

The International Environment at the Time
of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)
—Anglo-Russian Far Eastern Policy
and the Beginning of the
Sino-Japanese War

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Introduction

On August 1, 1894 Japan and China mutually announced their declarations of war. Many scholars have studied the diplomatic process up to that point. In Japan there are the pre-war works of Tabohashi Kiyoshi 田保橋潔, *Kindai Nissen kankei no kenkyū* 近代日鮮關係の研究 (*A Study of Modern Japanese-Korean Relations*) and Shinobu Seizaburō 信夫清三郎, *Nisshin sensō* 日清戰爭 (*The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95*) and the more recent works of Nakatsuka Akira 中塚明, Fujimura Michio 藤村道生 and Pak Chong-gün 朴宗根.¹⁾ Those earlier studies have clarified the full story of diplomatic activities including the Japanese government's response to the various approaches of China, Korea, the various European powers and the United States with regard to the beginning of the war with China. Japan's diplomatic efforts related to the beginning of the war were limited by the Far Eastern policies of the various European powers, particularly Russia and England. The Japanese government made diligent efforts to deal with the problem as a bi-lateral issue between Japan and China and Japan and Korea; only when they were assured that Russia and England would not intervene militarily did the Japanese government initiate a military solution, as can be seen in the memoirs of the Foreign Minister of that time, Mutsu Munemitsu's 陸奥宗光 *Kenken-roku* 蹇蹇錄.²⁾ This can also be clearly seen in the works cited above. However, not all of those earlier studies used original Russian and British sources in their analysis, and as a result the full dimensions of Russian and British Far Eastern policies on the eve of the war are not yet clear.

As for the sources of British Far Eastern policy, archival materials of the British Foreign Office can not only be used, but microfilms of those archives are available in Japan.³⁾ In spite of that, not only in Japan but in foreign countries, as far as I know, with the exception of the work of G. A. Lensen which I will refer to later, no analyses of the events leading up to the Sino-Japanese war which use these materials have been published.

As for Russian materials on Russian Far Eastern policy, *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, vols. 50-51, contains Russian diplomatic documents on the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, such documents covering the period from February 1894 to August 1894. In addition, the article, "First steps of Russian imperialism in the Far East, 1888-1903," (*Krasnyi Arkhiv*, vol. 52) includes the minutes of Russian government special conferences held to consider the Far Eastern problem.⁴⁾

In his major work Tabohashi Kiyoshi based on original sources outlined changes in international relations with regard to Korea in the period from the 1860s to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in August 1894. In the chapters of that book which deal with the beginning of the war, he used English translations of the same Russian language materials which are included in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, vols. 50-51,⁵⁾ and such Chinese language materials as the

Ch'ing Kuang-hsü ch'ao Chung-Jih chiao-she shih-liao 清光緒朝中日交涉史料 as well as Japanese and Korean sources in order to evaluate the diplomatic process involving Japan, China, Korea, the various European powers and the United States. Shinobu Seizaburō in his work used Japanese and Chinese diplomatic records that could be seen at the time as well as European language studies in order to analyse the Japanese diplomacy related to the beginning of the war, the so-called "Mutsu diplomacy"; he did not, however, use the materials that are included in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*. As for the more recent works of Nakatsuka Akira and Fujimura Michio, they have made extensive use of Japanese language materials that have been made public in recent years, but in analysing Russian and English Far Eastern policies, they in general follow the works of Tabohashi and Shinobu.

On the Chinese side there are the studies of Wang Hsin-chung 王信忠 and Chiang T'ing-fu 蔣廷黻 which were published in the 1930s at about the same time as the works of Tabohashi and Shinobu and which made use of Chinese language diplomatic records which had just been published at that time.⁶⁾ Wang's *Chung-Jih Chia-wu chan-cheng chih wai-chiao pei-ching* 中日甲午戰爭之外交背景 (*The Diplomatic Background of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894*) is still one of the most basic Chinese language secondary works on the problem. In recent years Liang Chia-pin 梁嘉彬 and Mi Ch'ing-yü's 米慶餘 research papers which take into account the research results of European, American and Japanese scholars have been published, but in scope of sources and analytical method their works have not surpassed the level of the earlier works cited above.⁷⁾

As for European and American studies of British and Russian Far Eastern policies in the period of the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war, rather than stressing as the Japanese and Chinese studies do the events leading up to the beginning of the war, they rather focus on the late 19th century as the climax of the European and American advance into China. Among the works which express such views are those of P. Joseph, R. S. McCordock, W. L. Langer, K. Krupinski, and Lung Chang.⁸⁾ Among the European language works we particularly note A. Malozemoff's *Russian Far Eastern Policy 1881-1904*,⁹⁾ which was published in 1958 and based on extensive reading of almost all of the available European, American and Russian published diplomatic records and research results. Malozemoff argues for the conservative character of Russian Far Eastern policy in the period before the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war, a conservative policy that strove to protect the existing situation, and analyses the changes in that policy by the end of the war. G. A. Lensen's recently published *Balance of Intrigue; International Rivalry in Korea and Manchuria, 1884-1899*¹⁰⁾ is a major work that examines the diplomatic moves of the major powers with regard to Korea and Manchuria in the late 19th century. This work which makes use of unpublished British, American, Russian, German, French, Belgian, Korean and Japanese diplomatic

archives has greatly raised the standard of research in this field. However, Lensen's work which is rich in citations from the original diplomatic records gives major attention to an evaluation of the diplomatic negotiations process from the point of view of the diplomats, but does not fully analyse the decisions and intentions behind the Far Eastern policies pursued by the British and Russian governments. Moreover Lensen does not make full use of the results of Japanese research and makes no use at all of either Chinese documentary sources or Chinese research analyses and as a result there are a number of points where one can find questionable explanations.

In the 1950s two works were published in the Soviet Union: A. L. Narochnitskii, *The Colonial Policies of the Capitalist Powers in the Far East, 1860-1895* and G. V. Yefimov, *Foreign Policy of China, 1894-1899*.¹¹⁾ Narochnitskii has read widely in Russian diplomatic, Army and Naval archives that are not included in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*. Although a number of works have been published in the Soviet Union since the appearance of his study regarding international relations in the Far East at the time of the Sino-Japanese war, none has yet surpassed the level of his work. B. D. Pak's recently published *Russia and Korea*¹²⁾ deals with Russo-Korean relations from the mid-19th century to the full incorporation of Korea by Japan in 1910; his treatment of the Sino-Japanese war period is quite simple but he does make use of some sources that were not used by Narochnitskii.

This essay builds on the works of both Japanese and foreign scholars and will provide an analytical discussion of the motivations behind British and Russian Far Eastern diplomacy in the period from the mid-1880s to August 1894, with special attention to the period just before the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war. In my view, the earlier studies have largely examined the diplomatic negotiations processes and have given insufficient attention to an analysis of the decision making processes of the Russian and British governments. Moreover, with few exceptions the works of European, American and Soviet scholars have made little use of either Chinese or Japanese original sources or research results, and on the other hand Chinese and Japanese studies have made insufficient use of European and Russian language materials or research results. In this study which uses British, Russian, Chinese and Japanese diplomatic records I will analyse British and Russian decision making processes, looking at the circumstances in which decisions were made and what kind of decisions resulted; I will also clarify the underlying presumptions of the Far Eastern policies of both the British and Russian governments as seen through a study of the background of diplomatic negotiations and decision making in several specific cases.

**I. Russo-Chinese Relations with regard to Korea before
the Sino-Japanese War, 1886-1893**

**I. The Port Hamilton Problem and the "Russo-Korean Secret
Agreement" as Preconditions for the 1886 Russo-Chinese
Tientsin Negotiations**

The Sino-Japanese war started as a direct result of the crisis induced by Sino-Japanese conflict over Korea. On July 7, 1884 the Russian government signed the Korean treaty of amity and commerce, following the United States, England and Germany to establish formal diplomatic relations with Korea. For the Russian government in the period before the Sino-Japanese war the Korean problem was the central problem in overall Far Eastern policy and they believed that the chief threat to the status quo in Korea would come not from Japan but from China. Therefore, in this chapter, taking as the pivot the willingness of the Russian and Chinese governments from 1886 on to come to an agreement over Korea, we will be looking at the transition in Russo-Chinese relations in this period before the Sino-Japanese war and also examining the contribution of its failure to the outbreak of the war. Before doing so, I would like to briefly look at the circumstances of the crisis that was created in 1886 by the British occupation of Port Hamilton (Kōmun-do 巨文島) and the "Russo-Korean secret agreement" which initiated Russo-Chinese negotiations.

In April of 1885 Britain, in response to growing tension in their relationship with Russia as a result of clashes on the Afghanistan border, occupied Port Hamilton, an anchorage off the southern tip of Korea, in order to forestall probable occupation of it by the Russian squadron in the Pacific. By the beginning of the following year, however, Britain was considering withdrawal from the anchorage as a result of the passive attitude of the British naval authorities to its permanent retention, as well as in response to Japanese, Korean and especially Chinese opposition.¹⁾

On March 11, 1886 Tseng Chih-tse 曾紀澤, the Chinese minister in London, sent the following communication to the British Foreign Office:

"The Russian Minister at Peking has on several occasions urged the Chinese Government to obtain the withdrawal of the British force from the islands forming Port Hamilton; and has stated that, in the event of the British occupation being continued, Russia would feel obliged to occupy some place in Corea."²⁾

Thus by referring to the Russian intention to advance in Korea, the Chinese government requested an early withdrawal from Port Hamilton. On

April 14, the British Foreign Office sent the following response:

“Her Majesty’s Government have no desire to prolong the occupation of Port Hamilton in opposition to the wishes of the Chinese Government, but it appears to them that it would be against the interests both of China and England if it were to be occupied by another European Power.”

“If the Chinese Government are prepared to guarantee that no such occupation shall take place, one of the chief objects which Her Majesty’s Government had in view in taking possession of Port Hamilton would be accomplished.”

“Should the Chinese Government be unwilling to undertake such a responsibility, Her Majesty’s Government would suggest that China should propose to Russia and to the other Powers interested to enter into an international arrangement guaranteeing the integrity of Korea. If this proposal is accepted, Her Majesty’s Government would be ready to become parties to the arrangement, and to retire at once from Port Hamilton on the understanding that it should be recognized as forming part of the guaranteed territory of Korea.”³⁾

What was the Chinese government’s attitude to this British statement? With regard to the first condition stated, that if Britain should withdraw from Port Hamilton, the Chinese government must guarantee that no other country would then occupy it, this condition had already been communicated to the British chargé d’affaires in Peking, N. R. O’Conor, in a despatch from the Foreign Office dated December 12, 1885.⁴⁾ O’Conor had communicated this message to the Tsungli Yamen 總理衙門 on January 6, 1886 and the Tsungli Yamen had at that time said that they could not make such a guarantee.⁵⁾ As for the second condition with regard to the Chinese willingness to lead in an international arrangement that would guarantee the integrity of Korea, Tseng Chih-tse immediately cabled this information to the Tsungli Yamen⁶⁾ and at the same time sent a despatch to the Tsungli Yamen that enclosed the text of his own communication of March 11 and the Foreign Office’s response of April 14, and urged the acceptance of this proposal.⁷⁾

Tseng Chih-tse’s despatch arrived in Peking on June 13; The Tsungli Yamen expressed its unwillingness to agree to an international arrangement to guarantee the integrity of Korea since Korea was China’s vassal state. Rather than deciding itself on a response, the Tsungli Yamen sent to Li Hung-chang 李鴻章, the governor-general of Chihli 直隸 and superintendent of trade for the Northern Ports, the details of the negotiations with Britain and urged him to decide on a response.⁸⁾

From this time on, Li Hung-chang became the crucial figure in diplomatic negotiations over Port Hamilton. While Li Hung-chang’s response to the

British proposal is not clear, there is no question that with regard to both the first and second conditions of the proposal, Russian agreement had to be procured in order to satisfy the British and make them withdraw from the anchorage. Negotiations with Russia then began in a crisis atmosphere created by the activities of a pro-Russian faction within the Korean government and within the context of the second "Russo-Korean secret agreement."⁹⁾

