

# The Pacific War and Rise of China as a Major Power

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## 1. Introduction

Modern Chinese history from the First Opium War in 1840 until the Xinhai Revolution in 1911 is the story of a nation in decline, gradually losing both its sovereignty as an independent nation and status as a major power with global influence. In particular, as a result of the First Sino-Japanese War, China tumbled from the position of power it had retained in East Asia for more than two thousand years.

The history of Chinese economic reform since the 1980s is also a story of the reinstatement of a nation to power. Since the turn of the 21st century, many Chinese have begun to realize that their country is a major power. The recent rise of China has affected the world in many ways.

In modern times, especially after the First Sino-Japanese War, the resurrection of China as a major power was a dream of many Chinese. The Pacific War was a turning point in China's perception as a major power. How should this turning point be viewed in terms of modern Chinese history? What contemporary significance does the Pacific War have for China? This paper looks at the steps taken by China towards its reinstatement as a major power through an examination of Chinese foreign diplomacy before and after the Pacific War, and thereby discusses the significance of the war for China.

## 2. Chinese Expectation of the U.K. and the U.S.

Before the Second Sino-Japanese War escalated into a full-scale war, there were two major political factions within the Nationalist Government of China, one favoring Japan and the other favoring the West. The faction leaning towards Japan was led by Chiang Kai-shek (a graduate of Tokyo Shinbu Military Academy), Wang Jingwei (Hosei University), Ho Ying-chin (Imperial Japanese Army Academy) and Chang Chun (Imperial Japanese Army Academy), all of whom had studied in Japan. The major figures of the faction favoring the West were Sun Fo (Columbia University), T. V. Soong (Harvard University) and H. H. Kung (Oberlin College and Yale University). However, the diplomat directly responsible for foreign policy negotiations with Western nations and who played a significant role in policy development was Wellington Koo (Yale University and Columbia University). The two factions had differing perceptions of Japan and, consequently, their policies concerning Japan diverged significantly.

Following the Manchurian Incident, Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei formed a cooperative administration and adopted “*An nei rang wai* (First pacify the interior then resist the external [threat]),” a policy which gave greater priority to domestic unification and stability rather than opposition to Japan. Around the same time in Japan there were growing calls,

which were expressed in newspapers and magazines, to reshape perceptions of China and to calmly and fairly address the rise of nationalism and the momentum towards unification in China. Following these trends, diplomatic negotiations concerning Japan-China relations were held and made some progress. Ambassadors were exchanged for the first time, and an amicable sentiment emerged.

However, after 1935 the China Expeditionary Army and the Kwantung Army implemented the North China Buffer State Strategy, driving the Chinese Nationalist Party and the National Revolutionary Army out of Hebei and Chahar Provinces. Actions taken by the local Japanese armies generated renewed anti-Japan sentiment within China, which resulted in a reversion to increasing tension between Japan and China. As a result, the influence of the Japan-leaning faction of the Nationalist Government over the making of policy declined significantly, while that of the West-leaning faction gained more sway.

On May 5, 1936, soon after arriving in Paris as Ambassador to France, Wellington Koo met with Prime Minister Albert Sarraut and asked him to pay the greatest possible attention to the tumultuous situation in the Far East. Koo and Sarraut agreed completely in their views of the Far East problem and global affairs. In other words, they shared the view that a neighbor of China (i.e. Japan) was preparing to invade China. They also agreed that this had to be halted somehow to prevent the outbreak of war in the Far East. On July 11, Koo held talks with the President of the French National Assembly. Ten days later, he sent a wire to Nanjing detailing the talks and asked Chiang Kai-shek and Chang Chun to consider the views of the French Government. According to the wire:

Despite the fact that the Nine-Power Treaty was adopted to ensure China's political sovereignty and territorial integrity, Britain and America are not fulfilling their duties as stipulated in the Treaty, citing their lack of military capability. Of the nine countries, the Soviet Union is the nation that shares a common vested interest with China, and is willing to provide support. According to observations made by the President of the French National Assembly, the Soviet Union's military capability is significant, particularly its air force, which is large and powerful even by European standards. The Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance was strongly desired by the French, based upon such an evaluation of the Soviet Union's military capability. The Soviet Union is currently making phenomenal advancements in the development of its heavy industries, and there is no doubt that the economy of the Soviet Union will grow into one comparable to America within 10 years. The only way for China to build a safe international environment, and therefore enable itself to focus on the development of its own country, is to work hand in hand with the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons, China rapidly began leaning towards the Soviet Union from around this time. As a result of his communications with the Soviet Union's Minister for Foreign Affairs,

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<sup>1</sup> Liu Jie, *Nicchu Senso-ka no Gaiko (Foreign Diplomacy During the Second Sino-Japanese War)* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobun Kan, 1995), pp. 18-19.

Wellington Koo came to believe that the Soviet Union would provide material assistance to China if Japan and China were to engage in military conflict.

An important characteristic of China's foreign policy prior to the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War was the lessening of emphasis on direct negotiations with the Japanese and the placing of more importance on requests for intervention by the Western powers, and, in particular, the expressing of strong expectations of the Soviet Union.

Wellington Koo, who led diplomatic negotiations with Europe and America, submitted the following statement of position in response to a request by the Nationalist Government:

Our nation is now facing a crisis and has been left isolated. Other countries have displayed sympathy towards our plight but are unwilling to provide actual support. We cannot ask for assistance in times of need because we lack allies. The most important condition when choosing an ally is that its policies are not contradictory to our own. We have until now sought assistance from Germany and Italy and have depended on their military manpower and equipment. However, this policy has merely been one of convenience. Germany and Italy have now strengthened ties with Japan, and have adopted policies which favor invasion, are pro-war and anti-League of Nations . . . In order to prevent China from allying with the Soviet Union and in order to realize its aggressive objectives, Japan will most likely demand that China sign the Berlin Agreement as we have refused to join the Anti-Comintern Pact. However, we must refuse all of this and force through policy reforms for our own self-preservation. In my view, Britain, France, the Soviet Union and America do not have aggressive ambitions and emphasize peace and cooperation because they want to ensure stability. In particular, Britain, France and the Soviet Union value the League of Nations and are attempting to achieve collective security. Although not a member of the League of Nations, America has always expressed its approval of the League's charter for peacekeeping. Additionally, all four countries possess territories and other vital interests in the Far East. Therefore, in relation to Japan's aggressive national policies, those nations have the same vested interests as China. Those nations also have the capacity to assist us in terms of diplomacy, military, finance and industry. Therefore, if we cannot come to terms with Japan in relation to the integrity of our territory, sovereignty and administration, we must immediately approach those four nations.<sup>2</sup>

As Japan-China relations continued to deteriorate, this diplomatic strategy vis-à-vis Britain, America, France and the Soviet Union proposed by Wellington Koo became the favored course of action within the Nationalist Government and overshadowed the policies of the Japan faction, which insisted on direct negotiations with Japan. It was therefore only natural that this strategy came to dominate Chinese diplomacy as the Second Sino-Japanese War escalated.

