POLITICS AND MILITARISM IN JAPAN

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POLITICS AND MILITARISM IN JAPAN

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PREFACE

Japan today is still a young nation. Attempts to develop democracy have never been realized, due to selfish desires of the militarists. Now, after its first military defeat, the Allies are attempting to raise its economic and political systems out of chaos.

This study is a treatment of the conflicts between politics and militarism in Japan from the promulgation of the Constitution in 1889 to December 7, 1941, in four major divisions: (1) organization of the government; (2) the Elder Statesmen in power, 1889-1918; (3) the party politicians in power, 1918-1932; and (4) the militarists in power, 1932-1941.

Demands of the populace for a constitutional monarchy and partial self-government were thwarted by the Constitution which was drafted by Ito Hirobumi. The aristocrats, militarists, and political parties struggled for control, and each ruled for a varying number of years. The government in December, 1941, was still an oligarchy as Ito had planned in 1889, but it was that of the militarists and not of the aristocrats as he had intended. Efforts of the Army and Navy leaders were now
exerted toward conquest and aggression.

To understand Japan one must appreciate the many amazing contrasts and paradoxes, the differences of opinions, concepts and beliefs of the people; the differences in the oriental and occidental minds.

I have attempted to give a clear, concise, and logical interpretation of the material available in the earnest hope that I may help the reader to understand the problems which confront General Douglas MacArthur and his staff in their reconstruction efforts. It has been an interesting study of an intriguing and unique government, and if I have accomplished this, my time has been well spent and my efforts worth-while.

Upon request of my major professor I have footnoted only direct quotations and contradictions of authorities.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. ORGANIZATION OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Executive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Imperial Diet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Judiciary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supremacy in Japan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE ELDER STATESMEN IN POWER, 1889-1918</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE PARTY POLITICIANS IN POWER, 1918-1932</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE MILITARISTS IN POWER, 1932-1941</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPILOGUE</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Direction of Japanese Government</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Emperor's Position in the Japanese State</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATION OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

Within the life period of many persons Japan has emerged from the isolation and inaccessibility proverbial of Tibet, and become a powerful force in the modern world. In less than fifty years her economic institutions have made a sudden leap from the 16th century to the twentieth, her ideas from the medieval to the up-to-date. Deep study and selective imitation, mostly of European systems of law and government and of American business and social practice, have brought into her life much that is modern and occidental. But Japan has not become European, or laid aside her fundamentally oriental character. Parliaments and courts may be imported almost as easily as silk hats and frock coats, but what really counts is the body to which they must be fitted and the indwelling spirit that is to employ such imported equipment.

It is only after one has grasped the fundamentals of Japanese political theory, namely, that society is more important than the individual, that all men are by nature unequal, that politics is synonymous with ethics, that government by man is superior to government by
law, and that the patriarchal family is the ideal state; and only after one has studied the evolution of the Japanese government through the successive stages of a primitive tribal theocracy, a bureaucratic civil aristocracy, and a military aristocracy -- that one is able to understand the Constitution of 1889 and the subsequent history of so-called "constitutional government" in Japan.

To draw a comparison between men and nations is, in this respect, not inappropriate. Indeed, no two men have the same quality, nor the same character. Every individual has his own quality, his own character. What is true of individuals can likewise be applied to nations. Certainly, every nation has its own character clearly distinguished from that of others. What is true of character is equally true of tradition. Every nation has its own history, its own civilization, its own traditions. In line with this Woodrow Wilson once remarked:

There is no universal law but for each nation a law of its own, which bears evident marks of having been developed along with the national character, which mirrors the special life of the particular people whose particular social judgment it embodies.¹

For more than twenty-five centuries since their national life began to develop under the leadership of

the first Emperor, Jimmu, the Japanese scrupulously maintained their ethnic unity, with common language, common custom and tradition and a common mode of life, and thus formed a firm national unity to such an extent that they, as a whole, are almost like an organism. Of course, after the Middle Ages Japan witnessed many bloody conflicts among court nobles, among powerful feudal lords, which conflicts sometimes covered the whole country, but they were always struggles among the governing classes for political supremacy, and the nation as a whole maintained the same unity and cohesion as before. Even the Restoration of 1867, which marked the beginning of modern Japan, was a struggle of the ruling classes in which the common people took no part.

This national unity and cohesion of the Japanese nation has been possible because of various factors. All religion, especially Shintoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, all standards of public morals which had a strong hold in the hearts of the Japanese, especially the code of chivalry called Bushido, which developed as the rules of conduct of warriors in the feudal ages -- all these things preached self-sacrifice, subordination of the individual self to the larger whole, a family or a nation, and subjugation of individual interests to general interests. Too, unity has been preserved because the Japanese
had, until recently, been free from foreign invasion, political or religious.

This submission of the individual to the larger whole naturally gave great power to the government. The authorities in the feudal ages constantly held to the Confucian maxim, "Let the people depend upon the government, but do not let them know the business of the government." This tradition remained strong as late as the outbreak of war in 1941. According to Y. Uyehara, "The Emperor of Japan can say without hesitation 'L'Etat c'est moi', more effectively than Louis XIV, not because he can subject the people to his will, but because he is morally so recognized."

It was the Restoration of 1867 which overthrew the Tokugawa Shogunate, a feudal monarchy, and established the beginning of the modern form of constitutional government. This was achieved by the four big clans in southwestern Japan, who had wanted to overthrow the Shogunate on account of their own absolute exclusion from the central government, to achieve their object by force, and they finally succeeded in restoring the power to the Emperor, under whose government they now actually exercised the power. Abolition of the feudal system by

\[\text{Ibid., p. 6.} \quad \text{Ibid., pp. 6-7.}\]
transfer of land and people from feudal lords to the Emperor occurred in June, 1868, and at the same time a civilian governor was appointed by the Emperor to rule each province. All class privileges were abolished in 1870 when those who had belonged to the warrior class were permitted to engage in business, and common people were allowed to enter into public service, civil or military. But in 1884 the five titles of nobility -- Prince, Marquis, Count, Viscount and Baron -- were conferred upon former court nobles and feudal lords, and the Constitution of 1889 gave to these classes the right to sit in the Upper House, partially restoring class privileges.

The overthrow of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1867 was only a step in the evolution of the Japanese government. On October 12, 1881, the government issued a decree announcing the promised establishment of a national popular assembly in 1890, and in the following year it ordered Ito, later Prince Ito, the chief framer of the Japanese Constitution, to visit Western countries in order to investigate the practice of constitutional government. He had a definite idea of what must be accomplished. He stated that the constitution must be the gift of the Sovereign and amply safeguard the powers and
dignity inherent in the Sovereign; that it make provision for a retention of power by those who had seen Japan through the critical period of the abolition of feudalism, i.e., the oligarchy; and that it must meet the demand for a representative assembly. Ito, himself, studied chiefly the German and Austrian systems because he believed that of England too democratic and was not fitted for Japan.

In 1888 the Privy Council was established to revise the Constitution, with Ito as president. It was promulgated by the Emperor on February 11, 1889. There was no consultation of the party leaders, but it was largely the work of Ito, revised under his supervision by the other leaders in the oligarchy.

Among other preparations made for the occasion was the suppression of practically all the radical newspapers in Tokyo, and the issuance of strict injunctions to the rest of the press that no unfavorable comments were to be made, for the time being, upon the Constitution. There was no attempt at mirth or frolic; the occasion was a solemn one, and the people behaved accordingly. Neither was there any effort made to include the populace; the Constitution was not read in public to the citizens of the Capital. Not even a pretense was made that this was to
be a government of, for, or by the people. The instrument had been framed in secret, ratified by the aristocracy, and promulgated before an audience of officials. It was the government's affair from the beginning to the end. It was Ito's express opinion, which has been honored ever since, that the Constitution was a gift of the Emperor to his people, not a concession to the demand of the people for a constitution.

The document occupies fewer printed pages than does the Constitution of the United States. In addition to a preamble it has only seventy-six articles, arranged in seven chapters. But this is because the Japanese Constitution does not form the entire organic law of the empire. It is supplemented by various imperial ordinances.

The government recognized the divine right dogma, based upon the myth of the Emperor's heavenly lineage. In theory the result was an absolute monarchy; ministers were responsible to the Emperor alone. The theory, however, failed to represent the facts, since the Emperor neither determined nor administered policy.

The salient features of the Constitution were monarchism, constitutionalism, and a resultant unitary state. The Japanese government was a strong monarchy.
(1) The initiative in a constitutional amendment was reserved to the Imperial Throne. The Diet could not initiate the project of a constitutional amendment, and even the people could not petition for it. (2) The succession to the Imperial Throne, the institution of a regency and other matters concerning the Imperial House were determined by the Imperial House itself, and the Diet could not interfere with them. Even the people could not petition in regard to these matters. (3) The Imperial Throne issued ordinances for the maintenance of the public peace and order, and for the promotion of the welfare of the people, with the proviso that they not in any way alter any of the existing laws. (4) The Imperial Throne was empowered to issue emergency ordinances in place of laws in consequence of an urgent necessity to maintain public safety or avert public calamities, provided that the Diet was not sitting. The government could also take necessary financial measures by means of an Imperial Ordinance, in case of urgent need for the maintenance of public safety, provided that the Diet could not be convoked owing to the external or internal condition of the country. (5) The power to declare war, to make peace and to conclude treaties was unconditionally vested in the Imperial Throne. (6) The
Constitution provided for the Privy Council which was the highest advisory body of the Imperial Throne. Important matters of State were referred to this body, even though they were also laid before the Diet. The Upper House of the Diet, the House of Peers, was composed of royal princes, peers, and persons who were nominated by the Throne, and what is more peculiar, the organization of this House was reserved to an Imperial Ordinance, and, therefore, was outside the power of the House of Representatives. But this did not mean that the Imperial Ordinance concerning this second House could be amended by the Throne at its own discretion. On the contrary, it provided that the consent of the House of Peers was necessary to the amendment of this ordinance.

As the result of the large power of the Throne, the Diet was weak, as compared with that of other modern countries. Yet, the Constitution was written and provided for a bicameral Parliament. But the organization of the Houses of the Diet, especially that of the Upper House, was considerably different from that of other countries, and would have to be changed a good deal in order to meet the true spirit of constitutionalism. The principle of separation of powers was also followed since the three powers, the legislative, the executive, and the
judicial, were not exercised by the same organ; the legislative power was exercised by the Throne with the consent of the Diet, the executive power by the Throne with the advice of the Cabinet Ministers, and the judicial power by the courts of law in the name of the Throne. The Constitution did not expressly provide that the Cabinet was responsible to the Diet. It became so because of custom. There was no system of impeachment. The Diet had no power to accuse a Minister of State for his political acts, or to constitute the court of impeachment. Of course, Ministers of State were subject to the jurisdiction of the courts of law for their violation of laws. Japan was a unitary state. In principle, all rights of sovereignty reside with the central government, as is so readily borne out by Chart 1.

There was no provision in the Constitution which expressly indicated in what agency resided the authority to interpret the document. Uyehara declared that the courts had no power to interpret the Constitution, and that this power belonged to the Emperor. Minobe, however, held that the Emperor had no power to interpret it. But as the Imperial Throne, the Diet, and the

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CHART 1  THE DIRECTION OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT *

*Robert Karl Reischauer, Japan: Government-Politics, p. 201
courts of law were independent of one another within their own functions, they also had the power to interpret the Constitution, so far as their own functions or powers were concerned, though the interpretation of any of them was not binding on the other two. Nevertheless, when the Throne and the Diet fixed the interpretation by a statute passed by the Diet and sanctioned by the Throne, the interpretation became authoritative and even the courts of law were subject to this interpretation, because in Japan a statute was the highest will expressed by the State under the Constitution.

A constitutional amendment was complicated. First, the power to initiate a constitutional amendment was exclusively reserved to the Throne. In ordinary law-making both Houses of the Diet had the initiative, but they had no initiative for amending the Constitution. Even when a projected amendment had been submitted by the Imperial order, the Diet could not take a vote on any matter other than what was contained in that project. Second, neither House could open the debate, unless not less than two thirds of the whole membership were present, and no amendment could be passed unless a majority of not less than two thirds of the members present was obtained. Third, during the time a regency was instituted, the Constitution could not be amended at all, even though there
was urgent necessity for it.

The Executive

The Japanese government is in the unique position of not having a single or central executive, in the sense that we in the United States understand the position. Among those who have not studied the government of Japan the consensus of opinion is that the Emperor is the executive, the dictator. However, such is not the case. There is no center of authority. There is, though, a balance of groups. National decisions, when they are made, are the outcome of a consensus of opinion arrived at behind the scenes. It is more correct to say that the Emperor reigns but does not rule, in so far as every act is performed in his name. But he performs no act except upon advice. His supreme political position was guaranteed by the Constitution; a theory of government was gradually built up which outwardly placed all officials in the position of mere advisers to the Emperor. He was made the object of worship in Japan's new nationalist religion, Shinto; the Japanese people were thoroughly indoctrinated with the belief that the Emperor is divine.

First, among the several advisory agencies, there is a Ministry or Cabinet, with a Prime Minister at its
head, and on most questions of public policy the advice of this body must be followed. But in the second place there is the agency known as the Supreme Command, a group of military and naval authorities, and the advice of this group is followed in matters relating to the national defense. Third, there is the Privy Council, a body quite distinct from the Cabinet, which has various advisory functions. Fourth, the Emperor had an extra-constitutional source of advice in emergencies from the Genro until the death of Prince Saionji in 1940, who was the last living member of this sage group. Finally, there is an Imperial Household Ministry, a small group of palace officials who are the Emperor's confidants and as such have a considerable influence upon his political views.

Those who accept the Emperor as sovereign base a great deal of their judgment on the influence of Japanese culture, which, in reality, impresses one with a sense of unity, a subordination of parts to a whole. To them all persons, all arts, all realms of knowledge must be part and parcel of a single organism. Everything and every person must be integrated into a single way of life. All life is contained within the framework of the five Confucian relationships of ruler and subject,
husband and wife, parent and child, elder child and younger child, friend and friend. The individual is primarily a member of a family and only secondarily an entity in his own right. Moreover, the family is an integral part of a larger unit, the clan, which in turn must subordinate itself to that largest of all families, the whole Japanese nation. It is the belief that almost all the families in Japan are related at least by distant blood ties to the Imperial Family, and hence are but inferior or branch clans of one great nationwide family of which the Emperor is the blood father.

It is for this reason that the Emperor plays so great a role in Japanese life. Shinto proclaims him to be the descendant and representative here on earth of the greatest of the Deities of Heaven, Amatsukami, the High Priest of his people and their intercessor before the Gods (Kami), and finally the blood father or head of the family of which all Japanese are members. Buddhism considers the Emperor a descendant of the supreme Buddha Vairocana, who manifested himself in Japan as the great Sun Goddess, ancestress of the Imperial Family. Confucianism maintains that the Emperor is the repository of benevolence, righteousness, and justice. He rules because of his overwhelming virtue. He is the father of his people in the ethical sense, their moral
guardian and guide.

To understand who is actually sovereign one must understand the big difference between the legal powers of the Throne and the actual powers of the Emperor. Even under these circumstances, however, there exists a diversity of opinion. H. B. Montgomery placed the Emperor at the head of the world's great statesmen, stating that he had the whole reins of the government in his hands and exercised over every department and detail of it a minute and rigid supervision. Munro was of the same opinion with the modification that the Emperor reigned but did not rule. Kitazawa differed radically as to who holds the sovereign power in The Land of the Rising Sun. According to this authority the Emperor of Japan long ago ceased in reality to be an autocratic ruler, and stated that the actual administrative power of the State passed almost entirely into the hands of the Ministers of State. Y. Uyehara is of the same general opinion. The diversity of opinion is

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5H. B. Montgomery, The Empire of the East, pp. 60-61.
6William Bennett Munro, The Governments of Europe, p. 804.
7Kitazawa, op. cit., p. 32.
8Ibid., p. 33.
extended further by McLaren who concludes that the Emperor is overshadowed by the Genro and the Cabinet. He contends that the policy of the Empire is formulated by these two groups, and that the public support of the government's policy is secured by appealing to the loyalty to the Emperor and to the chauvinism of the people. Possibly the most correct view is the one that the Emperor has been simply a force in Japanese politics, given certain divine attributes and maintained in a position of theoretical omnipotence, because it served the political ambitions of the oligarchy, both civil and military, to do so.

The powers of the Throne can be most ably treated under five distinct groupings: (1) the Imperial House Power; (2) Military Command Power; (3) conferment of honors; (4) the power in ritualistic affairs; and (5) the power in general State affairs.

The power in regard to Imperial House affairs is clearly separated from the power concerning the general State affairs, and exercised by the Emperor as the patriarch of the Imperial Family, chiefly with the advice

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of the Minister of the Imperial Household, who is entirely independent of the Cabinet. Before the promulgation of the Constitution there was no distinction between ordinary State affairs and Imperial House affairs, and both were under the control of the Council of State, the predecessor of the Cabinet. The property of the Imperial House and that of the State were mixed. But just before the promulgation of the Constitution, Imperial House affairs were separated from general State affairs, and they came to be conducted by the independent Minister of the Imperial Household. This separation of Imperial House affairs was completed by the Constitution, which placed the former outside the power of the Diet. But this category of Imperial House affairs contains matters which are not only royal family affairs, but also have a great deal to do with the people and the State itself, such as the succession to the Throne, the institution of a regency, legislation concerning the Imperial House affairs, and the supervision over peers. In regard to these matters the Cabinet is also consulted. On the contrary, other matters which are exclusively Imperial House affairs are, in principle, left to the autonomy of the Imperial House, and the members of the Imperial House are, as a rule, not subject to ordinary laws of State, civil or criminal.
In the exercise of this power the Minister of the Imperial Household chiefly advises the Emperor, as do Cabinet Ministers in general State affairs. The Minister of the Imperial Household is in charge of all matters pertaining to the Imperial Family and to the Emperor as a member of this family. Although called a Minister he is not a member of the Cabinet and is unaffected by Cabinet changes. All titles of nobility and rank conferred by the Emperor are done with the advice of this Minister. Appointment to this post is made by the Emperor on the advice of the Prime Minister, and dismissals are made in the same manner, although it is generally customary to allow this official to hold his post permanently or until he desires to resign. Since he is one of the few officials through whom appointments to see the Emperor must be made, he can prove troublesome to his political opponents if the latter should attempt to secure an Imperial audience in order to give advice on policy that does not meet with the approval of the former. His position is strengthened in that he cannot be questioned or made the subject of parliamentary debate.

Another of the advisory group which surrounds the Emperor is the Lord Privy Seal, who always advises the
Emperor in both State affairs and Imperial House affairs, though his post is not a responsible one. For this reason he countersigns the Imperial Order to appoint the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Imperial Household. Appointment to and dismissal from this position occurs in the same manner as does that of the Minister of the Imperial Household. He, also, is one of those few previously mentioned officials who control the making of appointments to see the Emperor.

As a deliberative body, there are the Privy Council and the Imperial Family Council, which consider the important matters of the Imperial House. The Privy Council was created in 1888 to act as the supreme advisory body to the Emperor. The immediate reason for its establishment in that particular year was to enable it to discuss and accept the Constitution drawn up by Ito. The members, who must be over forty years of age, are chosen from all walks of life -- lawyers, diplomats, administrators, scientists, generals, admirals. The members of the Imperial Family may participate in its sessions, and Cabinet members have seats "ex-officio." It must be called together by the Emperor at the instance of the Cabinet.
The Privy Council must be consulted in such important matters pertaining to the Imperial Family as a change in the order of succession to the Throne, the establishment of a regency, or an amendment to the Imperial House Law. Its sanction must be obtained for all laws and ordinances supplementary to the Constitution as well as for drafts of amendments to that document. Each organ of the government has the right to interpret the Constitution, but where two such interpretations so seriously conflict as to endanger the proper functioning of the government -- as in the disagreement of 1892 between the two Houses of the Diet regarding their respective budgetary powers -- the Council may be called upon to render a decision. It must approve of all emergency Imperial ordinances issued when the Diet is not in session, ordinances proclaiming a state of martial law, ordinances bearing penal provisions, and matters relating to changes in the personnel, functions, or procedure of the Privy Council. Its advice on important foreign treaties and conventions must be considered before they can be ratified by the Emperor. Finally, any matter of great significance to the State is generally submitted to the Privy Council, and is not to be settled without its consent.
It is clear, therefore, that the Privy Councillors are a power in Japanese politics. The possibilities of conflict between them and the Cabinet are innumerable. Such a situation is detrimental to the efficient functioning of the government. Opposition to the Privy Council is violent in the House of Representatives, and many plans for its reform and even for its abolition have been suggested. True, the Council cannot pass judgment on any matters except those specifically laid before it by the Emperor, who always acts in this connection on the advice of the Prime Minister. As all appointments to the Privy Council are made by the Prime Minister in the name of the Emperor it would appear rather easy for the Cabinet to break the power of the Privy Council either by packing it with friends or by refusing to lay matters before its members for their perusal. Tradition and the prestige of the Councillors, however, stand in the way of so simple a solution. No one is made a Councillor until it has been ascertained that he is acceptable to the President and a majority of the members of the Privy Council. If the Premier were to disregard this custom, or were to "advise" the Emperor to dismiss certain Councillors, or would neglect to "advise" the Emperor to lay important matters before the Privy Council, he would immediately bring down upon
himself a storm of criticism from the Imperial Household Ministry, the House of Peers, the opposition party in the House of Representatives, and the militarists, so that he would be a very courageous man, who was sure of a tremendous amount of popular support, who would dare adopt such a line of action. Premier Hamaguchi alone of the Commoner heads of the government has had the courage and the prestige directly to defy the Privy Council, in the consideration of the London Naval Treaty of 1930. In this case, when such defiance was shown, the Privy Council retreated far enough to avoid a test of power.

The Emperor's prerogative over Imperial Household affairs is based on the fact that he is the patriarch of the Imperial Family. He conducts family affairs in accordance with the provisions laid down in the Imperial House Law, which is second in importance only to the Constitution itself and was promulgated at the same time, and with the advice of the Imperial Family Council, which is composed of all Princes of the Blood who have reached their majority. The Imperial House Law is superior to all ordinary legislation and cannot be supplanted or amended by statute. Consequently, it is completely outside the control of the Imperial Diet. It can be amended only by the Emperor, with the advice of the Imperial Family Council and of the Privy Council. It determines who shall be Emperor.
The Imperial Family receives a yearly appropriation from the Diet of $1,500,000 for the expenses of the court. In addition it obtains a substantial income from its agricultural and forest lands, and its blocks of shares in various banks and commercial companies. The value of its holdings was estimated at over one billion yen ($330,000,000) as of 1939, making it almost the wealthiest family in Japan. The Imperial Family Council has a considerable voice in the control and spending of this vast fortune.

The power to command armed forces as the commander-in-chief is also separated from ordinary State affairs and therefore is placed outside the power of the Cabinet. There is no express provision in the Constitution to provide for this independence of military commanding power, but it was established by custom, to meet the practical necessity of preserving military secrets and of increasing the fighting strength of armed forces.

In exercising this power of military command, the Emperor is principally advised by the chief of the Army and Navy General Staffs. All problems concerning the Army and Navy are solved by the Chief of Staff of the service to which said problems pertain. If they involve both, they are cleared up by a joint meeting. The
Minister of the Army and the Minister of the Navy also advise the Emperor in regard to this command of military forces, not as Cabinet Ministers, but as organs of the military command, because those ministers are required by the Imperial Ordinance to be, respectively, generals or lieutenant-generals in the Army or admirals or vice-admirals in the Navy, and they deal with matters of military organization which are closely related to the military command. When Cabinet Ministers advise the Emperor, they must advise through the Prime Minister, but the Minister of the Army and the Minister of the Navy can advise the Emperor directly, so far as the military command is concerned.

The Ministers of the Army and Navy may be chosen by the Premier, but are appointed by the Emperor only on the nomination of the Army and Navy members respectively in the Supreme War Council, which is composed of the Field Marshals and Fleet Admirals, the Chiefs of the General Staff and the Navy Staff, the Ministers of the Army and the Navy, and other important Army and Navy officers appointed by the Emperor. Since the Army was afraid that a Minister of War, collaborating as he must in the Cabinet with bureaucrats and party politicians, might be somewhat contaminated by civilian ideology, the whole important field of military education was withdrawn
from his control and entrusted to a special Inspector-General of Military Education. He also is appointed by the Emperor on the recommendation of the Army members of the Supreme War Council.

Since no Cabinet can exist without Ministers of War and the Navy, and since these men must be military men subservient to the will of the Supreme War Council, the fighting services always can and frequently do bring about the downfall of any Premier who pursues policies unacceptable to them.

Although all Japanese are the loyal children of the Emperor, the fighting men are looked upon as his favorites, for they are bound to him in the additional relationship of soldiers or sailors to the commander-in-chief. The fighting services, therefore, particularly the officers, feel quite superior to the rank and file of ordinary subjects. In an Imperial Rescript to the Army in 1882 it was stated that service men should not involve themselves or interest themselves in politics, and the Constitution does not permit them to vote.

Since the active members of the Army and the Navy control all military affairs, however, and since it is impossible to divorce these from financial matters, foreign policies, and the nation's whole economic structure, the militarists
are very much in politics.

Consequently, they are interested in educating the public to think along the same channels with the leaders of the fighting services. For this reason there are all sorts of military organizations and societies for everyone from simple ex-service men to the most burning patriots. Foremost among these are the Imperial Ex-Servicemen's Association, the Black Dragon Society, and the Black Ocean Society. Their programs are all imperialistic. They glorify war and the fighting man, lay great stress on loyalty to the Emperor, and are fascist in their economic ideology.

The power of the Throne to confer titles of nobility, rank, orders and other marks of honor is also distinguished from ordinary State affairs by custom. The power to confer titles of nobility and rank is exercised with the advice of the Minister of the Imperial Household, while the power of conferring other honors is with the advice of the Cabinet. A considerable number and variety of honors are provided for. Of noble ranks, there are five -- those of prince, marquis, count, viscount, and baron. All peerages are granted with the right of hereditary succession. They may be surrendered or withdrawn. Court ranks in eight classes
are conferred upon those Japanese citizens whom the government wishes to honor for their services to it or to the country in a public or private capacity. Decorations are conferred in seven orders of varying grades.

Separation of the Church and State does not exist in Japan. The power in ritualistic affairs is exercised by the Emperor personally or by a member of the Imperial Family or ritualistic official as a royal representative, and is placed outside the power of the Cabinet.

The Sovereign exercises certain powers in ordinary State affairs. The legislative power is exercised with the consent of the Diet, that of the executive with the advice of Cabinet Ministers, and the judicial power is exercised by the courts of law in the name of the Emperor.

The Crown convokes, opens, closes and prorogues the Diet, and dissolves the House of Representatives. The Japanese Diet may not meet or open a session of its own accord. The Emperor also closes the Diet, but this means nothing but a ceremonial act, since the Diet legally closes when the term of a session ends. The power to dissolve the popular House is very important, but not unlimited. For instance, Parliament must be convoked every year, usually in December; the term of a
session must be three months, and might be prolonged by an Imperial order; when urgent necessity arises, an extra-session may be convoked.

The Throne orders the Cabinet to initiate bills, sanctions bills passed by the Diet, and orders them promulgated and executed. The government thus holds the initiative in legislation. Whereas the President of the United States has a suspensive veto, the sanction of the Japanese Emperor is necessary in law-making, which otherwise becomes invalid forever. A law thus sanctioned must be promulgated.

Although the Constitution enumerates the various subjects which may be dealt with by the ordinance power of the Emperor, this is not exhaustive. With administrative matters the Emperor may, in default of constitutional provisions to the contrary, issue ordinances without any specific grant of power by the Constitution. On the other hand, with regard to ordinances of an essentially legislative character, the power of the Emperor is strictly limited to the subjects enumerated in the Constitution.

This ordinance power is very large as compared with that of other countries. First, Imperial Ordinances may be issued, in place of laws, if this is necessary to
maintain public safety or avert calamities when the Diet is not in session. Before issuing an ordinance, the government must lay it before the Privy Council. This ordinance takes the place of a law and therefore it can repeal or amend the existing laws. Of course, the ordinance must be approved by the Diet at its next session. If it is not approved, it becomes invalid.

Second, the government issues administrative ordinances for (a) the execution of laws, (b) the maintenance of public peace and order, and for the promotion of the welfare of the people, and (3) the regulation of executive matters, i.e., the organization of various branches of the administration, the organization of the Army and Navy, the organization of the Privy Council with the consent of the Council, and the organization of the House of Peers with the consent of the House. This power is limited to supplying the deficiencies and cannot alter existing laws. Not only that, but this ordinance power cannot regulate matters which are exclusively reserved to a law. Third, the Throne issues ordinances with regard to specific matters by virtue of the mandate of laws.

The Throne may also appoint and dismiss officials, control military organization, declare war and conclude
peace, proclaim a state of siege, and exercise the pardoning power. It determines the organization of different branches of the administration and the salaries of all civil and military officers and appoints and dismisses the same under certain limitations. The judges of the courts of law and the judges of the Court of Administrative Litigation must be appointed from among those who possess proper qualifications. These judges can be dismissed only by criminal sentence or disciplinary punishment, and the rules for this must be determined by law.

The Throne also determines the organization and peace standing of the Army and the Navy. According to Prince Ito, this power embraced the organization of military divisions and of fleets, the storing and distribution of arms, the education of military and naval men, inspection, discipline, modes of salutes, styles of uniforms, fortifications, naval defenses, naval ports and preparations for military and naval expeditions.

The Crown declares war, makes peace and concludes treaties. Treaties cannot be altered by ordinances or statutes, and hence are superior to ordinary law, but they must not conflict with the Constitution or with the
Imperial House Law. In most modern constitutional governments both the declaration of war and the conclusion of treaties which affect the rights and duties of the people require the consent of the legislature. In Japan, however, this war power and treaty-making power is reserved to the Throne, which exercises these powers without consulting the Diet. Of course, treaties must be laid before the Privy Council before their ratification, but this does not necessarily mean that treaties which are concluded without the concurrence of the Privy Council are invalid.