The Taewŏn'gun 大院君, father of the king, who had been confined at Paoting 保定 following the Army Riot of 1882 (Jingo gunran 壬午軍亂) returned to Korea in October 1885; Yüan Shi-k'ai 袁世凱 who was selected by Li Hung-chang and sent as proconsul in Korea 駐劄朝鮮總理交涉通商事宜 supported the Taewŏn'gun and began to play a strong role in Korean political affairs. The dominant Min 閔 party sought the aid of Russia in their efforts to gain independence from Chinese control. They approached K. I. Waeber, who had arrived at Seoul as the first Russian consul-general and chargé d'affaires in October 1885.¹⁰⁾ Yüan Shih-k'ai, on June 14, 1886, reported to Li Hung-chang that there were moves in Korea to "repel China and become independent."¹¹⁾ In the following months Li received telegrams from Yüan on July 25, August 5, August 6, and August 13 with regard to rapid development in the Korean political situation. In those telegrams Yüan reported that the Korean government had handed over to Waeber a secret note bearing the royal seal, which requested Russia to protect Korea in order to gain independence from Chinese control and to send a naval vessel to Korea's aid in case of China's objection. To forestall such a move, Yüan urged Li to despatch troops to Korea to depose the Korean king.¹²⁾

What was Li Hung-chang's response to these maneuvers in Seoul? With regard to Korea, Li believed that the despatch of troops to Korea would arouse the suspicions of the various foreign powers and as a result he took a very cautious view of such steps, but believing that such a despatch of troops and removal of the king was a possibility, he sought advice from the Peking government.¹³⁾ With regard to Russia, on August 13 Li Hung-chang sent a telegram to the new Chinese minister in St. Petersburg, Liu Jui-fen 劉瑞芬, directing him to ask the Russian government not to accept the Korean request for protection,¹⁴⁾ and at the same time he requested that N. F. Ladyzhenskii, the Russian chargé d'affaires in Peking, come to Tientsin to meet with him.¹⁵⁾

On August 17 the Peking government sent orders to Li Hung-chang with regard to Korea directing him to immediately begin preparations for despatch of troops and as a coercive measure ordering him to send a naval ship to Korean waters, and also giving him responsibility for negotiations with Russia.¹⁶⁾

What was the Russian response to the Korean government's request for protection and the Chinese efforts to block it? It is unclear whether the secret note bearing the royal seal which was handed over to Waeber on August 9 was immediately sent by telegram to St. Petersburg by Waeber,¹⁷⁾ but even

if it was, the Russian government ignored it. On August 22 A. E. Vlangali, the Russian vice minister of foreign affairs, told Liu Jui-fen that he had received no communication from Waeber on this matter,¹⁸⁾ and on the 25th, in response to the Chinese government's request he said that even if Waeber had received the secret note bearing the royal seal, the Russian government had no intention of agreeing to the Korean request.¹⁹⁾ At that time not only was Russian military strength in the Far East weak, but on July 4 the Chinese and Russian delegates had signed the Hunch'un 琿春 Protocol, after three months of negotiation, finally settling the border between Chilin 吉林 Province and the Russian Maritime Province, this following what had been years of disagreement. Therefore Russia had no intention of ignoring China's right of suzerainty in Korea and signing a secret agreement with Korea.²⁰⁾

Tseng Chih-tse, who, as Chinese minister in London, had been responsible for discussions with the British government over the Port Hamilton question, was at the same time Chinese minister to Russia. Just at this time he was completing his term of office and before returning to China visited Russia from August 5 to August 19; during this visit he had three discussions with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vlangali.²¹⁾ In these discussions Vlangali stressed the importance of Sino-Russian friendship and said that he felt China was correct to demand a British withdrawal from Port Hamilton; he further denied that there was any basis to the rumors that Russia was trying to obtain Yonghŭng Man 永興灣 (Port Lazareff) or was planning to offer her protection to Korea.²²⁾ Although it is impossible to get any more details of the Tseng-Vlangali meetings, it is not difficult to imagine that Tseng reported to Vlangali on the British conditions for withdrawal from Port Hamilton.

It was thus under the circumstances described above that the Russian government ordered its chargé d'affaires in Peking Ladyzhenskii to go to Tientsin 天津 to meet with Li Hung-chang to discuss the Korean problem.

At the time that Li Hung-chang had first requested discussions in Tientsin with Ladyzhenskii, Li had explained his plans to Prince Ch'un I-huan 醇親王奕譞, father of the emperor and head of the Hai-chun ya-men 海軍衙門 (Board of Admiralty), as follows, "If Ladyzhenskii agrees to come, I will explain to him the proper course and request that nothing be done to acquiesce to the maneuvers of the Korean rebel faction and to harm the friendly and harmonious state of Sino-Russian relations that has been built over many years."²³⁾ It is clear from this that Li primarily intended to discuss the problem of the secret note with Ladyzhenskii. However, later on August 23 a letter to Prince Ch'un sent together with telegrams from Yüan Shih-k'ai and Liu Jui-fen, reported that the Korean government claimed that the secret note was a forgery and that neither the king nor the government had any connection with it, and furthermore both Waeber and Vlangali denied receiving the note. Therefore Li felt that it was going to be difficult to pursue the secret note problem any further. In that letter to Prince Ch'un Li wrote,

"I have requested that the Russian chargé d'affaires in Peking come to Tientsin to discuss the Port Hamilton problem."²⁴⁾ Thus although Li Hung-chang seems to have still harbored some doubts as to the Russian government's attitude, having received these denials, he could no longer pursue the question of the secret note, but rather took this opportunity to seek Russian agreement to the conditions laid down by the British government regarding its withdrawal from Port Hamilton.

While Yüan Shik-k'ai's telegram received on July 25 argued that the British occupation of Port Hamilton was one of the causes of the Korean effort to move closer to Russia,²⁵⁾ Li Hung-chang seems to have judged that to find a rapid solution to the Port Hamilton problem would contribute to preventing the reoccurrence of such a Korean approach to Russia.

2. The 1886 Russo-Chinese Verbal Agreement of Tientsin 天津

In response to instructions from his home government N. F. Ladyzhenskii went to Tientsin in September and held six discussions with Li Hung-chang 李鴻章 on September 12, 25, 29 and October 1, 7, and 24th. Although those meetings included discussions of the problems of commerce in the Sungari River 松花江 area and rights of navigation on the T'umen River 圖們江, the chief subject of discussion was the Korean problem. Below, I would like to give a brief description of those meetings.

At the first meeting on September 12, Li Hung-chang touched on the Port Hamilton problem, noting that the British government had agreed to immediately withdraw from Port Hamilton if the other powers would give assurances that they would not in turn occupy that anchorage. Li then requested that Russia provide such a guarantee. In fact Ladyzhenskii had already received telegraphic instructions from his home government dated August 30 that stated, "We have no intention of occupying Port Hamilton if the British should withdraw."²⁶⁾ However, in discussions with Li Hung-chang he expressed his distrust in the British conditions, and argued that the Port Hamilton problem should best be resolved bilaterally by Britain and China. Li then presented him with a copy of a memorandum dated April 14 which the British Foreign Office had handed over to Tseng Chih-tse 曾紀澤 and asked him to consider it. Li then shifted to a discussion of the "Russo-Korean secret agreement," and Ladyzhenskii said that Russia had no intention of yielding to the Korean request. He noted that Korea was a very poor country with very little in the way of goods and that not only would her occupation involve heavy expenses in addition to the use of military force, but in addition would bring Russia into conflict with both China and Japan, Russia therefore had no intention of occupying Korea.²⁷⁾

After the end of the first meeting, Li Hung-chang in a letter to Prince

Ch'un 醇親王 discussed in detail "Russia and Japan aim at Korea 俄日窺韓"; as an outline of the Korean policy that he was to follow, this document is of great interest. In this letter he first discussed the problem of putting Korea under the Chinese protection which the anti-Min 閔 party in Korea requested:

"During the Yüan dynasty, China often sent bureaucrats to Korea to supervise their government, but this led to great confusion, and as a result they gave up on the program. At that time there was no pressure from foreign countries for commercial trade, but now that pressure from foreign countries is quite strong. Of course Russia does not wish for our supervision of the Korean government, but we can deal with Russia through the process of diplomatic negotiations. But Japan from the time they first signed a treaty with Korea, has recognized her as an autonomous and independent country and this is an expression of their unwillingness to let any other countries interfere in Korean affairs . . . Japan, knowing that Korea is our vassal state, has gone ahead and recognized her an autonomous state; she has done so first in order to prevent our invasion of Korea, and further because Korea is a poor and weak country, and this is the first step in Japan's attempts to incorporate her. This intention is clearly very evil. If we were to immediately send officials to Korea to supervise her government, there is no question that the Korean king and his subordinates would act in a very opportunistic manner, therefore it would be difficult for us to cope with the situation, and that Japan, while immediately protesting us, would secretly prevail on the other powers to act together to block our moves. As a result, it would be extremely difficult for us to choose either to advance or to retreat."

In this Li was clearly arguing that the attempt to make Korea into a Chinese protectorate should not be done, considering China's relations with Japan, who in the 1876 Japanese-Korean treaty of Kanghwa 江華 had denied the suzerain-vassal relationship between China and Korea, rather than with Russia.

In the next section Li Hung-chang discussed the policy that China ought to take in dealing with Japan's probable aggression against Korea:

"Korea is an area which gives rise to great anxiety, but if Russia is right on her borders, Japan will never have treacherous plans with regard to her. We must use all means to make contact with the Russians and prevent their aggression against Korea; Japan will then probably also withdraw."

Li thus expressed his wish to gain agreement with Russia for non-aggression against Korea.²⁸⁾

Li Hung-chang saw the three countries of Russia, Japan and England as representing the chief threats to Korea, and clearly thought that Russia and Japan posed the greatest threats, as can be seen in his August 14 letter to Prince Ch'un:

“If Britain, Russia and Japan hear of internal rebellion in Korea, they will undoubtedly send naval vessels to patrol, and Russia and Japan might even go so far as to send military forces to land.”²⁹⁾

We can see that following the Russian government's attitude with regard to the secret note of the Korean government, and the first meeting with Ladyzhenskii in which he affirmed the Russian agreement and insisted that the Russian government had no intention of invading Korea, Li Hung-chang then worked to design a policy line to draw Russia to the Chinese side in order to deal with Japanese threats of a Korean invasion.

At the second meeting on September 25 Ladyzhenskii told Li Hung-chang of the telegraphic instructions from his home government ordering that he should assure Li that they had no intention of occupying either Port Hamilton or any other Korean territory. However, in response to Li Hung-chang's request that Ladyzhenskii draft a memorandum containing the above assurances, which would be handed over to the British to make them withdraw from Port Hamilton, Ladyzhenskii said that the Russian government was only willing to provide such verbal assurances directly to the Chinese government.³⁰⁾

Following this, at the third meeting on September 29, Li Hung-chang said:

“If Korea is willing to respect her position as a vassal state forever, the Chinese government will not invade her territory. The only fears we have are of Russian intentions. If Russia has no designs on Korea, then surely no third party will dare to invade Korea.”

Saying thus, Li Hung-chang then proposed a secret Russo-Chinese non-aggression agreement with regard to Korea.³¹⁾ In reply to this Ladyzhenskii noted that this was exactly what the Russian government was striving for and the two agreed to use the form of an exchange of notes as an expression of the agreement.³²⁾ That same day Li Hung-chang sent a telegram to the Peking government in which he said:

“In our meetings Ladyzhenskii said, ‘If China and Russia agree, then Japan and Britain will not dare to harbor treacherous ideas, Britain

will withdraw from Port Hamilton, and furthermore no third party will try to rupture the Sino-Russian agreement.' This view seems to be very sincere. While this is a little different from the form suggested in the British Foreign Office memorandum requesting that the various powers arrange for guaranteeing the integrity of Korean territory, in fact our anxieties for Korea from now on are related to Russia and Japan, and other countries are not involved. If Russia makes this agreement with us, Japan will certainly end its maneuvering, and there will be no need to negotiate directly with Japan."³³⁾

Here Li is again expressing his view that if they can come to an agreement with Russia, it will bring about a British withdrawal from Port Hamilton and also block a Japanese invasion of Korea.

