

TAKASHI HARA AND CHINA (2)

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III

After the Russo-Japanese war Hara spent very busy days, as a leader of the Seiyukai Party and also the Home Minister of the 1st and 2nd Saionji Cabinet. During those years he went abroad two times in private capacity when he was out of office. He visited America and Europe from August 1908 to February the next year, and next he made about one month's trip in China and Korea in May, 1911. He called those travels "tours" in his diary, but of course they were not mere pleasure-trips. He tried to see with his own eyes the world changing rapidly day by day. Those tours brought large profits to him who was always exerting himself to learn much more from his own experiences than from reading books. For the first time he visited the United States of America. He was much impressed by the economic activity of the country and her "development of people's power". He was deeply moved and said, "The most formidable nation in the future will be this country." On this matter, however, I will touch later and here I want to tell about his tour in China.

He visited China again after a long interval, for it was 26 years since he returned home in 1885, finishing his duty at Tientsin. I already mentioned in the last issue of this study about the extreme difficulties he had had on the way to Tientsin to which he had been appointed consul at the age of 28. This time he could enjoy quite a convenient and comfortable trip. The places he visited were only small section of North China and Manchuria, but he was surprised at the extraordinary change of aspects at every place he went to. The changes in Tientsin where he had lived before were the most remarkable. There remained no vestiges of its former days excepting part of the British concession. The old Tientsin he had been accustomed to see had almost vanished away. He was the more astonished when he was told that such great changes in Chinese society had been carried out within a dozen years or so after the Boxer Rebellion. The Chinese society, which he had conceived to be the typical of stagnant societies, was now changing greatly. He was also deeply

impressed by Japanese people displaying activities in various places. He was delighted to see Japan's expansion abroad, since he had always envied Englishmen and Frenchmen who were displaying activities in foreign countries, establishing colonies and building up their own streets in concessions.¹⁾

But all that he met with there was not favourable. He found the anti-Japanese sentiment of the Chinese was unexpectedly rife. "The government of China is eager to imitate Japan in the fields of government organization and many other systems, and Chinese newspapers are adopting Japanese words and phrases to use them as they are, just as Japanese papers do Western words. In spite of these facts there is a rather strong anti-Japanese sentiment here." Japanese residents in China may say that it is due to the agitation of those who studied in Japan and returned home without obtaining a diploma, for they can not succeed in society and their complaints make them speak ill of Japan. It may be one reason, but "I think there are a lot of affairs to be settled between them and ourselves, and that the Japanese are often doing such things as hurt their feelings. At any rate these states of affairs must be paid attention to."²⁾

Apart from these troubles, his travel was a fruitful and pleasant one. Though he went in private capacity, he was given a warm welcome everywhere, and could have opportunities of meeting important government officials. The weather was favourable, his health condition was good, and he indeed enjoyed himself; he spoke cheerfully of the trip after he returned home. But, to tell the truth, the early signs of the Chinese Revolution had already begun to work at this time. The after outbreak of the Revolution was seen in October, 1911, only five months after his visit to China.

The 2nd Saionji Cabinet was organized at the end of August of the year, and Hara took part in it as Home Minister. About 40 days after that, or on October 10 to be exact, an uprising broke out at Wuchang. The upheaval in Szechwan Province concerning the nationalization of the railway had already begun in September. The enlargement of the revolutionary movement could be anticipated by some Japanese, but any clear foresight of it could be held neither by the Cabinet nor by the military authorities. The Cabinet members concluded at the Council on October 24 that "The state of affairs in China is quite

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- 1) T. Hara: *Shina Chosen Man-yu-dan* [An Account of My Tour in China and Korea], *Hara Takashi Zenshu* [Complete Works of T. Hara], Vol. II.
 - 2) *Hara Takashi Nikki* [Diary of T. Hara], Vol. IV, May 31, 1911.

uneasy, and nobody could foresee what it will become hereafter.”³⁾ It was an honest confession of theirs. It was really impossible to have any definite and integrated policy toward China. Even in the inside of the military there was a discord between the Ministry of War and the General Staff Office. The former was accepting orders for weapons from the Peking Government, while the latter was willing to support the revolutionaries in secret by selling them weapons. Hara himself was at a loss. But anyway he had his doubts about the position of Premier Saionji and Foreign Minister Uchida who had compassion on the Peking Government. Perhaps he read instinctively the possibility of the development of the revolution. He said to Saionji and Uchida who were against selling weapons to the revolutionaries, “I don’t think it a good diplomatic idea to inquire into justice so exactly that we may injure feelings of either the Peking Government or the revolutionaries. Of course, all the ideas the General Staff Office hold are not approvable, but I think this problem needs further consideration.”⁴⁾ “From the present state of things we can not judge at all what the rebels or the government forces will become, so that we shall invite our disadvantages if we act too simply and honestly in obedience to diplomatic formulas alone.”⁵⁾ “At the last Council (on Oct. 13) they sympathized with the Peking Government, which is the rightful government of the land, without any compassion on the rebels at all. But today (14th) the main opinion was that to act with too simple an honesty is not a wise policy for our sake.” He wrote the above in his diary.⁶⁾

The progress of the affairs gradually attracted Hara to the revolutionaries. Neither the loan asked for by the Peking Government nor the plan of advising the adoption of constitutional monarchy, both of which were proposed by Foreign Minister Uchida, should be allowed to pass the Cabinet Council, now that the South party had gained so much power. He wrote in his diary as follows: “I said that both Japan and England almost equally have great interests in the South China, and it will be our large loss to hurt the sentiment of the revolutionaries by accepting the Government’s request for loan; therefore, I think we had better take the same measure as England does and decline the loan. The

3) Gaimushō [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], ed.: *Nihon gaikō nenpyō narabini shuyō bunsho, 1840-1945* [*An Chronological Table of Japanese Foreign Policy and Important Documents*], Vol. I, p. 356.

4) *Diary*, Vol. IV, Oct, 19, 1911.

5) *Ibid.*, Oct. 20, 1911.

6) *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1911.