The Throne proclaims a state of siege at the time of a foreign war or of domestic insurrection. Thus all ordinary laws are held in abeyance in favor of military measures. But the conditions requisite for this declaration must be prescribed by law, and the declaration itself must be referred to the Privy Council. Through his pardoning power the Emperor orders amnesty, pardon, commutation of punishment and rehabilitation. Thus the Throne has a very large executive power, subject to the limitation that appropriations necessary for its exercise must be approved by the Diet.

According to the Constitution, the judicial power is to be exercised by the courts of law according to law,
in the name of the Emperor, who is considered the fountain of justice, but the exercise of this power is left to the courts. This judicial power will be dealt with later.

The Emperor's prerogatives are so numerous and extensive that few, if any, attributes of sovereignty are omitted from the list. Yet, although the Emperor is virtually the State, he never acts except on the advice of others. Under the present system of Japanese government, Imperial decrees, ordinances, and orders are issued over the countersignatures of the ministers of the administrative departments affected; and with reference to Imperial Household affairs, the Imperial Household Minister has similar responsibilities. The Emperor does not manifest a will of his own, except in so far as he may persuade his advisors to alter whatever advice they had originally contemplated.

To find the real rulers of Japan one must search beyond the Emperor. Perhaps the word "shield" would be the best description of the role played by the Sovereign; for the long tradition of the Imperial Family, and the burning loyalty of the common people to this symbol of national unity, make the Emperor a perfect shield against a public irate and ready to hurl imprecations at its
ruling officials. No one criticizes the Throne.

Undoubtedly the best-known feature of Japanese government among Westerners, as well as the group which has probably wielded enormous power more consistently, is that body of men known as the Genro, or Elder Statesmen. They are not mentioned by the Constitution, nor are there any provisions in the ordinary laws and ordinances regarding the legal status of such a body. They were the counterpart in national life of the family and village elders, men of maturity, experience, and ability who had gained general confidence and had come to be relied upon for wisdom in counsel. The term was not applied to the leaders who carried through the Restoration, though some of them lived on into the latter part of Meiji, but to the second generation of the clan statesmen, who took over the duties of government during the eighties and conducted affairs under the trying conditions that prevailed after the establishment of a Constitution. The original group was composed of Ito Hirobumi, Yamagata Aritomo, and Inoue Kaoru of the Choshu clan, and Oyama Iwao and Matsukata Masayoshi of the Satsuma clan — all men who had played stellar roles in the political history of the Meiji Restoration. They were defendants of so-called clan or autocratic government against the
advance of democratic, representative institutions. Later additions to the group were Katsura Taro of the Chosu clan and Saionji Kimmochi, the only Court Noble among the Genro. Ito was assassinated in 1909, Katsura died in 1913, Inoue in 1915, Oyama in 1916, Yamagata in 1922, and Matsukata in 1924. Saionji's influence was strongly felt until he died in 1940.

Generally speaking, they are neither elected, appointed, nor dismissed. They are simply those few aged men who are recognized by universal authoritative opinion to be above party or class interest, to be in the highest degree competent and conscientious for making supremely important decisions in the interest of the nation, acting always in the Emperor's name. The system recognized that emperors, in a system of hereditary succession, may be more or less wise; administrators or parliamentary statesmen may be more or less efficient and acceptable. These Genro, on the other hand, enjoy the unquestioned prestige of past success, and are therefore looked to as the ultimate source of guidance for the nation when it is in difficulties.

The Elder Statesmen act in secret and presumably by informal agreement. They are responsible only to their conception of the national conscience and to the Emperor,
but it has repeatedly been their judgment alone that authoritatively determined the Emperor's will on an occasion of critical uncertainty. They possess a weight in counsel which preponderates over that of all other men and institutions. They may, by their advice to the Emperor, effectually veto an innovation, or make a significant departure from the usual practice; they may appoint to high office, or dismiss. Their operations may be in the realm of foreign politics, the making of alliances, the declaring of war, the deciding for peace. It may likewise be in the realm of domestic politics, and is most frequently and characteristically seen in the selection of an individual to be Prime Minister, after the resignation of his predecessor.

Another of the multiple ruling agencies which is more or less obscured by the divinity of the Emperor is the Cabinet. This body connects the Emperor and the Diet. It has three functions: advisory, parliamentary, and administrative. As advisors, they draft departmental laws and ordinances and ask the sanction of the Emperor after having laid them before the Cabinet meetings. They ask the Emperor to consult the Council, explain the opinion of the Cabinet before that body, and advise the Emperor to adopt or not to adopt the opinion of the Privy
Council. As a parliamentery organ of the Emperor, Cabinet Ministers submit projects of law and the annual budget to the Diet, either personally or through government commissioners, and defend themselves against interpellations of the Diet. As the chiefs of an administrative department of the government, they supervise the business of their respective departments and their subordinate officials.

What is the political significance of the Cabinet? One author states that it is the real administrative as well as the real law-making organ of the State.\(^{11}\) In direct contrast is the statement by another authority that the principal fault of Japan's system of government is the weakness of the Cabinet as compared with the older, stronger, more deeply ramified organization of the Army.\(^{12}\)

When a ministry falls, the Emperor, upon recommendation of the Genro, or Elder Statesmen, appoints a new Prime Minister and commands him to select his own Cabinet. In doing so, the Prime Minister ostensibly has a free hand, but in practice his selection is restricted. The

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\(^{11}\)Kitazawa, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

Foreign Minister, by tradition, has usually been a career diplomat. Too, the Premier must give due considerations to various factions of his party, as well as dignitaries in the Upper House. The qualifications required of the War and Navy Ministers constitute another hindrance to a sound development of Cabinet responsibility. In this instance the Prime Minister is restricted to a general or a lieutenant-general for the War portfolio and to an admiral or vice-admiral for the Navy post. Should the military or the naval clique decline to furnish a qualified person, they can prevent the formation of a Cabinet, or wreck it.

As head of the Cabinet, the Prime Minister maintains its unity, advises the Throne on all affairs of State, supervises all branches of the administration, and represents the Cabinet in public affairs. Other ministers must advise the Emperor through the Prime Minister, except the Minister of the Army and the Minister of the Navy, who have direct access to the Throne. Members of the Cabinet do not need to have seats in either house of Parliament as in Great Britain; on the other hand they are not debarred from being members of the legislative body as in the United States.
The Cabinet meets ordinarily once a week, while special meetings may be called at any time by the Premier. Members of the Cabinet are bound by honor not to disclose anything that is said at the Cabinet table, either in the Diet or out of it. Most of the Cabinet's deliberations relate to matters of general policy: (1) drafts of laws, estimates, and settled accounts; (2) treaties with foreign states and international questions of importance; (3) Imperial ordinances relating to administrative organization or to the execution of regulations and laws; (4) disputes concerning the relative competence of ministers of departments; (5) petitions from the people handed down from the Throne or submitted to the Imperial Diet; (6) expenditures apart from the budget; (7) appointments of local governors, as well as their promotion and removal. Discussions are not followed by a vote save in exceptional cases. When it develops that a very wide difference of views exists among members of the Cabinet, the matter is left open until some compromise is arrived at, so that it may present an outward unanimity. Often the final decision is left to the Premier.

The Diet may control the Cabinet by "representations," addresses to the Emperor, or interpellations.
The Constitution authorizes what are known as "representations." Thus the Lower House may suggest desirable projects of law or amendments to the government, which may or may not draft legislation in accordance. If the government refuses to accept a representation, it may not be presented again in the same session. Each House also has the right to present addresses to the Emperor, either in writing or at an audience granted by the Emperor to a delegation from the House concerned. Proposals for addresses to the Throne may not be presented to a chamber unless endorsed by thirty members; may convey criticisms of the government or any other message, e.g., a reply to an Imperial speech, congratulations or condolences, opinions and petitions. By interpellation a member of the House may put a question to the government provided that thirty other members endorse this action. He presents the question, in the form of a memorandum signed by himself and his supporters, through the President of the House. A Minister may answer immediately or may specify a future date or may decline to answer, giving his reasons for declining.

The Cabinet may be overthrown by various means. It need not have a majority in the House of Representatives, but should that body pass a vote of no confidence,
it usually resigns. Generally, however, the Premier will request the Emperor to dissolve the House before it has a chance to voice so strong a criticism. The Cabinet will fall if either of the Ministers withdraws for any reason and no officer is proffered in his place. Cabinets can be destroyed by an irate House of Peers or a hostile Privy Council. Sometimes Cabinets resign in the face of a storm of public criticism coupled with rioting and mob violence. Several Cabinets have come to an end because of successful or attempted assassinations of Premiers and important Ministers.

The Imperial Diet

The legislative body of the Japanese government is composed of the House of Peers and the House of Representatives. It is the latter which is mostly concerned with the organization and functioning of political parties because its members are elected with the aid of political machines.

Political parties in Japan have not revolved about principles, but about men. The two original parties, the Jiyuto and the Kaishinto, were established by Itagaki and Okuma, respectively, because these gentlemen were angry at the way the samurai of Satsuma and Chosu were monopolizing positions in the government. They
used their parties as tools with which to pry open lucrative posts in the administration for themselves and their loyal henchmen. After passing through several metamorphoses, they became the Seiyukai and the Minseito.

Groups of professional politicians rally about the man most likely to furnish them with positions at good salaries. Corruption and malversation in and out of office have become so much identified with the idea "politician" in Japanese life that it has been easy for the militarist group to use as a premise for all their claims the inherent viciousness of politicians as a class.

Whatever the several parties do offer in the way of broad programs, it has frequently been asserted that they are merely the tools of the great companies. Thus the Mitsui has associated itself with the Seiyukai, and the Mitsubishi with the Minseito. As a result, elements which favor an economic system comparing with Western fascism have accused the major parties of being organized to plunder the public domain and treasury in the interests of their masters, the capitalists.

Lesser parties center about ambitious politicians who have quarreled with the leader of one of the two main parties. These have been quite ephemeral and generally dissolve as soon as their members have been granted some share of the spoils by one of the larger parties, or
when the members have lost faith in their leaders.

A few notable exceptions are the "mass" parties which are socialist in philosophy and make their appeal to the farmers and laborers. Although they have never been strong enough to win more than a very few offices, the members are almost fanatical in their allegiance to principles. Therefore, although weak, they command respect. The most notable is the Shakai-taishuto, which won eighteen seats in February, 1936, and increased this to thirty-seven in April, 1937. Such a dormancy in popular movements is explainable by the fact that, while they had existed for some time before, it was not until after the granting of universal manhood suffrage in 1925 that the mass parties, as such, could engage in organized campaigns. The Communist party is illegal and subject to continual and ruthless persecution. Its political influence apparently is negligible.

The House of Representatives is composed of members elected by the people, the term of office being for four years unless the House is sooner dissolved. According to the law of 1925, the whole country is divided into 122 constituencies, each of which elects from three to five members, at the rate of one member for a population of 120,000. Candidates must be male subjects over thirty
years of age. There is no property qualification, though there are some disqualifying conditions, such as nobility, active military service, long imprisonment, disability, judicial and other similar occupations. Electors must be men over twenty-five years of age, but without property qualification. Universal manhood suffrage, which was for the first time adopted by the law of 1925, after a long struggle, came into force in the general election which took place in the year 1928.

Any person, with the exceptions noted above, may become a candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives by notifying the chairman of election of the district in which he proposes to run and depositing 2,000 yen, or about $700.00 at the 1938 rate of exchange. There are no primary elections and no nominating conventions, and the vote is of the nature of a single non-transferable vote. Each elector votes for only one candidate in a constituency which returns from three to five members to the House. Voting is voluntary. The election is by secret ballot. At the polling booth the voter is given a blank sheet of paper upon which he writes the name of a single candidate. Disputed elections are under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and those candidates who receive fewer
than one tenth of the total vote of their districts divided by the number of seats to which the district is entitled must forfeit their deposits.

Money plays a very considerable part in the electoral process. As Diets are frequently dissolved, and general elections constitute a severe drain upon the candidate's purse, there is a strong tendency for the member of Parliament, since he receives no considerable stipend -- only 3,000 yen plus travel expense -- to recoup his losses by making profitable connections with business houses. The Tokyo Asahi estimated that the election of 1930 cost the Minseito party six and the Seiyukai four million yen. While the legal maximum is in the neighborhood of seven thousand dollars, the average of successful candidates in 1930 spent some twenty-five thousand, and many went as high as fifty thousand dollars.

The organization of the Upper House is exclusively reserved to an Imperial Ordinance, free from interference by the Lower House. Such an Imperial Ordinance can be amended only by the concurrence of the House of Peers.

About one half of the entire membership are not peers at all. It consists of the following six classes: (1) the members of the Imperial Family who have reached
majority; (2) all princes and marquises over thirty years of age; (3) counts, viscounts, and barons who are elected by their respective orders for a seven-year term. The number of this class of members in the Japanese House of Peers has changed several times since the promulgation of the Constitution. The candidates must be over thirty years of age, and the electors must be over twenty years of age. The method of election is complicated. Electors vote for all candidates who may be permitted to the House. The result is that the group which controls the majority of one order monopolizes all the members of the House elected from that order. The elector signs his ballot, and may vote by proxy. Detailed matters concerning this election are left to the regulations made by the peers. Disputed elections are within the jurisdiction of the House of Peers, not within that of the courts of law as in the case of the House of Representatives. (4) Members nominated by the Emperor for life by virtue of their meritorious services to the State or on account of their erudition compose the fourth group. They must be over thirty years of age, and their number cannot exceed 125. As they are nominated by the Emperor on the recommendation and advice of the Cabinet, the latter tends to choose those
government officials or business men who are most subservient to it, without much regard to their erudition or meritorious services to the State. Therefore, after the party Cabinet system was established, this class of members was gradually divided along the party lines in the Lower House. They are, in reality, the most influential members in the House of Peers. (5) Four members are chosen by the Imperial Academy for a seven-year term and nominated by the Emperor. The Imperial Academy is the group of scholars of the highest standing, usually senior professors of Imperial universities. The election is by a secret and single non-transferable ballot.

(6) The last class which composes the House of Peers are those persons who are elected by and from among the taxpayers of the largest amount of direct national taxes on land, industry or trade in each prefecture and nominated by the Emperor. In prefectures of large population two members are elected by and from among the two hundred highest taxpayers; smaller districts furnish one member each by and from among the one hundred highest taxpayers. The term is seven years, and the number cannot exceed sixty-six. The method of election is similar to that for elective peers. This class of members is also influenced by political parties in the Lower House.
The president and vice-president of the House of Peers are not nominated by the House but appointed directly by the Emperor from among the members for a term of seven years. This contrasts sharply with the election of the speaker and vice-speaker in the House of Representatives. Here three persons are nominated by vote of the House, and the Emperor appoints one of the three. In practice, he appoints the candidates who receive the greatest number of votes for the respective offices.

Naturally such a group as the House of Peers tends to be highly conservative, and since its legislative powers equal, in principle, those of the House of Representatives, it has proved a bulwark of autocracy. Parties in the Upper House differ from those in the Lower House; the Peers are opposed to popular party cabinets and abhor co-operation with party politicians. Although there is always much talk among liberals about the need for reform of the House of Peers, no such step can be taken without the consent of the Peers themselves, consequently no fundamental change has ever been made.

The power of the House of Peers is, in principle, equal to that of the other House, with the following exceptions: (1) The organization of the House of Peers is
left to an Imperial Ordinance and placed outside the power of the House of Representatives, while that of the latter is required to be prescribed by a statute passed by the Diet, in which the House of Peers also participates. (2) The budget must be first laid before the House of Representatives. Consequently, the period in which the House of Peers deliberates upon the budget is sometimes shorter than that for the House of Representatives, but in other respects both Houses have equal power in regard to the budget. The Upper House can even restore the appropriations rejected by the House of Representatives. (3) The House of Peers may be consulted by the Emperor concerning the privileges of nobility. In this case the House has no power to amend projects of the Emperor, but merely reports whether the projects are acceptable or not. (4) The president and vice-president of the House of Representatives are nominated by the Emperor, respectively, from among each three candidates elected by the House; while the president and vice-president of the Upper House are nominated by the Emperor directly from among the members, the House itself having no power to recommend them. (5) The House of Peers has jurisdiction over disputes concerning the election of its members, while the other House has no such power.
(6) The House of Representatives permits the resignation of its members, and also their dismissal, but in the House of Peers the Emperor decides these matters.

(7) The Lower House is subject to dissolution, but the Upper House is free from it.

The opening of the Diet is marked by the appearance of the Emperor before a joint session of the two chambers, the Emperor reading his speech while hidden from view of the legislators. The joint session occurs in the House of Peers, followed by replies of the two Houses to the Emperor denoting full accord with the latter's views.

Both Houses of the Diet are subject to prorogation by Imperial order, and the Lower House is subject to dissolution by the same process. The Houses sit concurrently, and prorogation of the House of Peers always accompanies dissolution of the House of Representatives. Dissolution is carried out by Imperial rescript. The rescript, wrapped in purple silk, is brought into the House by the chief secretary of the Cabinet at the moment predetermined by the ministers. At the sight of the purple covering, the business of the House stops instantly and members rise and listen, with heads bowed, to the reading of the rescript by the president of the House. As the reading ends, members cry "banzai" -- "hurrah,"
literally "ten thousand years" -- honoring the Emperor's order. The Premier repairs to the palace and reports the dissolution to the Emperor. Prorogation may last for a period not exceeding fifteen days. The Emperor may dissolve the House of Representatives at will, but a general election must be held soon after, since the new House must meet within five months of the dissolution of the old. Although the Constitution calls for a session of three months, the dissolution order was used often during the first twenty-six years of the constitutional period (1890-1916). During this period the House, on an average, sat twenty-five days a session, averaging a little over three hours per meeting.

Immunities and privileges of members of the Diet are many. They are protected by the Constitution in the exercise of freedom of speech and from arrest during sessions. They may not be held responsible for opinions or votes given within their respective Houses. They are free to speak their minds; if, however, they disseminate their views outside the Diet by speaking, writing, or distributing printed documents, they are subject to the same legal liabilities as non-members. Proceedings receive official publication. Members may obtain leaves of absence for short periods. A member of the Lower
House may offer his resignation, which the House is empowered to accept. Elected and appointed members of the Upper House may petition the Emperor through the president of the House for permission to resign.

Each House is empowered to discipline its members. The presidents exercise the power of police, and may summon both house-guards and police officers whenever necessary. Motions for disciplining a member, if supported by twenty members, are referred to the committee on discipline. The presidents, in certain circumstances, may refer a case to the committee. The House discusses the committee's report, and the president delivers the judgment of the House. Penalties in four degrees of severity may be imposed: (1) reprimand at an open meeting of the House; (2) requirement that a proper apology be made in an open meeting; (3) suspension; and (4) expulsion.

Debate in both Houses of Parliament is free and the proceedings public. The Constitution, however, contains a proviso for the sitting of either House with closed doors upon the wish of the present or of not less than ten members, supported by the House, or upon the demand of the government with or without the consent of the House. When in the former event a motion for a secret sitting is
made, strangers have to withdraw from the House and the motion is voted on without debate. The proceedings of a secret meeting of either chamber may not be published.

In principle, all legislation must be made with the consent of the Diet, except in the case of ordinances and treaties. Projects of law are initiated by the government or either House of the Diet. But projects of constitutional amendment are initiated only by the Emperor. A bill which has been rejected by either House cannot be brought in again during the same session.

Bills initiated by the government are distinguished from those initiated by either House of the Diet by the following points: (1) government bills precede private bills in the order of the day, except when the concurrence of the government has been obtained to the contrary, in consequence of urgent necessity for debates; (2) government bills can never be voted upon, without having been first submitted to the examination of a committee, except when the government demands the contrary, in case of urgent necessity; (3) government bills can be either amended or withdrawn by the government at any time it desires.

Almost all laws passed by the Diet are government bills. In the session of 1924-1925, for example, forty
private-member bills were introduced. Four were passed by both Houses. In the same session the government introduced fifty-four bills, of which all but five were passed. A private bill cannot pass without the support of the government, because the leadership in legislation in the Diet is assumed by Cabinet Ministers or other government commissioners who can speak in the House at any time, and a bill initiated by a House member is lacking in such leadership. The fate of bills is almost always decided in the committee-room. Those bills which are recommended require a majority vote of each House to become law. The Emperor has the final word, having absolute veto power. If some exercise of this power might raise a popular furor, the government can simply delay publishing the act in the Official Gazette, which publication brings the said act into effect, or it may fail to provide in the budget for necessary funds to enforce the act. Other procedures of law-making are similar to those of other countries.

In regard to revenues, the imposition of a new tax or a modification of the rate of an existing tax must be determined by law, not by the budget. Therefore, both the government and the Diet have the power to initiate a revenue bill, and when a revenue bill is initiated by
the government, the Diet can reject or amend it, not only to reduce it, but also to increase it. Of course the budget contains all revenues as well as all expenditures, but revenues are collected by virtue of law, and therefore the government is only restricted by law, not by the budget. Revenues contained in the budget mean nothing more than the mere estimates of revenue. National loans and other liabilities on the charge of the national treasury also depend upon the consent of the Diet, except those which are provided for in the budget.

On the other hand, all expenditures of the government are laid before the Diet annually in an annual budget, and the government is restricted by the budget passed by the Diet. If the government spends money in contradiction to the budget, it must assume the responsibility for thus violating the law. But the budget is initiated only by the government, not by the Diet. The power of the Diet is limited to amending or rejecting the budget submitted by the government. The Diet can reduce or reject the budget but has no power to increase it, as in England. Even this power to reduce or reject the budget is not unlimited. The Diet cannot reduce or reject the appropriation for the Imperial Household, except in case of increasing the existing
fixed amount. The appropriations for certain purposes which continue for several fiscal years and which have been approved by the Diet at the beginning are also beyond amending or rejecting powers of the Diet.

The Japanese Constitution provides for expenditures which the Diet cannot reduce or reject without the concurrence of the executive. First, those expenditures which are caused by or result from the executive power of the Throne, such as Imperial Ordinances or treaties, cannot be amended or rejected, if provided for in a preceding budget and approved by the Diet. Ordinary expenditures necessary for the maintenance of different branches of the administration, expenditures needed for the maintenance of the Army and the Navy and salaries of civil and military officials, are among this kind of expenditure which are caused by the executive power of the Throne. Thus when the government establishes a new branch of the administration or a new Army division by an Imperial Ordinance, the Diet is free in reducing or rejecting the appropriations required by these new establishments, but once the Diet gives consent to those appropriations, it cannot reduce or reject them thereafter, without the consent of the executive. Second, expenditures necessary for the execution of law are also outside
the amending power of the Diet. Pensions, annuities, and the like, belong to this kind of expenditures. The framers of the Constitution were of the opinion that once a law is enacted by the Throne with the consent of the Diet, it is binding upon the Diet which cannot prevent execution of the law by reducing or rejecting the expenditures. Third, expenditures due to the legal liabilities of the government, such as interest on national loans, appropriations for the redemption of national loans, subsidies to companies, compensation of all kinds, are likewise free from amendment or rejection by the Diet. All liabilities on the charge of the national treasury, except compensation or indemnity, require the consent of the Diet. Such expenditures can be reduced or rejected by the Diet if the government agrees upon it, but as the latter is also bound by a law, it is not free in agreeing upon the amendment or the rejection of those expenditures, except when it is going to repeal the laws to which they are due.

The government is under the obligation to carry out administration within the limits of the budget passed by the Diet, but the Constitution admits that in some cases the government can go beyond the limits provided that such governmental actions must be approved by the Diet
afterwards. In case of necessity the Administration may spend money even beyond budget amounts or for some purposes other than those which are provided for in the budget. These expenditures are paid out of reserve funds. In case of urgent need for the maintenance of public safety the government can enact emergency financial measures, such as modification of the budget, raising of national loans, by means of Imperial Ordinances provided that the Diet cannot be convoked owing to the external or internal conditions of the country. Of course, these financial measures beyond or outside the budget must be laid before the Diet and approved at its next session.

There is another grave restriction upon the financial power of the Diet. That is, when the Diet has not voted on the budget or even when the budget has not been brought into actual existence, for example, on account of the dissolution of the House of Representatives, the government carries out the budget of the preceding year.

One authority believes that the Diet's place in the political system is impossible. It is divided against itself, as the two Houses are mutually antagonistic.

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13 Walter W. McLaren, A Political History of Japan During the Meiji Era, p. 374.
Another fault, he concludes, is that their powers of consent only serve the purposes of obstruction and provide an excuse for corruption and manipulation by the Cabinet, which in its turn suffers from its subservience to the will of the Elder Statesmen. With these views, however, another author disagrees sharply:

The question of the necessity for the existence of a second chamber and the composition thereof has been keenly debated in this and other countries of recent years. It seems to me that in this matter Japan has hit upon the happy mean. She has combined in her House of Peers the aristocratic or hereditary element in a modified degree with the principle of life membership by which she secures the services and counsel of the great intellects of the land, and such as have done the State good service in any capacity. At the same time she has not excluded the representative element from her second chamber -- a fact which must largely obviate any possibility of the House of Peers becoming a purely class body. A second chamber so constituted must obviously serve an extremely useful purpose in preserving an equilibrium between political parties, in preventing the rushing through and passing into law of hastily considered measures. For the composition of her second chamber, Japan has taken all human means possible to obtain whatever is representative of the stability, the intellect, the enterprise and the patriotism of the country. 14

The Judiciary

According to James Bryce, "There is no better test of the excellence of a government than the efficiency of

14 Montgomery, op. cit., pp. 54-55.
its judicial system, for nothing more nearly touches the welfare and security of the average citizen than his sense that he can rely on the certain and prompt administration of justice.\textsuperscript{15} In fact, the judicial administration holds an important part in modern constitutional government.

In Japan the judicial power belongs to the Imperial Throne, though exercised by independent courts of law. Neither the Emperor nor the Cabinet can interfere with the judicial administration. Then to what extent is the judiciary independent of the executive? First, the independence of judicial offices is guaranteed by the Constitution. The appointment and dismissal of judges and public procurators is provided for in the laws and is free from arbitrary interference of the executive. But this independence is weakened by the fact that the promotions of judicial officials are within the power of the executive, and they are, in reality, liable to be influenced by the executive. Second, the exercise of the judicial power by the courts of law is completely independent of other organs, executive or legislative. No one can interfere with judicial judgment. But in the

\textsuperscript{15} Kitazawa, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 85.
case of criminal justice public procurators who are un-
der the direction of the executive have the power to de-
termine whether the particular case is actionable or
not, and this fact affects the independence of judicial
judgment to some extent, though such a system results
from the necessity of maintaining the unity of the penal
policy of the country. Third, the judiciary can refuse
to apply invalid ordinances. As for laws which have
been passed by the Diet and sanctioned by the Emperor,
the courts of law have no power of judicial review,
even when they are unconstitutional. The Diet alone in-
terprets the Constitution in this respect, and the mem-
ers of the judiciary must concur. Of course, when a
law is in contradiction with the Imperial House Law, the
judiciary must refuse to apply it, because in this case
the question is one of fact, not of interpretation.
In respect of ordinances, however, the court has the
power to determine the general validity of ordinances,
which are merely an expression of the will of the ex-
cecutive, and to refuse to apply such invalid ordinances,
because the judicial is independent of the executive,
and is not bound by the interpretation of the executive.
Thus the differences between the treatment of ordinances
and laws by the judiciary are, in substance: (1) the
courts may inquire as to not only the form but the
substance as well, whether an ordinance is in conformity with the Constitution, Imperial House Law, laws or treaties, and may refuse to enforce conflicting ordinances; (2) in regard to laws, the power of judicial review extends only to its examination of the form; namely, if a law meets all legal requirements -- passage by the Diet, sanction by the Emperor, and promulgation in due form -- a court of law is bound to declare it valid and may not consider its constitutionality. Fourth, the effect of judicial decisions is independent. The only one exception to this principle is the pardoning power of the Emperor.

The courts of law are divided into four classes, the highest being the Supreme Court. Sitting in nine sections of five justices each, it has exclusive jurisdiction over cases of treason and serious offenses against the Imperial Family, and also over offenses committed by members of the Imperial Family such as are punishable by imprisonment or a heavier penalty. These actions may not be brought without the Emperor's consent. It hears appeals from judgments of the courts of appeal and from cases heard on appeal in the district courts, as well as complaints against rulings and orders of the courts of appeal and against those of district courts when hearing
matters on appeal. The Supreme Court is not bound by the decisions of the appellate courts on issues of fact, though it may accept them. Jury cases are appealed directly from the district courts to the Supreme Court, and in such cases the Supreme Court does not review the facts.

The second highest is a Court of Appeal. These courts try appeals from district courts and complaints against their rulings and orders. Civil actions in the first and second instance against members of the Imperial Family come within the competency of the Tokyo Court of Appeal. They may be brought without prior notice to, and consent of, the Emperor.

District Courts conduct the trial in first instance of all civil and criminal actions beyond the jurisdiction of the local courts. They also conduct preliminary examinations of criminal cases of complicated character. These courts also entertain appeals from judgments of the local courts and complaints against their rulings and orders.

Other litigation is processed through the Local Courts, which, like all other Japanese courts, have both civil and criminal jurisdiction. They have authority in civil actions involving amounts not exceeding $500.00 and
in other minor cases, and they also handle cases of bankruptcy and personal status. They also handle criminal cases which are not felony or which do not require a preliminary investigation.

In addition to these ordinary courts, there are military courts and the Court of Administrative Litigation. Military courts are composed of civilian judges and military officers, and deal with only criminal actions against persons in military service. The Court of Administrative Litigation is quite independent of ordinary courts of law, and considers all administrative suits. There is only one Court of Administrative Litigation.

Members of the court are appointed in theory by the Emperor, actually by the Premier, from persons thirty years old or over who have had at least five years' experience as judges or administrative officers. They hold their seats for life, i.e., until they reach the retiring age. Protected by statute, they may be removed only for cause by resolution of the whole administrative bench. The court sits in three sections, which act independently of each other. Each consists of five judges as a rule and comes to a decision by majority vote.

