

The Second Sino–Japanese War Was Caused by China — A Criticism of the “Japan-as-Aggressor” View —

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Introduction

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident is usually considered to have been the start of the Second Sino–Japanese War. It is no mistake that this incident served as the trigger for the Sino–Japanese conflict, but the incident itself was only a small conflict and it should not be called the start of a full-blown war. What must officially be considered to have been the start of the Second Sino–Japanese War was the concerted full-scale attack that was the general mobilization on Aug. 13, 1937, of 30,000 regulars under the Chiang Kai-shek government in Shanghai in opposition to the Japanese navy landing force stationed there for the protection of Japanese residents.

Who, then, caused the actual war between China and Japan?

In an Aug. 31, 1937, article in *The New York Times* by Shanghai correspondent Hallett Abend, we find the following:

Foreigners Support Japan

Official foreign observers and officials of various foreign governments who participated in various conferences here in seeking to avoid the outbreak of local hostilities, agree that the Japanese exhibited the utmost restraint under provocation, even for several days keeping all of the Japanese landed force off the streets and strictly within their own barracks, although the move somewhat endangered Japanese lives and properties.

“Opinions may differ regarding the responsibility for the opening of hostilities in the vicinity of Peiping early in July,” said one foreign official who was a participant in the conferences held here before Aug. 13, “but concerning the Shanghai hostilities the records will justify only one decision. The Japanese did not want a repetition of the fighting here and exhibited forbearance and patience and did everything possible to avoid aggravating the situation. But they were literally pushed into the clash by the Chinese, who seemed intent on involving the foreign area and foreign interests in this clash.”

The tenor of the article in *The New York Times* followed the general trend of the time to be critical of Japan and sympathetic toward China. The article still states that the start of the fighting in Shanghai was due to a one-sided strike by the Chinese army.

Some 30,000 Japanese were living in the Shanghai concession and working in manufacturing or trade. Stationed to protect the residents was a 2,200-man landing force from the navy. The Chinese army violated a cease-fire agreement¹ in sneaking a large number of soldiers into the demilitarized zone outside the concession, so reinforcements numbering 2,000 were hurriedly gathered. The “all of the Japanese landed force” mentioned in the Shanghai article are those some 2,000 landing-force troops.

On Aug. 9, the Chinese army murdered Sublieutenant Ôyama Isao and Seaman First Class Saitô Yozô, who were in their automobile and carrying out an inspection.

¹ The Shanghai Ceasefire Agreement, agreed to between Japan and China on May 5, 1932, after the first Shanghai Incident. A committee was formed of American, British, French, and Italian members working alongside Chinese and Japanese members to observe that the terms of the treaty were carried out. The location for stationing troops of both Japan and China was decided by the agreement.

The Chinese obstinately insisted that they had been attacked and returned fire, bringing out the body of a Chinese Peace Preservation Corps soldier as evidence, but the bullet damage indicated clearly their deaths had not been because of the Japanese. The book *Mao* (by Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, Anchor Books, 2005) explains that the incident was orchestrated by Gen. Zhang Zhizhong, the defensive commander of Nanking and Shanghai and a Communist Party member who had infiltrated Chiang's high command, to force Chiang Kai-shek to decide to attack the Japanese forces.²

The Chinese regulars surrounding the concession numbered more than 30,000, the core of which was the elite 88th Division. On the 13th the offensive began, and on the 14th the Chinese began simultaneous aerial bombardment as well. I will show how these attacks led to the outbreak of full-scale war later.

In any case, it was clearly the Chinese who were the ones who set the course for war. It is distinct truth that Japan was dragged into a war she did not want. The launching of a concentrated attack by regular army troops against civilians and soldiers stationed in accordance to treaty is, speaking in terms of international law, committing "acts of aggression" — regardless of whether they are inside their own country.

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident was also orchestrated by China

The article in *The New York Times* said, "Opinions may differ regarding the responsibility for the opening of hostilities in the vicinity of Peiping early In July." It was a conflict that became the impetus for what followed, but in point of truth, this, too, was clearly a conflict that had been orchestrated by the Chinese.

This is clearly written in the local cease-fire agreement³ that was concluded on July 11, four days after the actual shooting incident. The first item on the three-item cease-fire agreement says: "The representative of the 29th Route Army expresses his regrets to the Japanese forces, and declares that those formerly responsible will be punished, and those who will in future be responsible will take precautions to never again provoke such an incident." China clearly assumed the responsibility. The 29th Route Army was a force of approximately 150,000 controlling northern China under the command of Gen. Song Zheyuan. The opposing Japanese forces stationed there⁴ were no more than 5,600, so is impossible to say they were an overwhelming force in position to press for an unreasonable cease-fire deal. Afterward, China made out as if to say it did not exist, but that is preposterous. First of all, the document exists. The third item on the agreement says, "In light of the incident resulting from guidance from the so-called Blue Shirts Society, the Communist Party, and all manner of other anti-Japanese organizations, we will in future undertake counter-measures against them and supervise them thoroughly." The work of putting the particulars of the

² "But on 9 August, at Shanghai airport, an army unit hand-picked by ZZZ [=Zhang Zhizhong] killed a Japanese marine [*sic.*] lieutenant and a private [*sic.*]. A Chinese prisoner under sentence of death was then dressed in a Chinese uniform and shot dead at the airport gate, to make it seem that the Japanese had fired first. The Japanese gave every sign of wishing to defuse the incident, but ZZZ still bombarded Chiang with requests to launch an offensive, which Chiang vetoed." *Mao*, p. 198.

³ Agreed to by Qin Dechun, acting commander of China's 29th Route Army, and Matsui Kyûtarô, head of the Japanese Army Beijing Special Military Agency.