Council has decided so. Anyhow, no loans should be given to either party. The financial difficulty of them both may be a good cause for inducing them to conclude peace with each other. I also believe we should not take a policy at today's stage which will make the revolutionaries feel unpleasant."⁷⁾ "I do believe that constitutional monarchy is the best form of polity that there is, but I don't think it wise to recommend it now in order to settle the current situation. Because the revolutionaries would never consent to adopting it, and the negotiations in Shanghai will surely result in failure. I don't make any objection to the plan of proposing it to Britain, but I still think we had better give it up... I stated so, and the Cabinet decided to act in this way with one consent."⁸⁾ "To the revolutionaries we should give a little more positive assistance... I advised to have some deliberative discussions on this problem..."⁹⁾

Hara paid most careful regard to the balance of power between the North and the South party in China and to the situation in Manchuria. At the above-mentioned Council, where he proposed a positive assistance to the revolutionaries, he also stated, "Russia has already begun to meddle with Outer Mongolia under pretence of assisting her self-government. I think it is high time for us to take some proper measures toward Manchuria. On this problem we should have some deliberative discussions." And in his diary he said, "Setting aside the public reproach for a while, yet we do appear as if we were idling away our time without any policy and bringing about a lot of disadvantages to our country by missing fine opportunities now."¹⁰⁾

As it is well-known, Manchuria was the target for the strong interest of the Japanese leading class after the Russo-Japanese war. The outbreak of the revolution in the South China was probably considered by some of them to be "a golden opportunity".¹¹⁾ Although not realized, there were plans of sending Japanese army and of giving independence to Manchuria and Mongolia among the so-called Japanese adventurers in China as N. Kawashima and Y. Sasaki and among soldiers stationed there chief among whom was Colonel Takayama. At this period Hara proposed to "take some proper measures in Manchuria." I can not tell from the materials in hand what measures he meant actually. He does not seem to have thought of some crude military actions, because the above-mentioned Council decided (on Oct. 24, 1911), "Regarding Manchuria we are to

7) *Ibid.*, Dec. 19, 1911.

8) *Ibid.*, Dec. 22, 1911.

9) 10) *Diary*, Vol. V, Jan. 12, 1912.

maintain her present situation for a while, defend her from invasions, and try to increase our rights and benefits step by step by taking advantage of opportunities. As to the complete settlement of the Manchurian problems, we think it good not to touch it until we have an opportunity most favourable to us and fully hopeful of our success," and also because he expresses in the diary his hatred for the sticky stratagems of the adventurers and the soldiers "well-posted in China". He was always insisting that the South Manchuria Railway Company should be the pivot of the positive policy toward the district and was against the Government-General holding wide authority, as he was something like the representative of the army. For instance, he remarks in the diary, "At any rate, it is a disadvantage to our nation that such an exaggerative organization as the Government-General should have been set up in Manchuria (whereas unnecessary) to instill other nations' suspicion, especially America's."¹²⁾ The reason why he mentioned "there will be no other successful means of implementing the Manchurian policy than the railway"¹³⁾ was that he put importance on its diplomatic competence which might assist or substitute for the formal diplomacy by government, when necessary, not limiting its competence within the railway business only. With this intention he strongly recommended Shimpei Gotoh and made him take office of the first president of the South Manchuria Railway Company at the time the first Saionji Cabinet was in power. The achievements of the company in this respect, however, were not up to his satisfaction.¹⁴⁾ But this insufficiency does not seem to have changed his mind thoroughly, even after the outbreak of the Revolution. It can be said that his fundamental idea was to enlarge our rights and benefits in China steadily by means of intercourses and negotiations between the two countries.

Hara's sharpness of gaze at the progress of Chinese state of things and his pliability of pose adapted to the changes remind us of some of his old articles. For instance, he wrote "To Know the General Trend is an Urgent Need of the Government and the People", quoted below, when he was a young pressman of *The Yubinchochi-shimbun*. "It is by a natural tendency that the world is governed well. It is also a natural tendency that the world becomes chaotic. Even heroes could not stem the general trend when it is going on.

11) A letter from Aritomo Yamagata to Taro Katsura, dated Feb. 9, 1912.

12) *Diary*, Vol. IV, Feb. 24, 1910.

13) *Diary*, Supplement to Vol. II, Aug. 12, 1906.

14) *Diary*, Vol. III, Aug. 1, 1909. Vol. IV, Jun. 5, 6, 10, & 13, 1911.

Even wise men could not move it when it does not move... No calamity is bigger than the ignorance of the trend of the times. Nothing is of more urgent necessity in governing the country than to perceive it... There is no discrimination of right and wrong about the trend. Those who have gained power by taking fortune at the tide are not always right, while those who have fallen down running against the stream are not always wrong. Sitting on a political seat, if one does not know the trend of the times, one is doing nothing but leading the nation to danger. The leaders of a nation cannot be too sensible of the trend to take measures for it in advance."¹⁵⁾

The tendency of the times which no one could check is not a question of right and wrong but an inevitability, *i.e.* a natural course of events; to perceive which is the very thing that the statesmen should do. Hara developed this theory in "Alteration of Polity"¹⁶⁾ written at nearly the same time. Should the form of polity be changed or not? We cannot simply decide between the two. "Because there is no justice nor tendency of the times that is always unchanged." The choice depends on "the tendency of the times only". Then, at what signs of the times should the polity be changed? Hara asked himself this question and answered, "There is no knowing it". In the same way he says, "At what signs of the times shouldn't the polity be changed? There is no knowing it, either." Therefore, "To alter the form of government taking the tide at the flood is quite easy, while to perform it by perceiving the due signs of the times for it is extremely difficult". The analysis of tendency of the times and the pursuit of its causality were not the matters he wanted to do. They were beyond theoretical cognizance, he probably thought, but only the intuition of excellent statesmen could discern the trend of the times correctly.

Such a way of thinking of Hara is shown not only in some of his articles written in early days but also throughout his political life afterwards, though, of course, with some amendments. That is why his political judgments and actions were always adoptable for the situations.