The court's jurisdiction is defined by statute.
Stated generally, it includes every action in which the question to be decided is the validity or invalidity of an administrative act. Disputes relating to the assessment of taxes with the exception of customs duties, the punishment of defaulting taxpayers, the prohibition or withdrawal of permission to engage in business, and water rights and works, and disputes between the State and an individual concerning the ownership of land are, in general, within the jurisdiction of this court. It has no jurisdiction over civil or criminal actions, all of which go into the ordinary courts. The same is true of suits for damages save in circumstances for which the law especially provides. The court takes cognizance of both fact and law. Though in a sense a court of appeal, since all cases come to it after prior consideration by administrative agencies, its jurisdiction is to be regarded as original, the prior administrative consideration not being viewed as judicial. Its judgment is final, and may be far-reaching. Not only may it declare administrative acts invalid, but it may also annul such acts, substitute its own judgment for an administrative decision, and issue a writ of mandamus to compel the authorities to perform specific acts.

All judges are appointive, holding office during
good behavior until they reach the age limit, which is sixty-three years except for the president of the Supreme Court, who must retire at sixty-five. The president of the Supreme Court and the presidents of the Courts of Appeal are appointed nominally by the Emperor, the remaining judges in the ordinary courts by the Minister of Justice. Five years' experience is required for appointment to a Court of Appeal, ten years' experience for appointment to the Supreme Court. By permission of the Supreme Bench or a Court of Appeal, a judge may sit for three years beyond the normal age limit. Judges are legally forbidden to take a public interest in politics, to become members of a political party or of a prefectural or local assembly, to occupy any public office from which financial gain may accrue, or to carry on certain types of business. They are, in practice, free from suspicion of political ambition or subjection to political influence.

The use of a jury dates from October 1, 1928, although the jury law was passed in 1923. Jury trial is mandatory unless waived by the accused in all cases in which the accused is liable to the death penalty, perpetual penal servitude, or life imprisonment. Persons accused of crimes involving liability to limited penal
servitude or a prison term not exceeding three years are entitled to jury trial upon demand.

Juries are composed of twelve male citizens thirty years old or over who have been domiciled in one place for at least two years, who can read and write, and who pay at least three yen in direct taxes. They are selected in secret by the court, procurator, and counsel for the defense from a panel of eligible persons. Two emergency jurors are selected also to replace any who may fall ill. Five yen a day, food, and dormitory accommodations are provided for jurors. Jurymen may ask questions of witnesses and accused persons, and a simple majority vote is sufficient to decide a jury's vote concerning the verdict. The verdict, which is confined to questions of fact, is not binding upon the court, which may throw it out and empanel another jury, may reject the second jury's verdict and empanel a third, and so continues until it does agree with the decision rendered. Jury cases may be appealed on points of law to the Supreme Court. There is no appeal on the facts. And it is within the court's discretion whether to divide the cost of a jury between the defendant and the state, place it all on the defendant, or place it all on the state. Usually the state pays the cost because the accused lacks means.
Conventional proceedings, plus numerous peculiarities, exist throughout the courts and their proceedings. Trials are public unless a court decides, for reasons which it must make public, to conduct the hearing in secret. Proceedings in the local courts are conducted in small rooms and tend to be quite informal. Informality, however, is left behind when a case reaches the District Courts. Such tranquillity is maintained that the most soft-voiced witness is plainly heard. Court procedure in criminal cases varies, in many instances, from that in civil cases. The defendant is not placed under oath and is not amenable for perjury while on criminal trial. Witnesses related to the defendant or believed to be parties in interest with him also are not sworn. The defendant is examined first, very minutely. None of the witnesses is permitted to be in the courtroom except when giving testimony. In civil cases witnesses are furnished in advance with an outline of questions to be asked of them. Examination and cross-examination are conducted by the judge, to whom counsel may submit questions. The judge may put the questions as submitted or as modified by himself or may decline to put them at all. All persons must testify unless the law otherwise provides.
Supremacy in Japan

Who, in finality, exercises full power in this island kingdom, this nation which, in less than fifty years, emerged from obscurity and isolation and grew to the stature of one of the greatest world powers? The answer varies with different authorities, but a more or less general conclusion can be drawn which meets with common approval.

The governmental setup in Japan has been controlled by an oligarchy since the promulgation of the Constitution in 1889, though disguised in some instances. Riots and strikes accentuated the popular demand for a working Constitution, and Ito met it with one of the cleverest documents that has ever deluded gullible human beings. Determined to keep ultimate power in the hands of the Satsuma and Chosu clans, Ito mollified the people with apparent concessions, at the same time depriving them effectively of their remaining rights. The period of 1889 to 1918 was noted by dominance of the Elder Statesmen, men who were in every instance except one members of the previously mentioned clans. Politicians and bureaucrats predominated, at least in theory, during the years from 1918 to 1932. Nevertheless, the militarists
were never out of the picture, thanks to a clever intrigue which enabled them practically to control the formation and subsequent functioning of the Cabinet. Unquestioned control was theirs from 1932 on, with just enough leniency on their part to appease the people and bureaucrats who fought militarist dominance.

The very Constitution that was supposed to establish constitutional monarchy, made it impossible. It was cited as being a gift from the Emperor to the people. That the Throne was portrayed as being the fountain-head of all authority in the State is easily discernible from Chart 2. The people were led to believe that everything emanated from the Emperor, that there was nothing on the soil of Japan that existed independent of him. He was, so the Japanese people were led to believe, the sole owner of the Empire, the author of law, justice, privilege, and honor, and the symbol of the unity of the Japanese nation. But to say that the Emperor ruled and that the people received that type of government for which they had clamored is not true!

The Diet does not make laws. It takes part in legislation, that is true. Also it has power to deliberate upon laws. But it does not have power to determine law. Laws are shaped by the Cabinet or the clique
CHART 2  THE EMPEROR'S POSITION IN THE JAPANESE STATE*

SUPREME WAR COUNCIL
- MINISTER OF WAR
- MINISTER OF NAVY
- CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF
- HIGH LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY
- HIGH OFFICERS OF THE ARMY AND NAVY
- CHIEF AID DE CAMP TO THE EMPEROR

EMPEROR
- ADVISES
- CONDUCT
- HEAD OF COMMAND & ADMINISTRATION
- ADVISES
- BOARD OF FIELD MARSHALS AND FLEET ADMIRALS
- ADVISES
- ALL FOREIGN AFFAIRS
- EXECUTES WAR, PEACE, TREATIES

RITUALISTIC AFFAIRS
- CONFER HONORS
- APPOINTS
- CONVOKES
- OPENS
- CLOSES
- PROROGUES

CONSTITUTION
- SOLELY MAY INITIATE AMENDMENTS
- ADVISES
- COVERS
- ADVISES
- PRIVY COUNCIL
- ADVISES
- IMPERIAL FAMILY COUNCIL
- IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS

ARMY AND NAVY
- ADVISES
- MINISTER OF COMMAND & ADMINISTRATION

IMPERIAL ORDINANCES
- EXECUTES
- CABINET
- APPROVES OR REJECTS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
- LAWS
- EXECUTES

*REISCHAUER, OP CIT., P. 197
controlling it, passed to the Diet and dutifully approved, then promulgated by the Emperor. It is apparent that Ito out-Prussiased Prussia.

Above the Diet -- appropriately called the "talk club" -- and quite independent of it is the Cabinet. Its members are not elected. They are named by the Emperor, upon advice of the men about the Throne. It has an absolute veto over measures passed in the Diet. It frames all bills. It can issue Imperial Ordinances which amount to laws. It can dissolve the House of Representatives if it does not like its behavior. The logical conclusion, then, would be that the Cabinet holds the real power. But such is not the case.

The real power is held by the Army -- fathered by the Choshu clan -- and the Navy -- fathered by the Satsumas. Ito's constitution fixed that. The Emperor was given supreme command of the Army and Navy, and the Chief of the General Staff was authorized to go directly to him for authority. He does not need to trouble himself with the Diet or Cabinet or Premier. He is a military man and goes to his military superior. The Chief of the General Staff becomes thereby the most powerful man in Japan. His power is, of course, controlled by the armed forces, but by them alone. With the Emperor in his pocket, he is able to dictate not merely military
matters, but political, social, economic, and foreign affairs. Through him the armed forces become in effect a political party, directing the entire life of Japan.

The Minister of War does not have overall control of the military. If he did and his actions were controlled by the vote of the Cabinet, certainly the military would be stymied. Unfortunately, democratically speaking, this is not true. The Minister of War, instead of being the master of the Chief of the General Staff, is more often his servant. He introduces in the Cabinet such measures as are passed to him by his chief with the rubber stamp of the Emperor. Further clinching autocratic power by the military, the Cabinet cannot refuse to obey its behests. If a minister resigns, that automatically dissolves the Cabinet. Therefore, when the Cabinet proves recalcitrant, the Army withdraws the Minister of War, and the Cabinet collapses. As a new Cabinet cannot be formed without a full complement of ministers, the military can refuse to provide a Minister of War if the rest of the proposed Cabinet is not to the liking of the General Staff.

Politically, Japan was ruled by a "divine" Emperor who must not become involved in political entanglements. Any dispute which necessitates the Mikado's intervention
results in what Japanese term "embarrassment," and this can only lead to the noble art of hara-kiri for all concerned. In recapitulation, the Premier is a figure-head. He is the head of the unreal and visible government; the Chief of Staff is the head of the real and invisible.
CHAPTER II

THE ELDER STATESMEN IN POWER, 1889-1918

Oligarchy has always been the characteristic form of government in Japan. From the earliest times the government has been by the few and for the few. It has never been responsive to the will of the people nor has it ever acted for their good, except as it might further the interests of the oligarchy. Composition of the latter was varied, but its aims have always been the same: to monopolize economic wealth and to maintain political control of the country.

Rule by oligarchy has also determined the form of political change in Japan. During every period of great political change -- the Taikwa Reform in the seventh century, collapse of the court aristocracy and emergence of the warrior class in the twelfth century, unification of the country under the rule of the Tokugawa family in the early seventeenth century, and the collapse of feudalism in the nineteenth century -- the struggle for political control has taken place at the apex of Japanese society. It has never taken the form
of a struggle of the ruled against the ruling, but of
one faction within the ruling oligarchy against another.
Revolution has never challenged oligarchic rule in Japan.

The oligarchy has always resisted changes, political,
social, or economic, so sweeping that the basic atti-
tudes on which its acceptance rested would be shaken.
It has always controlled political movements so that
while changes have been possible inside the framework
of oligarchic rule, wider participation in government
has not been. The great changes that came over Japan
in the last half of the nineteenth century illustrate
this well. On the surface Japan went through one of the
greatest revolutions that any nation has ever experienced.
Old social distinctions were swept away, new political
institutions were introduced, and a spectacular change
took place in the economy of the country. Yet in spite
of all this the oligarchic form of government was not
abandoned, but was even more firmly established by the
use of new techniques of education and propaganda, and
new instruments of government.

The oligarchy which dominated the political scene
for almost thirty years after the granting of the Im-
perial Constitution was the Elder Statesmen, the "Genro."
They were not recognized in the Constitution nor in the
laws of Japan. They were merely a little group of old men of high rank who became trusted advisers of the Emperor. The prerogatives of the Crown were great, and were exercised as the Elder Statesmen advised. Theoretically, the Cabinet represented the Throne; practically, the Elder Statesmen represented it. Ministers rose and fell, but the Genro were independent of the Cabinet and Diet alike and beyond the reach of either. They and their staunch henchmen alone held the Premiership from the establishment of that office in 1885 until 1918 with the single exception of Okuma who was, himself, one of the leaders of the Restoration and has been classified by some with the Genro. Ito (Choshu), Kuroda (Satsuma), Yamagata (Choshu), Matsukata (Satsuma), Ito, Matsukata, Ito, Okuma (a samurai from an important fief in northern Kyushu), Yamagata, Ito, Katsura (Choshu), Saionji (the old court aristocrat), Katsura, Yamamoto (Satsuma), Okuma, and Terauchi (Choshu), was the monotonous order in which the Premiership passed back and forth among the Elder Statesmen from Satsuma and Choshu and their loyal favorites from those provinces. Saionji, the only descendant of the Court Nobles (Kuge), owed his prominence primarily to his friendship with the great Ito.

The Elder Statesmen also controlled the Privy Council,
as its dominating presidents from its creation in 1889 to the death of Prince Yamagata in 1922, after a tenure of seventeen consecutive years in that office. Only twice was the presidency in other hands than those of the Genro, from 1890 to 1892 when Count Oki Takato held it, and again from 1895 to 1899 when Count Kuroda Kiyotaka served as president of the Privy Council.

Nor is this the complete picture of the power wielded by the Genro. The three most influential men in the history of the Japanese Imperial Army were Field-Marshals Yamagata, Oyama, and General Katsura, all of whom were Genro. By the time of Field-Marshal Prince Yamagata's death in 1922 practically every important officer in the Imperial Japanese Army was indebted at least indirectly to him for his promotions; when this Genro spoke the Army promptly obeyed. Prince Matsukata, to a lesser degree, could rely upon the Navy to be obedient to his will, since this Elder Statesman was from the Satsuma clan, which openly ruled the Imperial Japanese Navy for many years. Field-Marshal Oyama also was a Satsuma man, as were Admiral Yamamoto Gombei and Count Kuroda Kiyotaka, so that the Genro and their henchmen had the Navy safely under their control. Only twenty-nine men held the posts of Premier, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal,
Minister of the Imperial Household, Minister of War, Minister of the Navy, President of the Privy Council, and President of the House of Peers from 1885 to 1918. Of these, twenty-two came from the five groups that had brought about the Imperial Restoration. Of the seven "outsiders" Fleet Admiral Kato Tomosaburo was considered the right-hand man of Fleet-Admiral Togo Heihachiro, the great Satsuma samurai who became the chief naval hero of modern Japan; Lieutenant-General Oshima Ken'ichi had served long under Field-Marshall Prince Yamagata, and Hachisuka Mochiaki was the ex-daimyo of Tokushima in Awa, and had married into the Tokugawa family. Thus, the old guard of pre-constitutional days carried on throughout the next thirty years under the aegis of the Satsuma and Choshu Genro.

Political parties, however, fought back. Led by Itagaki and Okuma, they had been organized partly as a means of carrying on the struggle against control of the government by the Choshu and Satsuma clans, and partly because of a desire to make the political system at least semi-popular in character. For a long time parties were really personal followings of such men as Okuma and Itagaki, held together by the personality of the leader rather than by any common set of beliefs as to public
policies. Both the Jiyuto, led by Count Itagaki, and the Kaishinto, organized by Count Okuma, professed to stand for the same things -- establishment of a constitution and of a representative system of government, with the abolition of clan control -- and yet the two groups were unable to amalgamate until 1898, and then only temporarily, because they were factions organized around the personalities of two dominating individuals.

Establishment of the Diet afforded party leaders a convenient center from which they could work toward the restriction of clan domination by the introduction of the principle of party control exerted through the representative branch of the government. From the first they indicated their intention to oppose a government which they could not control, in the hope that by such opposition they could force the acceptance of the principle that the Cabinet must be so constructed as to be able to secure a working majority in the House. By means of this systematic opposition, the House was able to bring about the downfall of successive Ministries, but could not determine their successors. The government, for its part, in its endeavor to break down the resistance of the forces opposed to it, resorted to successive dissolutions of the House, and tried to control
elections through manipulation of election machinery. But no basis for compromise between the principles of party responsibility and non-responsible government could be found, since neither side was willing to give up its pretensions. Even Ito himself was unable to break down the opposition of the House, except by resort to the Imperial rescript.

Two governmental agencies created before promulgation of the Constitution, the Cabinet set up in 1885 and the Privy Council established in 1888, had been headed by Elder Statesman Ito since their foundation. In 1889, however, shortly after the new Constitution had come into effect, he resigned both offices, as he had then completed his work for the time. This action was part of an agreement made between Satsuma and Choshu leaders. He was succeeded as Premier by Kuroda Kiyo-taka, who is sometimes counted among the Genro. His Ministry was short-lived, falling after Foreign Minister Okuma had his leg blown off by a bomb thrown by a person who desired to express opposition to the government's foreign policy. Neither Ito nor Elder Statesman Inoue cared to assume the unpleasant duty of facing the antagonistic members of the House of Representatives that was to meet in 1890 for the first time. Finally, in December, 1889, Elder Statesman Yamagata, a blunt
soldier with a samurai's contempt for bourgeoisie and democratic institutions, was persuaded to serve as Premier.

Thus, the new system came into full operation in 1890 with convocation of the first Diet. Immediately the future line of division became apparent. Parties controlled the House of Representatives, while the Cabinet was controlled by clan leaders. It soon became evident that the Diet had been given sufficient power to enable it to obstruct but not to control, and no provision, save resort to the Imperial rescript, had been made for a composition of differences between the two branches of the government. The clan leaders either had to control the Diet or govern in spite of its obstruction. The only alternative was one that had never been contemplated, the recognition of Cabinet responsibility to the House of Representatives. The bureaucrats had one weapon which they were to use frequently in the struggle for control -- they could dissolve the House and then attempt to influence the electorate to return members favorable to the government. But uniformly during the first four years of government under the Constitution the Cabinet was confronted by a House removed from its effective control. During these four years three Ministries were formed, under Yamagata, Matsukata, and, finally,
Ito, the framer of the Constitution. And during the
same period the Diet was twice dissolved, in 1891 and
again in 1893. The struggle invariably centered around
the budget. Over it Ministries fell and Diets were dis-
solved.

According to one authority, political parties de-
liberately started a movement in 1890 to wreck the Con-
stitution and the institutions it created.\(^1\) Itagaki
revived the Jiyuto and Okuma re-established his con-
nection with the Kaishinto, the two entering into nego-
tiations the upshot of which was a temporary union of
the main opposition parties. These two men were acknowledged leaders of the opposition as they still felt bit-
ter toward the Satsuma-Ghoshu clique for monopolizing
key positions in the new regime. The government, being
afraid of too close cooperation between hostile parties,
had passed a law earlier in the year prohibiting amalga-
mation of parties until the original organizations con-
cerned had been completely dissolved. This naturally
made cooperation between the opposition groups difficult.
Nevertheless, the new combination contested the election
in July, 1890, and when the Diet opened in November it
appeared in a solid phalanx, numbering nearly half the

\(^1\) McLaren, op. cit., p. 208.
membership of the Lower House, to oppose the government. When the Lower House of the Diet settled down into working order, the opposition launched its assault against the government, which from the outset it had obviously resolved to make responsible to itself. The attack was directed against the budget, and during the first three sessions and part of the fourth the opposition efforts were concentrated upon that point. But the Cabinet, even without support of a party, was so strongly entrenched on the side of finance that it could not easily be dislodged. The opposition proposed a sweeping reduction amounting to some 10,000,000 yen from the estimates. The Ministers and their delegates protested that the motion was unconstitutional because it exceeded the powers of the Diet, but the opposition remained noisily defiant, and rather than create a complete deadlock at the very outset of the Diet's history a compromise was effected, the Ministers yielding two thirds and the opposition one third of their demands, and the estimates were cut by 6,500,000 yen. The session was a long one, marked by great violence of speech and continuous obstruction. The Lower House had forty-nine sittings, but accomplished little. On the whole the first session gave little comfort to the administration, while it immensely strengthened determination of party men to
persist in their tactics.

Yamagata resigned as Premier in May, 1891, as he was dissatisfied with the progress made in treaty revision and had no inclination for another fight with the Diet. He was succeeded by Elder Statesman Matsukata of the Satsuma clan. This passing of the Premiership back and forth among the Genro enraged the parties under Okuma and Itagaki, who demanded that Cabinets responsible to the Diet be formed. Since the government refused to countenance such a proposal, these two men proceeded systematically to make the Constitution of 1889 unworkable. Immediately on convening at the close of 1891 in its second session, the Lower House attacked the government on almost every point, fought the budget, and drowned all business in floods of oratory. Speeches two hours long were a common occurrence. Elder Statesman Inouye of the Cho-shu clique was accused by Okuma of amassing a fortune through serving the interests of the Mitsui family; Okuma, however, was doing the same by promoting the Mitsubishi interests of the Iwasaki family. Finally, the government's patience was exhausted, and it recommended that the Emperor should

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dissolve the Diet, which was accordingly done on Christmas Day, 1891, after it had rejected the naval estimates.

Members of the opposition regarded the dissolution as a triumph. With the government obstructed at every turn and compelled to fall back on the constitutional provision for reapplication of the budget of the previous year, the opposition could claim that, save for the safeguards inserted into the Constitution by the oligarchy, it was at their mercy. Okuma was interviewed by the press, and stated that in general the policy of the opposition was dictated by hostility toward a government composed of Sat-Chō oligarchs: monopoly of the administrative and executive offices by members of the two clans was intolerable and must be destroyed. But aside from their general policy of obstruction, the opposition was opposed to the financial and commercial policy of the government, and especially to the prevailing corruption and favoritism.

The election held in February, 1892, in contrast to the very orderly contest of 1890, was bitterly contested. Matsukata's government was determined to win at any cost, and it put up candidates in every district. Prefectural governors and chiefs of police were instructed by the Minister of Home Affairs to return these candidates.
The parties were furious. In the ensuing riots, which were actually pitched battles in Itagaki's native province of Tosa, twenty-five people were killed and 288 injured. Though every device known to the government was brought into action -- police power, repressive laws, bribery, intimidation, and violence -- only ninety-five candidates of the official party were elected. The oligarchy had definitely been beaten, but Matsukata refused to resign.

When the Diet met in May, 1892, a crisis soon developed over the budget, as in most previous instances. As the budget of the previous year had been brought into force, the dispute developed over the supplementary budget. Although only a small measure, the Lower House determined to exercise its assumed prerogatives, and struck out two of the items, appropriations for ship-building and study of earthquakes. In this abbreviated form the supplementary budget was sent to the Upper House, which reinserted the items and sent the bill back to the Representatives. Finally, the question of the relative powers of the two Houses in the matter of finance bills was referred to the Emperor, as a deadlock had resulted, neither House being willing to compromise. The answer was delivered after the Privy Council had
settled the point, the statement being that both Houses had equal powers in financial matters, except in the one instance that the Lower House received the budget from the government before the Upper. This pronouncement resulted in a conference of the two Houses, at which a compromise was agreed upon, one of the objectionable items being dropped, the other included. The result of this reference to the Sovereign was not only to obtain a solution of the immediate difficulty but to destroy also the claim of the Representatives to exclusive jurisdiction over finance.

Though defeated, or at least only half victorious in its campaign upon the supplementary estimates, the opposition found other grounds for an attack upon the Ministry in connection with official interference in the elections. A strongly worded address to the Throne on the subject was thrown out, after a violent debate, by only three votes in a House of 289. Failure of this effort to unseat the Cabinet was not due to any doubts in the minds of members as to the justness of their accusation, but to unwillingness to harass the Emperor unduly with purely political and partisan questions, for when a representation to the government upon the same subject was introduced it passed by a large majority.
The Ministry weathered the session, but it was so cordially hated that the Matsukata Cabinet resigned shortly thereafter. Itagaki and Okuma were well pleased, since now both Yamagata and Matsukata had been driven from office. They waited impatiently for Ito and Inouye to place themselves in a position to suffer the same fate. They had not long to wait.

In August, 1892, Ito assumed the post of Premier and the grave responsibility of making the system of government which he had imported from Prussia in 1885 and formulated in 1889 serve the purposes of the Japanese Empire. That Ito had confidence in his power to make the machine run smoothly was proved by his neglecting to take any section of the opposition into his confidence and thus gain its support. Parties and party politics were deliberately avoided. On the contrary, he took into the Cabinet his old associate Inouye as Minister of the Interior; Matsu he secured for the Foreign Office. His other colleagues were mainly the Satsuma and Choshu oligarchs, Watanabe, Oyama, Nirei, Yamagata, Kono, Goto, and Juroda. From the first, strenuous efforts were made to placate public sentiment. Inouye took up the question of undue interference in the elections of February, and after investigating charges against
the local governors, dismissed eleven of the worst offenders. But members of the Diet were not to be put off by any such measures, though the outside public might be; their objection to the new Cabinet was rooted in the clan system, which had not been changed with the transfer of leadership from Matsukata to Ito. Temper of the opposition was indicated by an ominous circumstance which occurred immediately after the opening of the session on November 25. In the absence of the Prime Minister, owing to illness, Inouye outlined before the Lower House the policy of the government in an address which was distinctly friendly in tone, but a bitter attack was made upon him by some of the most fluent speakers of the House, merely because the Minister had read, not spoken, his address. From this purely factious insolence the attack shifted back to the old subject of interference with the elections, and from that to the financial measures of the year.

While in this belligerent mood the Lower House carried an amendment to the estimates which reduced ordinary expenditures by some 8,000,000 yen, and elided completely an item in the extraordinary expenditures providing 3,333,000 yen as the first annual installment of a fund for the building of warships. The Ministers rejected
both amendments, and thereupon the House carried by a vote of 181 to 103 an address to the Throne, and on February 7, 1893, adjourned its sittings for eighteen days. In the address adopted by the Lower House the members claimed that the reason that the legislature and administration had been wanting in concord, all their projects had been impeded, and all their capabilities marred, was caused chiefly by the Cabinet's failure to discharge its functions. It took the government less than three days to frame an answer to this address, when the House was summoned to hear the Imperial rescript informing it that it had no power to change fixed expenditures as it was trying to do. But the most amazing part of its answer was that it imposed as a special levy an income tax of ten per cent upon all officials, civil and military, members of the Diet as well as of the bureaucracy, which sums were to be devoted to supplement the fund for building men-of-war. In this manner, Premier Ito not only won the budget he wanted, but compelled members of the opposition to contribute to the naval fund. The Diet was thoroughly defeated, and the session ended peacefully, after running its normal life of three months without any further untoward incident.

The Diet for the session of 1893-1894 met in a stormy
frame of mind. Ito was well aware of the attitude of his badly worsted opponents, and he had taken measures during the summer to strengthen his position. An extensive program for retrenchment of administrative expenses was carried out, over three thousand officials were dismissed, and by this and other means a huge saving to the treasury was effected. Thus he sought to dull the edge of the campaign against the extravagance of the government. But he went further, for by arrangement with Itageki and the Jiyuto he secured support of that party in the Lower House, while by the same action he offended the Peers: to the Upper House any Cabinet was tainted as soon as it came to an agreement with any political party. Okuma and his loyal Kaishinto supporters were out to revenge themselves for the defeat of the previous session, and the first week was occupied by an attack on one of the Jiyuto leaders, Hoshi Toru. He was finally removed as President of the Lower House after several days of confusion and uproar. Having driven Hoshi from the House, the opposition then turned upon the Cabinet. Goto, Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and his Vice-Minister Saito were accused of improper relations with certain members of the Stock Exchange, and an address to the Throne was carried upon the subject of
official discipline. Premier Ito felt compelled to resign, but the oligarchy struck back through a message from the Emperor which declared that appointment or removal of Ministers of State was absolutely at the will of the Sovereign, and that no interference would be allowed in this matter. Thus, Ito was ordered by himself and his fellow Elder Statesmen to resume the Premiership. Thereupon Okuma's party shifted the attack to a condemnation of his foreign policy. The Diet was then prorogued for ten days, then for fourteen, and finally dissolved for the second time on December 30, 1893.

In the election following in March one person was killed and some one hundred and fifty injured. The government made use of its strict Press Law and Law of Public Meetings to harass the opposition, and was at least able to reduce their majority when the special session of the Diet convened in May. The government was immediately impeached for having dissolved the Diet in the preceding December. An address to the Throne was carried. Then the oligarchy struck back. The Emperor refused to accept the message, so that the President of the House of Representatives had to leave it with the Minister of the Imperial Household. He was informed through this person that the Emperor would make no reply,
because he would not receive the address. Before the Diet could recover from this surprise, it was dissolved for the third time in six sessions.

Things had now reached an impasse. The Satsuma-Choshu oligarchs still refused to grant the Lower House any control over the Cabinet, but followers of Itagaki and Okuma were in turn bringing the wheels of government almost to a standstill by preventing the passage of any legislation. Obviously, something had to be done. Ito, at this juncture, decided to join the group that was clamoring for war with China. There was no doubt but that the people wanted a dynamic, spectacular foreign policy. It was also apparent that the existing stalemate had to be broken. So Ito reversed the decision he had made in 1873, when he had urged peace instead of war, and encouraged the outbreak of hostilities between Japan and China.

The declaration of war in 1894 checked all partisan political activities in Japan. A forward foreign policy had been at last adopted, and Kaishinto agitation on that score ceased. No grounds of opposition remained except "responsible Cabinets" and purely domestic questions of administrative and financial reform, and during the time of war such matters attracted little or no attention.
The general election held in July was as quiet as that held four years previously, and in the brief session of the Diet convoked in October, 1894, at Hiroshima, the war capital, each section of the Lower House vied with the others in enthusiastic loyalty to the Emperor and the government. Huge special and emergency budgets were passed without a murmur of disapproval. Later, to show its patriotism, it passed a unanimous resolution to vote any sum of money the government needed for carrying on the war. Another interesting development was that Ito found that internal peace was at the cost of his own influence in the government, for he was a civilian, and with the advent of war his fellow clansman and Elder Statesman, Yamagata, the great soldier, began to overshadow him in the councils of the oligarchy.

Politically, the war resulted not only in complete cessation of constitutional development, if the unseemly squabbling of the first four years of the parliamentary regime may be dignified by such an epithet, but it also gave the oligarchy the opportunity of acquiring new sources of power over the popular parties. Measures adopted by the clan statesmen were of the most disingenuous character. Against the oligarchs, who had entrenched themselves firmly behind the Constitution, no action of a strictly legal nature could be taken by the
opposition with any reasonable prospect of successfully accomplishing the downfall of the Sat-Cho combination. Revolution was likewise out of the question, for the nature of the monarchy precluded any such eventuality. But mere obstruction by the opposition had served to destroy one Ministry after another, and Okuma was not likely to have overlooked the significance of events of the Diet's history. If the government was strong enough to stay in, it was at the same time powerless to carry out its own plans without the consent of the Representatives. Safety of the oligarchy lay in preserving its hold on the administrative offices, and yet that very monopoly of power was dangerous as well as futile.