At the fourth meeting on October 1, Ladyzhenskii handed over to Li Hung-chang a three clause Russian draft note written in French.³⁴⁾ That draft was based on the agreement that he had earlier reached with Li. On the 6th of October, he then suggested a revised version of the draft which read as follows:

1. China and Russia, in order to avoid any mutual misunderstandings, announce that there will be no change in the status quo of Korea hereafter, the methods used to date will be maintained. Furthermore that any attempts to destroy the existing situation in Korea or to encourage various complications are not in keeping with the wishes of the Chinese and Russian governments to preserve peace.
2. With regard to Korea, the Russian government has no intentions outside the preservation of peace, and is not interested in claiming any Korean territory. China also has no intentions of this sort.
3. From this time on, if there should be any unexpected circumstances that are greatly related to the status quo in Korea or threaten Russian interests there, which make some change in the current status quo necessary, the Russian and Chinese governments at the government level or through their representatives in Korea agree to meet and deal with the problems.³⁵⁾

Li Hung-chang felt that the three clause draft was clearer than the first draft but that there were some places that were not suitable, and at the fifth meeting the next day (October 7), he proposed that the second clause be kept as the outline for an agreement, that the others be dropped, and that a new simpler and clearer draft be prepared.³⁶⁾ It would seem that Li Hung-chang particularly requested the dropping of the third clause since he had insisted from the very beginning of the negotiations that China had suzerain rights over Korea while Russia was simply a neighboring state with commer-

cial relations, and therefore he could not accept the clause in the Russian draft note that seemed to give Russia equal rights to express opinions with regard to domestic affairs in Korea.

As a result of this discussion, Ladyzhenskii delivered to Li Hung-chang on October 9 the third draft of an agreement which said:

“Both China and Russia desire peace in Korea. In order to avoid misunderstandings, the two governments agree that there should be no change in the current situation in Korea and that neither has any intention ever to occupy any Korean territory.”⁸⁷⁾

On the same day Li telegraphed the Peking government and sought permission for an exchange of notes based on this draft note.

On October 11, however, the Peking government sent instructions to Li Hung-chang in which they argued that “the clause ‘the two governments agree that there should be no change in the current situation in Korea’ implicitly includes a guarantee for Korea, and there is a fear that in the future when dealing with the problem of Korea’s vassal status this clause may limit activities,” and therefore they directed Li to seek the removal of that clause.⁸⁸⁾ The same day Li Hung-chang sent a return telegram in which he argued that the phrase “current situation” referred to a situation in which “Korea is our vassal state and Russia is a neighboring state with commercial relations” and that Russia had no intention of protecting Korea; furthermore he insisted that he would make it clear to Russia that “Korea is our vassal state and that the actions we have taken so far are simply to preserve peace.” Furthermore, if we talk about settling the suzerain-vassal problem in the future, it will probably be impossible to make Korea either a Chinese province or a protected state. As for any Chinese efforts to suppress internal rebellion, Russia will not interfere. Using these arguments, Li argued for the acceptance of the Russian draft note.⁸⁹⁾

On this occasion the Peking government rejected the suggestions of Li Hung-chang. Prince Ch’un I-huan, in a letter to the Empress Dowager Tz’u-hsi 西太后 dated October 14 strongly stressed the difference of standing of China and Russia with regard to Korea, reporting:

“The reason China and Russia are signing an agreement with regard to Korea is because of an anxiety that Russia has ulterior motives. If we were to reach an agreement that limited our actions in the future, then it is better not to sign any agreement at all now. It is only natural that Russia should not invade Korea, and there is no reason to come to an agreement in which Russia should stand as an equal with us since we are Korea’s suzerain state.”

Prince Ch’un argued that rather than signing an agreement that guaranteed

"no change in the current situation in Korea," it would be better to treat the Sino-Russian negotiations as a blank page. If that were impossible, then the next best approach was to include into the Russian note, the following statement:

"Korea is China's vassal state and this status will be meticulously observed. As long as Korea does not violate her responsibilities as a vassal state, China will take no special measures. Russia will maintain friendly relations with Korea and carry on commercial ties, but has no intention of aggression against her territory."

The Empress Dowager agreed with Prince Ch'un and the same day ordered Li Hung-chang to begin again to negotiate with Ladyzhenskii following the policy line laid out by Prince Ch'un.⁴⁰⁾

As soon as he received these orders, Li Hung-chang sent his interpreter Lo Feng-lu 羅豐祿 to approach Ladyzhenskii. In response to this Ladyzhenskii said that he had received a cable from his home government in which they said that to remove the phrase "there should be no change in the current situation in Korea," would be for the Russian government to agree not to invade Korea, something that they had no intention of doing anyway. Since to do so would damage Russia's name as a major power, this proposal was rejected.⁴¹⁾ Following this the Russian government sent a telegram to Ladyzhenskii on October 22 directing him to reject any stipulation with regard to China's suzerainty over Korea.⁴²⁾ As a result of this, the final meeting on October 24 took place with Li Hung-chang and Ladyzhenskii's arguments following parallel lines, and ended without the exchange of notes, but rather with a verbal agreement to preserve the current situation and to take no aggressive action against Korea. On that occasion Ladyzhenskii noted that the current situation in Korea was taken to refer to Korea's status as a vassal state of China and a neighboring state of Russia, then if some internal rebellion occurred in Korea, Russia would be in the position of approving China's right to despatch troops.⁴³⁾ It would seem that Russia interpreted China's desire to remove the phrase "there should be no change in the current situation in Korea" and to clearly stipulate China's suzerainty over Korea as an approval of China's strengthening of her suzerain rights with regard to Korea and in fact opening the way to the establishment of a Chinese protectorate over Korea.

Parallel to the negotiations with Ladyzhenskii, Li Hung-chang had already been in touch with the British minister in Peking, J. Walsham, and even before the end of the discussions with Ladyzhenskii had reached agreement to the effect that even if official notes were not exchanged, if the Russian chargé d'affaires provided verbal guarantees that Russia would not invade Korean territory, Britain would withdraw its forces from Port Hamil-

ton.⁴⁴⁾ On October 31 the Tsungli Yamen 總理衙門 communicated Russia's guarantees to Walsham⁴⁵⁾ and on February 27, 1887 the British forces withdrew from Port Hamilton.

3. Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1888-1893

(1)

Since the Tientsin negotiations ended without any formal exchange of notes owing to the disagreement about the future of China's suzerain rights over Korea, the Russian government continued to harbor doubts with regard to China's intentions toward Korea. This was clearly reflected at the special conference on the Far Eastern situation that opened in St. Petersburg on February 7, 1887. At that meeting A. N. Korf, governor-general of the Priamur Region, stressed the following points. Aggression against Korea would not only not bring any benefit to Russia, but would in fact bring disadvantages. On the other hand, although both China and Japan have designs on Korea, if Japan were to invade Korea she would lose her special advantages as an island country. As a result of that, China was much more likely to invade Korea than Japan, and it was quite possible that the Chinese army would receive British support in invading Korea. In offering these views, Korf was offering a proposal to take measures to deal with China's designs on Korea, however he stressed a peaceful pursuit of Russia's goals since in any military clash with China over Korea, even if Russia was to achieve victory, the gains would not pay for the costs.

A. E. Vlangali, vice minister of foreign affairs, made a different proposal. Vlangali who had been the Russian minister in Peking from 1864 to 1873 and was an expert on China denied that China had any intention of invading Korea and argued that China was very suspicious of Russian intentions. He argued that it was very important "to assure the Chinese government that we have now regarded our present border lines as final," in order to improve Russo-Chinese relations. If Russia were to continue her present policy line, China would not invade Korea. The special conference then decided to direct the Russian minister in Peking to reopen negotiations with the intention of attempting to make the 1886 verbal agreement of Tientsin into a written form. Furthermore, after obtaining the support of the war minister and the director of the Naval Ministry, the conference decided to increase Russian forces in the Far East, especially her squadron in the Pacific, judging that under the current situation Russia could not make China pay proper respect to her. But as a result of financial difficulties, it would seem that this plan hardly realized.⁴⁶⁾

On May 8, 1888 Korf and I. A. Zinoviev, director of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held a special conference on Far Eastern problems. The purpose of this meeting was "to form an opinion of

the Government upon our political position in the Far East, in order to coordinate manners of acting both of Russian local authorities and of Russian representatives in the neighboring Asian countries, in consideration of possible eventualities in this part of Asia." The conclusions of this conference then provided the base for Russian Far Eastern policy in the subsequent period. Since the minutes for that meeting in their entirety are included in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, let us take a close look at the content of those discussions.⁴⁷⁾

The conference first noted that Korea was a central concern of Russian Far Eastern policy "because of Korea's geographical location", and decided on the following policy with respect to that country. Korea is a very poor country with a long coastal line which makes her defense very difficult, and if Korea were to be invaded it would lead to diplomatic conflict with China and Britain, therefore, "The acquisition of Korea not only would give us no advantages, but would not fail to entail very unfavorable consequences." Therefore the conference reaffirmed the policy line expressed by Ladyzhenskii during the discussions in Tientsin and the policy supported by the February 1887 special conference.

Secondly, the conference assumed that Korea, being insignificant by herself, might, because of her weakness, turn into a menace to Russia if she should fall under the rule of one of her neighbors, and proceeded to consider both Chinese and Japanese policies toward Korea. The conference's view of Japanese policy was that following the 1885 Sino-Japanese Convention of Tientsin Japan had given up her ambitions with regard to Korea, but that recently in order to block a Chinese invasion of Korea she was again starting to consider her policy. Since Japanese and Russian policy objectives were quite similar, Russia should try to support Japanese policy efforts.

What was the basis for formation of this Russian understanding? According to the work of A. L. Narochinskii, the reason Japan took a "peace-loving" attitude in her negotiations with China and Russia over the Korean problem after 1886, was because in her own efforts for treaty revision it was important not to give rise to any diplomatic conflict. Also, Japan was at that time occupied with various domestic problems including the drafting of a constitution and was in no position to take an active foreign policy.⁴⁸⁾ To what extent this is accurate explanation of Japanese policy toward Korea in this period is difficult to say, but there is no question that Narochinskii's views of Japan's passive policy are based on a reading of the reports of the Russian minister in Japan to his home government which are deposited in the Soviet Foreign Ministry Archives.

In March of 1887 the Japanese government informed the Russian chargé d'affaires in Tokyo that there had been a "basic change" in Japanese policy with regard to Korea. The Japanese government, with the intention of improving relations with China at the time of their revision of the commercial treaties and in reflection of China's strong assertion of her claims

to suzerain rights in Korea, announced that they were renouncing all claims with regard to Korea. N. K. Giers, minister of foreign affairs, after receiving this report, was convinced that if Japan was not going to be concerned with Korea, this would open the door for Chinese incorporation of Korea. He was very suspicious that there was an anti-Russian secret alliance between Japan and China in which Korea had been turned over to China's responsibility, and he immediately sent telegraphic instructions to D. E. Shevich, Russian minister in Tokyo, directing him to make it clear to the Japanese government and to all of the ministers of other countries in Tokyo that Russia would not recognize any agreement that would endanger the independence of Korea. In response to this Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru 井上馨 and Vice Foreign Minister Aoki Shūzō 青木周藏 replied that Japan would uphold the Sino-Japanese Tientsin Convention. In October of that same year, Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 informed Shevich that Japan was very busy with domestic reforms and desired "peace and tranquility" in Korea. However, at the same time Shevich reported that Admiral Enomoto Takeaki 榎本武揚, then minister of communication, had said that if China were to invade Korea it would give rise to much dissatisfaction within Japan, and "the army and navy would certainly not allow such action."⁴⁹⁾

In any case it would seem that the above reports from the Russian minister in Tokyo led to the Russian government's view that Japan had given up her ambitions with regard to Korea, and the special conference judged that such a positive Japanese policy toward Korea as suggested by Admiral Enomoto would be favorable to Russia.