Toward a series of movements beginning with the uprising at Wuchang, Hara took up a position a little different from that of Saionji and Uchida. The reason is probably that he thought he had read the trend of the times. "To inquire into justice too exactly" or "to act too simply and honestly in obedience to diplomatic formulas alone" would invite our disadvantages. Then, in what

15) *The Yubinchochi-Shimbun*. Nov. 19, 1881. *Complete Works*, Vol. I.

16) *Ibid.*, Nov. 4-8, 1880.

direction was the trend running on and where would it settle down? He could not foretell it. He was not much interested in the theoretical analysis of what the motive power of the trend was, nor was he confident of the possibility of such an analysis. Theories were in most cases considered by him to be "empty arguments" which were of no use in solving actual problems in concern. He despised those politicians who did not appear to have any ability except arguing "empty theories", and called them "controversialists". Sohoh Tokutomi said of him later, He was not a man of ideal but a man of practice. He thought of neither past nor future, 'but only of present'.¹⁷⁾ This remark exactly characterizes his way of thinking, though it may be a little exaggerating. He lacked a long foresight, but on the other hand he was safe from extreme simplicity affected by inadequate theories and could escape fairly well from the danger of taking a too much optimistic view of the trend of the times. He was most capable when he judged the situations with presence of mind and calculate profit and loss mainly within a short shot.

The trend of the times seemed to run rapidly till the 1911 Revolution overthrew the Ching Dynasty, but it became quite vague where to go after Yuan Shih-kai obtained power and stood in the way of the South party. Hara, who assumed a fairly positive posture at the time of the outbreak of the Revolution, stood more prudent. Despite the request for Japan's help by the South party, the Yamamoto Cabinet kept neutralism and refused negotiations, wherefore the second Revolution in 1913 resulted in failure.

Hara was afraid that Japan might be internationally isolated owing to the failure in the Chinese policy. The positive attitude of the Japanese militarists toward Manchuria after the Russo-Japanese war had provoked European countries and America to mistrust Japan. Besides, Japan's Chinese policy after the 1911 Revolution was liable to make them feel even more uneasy. Hara, who was always thinking of the real politics in dealing with foreign affairs, naturally gave careful considerations to this problem. Around this period he came to put importance on the collaboration with the United States. Of course, many an intellectual was aware of America's raising its head among nations. Hara felt it the more strongly because he had seen the American society with his own eyes. His tour in America and Europe from August 1908 to February 1909 had a great influence on his thinking. He wrote as follows on the day he finished

17) Sohō Tokutomi, Hara Takashi, *The Kokumin-Shimbun*. Nov. 6, 1921.

the one month's trip in America. ".....The United States, which I have never visited before, is a nation of activity. Although she is now affected by economic depression, yet her vigour all over the country can be felt quite vividly. As a matter of course, we must always pay attention to her future position in the world."¹⁸) He was surprised, when he visited Paris after the lapse of 20 years, to find that America had influences in the fields not only of politics and economy but also of the style of living. "What has changed much here has been copied after American style. The cause may be this. The Americans are very fond of Paris and tens of thousands of them come over here every year to spend their money. At first Frenchmen despised them as quite vulgar in manners and customs. But in the course of years Frenchmen have come to receive much money from 'the vulgar,' so they have begun to try to catch Americans' fancy and have been Americanized before they are aware of it. I cannot but conclude this, since I came here after paying a visit to America, after an interval of 20 years during which I had seen none of their transition. It is really surprising that America should have such potentiality not only in politics and economy but also in manners and customs."¹⁹) In the countries he visited in Europe as well as in America, he was deeply impressed by the new moving of the times and "the development of people's power" lying at the basis of it. On the day he returned home he wrote: "Although under economic depression, the United States is vigorous all over the country. It may be this country that will be the most formidable in the future. European countries do not appear to have changed so much, yet they seem to have remarkably developed in comparison with what I used to know during my last residence...The development of people's power of each nation is really astonishing. Even Russia who has had a strong bureaucracy is now listening to the people's opinions, and German bureaucracy, too, is being deprived of its power by the Imperial Diet. I think those facts must be taken into consideration when we consider our administration in future."²⁰)

Hara saw nations developing more rapidly than he had expected and regarded the growth of their "people's power" and "people's opinions" as the under-current of the changes. He seems to have felt here something of the motive power of "the trend of the times". In his head there lived two images of America; one was the leader of democratization of the world and the other

18) *Diary*, Vol. III, Oct. 8, 1908.

19) *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1908.

20) *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1909.

the strong nation to be considered first of all in Japan's foreign policy, a "formidable country" who often showed her mistrust in our Chinese policy.

He thought the collaboration with America must be the principal line in our policy. Some 'elder statesmen' argued about the need of the alliance with Russia or that with the three nations, Russia, England, and France. Contrary to them, he considered the friendly relation with America was the most important, and by establishing it the Chinese problem would be solved automatically. "Inoue said that Japan could not help joining with Russia, France and Englandbut it is wrong that England should treat us as if we were subject to her. I said, 'We must conciliate America and go hand in hand with her at any cost...'"²¹⁾ "When Matsukata remarked on the fundamental problem of China, I said, 'To solve the Chinese problem we must not look on China alone. There are arguments of the Russo-Japanese alliance or the alliance with Russia, France, Japan and England, but all these are only temporary measures not worth reliance. If possible, I want to make an alliance with America, but this can hardly be hoped. But if we maintain friendly relationship with America, the Chinese problem will be solved of itself, for China is apt to rely on America even when she is relying on England and Germany.' Matsukata agreed with me..."²²⁾

From Hara's point of view the foreign policy of the Ohkuma Cabinet appeared greatly to lack prudence. Won't it bring "the worst effect" on our future diplomacy to take part in the European War when the Allies themselves are unwilling to do? The attack on Kiaochow Bay may be easily done as military affairs, but the question is what on earth our diplomacy, finance and economy shall be after that.²³⁾ As to the twenty-one claims on China, he openly offers opposition to them, on the grounds that they will largely affect our future position among nations. The reasons he stated for the impeachment motion against the government introduced at the House of Representatives on July 3, 1915, are, firstly, that the other nations will deepen their suspicion toward Japan, if we should make such claims taking advantage of the tide when others are prevented by the war from giving their mind to China. Secondly, that we shall incur more ill-feeling among the Chinese people already shown by their boycotting of Japanese goods. For these two reasons Japan may be put into inter-

21) *Diary* Vol. VI, Sep. 21, 1914.