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

### **3. Chinese Diplomatic Strategy Concerning the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union**

On August 23, 1939, before the outbreak of World War II, the Russo-German Non-Aggression Treaty was signed in Moscow. This ten-year pact established that neither nation shall invade the other; should either nation be attacked by a third nation, the other nation shall not render assistance to the third nation; information is to be exchanged; neither nation should participate in an alliance that targets the other nation; and both nations should attempt to resolve conflicts peacefully. It is believed that the pact included a secret agreement that Poland was to be divided between the two nations if a territorial or political realignment was to take place in Eastern Europe. The establishment of a pact between the anti-communist, anti-Soviet Nazi Germany and the anti-fascist, socialist Soviet Union, two nations which were ideologically incompatible, stunned the international community. The Japanese Cabinet, led by Kiichiro Hiranuma, which had been engaged in divisive internal arguments regarding the strengthening of the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany and Italy, lamented this new development as complex and mysterious and resigned.

Britain and France were convinced that the Soviet Union's decision to strengthen ties with Germany was a breach of faith. Britain and France strongly condemned the Soviet Union's decision and began preparing for a German invasion. Following British Prime Minister Chamberlain's declaration that Britain had an obligation to protect Poland, Britain and Poland signed an Agreement of Mutual Assistance on August 25. This agreement also buttressed the military alliance between France and Poland.

The Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union also had a significant effect on China's diplomatic strategy which sought to strengthen ties with the West. The rapid rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union brought about a crisis in relations between the Soviet Union and Britain and France, which were already suffering from increasing mutual distrust. These developments had negative implications for China, which was developing plans to resist Japan with the aid of the four major nations—America, Britain, France and the Soviet Union. The Premier of the Executive Yuan H. H. Kung therefore sought to completely change China's foreign policy.

However, Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to France, sent a wire to Premier H. H. Kung, in which Koo expressed the following views: "Now that resistance to Japan is at its peak, China requires aid from the Soviet Union, Britain, America and France, as has been the case previously, but now more urgently than ever. There is no need to make changes in current foreign policy. We must strengthen relations with those nations to ensure that we continue to receive aid."<sup>3</sup>

Wellington Koo emphasized a relationship of dependence with the Soviet Union, Britain, America and France and assessed the situation optimistically. Koo analyzed as follows. The establishment of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union will reduce the westward threat to the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Soviet Union will be able to

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<sup>3</sup> *Gu wei jun hui yi lu (Memoirs of Wellington Koo)*, Vol. 4 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1986), p. 4.

concentrate part of its military resources in the Far East, which will place significant pressure on Japan. Additionally, although Britain and France were strongly dissatisfied with the Soviet Union, relationships between those countries were unlikely to deteriorate any further, as long as the Soviet Union remained neutral. While there was some antagonism between America and Germany, the fact that America has maintained its Far East policy was a sign that it was not expecting the Soviet Union to change its policies concerning relations with China. In other words, the Soviet Union's China policies are not likely to be influenced by American actions. On the other hand, when considering Germany's Far Eastern interests, Germany's basic posture will favor China and would never ally with Japan. Germany's military, business sector and cultural sphere has already formed a consensus on this point.<sup>4</sup> Koo thus continued to strongly insist on maintaining the same foreign policy, even after the international situation suddenly changed in the form of the birth of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union.

Additionally, in a wire sent to Chiang Kai-shek on August 26, Wellington Koo insisted that China take advantage to the utmost of the sudden change in international relations and resolve the problem of the Second Sino-Japanese War in one blow, recovering lost territory and restoring sovereignty. He placed emphasis on a strategy to resolve the Second Sino-Japanese War through negotiations mediated by America, Britain and France. The details of the message shall be presented below since the content is of interest when studying the foreign policy of the Nationalist Government at the time.

The signing of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union has created an optimal opportunity for China to discuss more active military cooperation with the Soviet Union and achieve a fundamental resolution of our relations with Japan. Even if we assume that the Soviet Union's intentions are defense of its homeland, or that it has other intentions in Europe, and therefore is not willing to deploy military resources in the Far East, it should at least display a willingness to provide us aid. In other words, it is crucial that the Soviet Union, Britain, France and America form a peaceful front to place pressure on Japan. In the north, the Soviet Union can deploy a large number of military units in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, while in the south, the U.S. Navy will advance into the West Pacific, and display their cooperation with Britain and France. Following this, negotiations mediated by Britain, France and America will take place, and Japan will be pressured to cease fire, withdraw its military and initiate reconciliation. Recently, the Japanese Government has been flustered by the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union and is seeking new means of diplomacy. Japan holds a grudge against Germany and does not trust the Soviet Union, and therefore, Japan will not come to terms with the Soviet Union. This means that there is a possibility that Japan will begin seeking ways to reach some sort of agreement with Britain, France and America. If that occurs, Japan may value the counsel of those three countries and may grant concessions to us. In other words, we should make the most of

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

our current advantageous diplomatic situation and utilize diplomatic means in order to reclaim lost territories and ensure that our sovereignty is restored. An opportunity such as this will never occur again.<sup>5</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek held Wellington Koo's analysis of the international situation and China's status within it in high regard. Chiang's diplomatic vision went further than Wellington Koo's proposal, and envisaged a diplomatic strategy in which the foreign powers cooperated in applying pressure on Japan. Chiang believed that "the problems of the Far East shall not be solved unless America assumes leadership and convenes a Nine-Power Treaty conference, another Brussels Conference, or organizes anew a Pacific Peace Conference."<sup>6</sup> On August 29, Chiang held talks with Nelson T. Johnson, the American Ambassador to China, in Chongqing and asked him to communicate the following three points to the American Government:

- (1) China will maintain its own foreign policies and maintain freedom of policymaking concerning relations with Britain, France and the Soviet Union.
- (2) The resolution of issues in the Far East, particularly those between Japan and China, is dependent upon America. China will act in complete compliance with America. China's diplomatic policy will be determined by the policies of America. China would therefore like to know America's stance as soon as possible.
- (3) China would like America to warn Britain and France that their Far Eastern interests cannot be maintained or secured by depending upon Japan. The Nationalist Government of China has already established itself in the Southwest, and it is not Japan but China that can secure the interests of those countries in the Far East.<sup>7</sup>

Such a diplomatic strategy that was dependent on America was a viable option for China in its weakened state. In accordance with Chiang's policies, Wellington Koo conducted diplomacy with the Americans in Paris, just prior to the German invasion of Poland.