The oligarchy acted quickly to secure issuance of an ordinance by the Privy Council which has enabled the military to control the Japanese government ever since. Only high officers in the active list of the Army and Navy could hold the positions of Ministers of War and Navy. No Cabinet could therefore be completed unless Satsuma and Choshu military men were willing to support it. Their support was usually conditioned on willingness of the Ministry to make adequate provisions in its budget proposals for expansion of the two forces, and thus on its acquiescence in a policy of expansion on the
continent. With this regulation in force, the Sat-Cho combination could well afford to allow party politicians to hold Cabinet offices, and, in fact, create what appeared to be a party Cabinet, and yet control the policy of the latter through the two non-party members, the Ministers of the Army and Navy.

When the Diet met again in December following the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki with China, the struggle against the oligarchy was immediately renewed. Ito was bitterly attacked by Okuma's Kaishinto. He made a deal with Itagaki's Jiyuto and other groups, however, and thus controlled a majority, so that his Cabinet was able to survive the session. Nevertheless, survival was not easy. The diplomatic situation at the close of the war with China made the position of the Prime Minister unpopular and difficult. Though the indemnity considerably exceeded the actual cost of the war, the resulting imperialistic policy of greater armaments necessitated a serious increase in the burden of taxation. Owing to the war and to receipt of the indemnity money there was a sudden and distressing rise in prices which produced a momentary but unhealthy prosperity followed by sharp financial reverses. These circumstances increased the difficulties confronting the government. The question of
ministerial responsibility remained in abeyance. The immediate issue was over imperialism and militarism. Early in 1896 Okuma founded a new party called the "Shimpoto" which was made up of old Kaishinto members and some fifty others. When Ito saw that he would have a majority of the Diet against him, he resigned. His power was now definitely on the wane and Okuma's star was ascending.

When the Ito Administration resigned in August, 1896, Okuma was undoubtedly the greatest figure in Japanese politics, and the people demanded that he should be placed in charge of the foreign affairs of the Empire. But Okuma stood outside of the official coterie; he was the acknowledged head of the Shimpoto, strongest of the opposition parties, and he was committed to the cause of responsible government. His admission to the Cabinet was therefore a matter not easily arranged, especially as bankers and manufacturers desired the return of Matsukata to the Finance Ministry.

Negotiations occupied more than a fortnight. On one side, Matsukata had a rooted objection to all political parties. He had never truckled to any of them, and he resigned in 1891 rather than violate the strict principles of the Constitution with regard to the "independence"
of the Cabinet. On the other, Okuma could not afford to enter a clan Cabinet unless he could make terms acceptable to his party. A compromise was reached whereby Okuma agreed to enter Matsukata's Cabinet and guaranteed the support of the party for the administration, upon the understanding that the Ministers should be collectively responsible to the Lower House, and that a thorough-going reformation of the administrative and financial systems should be undertaken. The compromise was regarded as a triumph for the popular party, and the Ministry was acclaimed as the realization of "constitutional government."

On September 18, 1896, the Cabinet was sworn in, the Finance Office as well as that of Minister President being occupied by Matsukata, the Foreign Office by Okuma, and other Cabinet posts were distributed among the second rank of the Sat-Cho oligarchs. In this company Okuma soon began to find himself isolated; the fine promises he received at the outset were not fulfilled, and he resigned in November, 1897, after little more than a year in office.

By Okuma's defection and the withdrawing of the Shimpoto's support in the Diet the government was forced to resign. Other causes contributed to the fall of the
Cabinet. During the session of 1896-1897 it had steadily grown more unpopular, and become the object of constant attack both in and out of the Diet. The session opened on December 25, 1897, and the speech from the Throne emphasized the necessity of improving the national defences. After the New Year recess, an address to the Throne impeaching the Cabinet was introduced by the Jiyuto, now the main party in the opposition, but it was thrown out by a large majority. A larger budget was approved. All these measures were carried through with the support of the Shimpoto. The old familiar charges of bribery were made. Not only was corruption of the members of the Diet by the distribution of money charged against the administration, but it was accused also of having introduced the spoils system into Japan. The resulting appointments threatened the existence of the bureaucracy, and not only earned for the government the hostility of the official classes, but provided the opposition press with a new weapon of attack. To embarrass Matsukata further, the leaders of the Shimpoto appointed a committee to approach the Prime Minister and present a program of reforms. At first he refused to receive the delegation, but afterwards admitted it, having exacted from its spokesman a promise of secrecy. In
violation of that promise, the very next day the press contained an account of the interview and the main items of the Shimpoto's program. The result was Matsukata's rejection of all the suggestions and the consequent loss of the Shimpoto's adherence, shortly followed by Okuma's resignation.

Baron Nishi was appointed to the vacancy thus created in the Foreign Office, and the government proceeded to secure the support of the Diet by a wholesale distribution of money among the independents as well as the members of the Jiyuto. But efforts of the Cabinet in this direction failed, for at a general meeting of that party held on December 15 it was decided to oppose the government. The session opened six days later, and on the 25th a vote of "no confidence" was passed by the Diet for causing dissatisfaction at home, loss of prestige abroad, and confusion in the national finance. The Diet was dissolved after sitting but two days more, and before any administrative business was transacted. The Cabinet resigned on the same day -- December 27, 1897.

Upon the fall of the second Matsukata Ministry, Ito was again thrust forward into the breach, and on January 12, 1898, formed his third Cabinet. It included Inouye, in the Department of Finance, and three of Ito's personal following -- Saionji, Ito Miyoji, and Suyematsu --
while the other members, except for Kataura, were the usual second-generation scions of the two clans. Kataura's elevation to the War Office marked the first appearance in the Cabinet of the man who was destined to become the champion of the military party during the remainder of the Meiji era. The government acknowledged no affiliations with any of the parties and disclaimed any hostility toward them. Its attitude was proclaimed as one of "benevolent neutrality," a phrase which was to become historic. Neither did the parties show a cordial feeling toward the oligarchy. In the ensuing election Itagaki's Jiyuto won ninety-nine seats, and Okuma's Shimpoto won 105 out of a total of 300. Both were still bitter against the Satsuma-Choshu clique and defeated the government's Land Tax Bill. The Ministry also failed to pass other measures. In consequence of these defeats it resigned in June, 1898, but not before it had dissolved the House.

From the year 1885, when the first Ito Ministry was formed -- that is, before the Diet had been convoked -- until the year 1901, when the fourth and last Ito Cabinet held office, the Ministries, with one exception, considered that they were responsible to the Sovereign alone. During this period of sixteen years, when a Ministry was
not an Ito Ministry it was an immediate creation either of this notable statesman or of his rival, Marquis Yamagata, who himself personally formed two Cabinets. The exception occurred after the fall of the third Ito Ministry, when the Marquis, determined to try more radical measures to stop the constant changes of Cabinets which had been taking place, made a new move. In tendering his resignation to the Emperor, he recommended that the opposition in the Diet should be requested to form a Cabinet. This was a striking departure from the usual routine. The result was the creation of a Coalition Cabinet led by Count Okuma, the leader of the Progressives, and Count Itagaki, the leader of the Liberals.

Immediately after the dissolution of the House on June 10, 1898, Okuma and Itagaki began to concert measures for a combination of the Shimpoto and the Jiyuto. On June 16 a preliminary meeting was held, and six days later a new party, the Kenseito -- Constitutionalists -- was organized. It was this party and these men who were to lead the next Cabinet.

It was not an easy matter, however, for Ito to convince the oligarchy, especially Yamagata, that the opposition be allowed to form the Cabinet. One authority maintains it was Ito's conviction that the Cabinet must
ally itself definitely with the newly formed Kenseito Party and give up the fiction of independent action,\(^3\) while another believed the prime motive of the Constitution-maker was to retard the slipping of his power into the hands of militarists led by Yamagata.\(^4\)

The precipitancy with which one event followed another left the leaders of the Kenseito dumbfounded, and Okuma and Itagaki were disposed at first to plead incapacity, since their party had been in existence only five days and their plans were far from matured, but upon Ito's representations they finally agreed to serve. Their favorable decision was regarded as marking the end of clan government, and great popular rejoicing ensued.

By June 30 the first so-called party administration was organized. Okuma became Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs; Itagaki, Home Minister; the other non-military posts were so distributed as to provide for three members of the Shimpoto section. Katsura and Saigo, the Ministers of the Army and Navy in the former Cabinet, were reappointed to their respective posts.

It is hardly necessary to look for any hidden causes for the fall of the Kenseito Cabinet: the plain fact

\(^3\)McLaren, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

\(^4\)Reischauer, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
seems obvious enough -- that the Kenseito as a party lacked homogeneity and coordination. Its leading men were not in sympathy with one another, and the characteristics of the two groups of which it was composed were radically different. The past history of the two factions had been such that it was impossible for them to forget their differences. But the most serious cause of difference among the members of the party was the "balance of power" theory. According to that theory, Cabinet offices were to be equally divided between the two factions, and similarly the patronage, but in the original distribution the Okuma faction had obtained five offices and the Itagaki section only three. This dispute reached a climax toward the end of October, 1898, when Ozaki Yukio, the Minister of Education, resigned as the result of pressure from the Court and the clan press. The Itagaki section demanded that the office should be filled by one of their number, but Okuma as Minister President nominated one of his own faction to the vacant post, and received the Emperor's sanction to the appointment. Itagaki and his followers withdrew from the Cabinet, the Kenseito broke up, and two days later, on October 31, 1898, Okuma and his three followers handed in their resignations. Katsura and Saigo of the oligarchy did likewise.
Thus ended the experiment from which so much had been expected, the attempted substitute for clan government. This so-called party government lasted only four months and left the clan leaders more securely entrenched in power than before.

In the meantime, Ito, having seen his project -- a party Cabinet under Okuma and Itagaki -- launched, proceeded to China to study the situation there, and to strive to effect a peaceful settlement of the questions in Chino-Russo-Japanese relations in Manchuria and Korea. Before his return domestic politics had passed through a crisis, and the party Cabinet had been replaced by the military section of the oligarchy, with Yamagata as Minister President. This incident marked the final rupture between Ito and Yamagata; from that time onward Ito fought against the rising power of militarism. Ito, like Yamagata, being one of the Elder Statesmen, supported the Imperial prerogative in the question of responsibility and appointment of Ministers, and also like him was a believer in oligarchical rather than popular government. The essential difference between the two men was that Yamagata was a militarist while Ito had become the advocate of a program for the material and intellectual advancement of the nation.
The Cabinet of Ito's rival, formed in November, 1898, contained no representatives of either the political parties or the Ito faction in the oligarchy, and, thus, represented the triumph of the partisans of militarism and clan politics. Even though Yamagata disdained all parties, he found it necessary to gain party support in the Diet to secure an enlarged military budget and increased taxes. His measures were purchased at the expense of an important reform enacted in 1900 which increased the membership of the Lower House to 381, provided for a more equitable distribution of representation, reduced the property qualification for the franchise, abolished the requirement for signing ballots, and made election districts co-terminous with the prefectures. Nevertheless, his hostility to parties led him to discredit the very factions upon which he had relied and then to resign office.

The Kenseito, now controlled by Hoshi Toru, allied itself with the Yamagata Cabinet, while the Kensei-honto was in opposition. During the session of 1899-1900, which convened on November 19, it attempted to impeach the Cabinet on the ground of corruption during the previous year, but its address to the Throne was defeated, as was also a private bill introduced by Ozaki for the trial by
the ordinary law courts of members of the Diet charged
with corruption. The failure of the opposition in the
House made its criticism of the government and the Ken-
seito all the more violent. Its press published daily
the most scurrilous attacks upon Hoshi and his party.
So sweeping were the condemnations of the morals of the
party politicians hurled back and forth in the newspapers
during the session and after its close, that the public
grew apprehensive, and many writers declared themselves
convinced that parliamentary government had failed in
Japan. As convincing proof they pointed out that the
last Diet had met infrequently, the debates on the budget
had been listless, and no attempts had been made by any
section of the Houses to curb the ever-increasing public
expenditures.

Seizing what seemed to be a favorable opportunity,
Ito turned to avenge himself on the military faction,
particularly Yamagata. During the last spring of 1900
he toured the provinces, speaking everywhere in favor of
party government, and his campaign aroused the interest
of the leaders of the Kenseito, who were on the point of
breaking with Yamagata. When the prospect of securing
Ito's allegiance seemed assured, Hoshi approached the
Prime Minister with the demand that several of the members
of the Cabinet should join the Kenseito, and that the Ministry be reconstructed so as to admit to office some of the members of the party. To the first of these proposals, Yamagata replied that the matter of joining the party must rest with individual Ministers; to the second, that it was impossible, because the Constitution provided that appointments to ministerial posts were the Emperor's prerogative. This decision served as an excuse for the party to withdraw from its alliance with the government.

Clearly Ito alone was strong enough to hope to oppose the entrenchment of the Yamagata faction in permanent control, and he could do so only if he could find sources of strength outside of the oligarchy. The next step toward the downfall of the Ministry was then taken. A committee of the Kenseito waited upon Ito and requested that he should become their leader. Harking back to the burden of his recent political speeches in the provinces, he pointed out that he could only accept their invitation on his own terms, which he intimated were hard. He must be the real leader and every member of the party must obey his orders. No objection was raised to these terms, and finally, on July 8, Ito assumed the presidency of the proposed party. Two months
later the preliminary organization of the Seiyukai Party was completed, and it became the strongest single force in the Diet. With the recent reorganization of the Kensei-honto under Okuma, plus the powerful Seiyukai under Ito, the position of the Yamagata Cabinet became untenable. There was no prospect of surviving another session of the Diet, nor was there any great need for the military party to cling to office, since during the past two sessions necessary financial legislation had been obtained. Yamagata resigned on September 26, 1900, having been in office nearly two years.

There was great difficulty in finding a successor to Yamagata, though Ito was the only feasible candidate. No one realized that fact more clearly than Ito himself, and he intended to assume the office from the beginning, but he hoped by hesitating to exact such terms from both the oligarchy and his party as would make his tenure of office secure. He provided against interference from the former by securing a promise to that effect from Yamagata, and against insubordination of his followers in the Seiyukai by keeping them on tenterhooks for a month. The Seiyukai resembled in some measure the original Kenseito, including in its membership a variety of hostile elements.
To placate these factions was Ito's main consideration in distributing offices in the Cabinet which was finally gazetted on October 19, 1900. All but three of the offices, the two military posts and the Department of Foreign Affairs, were given to members of the Seiyukai. Outside of the ministerial posts, Saionji was made President of the Privy Council and Kataoka the President of the Lower House. The minor offices in the administration, as far as they were political, were distributed among party men of secondary importance.

At the next session of the Diet the government introduced a bill calling for new taxes to supply money which the armed forces needed in preparing for war against Russia. Many of the Seiyukai members were opposed, but when Ito threatened to resign, the bill was passed and sent to the House of Peers. There it was soundly defeated as the Peers were angry at Ito for having accepted the presidency of a political party, and the Seiyukai members had been talking openly about reforming the Upper House. Then suddenly came an Imperial message to the Peers ordering them to accept the bill. They complied, but were so angry at Ito for his use of the Emperor against them that they passed all the other legislation submitted to them during the remainder of the session without discussion or even reading. The
Imperial message bore the countersignature of no Minister of State. Yamagata might have caused it to be sent to embarrass Ito, and because Yamagata wanted the money for the Army and Navy. Ito vowed he had nothing to do with it, but accepted responsibility and stood condemned before the country for having resorted to an Imperial message to overcome the Peers' opposition to his program of taxation. So great was his chagrin over the Emperor's action that he resigned and begged to be stripped of all his titles and allowed to retire into private life as plain Ito Hirobumi. The Emperor refused to sanction either of his petitions, and ordered him to continue in office.

Nor was this the only cause of dissension with which Ito had to contend. The presence of Hoshi in the Cabinet aroused the Kensei-honto's opposition. He was called the fountain-head of corruption in national and local politics. Viscount Watanabe, the Finance Minister, was very unpopular with the members of the Seiyukai. Early in April the Finance Minister, with Ito's sanction, announced the postponement of certain undertakings provided for in the budget because of the impossibility of obtaining the necessary funds by domestic loans. This action was criticized severely by his opponents in the Cabinet, and on April 20 the five party members of the administration

5McLaren, op. cit., p. 275.
presented an ultimatum to the Minister President, requiring him either to dismiss Watanabe or accept their resignations. And the Ito Cabinet resigned in May, 1901. Thus ended Ito's career as a parliamentarian. His attempt to stem the rising tide of militarism by a return to the former policy of civil progress under the aegis of a great political party had ended in a failure even more complete than had his previous effort in 1898.

Two men, Katsura and Saionji, alternated in the Premiership from 1901 until 1913. The Japanese preferred men over principles, but probably the most important cause for this alternation of the office was the difficulty of finding a solution for the financial problem. The principal obstacle to balancing the budget was the demand of the Army, and particularly of the Navy, for increased appropriations. An elaborate program of naval expansion, to be spread over a period of years, was proposed immediately after the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905. Financial difficulties forced extension of the period, but the program remained, together with Prince Yama-
gata's insistence on its ultimate realization.

It was not until June, 1901, that a new administration was formed, with Katsura as Minister President. The month which elapsed between the fall of Ito and the
rise of Katsura was spent in a series of maneuvers emi-
nently characteristic of the Japanese system. Yamagata
was asked to form a Cabinet, but refused, as he knew Ito
and the Seiyukai would welcome the opportunity to attack
him. Ito's friend, Inouye of the Choshu clan, the other
important civilian Elder Statesman, was then offered the
Premiership, but he was unable to form a government.
Then the militarist, Katsura, was asked, but declined.
Ito was next offered the post but had to turn it down,
then Katsura again who finally accepted it. This hawk-
ing of the highest political office from door to door
had an object. The military party desired to completely
humiliate not only Ito but also the politicians of all
parties.

With Katsura were associated a number of the younger
members of the oligarchy. It was a second-generation
Cabinet throughout, including no member of the original
group of Meiji statesmen, though Yamagata, Oyama, and
Saigo stood by to assist if necessary. The Minister
President immediately announced his attitude toward the
parties, for though the politicians could not form an ad-
ministration, they could obstruct. Katsura declared that
he would remain neutral, neither dependent on the parties
nor independent of them. Nevertheless, the Diet which
Count Katsura faced in December, 1902, was predominantly Seiyukai members, and it promptly defeated the Premier's budget proposals for a new land tax and a program of military development. Katsura at once dissolved the new Diet, and, in accordance with the Constitution, extended the previous budget for another year. This action was deliberately punitive, as it required members only elected the previous summer to stand the expense of a second election within a year. The prevalent corruption involved such heavy expenditure by the candidates that it was estimated that at least four years' salary was necessary to recoup them.

The new election in 1903 resulted in no substantial change in the membership of the Diet, and this time the budget was approved, because Ito, realizing that war with Russia was imminent, dragooned his followers to its support. This action ended Ito's career in politics. The leadership of the Seiyukai passed to Marquis Saionji, a liberal and firm believer in party government, and Yamagata had Ito elevated to the Presidency of the Privy Council in order to make sure that his break with the Seiyukai would be permanent.

The last political maneuver before the outbreak of war with Russia was the dramatic personal act of Kono, the President of the Lower House, at the opening of the
new session in December, 1903, when instead of the customary formal address to the Emperor, he drew his own speech out of his pocket and read it off rapidly. The members were not listening and let it pass. It proved to be an impeachment of the Cabinet, brought on by what he called the Cabinet's weak foreign policy. This extraordinary action resulted in the immediate dissolution of the House.

Two months later war broke out with Russia, and all domestic quarrels were forgotten. The general election held on March 1, 1904, was marked by unusual orderliness and absence of partisan disturbances. The Diet approved several emergency war measures, voted a large war budget, and passed resolutions expressing satisfaction with the military and naval operations. The Diet members continued to vie with each other in proclaiming their loyalty to the government, until the signing of the highly unpopular Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905, when the administration was bitterly attacked once more. Newspapers even advocated assassinating some of the oligarchs. There were riots, and martial law had to be proclaimed. Because Katsura did not want to face so hostile a Diet, he resigned in favor of Saionji, president of the Seiyuki. Ito went to Korea as Resident-
General, determined to prevent its annexation, which was what Yamagata wanted.

On January 6, 1906, the first of the Saionji Cabinets was formed, with the Ministry posts widely distributed among the members of the Seiyukai, the oligarchy, and the independents. The formation of this Cabinet was hailed as a victory of the Seiyukai and of the principle of party government -- an unwarranted opinion, according to one authority, as it was distinctly understood at the time that Marquis Saionji had been invited as an individual statesman, not as a party leader, and that he would carry out the policies of his predecessors.\(^6\) He expected to get the support of the Seiyukai and the Deido Club, an informal organization of pro-government representatives led by Count Katsura. The influence of the Yamagata element was indicated by the admission of three associates of Count Katsura to the Ministry, while General Terauchi continued as Minister of War. This Cabinet, while it made certain concessions to the composition of parties in the Lower House, was still primarily based upon the non-partisan principle of government. It differed from the

Katsura Cabinet in being more representative, but it was not responsible to the larger party in the Diet nor identified with it in leadership and principles. The opposition was, after 1906, made up of the Progressive Party and independent members. The Saionji Ministry had reconciled the principal party in the House, as well as the conservatives and Peers, who looked to Marquis Yamagata for leadership. But soon difficulties developed. The conservatives looked with suspicion upon the party connections of Ministers, and they were evidently resolved to avoid any action which might countenance the principle of party power.

After the election in May, 1908, the Seiyukai became the first party in the history of the Japanese Diet to hold an absolute majority in the House. Several factors brought about the fall of the Saionji Ministry shortly thereafter. The plea of ill-health upon which he retired was a subterfuge. Toward the end of 1907 the Elder Statesmen had determined to get rid of the Ministry on the ground that its "post-bellum" financial program had not satisfied the nation. The government had not been able to raise funds to defray its immense expenditures without recourse to increased taxation, or additions to the national debt in the form of loans.
The attack upon the Ministry was begun by Inouye, who determined to remove Sakatani from the Finance Department, ostensibly because of his incompetence, but really to satisfy a private grudge. Although it was their policy of expansion of armaments that had been the main cause of the government's financial embarrassment, the military members of the Genro threw themselves into the project, knowing that if Saionji stepped down he would certainly be succeeded by Katsura. In addition, the House of Peers opposed strongly the principle of party government which Saionji upheld. The extremely difficult problems of finance and administration, made even more difficult by the recent close of the Russo-Japanese War, still plagued the Ministry. It was Yamagata and Katsura, however, who finished wrecking the administration which Inouye had begun. They suggested to the Emperor that he intimate to his Ministers that they no longer enjoyed his confidence. This was all that was necessary, and Saionji resigned in July, 1908.

A new Ministry was formed immediately by Katsura, his second since 1901. Most of the members were from the Yamagata faction; three were Katsura's personal following. Komura was recalled from his post as Ambassador
in London to take up the duties of the Foreign Office. Katsura filled the double role of Minister President and Finance Minister. Terauchi and Saito were reappointed to the military offices, and Okabe became Minister of Justice. Katsura's henchmen, Hirata, Oura, and Goto Shimpei, were installed in the Departments of Home Affairs, Agriculture and Commerce, and Communications, respectively.

As the problem of public finance, especially the "post-bellum" program, had been the chief source of the outgoing Cabinet's unpopularity, Katsura turned his attention to this field, and early in September, 1908, announced his policy. Expenditures and revenue were to be balanced without resort to new taxes, new loans, or the inclusion in the budget of the anticipated increase of the revenues of the year.

At the close of December the annual session of the Diet began, and after the recess the Seiyukai, at the request of Saionji, agreed to support the Katsura government. The session under these circumstances was unmarked by any incidents. But outside the House a sensation was created by the "sugar scandal." More than a score of members and ex-members of the Lower House were arrested, tried, and convicted for having received bribes
from the Japan Sugar Refining Company. This industrial corporation, with a capital of 12,000,000 yen, was organized in July, 1906, during the boom which followed the war, and after a few years of apparent prosperity was declared bankrupt at the beginning of 1909. It had been so successfully looted by its directors that little remained of its immense assets. In examining its affairs the police discovered that more than a million yen had been spent in bribing members of the Diet during the years 1907 and 1908 with the object of securing legislation to create a government monopoly of the sugar refining industry, in which event the directors anticipated selling their plant to the State for twice its physical value and with the proceeds cover up their own defalcations and malfeasance of the company’s funds. The failure to secure the necessary legislation was mainly due to their lack of judgment in having approached mere members of the Lower House instead of Cabinet Ministers. The result was bankruptcy, followed by investigation, and the arrest and punishment of both the bribers and the bribed, and for the time being the prestige of the House of Representatives was seriously affected.

Before the next session of the Diet, the expansionists were able to lay groundwork for the annexation of
Korea, but at the expense of the man who made it possible for them to assume later the complete control of governmental reins. Katsura, being a militarist, and working together with Yamagata, removed Ito from his position as Resident-General of Korea. He still had enough influence, however, to block its annexation. The Constitution-maker in going on a tour of Korea and Manchuria was assassinated by a Korean, supposedly, at Harbin on October 24, 1909. The popular indignation at Ito's murder made the work of the expansionists easy, and the statesman's death became the very instrument of that which he had striven so long to obstruct. This was a truly miserable end for a man who had probably wielded more influence in Japanese political history than any other person of his generation. After his death Yamagata's control of the oligarchy was unquestioned. He was the real ruler of Japan until 1922 when he died.

During the next two sessions of the Diet the Seiyukai continued to support the Katsura Government. The questions which engaged attention of the members were chiefly such as related to readjustment of national finances. The government during the session of 1909-1910 continued to adhere to the "negative" policy initiated during the previous year. When differences existed
between the government and the Seiyukai, Hara and Mat-
suda representing the Seiyukai, and Katsura and Terauchi,
the Cabinet, got together and ironed them out. However,
any bill on the question of constitutional reform showed
how diametrically opposed were the views of the Repre-
sentatives and the Peers. The former strived to advance
toward democracy, the latter sought the predominance of
the aristocracy.

In August, 1911, the second Katsura government re-
signed, having been in office for over three years. Many
important national undertakings had been carried through
successfully. But in the field of domestic politics,
especially in public finance and administrative reform,
the government had made no progress. The fall of the
government at this time was, at any rate, voluntary.
None of the Japanese Cabinets had set a precedent for
long terms in office, and Katsura was wise enough to
withdraw after three years of sustained effort, in
which time he and his colleagues had reaped a large
monetary harvest and had bestowed upon themselves high
titles and dignities. The retiring Prime Minister ac-
knowledged that the people appeared to have tired of his
administration, and as he knew that it would be an easy
matter to reoccupy his post at any time, he graciously
withdrew, recommending Saionji as his successor in the highest office of State.

During the second Katsura regime political parties had made no progress. The great party, the Seiyukai, had turned, obedient to its leader and with due recognition of the political situation, to support the government. In each of the sessions of the Diet there had been a definite arrangement between the Cabinet and the party with regard to such projects of legislation as the government should introduce; by this process the Seiyukai sought to satisfy its supporters in the country, for it could point to various bills which it had forced the government to withdraw or postpone, the most important of all being the reduction in the land tax which it had wrung from the administration in 1910.

What the Seiyukai had done during the years between 1908 and 1911 was only what might have been expected, for it was inevitable that the rank and file should consult their own interests during the first year after the election of 1908, in order to recoup as rapidly as possible the immense sums spent to procure their seats. As a new general election approached, the country had to be convinced of the party's usefulness, so increasingly harder bargains were driven with the Cabinet during the
sessions of 1910 and 1911. In addition to personal bribes, the Seiyukai demanded as part of the annual payment for their support the passage of an occasional measure of public interest, or the withdrawal of certain government projects which involved or threatened increased taxes. The party gave the Cabinet the least trouble in 1909, for in that year the members were under the immediate necessity of reimbursing their election expenses. In 1910, the financial pressure on the members of the party having been largely removed, they had an opportunity to do something towards consulting the public's interest or to criticize outspokenly the program of the government. By 1911 the inevitable tendency of Japanese political parties towards obstruction had developed to such an extent that Katsura did not think it worth-while to continue any longer in office.

The new Saionji Cabinet came into office in August, 1911, with only three of its members appointed from the Seiyukai. The Premier filled the Cabinet posts mainly from the ranks of the oligarchy, but far the most interesting appointment to office was that of Yamamoto Tatsuo, president of the Hypothec Bank, who entered the storm center of the Finance Department. Throughout the Ministry's short life Yamamoto remained the center of
criticism and abuse, for it is safe to say that Katsura's failure to effect any real improvement in the financial situation had been the ultimate cause of his government's unpopularity.

The Finance Minister began by alarming the nation, and the foreign bondholders also, for he warned the Diet that the national finances were in a precarious condition, and that retrenchment and readjustment were the only means of avoiding bankruptcy. This was a tactical political blunder; it shocked the nation and alarmed the foreign investors. The Japanese soon recovered their equanimity, but it took a pointed intimation that the government did not intend to default to reassure foreign bondholders.

The budget, as usual, proved the most contentious part of the government's annual program. The Treasury failed to include in its estimates an appropriation for the construction of battleships, amounting to 90,000,000 yen, spread over six years, and rejected the item to defray expenses of an additional two Army divisions for Korea. This completely alienated the sympathy of the military party and proved the undoing of the Cabinet. But during the session of 1911-1912 the Seiyukai, by its adoption of the budget as it was introduced into the
Lower House, saved the government for the time being and enhanced the party's reputation in the country. The Shimpoto, which had changed its name in 1911 to the Kokuminto, condemned the financial provisions as negative, and the Cabinet's foreign policy as weak and vacillating, especially with regard to China. Nevertheless, the session passed off quietly, the parties being more interested in the approaching elections than in the government's legislative program.