22) *Ibid.*, Sep. 29, 1914.

23) *Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1914.

24) *Dai-nippon teikoku gikaishi* (*The Minutes of the Diet*), Vol. 9, pp. 1346 & 1347.

national isolation after Europe has recovered peace.²⁴⁾ Any nation, however strong, cannot go friendless in the international relations, therefore such a policy as may break collaboration between nations must not be taken. That is Hara's principle of foreign policy.

His speeches made on the conventions of the Seiyukai Party on October 15 and December 5, 1916, are almost similar in tones.²⁵⁾ On other occasions, too, he repeats again and again that the twenty-one claims have incurred the ill-feeling among the Chinese people and made our relations with them much worse. The point which needs noticing is that he sets down not a small part of the Chinese ill-feeling and their boycotting of Japanese goods to their misunderstandings. If Japan had not failed to choose the proper time and method for negotiations— “if it had been the time when we are making efforts to keep friends with them and the two peoples were most intimate”—the negotiations would have succeeded “during friendly talks”. Although he says, on the other hand, “Needless to say, we must insist on our own rights in the international affairs, but can we aim at obtaining our own rights and benefits alone without paying any regard to those of the other party when negotiating with them? Everybody knows what the other will think in such a situation.” This attitude of his, however, fades out in later days. He probably thought that the twenty-one claims were not very cruel in comparison with the claims European countries had laid in the past, (specifically, as to Japan's predominance in Manchuria, both China and the Powers admitted it without doubt). He could not understand that Chinese nationalism was growing up so much as to reject all such privileges on the part of alien nations. He was not fully conscious of the new trend of the times, growing up in China as well as in America and Europe where he was deeply impressed by the new “development of people's power”.

About this time Sakuzō Yoshinō wrote an article entitled “Our Unfixed Policy toward Chinese Imperial Regime”,²⁶⁾ in which he mentioned that “the permanent centre of exertion” would be “hundreds of youths now advocating reformation of their mother country”, if China's future were to be judged with a long foresight. According to him, Yuan Shih-kai, who is apparently the central power at present, has almost ceased to be trusted by hundreds of millions of the Chinese, “if things are looked into a little more deeply.” “The young China”,

25) *Complete Works* Vol. II.

26) *Yoshino Sakuzō hakase minshu shugi ronshū* [*Theses on Democracy by Dr. Sakuzō Yoshino*], Vol. 7.

though it is not yet well systematized, is resisting the conventional thoughts and abuses and is eager to save their country out of ruin by means of revolution. Whatever the result of the unrest in the South will come to be, this "young China's thought" itself will never perish. "A revolution is not only a war of force. It is also a war of thought. So far as this thought does exist, China will finally come into the hands of the young Chinese". Yoshino pointed out that Japanese political leaders often neglected this young power of China and warned them that they could never take "a permanent policy" toward China so long as they remained ignorant of it. From this point of view Hara was among the faulty leaders.

Of course we can not deal with foreign affairs with "a permanent policy" alone. Keeping contact with the young party with a long foresight, we should manage to have intercourse with Yuan Shih-kai, the leading power at the time, so Yoshino pleaded. To realize this was far from easy, as Yoshino himself admitted, but required excellent statesmen with insight and ability. The Ohkuma Cabinet not only failed in the proposal of the twenty-one claims but also deepened the mistrust both in the North and the South toward Japan through its thoughtless connection with the two without any firm principle. We must not continue this attitude, but must organize a new cabinet that will declare a new policy. This idea Hara strongly insisted on.

The new cabinet of Terauchi decided their Chinese policy on January 9, 1917; "Our empire will remain impartial and fair toward any political party in China and will never interfere in the discords in her domestic administration." "Excepting the questions concerning the districts where we have particular interests, our empire will endeavour to collaborate with the Powers and to make them gradually admit our superiority in the interests concerned."²⁷⁾ "The new policy seemed to make non-intervention and international concord its principle. Hara agreed with it, thinking it to accord with his pleas.²⁸⁾ But Terauchi was not faithful in observing the principle. Before long he began to give financial support to the Tuan Government in terms of the Nishihara loan, and then to supply them with a great number of weapons secretly behind the curtain of diplomatic stage. Hara duly offered opposition to these attempts. The outline of his argument against this inconsistency, made at the Temporary Advisory Board on Diplomatic Affairs on July 27, is recorded in his diary. "I said; To

27) Gaimushō, op. cit., pp. 424 & 425

28) *Diary* Vol. VII, Jan. 15, 1917.

help Tuan is to help the North. To supply them with money and weapons is to oppress the South. The relation is very important. When I heard the Prime Minister declare the non-intervention the other day, I agreed with him. But according to his present explanation, the policy seems to have changed. To lend money and to give weapons must be considered much more serious and should not be decided easily. There is no knowing which way China will go. The North and the South may come to terms with each other, or some prominent person may come out to unify the country. At any rate we had better offer our help when the state of things has settled down. The time has not yet come now. We had better reconsider it."²⁹⁾

It was not for "theory" that Hara offered opposition to Terauchi's inconsistency, but by his judgments of the actual situations—one was that to have connection carelessly with one party alone was not good at the stage when the future of China could not be foretold, and the other was that the South which "was always relying on America"³⁰⁾ would approach America the nearer because of our help offered to the North. Those judgments are based on the following viewpoint. Firstly, it is not necessarily desired for the sake of Japan's benefits that China will be a unified nation with modern civilization. In case she has become such, it is quite unlikely that she would be favourably disposed toward Japan. Secondly, such unity will almost be impossible in a short time. Thirdly, the conflicts among various parties in China do no harm to us but even bring us profits, so far as we take care not to hurt their sentiment. His talk with Premier Terauchi quoted below shows most clearly this idea of his.