On September 1, Koo held talks with William C. Bullitt, the American Ambassador to France, and communicated China's foreign policy as follows:

From the British and French perspective, the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union had a significant negative effect on relations within Europe. However, from a different point of view, the Treaty transformed the situation in the Far East and has isolated Japan. Japan has been abandoned by her European friend, and that friend now leans towards Japan's greatest enemy, the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has now secured more room to maneuver as it pleases. Japan, which has begun to sense danger, has been freed from pressure from Europe and is now likely to focus its attention on relations with China. In order to cope with these developments, Japan will

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

no doubt review its diplomatic strategy concerning relations with Britain and France.

According to information that I have recently acquired, Britain and France have begun reviewing their foreign policies concerning their relations with Japan and are seeking a rapprochement with Japan. However, in my (Wellington Koo's) understanding, if Britain and France forget Japan's actions over the past several months and decide to cooperate with Japan, they would be making a large mistake. If that were to happen it would send the wrong message to Japan and encourage a Japanese invasion of China.

The signing of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Treaty has created an optimal opportunity for China to convince Japan to abandon its aggressive policy towards China. In the past two years, I (Wellington Koo) have been urging the Soviet Union in the north and Britain and France in the south to cooperate in pressuring Japan. The Soviet Union can now afford to pressure Japan and now is the time for the three democratic nations to take a resolute position towards Japan. This is the only way to ensure peace in the Far East for the next twenty-five years.

Given the current situation in Europe, if Britain and France are unable to deploy their navies to the Far East, Japan will be forced to accept a resolution that is fair to China and would contribute to the rebuilding of peace in the Far East. In other words, Britain and France must maintain a hardline attitude towards Japan on the one hand, while on the other also propose a plan to expediently resolve the Second Sino-Japanese War. Japan also strongly desires this.

The signing of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Treaty has created a large gap between the Soviet Union and Britain and France. However, this should not prevent the cooperation of the three countries in the Far East because these three countries share common interests in the region. If war breaks out in Europe, China and Japan will remain hostile towards each other in the Far East and Japan will doubtlessly attempt to capture the British and French spheres of influence in the region. The efforts of President Roosevelt to restore peace in Europe may have failed, but these efforts will help bring peace to the Far East.

After eloquently presenting these views, Wellington Koo asked Ambassador Bullitt to communicate the following two messages to Britain and France.

Firstly, Britain and France must remain resolute in their stance towards Japan to avoid encouraging Japan's invasion of China.

Secondly, Britain and France must put pressure on the Japanese in Tokyo to prevent the establishment of a "central government" headed by Wang Jingwei. The establishment of such a government would not only invoke objections from Chongqing but also further complicate the situation and end up hamstringing Japan.<sup>8</sup>

As shown above, Wellington Koo spent a long time explaining China's foreign policy to

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

Ambassador Bullitt and attempted to gain America's understanding and support.

Bullitt accurately understood China's intentions and concluded that China intended to utilize the current situation to ensure its independence and territorial integrity. In other words, the Chinese did not place great importance on which side they stood. Rather, the only criterion for the Chinese was whether any decision would aid China in maintaining its independence and territorial integrity.

Bullitt promised that he would communicate China's views to President Roosevelt and that America would continue to support China.

After the outbreak of World War II, America took an increasingly hardline stance towards Japan. The Nobuyuki Abe Cabinet, which followed the Hiranuma Cabinet, adopted a reconciliatory policy towards America, which included "friendly treatment of American interests in China, protection of American citizens in China, the loosening of restrictions concerning trade and travel to and within China, and the pressing forward with the drafting of a new trade agreement." Based upon this policy, Foreign Minister Kichisaburo Nomura and American Ambassador Grew held a number of talks, but were unable to produce any concrete results. The Americans discontinued the discussions because they were "unable to receive a substantive guarantee that U.S. interests in China would be respected."<sup>9</sup> In July, prior to the outbreak of World War II, America notified Japan that the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Commerce and Navigation would be terminated. Around November, President Roosevelt held talks with Ambassador Hu Shih in Washington and revealed that the Treaty was to be terminated not solely to give a warning to Japan but also to warn Britain and France not to betray China.<sup>10</sup> According to information provided to Wellington Koo by L. Rajchman of the League of Nations Health Organization, President Roosevelt no longer had the intention of continuing any commerce agreement with Japan. Furthermore, when the Neutrality Act expired, America would be able to implement more aggressive policies in the Far East. He also stated that America had no intention of mediating negotiations between Japan and China, and would support China's continued resistance to Japanese aggression.

This shows that the Nationalist Government's foreign policy strategy concerning relations with America was highly successful.

#### **4. Chiang Kai-shek's Post-war Vision**

By the time Pearl Harbor was attacked, in 1941, China had been pouring every resource at its disposal into the war with Japan for more than four years. Even though China's national strength was wearing down, Chiang Kai-shek's National Government remained true to its policy of resisting Japanese aggression and continued the protracted war. However, it was believed that without further assistance and intervention from the international community, China's efforts to defeat Japan would require more time. Even after the outbreak of World War

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<sup>9</sup> Shigeru Hayashi and Kiyooki Tsuji, eds., *Nihon Naikaku Shiroku (A Historical Record of Japanese Cabinets)*, Vol. 4, (Tokyo: Dai-ichi Hoki, 1981), p. 118.

<sup>10</sup> *Gu wei jun hui yi lu (Memoirs of Wellington Koo)*, Vol. 4, p. 144.



II in Europe, America and Britain continued to provide material assistance to Chiang via the use of routes through Hong Kong, Indochina and Burma, as well as moral support. Needless to say, this had a significant influence on Chiang's outlook on the Second Sino-Japanese War. The Nationalist Government of China continued, via diplomatic means, to ask America, Britain, the Soviet Union and other countries to continue providing assistance to China. Chiang also believed that any emergence of a military-backed cabinet in Japan would have the potential of escalating the Second Sino-Japanese War to a world war involving Western nations, which would increase China's prospects of victory. Chiang viewed a military-backed Japanese cabinet as a potential tipping point of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

It was October 18, 1941 when his hopes became reality. On this day, the cabinet headed by Hideki Tojo was established after the resignation of the third Kono Cabinet. Immediately after this, on October 20, Chiang spoke at the Nationalist Government's War Council and stated as follows: "Ever since we went to war with Japan, we have longed for a military-backed cabinet to be established in Japan. If a military-backed cabinet were to be established, we would expect Japan to expand its invasion. If that were the case, Japan's war with China would quickly be seen as an invasion of the international community, resulting in a world war. China's ultimate strategy is to cooperate with our fellow anti-invasion nations and to force Japan, the aggressor nation, to withdraw."<sup>11</sup> At the same time, Chiang became concerned that members of the Chinese armed forces would become excessively dependent on Western nations as the situation changed. Chiang also made the following statements:

Obviously we are not continuing our attempts to defeat Japan in the hope of triggering a world war. Moreover, it is not our hope that other countries will destroy Japan with military force. What I want to say is that China expects that all anti-invasion nations will provide China with armaments and financial assistance so that we can defeat our enemy with only our own military forces.