⁴ According to the Boxer Protocol, agreed upon by eight nations, including Japan, Great Britain, America, and France, in 1901 after the Boxer Rebellion was put down, stationing troops for the defense of the residents in the Beijing and Tianjin areas was allowed. At the time, America stationed 1,200 and France 1,800, while Japan stationed 5,600. This was because the Japanese living in the Beijing area were more populous — some 33,000. Looking at the civilian-to-military ratio, Japan was 6:1, America 2:1, and France was 1:3. Proportionally speaking, Japan had far and away the smallest military force.

agreement into operation went forward, and later, on July 19, the pact was concluded. It is true that, for her part, Japan labored to that point to observe the terms of the agreement even while acts in violation of it frequently took place. Nothing could be done about China's repudiation of the existence of the agreement. In other words, not only did the Japanese military not set the course, the responsibility rests entirely on the shoulders of the Chinese.

There was a need for a Chinese attack

In the first place, there was absolutely no reason for Japan to make an attack. It goes without saying that it would be insane if the only 5,600 troops stationed there were to plan an attack on the 150,000-man 29th Route Army. Moreover, if one were to speak of the full might of the Japanese army — in Japan, in Manchuria, in Korea, and in China — it would have been roughly 250,000 men. Compared to this, China had 2.1 million. Of that number, 500,000 had received training in modern tactics and equipment from leadership under German military advisors. In addition, Japan's greatest potential enemy was the Soviet Union, and the Soviets had a large military force of 1.6 million, 400,000 of which had been dispatched to the Soviet Far East. Given all these conditions, it would have been foolish for Japan to open hostilities in northern China, and there were no plans for any such thing.

In China at that time, however, there was an overwhelming predominance of those advocating war against Japan. Excluding the peasantry, the urban residents of China had a burning desire for war and were confident of victory. One could look at all of the newspapers published in China at the time, and the situation would be obvious. The book *Nitchû Sensô: Sensô o nozonda Chûgoku, sensô o nozomanakatta Nihon* ("The Second Sino-Japanese War: The China that wanted war, and the Japan that did not want war")⁵ provides a detailed account of this. Those advocating war at the time can be broadly broken down into three groups. First were the radical intellectuals, students, and urban citizens; second were members of the Chinese Communist Party; third were the provincial military cliques. As supporters of the radical public opinions of the leaders of the intellectuals and others, the Communist Party and the military cliques used their opposition to the stance of the government of Chiang Kai-shek and advocated war as a more profitable goal.

The Communist Party in particular used the anti-Japanese stance as their most powerful political weapon. The Chinese Soviet Republic, established in November, 1931, in Ruijin in Jiangxi province, issued a proclamation of war against Japan in the name of the Central Government on Apr. 26, 1932. (On Sept. 18, they also issued an "official" proclamation of war by telegram.) In addition, in August of 1935, in accordance with the Comintern's "Anti-Fascist United Front" directive, they issued a declaration of anti-Japanese patriotism. Then, in December of 1936, the Xian Incident took place. Chiang Kai-shek, setting out to urge his soldiers to fight more vigorously in the subjugation of the Communist Party, was kidnapped by Marshal Zhang Xu-liang, who was the north-eastern commander in charge of those activities. Chiang was pressured into working with the Communist Party to put anti-Japanese conflict into practice. The Nationalist Party's confrontational line toward the Communist Party was diverted, and the anti-Japanese sentiment swelled all the more.

And then, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident occurred

⁵ Kitamura Minoru and Lin Siyun, *Nitchû Sensô: Sensô o nozonda Chûgoku, sensô o nozomanakatta Nihon* (The Second Sino-Japanese War: The China that wanted war, and the Japan that did not want war) (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyûjo, 2008), pp. 3, 72–90.

Given the circumstances, it was only a matter of when and where that a not unexpected strike on the Japanese would happen. On July 7, 1937 the Marco Polo Bridge Incident took place.

The 135 men of the Japanese army's 8th Company, having given prior notice to the 29th Route Army, conducted maneuvers on the dry riverbed near the Marco Polo Bridge. As the map (attachment 1) shows, the maneuvers began in front of the bridge at a position about 400 meters distant from the Marco Polo Bridge wall (the Wanping Fortress wall) and the embankments that were the Chinese army bunkers, and at about 10:40 PM, just before the maneuvers were to end after a 400-meter advance, several shots were fired into the Japanese positions. After that, ten-odd shots were fired from the direction of the embankments. A few hours later at 3:25 AM, there were three more shots; and at 5:30, after taking fire a fourth time, the Japanese forces finally responded with their own fire. This was seven hours after the first shots had been fired.

It was therefore only natural that the 29th Route Army would admit total culpability in the cease-fire agreement signed on the 11th.

As I have already shown, it said, "In light of the Incident resulting from guidance from the so-called Blue Shirts Society, the Communist Party, and all manner of other anti-Japanese organizations, we will in future undertake counter-measures against them and supervise them thoroughly." The commanders of the 29th Route Army, too, weren't completely certain who it had been that had fired the shots, but they certainly inferred that their suspicions were that it had been members of the Communist Party.

It was natural that the Chinese Communist Party, who continued to cry for total anti-Japanese action, would try to continue causing clashes, but the truth was that at the time the Communist Party found itself facing a serious predicament. To be sure, with the Xian Incident, Chiang Kai-shek had ceased attacking the Communists and he promised to forge cooperation and connections with the Communist Party; but he thrust strict conditions one after another at the Communist Party, and half a year later, around June of 1937, relations between the Nationalist and Communist parties were on the verge of a breakdown. Edgar Snow wrote,

But by June 1937. Chiang Kai-shek had scattered and demoralized the once-powerful Tungpei Army, moved his own forces into Shensi, and again was blockading the Reds---Once more they now seemed to face the choice of total surrender or encirclement and disaster, or retreat to the northern desert.⁶

The Communist Party was launching itself upon an enormous gamble to break the predicament. A large number of Communist Party members had slipped into the ranks of the 29th Route Army⁷ and fanned anti-Japanese sentiment, and those caught up in that fervor caused the shooting incident of 10:40 PM on July 7.