"It is officially declared for diplomacy's sake that we wish China to be unified, civilized, and able to enjoy prosperity and strength. Although it must not be said openly even to our people, to say nothing of other nations, China need not be civilized, prosperous or strong, when we calculate our own interests. If they become rich and strong, will they hold a good feeling toward us? Considering the spirit of the Chinese, it is quite doubtful. Even if they can really become rich and strong, it will not be in tens of years. Therefore, we had better forsake them for the present, leaving the diplomatic language unchanged. Terauchi agreed with me in general ideas. The Premier added, 'In case other nations should divide China, we ourselves must consider it, too.' I said In that case we should take our portion, which, however, is unlikely to happen in the

29) *Ibid.*, Jul. 27, 1917.

30) 31) *Ibid.*, Sep. 29, 1917

near future. Therefore, we should officially persuade the unity of China, but as a matter of fact, the unity is not necessary. The point we must consider is never to invite their ill-feeling or hostility toward us. If we are careful enough at this point, their strifes among themselves may do no harm to us but we can take advantage of them. Ohkuma Cabinet was not competent enough to adopt these measures. It gave suggestions to the South on the one hand, and on the other, helped the North, and these behaviours consequently gave rise to disturbances among them. The Chinese have hated us and the Powers have cast their suspicion on us. Taking notice of this point hereafter, we must decide both formal policy and actual measures. I said so and Terauch almost agreed with me."³¹⁾ The above quotation is important by way of showing the ideas of Japanese leaders in foreign affairs in those days. It was characteristic of them that they never sought what was to be our most desirable relationship with the expectant modern China, which would make its appearance some day, in the international political tendency in Asia and other parts of the world.

Hara, who had had quite a negative idea about Japan's intervention in Chinese internal affairs, began to change his mind since about the end of 1917. What made him feel uneasy were the change in the aspects of the European war and the expectation of the peace treaty between Germany and Russia, which might give influence over Asia. In case the treaty be concluded, Germany's power, adding to Russia's, will stretch to China. "There is a fear of Russia becoming subject to Germany, and after gaining peace, Germany may stretch her power to China. Therefore we must decide our Chinese policy now; I insisted at the Diplomatic Council."³²⁾ "After obtaining Russia, Germany may want China, so, we must, by any means, formulate some proper policy I advised Terauchi in this way."³³⁾ The proper line he meant was to defend China from submission to Germany by expediting the conciliation between the North and the South and helping them. Hearing that Foreign Minister Motono was for non-intervention, he strongly argued against Premier Terauchi. "Apart from the principle of the international law, not a few nations are making similar interventions. If we take a laissez-faire policy, we are sure to have great difficulties after the recovery of peace. The conciliation between the North and the South is, as a matter of fact, the best pretext for gaining a chance to stretch our

32) *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1918.

33) *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, 1918.

34) *Ibid.*, Apr. 22, 1918.

power. Do try this.”³⁴⁾ To him the acceleration of the conciliation meant the measure to prevent Germany’s dominance and to gain a footing for stretching our power.

The Terauchi Cabinet who had executed a bold policy of helping the North provoked the mistrust of the South and other foreign nations, and Hara’s plan was most unlikely to succeed. Especially he was most anxious about the Japano-American relations turning worse—which was, he thought, due to America’s suspicion on our ambition to invade Siberia and China—for Japan’s future would be seriously affected by it. “Of course we must remain friendly with England and France. But, watching the progress of the war, we cannot help having rather dark prospects of it. What we should do now is to pay much more attention to America. I dare say our fortune depends on how intimate we can be with America. Their suspicion on our having an ambition to invade Siberia and China is apt to bring forth alienation between them and ourselves. Therefore, we must avoid at any cost such behaviour as may deepen their suspicion for our own sake.” He pleaded as above and advised re-consideration to the government at Diplomatic Council held on June 19, 1918.³⁵⁾

IV

A hard task was imposed on the Hara Cabinet established in September, 1918—the task of meeting with the new international situation after the World War I, together with the debit caused by the failure in Chinese policy of the Ohkuma and Terauchi Cabinets. Of the new conditions concerning China after the war the most outstanding problem was the prominent rise of Chinese nationalism. Before the 1911 Revolution, the Chinese nationalists made frequent attacks on the Ching Dynasty’s sway over the Han race rather than on foreign nations, and either the revolutionaries or the reformists scarcely showed their resistance against Japan’s advance to their country. But around the time when they began to resist Japan’s positive policy toward Manchuria after the Russo-Japanese war and set to boycott Japanese goods on a large scale (1909), the Chinese nationalists began to stare at all alien invaders. This tendency became clearer and clearer as the national revolution proceeded. The time was just when the World War I broke out and the Powers were obliged to retreat from China. Japan’s bold measures which took advantage of this occasion provoked

35) *Ibid.*, Jun. 19, 1918.

a strong resistance on the part of the Chinese nationalists. The twenty-one claims, Nishihara loan, and the Shantung problem — the return of Germany's former rights, then occupied by Japan—made their hostility even severer.

The increase of the American prestige in China was closely related to this state of affairs. It did not mean merely the strengthened influence of the voice of America in the post-war world, but it went with the new tendency since the end of the war—an enlarged function of political ideology in the international affairs, about which I will make a remark later on.

At any rate the Hara Cabinet was urgently pressed to change the policy of the last Cabinet. At the Council soon after the organization, the Cabinet decided the suspension of the loan, and in February the next year, the supply of weapons was stopped. They amended largely the measures of the former Ministry who had assisted the Tuan Government. The Council on October 29 admitted that the loan "has invited other nations' suspicion and made our position in China disadvantageous", and declared that all the political loans hereafter were to be offered by the hands of the Quadruple Loan Group (Japan, Britain, France, and Russia).¹⁾ Hara's basic line was to recover harmony with the nations in concern, especially America, and to promote the voluntary unity of the North and South China by refraining our intervention on China's domestic problems. America's coming to the fore was just as he had anticipated, and the collaboration with her was what had always been in his mind. But the voluntary unification of China was extremely difficult, contrary to his expectation.