From beginning to end, our efforts to defeat Japan must be independent and based on the spirit of regeneration by our own efforts. Eliminating Japanese invaders, building a true nation and achieving our people's independence, freedom and equality are our objectives.<sup>12</sup>

This speech delivered by Chiang was intended to motivate the general officers of the Nationalist Party Army. The Japanese and Chinese armies engaged in the well-known Battle of Changsha in September and October 1941. Chiang was furious because the Chinese Army failed to capture any Japanese prisoners, despite suffering a huge number of casualties, and blamed his generals for this.

The following is an excerpt from his speech:

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<sup>11</sup> *Jiang zhong zheng xian sheng dui ri an lun ji (Chiang Kai Shek's selected speeches on Japan)* (Taipei: Chungcheng Cultural and Educational Foundation, 2004), p. 793.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 796.

Why is it that we are unable to defeat such a worn-out Japanese army? You have all been promoted to officers of high rank yet you fail to train your units when not at war, and when at war, you lose repeatedly. You did not resist when the enemy advanced, and when the enemy withdrew you did not pursue. The recent failure was not a lesson to be learned but was in fact a disgrace to our army. The battle proved our pitiful level of capabilities, academic aptitude and spirit.<sup>13</sup>

When World War II broke out in Europe, Chiang could feel as a reality the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War. However, the material assistance provided to the Nationalist Government from Britain and America and other countries was heavily affected by the blocking of the Hong Kong and French Indochina routes. Furthermore, the assistance from the Soviet Union was terminated due to the start of the Russo-German war. The “Burma Route” remained as the only route over which material aid could be delivered to China, by air and overland. For Chiang, who was leading the battle against Japan with the support of the West, the Battle of Changsha should have been an opportunity to prove to the international community that China was fighting hard and effectively. The defeat at Changsha happened when overall victory was beginning to be in sight, and therefore came as a great shock to Chiang.

Although Chiang was strongly dissatisfied with the operations of the Chinese army, he held an optimistic outlook towards the war amid the rapidly changing international situation. Chiang's understanding of the situation and his post-war vision after the outbreak of World War II can be summarized by the following three statements.

Firstly, after four years of war, Japan's human and material resources have been greatly depleted. Therefore, Japan has almost no reserves of strength left to continue its war with China.

Secondly, we have received military supplies and other materials required for the war with Japan from nations friendly to our cause, and therefore, we are in good condition for fighting Japan.

Thirdly, by eliminating the Japanese military with our own forces, China can aim to become a genuinely independent nation when the war is over.

Chiang started to become focused on post-war matters. For Chiang, armaments, material and financial aid from America and other Western nations were indispensable for ensuring victory in the war with Japan. However, the direct involvement of foreign armed forces was a situation that had to be avoided. Chiang had a strong conviction that the direct involvement of foreign armed forces during the war must be avoided in order to ensure China's independence and sovereignty after the war.

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 797-798.

## 5. From Minnow to Major Power

The outbreak of the Pacific War created a great opportunity for Chinese leaders to restore the sovereignty that was lost by the signing of unequal treaties at the beginning of the modern era. In particular, restoring China's status as Asia's major power, which had been lost since China was defeated by Japan in the First Sino-Japanese War, was a major item on China's agenda. However, that status could not be restored unless China was victorious in its war with Japan. America's attitude towards Japan and policies concerning relations with China were extremely important for the future of China's war with Japan.

Ever since the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Nationalist Government took a proactive approach to diplomacy with the Anglo-Americans, and communicated its stance to the world through its diplomatic missions abroad. It is very well known that Hu Shih, Chinese Ambassador to the U.S., made great efforts to gain America's support.

Hu Shih was born in Anhui Province, China and in 1910, at the age of 20, went to study at Cornell University and Columbia University. Hu took great interest in the role of spoken language in Europe and contributed greatly to the development of the colloquial Chinese language in the 1910s.

Hu became a professor at Peking University and took a firm and critical stand against Japan's aggressive policies towards China. In November 1935, Hu published an article entitled "Appeal to the Japanese" in *Nippon Hyoron*, criticizing the slogan "Goodwill between China and Japan," which was popular at the time, describing it as "concealed fists." According to him, what was "goodwill" to the Japanese was for the Chinese "the equivalent of adding insult to an already injured China." In this article he warned the Japanese by saying "it is my hope that the Japanese will not disregard the animosity of four hundred million Chinese." In April of the following year, in 1936, Hu published another article entitled "Prerequisites for the Settlement of China-Japan Relations,"<sup>14</sup> in which he stated that the settlement of China-Japan relations would first require a resolution of the "hatred" of Chinese people towards Japan, which was fueled by Japan's "endless invasion and unbearable superiority complex," and urged Japan to change its China policy. Hu dismissed the urging by Japan that China "move away from political dependence on the West," saying that what was described by Japan as dependence on the West was in fact cooperation with friendly nations and an exercise of sovereignty to protect itself from the attacks by enemies. Furthermore, in response to Japan's demand "to grant effective recognition of Manchuria," Hu countered by saying "in the past few years we have done everything possible. We can never allow anything that would exceed our limits in light of national sentiment." Hu proposed seven conditions to Japan aimed at improving Japan-China relations, and attempted to parry Japan's China policy:

- (1) Abolition of the Tangu Truce and elimination of the ceasefire zone.
- (2) Announcement of the invalidity of the He-Umezu Agreement.
- (3) Waiving of the Japanese Government's right to station its military units in areas along

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<sup>14</sup> *Guo wen zhou bao (Kuowen Weekly)*, April, 1936.

the Beiping railway line, which was granted by the 1901 Boxer Protocol and its auxiliary agreements. This is to be followed by the withdrawal of the Japanese Army stationed south of the Shanhai Pass, thereby setting a good example for the other signatories of the Boxer Protocol.

(4) Announcement of the invalidity of the Chin-Doihara Agreement signed in June of the previous year, to be followed by the withdrawal of the Kwantung Army from Chakhar.

(5) Prohibition of autonomy movements in provinces in North China and Fujian Province.

(6) Annulment of consular jurisdiction within China, on Japan's initiative.

(7) Unification of diplomacy. The Japanese Government must announce the invalidity of any agreements signed by authorities other than the official plenary powers of both countries.

Hu Shih was an intellectual and emphasized such hard-lined policies towards Japan while strongly insisting on strengthened ties with the Soviet Union, Britain and America. However, he did not hope for an all-out war with Japan. Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident that triggered an all-out war between Japan and China, a group known as the "low key club" was formed within the Nationalist Government. The group criticized the ideology of the pro-war faction that advocated immediate and open hostilities and insisted on the importance of maintaining a channel with Japan which would enable diplomatic negotiations to be conducted. Hu was a member of this group and had given the group its name.<sup>15</sup>

Hu was critical of both Chiang Kai-shek's domestic and foreign policies, but Chiang had high regard for Hu's expertise regarding America and therefore appointed him ambassador to the U.S. in 1938, soon after the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

After moving to America, Hu travelled around the country, calling for support and "sympathy" for China from Americans and American society.