Immovable proof that the Communist Party planned it: the 7-8 circular telegram

⁶ Edgar Snow, *Random notes on Red China, 1936-1945*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1957. Preface.

⁷ Thanks to Chinese publications it is now clearly known that a large number of Communist Party members had slipped into place in the 29th Route Army, including four staff officers (one of whom was the deputy chief of staff, Zhang Kexia), the local deputy propaganda chief, the intelligence bureau chief, battalion commanders, and others. Wang Jianying, ed., *Zhonggong zuzhi ziliao bian* [Compiled documents on the Chinese Communist Party organization] (Hongqi Publishers, 1983); He Husheng et al., ed., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo zhi guan zhi* [People's Republic of China workers' and officials' aspirations] (Zhongguo Shehui Publishers, 1993).

It is now 100 percent clear that it was the Communist Party who had caused these incidents. On the 8th, the day after the shooting incident, the Communist Party sent a long telegram from Yan'an in the name of the Central Committee to all the powerful people in China (starting with Chiang Kai-shek), the newspapers, those affiliated with the Nationalist government, the army, and other organizations and associations. In official Communist Party histories, it is given special mention as "the 7-8 circular telegram." Moreover, on the same day, the same kind of telegram was sent under the names of Mao Zedong and six other military leaders to Chiang Kai-shek, Gen. Song Zheyuan, and others.

As I mentioned before, the Japanese army first began to return fire at 5:30 on the morning of the 8th. It follows from circumstances of transmission at the time that though the counter-offensive began on the 8th, for this intelligence to be in-hand on the 8th to comprise what had transpired and to create the long text, and to gain the approval of the Central Committee, then draw it up as an official telegram and to send it all over the country, etc., is totally impossible. The only possibility is that it had been prepared in advance.

In point of fact, it *had* been prepared in advance. Evidence to that exists today. The chief of the China Expeditionary Force Intelligence Department Beijing (Beijing) Office, Col. Akitomi Jûjirô, said: "Late at night immediately following the incident, the Tianjin Special Intelligence Section radio operator intercepted an urgent wireless transmission from a transmitter we believe to be on the grounds of Beijing University to the Communist military headquarters in Yan'an. It repeated '*Cheng-gong-le* [success!]' three times." (*Sankei Shinbun*, Sept. 8, 1994, evening edition.) He said that at the time they had no idea what it meant. It is clear now. They were relaying to Yan'an that their stratagem at the Marco Polo Bridge had succeeded. The creation of that telegram was carried out immediately in Yan'an. Then, on the morning of the 8th, after having confirmed that Japan had begun firing back, they sent the long telegram in great numbers all over the place. The criminals who started the war were the Chinese Communist Party.

Edgar Snow wrote about the Marco Polo Bridge Incident as if the Japanese Army had caused it, which rescued the Communist Party from their great predicament of June. He wrote:

Now a second stroke of luck opened up the broadest and most fertile opportunities for them. For it was in the following month that they were extricated from their precarious position only by Japan's "providential" major invasion of China, which gave Chiang no choice but to shelve any and all plans for another annihilation drive.⁸

While they planned it themselves, they repeatedly said that the Japanese attack had been a Godsend. As I have already presented, it was the Chinese who caused the incident. Above all, there is no way a Japanese force numbering merely 5,600 would have launched an attack, and that is not what happened. There was the cease-fire agreement on the 11th, but there were repeated violations of that agreement on the Chinese side — whether by the army itself, or by persons unknown. There were also large-scale cease-fire violations by the Chinese army such as the Langfang Incident and the Guang'anmen Incident. On July 27, the Japanese government, which had consistently followed a policy of non-expansion of the conflicts since the incidents occurred, finally determined to dispatch three army divisions into the Chinese interior, and on the 28th sent notice to the 29th Route Army that it was war.

⁸ Snow, *op. cit.*, Preface.

The Communist Party that planned on escalating the Marco Polo Bridge Incident

While it is untrue that there was a concerted attack by the Japanese military, Snow, in his writings, let slip that the Chinese had desired exactly that. They were delighted that Chiang Kai-shek had had no choice but to abandon his operations to wipe out the Communists, but their true goal was going on and forcing him to fight the Japanese. Two of the items on a Comintern order issued after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident said:

- 1) You must stubbornly avoid localized resolutions and instead lead the way to full-scale conflict between China and Japan.
- 2) You must use every possible measure to accomplish the above goal and you must obliterate important people who betray the liberation of China with their localized resolutions and compromises toward the Japanese.⁹

We can clearly understand that in addition to aiming directly at breaking the deadlock of the Communist Party's predicament, the true goal of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident was to create a full-scale outbreak of hostilities between Japan and China. The Communists called for opposition against Japan, but rather than directly engaging the Japanese military themselves, their true goal was to cause a full-scale war between the Japanese army and the army of Chiang Kai-shek. With this, they could achieve their objective of guaranteeing the security of the Soviet Union; and bringing about the exhaustion and mutual destruction of both China and Japan was their long-term strategy for realizing a Communist Party victory. It goes without saying that 1949 was the realization of the ultimate goal of the Chinese Communist Party, which had implemented this global strategy.

The North China Incident and the Tongzhou Massacre

The conflict expanded in keeping with the Communist Party's goal, and the Nanking government of Chiang Kai-shek also went forward with plans to send the army north. As I have already said, Japan was forced to change her policy of non-expansion and localizing the conflict, and decided to dispatch three divisions on July 27 and notified the 29th Route Army on the 28th that a state of war existed. It was an outnumbered military force, but with support from the Kwantung Army in Manchuria and the troops stationed in Korea, the Japanese army quickly gained total control of the Pingjin area (i.e., the Beijing and Tianjin areas).