Two years later, on the afternoon of the very day on which he was assassinated at Tokyo Station (November 4), he met a Chinese journalist Tung Hsien-kuang and told him about his non-intervention policy toward China. "At that time (*i.e.* while in the Ohkuma and Terauchi Cabinets), I was the president of the Seiyukai Party, and I considered their policy to be disadvantageous and dangerous. I insisted again and again that we should leave the Chinese affairs to the Chinese and let them dispose their own affairs for themselves. It will never make the relations between you and ourselves better that we should interfere in your domestic administration, take part in your conflicts, or make profits by taking advantage of your uneasy situation. I insisted to our politicians that you and ourselves must go hand in hand with each other. The Japanese people were then divided into two opinions. Most people considered my opinion inadequate. But I did not stop pleading that we should help China for the sake

1) Gaimushō, *op. cit.*, pp. 471 & 472.

of the two nations and should withhold our intervention. In spite of my endeavour, the Terauchi Cabinet that followed the Ohkuma Ministry, acted against my wish. It was not until I became the prime minister three years ago that I could carry out my idea."²⁾

When he was out of power, he did not always carry through non-intervention as already mentioned above, and his words quoted above included somewhat his "diplomatic language". But admitting it, he had, at any rate, no doubt a wish to alter the former Chinese policy greatly.

The result of the non-intervention, however, turned out absolutely opposite to his expectation. The unity between the North and the South did not proceed at all, meanwhile the North fell into a heavy financial distress, as Japan's support had been suspended, so that they could not pay even salaries to the officials and soldiers. The North asked for the revival of financial aid, and on Japan's side, the militarists staying in China, Terauchi's group, and the Kenseikai Party had been making an objection to Hara's non-intervention policy. Moreover, the May 4th movement in 1919 enlarged so much as to drive the pro-Japanese in the North party into a corner. In case the Hsu Shih-chang Government should fall, the state of things will become uncontrollable and our interests in China will consequently be hard hit. Unless we save the pro-Japanese and keep contact with them, our Chinese policy may come to be hopeless. Hara was worried. "If I follow the former way as they did, I cannot but go against what I have pleaded," he hesitated. But after all he could not do other than to change the non-intervention in July 1919. He offered a financial aid to the North.³⁾

This, however, was not the thorough revival of the policy of the former Ministries. He consistently observed the line of keeping harmony with nations, promoting the unity of China, and putting importance on antimilitarism and economic approaches. The financial assistance toward the North was not for strengthening the North power but was made for the purpose that some portion of the money was to be handed over to the South and through its agency the two would come to terms with each other as soon as possible.⁴⁾

Such logic, however, had scarcely any effect before the rapid rise of Chinese nationalism. The Chinese nationalists openly began to attack Japan

2) Ken Kurihara: *Tai man mō seisakushi no ichimen* [*An Aspect of the History of Japan's Policies toward Manchuria and Mongolia*], pp. 228 & 229.

3) Gaimushō, op. cit., p. 504. Tatsuo Kobayashi, ed., *Suiusō Nikki*, p. 690.

4) Gaimushō, op. cit., pp. 501-503.

since the 21 claims, and the Shantung problem spurred them the more. Behind the back of their actions there was a new tide of American diplomacy. As many historians of diplomacy point out, the international relations in the world in the second decade of the century were characterized by "the idealistic diplomacy" of the United States. Instead of a temporary peace of current situation maintained by the balance of power between a few strong nations, there appeared a new brilliant doctrine that justice and democracy must be the principle of the peaceful and moral world established by the hands of every country, which was advocated by President Wilson who declared, "The existence of the United States is significant only because we think that our ideal is our mission and duty," and with the growth of her national power, the country would grow one of the strongest in the world. According to Wilson, the ideal and duty of the United States were to secure peace, right, and liberty of the human beings and his country was to play the most active role in establishing a new world order. It is well known that such a new idealism of America underwent various criticisms, but I don't touch it here as it is not my present subject. At any rate, this idealistic diplomacy of America not only created a sensation among the leaders of the Powers but also stimulated the rise of nationalism in many countries.

Wilson's doctrine was most clearly shown in his policy toward China. I have already mentioned that America gradually deepened her mistrust in Japan's Chinese policy after the Russo-Japanese war. E. T. Williams, Director of the Far East Affairs Bureau, stated that Japan had quickly developed her modern industry and strengthened armed forces, but that it only meant Japan had become "another Prussia". Among American leaders such a precaution grew stronger that China must not be under the control of Japan who was superficially westernized in the fields of armament and material civilization only.⁵⁾ Among many Americans who welcomed the 1911 Revolution as the birth of the first "sister republic" in Asia, there spread an image of China oppressed under Japan's bold policy, because they were influenced by informations given by missionaries sent to China.

This attitude of America's foreign policy and the new tendency of public opinions coincided with the rise of the "Young China", by which the young generation were greatly encouraged. The young Chinese who returned from abroad

5) Akira Irie: *Bei chū kankei no image* [*Images of the Relations between the U. S. A. and China*], p. 53.

or received new education at home aimed at the most brilliant object of obtaining the freedom and independence for their mother country. The Chinese nationalism grew up over and above the opposition between the North and the South, and the American prestige went up among political leaders as well as the people. Paul S. Reinsch, American Minister in China from 1913 to 1919, said, "The Republic, of which I was a representative, was the pattern which the Chinese people took for a model and whose spirit they followed ardently. So, I felt as if I were one of them when I was consulting with the Chinese leaders."

How Hara dealt with such situation? I already mentioned in the previous chapter that he always paid attention to America's movements, regarded the collaboration with the United States as the basic line of Japan's foreign policy, bearing in his mind an image of a strong nation with rapidly developed "people's power" and "people's opinions". He said in answer to a question by Sakue Takahashi at a conference of the House of Peers on January 23, 1920, "...You have asked what it means to adapt ourselves to general tendency. It is not very difficult. You know we have plenty of variance both materially and spiritually as a result of the European war. In regard to diplomacy, economic affairs, and other matters, no nation is allowed to overcome the world with her own opinions alone, for there exists the ideal of the League of Nations today. The concord among nations and maintenance of permanent peace are what every nation aims at."⁶⁾ He also said in an article entitled "At the Beginning of the Year 1921" as follows: "The next thing that the people must take notice of is that we, one of the Five Powers, must take responsibility of leading the world together with the other four. In former days the strong could easily oppress and invade the weak and monopolize the profits of the world. But today the great nations consider it their duty to enlighten and improve the weak by forces and to contribute to the civilization of the world. In the Meiji era there were in fashion such words as a strong foreign policy, weak policy or positive diplomacy. But nowadays our nation is one of the leading Five Powers in the world. Such policies as were pleaded in the old days are no longer our measures. We are far above them. In spite of these circumstances, some people have not realized it yet and are apt to forget behaviours suitable to a great nation. It is quite regrettable that such persons should be found even among the leading intellectuals."⁷⁾

6) *The Minutes of the Diet*, Vol. XI, p. 1388.