In December 1940, after the start of World War II, Hu appealed to Americans as follows, introducing examples of the many Americans who were sympathetic to China's plight in its war with Japan:

Recently there has been a trend in which history is interpreted from an economic perspective. This school of thought argues that America entered World War I for purely economic and financial reasons. This understanding has led to the enacting of a number of new laws. As a result, the U.S. banned the providing of financial assistance to any countries that are at war, with the exception of South American countries. It was commonly believed this meant that America would never be dragged into war. However, those economic historians who hold such views have forgotten that human beings are inherently sympathetic. The Government can use legal means to ban the provision of financial aid, but those laws cannot eliminate the feelings of compassion that arise for various reasons.

My dear friends, I am convinced that this war that my Government and my people have

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<sup>15</sup> Liu Jie, *Nicchu Senso-ka no Gaiko (Foreign Diplomacy During the Second Sino-Japanese War)*.

fought with whole body and soul is worthy of your compassion. This war has already lasted three years and four months. We are fighting this war not merely to ensure our survival but to eliminate all obstacles to democracy, freedom and justice to all countries throughout the world. I am sure that you can all easily imagine how difficult the war in Europe would be if we were not able to keep Japan tied down.<sup>16</sup>

At the beginning of 1941, Hu delivered a speech in New York, highlighting the vast land mass, huge population and historic significance of ethnic unity as the reasons for China's ability to fight in the long war, while also emphasizing and acknowledging the importance of foreign aid. He said "it was the assistance from the American government and private sources that enabled us to continue our fight for freedom and independence. Without the aid of friendly nations, China may not have been able to fight this war as long and bravely as it has."<sup>17</sup>

Such efforts by Chinese diplomats played a significant role in gaining international public sympathy and the support of foreign nations including America and Britain.

On the other hand, Owen Lattimore, who was living in China as an advisor to Chiang Kai-shek, acted as a bridge between President Roosevelt and Chiang Kai-shek.

After spending his childhood in China, Lattimore studied at Harvard University and in 1943 became the Chief Editor of *Pacific Affairs*, a journal published by the Institute of Pacific Relations. In recognition of his expertise on Far Eastern issues, President Roosevelt personally appointed him to the position of personal political advisor to Chiang Kai-shek. Lattimore consequently lived in Chongqing between 1941 and 1942, during which time the Pacific War broke out.

Gaining aid from America was an important part of Chiang Kai-shek's diplomatic strategy, and to this end Chiang maintained a cooperative attitude towards America. On December 5, 1941, Chiang entrusted Lattimore with the following message for President Roosevelt:

- (1) The Bohai Gulf is the only natural naval port in Asia and can be used as a base for cooperative operations by the Chinese and American navies. To permanently eradicate the root of evil in East Asia, we must demand that Japan return Lushun.
- (2) In the future, America must shift its interests to the Far East and must cooperate with China to ensure that China becomes a free nation. Additionally, America must cooperate to achieve India's independence.
- (3) The issues in Northeast China (Manchuria) are a part of the bigger China problem, and the Second Sino-Japanese War must be resolved concurrently with the resolution of the World War. Therefore, in order to avoid causing trouble for America, there is no need

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<sup>16</sup> *Shen pao*, December 16, 1940.

<sup>17</sup> *Shen pao*, January 1 and 5, 1941.

to rush into negotiations with Japan over issues in Northeast China.<sup>18</sup>

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor provided an opportunity for Chiang Kai-shek to restore China's sovereignty and status as a major power. At the special meeting of the Nationalist Government's Central Standing Committee held on December 8, 1941, Chiang made the following statements in relation to policies that China should take:

We are already prepared to declare war on Japan. The procedure is straightforward. Now that war has broken out across the Pacific Ocean, the position of China from now on is particularly important. I wouldn't say that China's influence will be decisive, but our influence on the decision by our invaded friends as to whether they will take unified action against Japan is significant. Therefore, before we declare war with Japan, we must give advance notice to our friends, Britain, America, and the Soviet Union, of our policy towards the war and at the same the time, confirm their attitude and claims. The following three policies are the nation's policies.

- (1) Anti-invasion nations throughout the Pacific are to immediately form an official alliance, recognize America as the leader, and appoint a commander in chief of allied forces.
- (2) We will urge Britain, America, and the Soviet Union to declare war together with China on Germany, Italy and Japan.
- (3) The Allies are to mutually promise to not sign a separate peace treaty with Japan until the Pacific War has been won.<sup>19</sup>

The outbreak of the Pacific War was a welcome development for a China already at war with Japan. The American Government was also aware that this was a positive development for China. President Roosevelt invited Ambassador Hu to have a forty-minute discussion on the afternoon of the 7th on the position China should take. "We just made our final effort to come to peace with Japan, but I am not optimistic. Within the next forty-eight hours, the Japanese army, air force and navy will probably open hostilities. It will be a tragedy for humanity but for China it may be your best opportunity. However, I would like you to pass this message on to the leaders of China. Even if war breaks out between Japan and the U.S., the people and Government of China should not celebrate this occasion. The Chinese should show sorrow and should not display joy over this development."<sup>20</sup> The Chinese Government responded immediately to the outbreak of the Pacific War. On December 9, China declared war on Japan, Germany and Italy, keeping in step with the U.S. Chiang Kai-shek left the following written statement regarding the reason for making such a decision:

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<sup>18</sup> *Shi lüe gao ben (Jiang zhong zheng zong tong dang an) (The Chronological events [Chiang Kai-shek collections])*, Vol. 47 (Taipei: Academia Historica, 2010).

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

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

Today we have decided to declare war simultaneously on Japan, Germany and Italy. The purpose for the declaration of war is to abandon Japan, Germany and Italy, who are no longer important to us and repeatedly invade and engage in violence, and to side with America, Britain, and the Soviet Union, all of with whom we share common interests. Another reason is to gain a position from which we can make our stance known to the Soviet Union, Britain and America.<sup>21</sup>

Chiang seized the opportunity presented by the outbreak of the Pacific War to attempt to improve China's position within the international community. Chiang made the following comments regarding this aim at the war council convened on December 9.

Today, upon hearing of Japan's attack on Britain and America, I proposed a plan for joint operations to America, Britain, and the Soviet Union, and declared war against Japan, Germany and Italy. Notably, we declared war on Germany and Italy before the U.S. This is a demonstration of the Chinese Government's spirit of independence.<sup>22</sup>

Following the declaration of war on Japan, Germany and Italy, the Nationalist Government announced the invalidity of all treaties, agreements and contracts involving those countries.