Chinese Peace Preservation troops, taking advantage of an opening left by the movement of the outnumbered Japanese army, carried out a massacre of Japanese residents of the city. There were about 420 Japanese living in the town of Tongzhou, some 12 km east of Beijing. On July 29, the Japanese defensive garrison numbered merely 110 as their forces had made for an offensive in nearby Nanyuan. Peace Preservation Troops of the autonomous government of pro-Japanese Yin Jukeng were stationed in the town, but seeing the situation, they suddenly swooped down and attacked the small remaining garrison and the ordinary townsfolk. A barbarous act of mass slaughter unfolded. It was later established that First Unit commander Zhang

⁹ Comintern Order (Directions to the Chinese Communist Party), July, 1937. All five items appear in: Political Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Asian Development, *Kominterun ni kansuru kihon shiryô* ("Fundamental documents concerning the Comintern").

Qingyu and Second Unit commander Zhang Yantian had been in contact with the Nationalist Party beforehand.

All manner of brutalities such as looting, acts of violence, indignities, and slaughter were directed toward a great number of innocent people, including the old, the young, and women. The number of the slain totaled 250.

In Asahiken (a Japanese restaurant) were seven or eight women, all of whom had been raped. They were shot dead, naked, with their privates exposed. Four or five had been stabbed in their privates with bayonets. Most of the Japanese men's bodies showed signs of having been strangled with ropes. Blood spattered the walls. It beggars description. (Testimony given at the Tokyo Trials by the witness Kayajima Takashi, commander of the 2nd Regiment, who rushed to the site on the 30th to rescue the town.)

At the entrance to Kinsuiro (an inn), I saw the body of a woman who looked to have been the proprietress. Her legs were facing the entrance, and she was covered only on her face by a newspaper. I remember that it seemed as if she had resisted considerably; the upper and lower parts of her body were exposed, and there were signs of four or five bayonet thrusts. It looked like her privates had been gouged out with an edged weapon, and there was blood everywhere. ... In the house of a Japanese family behind, two people — a parent and child — had been slaughtered. All the fingers of the child had been cut off. At the store of a Japanese citizen near the South Gate, the body of what seemed to have been the proprietor had been left in the street, his ribs exposed and his organs scattered. (Testimony given at the Tokyo Trials by acting 2nd Regiment Infantry Commander Katsura Shizuo.)

The cruel atrocities went on and on, and there are no words to describe them.

The Nanking Massacre and the Tongzhou Massacre

These witness statements do not speak of the Nanking Massacre, but it is possible that there are those who misapprehend that they do. To be sure, in the tale told by Chinese afterward purporting a Nanking Massacre, stories exactly like these, the manner in which things were done, examples of brutality and so forth, were common. I will write about the Nanking Incident later, but although no Nanking Massacre ever existed, it is an undeniable truth that there was a massacre in Tongzhou. An incident of brutality the like of which had never happened in Japan happened in China. In investigating the history of China, however, we find that such brutal incidents were not uncommon.

In reading the book *Chûgoku daigyakusatsu shi: Naze Chûgokujin wa hitogoroshi ga suki na no ka?* (A history of massacres in China: Why do the Chinese like killing?)¹⁰ by Shi Ping, a graduate of Beijing University, we learn that in China excessive by far massacres were repeated occurrences in ancient, medieval, and modern times, and even in the present day under the Communist Party rule. Particularly interesting is the fact that there *was* a Nanking Massacre. It was not in 1937, however, but in 1864 during the Taiping Rebellion, when Nanking, then the capital of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, was attacked and entered by an army commanded by Zeng Guofan. After Zeng Guofan's death, one of his staff officers, Zhao Liewen, wrote *Neng jin ju shi riji* (Diary of a capable, quiet gentleman):

Children, too, were the object of the slaughter, and many of the rank and file soldiery quite nearly made a game of the killing of the children and appeared to delight in it. As far as women were concerned, those under 40 were made instruments to slake the lust of the sol-

¹⁰ Shi Ping. *Chûgoku daigyakusatsu shi: Naze Chûgokujin wa hitogoroshi ga suki na no ka?* (A history of massacres in China: Why do the Chinese like killing?) (Tokyo: Business-sha, 2007).

diery, while those over 40 or those with unattractive faces were cut down indiscriminately with whatever came to hand.¹¹

Notorious mass killings — a million slaughtered at the massacres in Sichuan, the massacre at Yangzhou, the massacres at Jiading, and on and on — fill the pages. Shi Ping's book is a must-read.

To repeat, no such incident ever took place in the entire history of Japan. Something with which the Japanese were totally unacquainted, and which the Chinese were vehemently saying had been the work of the Japanese, was the “Nanking Massacre.” In other words, the “Nanking Massacre” was fabricated to indict the Japanese army; it was a tale made-up in imitation of the accounts of the mass killings that had occurred time and again in China as well in imitation of the recent massacre in Tongzhou which *they* had perpetrated. That is why it was a story that so closely resembled the conditions of the Tongzhou Incident.

I will later present evidence to show why there was no “Nanking Massacre,” and why there could not have been one.

The Funatsu peace initiative and the murder of Lt. Ôyama

The Japanese army had gained total control of the Beijing-Tianjin district and its northern environs, but the general staff headquarters issued an order that the limit for their forces' advance should be retained at about 100 km south of Beijing. That was a point some 1,000 km away from Shanghai. The Japanese government's objective was to end the “North China Incident” and keep the conflict from spreading.

The Japanese people were enraged at the news of the Tongzhou Massacre. All the newspaper headlines were full of demands to “chastise the violent Chinese.” Public opinion seethed against the unforgivable Chinese atrocity and voices grew louder demanding the government take resolute measures. There is one note that must be added here. Namely, the murder of Chinese workers, merchants, and businessmen by angry, rioting Koreans at the time of the Wanpaoshan Incident.¹² In contrast, there were Chinese workers, merchants, and businessmen in Kobe and Yokohama, but there were no incidences of attacks on the those in Japan. There was fury, but there was nothing resembling any retributive attacks.