7) *Complete Works*, Vol. I, p. 1139.

Nobuaki Makino was one of those who thought much of America's new diplomacy and openly agreed to it. Hara appointed Makino one of the ambassadors plenipotentiary sent to the peace conference in Paris. On his departure Makino stated at the Diplomatic Council, "The results of the World War are greatly related to our interests for ever afterwards. The declaration of the fourteen articles made by the American President contains a significance of world-wide scale, and moreover, it has been done in a quite different way from what it used to be. Considering that the President himself has made up his mind to visit Europe, we cannot but think that the aspect of the international affairs has largely changed... To esteem peace and exclude coercion is the present-day trend in the world, and Americanism is now advocated all over the world. I ask Your Excellencies to pay attention to this completely altered situation in foreign affairs."⁸⁾ "Watching the recent state of affairs in other nations, we find that such an idea has grown up and been gaining general assent among governments and peoples that tricky plottings and evil stratagems for invasions are to be excluded out of international relations. This is a great change in thought that goes with the transition of the times, but at the same time, it can be said that it is a gift of the War... The new diplomacy of the day respects fairness, morality, and humanism. The old diplomacy has failed and the new idea has been prevailing..."⁹⁾

Referring to those words Hara said, "I never hesitate to express my hearty assent to them." It is quite natural that he who appointed him should have fundamentally the same point of view. However, in regard to the possibility of carrying this new policy into effect, he could not have such an optimistic view as Makino had. Especially the Chinese problem was a bog to him, and with the doctrine of his new policy alone he was not able to find out a clue to the solution. In fear of the nations expanding their power into China again after the end of the War, he eagerly wished the prompt unity of China, but as to its realization he had a dark prospect. Here and there in his diary we can find his mistrust in the Chinese political leaders (of both the North and the South) whom he had direct and indirect connection with in those days. For instance, he said about Tang Shao-yi, "After all Tang does not get rid of the Chinese abuses. He only wants to expand his power with our support. It is quite doubt-

8) 9) T. Kobayashi, op. cit., pp. 326, 334 & 335.

10) *Diary* Vol. VII, Apr. 27, 1918.

11) *Diary* Vol. VIII, Sep. 30, 1919.

ful whether he is truly an ardent patriot."¹⁰ "Tang has no sincerity. When he has lost one pretence, he prepares another to hinder the conciliation... Disclosing his intention, he wants us to help the South and overthrow the North."¹¹ As to Hsu Shik-chang, he was no less suspicious. "As the Chinese often do, he may say something like a resolution for the sake of temporarization."¹² Though he did not know Sun Yat-sen directly, he regarded him as a man of pure theory with no practical mind.¹³

To Hara the Chinese state of things seemed to be a bog of conflicts rather than revolution, and to set up a fundamental policy toward China seemed to be meaningless as well as difficult, since her future was very hard to anticipate.¹⁴ "Neither of the two parties can overcome the other, nor does it stop the conflicts. After all, none of them looks outside of their country but only continues selfish conflicts among themselves."¹⁵ He could not make up any fundamental policy more than an abstract one. To take temporary measures adapted to moving of actual situation may be better, he thought. The armed policy attempted by some of the militallists and adventurers is already out of date and will lead Japan to international isolation. By any means, we must act within the limit of international collaboration. As the North and the South are both suffering from heavy financial difficulties, money may be the only thing that can break the deadlock more or less. In order to accelerate the conciliation and to avoid alienation between Japan and China, a monetary support to them is the best method.¹⁶ But those who are pulled about by money will easily run to others when the supply of money is suspended. Hara did not trust "the pro-Japanese" either. "Pulling the North can easily be done by lending them money, but they will run to any country if the monetary aid is stopped."¹⁷

The image of China which Japanese leaders including Hara pictured in their mind was completely different from the one that the Americans did. Hara could see nothing but conflicts in their conflicts, for he could not see the under-current of nationalism flowing at the bottom. That was why he could not understand the strong anti-Japanese sentiment of the Chinese people and their government's hard attitude which had arisen in relation to the Shantung plan

12) *Ibid.*, Sep. 11, 1919.

13) *Diary VII*, Jul. 29, 1917. Apr. 27, 1918.

14) *Diary IX*, May 28, 1921.

15) *Diary VII*, Dec. 11, 1917.

16) *Diary VIII*, May 31, Sep. 2, 1919.

17) *Ibid.*, May 15, 1919.

proposed at the peace conference in Paris. He stated at an assembly of the Seiyukai Party in Tokai district, "As it is generally called the Shantung problem, aliens who do not know the matter well take it for a problem concerning the large area of Shantung Province. They are absolutely mistaken. The fact is, the problem concerns only Kiaochow Bay and Shantung Railway. After the peace treaty with Germany, all the rights of what Germany had possessed came into our hands. Despite it, they are acting as if they were neglecting our sincerity on the pretence of their participation in the War, which took place over two years after our military occupation. It is really a matter for regret in respect to the amity between China and Japan. Soon after the conclusion of the peace treaty, we required them to open negotiations for returning what we had obtained from Germany, but to our surprise, they refused our demand... And recently we asked the Chinese government again to open negotiations and solve this problem quickly, presenting very much favourable and generous conditions, but in spite of this they replied again as if they had paid no regard to our good will. What makes them act so? We cannot but wonder... Their deeds are beyond our understanding."¹⁸⁾

The under-current of Chinese nationalism at last gushed out, violently spurred by the Shantung problem, into the May 4th movement. It was a riddle to Hara and he said to others, "The Chinese are unreasonably raising troubles about the Shantung problem."¹⁹⁾ But as the movement proceeded further than he had feared, he had to admit that "the present anti-Japanese movement will disappear before long, but the mind and pretence of Japanophobia will not easily vanish."²⁰⁾ He had to admit that the students' group which made the core of the May 4th movement was a new power worth noticing. The Council of September 9, 1919, concluded thus, "The most prevailing power in China at present is a group of students consisting of those belonging to high schools and higher ones. They are exerting themselves with new knowledge and pure minds. We have to take them into consideration hereafter..."²¹⁾

In regard to whether the movement by the students' group was being done on their own initiative, or whether they were enough competent to establish a new China, Hara had a negative prospect. The same Council decided, "Their

18) *Complete Works*, Vol. II, pp. 947 & 948.