With regard to China, the special conference reached the following conclusions. With regard to Korea's fate, China has a very strong influence. If China's suzerainty over Korea is to remain at the level of the existing traditional relations between the two countries there is no reason to oppose it, however recently China has strengthened her control over Korean domestic affairs, and it is possible that China will in the near future convert Korea into a Chinese province. The powers have shown no interest in Korea and are diligently working to preserve friendly relations with China. Especially Britain, seeing China as an ally in any conflict with Russia, has encouraged the conceit and ambitions of the Chinese authorities.

Thus we can see that this conference believed that threats to Korea would come from China which was backed up by Britain. What policy then should Russia adopt to deal with a possible Chinese incorporation of Korea? The conference decided that first the Russian government should try to allay the suspicions of the Chinese government with regard to Russian intentions in Korea, and they should convince the Chinese government that Russia was satisfied with the Tientsin verbal agreement of 1886 and should by diplomatic means work to see that China held to it.

As we have seen earlier, the Li-Ladyzhenskii talks ended without a

formal exchange of notes as a result of the conflict over the question of China's suzerainty over Korea; with regard to this question, what position did the conference take? With regard to China's suzerainty over Korea, the conference decided not to deny the traditional relations existing between Korea and China, provided the privileges secured by Korea through her treaties with European powers and the United States were preserved perfectly. However, if China should demand to clear up her suzerainty over Korea, it would be best to the extent possible not to touch on this delicate question as in the discussions at Tientsin.

Furthermore, in the case of a grave disturbance in Korea, the Sino-Japanese Tientsin Convention had already fixed conditions for the despatch of troops by both countries, and in the Russo-Chinese Tientsin negotiations Li Hung-chang had clearly stated that:

"Korea is China's vassal state and China is responsible for her. If there are domestic disturbances in Korea, China cannot but send troops. Once the disturbance is ended, we will immediately withdraw our troops."

Ladyzhenskii had agreed with this statement.⁵⁰ If China should in this manner despatch troops to Korea, what action should Russia take? In such a case, on the basis of the right reserved to Russia by the Tientsin verbal agreement of 1886, Russia should seek an explanation of China's aims in sending the troops and should express her hopes that as soon as China's goals are attained she withdraw her forces. Only in a case where China appeared to be indefinitely occupying Korean territory should Russia turn to the use of military force which might include such steps as the use of pressure on the Russo-Chinese border, particularly in the western section of it or might include a naval demonstration in Chinese waters or even the temporary occupation of a Korean coastal point close to Russian border. Such steps however were only to be used in extreme cases and the conference decided to send instructions to the Russian representative in Korea that he should counsel Korea to take no actions that would suggest a change in her relationship with China or that might be used as an excuse for Chinese intervention.

From the above details we can see that the May 1888 special conference took as the basis for Russian Far Eastern policy the agreement made during the Russo-Chinese Tientsin negotiation with Li Hung-chang in which Russia and China pledged to protect the existing situation in Korea, and believing that threats to her would come from China, the conference aimed at a corresponding adjustment in Russia's relations with China. In these discussions the possibility of a Japanese invasion of Korea was almost totally ignored, and Russia assumed that they shared the same interests as Japan in Korea and that in case of conflict they could obtain Japanese support.

(2)

Following the special conference of May 8, 1888 which had reached agreement on the outlines of Far Eastern policy, the Russian government immediately took steps to put those plans into action. If we look at Russian policy toward Korea, we can see that the Russian chargé d'affaires in Seoul, K. I. Waeber, was dissatisfied with the expansion of Chinese strength as represented by Yüan Shi-k'ai 袁世凱. A telegram dated June 10, 1888 from A. M. Kumani, the Russian minister to China, reported that Li Hung-chang complained to him that Waeber had encouraged the Korean king to send a Korean mission to St. Petersburg and to seek the complete independence from China. Foreign Minister Giers, judging that this objection was based on reports of Yüan Shi-k'ai, sent a telegram to Waeber dated June 15 in which he said that Waeber should not give the Chinese any cause for suspicion, "lest Sino-Russian relations be harmed."⁵¹ Further, Giers sent a despatch to Waeber on August 7 in which he communicated the decisions of the May 8 special conference and in which he restated the Russian government policy that it did not desire itself to acquire Korea nor did it desire to place Korea under Russia's exclusive protection, but rather aimed to convince China that Russia was prepared to observe the Li-Ladyzhenskii verbal agreement and to preserve the territorial integrity of Korea; furthermore he pointed out to Waeber that in the Russian view, the greatest threats to Korea would come from China and ordered him to urge Korea to do nothing that would provide an opportunity for the Chinese to interfere in Korean political affairs.⁵²

Next, let us examine Sino-Russian relations. When the Li-Ladyzhenskii talks ended in October 1886 with no exchange of notes but simply a verbal agreement, both parties agreed that negotiations should not be closed and that the new Russian Minister Kumani would continue those talks. In fact, the talks were not reopened after Kumani took over, but in March of 1887 when the Tsungli Yamen 總理衙門 expressed its apprehension over the increase in the Russian Pacific squadron, Kumani responded that the question of the increase in the naval forces had not yet been decided upon, but that if the Chinese government did not raise excessive claims Russia was willing to sign a non-aggression pact with regard to Korea.⁵³ With respect to the question of drawing up a formal written statement of the terms of the Tientsin verbal agreement, Li Hung-chang sent a telegram on August 4, 1887 to the Tsungli Yamen, in which, arguing that the Russian minister to China had informed him that Russia would observe the Tientsin verbal agreement, Li advised the Yamen to approach the Russian minister with the intention of concluding a Sino-Russian secret agreement in order to stabilize the situation in Korea.⁵⁴ However the Peking government did not take such action at that time.

However, after the special conference of May 1888 the Russian government anew proposed to the Chinese government that a written statement

based on the Tientsin verbal agreement be drawn up. On July 25, 1888 the Russian Minister Kumani sent a *note verbale* to the Tsungli Yamen via P. S. Popov, dragoman of the Russian legation, in which he said that the Chinese government should be assured that it was the policy of the Russian government to respect the Tientsin verbal agreement, and that if the Chinese government agreed, the Russian government would be willing to sign a more detailed statement that took the Tientsin verbal agreement as its base.⁵⁵⁾

In parallel with this action, the Russian government proposed to Ch'ing Ch'ang 慶常, secretary of the Chinese legation in St. Petersburg, the drawing up of a written Sino-Russian agreement guaranteeing Korean territory and offered to invite other powers including England and Japan to join in this agreement.⁵⁶⁾ The exact date of this proposal is not clear. The letter of Hung Chün 洪鈞, Chinese minister to Russia as well as Germany, Austria and Holland, addressed to the Tsungli Yamen with reference to this matter has not been included in collections of Chinese language materials, and the only reference we have to the Russian proposal comes from a citation of part of it in a letter from Li Hung-chang to the Tsungli Yamen dated October 15.⁵⁷⁾ Since Hung Chün's letter must have reached Peking in early October and since it took approximately two months for delivery of a letter from St. Petersburg to Peking, we can guess that the proposal must have been made in August, probably right after Kumani's *note verbale* was delivered to the Tsungli Yamen.

What attitude did the Chinese government take to this new approach of the Russian government? On October 11 the Tsungli Yamen sent a cable to Liu Jui-fen 劉瑞芬, Chinese minister in England, informing him of the Russian government's proposal for the signing of an agreement guaranteeing Korean territory and ordering him to secretly explore British views on this proposal.⁵⁸⁾ At the same time, the Tsungli Yamen sent Hung Chün's letter to Li Hung-chang and sought his views on the question. On October 22 the Tsungli Yamen received a return telegram from Liu Jui-fen in which he said that the British Foreign Office did not desire Russian involvement in Korea and felt that China herself should protect Korea; on the following day another telegram arrived from Liu Jui-fen reporting that the British Foreign Office had announced that according to a telegraph from British ambassador in Russia, Russia had concluded a treaty with Korea re the protection of Korea.⁵⁹⁾

We can certainly suppose that Liu Jui-fen's telegrams caused the Tsungli Yamen to have doubts as to Russia's intentions. On the other hand, Li Hung-chang argued that China should accept the Russian proposal to conclude an agreement with regard to Korea, and urged the Tsungli Yamen to send to Hung Chün a copy of his reports which he had sent to the Yamen in 1886 on his talks with Ladyzhenskii as reference for Hung Chün's use in discussions with the Russian Foreign Ministry.⁶⁰⁾ Furthermore, with regard to the

reports of Liu Jui-fen on a Russo-Korean treaty, Li Hung-chang immediately consulted with Yüan Shih-k'ai and Hung-Chün, and after ascertaining that there was no basis for such reports, Li informed the Tsungli Yamen of this and urged again the Yamen to pursue negotiations with Russia, arguing that concluding a Sino-Russian agreement would prevent such an intrigue from recurring within Korea.⁶¹⁾

This time the Tsungli Yamen did not immediately reject this Russian proposal, but on October 17 sent a cable with instructions to Hung Chün which said, "With regard to the question of an agreement guaranteeing Korean territory, begin negotiations after receiving documents sent by the Tsungli Yamen."⁶²⁾ While we can certainly suppose that there were some further dealings between Hung Chün and the Russian Foreign Ministry, they did not lead to any results, as we can see from the Russian communication to Hung Chün in January 1889:

"Although we at first feared that a third party might attack Korea, those fears have now disappeared. Since the Russian Tsar desires to maintain peace in Korea and not change the existing situation, it is sufficient if both countries have expressed their agreement on these matters."⁶³⁾

With this, the discussion of the proposal was indefinitely postponed.

With regard to these Sino-Russian negotiations of July 1888 to January 1889, neither A. L. Narohnitskii nor B. D. Pak in their works have discussed the problems, and it is unclear what negotiations went on in St. Petersburg. According to Li Hung-chang's letter to the Tsungli Yamen dated October 15, 1888, we can see that the Tsungli Yamen not only wanted both Russia and China to agree not to occupy Korean territory but also intended to ask the Russian government to clearly affirm Korea's status as a Chinese vassal state;⁶⁴⁾ therefore we can imagine that in this case as in the Tientsin negotiations of 1886, this condition blocked the further progress of negotiations.

(3)

Following the indefinite postponement of the St. Petersburg negotiations in January of 1889, we can see no evidence up until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war of Russian attempts to urge the Chinese government to sign an agreement with regard to Korea. During this period, the decisions of the May 1888 special conference which had taken preservation of the status quo in Korea as the base of Russian Far Eastern policy continued to dominate that policy, and they continued to believe that the major threats to Korea would come not from Japan, but China. This can be clearly seen in the despatches sent to the Russian ministers in China and Japan.