The government, however, sticking with its non-expansion policy despite such atrocities and such an outraged public opinion, went along with the emperor's suggestions and drew up a peace plan¹³ on Aug. 1, and receiving the assent of the foreign and army and navy ministers five days later, made the proposal to the Chinese. This peace proposal was a momentous, conciliatory document wherein most of the pending issues between China and Japan to that point (and in particular vested rights in north China) were renounced.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

¹² In May of 1931, over 200 Korean farmers settled in the town of Wanpaoshan. In July, more than 400 Chinese farmers attacked them with the backing of Chinese authorities. Japanese authorities set out to protect the Koreans. Furious at this incident, Koreans attacked Chinese merchants in Seoul, Sinuiju, and Pyongyang, killing 109.

¹³ Draft of cease-fire negotiations: (1) The Tangu Truce, the He-Umezu Agreement, the Qin-Doihara Agreement, and any other extant military agreements in North China are cancelled. (2) Special areas will be established as demilitarized zones. (3) The administrations of Ji Dong and Ji Cha are to be terminated. (4) The strength of the Japanese forces stationed shall return to their *status quo ante bellum*. Draft of diplomatic relations: (1) China must recognize or accept(acquiesce) [the existence of the state of] Manchuria. (2) China and Japan will enter into an anti-Communist pact. (3) Repeal of the free flight of Japanese aircraft, etc.

Funatsu Tatsuichirô, formerly Japan's consul general in Shanghai and at that time the chairman of the board of the Spinning Association in China, was named to be the person responsible for the negotiations, so it came to be called the "Funatsu peace initiative".

Aug. 9, the day of the first meeting between Ambassador Kawagoe Shigeru and Gao Songwu, head of the Asia Office, was the day that Lt. Ôyama was killed. As I mentioned already, this was an act perpetrated by the Nanking and Shanghai Defensive Forces under the command of the crypto-Communist Zhang Zhizong to get Chiang Kai-shek's to fight the Japanese. It was also meant to be an obstruction to the peace process. As intended, then, peace negotiations collapsed.

The secret Sino–Soviet non-aggression pact

Chiang Kai-shek moved forward with preparations for war with Japan. While creating a central Chinese army and modernizing the equipment and training of fifty divisions under the direction of a corps of German military advisors led by Gen. Alexander von Falkenhausen, the Chinese prepared for war with the Japanese by building a solid defensive network in the Shanghai suburbs consisting of 20,000 bunkers which came to be called the "Seeckt Line" (named after Gen. Hans von Seeckt, the fourth leader of the German advisors). Chiang Kai-shek was cautious about starting a real war. He was not very much in sympathy with the jingoism of Zhang Zhizong and his ilk, but anti-Japanese sentiment was growing and the murder of Lt. Ôyama being a *fait accompli* added to the situation, so at last he decided to go to war.

The premier scholar of the recent history of the Republic of China, the late Prof. Lloyd E. Eastman of the University of Illinois, surmised that it was on Aug. 7, at a meeting where the top brass were assembled, that Chiang Kai-shek made the decision. "Chiang Kai-shek was setting out on a great gamble, one which later would be argued as the greatest in his life."¹⁴

Something that may be considered a greater gamble than the one Chiang Kai-shek made then was China's secret agreement attached to the non-aggression pact,¹⁵ concluded with the Soviet Union on Aug. 21. With this treaty, the following support was to be provided by the end of 1937: 360 planes, 200 tanks, 1,500 trucks, 150,000 rifles, 120,000 artillery shells, 60 million rounds of ammunition; and in addition, engineers and technical experts in each of these fields were to be sent to China. Negotiations for this treaty began swiftly, and it is assumed that the secret items were set in early August at the latest. This promise of military supplies from the Soviet Union had to have been reassuring to China, who, though they had a large army of 2.1 million, lacked the ability to manufacture aircraft and tanks and the like themselves. Setting aside the beginning of the hostilities, if the fighting were to be drawn out even a little longer, such supplies would become absolutely essential. Without them, Chiang Kai-shek would probably not have been able make the decision to go to war.

Indeed, it would seem that the Soviet Union had been pushing China toward war. As we can see from the Comintern orders, that was exactly in accordance with the goals of the Soviet strategy.

The actual situation in the Second Sino–Japanese War was that China relied entirely on Soviet military aid for first half of the war, and for the second half on British and American military aid to continue fighting. It was not because mainland China

¹⁴ Lloyd E. Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution, 1937–1949* (NYC: Stanford University Press, 1984), quoted in Suzuki Akira, *Shin "Nankin daigyakusatsu" no maboroshi* (New illusions of the "Nanking Massacre") (Tokyo: Asuka Shinsha, 1999).

¹⁵ Source: *The Lowdown* (New York: January, 1939), p. 18.

was so huge that the conflict went on and on and became a quagmire, but rather because of the vast military assistance and intervention from the great powers. Still less was it because of Japanese aggression.

The naval landing force's struggle, and the dispatch of two army divisions

On Aug. 13, the 30,000-strong elite Chinese force encircling the concession began its attack on the 4,200-man naval landing force stationed there. It is often said that the fighting leapt like a flame from northern China to Shanghai, but this is a manner of speaking that is considerably far removed from the truth. The Japanese forces in northern China did not move southward beyond their holding line, which was 1,000 km away from Shanghai. They were therefore no manner of threat in Shanghai at all. The battle in Shanghai was entirely the design of the Chinese who unilaterally started it, as *The New York Times* described it. On the 15th, Chiang Kai-shek ordered a nation-wide general mobilization, established a supreme command headquarters, and assumed the rank of commander-in-chief of all three branches of the military — the army, the navy, and the air force — for waging all-out war against Japan.