19) *Diary* VIII, May 22, 1919.

20) *Ibid.*, Jun. 19, 1919.

21) 22) *Gaimushō*, op. cit., p. 504 & 505.

movement and exertions are not only made of their own volition but also agitated by other politicians and by the English and American people. Moreover, their movement remains within a limit of negative one such as Japanophobia, and has not yet made a positive attempt to reform general politics, or the most important problem for recovering China. We can not think that they are eagerly striving for the welfare of their people, and for this reason, for the present we can not sympathize with them in their efforts."²²⁾

After all, his image of China in those days was not much different from that of the military leaders. At an early stage of the Revolution Hara tried to understand the moving of a new tide out of the disturbances, but as the Chinese state of affairs began to show unexpected varieties of aspects and also as he himself stepped up to a higher position in the axis of political power, he grew more and more practical and his range of interest became rather narrower. This may be the inevitable destiny to those who hold such a way of thinking as Hara did. When the May 4th movement was raging most fiercely, he talked with Yamagata as follows, "The present anti-Japanese movement will disappear before long but the mind and pretence of Japanophobia will not easily vanish. We should officially exert ourselves to keep harmony with other nations, for it will be our loss if we go out of step with others, since China cannot actually exist but will be subject to interference from others. But behind the curtain, by lending our help to them we should support the pro-Japanese.... The world is now under the predominance of Britain and the United States, and in the East Japan joins them. Whether Japan adheres to Britain or to the United States is a matter of great concern to them both, so that we are, so to say, sought after by the two. And there must be a collaboration between Japan, England, and America; therefore, we must adopt some proper measure that will cope with this state of affairs." Yamagata is said to have agreed with him.²³⁾

Hara thought that China would be unable to obtain independence for a fairly long time, repeating conflicts after conflicts among themselves, and would remain under the intervention of the Powers. The Powers practically meant Britain and the United States. The two were dominant in the world, and in the East, Japan joined them. The international concord actually meant the one between those three. To maintain this sort of concord and at the same time to extend Japan's influence by helping the pro-Japanese in secret were what Hara wanted to carry out.

23) *Diary*, VIII, Jul. 19, 1919.

This is most clearly shown in the affairs in Manchuria and Mongolia. I already mentioned in the previous chapter that Hara had a large interest in gaining much more profits in Manchuria, though he was against the regime of the Government-General. When the Ishii-Lansing Agreement was concluded during the period of the Terauchi Cabinet, he assented to it at the Diplomatic Council, saying, "I am always wanting to make the Americans acknowledge our superiority in Manchuria some day. So, this time I think we have advanced one step in this direction, although the agreement is not wholly satisfactory... The fact that we have this agreement between Japan and the United States will take off other nations' suspicion and will make the South party understand us."²⁴⁾

While talking with Burton (an American ex-senator), he said that the security of our special profits in Manchuria and Mongolia was "our national sentiment" and "our people have had no mind to yield to any nation since the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese War."²⁵⁾ He succeeded to the Manchurian policy of the former Ministry and identified himself with Chang Tso-lin. It was a measure calculated to enlarge Japan's profits in Manchuria and at the same time expand Chang's power there. "Chang Tso-lin has sent Kan Chong-han to us to ask whether we support him as he eagerly wish to rely on us... I gave him an affirmative answer. To tell the truth, Chang wants to spread his power backed up by us, but on our side, too, we have a necessity of welcoming Chang with a view to extending our influence over Mauchuria. We both happen to have common interests between us."²⁶⁾

When Chang asked Japan for supply of weapons and other assistances with a view to stretching his power up to the political centre in China proper, Hara regarded it as a question "requiring a most prudent consideration" and decided "not to help him willingly."²⁷⁾ He knew that an open assistance might break the international concord in the above-mentioned sense and come to be a handicap to us.

Although Hara's ideas of China was not very different from that of military leaders, the actual measures he took were fairly different from theirs. He was afraid that Japan might be put out of the international concord, which he accepted as a world-wide tendency, and fall into international isolation. He re-

24) *Diary*, VII, Oct. 3, 1917.

25) *Diary*, VIII, Sep. 8, 1919.

26) *Diary*, IV, Nov. 24, 1920.

27) Gaimushō, op. cit., p. 524.

jected armed approach to the utmost and took the most careful caution lest his Chinese policy should be distorted by the military authorities stationed in China. It is well known that his attitude in Chinese policy made the pattern of Shidehara's foreign policy in later years. It may be needless to say that his economic approach in diplomacy was supported by Japan's capitalism which had developed rapidly during the World War I.

Hara was killed by violence before he could hear the success of the Washington Treaty. After his death Sennosuke Yokota (the chief suite) is said to have spoken at the memorial services for him held by the plenipotentiaries in Washington, "I had never heard Premier Hara speak of God or Buddha. But on the occasion of this Washington conference, he said 'God is dwelling in the mind of Harding and has made him plan this. I wish this conference turn out a success by all means.'" He himself knew better than anyone else the difficulty of making his principle of Chinese policy accord with the principle of international amity.

It will be not be fair to look on his foreign policy as nothing but "imperialism", drawing no distinction between his and his predecessors'. There is no doubt a difference between his and theirs. But over and above such a difference, there existed a much more important phase, for there was a rapid rise of Chinese nationalism in those days.