For example, in 1891 when Kumani was replaced as Russian minister to

China by A. P. Cassini, he was sent orders, dated May 19, which said, "The Korean problem is the most important political problem in the Far East." In saying that clash with China over this issue, "is utmost undesirable for Russia," the Russian government clearly denied any possibility of a Russian invasion of Korea. It was in Russian interests, however, to oppose Chinese control over Korea, "using whatever methods were available, to strive to stabilize and make firm the Korean domestic situation which has been in constant change, and to help to maintain the independence of the Korean peninsula."⁶⁵⁾

As a further example we can turn to the instructions to M. A. Hitrovo who was to arrive in Tokyo as Russian minister to Japan in 1893. The instructions to him, dated September 20, 1892, described Russian Far Eastern policy as follows:

"Because of its geographical position, if the Korean peninsula should fall under the control of either China or Japan, it would represent a serious threat to our Ussuri region. We wish you to keep this in mind while assuring the Japanese government that we have no intentions to seize advantage in the regions near Japan. Our wishes with regard to Korea stop with a desire to see her independence maintained. We will do what we can to see a strengthening of the Korean domestic system, but at the same time will not officially intervene. On the other hand, Japan clearly fears Chinese aggression in Korea, and at the very least with regard to the question of our opposition to Chinese aggression against Korea, Japan will presumably cooperate with our policy lines."⁶⁶⁾

The strength of the Russian expectations for Japanese assistance in resisting Chinese aggression against Korea can be seen from the fact that this policy was unchanged by the occurrence of the Otsu Incident 大津事件 of the previous year (1891). In that incident, which shocked both official and private circles in Japan, a Japanese policeman attempted to assassinate the visiting Russian crown prince. Although the instructions to Hitrovo include some reservations about the stability of the Japanese domestic situation, they note that the Otsu Incident "has not changed our friendly attitude toward Japan." Furthermore, "Japan will certainly be important to us on any occasion when there should be major turmoil in the Far East. . . . Since there is no conflict of interests in principle between ourselves and Japan, there should be no major blocks to our drawing closer to Japan." Thus Hitrovo was instructed to work for the preservation and strengthening of friendly relations with Japan.⁶⁷⁾

From the above documents we can see the passive policy of preservation of the existing situation in Korea which Russia took vis-à-vis China in this period, and the same picture would emerge from a search of Chinese language materials. Following the St. Petersburg negotiations, the next time that the

Korean problem became an issue for negotiations between Russia and China was in the case of the 1890 Korean government plan to borrow foreign capital. On May 12 of that year, Ch'ing Ch'ang 慶常, secretary of the Chinese legation in St. Petersburg, visited the Russian Foreign Ministry and in a conference with Foreign Minister Giers, Vice Minister Vlangali and Director of the Asiatic Department Zinoviev stressed China's status as Korea's suzerain and strongly requested that Russia refuse capital loans to Korea. In response to this, the Russian Foreign Ministry stated that neither government nor private funds would be loaned to Korea, and that furthermore Russia had no intention of intervening in Korean domestic affairs and only desired to preserve the existing situation.⁶⁸⁾

In 1891 Hsü Ching-ch'eng 許景澄 succeeded Hung Chün as Chinese minister in St. Petersburg. In a letter to the Tsungli Yamen describing the events on the occasion of his presentation to Tsar Alexander III on March 2 of that year, he reported that he believed that Russia intended to pursue a peaceful policy in the Far East.⁶⁹⁾ Hsü Ching-ch'eng was to remain as Chinese minister to Russia, Germany, Austria and Holland from that time until 1896, and we can get a good sense of his diplomatic activities from his *Hsü Wen-su kung i-kao* 許文肅公遺稿 (*A Posthumous Collection of the Works of Hsü Ching-ch'eng*). According to this work the matters in which he conducted negotiations with the Russian government up until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war included discussions of border problems in the Sinkiang 新疆 and Pamir region, navigation rights on the Sungari River 松花江, and the problem of bannerman's settlements on the left bank of the Amur River 黑龍江. As for the Korean problem, with the exception of a discussion in September 1891 with N. P. Shishkin, the Russian vice minister of foreign affairs, in which he denied to Hsü Ching-ch'eng the newspaper reports of a secret Russo-Korean agreement,⁷⁰⁾ it did not become a topic for negotiations.

4. The Russo-Chinese Tientsin Verbal Agreement and Japanese Policy toward Korea

As we have already seen above, the crisis created by the Port Hamilton problem and the second "Russo-Korean secret agreement" provided an opportunity that led to the attempts to sign a Russo-Chinese agreement, but in spite of the mutual consent between the direct negotiators Li Hung-chang and Ladyzhenskii themselves, the Peking government's unwillingness to be restricted by Russia with regard to China's suzerainty over Korea resulted in a failure to come to a written agreement. As a result of this Russia's fears of a Chinese attempt to incorporate Korea were strengthened, and Russia thus was led to consider cooperation with Japan in opposition to this.

On the Chinese side, Li Hung-chang believed that there were threats to Korea from Russia, Japan and England, but particularly Russia and Japan and

in a hope to draw Russia to China's side in opposition to Japan's threatened invasion of Korea, he initiated the Tientsin negotiations, as we have already seen above. The fact that Li Hung-chang continued even after that time to fear Russian and Japanese aggression against Korea can be seen from his July 26, 1889 letter to the Tsungli Yamen in which he wrote, "Russia and Japan are in close proximity to Korea, like the lips to the teeth, and both are considering incorporation of Korea."⁷¹⁾

Thus, in spite of the assurances from both Russia and China that they would preserve the existing situation in Korea, they differed in opinion as to what would threaten her, that is, their estimates of Japanese policy toward Korea. In the end it was, despite Russian predictions, Japanese action that destroyed the existing situation in Korea and led to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war.

At the time that Japan decided to attack the suzerain-vassal relationship between China and Korea and to initiate the Sino-Japanese war, there is no evidence that any consideration was given to the 1886 Sino-Russian Tientsin verbal agreement. It is not even clear whether the Japanese government knew of this agreement, nor do we know how the situation would have been changed if the 1886 Tientsin negotiations or the 1888-89 St. Petersburg negotiations had led to the formal signing of a written agreement pledging non-aggression against Korea and preservation of the existing situation. It is certainly possible that the existence of such a Sino-Russian agreement, particularly an agreement like that proposed by Russia in 1888 which would have invited the major powers including England to join in an international agreement guaranteeing Korean territorial integrity similar to the proposal that England had made to China in April 1886, might have prevented the Japanese invasion of Korea and the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war to some extent.

As is well known, with the advance of the construction work on the trans-Siberian railroad the fears and alarms with regard to a Russian invasion of Korea had been raised in Japan. For example in March of 1890 Prime Minister Yamagata Aritomo 山縣有朋 in his "On diplomatic policy" expressed fears of a Russian invasion of Korea and he suggested that a Japanese-Chinese-English-German treaty on the neutrality of Korea might oppose such a move.⁷²⁾ If there had been a Russian-Chinese-English agreement pledging non-aggression in Korea and preservation of the existing situation, presumably the Japanese government would have considered joining in this agreement, and even if Japan had not joined in such an agreement there is no question that it would have limited Japanese policy initiatives toward China and Korea.

Thus we can argue that the actions of the Peking government in blocking the soft policy of Li Hung-chang in his negotiations with Russia meant that the only agreement between China and Russia was in the relatively unstable

form of a verbal agreement, and in the end this may have been one of the factors which led to the Sino-Japanese war.

In June of 1894 when Japan, acting contrary to the expectations of Li Hung-chang, sent troops to Korea, Li Hung-chang appealed to Russia on the basis of the 1886 Tientsin verbal agreement, and Russia at first appeared to respond to this. At that time, Russian policy in its general outlines followed the policy lines agreed on at the special conference of May 1888. This problem will be dealt with in more detail in the third chapter of this essay.

II. British Far Eastern Policy and the Beginning of the Sino-Japanese War

I. British Far Eastern Policy in the Period before the Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese Conflict

Before considering the British attitude to the hostilities that broke out between China and Japan regarding Korea, let us first look at the general outlines of the basic principles of British Far Eastern policy with special emphasis on the Korean problem.

In the early 1880's the British Foreign Office, on the basis of the advice of British diplomats in the Far East, particularly H. S. Parkes, then minister to Japan, began to consider establishing diplomatic relations with Korea, and on June 6, 1882, following the United States, Britain signed a treaty of amity and commerce with Korea. At that time the British minister in China, T. F. Wade, had not sought instructions from his home government, but rather after reaching an understanding with the Chinese authorities had asked Vice Admiral G. O. Willes, commander-in-chief of Britain's China Station, to sign the treaty. When Parkes heard of this after the fact, he criticized the treaty arguing that the clauses with regard to extraterritoriality and commercial privileges were not advantageous.¹⁾

On the basis of Parkes' criticism of the treaty, a major discussion of Korean policy was held in the British Foreign Office beginning in December 1882, and in February of the following year they notified Parkes of the following decisions: it would be best if in her relations with other countries Korea were treated as an independent country; Parkes himself was being appointed as British minister to China and was to undertake a renegotiation of the treaty with Korea, but he was not to notify the Chinese government of the decision to renegotiate the treaty. With the approval of his home government, Parkes took a new draft treaty to Seoul and on November 26, 1883 the new Anglo-Korean treaty was signed.

However, following that event, there was a retreat in the British determination to treat Korea as an independent country. Naturally following the

signing of the treaty the question of diplomatic representatives arose. In spite of the earlier British intention to make her minister to Japan serve jointly as minister to Korea, in consideration of Chinese dissatisfaction with the new treaty, the British government decided to have her minister to China serve jointly as envoy to Korea.²⁾

Such a British position with regard to Korea can be seen very clearly in the events surrounding the British occupation of Port Hamilton beginning in April 1885 and the following diplomatic clash over that occupation. As we have already noted in chapter one, the conditions for British withdrawal from Port Hamilton included a desire that other countries guarantee that they would not in turn occupy the anchorage, and in pursuing this search for guarantees Britain did not negotiate directly with Korea, but rather with China, her suzerain power. Following the Russian guarantees that she would not occupy Port Hamilton given in October 1886 through China, the British withdrew from Port Hamilton in February of the following year.

In fact the impetus for the signing of the Anglo-Korean treaty and for the occupation of Port Hamilton had been suspicions of Russian intentions to move to the south, and the conclusion of the Franco-Russian alliance in the early 1890's had only increased those suspicions. Britain was thus, in spite of her defense of the system of unequal treaties with China, attempting to maintain friendly relations with China and strengthen the position of China as a block to the southern advance of Russia. The British Foreign Office in a despatch dated January 19, 1894 to its minister in Peking, N. R. O'Connor, explained Britain's China policy as follows:

"The political interests of England and of China are nowhere at variance in any important degree. In many parts of Asia the objects of their policy are identical though the manner of attaining them may differ."

"By a full and confidential exchange of ideas on matters in which both Powers have a common interest they will be in a better position to pursue their policy and to carry out their views, than if each State acted separately on its own behalf without consulting the other. This is especially the case where questions affecting the relations of England and of China with Russia, France and Siam are concerned."³⁾

O'Connor, based on this statement of his own government's intentions, then acted from a position that regarded China as an "ally" at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict.⁴⁾

If we turn to British policy toward Japan in the period before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, there is no question that the central diplomatic issue was treaty revision. Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu 陸奥宗光 presented a draft plan for an equal treaty to the cabinet in July 1893 and in September of the same year Aoki Shūzō 青木周造, Japanese minister to

Germany, was sent to London to begin negotiations for treaty revision. In preparation for those negotiations Aoki met with H. Fraser, British minister to Japan who was on home leave at the time, and presented the draft for treaty revision. At this time in Japan the opposition political parties announced their opposition to the government's treaty revision plan and promoted the continuation of the existing treaties, and the treaty revision question was the chief topic of debate in the Diet.⁵⁾

It was under these circumstances that the British Foreign Office agreed to consider the Japanese request for treaty revision in January 1894, and the result of the consideration was the following memorandum drafted by F. Bertie, assistant under-secretary of state for foreign affairs:

"If we refuse to negotiate or leave unanswered the Japanese proposals, a strong anti-English movement encouraged by the Japanese Government may ensue."

"It is possible that no Government may be strong enough to denounce the Treaties with foreign Powers. On the other hand, the exigencies of party warfare may drive whatever Government may be in power into a denunciation, leaving us with no trade advantages, and without extra-territorial jurisdiction. In such a case, we are not locally in a position to enforce our existing treaty rights. The Japanese have a navy nearly as strong as that of China. Their coast defenses are nearly finished, and will be formidable, and their army consists of 70,000 well-armed and well-drilled troops. The great object which Japan and China have in common, and which is also an English interest, is to keep Russia out of Corea, as, if that Power establish herself at Port Lazaref, she will be in a position of continual menace to Japan and China."

Speaking in this way, Bertie recommended the desirability of beginning negotiations for treaty revision with Japan and received the support of Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs T. H. Sanderson and of the Earl of Rosebery, A.P.P., secretary of state for foreign affairs.⁶⁾ The British government thus recognized the strength of Japan's modern military forces, and hoping that this would not become a threat to Britain but that rather together with China Japan would stand as a block to Russian advances into Korea, the British government decided to open negotiations for treaty revision which Japan had requested.