On the same day, the Chinese Communist Party also made a declaration that "as a member of the anti-fascist group, China will forge a military alliance with all friendly anti-Japan nations, including Britain and America. Together we will carry out joint operations and fight with a united people's front against Japan in the Pacific region."<sup>23</sup> Additionally, the Americans communicated to China that the U.S. would place greater importance on China now that war with Japan had broken out. On December 9, President Roosevelt, in his wire to Chiang, praised China's efforts in its war with Japan, saying "the fact that you have continued for four-and-a-half-years your war with your neighboring invader has won you moral and practical sympathy from the American people." He went on to say that "the U.S. is honored to work with your Excellency and the people led by your Excellency. The war will surely end with our victory."<sup>24</sup> According to Lattimore, "as soon as the U.S. officially joined the war, all diplomatic, financial and naval organizations established their own channels of direct communication with the Chinese Government."<sup>25</sup> On December 10, Chiang presented his "Letter to my Fellow Soldiers and Civilians," declaring the resurgence of the Chinese. He stated that "the Chinese who have five thousand years of history and culture and embrace the Three Principles of the People have now been entrusted with a grave mission of unprecedented importance." "Our victory will wash away the shame that our country has felt since the Manchurian Incident, and will wipe off the

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 639.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Zhong hua min guo da shi ji (Chronology of the Republic of China)*.

<sup>24</sup> *Shi liè gao ben (The Chronological events)*, Vol. 47, pp. 642-643.

<sup>25</sup> Owen Lattimore, trans. Fujiko Isono, *Lattimore: Chugoku to Watashi (Lattimore: China and Me)* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1992, originally published under the title *China Memoirs: Chiang Kai-Shek and the War Against Japan* in 1990), p. 195.

insult suffered by our fellow citizens during the same. From a domestic perspective, victory will restore our sovereignty and enable us to achieve our objectives in this war. Internationally, victory will spread justice and deliver untold honor to the Chinese people.”<sup>26</sup>

Chiang Kai-shek must have felt a strong sense of freedom after the outbreak of the Pacific War. This can be attributed to America’s entry into the war, which pinned down the Japanese army and navy, consequently relieving Japan’s pressure on China, which was struggling in its war. According to observations made by Lattimore, Chiang had an extremely high expectation of the U.S. He thought that “we can leave Japan’s defeat up to America. What China needs to do is to adopt a holding strategy and hold on no matter what the cost is until the American pressure on Japan bears fruit.”<sup>27</sup>

Additionally, Chiang believed that “following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. has not nominally but wholeheartedly entered the war. The Allied Forces will suffer serious losses in the Pacific and Southeast Asia but the Allies, particularly the U.S., will rebound and eventually defeat Japan.”<sup>28</sup>

At this point, Chiang was already thinking about the next phase of his leadership, in other words, how to deal with the Communist party after the war. On analyzing Chiang’s thoughts, Lattimore stated that “his long-term strategy was to attempt to strengthen his own standing forthwith, and when the war is over, to make the Communist party and greater China accept his method of Nationalist Government control without making compromises with the Chinese Communist Party and the vestiges of the First United Front.”<sup>29</sup>

The U.S. was urging China to put more effort into the war but China was already thinking much further ahead; that is, how to establish a new and important status within the post-war international community.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, Chiang made active efforts to form an alliance led by the U.S. On December 10, Chiang met with American military officials in Chongqing and asked them to pass his vision, outlined below, to the U.S. Government:

- (1) The U.S. should propose a joint military operation plan for America, Britain, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, and China, and designate Washington D.C. the political and military center of this effort.
- (2) Before the Soviet Union declares war on Japan, the U.S. should assume leadership and develop a military operation plan to be carried out in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore, Burma and the Dutch East Indies.
- (3) The Americans, British, Dutch, and Chinese should agree to designate Chongqing as the venue for talks.

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<sup>26</sup> *Shi lüe gao ben (The Chronological events)*, Vol. 47, pp. 644-650.

<sup>27</sup> *Lattimore: Chugoku to Watashi*, p. 195.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.



(4) The Americans should propose a five-nation military cooperation agreement involving the U.S., the U.K., the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, and China.<sup>31</sup>

The Soviet Union was reluctant to agree to Chiang's proposal to form an alliance and conduct joint military operations, because it wanted to focus its effort on the war with Germany. The Americans, however, agreed to the proposals. According to a wire sent by Ambassador Hu to Chiang, "the Secretary of State approves the establishment of a Combined Pacific Ocean Headquarters and we have already had several talks with the President and army generals. I will assist the establishment of the headquarters." Hu also suggested to Chiang that the expression "military alliance" should not be used in order to avoid misunderstandings.<sup>32</sup>

The President also sent a telegram to Chiang, to emphasize the importance of joint military operations against Japan and proposed the holding of an Allied Military Conference in Chongqing involving representatives from the five nations.

On December 17, Chiang met with military representatives from America, Britain, and the Soviet Union, and presented an outline for a five-nation Military Representative Council. The outline proposed the following: (1) The establishment of a Military Representative Council or an equivalent organization under the name of "General Staff Corps," to facilitate joint operations; (2) Council meetings to be held in Chongqing; and (3) The meetings to be hosted by the American representative. Chiang decided to give enormous power and authority to the Council. For example, the Council was to develop a strategic operations plan for the entire Pacific region involving Britain, America, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, and China. The Council was to also formulate specific plans for the joint defense of Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Burma and the Dutch East Indies. Finally, the Council was to also oversee improvements to overland and air routes.<sup>33</sup>

In accordance with Chiang's proposal, a military council meeting involving representatives of America, Britain, and China was held in Chongqing on December 23 to 24. The meeting adopted a proposal for military operation plans in the Far East. According to the plan: (1) Protection of Burma was to be given highest priority; (2) The nations were to continually assist China and support its war effort; (3) The Chinese army was to continue with offensives against the Japanese army in order to maintain pressure on the Japanese; (4) When the time came, America, Britain, and China were to jointly carry out a counteroffensive against Japan; and (5) Headquarters for the operation were to be established in the U.S.

Although the achievements of the Chongqing meeting were limited in scope, the fact that Chinese leaders led an important meeting that would determine the future of the Far East meant that China had taken a huge step forward in becoming a major power.

Soon after the Chongqing meeting, the U.K. and the U.S. signed the Declaration by the

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<sup>31</sup> *Zhong hua min guo shi zhong yao shi liao chu bian, Di san bian: Zhan shi wai jiao (Important Documents of the Republic of China [Primary edition], Anti-Japanese War Period, Part 3: Wartime Foreign Diplomacy), Vol. 3 (Taipei: Chung-kuo Kuomintang Central Executive Committee, Party History Committee, 1981), p. 47.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

United Nations at the Arcadia Conference, which was held from December 22 in Washington. The Declaration stipulated that all signatory nations shall allocate all human and material resources at its disposal to the war against the Axis and that all signatory nations shall not conclude separate ceasefires or peace treaties with the Axis powers.