The result of the election in May, 1912, was the return of the Seiyukai with a slight increase of strength, and a considerable margin over all other parties combined. The Kokuminto held its own. Immediately the government made plans for retrenchment in administrative expenses, and practically no other political subjects were discussed in the press during the month of June. But in July of this year came the Emperor Mutsuhito's death, most unexpectedly, for he died after an illness of only about a week, and for the time being interest in politics was eclipsed by the nation's universal mourning. Many of his old statesmen considered this the symbolic death of their whole generation. Nogi, the hero of Port Arthur, committed suicide together with his wife; it seemed useless, if not even wrong, to outlive
their Sovereign. This untoward event and arrangements for the elaborate funeral which ensued absorbed the government's attention for nearly two months. The Emperor was succeeded by his only son, Yoshihito.

The passing of Emperor Mutsuhito, posthumously known as Meiji Tenno, and accession of his only son, Yoshihito, was the signal for a political upheaval such as had not been seen in Japan since 1873. Katsura, who had conferred upon himself the rank of Prince in 1911, had evidently incurred the jealous hatred of his quondam patron Yamagata. Both were Choshu men, but Katsura's power and wealth had increased to such an extent that Yamagata feared for his security as head of the Army, and he determined to remove his former henchman. Katsura became Court Chamberlain and Keeper of the Privy Seal. What this extraordinary appointment meant, who was responsible for it, and what Katsura thought of it, became the subject of so much speculation that to silence the press he finally made public his determination to quit politics forever and devote the remainder of his life to the personal service of the young Emperor. Having thus disposed of Katsura, Yamagata turned on the Ministry.
Saionji's resignation was caused by the military party directly and openly, and although he had the backing of the Selyukai and the sympathy of the general public, his administration was unceremoniously brushed aside because it stood in the way of the Yamagata faction. At no previous time in Japanese political history had the strength of the military clique stood out more conspicuously than in this crisis. The Army had been insisting for some time on the creation of two new divisions for Korean service, and when, in December, 1912, it became evident that Saionji, backed by the civilians in his Cabinet, intended to persist in his opposition, War Minister General Uyehara resigned. Refusing to accept the principle that resignation of one member should mean destruction of his Cabinet, Saionji sought anxiously for another War Minister, but Yamagata's plan to keep military control of the nation worked well. Only a General or a Lieutenant-General in active service might hold the portfolio, and the Army, under Yamagata's control, refused to appoint any of its members. There was no other courses, therefore, but for the whole Cabinet to resign, which it did on December 5, 1912.
After Saionji's resignation the task of choosing a successor was taken in hand by the Genro, and for three weeks the process dragged on. As on previous occasions when strife was acute within the inner circle, the office was offered in succession to Inouye, Matsukata, Yamagata, and Terauchi. A faction in the Genro favored putting Saionji back again, but from the beginning Katsura was the most promising candidate. In the meantime the press was busy denouncing the Genro and ridiculing their various shifts, incidentally discussing with an admirable grasp the subject of the constitutional questions involved in the overthrow of Saionji. The Seiyukai and Kokuminto united for the time being against the oligarchy, and their spokesmen displayed an activity and boldness unheard of hitherto in Japan, in discussing before large audiences in all principal cities the defects of the national system of government. Ozaki, Inukai, and a host of lesser lights exposed the secrets of the clan system so cunningly devised to keep the military party in power, and they pointed out clearly the nature of the devices of the clans and the methods by which the Sat-Cho combination had retarded the growth of popular government. Yet nothing was more conspicuous than complete absence of criticism of the Constitution. This
sacred instrument, though the main bulwark of the oligarchy, passed through the ordeal unscathed, even unquestioned.

It was in the midst of this political ferment that Katsura and his Cabinet were sworn in on December 21, 1912, but from the first day it was evident that the Premier would have difficulties to face other than those created by party politicians. To form the Cabinet it had been necessary to issue an Imperial order to Admiral Saito, commanding him to retain his office as Minister of the Navy, but at the time the significance of Satsuma's refusal to voluntarily supply an eligible candidate for the office had been cast into the shade by the issuance of a companion rescript commanding Katsura to resign his offices as Court Chamberlain and Keeper of the Privy Seal and enter politics once more. For more than a month popular orators and the press continued to denounce the clan system, until other events made it obvious that the emergence of Katsura was not a victory of the clans but a personal triumph which involved his repudiation of the clans and the clan system and his adoption of the principles of party government.

Prince Katsura, as Saionji, did not favor creation of two new Army divisions for Korea, but he did accept
Admiral Saito's plan for naval expansion to the tune of 350,000,000 yen, only asking that the Navy be satisfied with three or four millions as the first year's contribution, and to camouflage the scheme by talking of a preliminary program for the expenditure of ninety millions. Saito's plan was for construction of eight super-dreadnoughts and four battle-cruisers, and it became in later years an object of considerable criticism both at home and abroad. But while the Navy gained these advantages, no progress was made at all with the plan for expansion of the Army.

Prince Katsura had no sooner formed his Cabinet than meetings began to be held to denounce it. The annual session of the Imperial Diet was due to begin soon, and the new government had all its program, including the budget, to prepare in a few days. Even Saionji spoke vigorously in public against the new government, and Seiyukai leaders Ozaki and Motoda carried on a campaign for constitutionalism which created a degree of political excitement hitherto unknown. The Diet began with its customary false start. Summoned at Christmas, it performed the preliminary parliamentary exercises, and adjourned till Japan recovered from the annual paralysis of the new-year holidays. It was January 21,
1913, when the excitement really began. In a joint interpallation in the Diet, Ozaki and Motoda asked who, at a time when Prince Katsura himself was Lord Privy Seal and Grand Chamberlain of the Court, advised the Emperor to command Prince Katsura to form a Cabinet. Who, they asked, recommended the Emperor to order Admiral Saito to retain the Navy portfolio? And would the government, they also inquired, bring in a bill embodying the Army expansion scheme? The immediate reply to these and other questions was an Imperial decree pro-roguing the Diet for a fortnight. It was a weak move, but things were getting desperate. The Diet, it was true, had no power, and could be dissolved whenever asked for an Imperial decree for that purpose. But this had never given stability to Japanese Cabinets, which were generally short-lived. During the time that he had been in power Prince Katsura had borne practical testimony to his belief in the importance of parties by endeavoring to organize one to support his own government. His efforts resulted in the creation of the Doshikai, of which Viscount Goto was a leading spirit. Another effort on Katsura's part to put a better face on affairs was the creation of a Council of National Defence, by which he apparently hoped to camouflage the
Army and Navy with an array of highly respectable gentlemen behind whom they could maintain their position without their being subject to continual attack.

When the Diet, which met on February 5, was prorogued till the 8th, and again till the 10th, disorders immediately broke out. It will be recalled that the last time that civil disturbances had been seen in the capital was in 1905, during an earlier Katsura Administration, when the mob demonstrated against the terms of peace made with Russia. In this, the last Katsura Ministry, the mob was not to be denied. A huge crowd assembled at the entrance to the Imperial Diet. Opposition members arriving, and distinguished by their wearing a white flower, were cheered as friends of the people. Presently news came that there had been a further prorogation. This infuriated the crowd, which broke up into mobs who went raging round the streets, bent on mischief. A target for their fury was found in the offices of those newspapers which had supported the Katsura Administration, some merely having their windows broken and others being destroyed by incendiaries. Only by calling out two regiments of the Army was the government able to put down rebellion.

One of the last efforts made by the doomed government was the extraordinary expedient of advising the
Emperor to summon Merquis Saionji and command him to make a compromise with Prince Katsura. Saionji gave necessary assurance of obedience to the Imperial wishes; but the politicians at large had received no command, and it only increased the determination of the opposition to overthrow the government. In the face of continued hostility the Cabinet was forced to resign. Katsura had demonstrated that a strong man could form a Ministry in spite of opposition of the Genro and the people, but his overthrow proved that no government could remain long in office in the face of an uncomprising majority of the Lower House, backed by an exasperated and lawless Tokyo mob. He had defied the Genro, the militarists, the parties, and the people; he had tried by Bismarckian tactics to set himself up in a modern pattern as dictator. He failed; and with him failed the principal revolt in the governing oligarchy against the domination of Yamagata. Thereafter, till his death on October 11, Prince Katsura was little heard of.

Three of the Genro met again, and Admiral Count Yamamoto Gombei of the Satsuma clan was summoned as the next Premier, succeeding the fifty-three day old Cabinet of Katsura. The clan system, built up on the Constitution, had evinced its immense strength, surviving both a quarrel within the oligarchy and a popular assault from
the combined forces of the opposition. The Genro had shown themselves as inviolable as the Emperor, for having set up a Prime Minister who was howled down within a month and a half, they had immediately brought forward another, and their new nominee was straightforwardly accepted. The Constitution had never even been called into question, but had been appealed to by staunchest advocates of popular liberty. So far from being regarded as a stumbling block in the path of progress, it had held its place as "an immutable law." The military bureaucrats had triumphed in the formation of the Yamanoto Cabinet, and all that had been accomplished under the most favorable circumstances by the advocates of popular government was merely a change from one faction to another within the military party, from domination of Choshu to that of Satsuma, from a policy of military to one of naval expansion.

Katsuura was dead, and Goto had dropped his new party, the Doshikai, but there was no lack of opposition to Count Yamanoto's Ministry. When the Diet met in January, 1914, the government was immediately attacked for its extravagance in respect of the defence forces. But more sensational matters soon eclipsed the ordinary parliamentary recriminations. Shimada Saburo introduced
into the Diet the question of the naval scandals which centered about the building of new battleships. The greatest indignation was felt at the disclosures, and a crowd of forty thousand assembled in Hibiya Park to demonstrate against this corruption in quarters which had pretended to a sacred purity. Two days later troops had to be called out, so violent was the demeanor of the crowds in countless meetings.

Mob meetings are ephemeral, but the feeling of responsible men increased in intensity as the disclosures proceeded. When the Diet session approached its real business of voting on the budget, the Lower House cut 30,000,000 yen from the naval estimates. There was excellent reason for such a course, for the country was trying to keep pace with the gigantic naval expenditures of England and Germany without possessing means to do so. The estimates would have been passed easily but for the indignation aroused by the very idea that a service which had been regarded as incorruptible was, after all, on not much higher a plane than the banks, municipalities, and business concerns whose scandals were the daily pabulum of the newspaper reader. The action of the Upper House was more remarkable still. The Peers showed their indignation by cutting the naval
estimates to the extent of seventy millions. The Lower House, which was attached to the English precedent of claiming sole voice in money matters and voting of supplies, was indignant and refused to endorse the Peers' action. All attempts to settle the matter by a conference between the two Houses failed. The Diet was within a day or two of the normal end of its session, and on March 23 Admiral Count Yamamoto and his Cabinet handed in their resignations.

To find a successor for Count Yamamoto was no easy task, and the Elder Statesmen were by no means easy in their minds. Prince Tokugawa was invited to form a Cabinet, but declined. Viscount Kiyoura was discussed; he was a man with immense prestige, but of little driving force. Hara's chances were also canvassed, but the Elder Statesmen were unwilling to propose a mere popular politician, however able. He was the new president of the Seiyukai, succeeding Prince Saionji. Finally, and not without much reluctance, Marquis Okuma was summoned and, after some preliminary discussion, consented to form a Cabinet. It was not the first time he had been Premier. Before the alternation between Katsura and Saionji there had been the Okuma-Itagaki-Cabinet -- a brief excursion into rule by democratic leaders. Okuma was
already aged -- sometimes being spoken of as Japan's "Grand Old Man." He was no favorite of the Elder Statesmen, however, for whom he showed no reverence whatever. The Elder Statesmen thought that the Cabinet should be responsible to the Throne, rather than to the Diet, which really meant that it be responsible to them. Marquis Okuma held that the Cabinet should be accountable to the Diet, and through that body to the people. The issue, therefore, was really between autocracy and democracy.

The Okuma Ministry had been in office for only four months when, in accordance with the requirements of the alliance with England, Japan declared war. On assembly of the Diet at the end of the year the Ministry asked unanimous approval for a greatly enlarged naval and military budget for the ensuing year. The Diet refused to lay aside its partisanship as it had done in the case of the wars with China and Russia, and the budget proposals were rejected in both houses. In the face of such opposition the only practicable measure was dissolution of the Diet and appeal to the electorate. The results were favorable to Count Okuma and his Ministry, though it was alleged that the elections were marked by corruption and official pressure in favor of ministerial candidates. The Diet promptly granted the Army
and Navy increases, including various demands dating back to the Cabinet crisis of 1912.

On the eve of the assembly of the new Diet in May, 1915, it was announced that China had yielded to the Japanese ultimatum in the matter known as the Twenty-one Demands. Though the Diet approved the increased budget, vigorous attacks were made upon this aggressive Chinese policy of Count Okuma, and charges were pressed against one of the Ministers in another matter. Wholesale bribery of members of the Diet was no new thing; yet when in June it was disclosed that Viscount Oura, a Katsura henchman forced into the Cabinet as Home Minister, had distributed 10,000 yen among members in order to make sure of the vote for two new Army divisions, there was real public indignation. Ozaki Yukio, whose independence had been suspect when he became an advocate for demands of the Army, was especially revolted; he was well known as a liberal statesman and one who had remained poor because he would not jeopardize his political integrity; and he now openly denounced his fellow-Minister. Oura resigned not only office but title, a career hitherto distinguished thus ending in inglorious eclipse. Such a storm was there that on July 29 the whole Cabinet tendered their resignations. A compromise
was come to, however, in the jettisoning of Kato, the Foreign Minister, in the vain hope of criticism being appeased by the offering of a scapegoat. It was clear, nevertheless, that the Okuma Ministry was drawing to a close. Hara, leader of the Seiyukai, began a vigorous campaign of criticism, and at the beginning of August, 1916, Okuma himself began to talk of his impending resignation. He held on for two months longer, however, causing much indignation among his enemies by declaring with his usual impudence that he could find nobody to take his post, but at length, on October 3, 1916, placed his resignation on the score of age, in the Emperor's hands. He was invited by the Emperor to serve as one of the Genro, but consistent with his often-expressed contempt for that body, he refused to take this invitation seriously.

Great was the satisfaction in Army circles and equally great the dissatisfaction in other quarters when Count Terauchi was called from the governorship of Korea to succeed Okuma as Premier. The popular press was outspoken in opposition. The Japan Advertiser stated:

The Elder Statesmen have once more conferred on Japan a Cabinet devoid of any pretense of connection with representative institutions. Once more it is demonstrated that all the appurtenances
of popular government with which we are familiar -- the voters, registers, the elections, the legislators, and the parties -- are a Western facade run up to modernize an old-style personal-government edifice of which the interior arrangements are uniquely Japanese. 7

This Ministry did not command a majority in the Diet and was at once denounced as ultra-militaristic. Of particular vehemence were the attacks made upon the new policy of lending money to China. Secrecy was not easy in the negotiation of these loans. Count Terauchi, a military man who believed that power should come from above and not from below, that the court and nobility should rule, and that the people should obey, was not the man to have much patience with the Imperial Diet, and members who had been elected during a period when Marquis Okuma was extremely popular were not likely to be congenial to Terauchi. Accordingly, the Diet was dissolved early in the year, giving the government a free hand with the budget. Thus the budget of the previous year was used. In the election of April, 1917, the Premier won a victory, thanks to support of the Seiyukai. His days, though, were numbered, and he soon felt that against him and his Ministry was hurled the full fury of strikes caused by high prices and

low wages.

The Terasuchi Cabinet had frequently issued orders to the press not to print or to comment upon whatever it thought would be better left unpublished, and among these prohibitions the news of strikes and of the spread of "dangerous thought" -- by which Socialism was meant -- was frequently included. Inukai, leader of the Kokuminto, or Nationalist Party, and reckoned one of Japan's more liberal politicians, protested vigorously against the attempt to mould the public mind with the hard hands of bureaucracy.

But the suppression of news was of no avail. When the storm broke, it was as though a call had been heard all over the land. It appears that it had its origin in fishing villages in the remote province of Toyama, where angry fishwives raided the rice shops on August 4, 1918. During the next few days rice riots were witnessed all over the land. Alarmed authority now endeavored to open shops for the sale of cheap rice, but the measures taken were too late and inadequate. On the 10th there were riots in Kyoto, on the 12th they began in Osaka and Kobe. It was in Kobe that they reached their most serious dimensions, and took a form more far-reaching than mere mobbing of rice shops. The mob began
to move towards Suzuki's, a firm which had become very wealthy during the war and whose operations on the rice market particularly attracted the mob's hostile attention. Actually Suzuki's had been buying rice chiefly on the government's behalf as commission agents, but it was believed that this firm was responsible for forcing up the price. Doors were battered in, kerosene poured over the furniture and the premises fired. The disturbances spread, and it required four or five days to suppress the demonstrators.

Notwithstanding speedy restoration of order, punishment of the riot leaders, and measures taken to assuage popular discontent, the Terauchi Government found it inadvisable to continue in office, and resigned on September 17, 1918. Its warmest supporters could hardly maintain that it had risen to the occasion. Its own minor servants were no better off than the poorest of the proletariat; their wages had been raised a little, but they suffered considerable hardships. Many of the lower officials left so penurious a service, and, with the work of various government departments increasing every day, its performance grew less and less efficient. The Department of Communications, with Baron Den at its head, seemed to give up almost without a struggle.
Telegrams took days in transmission and were hopelessly mutilated; letters took weeks. In smaller degree the same deterioration was observable in other departments as well, but these did not come so intimately in contact with the daily life of the people. The State railways did their best to cope with the immense increase in traffic, but it was extremely difficult to obtain rails, engines, and materials for making rolling stock. Even coal could be obtained only at fanciful prices. So there was deterioration here too. All public vehicles, both railway and tramway, were incredibly congested, and municipalities were even less able than railways to improve their plant or keep it up to the normal standard of the days before the war. Even handling of overseas commerce, which was making the country so wealthy, could not be managed, and from time to time there were bitter complaints of congested piers and customs-houses.

It was never intended by Ito that Japan should be a democratic nation in the sense understood by Western peoples. The Prince's purpose in drafting the Constitution was to meet the popular demand for the latter and quench the people's thirst for a Parliament. He was determined, however, that the Genro would be the ruling power with the Emperor as a shield.
This Sat-Cho combination definitely retarded the growth of popular government by controlling the formation of the Cabinet and nomination of the president of the Privy Council. The parties fought back, but lack of homogeneity and coordination prevented them from being successful in their efforts to replace the Genro. They were able to obstruct but not control.

It was a turbulent period, one in which violence, bribery, intimidation, and riots prevailed. These disturbances, plus the recurring dispute over the budget, caused the fall of most of the Ministries. Weaknesses of party organization prevented their putting up strong opposition and aided the Elder Statesmen in passing the Premiershipt among their clique. The oligarchy, after Ito's death, continued to form the Cabinets, but it was now a military Genro led by General Yamagata. All that had been accomplished by the advocates of popular government was merely a change from control by the aristocracy to control by the military party in which the Army was pitted against the Navy; military expansion was championed by Choshu; the development of naval power was the main goal of the Satsuma clan and its supporters.
CHAPTER III

THE PARTY POLITICIANS IN POWER, 1918-1932

Political parties at first had centered completely around the old oligarchs, but with the passing of time the small ruling circle found it increasingly necessary to win the support of a new politically conscious public, a public which, by riots and demonstrations, had caused the Sat-Chō clique no end of concern. The tax requirement for voting, at the end of the first World War, was only three yen, and the electorate numbered 1,500,000, thus including the bulk of the middle classes, but not the peasantry and urban proletariat.

Despite political gains of the middle classes and emergence of new intellectual trends, Japan entered the first World War supposedly under the firm control of a small oligarchy, and then, as the war ended, it suddenly became evident that there was no longer a small, clear-cut ruling group, but instead, thousands of bureaucrats, military leaders, business men, and intellectuals, all contending for control of the government. Within a few years the intellectual life and even urban social patterns became westernized.
One reason for this rather sudden change was the disappearance of the original oligarchs. The Meiji Emperor died in 1912, leaving the Throne to his son, who ruled in name only until 1926. Yamagata and Matsukata died before 1924, leaving only one of the great Elder Statesmen of the Meiji period, Prince Saionji, the old Court noble and perhaps the least typical member of the whole group, as he heartily favored party government.

The first World War had given a tremendous impetus to commercial and industrial expansion, which helped make the business classes, and particularly the great commercial and industrial interests, increasingly important in Japanese life and politics. Moreover, the overwhelming success of Western democracies in the war strongly influenced Japanese thought. The most democratic Western powers, Great Britain, France, and the United States, had emerged victorious, and the least democratic, Germany, Russia, and Austro-Hungary, had collapsed completely. The argument that democracy obviously made stronger states and was therefore superior to autocracy was convincing to the average Japanese.

While the class of military leaders, bureaucrats, and business men were dominant, other classes were
beginning to come on the political scene. The intelligentsia, underpaid office workers, and city dwellers of lower economic status were waking to a new political consciousness. These men, too, belonged to the new generation and were products of the new education. University professors, teachers, writers, doctors, lawyers, and office workers were conversant with intellectual and political trends in the Western world. Even city laborers, with their elementary education, could read the newspapers, which exposed them to influences from all quarters. The educated populace demanded a share in government, and with the democratic tide of the day, this demand could not be denied. In 1919, the electorate was doubled, increasing from 1,500,000 to 3,000,000; and in 1925, universal manhood suffrage passed, raising the total to 14,000,000. Now the whole adult male population of Japan, peasants and city workers along with the middle and upper classes, could vote.

During this period of movement toward party government, political groups fell under the control of the capitalists. The Seiyukai, originally concerned with protection and promotion of the welfare of the land-owning class, allied itself with the Mitsui interests. The Minseito was to come into being through coalition
of the earlier parties which had been chiefly concerned with the promotion of industrial interests, and was even more the party of "big business."

Thus, in October, 1918, Japan faced a new era. The militarist Terauchi had failed; and with the fall of his Cabinet, it was said, the old school was discredited and finished. Age now threatened the autocratic Genro, which nothing else had been able to move. The one among them whose life might extend farthest into the new time was Saionji, a liberal. In key positions, such as Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and Minister of the Imperial Household, served such men as Makino and Ikki, noted for their broad and liberal views. Liberal observers proclaimed this to be "Kensei no Jodo" -- the Period of Normal Government.

Just how normal this government really was, and how long it would survive remained to be seen. In 1918 Yamagata's years may have been numbered, but he was still very much alive; and was the strongest Army leader. What type of a man would succeed him? Among party politicians, there was no systematic organization but only temporary obedience to powerful leaders, so that if anything happened to its leader -- as was three times the case -- the party was lost.
There is sufficient reason, therefore, for the contention that the "Commoners in Power" has been over-emphasized. Of the succession of Premiers until 1932 only four were commoners: Hara, Takehashi, Hamaguchi and Inukai. Kato Tomosaburo and Yamamoto were admirals; Kiyoura and Wakatsuki were a Peer and a bureaucrat, respectively, while Tanaka was the only general among the group. Kata Takeakira was a politician, a diplomat, and was joined by marriage to the Mitsubishi interests. Only two of the eleven were powerful figures, Hara and Hamaguchi, and they, together with the last, Inukai, were assassinated in office. Nevertheless, for more than a decade after the first World War Cabinets were largely party Cabinets, dependent for their authority upon party strength in the Diet. With the exception of Peer Kiyoura and the two Navy men, Kato Tomosaburo and Yamamoto, all the Premiers were leaders of the majority party at the time they formed their Cabinets. Japan had its full share of political corruption; but democracy, however imperfectly, was becoming the dominant force in Japanese politics. However, this advance was hotly contested. With the end of the oligarchy in view, the new generation in the Army High Command made it plain that they would contest the succession to power with the politicians. They were
determined that their views on Army expansion and patriotic indoctrination should prevail, while the Navy was equally insistent that civilians should not thwart its programs for fleet expansion by international commitments. Instead of taking chances with the Lower House alone, the Premiers, with the exception of Hara and Hamaguchi, arranged compromises with other elements of the government. These compromises became increasingly difficult to fulfill and in the end caused the leaders' fall.

Hara Takashi, who succeeded General Terauchi as Premier in September, 1918, has sometimes been referred to as Japan's "Great Commoner," since he was the first untitled man to hold this important office. This elevation of a commoner was dictated by several considerations. He was the recognized leader of a powerful party, the Seiyukai, and Saionji insisted that the time had arrived to recognize democratic developments by calling a commoner. In the second place, during 1917 and 1918 such great emphasis had been laid on the idea of democracy, as part of war propaganda throughout the world, that it seemed fitting to show that Japan had accepted the new idea. This was especially desirable because of criticism which had been leveled against the
militarism and clan government of Japan after 1914 in the Western world, and notably in the United States. And in the third place, there was no bureaucrat capable of forming a government. Ranks of the Elder Statesmen had now been reduced to Yamagata, Matsukata, and Saionji. On advice of the first two, the Emperor had ordered the latter to form a Cabinet, and he gave the signal for party government in backing the president of the Seiyukai. Hara was a man of great personal force, and owed his power in large part to the personal loyalty that he inspired among his political followers.

Hara's two chief Ministers were interesting characters. Tokonami, the Minister for Home Affairs, was the ideal bureaucrat. Upright and high-minded, his object was to lead everybody along the path of patriotism and loyalty. The Minister of Finance, Viscount Takahashi, was a more cautious man, less addicted to what he called a "positive policy," and might have made more of the opportunity for putting Japan financially on her feet; but, after all, his greatest extravagances were in expenditures on the Army and Navy. This ran counter to his personal wishes, but he was overruled by the Ministries of Defence, and he left the treasury still well filled, though declining, when he relinquished office.
The first unpleasant problem with which the Premier had to contend was the scandal of the Yawata steelworks, a government project. Early in February, 1918, a sensation was caused when the manager took his own life. Official inquiry into administration of the works showed that the suicide was, without doubt, the result of fear of imminent disclosures of corruption. Investigation dragged along throughout 1918. Inquiries were pursued; everybody denounced everybody else in the hope of saving himself. The investigation was stopped on December 28, 1918, and officials were given suspended sentences when it was found to be impossible to prosecute all those connected with the corruption. At this time the country was reading about another scandal -- a still more corrupt story regarding land in Kyoto, publication of which had been forbidden in its earlier stages. Scandals were unusually rife as economic conditions were abnormal and everybody was in a hurry to get rich. The postal and telegraph services were inefficient, telephone service was congested, wharves were piled high with goods, and the time table of trains was of no use.

By way of political diversion Ozaki Yukio was an enthusiastic advocate of manhood suffrage. His party, the Kenseikai, joined in the cry, but the majority were professional politicians who cared little for such things
except so far as they could use them for personal advantage. Ozaki, as an exponent of constitutionalism and a student of English politics, turned to the ballot box as a cure for the social discontent which was making itself manifest.

Another political portent which the rice riots had revealed was the existence of a parish caste -- the Eta. Their degraded social position was mainly due to their following trades -- such as leather-dressing -- which were inconsistent with Buddhism, though necessary to the social organization. They were unlike an Indian low caste in that they absorbed into their community drunkards, wastrels, and disgraced men of better social standing; yet there seems to have been no way of emerging from the Eta ranks into something better, even though individuals among them acquired considerable wealth. Naturally, they were rough, less cleanly and polite in their habits than most Japanese. Accustomed to being treated with little consideration, they became indifferent to harsh treatment and, in their villages and ghettos, had little fear of the police. Many of the men arrested after the rice riots were of the Eta class, and there was some spasmodic talk about society's duties towards them. Count Oki started a society called the Dojo-yuwa-kaw for their
amelioration; but nobody liked to undertake a solution which the Etas began to solve for themselves in a meeting held in Tokyo on February 23, 1919.

The Diet, which assembled for the annual session at the beginning of 1920, was unruly and clamorous, and towards the end of February it was summarily dissolved. This was very high-handed, though from the legislative point of view it did not greatly matter. Dissolution before the budget was passed, and when it was too late to hold a general election and present the budget to the new assembly, involved repetition of the previous year's budget. The most interesting point about the dissolution of the Diet, however, was the reason which Premier Hara declared had prompted the government to seek Imperial consent for such a measure. It was owing, he said, to the increase in dangerous thought, under which term was included Trade Unionism, Socialism, and everything likely to cause perturbation to vested interests. He illustrated the manner in which subversive ideas had penetrated even into the legislative chamber by pointing to the fact that each of the political parties, all striving for popularity, had introduced its own suffrage bill into the House, and that these bills were dangerous because they aimed at the destruction of class
distinctions. So spoke Japan's "Great Commoner" after holding office for two years. His real reason was to enable the Seiyukai to secure a stable majority in the House of Representatives.

A year before, the government had passed a new electoral law which decreased the size of election districts and increased the number of representatives in the Lower House of the Diet to 464. The three principal parties in the first Diet elected under this new arrangement numbered: Seiyukai, 281; Kenseikai, 109; and Kokuminto, 30. The Seiyukai thus controlled a large majority, but when the Diet met in June, 1920, a bitter quarrel within the party prevented the anticipated exhibition of mutual confidence between the Premier and the majority. Hara wanted the Siberian military expedition kept as small as possible, and Viscount Takahashi, the Finance Minister, was dissatisfied with the cost. The Army, which had more influence with the Seiyukai than with any other party, and General Tanaka, Minister for War, insisted that they should be given a free hand. It was probable that the civil power would have been very glad to get out of this bad Siberian business, but they could not do so without consent of the military.

The year 1921 was noted, as were the previous years
of the Hara Ministry, for its crop of scandals. From time to time progress of the Kitahama Bank trial was reported. Directors of this Osaka bank had made away with nearly all the money, and, after ten years, the case was still proceeding. Sentences were also pronounced on the high officials of Kyoto who had been arrested two and a half years before on charges of land jobbery, and their appeals dragged on for many months longer. The Tokyo municipal scandals were notorious. Taxes were high, but public works were neglected. Speculation was shameless and justice was flouted. Their dishonesty was a matter of common knowledge but the corrupt officials seemed to be indifferent, their only mark of respect for public opinion lying in their bribery of journalists to keep their unsavory doings out of the newspapers. Members of the Diet thundered against this corruption, and Viscount Goto undertook the office of mayor on the understanding that he would bring about some drastic reforms.