However, as we can see clearly from this memorandum, at this point Britain did not yet have any hints of the future Japanese aggression against Korea and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war. The treaty revision negotiations were to begin in April 1894, and as part of the process Bertie met with Aoki on May 2 and in their discussions touched on the Korean problem:

“Britain does not have any special expectations with regard to Korea and might be said to be on a position of almost no relationship at all. We only do not wish to see that country occupied by Russia. For that reason, whatever may be China’s status in the treaties, in fact she stands in a suzerain relationship with Korea and in control of Korea, and that is a relationship that we appreciate in our heart. Therefore, Britain will be reassured as long as China does not lose her position of power in Korea.”⁷⁾

Thus Britain, in order to block Russian advances into Korea, was willing to support a preservation of the actual situation of Chinese control over Korea.

Thus, as we will see later, when Britain began to feel real anxiety with regard to Russian intentions while at the same time the opposition between China and Japan was growing, Britain was forced to reconsider her Far Eastern policy which had originally been based on the perpetuation of friendly relations with both China and Japan as a way to block Russian advances in Korea.

2. Japanese and Chinese Despatch of Troops to Korea and Britain’s Good Offices

O’Conor notified the British Foreign Office of the outbreak of the Tonghak 東學 Rebellion in Korea in a despatch of February 3, 1894 in which he also enclosed a report from the acting consul-general in Seoul.⁸⁾ From that time on, O’Conor’s despatches on the situation in Korea were inspected by the Foreign Secretary himself, but the British government does not seem to have given much attention to the situation.

However, the despatch of Chinese troops at the request of the Korean government in early June and especially the Japanese despatch of troops in response to this, evoked a great deal of attention from the British Foreign Office. The Foreign Office learned of the Japanese despatch of troops in a cable from the chargé d’affaires in Tokyo, R. Paget, sent on June 7,⁹⁾ and on the following day, F. Bertie, assistant under-secretary of foreign affairs, drafted and had circulated within the Foreign Office a memorandum on the Korean problem. The first half of this memorandum quoted part of the 1883 Anglo-Korean treaty and of the 1885 Sino-Japanese Convention of Tientsin which stipulated the two countries’ despatch of troops to Korea. The second part of the memorandum described the British occupation of Port Hamilton beginning in 1885. Bertie stated that that occupation had been taken in view of possible hostilities with Russia and described the negotiation process between England and China designed to gain a Russian guarantee that they would not try to occupy Port Hamilton.¹⁰⁾ From this memorandum we can

see that from the very beginning of conflict between Japan and China the British Foreign Office feared that the Japanese despatch of troops might bring a major change in the international situation in East Asia and that such a crisis might appear again that would compel Britain to take action in order to block the Russian advance to the south, just as in 1885 Britain had occupied Port Hamilton.

With regard to the Japanese despatch of troops, the Foreign Office on June 8 sent a cable to Paget inquiring as to whether the Japanese government had, in accordance with the Convention of 1885, given notice of their intentions to the Chinese government.¹¹⁾ After receiving a return telegram that assured the Foreign Office that the Japanese government had notified the Chinese government of their intention to send troops to Korea,¹²⁾ Bertie then, wrote to the Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Kimberley J. W., on June 12 that, "Japan is within her rights in sending troops to Corea, and it can only be on the score of the disturbances being already quelled that Japan can be asked to desist from interfering." Kimberley expressed his agreement with Bertie's statement of the problem.¹³⁾

During this same time, Li Hung-chang 李鴻章, the governor-general of Chihli and superintendent of trade for the Northern Ports, who had not anticipated the Japanese despatch of troops to Korea, met in Tientsin on June 9 with O'Connor who was on his way to Peking from Chefoo 芝罘 and had a detailed discussion of the Korean problem. Li requested that England would use her influence to persuade Japan not to send troops to Seoul.¹⁴⁾ On June 13, Foreign Secretary Kimberley called Japanese Minister Aoki for a meeting at which he conveyed to him the Chinese government's request, however, since the British government took the position that the Japanese despatch of troops was not in violation of the Tientsin Convention, Kimberley's statements to Aoki did not go beyond a general discussion of the necessity to avoid an open clash between China and Japan.¹⁵⁾ Li Hung-chang who was very dissatisfied with Britain's failure to put stronger pressure on Japan, on June 20 appealed to A. P. Cassini, the Russian minister to China, to mediate in the matter.

Meanwhile Japan on June 16 proposed that China would work to reform conjointly with Japan the internal administration of Korea and when that proposal was rejected, on June 22 decided on a policy to continue the stationing of troops in Korea and to proceed with the reform of the internal administration regardless of China's intentions, and presented to China the so-called "first notification of a break in relations 第一次絶交書."¹⁶⁾ At the same time, Japan appealed to England to obtain her support for a position which argued that in order to prevent a Russian advance to the south, it was essential to bring about a reform in the internal administration of Korea. On June 23, Minister Aoki met with Foreign Secretary Kimberley to discuss the situation. On that occasion he delivered a telegram from the Japanese government pro-

posing a reform in the internal administration of Korea; Aoki argued that in order to defend Korea from the danger of Russia a reform in the internal administration with the help of Japan was necessary and that since China was not strong enough to resist Russia, Japan could not acquiesce in the China's control over Korea. In response to this, Kimberley expressed his concern that Russia would take advantage of a clash between Japan and China in order to intervene in Korean affairs, but did not necessarily express his opposition to an internal reform in administration.¹⁷⁾

Aoki had earlier dealt with Bertie and with J. H. Gubbins, secretary of the British legation in Japan, who was then in London, in regard to the negotiations for treaty revision; in those discussions Aoki had touched on the question of Korea, and argued that the Sino-Japanese Convention of 1885 was simply the solution of a temporary difficulty, and fell short of the definite understanding which was so urgently needed in order to promote the peaceful developments of Korea, to compose the rivalry in the peninsula between China and Japan, and to check the southern advance of Russia. Gubbins on the basis of his experiences in Japan and his discussions with Aoki prepared a long memorandum dated June 16 on Japanese views of the Korean problem which was sent to the Prime Minister Rosebery and leaders of the Foreign Office. In that memorandum he argued that, "Just as it is in our interests that Japan should have a stable administration, so is it in the interests of the latter that the same condition of things should be secured in Corea."¹⁸⁾ While the Japanese government had anticipated the Chinese government's rejection of the demand for an internal administrative reform in Korea, the proposal had been presented by Japan, who pretended diplomatically to stand on the defensive, with the intention of using it as an excuse to provoke China,¹⁹⁾ but there were already existing grounds for England to accept Japan's position with regard to the Korean internal reform.

In fact O'Connor in China cabled his home government to the effect that the stiffening of Japan's position could very well lead to war,²⁰⁾ and he further reported on June 25 the request from the Korean government inviting friendly offices of England, Russia, America, Germany and France in urging Japan to withdraw her troops at the same time as China;²¹⁾ the Foreign Office did not respond to these telegrams.

However, the cautious attitude of the British government was changed quickly in response to the reports that the Russian government would intervene in the conflict between Japan and China. On June 28 as soon as he received a cable from O'Connor which reported that as long as the Japanese troops remained in Korea the Chinese and Korean governments would refuse to discuss the problem of internal administrative reform and that Li Hung-chang had asked for good offices of the Russian government, who were putting pressure on Japan, which, if successful, might be made use of to extract something from China,²²⁾ Kimberley sent a cable instructing Paget to

warn the Japanese government of the very grave consequences which might result if they persisted in their present attitude; it could only lead to a serious quarrel in which Russia would be the sole gainer.²³⁾ In response to this, the Japanese government replied that if the Chinese government would propose negotiations on the basis of the independence of Korea and a guarantee for the future good government of that country, the Japanese government would be willing to consider the proposal.²⁴⁾ From that time on Kimberley using O'Connor and Paget offered Britain's good offices to both countries acting as a middleman in conveying the positions of Japan and China to the other.

During this time, O'Connor reported to the Foreign Office in a cable dated July 3 that the Japanese government had refused the Russian note demanding a Japanese withdrawal of its troops, and that he had strongly urged the Tsungli Yamen 總理衙門 to immediately reopen negotiations with Japan in order to prevent Russian intervention. Furthermore, O'Connor predicted that "Russia's next move will probably be to invite diplomatic cooperation of other Powers to whom King of Corea appealed."²⁵⁾ O'Connor did not indicate the basis for his prediction about the activities of Russia and in fact the Russian government had no such intention. However, this report cannot but have had great impact on the British government who most feared a solution to the Korean problem centered on Russia. England therefore felt compelled not only to advise the two governments of China and Japan to reopen negotiations but also to put forth rapidly a concrete plan for dealing with the Sino-Japanese confrontation and to seek the mutual agreement of both parties.

The same day, Kimberley sent a telegram to Paget, chargé d'affaires in Japan, instructing him that unless Japan opened friendly negotiations with China at once, "Russia will undoubtedly call for joint intervention of European Powers," and directing him to recommend the following points to the Japanese government:

1. Any question of exceptional position claimed by China in Corea should not be made a preliminary condition by Japan. On questions of suzerainty and tribute China is less likely to give way than in questions of more practical importance. Independence of Corea could only increase opportunities for foreign intervention and diminish the power of China and Japan to control and protect her.
2. Negotiations should be begun at once on basis of reorganization with joint guarantee of integrity of Corea.
3. An essential preliminary is a simultaneous and, if necessary, gradual withdrawal of troops of both countries.²⁶⁾

Of the above points, while point two was a condition that the Tsungli Yamen had already made clear to O'Connor,²⁷⁾ point one was in fact a com-

promise between Japan's demands for an independent Korea and China's assertion of her suzerainty over Korea, and point three represented a redrafting of the Chinese demand that Japan immediately withdraw her troops in a manner that would make it easier for Japan to accept. With this formal proposal England sought to establish Sino-Japanese cooperation in reaching a solution and to prevent the intervention in Korea of foreign powers, especially Russia.

The British recommendation was communicated to the Japanese government on July 5. Meanwhile, the Japanese government had already decided to "rely on England" in order to cope with the Russian intervention,²⁸⁾ and had presented to Paget on July 3 the following four conditions for negotiations with China:

1. To appoint a Joint Commission from both countries to reform administration and finance of Korea.
2. Not to raise the question of Korean independence.
3. The question of withdrawing troops shall be arranged at the commencement of negotiation.
4. Japan must enjoy in Korea equal rights and privileges with China in all matters, political as well as commercial.²⁹⁾

As Tabohashi 田保橋 and Fujimura 藤村 have already pointed out,³⁰⁾ points two and four are contradictory and point four contradicts China's suzerainty over Korea and in fact the Tsungli Yamen would certainly not agree to this point. However this four point Japanese proposal seemed to comply with British desires which were expressed in the three point recommendation presented to Japan. When Kimberley heard of the Japanese proposal on the 6th of July, he said, "This seems to be a reasonable proposal, which China should accept." The same day he cabled O'Connor instructing him to recommend the Chinese government to accept it.³¹⁾

However, the Sino-Japanese negotiations for peaceful settlement initiated by the British good offices were to break down without even discussing the British recommendation of three points or the Japanese proposal of four points. This was because the Chinese government hardened their position. The British recommendation to the Japanese government of July 3 was in fact based on the Tsungli Yamen's statement of July 2 that while they would reject any proposal derogatory to the national dignity of China, they were willing to accept a joint guarantee of Korean integrity, and the reorganization of her administration as a basis on which to open negotiations.³²⁾ In so saying, the Yamen had changed their earlier position that they would not negotiate until the Japanese had withdrawn their troops. On July 2, however, as the Tsungli Yamen informed Li Hung-chang of the contents of the discussions with O'Connor and sought his views on the matter,³³⁾ Li at once replied that the

conditions for mediation proposed by the Russian minister to China, Cassini, were more favorable; moreover, Li was adamantly opposed to a discussion of the internal reorganization of Korea.³⁴⁾ Further, on July 8 Li urged the Tsungli Yamen to work for a withdrawal of Japanese troops based on the terms of the 1885 Tientsin Convention, arguing that a Russian intervention against Japan was quite possible.³⁵⁾ In spite of O'Connor's attempts to persuade the Tsungli Yamen, on July 9 they informed Komura Jutarō 小村壽太郎, the Japanese chargé d'affaires in Peking, that without an unconditional withdrawal of Japanese troops from Korea, China was unwilling to discuss internal administrative reorganization.³⁶⁾ With this, the Sino-Japanese direct negotiations initiated by the British good offices reached a breaking point with no results.