On January 1, 1942, T. V. Soong, who assumed the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs, signed the joint declaration on behalf of the Chinese Government as one of the four major powers. It is not an overstatement to say that the signing by China, which had lost its major power status during the Opium Wars and the First Sino-Japanese War, of an international agreement as one of the four major powers was a critical turning point in modern Chinese diplomatic history. It is indisputable that the improved status of China within the international community can be attributed to China's diplomatic strategy to strengthen ties with Britain and America while it was at war with Japan. President Roosevelt's sympathy and aid to China also played an important role in improving China's status.<sup>34</sup>

The establishment of the China Theater was symbolic of China's improved status. On December 29, 1941, General George Marshall proposed to President Roosevelt the establishment of the China Theater, which would include East Burma, Thailand and Indochina. The President agreed to his proposal with the exception of Burma. On December 31, the President sent Chiang Kai-shek the following wire:

With the approval of the British and Dutch governments, I propose that your Excellency take the responsibility of leading the Allied Forces that currently or will operate in China. I would also like to propose that your theater include areas of Indochina and Thailand which units of the Allies forces may reach. I also believe that representatives of China, America and Britain should immediately form an Allied planning and operations staff in order to ensure the effectiveness of your Supreme Command.<sup>35</sup>

Obviously it is questionable whether or not the two major nations, America and Britain, regarded China as an equal.<sup>36</sup> However, it is undeniable that the establishment of the China Theater following the Declaration by the United Nations contributed to the further strengthening of China's status as a major power.

## **6. End of War and “*Yi de bao yuan* (Render good for evil)”**

The Potsdam Declaration of July 26, 1945 stated that: the Allies shall occupy Japanese territories until Japan's ability to fight a war has been completely destroyed (Article 7); the sovereignty of Japanese colonies, including Taiwan, Manchuria and Korea, shall be restored as per the Cairo Declaration; Japanese territories shall be limited to Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu,

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<sup>34</sup> Shi Yuanhua *et al.*, *Zhong hua min guo shi* (*History of the Republic of China*), Vol. 10 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2011), p. 12.

<sup>35</sup> Ding Qiuji and Song Pingji, eds., *Sho Kaiseki Shokanshu* (*Collection of Chiang Kai-shek Correspondence*), Part 2 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 2001), p. 1063.

<sup>36</sup> Shi Yuanhua *et al.*, *Zhong hua min guo shi* (*History of the Republic of China*), Vol. 10, p. 13.

Shikoku and islands determined by the Allies (Article 8); and that the Japanese army and navy shall be completely disarmed (Article 9). The Declaration also stated that those responsible for war crimes shall be brought to justice, in other words, that “stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners.”<sup>37</sup> The announcement of the Potsdam Declaration meant that the war in the Asia-Pacific region, which had been triggered by the Manchurian Incident, had finally entered its last stage. By making this declaration, the nations participating in the conference communicated to Japan their intentions of bringing war criminals to justice at the war’s end.

However, for many Japanese, defeat in war or surrender meant a defeat by the British or the Americans. It was rare for the Japanese to consider that Japan was defeated by China or the Soviet Union. The China Expeditionary Army, which had consistently defeated the Chongqing Government Army and was full of a sense of victory, felt the surrender to the Chinese army was an unbearable humiliation. The common understanding of the Japanese army stationed in China was that they had not lost to China.

Although Japan did not consider China as a victorious nation, it would be false to state that Japan did not fear recriminations from China. On around August 13 and 14, when acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration became certain, army commanders started developing a belief that “surrender in China will bring the cruelest of recriminations to our forces and people.”

The anxiety of the Japanese forces was alleviated by China’s policy towards Japan as declared by Chiang Kai-shek immediately after the war. This declaration is commonly known as the “Repayment of Wrongdoing with Kindness” Speech. The following portion of the speech entitled “A Letter to Inform all Servicemen and Civilians in China and People throughout the World of Our Victory in the War,” read by Chiang Kai-shek himself and delivered via radio on August 15, 1945, had the greatest impact on the Japanese:

My fellow Chinese citizens must understand that the high and precious moral character of the Chinese means that we will “not dwell on past evils” and will “do good to others.” We have consistently made it clear that our enemies are not the people of Japan but rather the Japanese military clique which used brutal force.

Today, our enemy was defeated by the Allies. As a matter of course, we will strictly supervise in order to ensure that all of the conditions of surrender are faithfully observed. However, we must not engage in retaliation and, furthermore, we must not insult the innocent civilians of our enemy nation. We can only treat them, who were controlled and driven by a Nazi-like military clique, with grace so that they can repent of their mistakes and sins. If we are to repay the violence of our enemy with violence, or if we are to respond to their superiority complex with slavish insults, vengeance will be repaid with more vengeance in a never ending cycle. This is a lesson that we men of morals would

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<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, ed., *Nihon Gaiko Nenpyo Narabini Shuyo Bunsho: 1840-1945 (Chronology of Japanese Foreign Diplomacy and Major Documents: 1840-1945)*, Part 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1955), p. 626.

never teach. This is to be kept in the minds of all our soldiers and civilians, particularly today.<sup>38</sup>

A prototype of Chiang Kai-shek's policy towards Japan had already been formed before the end of the war. Chiang's policy was based on his wartime perception of China's status in the international community and his understanding of international affairs at the time. The deployment of the Soviet Red army in Manchuria was approved at the Tehran Conference, which was held without China's participation. This decision was utterly abhorrent in the eyes of Chiang Kai-shek, who was very wary of the expansion of communist forces and the intervention of the Soviet Union in China. Eventually, in his post-war vision, Chiang started to believe that his most trustworthy ally would be Japan.<sup>39</sup> It is believed that Chiang abandoned the right to claim compensation for damages caused by war because he sensed the following danger: "If Japan becomes impoverished, it may give rise to communism, leading to a socialist revolution that would increase the likelihood of the Soviet Union invading Japan. If that occurs, it may trigger an avalanche that leads to the entirety of Asia becoming socialist."<sup>40</sup>

Commander Ho Ying-chin, who was responsible for negotiating the ceasefire with Japan under Chiang Kai-shek's direction, issued an order entitled "The Treatment of Japanese Armed Forces,"<sup>41</sup> which meticulously stipulated how the Chinese army should treat surrendering Japanese forces. Article 8 of the order stipulated that the Chinese army could not confiscate goods other than armaments, such as clothing, watches and a certain amount of cash, possessed by Japanese soldiers. Article 11 stipulated "during disarmament, there must be no intentional abuse of Japanese soldiers." In addition to those stipulations, the order also stated that the provision of food for surrendering Japanese soldiers must be guaranteed and that divisional and regimental formations of the Japanese army must be maintained.

The orders of Ho Ying-chin were scrupulously carried out by the Chinese army. General Yasuji Okamura, commander in chief of the China Expeditionary Army, left the following records regarding the Chinese army's treatment of the surrendering Japanese soldiers.