It was during this turbulent period, on September 28, 1921, that Yasuda Zenjiro, Japan's richest man, was murdered. Exactly five weeks later a much greater man fell under the assassin's knife. On November 4, 1921, Hara was scheduled to take the night train for Kyoto on a
speech-making trip. There was a crowd of admirers ready to shout "banzai" as the train left the station. As the Premier, closely followed by his private secretary, passed through the crowd a young man edged forward and drove a dagger through his back. The Premier collapsed without a sound into the arms of horrified bystanders, and the murderer stood by without attempting to escape. Police took him in charge before the astonished crowd could take the summary vengeance that in another moment would probably have been his lot.

Hara, a journalist-politician of humble origin, had demonstrated that in modern Japan it was possible for a commoner to attain the highest position in the State; but his instincts were far from democratic. He did increase the electorate slightly, so that three millions out of a population of fifty-six millions were qualified to vote, but he opposed all further extensions of the franchise. In statecraft he had no principles but opportunism. That Japan's war profits were squandered recklessly on the Army and Navy indicated that the country was actually under militarist control which had the wisdom to keep in the background and make civilian members of the government speak for it. But the country was full of money, and incredible sums were wasted no less
mischievously than if they had been spent on armaments. It would be difficult to find an example of splendid opportunities so grievously wasted as in Japan under the rule of her Great Commoner. Clearly, although the Hara Government represented belated recognition of a constitutional principle, it did not bequeath a higher code of political conduct.

The tragic death of Hara was followed by the accession of Viscount Takahashi Korekiyo, his Minister of Finance, to the presidency of the Seiyukai and also to the Premiership. He was a man of liberal principles, not the type of boss represented by his predecessor, and he found himself incapable of holding his party in line. He did not dare to engage in spectacular finance when the situation really required boldness. It was a turbulent time. The demand for manhood suffrage was once more enjoying a great vogue, and appeared to have become a really popular aspiration. Huge processions were organized, and the Diet had to be protected against the demonstrations. In this session at the beginning of 1922, however, scenes within the Parliament were far more disorderly than any without. There was no lack of excuses for turmoil. The Minister of Education was the object of some virulent attacks because he had promised
to raise some of the high schools to university status, but was denied the necessary funds by a government which had suddenly become nervous about money matters. Suzuki Fujiya, a Kenseikai member, roundly accused a number of the Seiyukai of having received money from the corrupt opium monopoly at Deiren.

A serious constitutional defect was the subject of much discussion. The right of direct appeal to the Throne was enjoyed not only by the Ministers for War and Navy, but by the Chief of the General Staff as well. This privilege, combined with the rule that the Ministers of Defense had to be officers of the highest rank on the active list, enabled the militarists to control policy, and they had not scrupled in the past to defy the Diet from behind the rampart of the irrevocable Imperial sanction. The debates, however, even when concerned with serious matters, were conducted with little dignity. Flushed gentlemen roared, and arguments frequently culminated in a rush for the rostrum, whence the speaker of the moment would be dragged into the midst of a free fight. At one session bedlam broke loose when a live snake was dropped from the spectators' gallery and fell among the Seiyukai benches. When quiet was restored and the snake removed, it was found to have been flung by one of the Seiyukai's own hired bullies, who,
owing to the awkwardness of the creature, had failed
to hurl it, as he had intended, into the midst of the
opposition. More serious to the government, there ap-
peared a marked Communististic swing in popular thought.
Such cries as "Soviets are better than Diets" were an-
swered by the Cabinet through introduction of a bill to
suppress dangerous thoughts, but the session ended before
it reached a vote. "Soshi" -- organized bullies -- were
increasingly employed by every kind of organization, par-
ticularly to smash labor unions and ruin the offices and
persons of over-liberal newspapers and their editors.

The Washington Treaties occupied the public's at-
tention during the forty-fifth session of the Diet, the
debates in the latter centering around reduction of naval
armaments and the Four-Power Pact replacing the Anglo-
Japanese Alliance. On January 21, 1922, Foreign Minister
Uchida made his usual address on foreign relations and
described in detail the proceedings at Washington. Rep-
resentative Etsujiro Uyehara, on January 24, addressed
a long question to the government on the conference. He
alleged that the Seiyukai Government kept the people
ignorant of its policy at the conference, while the
British and French governments took their peoples into
confidence; he recalled Seiyukai opposition to the Ozaki
resolution on naval and land armaments in the forty-fourth
Diet and inquired why the present Seiyukai Cabinet was supporting the naval limitation program. Count Uchida in his reply denied that the government ever opposed a limitation of naval armaments, and admitted that Japanese acceptance of the 5:5:3 ratio was made after receiving approval of the home government. A resolution which stated that the government had failed to obtain the full understanding of the people concerning proceedings of the conference was defeated by a standing vote after a brief debate. On March 16 the Kenseikai party introduced a resolution of want of confidence in the government, violently attacking its concessions at the conference. Contending that the conference was a success, the Seiyukai majority opposed the resolution. When the vote was called, it met defeat by 254 to 141.

The government outlasted the session of the Diet, but not long. The Seiyukai, under the "Great Commoner," had had the virtue of loyalty to its own members, but Takahashi was not so fortunate. He trusted in compromises and adjustments rather than in the solid phalanx into which Hara had organized his cohorts. There were strong arguments over the "one go, all go principle." Takahashi declared that he did not believe in any such theory, and asked two of his Ministers to resign. They refused flatly, and the Premier resigned, June 6, 1922,
after only seven months in office.

Instead of recommending Viscount Kato Takaakira, leader of the opposition, as Premier, the surviving Genro, Saionji and Matsukata, turned to Admiral Kato Tomosaburo who had just returned from the United States as Japan's representative in the negotiation of the Washington Treaties and the Four-Power Pact. He persuaded the people of Japan that the nation had not been sacrificed, but, on the contrary, had improved her international standing since friendly conciliation had been the keynote at Washington, and naval reduction had been mutual and voluntary. Before taking office, the popular Admiral was assured of Seiyukai support, approval of the measures of the Washington Conference, and a general policy of Army and Navy reduction and of the evacuation of Siberia. Here for the first time a Prime Minister and not the clan statesmen were free to select his Army and Navy Ministers. Traditionally the Army and Navy of Japan have been virtually independent of the civil government. With a naval officer as Premier it would be a natural assumption that the military party would be strengthened. However, this Admiral and baron, so far from increasing the militarism and aristocracy of his government, made his influence felt for subordination of the military to the civil power and for the development
of responsible party government.

He endeavored to cope with the growing social unrest and with the very serious commercial depression which had set in. Unfortunately, his health was bad, and he, as Japan's "big Navy" Admiral, who had won much fame as a pacifist at Washington, died in office in August, 1923. His Cabinet promptly resigned.

At noon on Saturday, September 1, 1923, a violent earthquake shook Japan, destroying nearly two thirds of Tokyo. People watched as tiles showered from the roofs, buildings crashed, and cries for help and screams of pain and fear rose on all hands. Over 150,000 people lost their lives, about as many more were injured, and the property loss was officially estimated at from 7,000,000,000 to 10,000,000,000 yen. The following day, after the usual conferences, Admiral Count Yamamoto was nominated to succeed Kato. He had already served in that capacity in 1913-1914. The nominating authorities were afraid to appoint any young man.

No sooner had the Cabinet assumed office than the police arrested over a thousand residents of Tokyo, most of them Socialists and members of the "dangerous thought" group, whose leaders were already in prison. A rigid censorship was established and the people were led to
believe that the Socialists were responsible for a series of detonations which rocked the island of Honshu. A captain of the gendarmerie, one Amakasu, had the prominent labor leader Osugi Sakae arrested, together with his wife and seven-year-old nephew, and strangled them with his hands. When the news finally became known, he was court-martialed and sentenced to ten-years' imprisonment, although several newspapers called him a national hero. Thus a junior military officer undertook to guide the destinies of Japan by his own hands.

The main task of the Ministry was to plan for reconstruction, but its political tenure was insecure because of opposition of the Seiyukai. Baron Goto, a member of the Cabinet, introduced a bill for manhood suffrage, and the reforms of the House of Peers were also discussed. When the Premier declared his Cabinet to be transcendant and above all parties, he antagonized both large parties which wanted a share in the post-earthquake reconstruction. They were determined that, if they did not get it, no one else would obtain it either. This completely disgusted Yamamoto and led him to resign. An attempt was made to assassinate the Prince Regent, Hirohito, on his way to open a new session of the Diet. The youth who made this unsuccessful attempt thoughtregicide was a
short cut to reform. The authorities were now deter-
mined more than ever to root out all radical thought. 
According to occidental standards the resignation of the 
Cabinet was absurd, but in Japan it was traditional that, 
whenever any grave mischance occurred, everybody whose 
virtue was sufficient to avert such an event should as-
sume responsibility. Although the event was deplora-
ble, the Cabinet was fortunately able to resign in cir-
cumstances that commanded sympathy.

Never was the lack of any constitutional machinery 
for advising the Emperor so keenly felt. Two Cabinets 
in succession had caused the major parties considerable 
.anxiety, and immediately upon Yamamoto’s resignation 
the political leaders began a series of conferences 
to seek a return to normalcy in government. Meanwhile, 
Viscount Kiyoura, seventy-three-year-old President of 
the Privy Council, tried to solve the difficulty for the 
Genro. After visiting the two wise old men, Matsukata 
and Saionji, Count Makino, Minister of the Imperial 
Household, and Viscount Hirata, Keeper of the Privy Seal, 
he advised the Emperor that he could find nobody but 
himself to make a Cabinet. The new Ministry was com-
posed entirely of members of the House of Peers. General 
Akaike, head of the Metropolitan Police, was a great
believer in police rule. During the previous June he had arrested all the more prominent Socialists. They were kept safe in prison throughout the horrors of the earthquake, and were still there. Akaike confessed that the chief difficulty concerning them was that they would confess nothing and that the police knew nothing.

The Kiyoura Cabinet was not unpopular merely among liberal thinkers. Viscount Miura, still the oracle-in-chief, summoned to his house Viscount Takahashi, President of the Seiyukai, Viscount Kato, President of the Kenseikai, and Inukai, President of the Kokuminto, and exhorted them to destroy the Kiyoura Government. It was one of the strange anomalies of Japan that a man of such antecedents should be able to command the respect, and even the obedience, of men so much better than himself.

As might be expected, a Cabinet consisting entirely of Peers, and openly contemptuous of party obligations, found the Imperial Diet a very obstreperous body indeed. The questions of party government and ministerial responsibility produced a struggle for power between the two Houses of the Diet. Attempts were made to form a coalition of opposition elements on a platform of manhood suffrage. Failure of this plan forced a break in
the ranks of the Seiyukai, and 148 seceders, calling
themselves the Seiyu-honto, rallied to the support of
the Premier. In the tense political situation, a train
on which three opposition leaders were traveling to
Tokyo was wrecked. This put the Diet in an uproar,
since the opposition accused the government of using
this means to dispose of its enemies. Hired bullies
were strategically placed throughout the chamber. When
a package wrapped in a large purple silk napkin was
brought in and given to the Premier, the members became
quiet and attentive. Then this Imperial Rescript was
read, and the House was dissolved.

Outraged, the parties, according to one authority,
waged a vituperative campaign for the ensuing elections.1
Another author said that the elections, which occurred
on May 10, were marked "by more than usual disorder and
corruption."2 Contradicting these views is the follow-
ing statement: "The one good point about the Kiyoura
Government was that it did not condescend to manipulate
the general election which followed its dissolution of
the Diet . . ."3 A surprising result of the ballotting

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1 Reischauer, op. cit., p. 142.
2 George Matthew Dutcher, The Political Awakening of
the East, p. 232.
3 A. Morgan Young, Japan in Recent Times, p. 316.
was the small number of members who were re-elected. The elements opposed to the Ministry in power demanded universal suffrage, constitutional government, and reform of the Upper House of the Diet. The Kenseikai, in electing 146 members to the Diet, became the most powerful single group. The Seiyu-honto, which was formed when a group of the Seiyukai seceded, won 120 seats, and the weakened Seiyukai seated 101 members. The defeat of the Ministry was unmistakable, and on June 10, 1924, it resigned.

Shortly afterward, Kato Takaakira, President of the Kenseikai, became Premier with the support of the Seiyukai. Under his Cabinet a fairly liberal policy was possible, for as Foreign Minister in Okuma's 1915 Cabinet Kato had been responsible for the Twenty-one Demands, and it was felt that his attitude toward China would be satisfactorily firm. Baron Shidehara's appointment as Foreign Minister caused widespread disgust, for he was known to favor a conciliatory policy toward China; few things could cause greater suspicion of a Cabinet member than that. Viscount Takahashi, now a commoner again after having resigned his peerage, became Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, and Inukai became Minister of Communications. Thus the acquiescence of the Seiyukai
was secured, though the most important offices were held by Kenseikai men. The Home Minister was Wakatsuki; the Finance Minister, Hamaguchi. It was often referred to as the Mitsubishi Government, as Viscount Kato and Baron Shidehara were both closely related by marriage with the house of Iwasaki, controllers of the Mitsubishi firm.

One major legislative accomplishment must be credited to this coalition. Both major parties had coveted the honor of passing a universal manhood suffrage bill; as a result, each party had prevented the other from doing anything about it. Now that they were united, however, it became quite simple. The suffrage in Japan had been controlled by the electoral laws of 1889, 1900, and 1919. All stipulated the payment of a direct national tax. By this most recent act in March, 1925, the electorate was increased from some 450,000 in 1890 to 12,500,000.

The political shuffling that followed passage of the manhood suffrage bill brought new strength to the Sei-yukai. Takahashi, whose forte was not party leadership, resigned his position, and General Baron Tanaka Giichi retired from active military life to accept the presidency of the party. He was influential because of his pleasant personality and his seniority in the Choshu clan. Inukai Ki, a liberal politician of great ability, also joined. Thus in successive months, April and May, 1925, an
outstanding militarist and an equally outstanding liberal
joined forces to give new life to the party of Itagaki,
Ito, Saionji, and Hara. Tanaka was needed because he
was in favor with Saionji and a potential Premier; Inukai
could appeal strongly to ten millions of new voters.

The new Ministry, however, had conservative members.
Principally under the direction of Okada, Minister of
Education, war was declared on "dangerous thoughts," par-
ticularly among students. Young men were arrested and
held incommunicado; the study of Socialism and "such
dangerous subjects" was forbidden. In April, 1925, the
famous Peace Preservation Law was passed. Under its
provisions, "those who formed or joined societies that
had as an object the alteration of the national consti-
tution or the form of government, or repudiation of the
system of private ownership of property, would be subject
to imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years, with
or without hard labor." 4 Advocacy of such ideas was
penalized by seven years' imprisonment, or the death
penalty. In the House of Peers, only Marquis Tokugawa
opposed it. While it by no means caused the first polit-
ical arrests in Japan, this law did inaugurate the policy
of mass incarcerations which after its passage became
common.

4Reischauer, op. cit., p. 143.
It was principally the elements whose love of liberalism was not deep, but who desired to have the Western nations regard Japan as a progressive, liberal state, who advertised widely at this time the demilitarization of the country. The postwar military reorganization plan, developed in the early twenties, involved reduction of the Army both by divisions and by manpower. In March, 1925, four recently organized divisions were disbanded. Since the Siberian Expedition had never been popular, the military men were willing to avoid the public eye; their own partisans, therefore, were among the most vociferous in pointing out the increasingly pacific nature of the Japanese government.

In reality there was no cessation whatever of military activity. Officers from disbanded divisions were not retired but were signed to schools, where, approximately at the same time, a new system of military service was organized, similar to the American R. O. T. C. The money saved, the additional officer corps that resulted, and the equipment released, were all put to new and better use, particularly in developing the tactical lessons of the World War, involving the use of tanks, machine guns, and airplanes.

As time went on the Cabinet quarreled with and purged itself of the members not belonging to the Kenseikai, and
its position became less stable. In August, 1925, these quarrels between the latter party and the Seiyukai caused its end. Kato returned to the Premiership immediately, with a new government formed completely from the Kenseikai party, of which he was president. Shidehara retained his post as Foreign Minister, and the Diet and the Army continued to attack his China policy. The new Cabinet held its ground successfully until the death of Viscount Kato in December 28, 1925, and on the same day, that of Viscount Miura, the political oracle.

After the death of Prince Matsukata in July, 1924, Marquis Saionji was only survivor of the Elder Statesmen. The latter, a liberal, was content to let Wakatsuki form the Cabinet. The new Premier had succeeded to the presidency of the Kenseikai Party upon the death of Kato Takaakira. "Lion" Hamaguchi became Home Minister. This Cabinet remained in office until April, 1927, but had a stormy career. On the one hand, large and vociferous elements opposed its foreign policy because Shidehara remained as Foreign Minister. On the other hand, there was considerable dissatisfaction among the people; on December 1, 1925, a Farmer-Labor Party had been organized with the consent of the government, but, probably because it claimed 140,000 members, it was dispersed on the same day.
A tremendous onslaught was made upon the Selyukai at this time in order to force into the background the attacks upon the government from the forces of reaction and radicalism. General Baron Tanaka, that party's new president, was openly charged with receiving enormous sums from Osaka millionaires for favors to come later. He was also accused of malversations of secret service funds in connection with the Siberian Expedition. Although these charges followed Tanaka until his death, none of them was ever proved. For a long time they were eclipsed by a much greater scandal. Among the Socialists and other dangerous thinkers arrested immediately after the earthquake were a young Korean named Boku Retsu and his Japanese wife, Kaneko Fumi. That they had been arrested was unknown until November, 1925. They were tried secretly from February 26, 1926, till March 25, when the sentence of death was pronounced upon both of them. The nature of their crime was generally assumed to be high treason although it was never disclosed. The judge, Tatematsu, who had conducted the preliminary trial, desiring a memento of so strange a case, visited the prison to get a photograph of the prisoners. The judge took the picture in one of the office rooms, as Fumi sat on the edge of Boku Retsu's chair and put her
arm about his neck. Somehow a copy of the photograph fell into the hands of the enemies of the government, who expressed indignation that love still prevailed in the very shadow of the scaffold, that the government had betrayed the country into the hands of its enemies. Although the emotion was entirely hypocritical, it was, nevertheless, just part of the political game. It is to be remembered that parties had little in the way of policy to which they recommended themselves to the electorale, and the opposition generally attacked the government only on such vague grounds as diplomatic weakness, extravagance, or lack of official discipline. An actual case of such slackness was a godsend. This method of attack was preferred because it bound the opposition to nothing if it succeeded. The resignation of Judge Tateematsu followed. Tokonami, President of the Seiyuhonto, abandoned his working agreement and denounced the government with the greatest vigor and severity. Echoing through the summer of 1926, it was still heard of until the end of the year. The government refused to budge, and Saionji gave no sign. Finally the storm died down. No better example than this can be found to demonstrate the nonsense on which politics were now based, and the depths into which they had fallen. As the clamor
of the Boku Retsu case died down, that regarding General Tanaka's alleged misuse of secret service money was revived. Both cases were finally overshadowed by the Matsushima brothels scandal, in which high officials were said to have enabled speculators to make money by giving them advance information about the government's decision regarding location of new brothels. Minoura, a former Cabinet Minister, was deeply involved, and filed a complaint of perjury against the Premier himself when he denied that he also was implicated.

Reshuffling of the parties was again caused by the general trend toward a stronger Seiyukai at a time when the Kenseikai and its president had formed the present Cabinet. Thus it was that a part of the Seiyuhonto, which broke off from the Seiyukai under the leadership of Tokonami Takejiro and formed a party on January 29, 1924, effected an affiliation with the Kenseikai on March 1, 1927. The result was a new party, the Minseito, formed on June 1, of the same year. This completed the development of major parties in Japan, the Seiyukai having been formed by Itagaki in 1881 as the Jiyuto.

Although it still held a majority in the House of Representatives, and had not been defeated on any major
measure, the Wakatsuki Cabinet resigned on April 18, 1927, when challenged by the Privy Council in connection with relief measures concerning the Bank of Taiwan. The way was opened, therefore, for the Seiyukai to undertake at once to satisfy the more military and conservative groups, toward which it leaned on many matters of policy, and to assure the continuance of real party government.

General Tanaka Giichi, who had become head of the Seiyukai upon Takahashi's resignation a few years before, formed a Cabinet in which Takahashi held the portfolio of Finance. Tanaka himself was high in the councils of the second generation of the Choshu clique, but with the exception of his War and Navy Ministers, his Cabinet was formed entirely of Seiyukai members. He retained the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, with the result that the storm aroused over his conduct of the government was directed mostly against himself as an Army leader, as head of the Cabinet, and as the Minister directly responsible for the unhappy developments in foreign relations. Eventually large sections of his own Seiyukai felt free to criticize him.

The scandal about Tanaka's alleged misuse of secret military funds on the Siberian Expedition now rose to
new heights of foulness by the efforts of the Kenseikai. As it still controlled a majority, it did not hesitate to carry through the House of Representatives a resolution impeaching the Privy Council for refusing to support Wakatsuki on the Bank of Taiwan affair. To forestall a vote of no confidence, the Premier obtained an Imperial order of dissolution on January 21, 1928.

Despite liberal expenditures of money by his party, the Premier found after the elections that no substantial change in alignment had taken place. The Home Minister, Suzuki Kiseburo, retired after the campaign; it was the second time since the promulgation of the Constitution that the government had lost an election. With this Diet, 1928-1929 was an even more turbulent year. A short special session late in 1928 lasted for only seventeen days, yet was suspended twice to prevent a no-confidence vote. On the last day of the session a third escape was made possible by the failure of the Meiseikai and other independents to support the Minsaito. This new party had been formed in April, 1928, by Tsurumi Yusuke, son-in-law of Viscount Goto, expressing a belief in decentralization, amelioration of lower-class life, and international cooperation. Apparently, the party, which had only six seats in the
Diet, sought to play the major parties against each other to its advantage.

The two principal problems which continued to trouble this Ministry throughout its career were relations with China and the Pact of Paris. During 1928 Japan had joined other states in signing the Kellogg-Briand Treaty for the Renunciation of War. According to the wording of the treaty, the sovereigns or presidents of the various states signed "in the names of their respective peoples." Tanaka and his Seiyukai Cabinet took no exception to this phraseology, but in the ratification the Privy Council insisted on a statement that the phrase was inapplicable to Japan, and must be interpreted "on behalf of the people," since the Emperor was the sole repository of the sovereignty. This aroused the Minseito. After violent debates, the Privy Council recommended ratification with an attached statement that "in the names of their respective peoples" did not apply to Japan. Foreign Minister Uchida was so upset by this reservation that he resigned.

The incident which led directly to the downfall of the Tanaka Cabinet was the death of the Manchurian warlord, Chang Tao-lin, and the subsequent investigation of the incident. During May, 1928, Japanese troops were,
reportedly, sent to China to protect the Japanese people in Shantung in the face of the northern advance of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Army. These troops, however, assumed that they were to check that advance — depending on the friendship of Chang Tso-lin — for reasons of policy, and to demonstrate the reality of Premier Tanaka's somewhat vaguely stated "positive policy" toward China. The whole affair was managed by the military command working with Tanaka, but with little reference to civilian authorities. On this unfortunate moment Chang Tso-lin was shot in the suburb of Mukden at a railroad intersection controlled by the Japanese.

The public demanded immediate publication of a full report. Unsuccessful efforts were made by the government to prevent making the incident become a political issue. To no avail, on January 21, 1928, Tanaka pleaded before representatives of the House of Peers not to ask questions on the incident during the approaching session of the legislature. The Diet ignored his request. On May 14, 1929, the Cabinet deliberated secretly on publication of the report, but no decision was reached. Meanwhile, Saionji made it known that he favored publication of the findings for the glory of the Japanese Army and to indicate its responsibility. Baron Tanaka agreed,
but high military authorities were opposed. They were led by Marshal Uyehara, a supreme war councilor and veteran member of the board of field marshals and fleet admirals, and Admiral Suzuki, Grand Chamberlain.

The Premier was placed in an embarrassing position. There was an increasing popular demand to publicize the report of the incident. High military circles, of which the Baron himself was an influential member, vigorously opposed this, and the political tension became taut. The Big Three of military circles, namely, War Minister Shirakawa, General Suzuki, Chief of the General Staff, and General Muto, Inspector-General of Military Education, maintained that they could not be held responsible for the incident, and that disciplinary measures should be confined to military in Manchuria. Tanaka's position became extremely delicate when Admiral Suzuki and Count Makino, Lord Privy Seal, stated that action taken by the government towards the commander of the Kwantung garrison should be directed also to the War Minister, as punishment of high military officers in Manchuria would impair the integrity and honor of the Imperial Army. Saionji asked the Prime Minister to clarify political responsibility for the incident, and indirectly advised him to tender his resignation. The General had no
other course but to follow the Genro's advice. An extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet was called on July 1, 1929, to study the final details concerning its resignation. It also decided to keep the findings of the incident secret.

Such scandals defeated the Seiyukai in the election of 1930. The Cabinet was notoriously corrupt, terrorism was tolerated, disreputable men were appointed to high offices. Mistakes were made in diplomacy, and public funds were spent recklessly. Minseito meetings were broken up, their pamphlets seized and posters torn down; gangs of patriotic ruffians beat labor leaders, and there was general terrorism to counteract the manhood vote. As the convener of the Far Eastern Conference and author of the Tanaka Memorial, Tanaka laid plans for the subjugation of China which in other hands than his own had caused purposeless suffering to many millions and had brought infinite discredit on Japan. His administration was an orgy of corruption, but he went down in history as a practitioner of bold policies and an apostle of Japanese expansion. He was given an audience on July 2, 1929, by the Emperor to present the resignation of the Ministry, and the Minseito returned to power. Tanaka died at the end of the year, a poor and broken man.
"Lion" Hamaguchi had replaced Baron Wakatsuki as President of the Minseito after the latter's Cabinet fell in 1927, and formed a new Cabinet, in which only five Ministers were not party members -- Foreign Affairs, War, the Navy, Finance, and Justice. Baron Shidehara was regarded as a party member in all but name, and General Ugaki was believed to be pro-Minseito. Viscount C. Watanabe, Minister of Justice, was the only Peer. Premier Hamaguchi was the dominant spirit until a would-be assassin wounded him so badly that he was compelled to resign the Premiership and the leadership of the party.

When the Minseito Cabinet, controlling 173 votes, met the House of Representatives in the session of 1929-1930, it could make no progress against the riotous tactics of the opposition which occupied 237 seats. The House was dissolved, and the government triumphed, winning 273 seats to the Seiyukai's 174 in the general election. Adachi Kenzo, Minister of Home Affairs, got credit for the landslide, aided by widespread dissatisfaction with the last Seiyukai Administration.

In domestic policy Hamaguchi pressed more zealously than ever for retrenchment and reform. In reorganizing governmental administration, including the Army, he aimed to reduce the running expenses of government, and
to maintain an energetic fight against the world-wide depression, which Japan was only then beginning to feel.

In world affairs the Hamaguchi Government accomplished one great purpose, namely, ratification of the London Naval Treaty of 1930. The treaty embodied a compromise with the original Japanese proposals. The Premier favored the compromise, as did the Foreign Office, but it was not acceptable to the Navy. The Japanese delegates had signed the treaty but ratification by the Diet was doubtful. The Supreme War Council contended that the government should not have signed without approval of the Naval Staff. The Premier stated before the Privy Council that the Chief of the Naval Staff had been fully informed on the government's action and had withdrawn his opposition. The constitutional position of the military services as advisers of the Emperor was not affected if such had been the case. Actually, the reverse was true, for the government had given orders to sign the treaty against emphatic opposition from the Navy. In other words, the Cabinet, the civilian and responsible wing of the government, had defeated the Navy while the latter was acting within its constitutional right to advise the Throne directly.

In consequence of all this, while the Cabinet
enjoyed the favor of a large section of the people -- the liberals and business interests -- it was cordially hated by the Army and Navy. Nevertheless, the Minseito continued to hold its majority in the House of Representatives despite constantly increasing Seiyukai opposition. The House of Peers, however, became increasingly unfavorable toward it; and conservatives and Army supporters were convinced by the way in which the Cabinet forced the London Naval Treaty through the Diet that only by quick, decisive action could they prevent the ruin of their ambitions and plans. The days and years ahead were to be marked by unemployment, acute agrarian distress, growing internal political unrest, and a number of murders of politicians and financiers by fanatical young Army officers.

While the struggle over the London Treaty still filled the public mind, Premier Hamaguchi was shot and wounded seriously at Tokyo station. He was leaving on one of his frequent speaking tours on November 14, 1930, when a young fanatic named Sagoya Tomeo stepped out of the crowd and shot him in the abdomen. Nine years before, on the same spot, Mara Takashi, the Seiyukai, had been murdered. The dagger had proved more effective, however, than the pistol. Hamaguchi was carried quickly
to the hospital, where it was reported that he had a good chance to recover.

The selection of a Premier "ad interim" was noted by the conspicuous absence of the influence of Saionji, the only living Genro. There was a hurried meeting of such members of the Cabinet as were in Tokyo to decide on a substitute for the "Lion," pending his recovery. Lead in the discussion was taken by Egi, the Railway Minister. General Ugaki, Minister for War, was the senior Cabineteer, but he had been ill for a long time, and was about to resign. Baron Shidehara came next and was appointed. The appointment should have been a mere formality, but there was an eager candidate in the person of Adachi Kenzo, the Home Minister, who at the time of the shooting was with the Emperor at the autumn maneuvers. Although he hurried back to Tokyo, he was too late. His henchmen loudly declared that Shidehara was unfit for the Premiership; but the suggestion by Egi that Adachi should become President of the Minseito aroused no favorable comment. The Home Minister not only missed the opportunity to stand at the helm of State, but was also accused of lack of respect to the Imperial House. In his hurry to become Premier he had deserted the Emperor on the field of mimic battle. He
never lived it down.

Baron Shidehara became acting-Premier, contrary to his own desire, and this appointment became a cause of dissension within the Minseito and a target for the shafts of the opposition, since Shidehara was not a member of the government party. Except for the budget, in which taxes were reduced and a further reduction of expenditures was accomplished by the devious method of misstating anticipated revenues, the session was barren. The Lower House passed bills to enfranchise women in city, town, and village elections and to legalize labor unions, but they failed to receive approval of the Upper House.