3. Plans for a Joint Intervention under British Leadership

As we have already noted above, on July 3 O'Connor cabled the Foreign Office informing them of Russian plans to lead a joint intervention. The same day after receiving this, the Foreign Office sent a telegram to O'Connor, saying that Britain had already urged Japan to begin negotiations at once with China, and that "if this effort fails we will at once communicate with Russia as to calling for joint action by the Powers."³⁷⁾ Without waiting to verify the results of the direct negotiations between Japan and China, on July 7 Britain proposed a joint intervention between China and Japan by the powers. In this case, as in the earlier offer of good offices to effect direct Sino-Japanese negotiations, the direct crisis leading to the move was reports of Russia's intentions.

On July 6, O'Connor reported to the Foreign Office in a cable that Cassini, Russian minister to China, was urging Li Hung-chang to agree to a conference of Russia, China and Japan, and O'Connor offered the view that a joint intervention of Great Britain, Russia, Germany, France and America would be preferable to cope with this.³⁸⁾ The three power conference among Russia, China and Japan referred to here had been suggested to Sheng Hsüan-huai 盛宣懷 and Lo Feng-lu 羅豐祿, advisers to Li Hung-chang, when they met with Cassini on June 30. Since Cassini had suggested that such a conference would only advise Korea to reform her internal administration and would not change the "general situation in Korea," Li Hung-chang was inclined to accept the proposal.³⁹⁾ The key to the proposal for the three power conference was Japan's strong explanation for the need for internal reform in Korea which had been made in response to Russia's demand for an unconditional withdrawal of Japanese troops on June 25. Cassini was attempting to remove Japan's justification for the refusal to withdraw troops by assuring internal reform in Korea, and at the same time was attempting to assert Russia's equal right as a neighboring country, together with Japan and China,

to express her views on the Korean problem.⁴⁰⁾ However, this proposal was taken on the initiative of Cassini, a diplomat on the scene, and was not adopted by his home government as we will see in section two of chapter three, and as on July 7 and again on July 10 N. K. Giers, minister of foreign affairs, announced that Russia would not intend to intervene in the Sino-Japanese conflict, this proposal was to disappear.⁴¹⁾

In the above fashion, the plan for a three power conference ended as simply a private proposal of Li Hung-chang and Cassini; from the point of view of the Tsungli Yamen, who were continuing negotiations with British Minister O'Connor, it would not seem that they placed much hope in this proposal.⁴²⁾ However, with regard to the British government, O'Connor's July 6 cable did provide sufficient support for the anxiety that Russia was planning an independent intervention in Korea. That same cable also reported, on the basis of information acquired in Korea, that M. A. Hitrovo, the Russian minister in Tokyo, was pressing a secret treaty upon Japan. Aoki, Japanese minister in London, also informed Assistant Under-Secretary Bertie on July 6 that Hitrovo was pressing the Japanese government to enter into political arrangements with Russia, offering in exchange any commercial treaty that Japan might desire, and so lead the way in treaty revision.⁴³⁾

In these circumstances the British Foreign Office was convinced that China was more likely to come to an understanding with Russia about Korea than Japan.⁴⁴⁾ On July 7 the Foreign Office cabled instructions to O'Connor and Paget ordering them to strongly urge the Chinese and Japanese governments to begin direct negotiations and instructing them to add that Britain could not view with indifference any agreement between Japan and Russia, China and Russia, or China, Japan and Russia.⁴⁵⁾ At the same time, in line with O'Connor's views, the Foreign Office also cabled instructions to the ambassadors in France, Germany, Russia and America asking them to request that each of the governments to which they were accredited take part in a joint intervention between Japan and China, for the purpose of effecting a peaceful settlement of the question at issue between these two powers.⁴⁶⁾ We can say that in this case England was trying a two stage policy, designed to block an independent intervention by Russia: stage one, which was the preferred solution, called for direct Sino-Japanese negotiations. If that failed, then stage two called for a joint intervention by the various countries which Korea had approached in seeking good offices, i.e. England, Russia, Germany, France and America. This approach was designed to remove the basis for the proposed three power conference of Russia, China and Japan.

What were the responses of the various governments approached? The American government responded that they had already pressed Japan to seek an adjustment of her dispute with China by arbitration and a strong remonstrance against the attitude of Japan toward Korea had been sent to Tokyo on the 7th, and that it did not appear desirable that the United States should

take part, at present, in the joint intervention.⁴⁷⁾ The German government responded that instructions would be sent to the German representatives at Peking and Tokyo to act with their colleagues in pressing conciliatory advice upon the Chinese and Japanese governments respectively, and with this limitation, to give their support to any steps which might be taken by their colleagues.⁴⁸⁾ The Russian government replied to the British chargé d'affaires in St. Petersburg that Russia had recommended both China and Japan to arrange for the withdrawal of their troops from Korea as soon as order was restored, and to settle by diplomatic ways any difficulties that might remain, and that the Chinese government were seemingly disposed to listen to the advice of Russia, but that Japan maintained that the causes of the disorder in question had not yet been eliminated, nor had order been completely restored.⁴⁹⁾ This Russian response avoided a direct response to the request for a support to the proposal for joint intervention. The French government's response noted that although the French government had no immediate interest in this question, they had already offered counsels of prudence and moderation both at Peking and Tokyo, and that the French government would be willing in principle to associate themselves, in the event of the case arising, with those joint measures in which all the other powers might decide to take part.⁵⁰⁾

As we can see from the above responses, none of the countries took a positive position on the joint intervention, and Germany alone offered to support the efforts of England by diplomatic means.

At this point, I would like to consider two points raised by the British proposal for joint intervention. First, why did not the joint intervention take place? With regard to this, A. Vagts has argued that from the British point of view, it was in fact Germany's refusal to participate that made the Sino-Japanese war possible.⁵¹⁾ Nakayama Jiichi 中山治一 influenced by Vagts has argued that the possibility of a joint intervention of European powers failed to be realized chiefly owing to Germany's refusal to join,⁵²⁾ and Fujimura Michio 藤村道生 has in turn accepted the Nakayama thesis.⁵³⁾

However, as we have already seen, it was Germany among all the powers that gave the most positive response to the English proposal. With regard to Germany's refusal to join a joint intervention we can turn to the report of Baron Wolfram von Rotenhan, the German undersecretary of state for foreign affairs. In a marginal note added to that report by Kiderlen, an advisor to the Kaiser, we find, "His Majesty has completely agreed to our refusal to intervene in a problem where, other than Japan and China, only Russia and England have interests."⁵⁴⁾ This is indeed pointed out by Vagts and Nakayama; but it seems that "intervene" being referred to here means an intervention with military force as its backup. In this report Rotenhan says that he replied to England that as the Korean problem could lead to a collision between England and Russia such an intervention was not appropriate for

Germany; at the same time he states, "However, as long as such a collision does not occur and the other European powers intervene with peaceful intentions, it seems desirable for us, in view of our commercial interests in East Asia, to take part in these joint efforts." This view was then communicated by telegram to the German ministers in Japan and China on July 11.⁵⁵⁾ On July 9 the German ambassador in England, Count Paul M. von Hatzfeld, questioned Kimberley as to what would be the nature of the intervention, and Kimberley replied that they should jointly address the Chinese and Japanese governments in the same sense as the advice already given to them both by England and by Russia; it would be premature now to consider what further steps might be necessary if such action failed.⁵⁶⁾ Since the German response was in accordance with this statement by Kimberley, Nakayama's thesis that the British placed responsibility for the failure of the joint intervention on the German refusal to participate is clearly untenable.

Related to this is another point raised by Vagts and Nakayama. They have cited as evidence supporting their argument of the German refusal to participate a statement from the memoirs of Prince Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, the Chancellor of the German Empire, in which he wrote that Kaiser Wilhelm II had said, "We protected Japan against English attempts to intervene and therefore we have the right to claim compensation."⁵⁷⁾ However, the date on this entry is November 2 and it seems clear that it refers to the British proposal of early October with regard to a joint intervention by the great powers to end the Sino-Japanese war, on the basis of a guarantee of the independence of Korea by the powers and the payment of an indemnity to Japan. It is clearly not referring to the events before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war.

Taking that into consideration, what then were the reasons for the failure of the joint intervention? It seems that the chief reason lay with the failure of the Russian government to give a definite answer to the British proposal. This is clearly illustrated by the statement of Kimberley to the Russian ambassador in England, E. E. Staal, on July 16 when the attitudes of the powers toward the British proposal had already been known. Kimberley told him of the responses of Germany, France and the United States and then said that it appeared to devolve upon Russia and Great Britain to take the lead in joint action.⁵⁸⁾ It is not difficult to imagine from the responses of the French and German governments cited earlier that if England and Russia had agreed on joint intervention that the other two would also have joined in.⁵⁹⁾

The second question concerns the content of the British proposal for joint intervention. On July 12 Kimberley told Japanese Minister Aoki that, "we have requested that Russia, France, Germany and the United States join England in urging the Chinese government to accept the proposal of Foreign Minister Mutsu."⁶⁰⁾ On the basis of this, Fujimura Michio 藤村道生 has argued that, "Britain proposed the joint intervention as a way of urging the Chinese

government to accept Japan's demands. This is an illustration of the shift of the center of British policy in East Asia from China to Japan."⁶¹ However, England proposed to the powers a joint intervention between China and Japan,⁶² and was not simply trying to get China to accept the Japanese demands.

How then ought we to understand Kimberley's statement to Aoki? On July 12 Assistant Under-Secretary Bertie drafted the following memorandum for Kimberley's inspection:

"Even if the Japanese government were willing to withdraw their troops from Korea, which they are not, public opinion would prevent their doing so"

"Japan wishes to come to an arrangement with China for jointly securing their respective interests as against Russian designs, and until such an arrangement has been come to Japan will keep troops in Korea, and probably increase her force there, unless coerced by China or the Powers. None of the Powers will, it appears, use force. The power of China to turn Japan out of Korea is doubtful. China had therefore better come to an arrangement with Japan on the basis suggested by the latter."⁶³

Thus, Great Britain, faced with the breakdown of direct Sino-Japanese negotiations and the passive responses of the powers to her proposal for a joint intervention and with doubts as to the effectiveness of Chinese military power, reaffirmed her earlier position that it would be best for China to accept the four-point Japanese proposal of July 3. And we can say that Kimberley's statement to Aoki was based on the above position of the Foreign Office. As for the proposal for the joint intervention itself, it certainly included even the possibility of using force to make Japan yield.

Looking back over what happened, while Britain from the beginning of the Sino-Japanese conflict welcomed Japanese demands for a reform in the internal administration of Korea, she at the same time did at least in name recognize China's suzerainty over Korea. Therefore we can say that British diplomatic efforts to effect direct Sino-Japanese negotiations were still following her policy line from the beginning of 1894, in the sense that the above efforts were striving to maintain a position equidistant from China and Japan and working to create a British-Chinese-Japanese bloc to prevent Russia's southern advances into Korea. On the other hand the proposal for a joint intervention, much like the offer of good offices to facilitate direct Sino-Japanese negotiations, had indeed as its aim a desire to block Russian attempts to independently intervene in the Korean question which in this case took the form of the proposal for a three power conference of Russia, China and Japan; nevertheless if the joint intervention had taken place, it would have possibly frustrated Japan's desire to go to war with China and might have led to the

dismantling of the conception of the British-Chinese-Japanese bloc against Russia. When the possibility for that joint intervention was blocked, British policy in the Far East began to shift toward a position favorable to Japan as we have seen in the Bertie's memorandum and the statement by Kimberley.