Since 4,200 troops could not protect 30,000 residents, Japan decided to dispatch two divisions to China on the 13th, and on the 15th the Shanghai Expeditionary Force under the command of Gen. Matsui Iwane was formed. Mobilization and transportation took almost ten days before they disembarked at Shanghai, however. Until then, the naval landing force in Shanghai had to hold out against attacks from an elite force nearly ten times their size. What might have happened if they had been beaten down and allowed a Chinese force to penetrate the concession had already been proven in Tongzhou. It would have been a second Tongzhou Massacre. There was a possibility that thousands — or even tens of thousands — of civilians might have been slaughtered.

One army division finally landed in Wusong near Shanghai on the 23rd. In those ten days, the small landing force had defended their position well. They fought amazingly bravely, and thereby were able to prevent a massacre in Shanghai. Due to the over 20,000 bunkers and defensive positions, the army forces that landed on the mainland became embroiled in a desperate campaign against nearly 300,000 Chinese soldiers. With the gradual drive forward by the reinforcement of three divisions, the Japanese couldn't avoid enduring heavy losses. Casualties ultimately totaled more than 41,000 killed and injured — the heaviest losses Japan had sustained since the campaign for Port Arthur during the Russo–Japanese War. On Nov. 5, the Japanese 10th Army Corps landed at Hangzhou Bay in a surprise assault planning to cut the Chinese army off from behind. The Chinese army immediately collapsed and made for Nanking in a rout.

Chiang Kai-shek was not receptive to peace negotiations through the intermediation of German ambassador Oskar Trautmann and continued the resistance, so to bring the war to an end it was going to be necessary to occupy the strategic base that was Nanking. On Dec. 1, Gen. Matsui, now commander of the Central Chinese Area Army (the Japanese Central Chinese Area Army having been formed by combining the Shanghai Expeditionary Force and the 10th Army), was ordered to take Nanking. He pursued the fleeing Chinese army and on Dec. 9, after achieving the encirclement of Nanking, issued demands for the city to surrender.

The capture of Nanking and the so-called massacre

After confirming that the 24-hour deadline for a reply had passed, the Japanese army commenced its attack. At the peak of the hard fighting on the 12th, Japanese forces were on the verge of breaking into the city. Despite not having given withdrawal orders to his subordinates, Tang Shengzhi, the commander of Nanking's defenses, fled the city on the night of the 12th, abandoning it and his men. There was a great deal of chaos inside the city with the defending forces making their confused escapes, "friendly fire" going on at the Yijiang Gate (the shooting deaths of fleeing Chinese soldiers by their supervising unit), etc. When the Japanese forces entered Nanking on the 13th, most of the defenders had fled so there was virtually no fighting inside the city. Those soldiers who had been too late to escape fled into the Safety Zone, later becoming the seeds of the problem.

The entire Japanese force did not enter the city. Rather, a selected portion of each unit entered Nanking, so there was absolutely no disorder in the city. This is what was reported by the more than 100 journalists and cameramen who entered the city at the same time.

Instead, what the soldiers of the units that entered Nanking were concerned about was that the city was silent as a graveyard and there wasn't a soul in sight. This is all written in the soldiers' diaries and so on. This was as it had to be, as virtually all of townsfolk of Nanking — totaling 200,000 — had assembled in the "Safety Zone," which was overseen by the International Committee. There were no townsfolk anywhere outside the Safety Zone.

The International Safety Zone Committee left an English-language record of their activities. An agency of the Guomintang edited it and published it as *Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone* by Kelly & Walsh Co. in Shanghai.

As the International Committee (headed by the German John Rabe) had American missionaries as its core, anti-Japanese sentiment was thick, but the following things, which they wrote in the *Documents*, are extremely important:

- 1) The population of Nanking at its fall was 200,000. Afterward throughout the month of December it *remained* 200,000, but a month after the city's fall, on Jan. 14, the number is recorded as 250,000. This is absolute proof that there had been no massacre of any sort.
- 2) In a list of the complaints of the townsfolk, twenty-six instances of murder were brought up. Only *one* of those, however, had an eyewitness, and that one had a deliberately appended note stating that it had been a lawful killing. The Safety Zone was about the same size as New York's Central Park, and 200,000 people were gathered there. If there had been a massacre it could not have happened without being seen, but there were no eyewitnesses to any massacre.

Exactly how false the so-called massacre was can be explained with just these two points. For those who need more, to add another thing, there is a document bearing a "top-secret" stamp titled *An Overview of Propaganda Operations of the International Information Division of the Central Propaganda Bureau of the Nationalist Party: from 1938 to April 1941*, that was discovered in the Guomintang Historical Documents Archive in Taipei.¹⁶ This was an internal document of the Guomintang, so any hints of propaganda within it are slim. It says that the International Propaganda Office invited foreign correspondents in Hankou to press conferences 300 times during the eleven months encompassing the Battle for Nanking. In the press conferences, called

¹⁶ Higashinakano Shudô, *Nankin jiken: Kokumintô gokuhi bunsho kara yomitoku* (The Nanking Incident: Decoding it from the top-secret documents of the Guomintang) (Tokyo: Sôshisha, 2006).

to criticize the Japanese forces, not even *one time* was there any talk of a massacre of civilians or the unlawful execution of prisoners in Nanking. If there had in truth been a massacre, would they really have said nothing about it? It is, of course, impossible.

In short, the Nanking Massacre was nothing more than a trumped-up lie put forth when Japan were unable to substantially resist the American military occupation. It is simply pathetic and stupid that with such a lie as this people still talk as if the massacre was a given. To put a stop to such foolishness, the Committee for the Examination of the Facts about Nanking (Kase Hideaki, chair; Fujioka Nobukatsu, secretary general) presented an open letter of inquiry to President Hu Jintao of China when he came to Japan. It was disseminated to the world via press conferences and the Internet. (It appears on the website for the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact in Japanese, Chinese, and English. The English version is available at http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_3/17_S1.pdf) It comes as no surprise that Hu Jintao has yet to respond to it. That is because he *cannot* respond to it. With this, the issue of Nanking has been settled.