The Seiyukai expressed a formal sympathy with the Premier, but indulged in such continuous uproar in the House that it was almost impossible to do business. Three government members were stabbed in one affray in the lobby, and Baron Shidehara narrowly escaped personal violence in the Chamber itself. Demands were made that the Premier either resign or attend in person. He complied and attended accordingly on March 10, but seemed only like the ghost of the old "Lion." He again attended the Diet on March 13 and 18 and was heckled without mercy. He was treated little better two days later
when he went to the House of Peers. Thereafter he took to his bed. Operations were performed on April 5 and 9 in the desperate hope of saving him. He acknowledged defeat at last and resigned on April 11, 1931. He died on August 26 of the same year, and a month later all that he had striven for was flung to the winds.

It was the desire of a large faction within the Minseito, following the resignation of Hamaguchi, to elect Adachi Kenzo, the Home Minister and campaign manager, to the presidency of the party. T. Egi, Minister of Railways and former Minister of Justice, was supported by a much smaller faction. Neither, however, was chosen, as the party elders compromised and selected Wakatsuki. He was given the title of Baron for his work at the London Conference and was appointed to succeed Hamaguchi as Premier. Wakatsuki was well intentioned and somewhat more in touch with party politics but was irresolute in action. Compromise was his method, and he finished by compromising the liberals right out of power. His Cabinet retained nine of Hamaguchi’s Ministers. New men appeared in the Ministries of War, Commerce and Industry, and Overseas Affairs. In all the cross-currents of disturbance that were to follow, there was one man who held persistently of his course, working for peace and
understanding. Baron Shidehara, the Foreign Minister, constantly kept before him the fact that a friendly neighbor was a better customer than one who was hostile, and continued the policy which he had begun in 1924, and continued even through the trying days of 1927, of relying on friendly persuasion, rather than on high-handed methods such as the military men favored. He always deprecated the wild exaggeration of "incidents" by which many politicians and nearly all the press constantly tried to inflame feeling against China.

The Wakatsuki Cabinet sought to reduce governmental expenditures by cutting salaries and dropping or reorganizing certain Ministries. On the former point it was successful, but the saving was comparatively slight. Although the Ministry of Overseas Affairs was abolished, it was reinstated within a few months by the Seiyukai, and the effort to amalgamate the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry with that of Commerce and Industry was completely unsuccessful. The lower appropriations desired by the Finance Minister, Inouye, were opposed by several colleagues, particularly those of War and the Navy. The inevitable result was a clash between the Cabinet's retrenchment scheme and the plan of military authorities for increasing the size of the forces in
Chosen and Manchuria, and for a larger air force.

Although Wakatsuki had attempted to continue Hama-
guchi's program of "Retrenchment and Reform," it was evi-
dent that it had only been the "Lion's" iron will and
resolve that had accomplished things; this the present
Premier lacked. As a result, the militarist clique
not only felt that something had to be done; now it
felt that something could be done.

It found its opportunity in the Mukden Incident of
September 18, 1931. This Manchurian crisis weakened
the Minseito Cabinet, since it afforded the Seiyukai
an opportunity to attack the Cabinet's foreign policy,
which was denounced as weak, compromising to Japan's
prestige, and an inevitable prelude to the present neces-
sity for vigorous military action. The Cabinet was
known to be divided, certain members favoring diplomacy
and conciliation, while others were more radical. The
incident resulted in the conclusion of a four-month
struggle between the Army, represented chiefly by War
Minister General Minami, and the Foreign Office headed
by Baron Shidehara, over settling the relations between
the Japanese and Chinese governments. The struggle came
to an abrupt end when the Army ignored the Foreign Office,
which was used to justify the "faits accomplis" of the
Army, and to present them henceforth in the most palatable form possible to the outside world.

The Cabinet was further weakened by suggestions of the advisability of a coalition government urged by Adachi Kenzo, the Home Minister. Tokonami Takejiro, an adviser of the Seiyukai, supported him. A party coalition was the desire of party men, while members of the House of Peers and the Privy Council favored a transcendental Cabinet of strong men. Failing to find coalitionists among his colleagues in the Ministry, Adachi refused to attend Cabinet meetings and at the same time refused to resign alone. This course was successful because of his long experience in politics and his affiliations with the military authorities and the great Mitsui trust. As he could not be removed, and as the Cabinet could not function without a Home Minister, it resigned on December 11, 1931, giving the Seiyukai a final opportunity to demonstrate that a party government could still cope with the situation.

The Genro, appointed Inukai Tsuyoshi, President of the Seiyukai, as the new Premier, who selected his Cabinet almost entirely from his own party. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, of War and of the Navy were, as usual, non-party men. Adachi, therefore, was not included,
though he had resigned from the Minseito and carried nine other members with him.

As the Seiyukai Premier found it impracticable to carry on even the pretense of representative government with a large majority of the opposition party in the Diet, he dissolved it so that one more amenable might be elected. The usual precautions were taken, including a wholesale eviction of Minseito prefectural governors and their replacement by Seiyukai men, and the desired result was achieved without difficulty. The new Diet had 303 Seiyukai members and 144 from the Minseito.

Meanwhile, two more leaders had been murdered: Inouye, ex-Finance Minister, and Baron Takuma Dan, head of Mitsui interests. As it was one of the customs of the Diet to fasten responsibility for any untoward events on the government, the opposition began the good work at the first meeting of the Diet. Declaring that the murders had been committed by the Blood Brotherhood, a society that existed before his Cabinet came into being, the Premier held that the previous Cabinet must be held responsible for the deterioration in public morals. This so enraged some of the members that there was a rush for the rostrum, and the officials who were appointed to keep order had to drag them back. The Premier also spoke of plans for the control of foreigners, not that
there had been any foreigners connected with the murders in even the remotest way, but it was always a safe line to take. The internal situation was out of the control of the political parties.

The crisis came on May 15, 1932, when a group of young military and naval officers terrorized Tokyo for several hours, attacking banks, the Metropolitan Police Headquarters, and the headquarters of the Seiyukai. The privacy of the official residence of the Premier was violated, and policeman and servants who tried to stop the assassins were cut down unmercifully. The Premier was undismayed, and, though he guessed their errand, demanded to know what they wanted. Their reply was to fire a dozen or more bullets into his body and leave him dying. That the murderers of Inukai were not punished was due to the cult of loyalty and patriotism in Japan. Murder, so long as it was committed for any other purpose than that of robbery, commanded the greatest admiration. The plotters felt that the State was not being well served, and they were treated as unfortunate "patriots" rather than murderers. A few of the men were given prison sentences, ranging from life imprisonment downward, but by 1940 all but one were free.

The results of the London Naval Conference were given by the naval cadets who were involved in the murder
as their primary motive. They declared that they were aroused by the encroachment of the Supreme Command by the civil authorities; that the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Grand Chamberlain had prevented Admiral Kato Kenji, then Chief of the Naval General Staff, from submitting a memorandum to the Throne on the conference. Economic conditions also influenced the plotters. There was distress in the rural districts of Japan, and out of this grew dissatisfaction with the existing social and economic systems. The plotters, and their predecessors in the earlier assassinations, attempted to overthrow what they called the "capitalistic oligarchy." State control of finance and industry was demanded, both as a measure to eliminate the capitalists and as a device to insure the more efficient arming of Japan. They did not want to supplant the capitalistic system with a dictatorship of the proletariat, but with a dictatorship of the State. Socialism or Communism was not their cure for the economic ills that were besetting Japan, but the complete diversion of the energies of the State to conquest and aggression.

The "May 15 Incident" marked a long stride toward the domination of Japan by the military. Minister of Finance Takahashi assumed the Premiership, and Suzuki
Kisaburo, an influential member of the Seiyukai, took over the party leadership. But an era had ended. Prince Saionji, the aged Genro, was on his way to Tokyo to consult with the Emperor on the selection of a new Premier. The civil authority had been emasculated by political activities of the conservative and militarist elements in the government and nation; the power of the politicians was broken by personal attacks and the rise of popular agitation. No prominent civilian, as indicated by the assassinations, was safe from attack by extremists either in or out of the services. The trials of the men involved in the assassinations showed that actual and potential victims of assassins not only lacked protection of the law, but that public opinion was not supporting them. The attack on the capitalists meant that it was not healthy to be either a businessman or a spokesman for the protection of the interests of big business. The parties could no longer play the dominant role in the politics of Japan, as indicated by the recent attacks on political party headquarters and the attempt to involve the parties in the corruption of the businessmen. The militarists were sweeping toward power, using the Emperor as a shield when necessary. Attacks on the groups that were attempting to prevent their rise were bearing fruit.
CHAPTER IV

THE MILITARISTS IN POWER, 1932-1941

Striking features of the Japanese government since 1932 were (1) active participation of the Army in politics with the dual objective of (a) promoting some form of national socialism, perhaps fascism, at home, and (b) imperialistic expansion on the Asiatic continent; (2) the struggle of the so-called liberal factions -- the capitalists, industrialists, party politicians, and the intellectual liberals -- to revive the lost prestige of party and responsible government and the general ideals of a so-called liberal and democratic society.

The power of the Army was so deep-seated in Japanese history and tradition that it required exceptional courage and opportunity to bring it under civilian control. It seemed, during the first days of Japanese democracy after the World War, as if civilian statesmen with the democratic backing of the people could be able to subordinate the military to their wishes. Indeed for a time they were able to do so, but the misuse of power by some of the representatives of democracy and its utilization
for personal motives, such as nepotism and private gain, enabled the military to stir up popular feeling against the civilians. What ended the period of party government was not simply the attacks of the militarists. These could not have had so ruinous an effect had it not been for the decline of influence of the politicians' platforms, largely as a result of their inability to agree on programs to settle Japanese problems. The final testing ground was the dispute over the Manchurian invasion and over Japan's China policy, which gave the military the occasion to consolidate and perfect their political control by getting rid of the more liberal-minded statesmen through forced resignation or unscrupulous schemes involving even murder.

Since the militarists discredited the plans and persons of the politicians, and assumed a more direct control of the government, they themselves were several times discredited, often experiencing serious divisions within their own ranks. Several times they had to retire from the foreground of public attention and use the bureaucrats for a front. The deciding power over how the Japanese government should appear and what it should do was kept for them by the nature of their peculiar position in the Japanese body politic. This
power was exercised under the surface, and in the face of an ever-increasing opposition from powerful civilian leaders such as Hamaguchi, from the end of the World War until 1931. It was quite obvious by 1932 that the politicians had lost most of their ability to control the course of events. Ever since that time military dominance has remained supreme, although camouflaged at times.

The murder of Premier Inukai on May 15, 1932, brought on the most serious Cabinet crisis in Japan's history, and Prince Saionji was unprepared to face the forces of reaction alone. He accordingly consulted all former Premiers, the Lord Privy Seal, and the War and Navy Ministers before making his decision. Formation of a party Cabinet was bitterly fought by the Army chiefs, who demanded the establishment of a "national" Ministry headed by Baron Hirainuma, leader of the Kokuhonsha. The logical choice for the head of a party government was Kisaburo Suzuki, who had been hurriedly chosen president of the Seiyukai. Prince Saionji chose neither of these, but secured agreement of the Army and parties to the appointment of a compromise candidate -- Admiral Saito, former Governor-General of Korea. A coalition Cabinet was formed on May 26, 1932, with three posts allocated
to the Seiyukai, two to the Minseito, two to the military, and six to non-party men. Saito did not share in the Army's bitter detestation of parties, but he was certainly not a party man. The Ministers of the military were carefully chosen men, as General Araki's excitability in the War Office was balanced by Admiral Okada's calm diplomacy in the Navy Ministry. In the general compromise political parties suffered the most decisive loss. Inclusion of party members when it was evident that the whole party system might not live much longer, forced the Minseito and Seiyukai to support the Cabinet in self-protection; in any crisis they or their representatives in the government might be blamed. The theory of government responsibility to the Diet, which had been reinforced by six successive party administrations, experienced a grave setback. On the other hand, although the basic demand of the militarists that the government must stand above party allegiance was satisfied, Army extremists failed to mold a Cabinet exclusively dominated by the military. The compromise, to this extent, represented a victory for capitalist elements, despite loss of authority by the parties, especially since the key post of Finance Minister was placed in the capable hands of Takahashi.
As 1932 wore on, however, this compromise proved
no freer from active conflicts than the earlier ones had
been. Both Seiyukai and Minseito members, it is true,
introduced a bill to recognize the new Army-created
state of Manchukuo. The Diet passed it unanimously.
Division within the parties, however, made cooperation
more and more difficult between liberal party elements
and those outside the parties who favored parliamentary
government. Former Home Minister Adachi continued his
break with the Minseito, and, after several other at-
tempts, finally organized the Kokumin Domei or National
Union Party, with the full status of a political party.
Some thirty-two Diet members, mostly recruited from the
Minseito, rallied under his leadership, and they specific-
ally and definitely favored fascism.

At the expense of unity on matters of policy, the
Seiyukai retained its party organization. There were
several breaks, and it was the group which opposed co-
operation with non-party Cabinets which finally pre-
vailed. Those who accepted portfolios in such Cabinets
were formally read out of the party.

At the same time that the major parties were suffer-
ing internal dissensions, the Shakai Minshuto (Social
Democrats) and Zenkoku-Rono-Taishuto (Farmer Labor Party)
joined to form the Shakai Taishuto (People's Socialist
Party). Although it had no particularly revolutionary significance, as it was the one mass party permitted to continue rarely molested by the authorities, its appearance carried some importance.

It was on September 5, 1932, that the 63rd Diet adjourned. The supplementary budget and numerous measures to cope with the depression had been approved. Again, apart from more purely political activities, the next Parliament, which ended on March 25, 1933, followed its predecessor in passing economic legislation. There was a revival of tenseness in public affairs, however, during this year. General Araki invented the "crisis of 1935-1936," focusing attention on the "foreign menace," and on the United States in particular. Hence, the Army and Navy were successful in their demands for the larger part of the 1934 budget. Araki proposed reform of the tax system which would shift the weight of the burden from agrarian classes to those of finance and industry. His resignation as War Minister in 1934 was caused in great part by his failure to persuade the rest of the Cabinet to endorse this proposal and several farm relief measures.

In April, 1933, leaders of the Seiyukai decided to withdraw their support from the Saito Cabinet. The budget passed, tremendous as it was, because in the state of
emergency everyone had worked together. The Seiyukai totaled 290 members in the Diet to the Minseito's 110, and it expected that at the end of the Diet session a Seiyukai Cabinet would return to power under the Premiership of party president Suzuki. The Seiyukai attempted to overthrow the Cabinet by causing the Finance Minister, Takahashi, to resign. At the request of Saito and Prince Saionji, the latter refused to be his party's tool. Suzuki refused a ministership without portfolio. At that point an unofficial split occurred within the Seiyukai between those who supported the "national coalition" and those who had nothing to do with it. Momentarily Suzuki decided to take no action, but the following year the party declared its opposition to the Cabinet.

It was doubtful whether liberalism or reaction was on the wane during 1934. On the one hand, contrary to all precedent, Baron Hiranuma, Vice-President of the Privy Council, was passed over in the appointment to that Council's presidency in May. Baron Ikki Kitokuro, a liberal, was nominated for the position by Saionji, and it was commonly said that the Genro disapproved of Hiranuma's close connection with the reactionary Kokunhosha. It was generally conceded that Saionji expected the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, the Minister of the Imperial
Household, and the President of the Privy Council to take over the duties of Elder Statesmen when he died, and for this reason he appointed liberals to the positions.

On the other hand, the Army was vigilant though cautious lest any statements or acts should prejudice the "purity" of the Japanese spirit; and in this it found support in the House of Peers, the bureaucracy, the ex-service men's and other patriotic societies, and even in the parties. When it was discovered that Baron Makashima, Saito's Minister of Commerce, had written an article ten years previously comparing the Shogun, Ashikaga Takaouji, who had subdued the Emperor Go-Daigo in 1335, to Oliver Cromwell, he was immediately compelled to resign.

It was not the Army, however, which rang the death-knell of the Cabinet. The fatal blow came from within. Vice-Minister of Finance Kuroda was implicated in some serious corruption, and in the midst of the uproar that followed, the Ministry resigned, on July 3, 1934. A patchwork affair, it certainly was no improvement on the party system; but it had had to carry on in an atmosphere darkened by murder, and with a national economy destroyed by a military conspiracy.

The Minseito had too few Diet seats to form an administration, and a serious split prevented the Seiyukai
from taking any concerted action. After a joint conference with the living ex-Premiers, the President of the Privy Council, and the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, Saionji recommended Admiral Okada for the Premiership. The resulting Cabinet was formed on the basis of a super-party coalition similar to that of its predecessor.

Suzuki and Wakatsuki, presidents of the Seiyukai and Minseito, respectively, were approached by the Marquis in an effort to secure a "national" character for the government. But Suzuki refused it any official party support and the three Seiyukai members who accepted portfolios were ejected from the party. The Minseito, on the other hand, was cooperative, and Wakatsuki supported his two members who retained their old posts. Attempts for Seiyukai-Minseito cooperation were practically abandoned, for now the Minseito supported the Cabinet, while the Seiyukai at least tacitly opposed it. War Minister Hayashi, Navy Minister Osumi, and Hirota, the Foreign Minister, also agreed to remain at their posts under the new Premier; thus Okada took over the government with a Ministry including seven bureaucrats and militarists, and five party men. A further compliment to the parties came when the government chose nine Seiyukai, nine Minseito, and six members of the House of Peers for the twenty-four Parliamentary Vice-Minister and Counsellorships.
The Administration, beset with continuing economic and social problems and growing attacks on liberals and liberal ideas, had, nevertheless, to give much of its attention to the "national polity" issue which was upsetting the nation. Minobe Tatsukichi was attacked early in 1935 because lectures and books which he had delivered and written as professor of Constitutional Law at Tokyo University advanced the theory that the Emperor was only an organ of the State. Although Minobe was now a member of the House of Peers, Premier Okada and Home Minister Goto refused to suppress the book in question. For a long time there was little excitement over the books; then a formal complaint of "less majesty" was filed by a Diet member, and from then until the end of the year few issues surpassed this in the attention of the nation. War Minister Hayashi announced that the issue singularly involved national thought and had to be dealt with. The major parties drafted a resolution and asked the government to clarify the form of the national polity. The debate continued throughout the summer, despite other new and difficult problems. Pressure against Minobe and others who were involved in the general investigation of belief on national polity was relieved to a great extent when the former professor resigned from the House of Peers.
The issue continued to flare up intermittently, however, as the Seiyukai, which had outtrived the militarists in explosive indignation during the whole affair, disapproved of Premier Okada's theory of national polity. On October 15, 1935, the Cabinet finally stated that the "Constitution rested on the principle that sovereignty resided in the Emperor; and that any idea of the State as a repository of sovereignty could not be abided."¹

Meanwhile changes had occurred in both the civilian and military organs of government. A stronger foothold in the civilian government was gained by the bureaucracy by the establishment on May 11, 1935, of the Cabinet Inquiry Council. It was composed of four veteran statesmen, four members of the House of Peers, five members of the House of Representatives, and two financial leaders. The refusal of the Seiyukai to cooperate prejudiced its completely national basis. But the bureaucrats, by whom principally its recommendations were to be prepared, hailed its creation as a move to stabilize the government.

Its first duty was not a very encouraging one. The Administration requested that it find a method of balancing

¹Reischauer, op. cit., p. 168.
the national budget by improving the financial conditions of national and prefectural governments. As there were no important militarists on the Council, it was thought that it might be possible to achieve unity on a proposal to balance the budget by reducing armaments. It was soon found, however, that any tampering with Army appropriations by a non-Army group or individual produced a violent reaction among the military; the only pathway toward real accomplishment open to the Council, therefore, was one which at the same time would lead to its own inevitable damnation.

In July, 1935, there was a radical rearrangement of the Army High Command, reaching deep into the ranks. It was directed by War Minister General Hayashi and Prince Kan'in Kotobito, Chief of the General Staff. Some thirty-five hundred changes of command were made and approved by the Emperor, including that of General Mazaki Jinzaburo, Inspector-General of Military Education, in order to create greater unity in the Army. It was asserted by a secretly circulated pamphlet that this purge was instigated by General Nagata, Director of the Military Affairs Bureau of the War Ministry, in order to supplant the Araki-Mazaki faction with the Ugaki group. Araki and Mazaki were the principal representatives of
the "Young Officers." They were leaders of, and spokes-
men for, the new officer group which had been striving
to supplant the clan cliques in the Army; they advocated
reform in the Japanese social system, as well as a strong
foreign policy. Although it was debatable whether Ugaki
was truly liberal, he certainly was more favorable to
the older cliques of capitalists and politicians.

Before all the changes were effected, General Nagata
was murdered in his office by one of the young officers,
Lieutenant-Colonel Aizawa. The junior officer went to
the office of his superior on August 12, 1935, feeling
that the situation in the country was grave. He said
that the nation was in a deplorable state, the farmers
were impoverished, diplomacy was weak, and the preroga-
tive of the Supreme Command had been violated by the
naval-limitation agreements. There was, however, no
discussion of the problems. Aizawa drew his sword and
lunged, but Nagata dodged. A second thrust reached him
and wounded him slightly. As the General turned to a door
leading to the next room, Aizawa ran him through from the
back. With unparalleled brutality he rushed round and
floored him with two savage cuts on the neck as he leaned
on the table. His cruelty was real, and he was never
sorry. He remarked, "I then remembered that I had failed
to dispatch Nagata with one stroke of my sword, and as a fencing instructor I was ashamed."²

The Big Three of the Army, Field Marshal Prince Kan'in, General Hayashi, and General Watanabe, agreed that stricter discipline was needed in the Army. The younger officers were offering too real a challenge to their superiors, and military efficiency could not be maintained if politics divided the Army. War Minister Hayashi took responsibility for the assassination and resigned. However, no further steps were made to break up the Araki-Mazaki clique by General Kawashima Yoshiyuki who succeeded him. A statement was issued by the Army expressing regrets that a national emergency had been caused by it, and maintained that its program must have the support of the whole nation.

In spite of this recent outburst of the Army, it was evident that a new group of moderate statesmen were gradually becoming stronger and asserting a great deal of authority. The Army extremists, at no point, were able to break through the wall that was again rising up before them. Despite all efforts by the military, the inner group of Imperial advisers continued to be dominated

by the moderates. Of these Prince Saionji was still the most influential. Others were Count Makino, Lord Privy Seal, and Admiral Suzuki, Lord Chamberlain. Every post in the circle of inner advisers surrounding the Emperor was sealed tight against encroachment from the military.

On January 21, 1936, the Diet convened. The Seiyukai was in the majority and was determined to use it to pass a vote of no confidence in the Ministry. It still raised the national polity issue, it wanted a party Cabinet, and it attacked the lack of harmony between defense and industry. Making known that the nature of the Parliamentary debates was preventing just such harmony, the government dissolved the House. During the ensuing election campaign Premier Okada and Finance Minister Takahashi took the unprecedented step of addressing a government-sponsored mass meeting. The wide public interest evoked was expressed in the voting: 11,100,000 votes were cast, representing some eighty per cent of the electorate. Final election returns on February 22 demonstrated the change in popular opinion. The Seiyukai, the most extremist of the two major parties, was roundly defeated, electing only 124 members to the House of Representatives, while the Minseito regained its position as the leading party in the Diet with 205 members. Takejiro
Tokonami and some of his followers had bolted the Seiyukai prior to the election and set up the Showakai Party, of fascist leanings. The Minseito, combined with the new party, the labor members, and the liberal independents, commanded an absolute majority in the Lower House. Policies of the Okada Cabinet were thus vindicated; if a new Ministry were formed, it would probably witness an increase of party influence. To their strongholds at Court and their growing control in the Cabinet, the moderates had now added the Diet, thus closing the last Parliamentary door to the Army extremists. Unless the military were willing to admit defeat, they would be forced to take direct steps either through independent action in the field or a frontal attack at home. They chose the latter course, in the form of the "February 26, 1936, Affair."

The aim of the perpetrators of the crime, according to their declaration, was to exterminate at this moment of great crisis at home and abroad the arch-traitors who were destroying the national polity, such as the Genro, statesmen close to the Throne, financial magnates, certain military cliques, bureaucrats, and members of political parties. Establishment of a full-fledged military dictatorship was actually their objective.
This was not the first time that Army men had taken matters into their own hands, and certainly not the first plot to assassinate authorities. To date, however, this was the first which was so extensive; the first which used common soldiers; and when an Imperial command to disperse was ignored, this was the first to commit what was unquestionably the most serious kind of mutiny.

Admiral Saito, Lord Keeper of the Imperial Seal, who had returned late from a dinner followed by a picture at the American Embassy, was butchered in the presence of his wife. At 5:30 o'clock on the morning of February 26, a detachment of a hundred and fifty soldiers surrounded his home, while two officers and four enlisted men entered the house through the servants' quarters in the rear. The first to notice the disturbance was Viscountess Saito, and just as she pushed aside the sliding door a bullet grazed her left arm. As Saito got out of bed, an officer shot him with a revolver. His body was riddled with thirty-six more bullets from a machine gun as it lay on the matted floor.

At the same time the official residence of Grand Chamberlain Suzuki was surrounded by a hundred soldiers. Led by Captain Teruzo Ando, one of the principal leaders of the military revolt, they forced their way into the
front hall. Suzuki was looking for his sword when the soldiers found him. When he asked what they wanted and suggested talking the matter over, he was told that it was too late to talk. He was shot three times with a revolver, and only when Mrs. Suzuki stepped between her husband and the soldiers was the attempted assassination thwarted. Suzuki's wounds were treated by Dr. Shioda, the famous surgeon who had attended both Premier Hama-guchi and Premier Inukai when they were shot, and he recovered.

Another victim was Finance Minister Korekiyo Takahashi, eighty-three years old, one of the most popular men in Japanese public life. He had been acting Premier for a time following the assassination of Premier Inukai four years earlier, and was now serving in his eighth Cabinet. Breaking down the wooden gate of his residence, a squad of Japanese soldiers rushed into the house, shooting as they went. He was shot with an automatic and brutally hacked with a sword as he lay across his bed. The factor that, more than any other, marked him for assassination was that he held the purse strings and tried by tightening them to keep the Army in check.

The most interesting and baffling of the murders was that of Premier Okada. When the rebels broke into his official residence at five o'clock on the same
morning, an emergency alarm was sounded. Colonel Matsuo, the Premier's brother-in-law, pushed him into the washroom into safety, and was, himself, killed a few minutes later when he tried to escape across the yard. Meanwhile, the Premier hid in the closet of one of the servants. The murderers, not knowing the Premier, were convinced through the persuasion of some of the guards that the body was that of the Cabinet head. The story differs as to how Okada actually got out of the house to freedom. One authority states that, two days after his attempted assassination, he followed his own coffin, in which his brother-in-law's body lay, out of the residence under the noses of the mutineers. According to another author, the Premier was carried out, with a flue mask clamped over his head to prevent possible identification, under the pretext that he had had a stroke. Only advance warnings and flight into the hills nearby saved Count Makino, and Prince Saionji.

The rebels belonged to the first and third regiments of the First Division stationed in Tokyo, which had been mobilized for service in Manchuria; leaders of the revolt were two junior officers, Captains Shiro Nonaka and

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 121.

\(^4\)Wilfrid Fleisher, *Volcanic Isle*, p. 85.
Teruzo Ando. They occupied the Premier's official residence, the War Office, the Metropolitan Police Headquarters, and the Peers' Club, and established headquarters in the Sanno Hotel after evicting the guests. Barbed-wire barricades were thrown across the streets. Martial law was proclaimed and Lieutenant-General Kohei Kashii was placed in command. During the first day or two of the rebellion, it seemed as if the ruling groups would be constrained to accept this result. War Minister Kawashima and many other high officers of the Army tacitly supported the revolt; Army extremists, such as Generals Araki and Mazaki, openly came forward as mediators between the rebels and the Court. Prince Chichibu, hurriedly summoned to Tokyo from his division at Hiro-saki in the north, was thought to be "persona grata" with the extremists. The moderate leaders were either dead or in hiding. On the other hand, the populace failed to accept the rebellion, hardly surprising in view of the clear expression of public opinion in the last election. Army extremists hesitated to take the dangerous step of calling out other military units to assist the rebels; in the face of this hesitation, many officers who sympathized with the aims of the uprising were impelled to protest against its methods. Thus the Army was disunited, while
the Navy was definitely hostile. After a period of confusion and perplexity, the government finally won in a battle of words. An appeal was directed to the rebel soldiers over telephones and loudspeakers by General Kashii. The gist of the message was:

If you have been thinking you were doing right, you must now reconsider and return to your barracks, otherwise you will be branded as traitors and your fathers, brothers, mothers and sisters will be weeping. They hope you will return to your barracks under the flag of Japan.5

The message had a magic effect, and the rebels surrendered. The revolution had lasted eighty-one hours, and not a shot had been fired from behind the barricades.

So far as the people of Tokyo were concerned, the affair was liquidated in a few weeks. Its repercussions, however, were felt for a long time. Naturally, the Army's prestige had suffered an enormous blow. To demonstrate its profound humiliation, the seven generals on the Supreme War Council resigned, and of these Generals Araki, Mazaki, Hayashi, and Abe were retired, while the other three received other appointments. The Minister of War was replaced by General Terauchi Juichi; command of the Kwantung Army -- which went with the ambassadorship to Manchukuo -- was shifted; General Minami, who gave up

5Ibid., p. 94.
the post, became a Supreme War Councillor; and the com-
mander of the Tokyo garrison was replaced.

Compared with the loss to the nation by Takahashi's
death, however, these changes were insignificant. The
War and Navy Ministers had been forced to submit their
budget demands to Finance Minister Takahashi since De-
cember, 1931. His position had enabled him not only to
exercise some control over militarist activities, but
as the representative of the financial world in the gov-
ernment, also to strengthen his official control by in-
forming the militarists just how far the capitalists,
of whom they could not be independent, would go with
them. The government, the capitalists, and the peace of
the nation all suffered equally by his death.