- (1) We were not referred to as prisoners; we were unarmed soldiers.
- (2) Army divisions were not dismantled until withdrawal and I, the Commander-in-chief, was ordered to change my position name to "Commander-in-chief, Liaison Department of Post-war Affairs" and other area army commanders were ordered to change their titles

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<sup>38</sup> Minoru Takeuchi, ed., *Nicchu Kokko Kihon Bunkenshu (Literature Collection of Japan-China Relations)* (Tokyo: Soso-sha, 1993), pp. 126-130.

<sup>39</sup> Ryoko Iechika, *Nicchu Kankei no Kihon Kozo: Futatsu no Mondaiten Kokonotsu no Kettei Jiko (The Fundamental Structure of Sino-Japanese Relations: Two problems, nine decisions)* (Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 2002), p. 134.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Zhong guo zhan qu zhong guo lu jun zong si ling bu, *Chu li ri ben tou xiang wen jiang hui bian, (Chinese Army General Headquarters in China Theater, ed., Collected Documents Dealing with Japanese Surrender)*, Part 1, (1945), pp. 9-12.

to “Commander, Liaison Department of Post-war Affairs” of each region.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, after the war Okamura admitted that “the successful withdrawal to Japan of two million soldiers and civilians, who each carried a relatively large amount of personal possessions” “can solely be attributed to the favorable attitudes of the Chinese officials and civilians who followed Premier Chiang Kai-shek’s policy.”<sup>43</sup>

China remained respectful to Japan during negotiations as well. Deputy Chief of Staff in China Takeo Imai was sent to Zhijiang, Hunan Province, between August 20 and 23 to participate in preliminary surrender negotiations. As members of the negotiation committee, the Chinese government sent government officials who had studied in Japan, and chose lower ranking officials in consideration of the ranks of the Japanese committee. Imai later reported that “In Zhijiang, we had negotiations with Ho Ying-chin, the chief of staff who was approved by Ho Ying-chin and an American chief of staff. The treatment of the Japanese was relatively gracious and favorable.”<sup>44</sup>

Under the slogan of “Repayment of Wrongdoing with Kindness,” Chiang Kai-shek took the stance of a moral nation towards Japan. This has had a significant influence on the Japanese people’s postwar perceptions of their responsibility for the war with China. These Japanese feelings of responsibility were felt particularly towards the Nationalist Government that took refuge in Taiwan, and led to the Treaty of Taipei and the maintenance of diplomatic relations until 1972 with the Republic of China. This also has much to do with mainland China’s suspicions that Japan supports Taiwan’s independence.

## 7. New Definition of Major Power

As can be seen, the outbreak of the Pacific War gave hope to the Nationalist Government of China, which had made a great sacrifice during the prolonged war with Japan. Based on an understanding that “the war between China and Japan has become part of the World War,” Chiang Kai-shek concluded that “China’s war has passed its most perilous moment and the threat of invasion into China by Japan no longer exists.” In Chiang’s eyes, the Pacific War and the Second Sino-Japanese War were two different phases of the same war.

With the same understanding that Chiang Kai-shek had, contemporary historians in China view the Pacific War as an extension and expansion of the Second Sino-Japanese War. On the other hand, while names like the 15-year War or Asia-Pacific War came to be commonly used during the post-war period in Japan, the Draft Constitution for Japan, created in April 2012 by Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party, used the term “last war,” which is still today one of the most common ways in Japan of referring to the war. For many Japanese, the “last war” is a reference to the Pacific War which started in 1941.

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<sup>42</sup> Masao Inaba, ed., *Okamura Yasuji Taisho Shiryo (General Yasuji Okamura’s Documents)*, Part 1, (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1970), p. 13.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

In recent years, Chinese historians have shown a strong interest in China's status as a major power, a position that China secured during the Pacific War. The historical significance of the following facts is undeniable. The battleground of the Second Sino-Japanese War was named the China Theater, with Chiang Kai-shek assuming the role of Supreme Commander. In January 1943, China successfully abolished the unequal treaties that had been forced upon China by Western nations since the Opium Wars. In November of the same year, Chairman of the National Government of China Chiang Kai-shek attended the Cairo Conference along with American President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill, thereby elevating China to a world power. Upon the inauguration of the United Nations, a representative of the Republic of China signed the United Nations Charter at the San Francisco Conference, contributing to the establishment of the United Nations as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. In other words, interest in the improvement of China's international standing during the Pacific War has promoted a reexamination of Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Government, and has encouraged a diversification of the understanding of Chinese history.

Furthermore, Soviet-American relations during the Pacific War assisted the growth of the two major parties in China, the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party. Needless to say, the Soviet Union's influence lay behind the growth of the Communist Party, while the U.S. also deployed investigators in Yan'an between 1944 and 1947 and attempted to establish official contact with the Communist Party. It was diplomatic relations with the Americans during the Pacific War that marked the beginning of the Chinese Communist Party's official diplomatic activities. The relationship between the Communist Party and America which developed during this period would later become an important asset of China's diplomatic strategy from the late 1970s to strengthen ties with the U.S.

The Chinese Communist Party achieved significant growth during the Pacific War. However, in 1946, one year after the end of the war, a full-fledged constitution was drafted in the Republic of China under the leadership of the Nationalist Party. This meant that China was on the verge of realizing the final stage of "military administration, political tutelage and constitutional governance," which was Sun Yat-sen's vision and which had been pursued since the end of the Xinhai Revolution. However, the Communist Party did not recognize the authority of the Nationalist Party and criticized this Constitution as a "fake constitution." During the ongoing civil war, the Communist Party completely rejected the legal system developed by the Nationalist Party and developed its own neo-democratic and socialist legal system. However, the legitimacy of the Constitution of the Republic of China still continues to be recognized today after being brought to Taiwan and has enabled the development of a democratic society in Taiwan.

How should mainland China, which strives to unite with Taiwan, come to terms with the Constitution of the Republic of China, which was drafted after the Pacific War and is a legacy of the country's modern history? Straddling the Taiwan Strait, two views of history are clashing vehemently.

The Pacific War enabled China to restore its sovereignty, but due to its separation from Taiwan and economic stagnation, China was unable to establish itself as a major power. In order to quickly achieve major power status, China did not resort to reforms; rather, it chose

revolution. Some of the major means China used included the exportation of communism, possession of nuclear weapons and invocation of mass movements. It was only after the death of Mao Zedong that China abandoned such a path. However, due to the unresolved issues concerning Taiwan and memories of the past, among others, Chinese people are still very much aware of the issue of restoring their sovereignty.

The economic development of the past thirty years or so is indeed the result of “reforms.” However, such reforms have also given rise to social disparities, which is a serious social problem. The road to becoming a major power is not a smooth one. China once again faces the question of choosing reform or revolution.