Peace conditions after the Nanking occupation and Japan's posture toward China

On Dec. 22, after Nanking was occupied, the Japanese government decided once again to try for terms of peace mediated through the good offices of Germany's ambassador to China, Oskar Troutmann. The following four points were the basic terms:

- 1) China would renounce pro-Communist, anti-Japanese, and anti-Manchurian policies, and would cooperate with Japan and Manchuria's anti-Communist policies.
- 2) Demilitarized zones will be established in required regions, and special organizations will be established.
- 3) Close economic agreement will be executed among the three countries of China, Japan, and Manchuria.
- 4) China would pay reparations to Japan.

The clause on reparations was not included in the peace talks before the occupation of Nanking, but it was included after taking into account the demands for it by the Japanese people. Even so, one cannot say that these are particularly severe conditions. These are not demands for a piece of territory or for certain special rights or interests. Instead, it mentions formalizing a relationship of economic cooperation. It also speaks of collaborative anti-Communism; but since Chiang Kai-shek was anti-Communist from the start, this item can hardly be said to be a harsh one. It was just that there was no way the Soviet Union (China's greatest supporter) and the Communist Party would accept this one.

Chiang Kai-shek didn't go for the agreement probably out of concerns with his relationship with the Soviet Union and the Communist Party, as well as his relationship with America and Great Britain. Even when the deadline for his reply, Jan. 12, was reached, he did not respond. China's actions were apparently intended to just prolong the process, however, and the leaders of Japan's government — prime minister, Konoe Fumimaro, foreign minister, Hirota Kôki, and others, facing down strong opposition from the army's general staff headquarters — declared on the 16th, "We will no longer deal with the government of Chiang Kai-shek," and cut off negotiations. It is possible that there was some influence here by one of Konoe's close associates, Ozaki Hotsumi, who was a covert operative of the Comintern. It is also possible, however, that this decision was made to curry favor with a public who viewed China as insolent.

As a result, Japan was pulled into a protracted war against the government of Chiang Kai-shek, but calling this Japan's aggressive war is a total injustice. First, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident had been an event orchestrated by the Communist Party, and it had also been the Communists who expanded the conflict, based on the directive to "stubbornly avoid localized resolutions and instead lead the way to full-scale conflict between China and Japan." It had been Chiang Kai-shek's government who rebuffed the Japanese peace proposals amidst growing anti-Japanese sentiment and set the course for full scale war in Shanghai. The war was something that had been entirely caused by China. Afterward, Japan again proposed peace, but had been flatly refused. The onus for this is primarily on the Chinese. The result was that the war went on. No matter how one looks at it, calling *that* aggression is undeserved. According to international law the aggressor is the one making lawless attacks — even if it is within China's territory.

There was Konoe's declaration, "We will no longer deal with the government of Chiang Kai-shek," but in November that year came the second Konoe declaration, and in December yet a third Konoe declaration appealing for peace.

- 1) Second Konoe declaration "The establishment of a new order in East Asia" (Nov. 3, 1938)

Calling for international justice, joint anti-Communism, and economic cooperation with the three countries of Japan, Manchuria, and China.

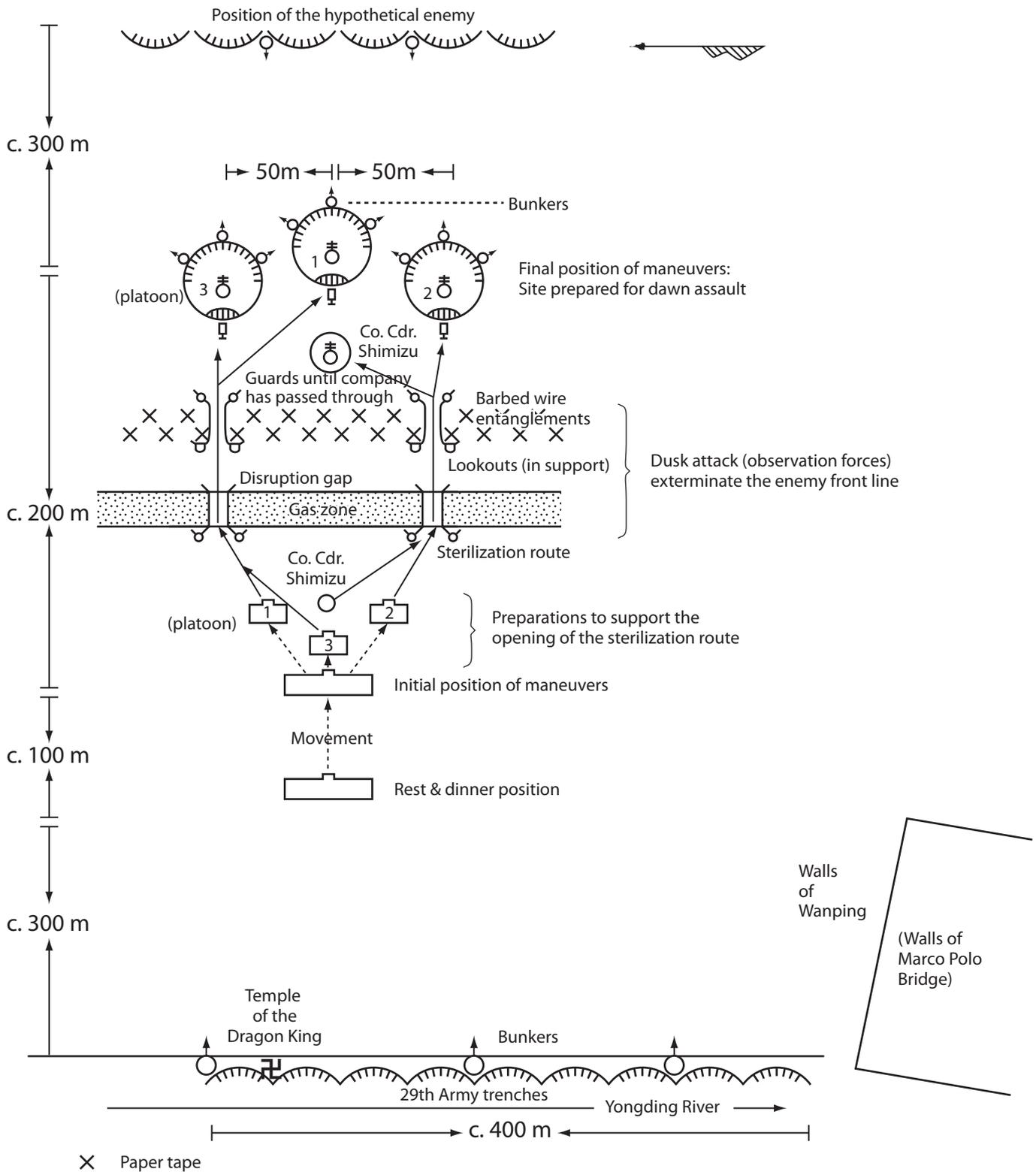
- 2) Third Konoe declaration (Dec. 22, 1938)