The Army, though, was not greatly injured by its
loss of prestige. Selfish quarreling among political
parties, and lack of self-denial and sacrifice for the
nation were what brought about the uprising, according
to apologists who came forth at once in behalf of the
Army. They reiterated that there would be a recurrence
of the same thing if something were not done at once to
purify the national spirit. They insisted that the
young captains and lieutenants involved were of poor
agrarian families who were striking back at the oppressors
of their class. It appeared later in the semi-official Japan Times, however, that among fourteen of the leaders, four were the sons of generals, one the son of a rear admiral, one the son of a colonel, and the other two the sons, respectively, of a lieutenant and a sergeant-major. Only one was the son of a farmer.

No event in recent Japanese history better demonstrates the complexity of the conflicts inside the nation than do these assassinations. Among those who were killed was General Watanabe Jotaro, Inspector-General of Military Education. Why should he have been killed? For the same reason that General Nagata had been assassinated is the obvious reason. These two soldiers believed literally in the Meiji Emperor's admonition to soldiers to avoid political matters. They represented a faction in the Japanese Army which also included Generals Ugaki Kazushige, Terauchi Juichi, and Abe Nobuyuki. They were able to enforce their views because of their high positions. The other group, of which the Young Officers' League was the most explosive exponent, and which looked to Generals Araki and Mazaki for leadership, caused their assassination. Of the sixteen Japanese Prime Ministers since World War I, five were assassinated -- Hara, Takeda, Hamaguchi, Inukai, and Saito. A sixth, Admiral
Okada, narrowly missed a similar fate.

The moderates now held the initiative momentarily, although their losses in the rebellion were severe. The Emperor called Prince Saloinji and Count Makino, strongest liberal statesmen, into consultation after it was found that Premier Okada still lived. Prince Konoye was offered the Premiership on March 4, 1936, but declined on the plea of ill-health and lack of ability to cope with the crisis. Koki Hirota, former Foreign Minister, then assumed the task, forming a Cabinet which included several party members. Nevertheless, it brought the bureaucratic group, from which Hirota himself came, into primary prominence. His first choices, announced two days later, included a set of liberal Ministers, who, if they had been confirmed, would have constituted a Ministry similar to that under Admiral Okada. This was immediately forestalled by Army pressure, although the Supreme Military Council disavowed any desire to alter the form of government and proclaimed its intentions to cooperate with a civilian Cabinet. From their vantage point the militarists vetoed the selection of Shigeru Yoshida as Foreign Minister. Yoshida was strongly opposed to any policies which would lead to a break with Britain or the United States, and he was the son-in-law
of the strongest liberal statesman, Count Makino. Hirota took Foreign Affairs in addition to the Prime Minis-
tership. The militarists disapproved the appointments of
Naoshi Ohara, who in the previous Cabinet had insisted
on prosecuting the assassins of Premier Inukai, as Min-
ister of Justice, and of Hiroshi Shimomura, editor of the
then liberal Tokyo Asahi, as Overseas Minister. Gen-
eral Terauchi, Minister of War, also would not permit
the appointment of Kawasaki, a Minseito party man, to
the Home Ministry, but did approve selection of Keino-
suke Ushio, a non-party bureaucrat and member of the
Kokuhonsha. Important changes also occurred among the
inner circle of the Emperor's advisers. Continued pres-
sure from the extremists forced Baron Ikki, President of
the Privy Council, to resign, and he was succeeded by
the reactionary Baron Hiranuma. In the Imperial House-
hold Ministry, however, the moderates retained control
through the appointment of Kurahei Yussa as Lord Privy
Seal, in place of the murdered Viscount Saito, and of
Tsuneo Matsudaira as Minister of the Imperial Household.

Under these circumstances, and despite popular an-
tipathy, the part played by the military in the Cabinet
became far more influential than at any time in the
previous five years. General Terauchi, by cautious and
conservative leadership and with great unified support from the Army as a whole, directed the military-fascist movement from the top as it proceeded to work for its objectives. Terrorism was eschewed and its exponents curbed, except as a latent threat held over the heads of the moderates to force acceptance of demands presented in the Cabinet. General Terauchi, besides revising ministerial personnel, exacted a number of pledges from the Premier in the course of negotiations leading to formation of the new government. These pledges were along four major lines: vastly larger appropriations for the military-naval establishments, to be financed by heavier taxation; definite steps toward a controlled economy, beginning with nationalization of certain selected enterprises; revision of the parliamentary structure; and a "positive" foreign policy. It was toward the close of Hirota's term of office, however, before the full outlines of this program became apparent. General Terauchi, in an effort to counteract the hostile popular sentiment toward the Army, had the young officers involved in the revolt court-martialed and shot, and retired some officers among the lower ranks while shifting many others. He thus concentrated control in his own hands, and strengthened Army unity. His control was so strong that he even succeeded in revoking the ordinance which had permitted
generals on the reserve list to become Minister of War, and this at a time when their number in active service had become very limited.

Apprehension of the bourgeois moderates was somewhat relieved by these measures, but popular response was not forthcoming, despite the wide publicity which attended the purge and the "restoration of discipline" in the Army. Because of this dormancy of the public opinion, martial law was prolonged for nearly six months until the middle of July. Rigid control of the press and the silencing of opposition voices were among its provisions. Labor demonstrations on May 1 were banned. These efforts were even aided in some cases by leaders of the political parties. Further steps in this direction were taken during the Extraordinary Diet session which was opened by the Emperor in May, 1936. He departed from his customary formally prescribed speech, and included the following words:

We regret the outbreak of the recent incident in Tokyo. It is expected of our faithful subjects that they will unite as one, government and people, civilians and military, to promote the development of national prosperity.6

This Imperial intervention was a rebuke to the Army, but it also served to soften the popular resentment against

the military.

Nevertheless, several reactionary bills were introduced under Army pressure in this session of the Diet. A bill for protection and surveillance of persons charged with "dangerous thoughts" after their release from prison was passed and strengthened the notorious Peace Preservation Law of 1925, which had made it a crime to organize associations designed to alter Japan's national polity or repudiate the system of private ownership of property. Two bills, a Mobilization Secrets Bill and a Seditious Bill, both of which could have been utilized to stifle freedom of speech and the press, were introduced by the Army but met with strong opposition. The first was eventually abandoned, and, although the second was passed, several amendments weakened its force and made it apply solely to emergency situations. Dissatisfaction with the Hirota Government was evidenced by the opposition to these bills, both within the Diet and from the general public, a discontent which continued to increase. Diverse opinion also witnessed to Terauchi's failure to moderate popular suspicion of the Army's motives and activities.

Another schism developed in October, 1936, when the press reported a set of reform proposals which was said
to be receiving strong backing from the Army authorities. This scheme, as reported, provided for organization of an inner cabinet to be composed of only a few Ministers; separation of legislative and executive powers in such a way as to deny a political party the right to organize a government; annulment of the Diet's right to impeach a government by vote of non-confidence; abolition of universal suffrage by enfranchising only the head of a family or a person who had served in the Army; and functional instead of territorial representation. A storm of protest was raised when these proposals were published. Statements were made by General Terauchi on November 6 and Premier Hirota on November 16 in an attempt to allay suspicion, but they only succeeded in intensifying the unrest. The Hirota Cabinet's efforts to secure parliamentary reform ended at this point, with an aroused public opposition in full cry and the War Minister covering his retreat.

When the Diet members reassembled during the regular called session in January, 1937, after the customary holiday-season recess, they were provided with a full store of ammunition for a verbal attack on the Hirota Ministry. Difficulties over the Soviet-Japanese fisheries agreement, unpopularity of the German-Japanese
pact, and lack of results attending the China negotia-
tions laid the government's foreign policy open to
wholesale condemnation. Emasculation of parliamentary
government by Diet reforms as attempted by Terauchi
was generally resented by the public. Also the Cabinet
had become exceedingly vulnerable because of its budget
program which increased taxes and deficit financing.

This vigorous attack launched on the Cabinet by
party members immediately created a governmental cri-
sis. None of the ranking party leaders had sought this,
which was mainly the work of young progressive members
in the two major parties. After the session, the Cabi-
et obtained Imperial sanction to prorogue the Diet for
two days, January 22 and 23. This period of proroga-
tion was featured by active political maneuvering. Rank-
ing leaders of the Minseito and Seiyukai denounced the
step as unconstitutional. The War Minister demanded
that the Diet be dissolved, and a sharp struggle ensued
within the Cabinet. Apparently in an effort to force
the Premier to dissolve the House, Terauchi privately
submitted his resignation on January 22, after conferring
with other Army officers. A compromise was sought by
the Navy, which was seconded by the Emperor's advisers.
The Cabinet was divided, and it seemed that the War
Minister might have his way. However, the four party members and Navy Minister Nagano Osumi held out against dissolution, and on January 23 the Ministry turned in its resignation.

The next few days, following the dismissal of the Hirota Government, clearly showed who were in control of the nation. The structure was still not perfect, but there was no other group in Japan, governmental or otherwise, which could now challenge the position of the militarists. Thus, when on January 25 General Ugaki, former Governor-General of Korea, was requested to form a Cabinet, he could find no one both willing and eligible to fill the post of Minister of War, for his selection was rigorously opposed by Prince Kanin, Chief of Staff, General Terauchi and General Sugiyama, Inspector-General of Education, on the grounds that Army discipline could not be restored were he to form a government. He was also a moderate and a friend of the politicians, and the militarists feared the power which he might wield if he became Premier. He worked hard for a week, but finally had to confess his failure to the Throne.

General Senjiro Hayashi was finally selected as Prime Minister on February 2, 1937, and he allowed no Minister to retain party affiliations while in his
Cabinet. Not only had the Army forced the resignation of one Ministry, but it had checked the formation of another, and the Terauchi-Sugiyama clique had been able to select its own Premier. The Navy, which had been quietly standing by to reaffirm its loyalty to the Emperor during the troubles of past years, was represented by its own choice, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, Mitsumasa Yonei. Terauchi, at the demand of the Diet, left the War Ministry in favor of Lieutenant-General Kotaro Nakamura, and accepted the position of Inspector-General of Military Education, which was undoubtedly a demotion. The liberal capitalists demanded that Finance Minister Baba be relieved of his position, and Yuki Toyotaro was put in his place, another feather in the Army's cap. The latter summed up in his person the basic political evolution that was taking place in Japan's ruling circles. He was president of the Industrial Bank of Japan, and concurrently president of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Yuki had, on the other hand, in recent years drawn close to the Army, and favored arms and industrial expansion -- factors which won him the allegiance of heavy industry. He was thus uniquely fitted to harmonize all capitalist interests and marshal them behind an economic program adapted
Many factors combined to weaken the parties' position at the outset of this new period of conflict. Lieutenant-General Sugiyama, who replaced Nakamura in the War Ministry due to serious illness, and General Terauchi, who assumed the position of Inspector-General of Military Education upon Sugiyama's resignation to accept the former position, merely exchanged places in two of the "Big Three" posts and thus retained dominance in the Army. This success in ousting party men from the Cabinet was a bold advance toward exclusion of the parties from governmental authority. Leaders of the major parties, surprised by this Army offensive, were inclined to hesitancy and compromise. The feeling that Yuki's revision of the budget would conduce to the interests of their capitalist supporters reinforced this tendency. Throughout the legislative session, the Army continued to hold the threat of dissolution over the heads of the party leaders. There were efforts to disrupt the two major parties and organize a new fascist party out of dissident elements, which strengthened the position of the Army. The Seiyukai was in the throes of a serious internal crisis, with a strong reformist faction under Army influence disputing for leadership. It
reached an unprecedented low when Kisaburo Suzuki re-signed as president, and its guidance had to be placed in the hands of a committee representing the several factions. Thus, it was no wonder that the opposition during the session was confined mainly to occasional courageous criticism from individual deputies.

These diversions, however, could not conceal the position to which the parties and parliamentary politics had been reduced under the Hayashi Ministry. The basic trend was indicated by the smooth functioning of the Yuki-Ikeda combination, which was intent on forcing Japan's industrial development into the straight and narrow path of preparation for war. It was indicated by huge Army-Navy appropriations, to which the business interests had easily accommodated themselves. The parties followed suit and swallowed the insult of exclusion from Cabinet posts in approving the budget. Their defense was not an attack on fundamental aims of the military-fascist program, but solely an effort to maintain their parliamentary rights.

The un-cooperative attitude of the Diet produced an early reaction. The Premier charged that it had unduly obstructed the passage of legislation and dissolved it on March 31. The general election set for April 30 found
the government without an organized party to represent it at the polls. The threat prevailed until nearly the end of the campaign that a new party, essentially dominated by the Army, would be organized by the government. Campaign issues were also revealed by the government's orders to prefectural chiefs of police to prevent candidates from speaking in a manner calculated to alienate the people from the Army during the election. The Minseito and Seiyukai countered by saying they were prepared to introduce a vote of non-confidence at the special session of the Parliament to be called after the election. In a battle of words the Cabinet stated that it was ready to dissolve the Diet a second time if results at the polls did not prove satisfactory. In spite of all his efforts, Hayashi was unable to organize a new party by April 30 that would stand any chance of success in the election. Only sixty per cent of the electorate voted; yet the Premier avoided a concession of severe defeat only by announcing that he could not be defeated since he had made no effort to win the election. The results showed the Minseito with 179 members, the Seiyukai with 175, which meant a combined opposition of well over an absolute majority, and the Showakai, the main government supporter, lost six seats. Among the newly elected deputies of all parties, the government
could muster hardly fifty adherents.

Premier Hayashi elected to remain in office, although under normal constitutional procedure such an election result would seem to have called for his immediate resignation. The Cabinet prepared to face a special session of the Diet, but it postponed the date for the session until August, or five months after dissolution -- the final limit permitted by law. Its most serious problem was how to cope with the parties. Organization of a new party out of the material thrown up by the election was patently impossible and had to be abandoned. Matters very soon became quite serious when on May 19 the Minseito and Seiyukai established a joint headquarters to overthrow the Ministry. A combined rally of the two parties in Tokyo on May 28 carried the movement further. Sentiment in the House of Peers turned against the government. Its only organized support in the Lower House, the Showakai, voluntarily dissolved on May 21 as an example to the other parties. Its position becoming hopeless, the Cabinet resigned on May 31, 1937, after a little over three months in office.

The new government, formed by Prince Fumimaro Konoye, was a further departure from party allegiance than any previous ones. For the key posts he chose the leading reactionary figures of the two previous Cabinets. General
Sugiyama and Admiral Yonsai were carried over as War and Navy Ministers, affording the clearest evidence that no real change in policy was contemplated. As Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Konoye retained the experienced Hirota. According to one authority three of the Ministers were from political parties,\(^7\) while another says they only had two minor portfolios.\(^8\) The Administration became extremely nationalistic as well as bureaucratic, and its policy was dictated almost entirely by events that took place on the Asiatic continent in July, 1937. Not only were the potentially liberal members of the Cabinet successfully silenced by new military operations in China, but the Cabinet sponsored a new and more intensive program of unification and centralization. Independent liberals, such as Mikio Ozaki, were impotent and Japan slowly drifted into a state of war psychology under which all activities were directed towards a speedy and successful termination of the struggle.

Less than five weeks after the Konoye Cabinet assumed office, the first shot of the war with China was fired at Lukouchiao. Within this brief period, the Army retrieved political victory from apparent disaster, and

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\(^7\)Reischauer, op. cit., p. 181.

\(^8\)Bisson, op. cit., p. 272.
Hayashi's fall was in the nature of a rout. The Army skillfully reformed its lines. This was the beginning of the end for the liberal opposition; it was to be swept away and its cause lost.

On July 23 the special two-week Diet session began, and the House was told by Foreign Minister Hirota that the Ministry was prepared to take all appropriate steps in coping with what might at any moment become a dangerous situation. By August 2 the adoption of emergency taxation and commercial control measures already put Japan on a nearly wartime basis; and two days later a supplementary budget was approved for North China use. The special session ended on August 7, in an atmosphere of unity unknown for years.

The Administration organized by Premier Konoye, with its "national union" basis, was well suited to take advantage of the change effected in public opinion. In the political parties progressive tendencies were submerged by the flood of nationalist propaganda. Political leaders vied with each other in demonstrating their firm support of the government in its prosecution of the war. While details of establishing a wartime economy were thus being arranged, the Army and Navy authorities were entrenching their position as sole arbiter of the
conduct of war operations through the establishment of an Imperial Headquarters on November 12, 1937. By this means they took a firm hold on control of military operations in China, which was the paramount political concern of the country. Overshadowed by this enterprise, the Cabinet, to the delight of the militarists, was relegated to a subsidiary role. Political trends in Japan under the stress of war conditions were also marked by the re-emergence of the Army extremists, whose influence had gone into partial eclipse after the assassinations in Tokyo in February, 1936. Recall to active service of many extremist officers was necessitated by mobilization of an Army of one million soldiers. Another movement in the ranks of the militarists to consolidate their position at home was the arrest, during late December, 1937, of all persons suspected of harboring "dangerous thoughts," that is, those with liberal or radical leanings. The press was stringently prohibited to mention these arrests until the end of January, 1938, when the police released some information as to the scope and details of the raids.

The Parliament, meanwhile, raised little opposition to passage of the budget as presented to it by the government and exhibited a true sense of unity toward full prosecution of the undeclared war with China. Konoye
sanctioned the Chinese adventure, approved the Army’s immense rearmament program, and forced the National Mobilization Bill through the reluctant Diet. It became evident in the fall of 1938, however, that the Premier was compromising his principles in an attempt to heal strife and allay friction, for when the Army presented a new series of demands including sole control over the administration of invaded China, closer links with the Rome-Berlin Axis, and invocation of Article XI of the National Mobilization Bill, which restricted dividend rates and the utilization of profits, he could only half-heartedly approve them. After a vague, weak speech by the Premier, difficulties began to multiply, and Konoye resigned on January 3, 1939.

On the next day in Tokyo the new Premier was announced: Baron Kichiro Hiranuma, fascist lawyer and fanatical patriot -- and a man whose ambition to become Premier Saionji had persistently thwarted for years. For the first time in modern Japanese history the Genro was overruled. Also Hiranuma’s selection indicated that defeat had come both for the clique of great industrial families which had a powerful hand in molding Japan and for such liberal political institutions as the Empire imported from the West.
Strangely enough, it was Konoye, who now became president of the all-important Privy Council, who was to lead the fight against the militarist regime under Hiranuma. In this high post he fought bitterly against a military alliance with the Rome-Berlin Axis, demanded by the Army just prior to the Hitler-Stalin accord. He might have remained in this role had not Herr Hitler triumphed in Europe. Initial German victories had a tremendous impact upon Japan. They whetted the Army's appetite for new conquests, gave a boost to domestic jingoism, and strengthened the demand for rigid regimentation of national life. It was big business that fought back stubbornly, and once again turned to Konoye for aid. The Army's drive towards military dictatorship had to be halted before it was too late, and the moneyed interests felt that he could succeed the aged Genro, Saionji, as the apostle of moderation and capitalism. Every channel of public opinion controlled by big business was employed to build him up, and the purpose of the campaign, shrouded in pious verbiage, was to create a one-man dictatorship, friendly to big business and depending for its strength upon its access to the Emperor, its control of a single party which was to be formed and its influence at the Court. The Prince was the ideal man for the job of
bringing the Army and big business to a compromise as he was a "middle-of-the-roader" unexcelled.

It was an "outsider," however, who brought about the fall of the government. After more than seventy meetings of the Hiranuma "Inner Cabinet" in eight months, five leading Ministers still had not decided whether the country should raise the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Anti-Comintern Pact to a military alliance. The Nazi Fuehrer became impatient and came to terms with the Soviet Union. The Japanese Premier, dumbfounded, renounced the Axis, and resigned on August 28, 1939.

The Army elder statesmen chose General Nobuyuki Abe as Premier to collect the threads of Japanese policy after the German-Soviet non-aggression pact was signed. He thus became the second soldier to head a Japanese administration since the Manchurian incident made the Army the propelling force in Japan's national life. He was little known and had been on inactive duty for the past three years as a result of the purge following the revolt in 1936. He was also the only full general in militarist circles who had not seen active service.

His tenure of approximately four months had as its principal problem the solution of a commercial treaty with the United States, which eventually lead to its
downfall. In August, 1939, during United States' Ambassador Grew's absence in the United States, the State Department had given Japan six months' advance notice of the American intention to denounce the treaty of commerce between the United States and Japan which was to lapse on January 26, 1940. Japanese leaders became extremely nervous of the consequences as that dread day approached, believing that it would lead to immediate embargoes on American products essential to Japan's prosecution of her war in China and to her own existence at home. Once again foreign relations took precedence over domestic affairs as Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura, Foreign Minister in the Abe Cabinet and serving as Japanese Ambassador in Washington, opened negotiations with Ambassador Grew to bridge the growing gap in American-Japanese relations. Admiral Nomura was notified that the American attitude was to conclude reciprocal commercial treaties with all nations which did not discriminate against American trade and from which the United States might expect equality of commercial rights and opportunities on a reciprocal basis, but the Minister went no further than to make a gesture to reopen the Yangtze river to navigation below Nanking under conditions which were never specified. Inability to come
to an agreement on this vital question, plus the increasing problems of high prices, scarcity of food, and the unsatisfactory progress of the war, caused Abe to resign on January 16, 1940, ten days before the expiration of the commercial treaty.

Prince Konoye, now an Imperial adviser himself, was urged to accept the Premiership but refused. The Prince then tried to persuade General Shunroku Hata, retiring War Minister, to take the job. The Army objected, fearing the possibility of more blame on its head for any subsequent government failures. Emperor Hirohito had Kuraheii Yuasa, Lord Keeper of the Imperial Seal, confer with three former Premiers and also consult Prince Kimmochi Saionji, the seemingly ageless Elder Stateman. As a result of these conferences the Navy provided Abe's successor: Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai, who had been Navy Minister in the Hiranuma Cabinet.

The Emperor called Hata to the palace to demand the Army's cooperation with the new government of Admiral Yonai. The Admiral's first appointment was to make Hachiro Arita his Foreign Minister. On the following day he completed his Cabinet, retaining Hata as War Minister and Admiral Zengo Yoshida as Navy Minister. This choice of the Admiral to unravel the tangled skeins of Japanese
politics and diplomacy was a surprise to Tokyo, for it meant nothing less than the beginning of an experiment with a new policy. The Admiral was a determined liberal, and, naturally, opposed any extremist schemes of the Army. In fact, in Hiranuma's Government, he kept these extremists from drawing Japan into a military alliance with the Axis Powers on the ground that in such a tie-up the Navy would have to bear the brunt of any war the country might be involved in as a result of partnership with Germany and Italy.

Army dissatisfaction with the Cabinet became increasingly manifest, and the air was filled with rumors of the possibility of another incident similar to that of February 26, 1936. Because of the overwhelming successes of the Germans in Europe, the Army decided that the time had come to join the Axis, and they, subsequently, caused dismissal of the Prime Minister with little more ceremony than a corporation would use in changing its janitor. When the War Minister presented his views on a new political structure at home and a new foreign policy, the Premier replied that he did not share the War Minister's views and asked him to resign, which was what the Army had hoped would happen. When the Army refused to supply another War Minister for the Cabinet, Yonai resigned in July, 1940.
Before accepting the Imperial mandate to become Premier, Konoye asked that War and Navy Ministers be furnished. The Army complied and appointed General Hideki Tojo, who afterwards became the War Premier; the Navy made no change. Konoye then named Yosuke Matsuoka as Foreign Minister, and the four decided the new government's policy before Konoye troubled to appoint the other members of the Cabinet. In a few weeks the result of those consultations was seen. An alliance was signed in Berlin and a commission was appointed to prepare a "new structure" of totalitarian design.

The Premier believed in a new political structure. He thought that an authoritarian type of state would work better among a politically immature people than a representative system. He wanted to bring the Army into the new structure, hoping thereby to end its interference with the central government. The keynote of the speech which started the movement was:

The new national structure movement aims at superseding the old party politics predicated upon liberalism. . . . Nor can it be allowed to take the form of a single party system: . . . as it is contrary to the basic principle of our national policy of 'One Sovereign over all.' In Japan, it is the privilege of every one of His Imperial Majesty's subjects to assist the Throne, and that privilege cannot be monopolized by the power of a single person or a single party.9

With this announcement, a new organization, the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, was established. It was soon apparent, however, that this association was not to be a substitute for political party organizations but rather a vehicle for mass mobilization of the people behind Japan's total war effort and a framework within which various agencies could operate to maintain home-front morale. Political parties, in an endeavor to curry favor with the new leaders and out of fear that Diet members who failed to fall in line might lose their seats in a wholesale reorganization of Parliament, dissolved, one after another, to make ready for the new structure, the Seiyukai in July, and the Minseito, the most powerful Diet group, in August, 1940. This sudden disappearance of the only serious organized opposition to absolutist government, after nearly sixty years of intense activity, must be regarded as epochal. Approximately three months later, on November 24, 1940, liberalism received another hard blow when Prince Saionji died. He was the last of the Genro.

All sorts of methods of terrorism and repression came with the new structure. Freedom of speech had long ago disappeared, and no one dared express any opinion either publicly or privately. Telephone lines were
tapped, and contents of wastepaper baskets were closely investigated. No criticism of the China war or the Army was conceivable.

Konoye was willing to go a long way with the Army and had done so, but he was unwilling to go to war with the United States. He attempted to deliver American acceptance of Japanese conquests through negotiation, but was unable to do so. He, therefore, resigned on October 16, 1941, to make way for those who were willing to risk Japan's greatest military gamble. Military government came into the open at last.

The appointment of General Hideki Tojo as Premier, on October 18, 1941, certainly should have been taken as substantial evidence that aggression was in the air. He was an important member of the Kwantung Army clique, the powerhouse of aggression in Japanese Army politics, having served as the head of the dread military police of the Kwantung Army and later as its Chief of Staff. He had entered the first Konoye Cabinet as Vice-Minister of War and was later chief of Japan's air forces. As War Minister in Konoye's second and third Cabinets, he re-organized the Army, strengthened its air force and generally streamlined it for offensive war. Clearly Tojo possessed the qualities of driving militarism, the military and administrative leadership and the political experience required of a Premier who was destined to launch
the greatest military effort in Japanese history.

Tojo retained five of the Ministers who held portfolios in the previous Konoe Cabinet, but they were of strong nationalist leanings. The new naval Minister was Shigetaro Shimada, the Foreign Minister, Shigenori Togo, and Okinobu Kaya became the Finance Minister. They were all extremists.

All internal obstacles to the creation of a military totalitarianism were swept aside so the Army could be in a position to execute without delay any program upon which it decided. Political parties had been dissolved for over a year, and the Imperial Rule Assistance Association was taken over by the Army. The Diet was little more than a sounding board for public opinion, and there was talk of circumventing it. But as it was created by the Constitution it could not be disposed of without offense to the Emperor's sacrosanct person.

The last bills passed by the Diet in peacetime were dictated by the militarists. Revision of the National Mobilization Law provided legal foundation for government control of the whole economic structure of the Empire. The new National Security Defense Bill was so severe that even a member of Parliament could be imprisoned for as much as ten years for talking to a foreign
correspondent. Another bill gave the Navy first and undisputed call on every ton of Japanese shipping. The fight between the extremists and the moderates was over. Japan turned her corner in history on December 7, 1941.
EPILOGUE

The Constitution of 1889 was drafted by Ito Hirobumi, at the request of the Emperor, in an effort to satisfy the popular demand for partial self-government. Ito, however, did not believe the people were capable of ruling themselves and met their clamor with one of the cleverest documents that has ever deceived credulous human beings. He was determined to keep ultimate power in the hands of the aristocracy. He accomplished this by mollifying the populace with apparent concessions, at the same time depriving them of their remaining rights. The Emperor was not given supreme power, and the people did not receive the type of government for which they had striven. Thus the very Constitution that was supposed to establish a constitutional monarchy, made it impossible.

The government was dominated by the Elder Statesmen from 1889 to 1918. Their power was exercised through control of the formation and dissolution of the Cabinet, and nomination of the members of the Privy Council, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, Minister of the Imperial Household, and President of the House of Peers. The aristocratic
Genro were the ruling authority till the death of Ito in 1909. Thereafter, the military Genro, championed by General Yamagata, dominated, openly till 1918, and indirectly till the latter's death in 1922. It was now predominantly a contest between Army and Navy, not between the aristocracy and military.

Politicians made their strongest effort to dominate the administration during the years 1918-1932. They were aided by a populace which suddenly awoke to its governmental responsibilities, a public which after 1925, for the first time, was granted universal male adult suffrage. The masses were influenced more by outstanding personalities than by a common set of beliefs, and this weakness created dissonance and prevented a strong unified system for a prolonged struggle against the militarists. Political parties caused the fall of several Ministries, but inability to determine their successors led to their decline in importance. Saionji, the most liberal, and the last, of the Genro, kept the aristocratic political hopes alive. In 1932 civil authority was emasculated by political activities of conservative and militarist elements, directed by General Tanaka.

The Army advance toward complete power culminated in the nine years between 1932 and 1941. A group of
young officers in the putsch of February, 1936, attempted to establish a dictatorship by murdering responsible civilian and military officials. General Terauchi and other military elders, fearing that a division in the Army would mean their loss of control, applied stricter discipline to their commands and punished the leaders of the revolt. All internal obstacles to the creation of a military totalitarianism were swept aside so that the Army could execute without delay any program upon which it decided. The last Genro had died, political parties were dissolved, freedom of speech was suppressed. The Diet was reduced to little more than a debating society. Military Premiers used party men in their Cabinets only for appeasement and then in unimportant positions. The Cabinet was relegated to a subsidiary role by the establishment of the Imperial Headquarters.

By December, 1941, Japan, in less than sixty years, had emerged from obscurity and isolation and grown to the stature of one of the greatest world powers. As Ito had planned, Japan had been, and still was, ruled by an oligarchy; but it was now governed by the military instead of the aristocrats as the Prince had originally intended. General Tojo diverted all energies of Dai Nippon toward conquest and aggression.
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