especially the hostilities which having been begun in Manchuria have latterly been extended to Shanghai, far from indicating the advisability of any modification of the treaties we have been discussing, have tended to bring home the vital importance of the faithful observance of the covenants therein to all of the nations interested in the Far East. It is not necessary in that connection to inquire into the causes of the controversy or attempt to apportion the blame between the two nations which are unhappily involved; for regardless of cause or responsibility, it is clear beyond peradventure that a situation has developed which cannot, under any circumstances, be

reconciled with the obligations of the covenants of these two treaties, and that if the treaties had been faithfully observed such a situation could not have arisen. The signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty and of the Kellogg-Briand Pact who are not parties to that conflict are not likely to see any reason for modifying the terms of those treaties. To them the real value of the faithful performance of the treaties has been brought sharply home by the perils and losses to which their nationals have been subjected in Shanghai.

That is the view of this Government. We see no reason for abandoning the enlightened principles which are embodied in these treaties. We believe that this situation would have been avoided had these covenants been faithfully observed, and no evidence has come to us to indicate that a due compliance with them would have interfered with the adequate protection of the legitimate rights in China of the signatories of those treaties and their nationals.

On January 7th last, upon the instruction of the President, this Government formally notified Japan and China that it would not recognize any situation, treaty or agreement entered into by those Governments in violation of the covenants of these treaties, which affected the rights of our Government or its citizens in China. If a similar decision should be reached and a similar position taken by the other governments of the world, a caveat will be placed upon such action which, we believe, will effectively bar the legality hereafter of any title or right sought to be obtained by pressure or treaty violation, and which, as has been shown by history in the past, will eventually lead to the restoration to China of rights and titles of which she may have been deprived.

In the past our Government, as one of the leading powers on the Pacific Ocean, has rested its policy upon an abiding faith in the future of the people of China and upon the ultimate success in dealing with them of the principles of fair play, patience, and mutual good will. We appreciate the immensity of the task which lies before her statesmen in the development of her country and its Government. The delays in her progress, the instability of her attempts to secure a responsible government, were foreseen by Messrs. Hay and Hughes and their contemporaries and were the very obstacles which the policy of the "open door" was designed to meet. We concur with those statesmen, representing all the nations in the Washington Conference, who decided that China was entitled to the time necessary to accomplish her development. We are prepared to make that our policy for the future.

Very sincerely yours,
HENRY L. STIMSON

The Honorable William E. Borah
United States Senate

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