Three necessary fundamentals: good neighborly friendship, joint defense, and economic cooperation.

It may be fair to say that the declaration was belated. Still, where in these declarations can one find any aggression toward China, or any intention to control China? Was not the problem in fact Chiang Kai-shek's stubbornness in not taking peace and instead choosing to rely on support from powerful nations — first the Soviet Union, and then America and Great Britain?

Because of this obstinacy, ultimately, he was undone by the Communists and faced with having to flee to Taiwan. The Second Sino-Japanese was not a war of Japanese aggression.

Rough map of the night-time maneuvers of the 8th Company on 7 July, 1937



Attachment 2.

OPEN QUESTIONS FOR HIS EXCELLENCY HU JINTAO, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

May 5, 2008

As enthusiastic supporters of friendly relations between Japan and the PRC, we would like to extend the warmest of welcomes to President Hu Jintao on the occasion of Your Excellency's visit to Japan.

For some years, our organization has been engaged in an investigation into the events that transpired in Nanking in connection with the Battle of Nanking, which took place in December 1937. We are profoundly concerned about the PRC's position on and approach to these events. Additionally, we are exceedingly uncomfortable with the duplicity of the PRC in its pursuit of friendship with Japan on the one hand, and actions that are most unfriendly in nature — the expansion and renovation of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall in 2007 — on the other. Recent research has proven that there is absolutely no basis for the claim that there was a massacre in that city. We respectfully request Your Excellency's responses to five important questions, which follow.

1. Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong never referred to a massacre in Nanking. He made exactly one mention of the Battle of Nanking during a lecture delivered at Yan'an six months after the conflict, reproduced in *On Protracted War*. Chairman Mao criticized the Japanese for failing to annihilate Chinese troops after having surrounded them. If there had been slaughter in Nanking of a magnitude so great (300,000 civilian victims) as to prompt the description "holocaust of the century," there is not the slightest chance that he would have been silent on the matter. What are Your Excellency's thoughts on the facts presented here?
2. In November 1937, during the Second United Front and prior to the Battle of Nanking, the Nationalist Party established a new section at the Central Propaganda Bureau — the International Propaganda Section. We would like to direct Your Excellency's attention to a top-secret document entitled "Outline of International Propaganda Operations," which states that the International Propaganda Section held 300 press conferences in Hankou between December 1, 1937 and October 24, 1938 (a period that includes the Battle of Nanking); they were attended by 35 foreign journalists and diplomats, on the average. How does Your Excellency explain the fact that not once during any of these 300 conferences was a statement or announcement made to the effect that a massacre had been perpetrated, or that prisoners of war had been unlawfully killed in Nanking? Does Your Excellency, too, find these circumstances extraordinary?

3. The International Committee administered to the civilians remaining in Nanking, who were gathered in the Safety Zone. Records of the International Committee's activities were published in 1939 as *Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone* by a British company in Shanghai, under the auspices of the Nationalist Government's Council of International Affairs. According to those records, the population of Nanking prior to its occupation by the Japanese was 200,000. That figure remained unchanged, at 200,000, throughout the remainder of 1937. By the end of January, it had increased to 250,000. These statistics completely and utterly destroy the credibility of any accusation of a massacre that claimed 300,000 victims. What are Your Excellency's views on this matter?
4. Among the records in the aforementioned *Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone* are detailed complaints about misconduct attributed to Japanese military personnel. They include a total of 26 murders, only one of which was witnessed (to that account is appended a note describing the "murder" as a lawful execution). Can Your Excellency reconcile these records with the PRC's claim of a massacre with 300,000 victims?
5. Photographs purported to be evidence of a massacre in Nanking are on display at the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall, at other exhibitions, and in printed publications. However, *Analyzing Photographic "Evidence" of the Nanking Massacre* by Higashinakano Shudo (Soshisha, 2005) and other recent scientific research reveal that there are no photographs attesting to a massacre in Nanking. If Your Excellency is aware of photographic evidence of a massacre, please have it forwarded to us so that we may examine it.

On the basis of the factual information contained in these five questions, we are completely and totally convinced that there was no massacre in Nanking. We would greatly appreciate Your Excellency's responses to our questions. Please note that we have selected the open-question format precisely because the matter at hand is clearly one of the prime concerns of many citizens of Japan and the PRC. Our hopes for friendly relations between our two nations, for all generations to come, rest in Your Excellency's hands.

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