4. British Estimates of the Military Strength of Japan and China; Japan's Decision for War and England's Protest to Japan

Following the failure of her offer of good offices toward a peaceful Sino-Japanese settlement and the negative attitudes of the powers toward her proposal for a joint intervention, England had to decide what she would do in case war broke out. The crisis had been heightened with the break of negotiations between Komura and the Tsungli Yamen on July 9 and the issuance on July 14 by the Japanese government to the Yamen through Komura of the so-called "second notification of a break in relations 第二次絶交書" which stated that, "the Chinese government are disposed to precipitate complications, and, at this juncture, the Japanese government find themselves relieved of all responsibilities for any eventualities that may in future arise out of the situation."⁶⁴ On the 14th, the Foreign Office asked the Intelligence Division of the War Office and on the 15th the Intelligence Division of the Admiralty to report on the comparative military strength of China and Japan. On the 16th the Intelligence Divisions of the two ministries delivered their reports which were then reviewed by the leaders of the Foreign Office and by Prime Minister Rosebery.

The report from the Admiralty, after listing the number and type of ships at the disposal of each country, commented:

"Mere comparative lists of ships, armament, and crews will convey no real information as to the relative naval strength of China and Japan. The organization of the Chinese fleets is still to a large extent provincial; on the other hand, the Japanese navy is a purely Imperial force, and its organization has been copied with considerable fidelity from that of Western navies. All the foremost hands and a majority of the officers of the Japanese ships have been brought up according to Western naval methods, and, in fact, know no other. Japanese ships have frequently cruised in distant seas, and their officers have shown themselves to be capable of handling them efficiently. There is a general agreement amongst foreign seamen that the Chinese fleets most plainly fall off in efficiency as soon as their European advisers leave them. Notwithstanding the greater figures of the Chinese tonnage and guns, the Japanese organization, discipline, and training are so superior that Japan may reasonably be considered the stronger Power on the sea."⁶⁵

The memorandum from the Intelligence Division of the War Office, providing a list of the numbers of men under arms, and mentioning the kinds and names of weapons available to the two countries, said the following: the Chinese army has a force of 600,000 men with a reserve force of up to 1,000,000. However, since the force is organized on a provincial basis, it is impossible to get exact figures. Their weapons include a great variety, with the weight going to old-style weapons and they lack an organized system of transport and medical services. The Chinese soldier, under European instruction and discipline, would prove himself of very great value, but at the present time they lack organization, training and leadership and are scarcely, if at all, above the level of coolies. On the other hand, the Japanese army in normal times has a force of 75,000 which in times of war will rise to 250,000. They are armed with domestically manufactured weapons which are competitive with those produced in Europe, and they have good transport and medical services. The officers have in most cases passed through the Imperial Military School, and the regular soldiers are of outstanding quality. In summary, there is a gap in the military forces of China and Japan similar to that between a nineteenth century force and that of a medieval army. China's only hope in a war with Japan would lie in protracting operations for two to three years, during which time she would have to reorganize her forces on European models. However, even if Japan should allow her time, it is doubtful whether China would be capable of sustained effort in this direction.⁶⁶⁾

As we can see from the above, the British military authorities recognized the superiority of Japanese forces on both land and sea. We should particularly note the memorandum of the War Office which predicted a Japanese victory even in the event of a prolonged war. The British journalistic world of that day had predicted that a Sino-Japanese war, aside from its initial stage, would result in a Chinese victory in the long run.⁶⁷⁾ Earlier studies have taken that view to represent the view of the British government,⁶⁸⁾ but in fact the reverse is true.

Thus the questions raised about Chinese military strength expressed in the July 12 memorandum of F. Bertie, assistant under-secretary for foreign affairs, received the support of military experts in the reports of the War Office and Admiralty. It would seem that as a result of these predictions of Japanese military superiority over China, when a Sino-Japanese war was to be unavoidable, the British government came to accept the Japanese position that it was Japan and not China that should play the chief role in blocking the southern advance of Russia. And we can also say that this was the major factor in a significant shift in British Far Eastern policy that substituted a British-Japanese bloc for the earlier British-Chinese-Japanese bloc which should stand as the major obstacle to Russian southern advances.

However, even though Britain had recognized Japan's military superiority,

this does not mean that she directly approved of Japan's intention to begin a war with China. As long as it was unknown what action would Russia take in an open clash between China and Japan, Britain had to continue her efforts to avoid a Sino-Japanese war. On July 14 Foreign Secretary Kimberley sent a cable to O'Connor in China arguing that since there was no hope of the Chinese and Japanese governments agreeing to a withdrawal of troops, and instructing him to recommend to the Chinese government that the Chinese and Japanese troops should remain in joint occupation of Korea, the troops of each power being kept in separate localities.⁶⁹⁾ This proposal had been suggested to Kimberley by Japanese Minister Aoki that same day.⁷⁰⁾ It would seem that Kimberley believed that it was China's demand for an immediate withdrawal of Japanese troops that had led to the breakdown of direct Sino-Japanese negotiations, and that he believed that if China agreed to this proposal, it would be easy to gain the agreement of the Japanese government, and that therefore he followed Aoki's suggestion in making the proposal. Kimberley also communicated with the Russian Ambassador Staal, not only informing him of the responses of the German, French and American governments to the proposal for a joint intervention, but also suggesting to him that it appeared to devolve upon England and Russia to take the lead in joint action and he requested Russian support for the plan to separate the troops of China and Japan from each other and prolong the joint occupation of Korea.⁷¹⁾

Meanwhile, O'Connor in Peking, acting separately from the official British government efforts, continued to work for a restoration of direct Sino-Japanese negotiations which had broken down. On July 12 O'Connor visited the Tsungli Yamen and urged them to accept the basic principles of the Japanese proposal for a reform of the Korean internal administration and inquired as to the Chinese views on his own proposal for Sino-Japanese cooperation, but was unable to gain acquiescence of the Tsungli Yamen.⁷²⁾ O'Connor was convinced that the uncompromising position of the Tsungli Yamen was the result of the pressure from a war faction close to the Kuang-hsü Emperor 光緒帝, but also got the impression that the Tsungli Yamen desired to throw the responsibility of the Korean embroglio upon Li Hung-chang. Therefore, on July 13 he sent H. Cockburn, assistant Chinese secretary of the British legation in Peking, to Tientsin.⁷³⁾

Cockburn met with Li Hung-chang on July 15 and told him that it would be very dangerous for China if Russia were to intervene in the Korean problem, and that Britain had proposed a joint intervention by the European powers, but that the powers would not consider Japan's position unreasonable. Therefore he urged China to come to an agreement with Japan. In response to this appeal, Li Hung-chang suggested the following modifications with regard to the four point proposal made by Japan:

1. The Joint Commission will inquire into the whole condition of Korea and report upon it. China can only give advice to the King of Korea on the suggestions of the Commissioners, but cannot force him to adopt them.
2. In Korea, Japan should have equal commercial rights with China, but the word "political" should be deleted.⁷⁴⁾

With regard to point one of the revisions, the Tsungli Yamen had already expressed to O'Connor on July 12 their understanding on this point, but point two was one which the Tsungli Yamen had rejected in their conversation with O'Connor and which they would not agree to up to the outbreak of the war. In spite of that, when O'Connor learned of the revised proposal of Li Hung-chang, he believed that there should still be hope of a solution, for Li Hung-chang, who had a major voice in China's Korean policy, had for the first time agreed to open negotiations with Japan on the basis of the conditions proposed by Japan. Then O'Connor sent the revised proposal to the Japanese government, without informing the Tsungli Yamen of Li Hung-chang's views though Li had requested him to do so.

However, the Japanese government, as Shinobu, Nakatsuka, and Fujimura have noted, having successfully completed negotiations and signed a new commercial and navigation treaty with Britain on July 16, hardened their determination to begin war.⁷⁵⁾ We can say that they had no intentions any longer to consider acceptance of the revised proposal communicated to them through Paget, British chargé d'affaires in Tokyo, on July 19. The same day, the Japanese government offered a counter proposal, giving a limit of five days for a Chinese response. The Japanese counter proposal said:

1. The joint labour of the Chinese Commissioners must be confined to the future and must not touch upon works which Japan has already taken up independently of China. Both governments must pledge themselves to make the King of Korea adopt the reforms proposed by all means.
2. The word "political" must stand.

The Japanese statement added that, "in the meantime any additional dispatch of Chinese troops will be considered as a menace."⁷⁶⁾ This counter proposal was based on the judgement of Foreign Minister Mutsu that, "it is better for us to present unacceptable conditions to the Chinese government and make their maneuver fail of itself."⁷⁷⁾

Tabohashi Kiyoshi has argued with regard to the Li Hung-chang's revised proposal and the Japanese counter proposal that, "Mutsu believed that the revised proposal was entirely the personal view of Li Hung-chang and therefore his impossible counter proposal was offered for that reason, however, in

fact it was drafted by O'Connor in such a way that he thought it would be acceptable to the Japanese government, and the sharp counter proposal of the Japanese therefore caused O'Connor to lose any standing position. It is no wonder that England's attitude should therefore have become more severe."⁷⁸⁾ Fujimura Michio also adopts this position, pointing out Mutsu's mistaken judgement, and places the responsibility for this on the reports of chargé d'affaires Komura.⁷⁹⁾

However, as stated above, the Chinese revised proposal was suggested by Li Hung-chang in response to Cockburn's appeals which were based on the views of O'Connor, and O'Connor had in fact reported to Kimberley that it represented Li's own views.⁸⁰⁾ Komura's reports that the revision was the result of the Li-Cockburn meetings⁸¹⁾ and Mutsu's de facto rejection of the proposal were therefore not mistaken.⁸²⁾ Indeed, when Kimberley was informed of the Japanese response to the revised Chinese proposal, he took a very severe attitude arguing in a memorandum to the Japanese government that their present demands were far in advance of and inconsistent with the basis on which they had expressed their readiness to negotiate, that they were in disregard of the spirit of the 1885 Treaty of Tientsin, and that if the Japanese government persisted in this highhanded policy and the result was war, they would be responsible for the consequences which might ensue.⁸³⁾ Nevertheless, it would seem that this was not because the Japanese counter proposal caused the British to lose any standing position, but rather because the British were dissatisfied as they felt that Japan had issued a de facto ultimatum to China and increased the chances of war in a situation in which it was still unclear what action Russia would take since she had not yet responded either to the July 7 proposal for a joint intervention or to the July 16 proposal for a separation of Chinese and Japanese troops and a temporary joint occupation of Korea.

5. Anglo-Russian Cooperation and the Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War

Before presenting the above memorandum of protest to the Japanese government, the British government had cabled its representatives in Germany, Russia, Italy and France directing them to request the respective governments to support the British ministers at Peking and Tokyo in their efforts to avert a war between China and Japan, which would break out unless strong pressure be at once put on the governments of those two countries.⁸⁴⁾ Since America had already refused to participate in any joint intervention, she was excluded from this appeal, but the Italian government, which on July 18th had announced its intention to support the efforts made by the British government to persuade the governments of China and Japan to come to terms,⁸⁵⁾ was added in her place.

In response to the British request, the German and Italian governments announced their agreement on July 20, and the French government announced its agreement on July 25.⁸⁶⁾ On July 22nd the Russian Foreign Minister Giers notified the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, F. Lascelles, that Russia intended to act in cooperation with the British government, and with all the powers, to avert a conflict between Japan and China and that instructions were to be sent to the Russian ministers in China and Japan to arrange for concerted action with their British colleagues. Giers further said that the Russian government had also requested support of the Germans and French but maintained that Anglo-Russian cooperation should be on an equal footing.⁸⁷⁾ While the Russian government, as noted earlier, had decided to reject the plan for a three power conference among Russia, China and Japan and ordered Cassini, Russian minister in China, not to intervene in the Sino-Japanese conflict, with regard to the British proposal for a joint intervention, the Russian government had felt that Russian interests in Korea, as a neighboring power, were too serious for them not to preserve perfect freedom of action and that therefore they could not give a definite reply until they knew what form the joint pressure on the two countries was to take,⁸⁸⁾ and as a result the joint intervention did not take place.

In this instance, the fact that Russia announced her agreement to the British proposal for the first time and expressed her intentions to cooperate with Britain certainly had a major significance for British diplomacy. With this, the British could at last put aside their fears of an independent Russian intervention in the Sino-Japanese conflict.

This, taken together with the British estimate of Japanese military superiority vis-à-vis China, meant that when the complete collapse of the Sino-Japanese relations occurred, clearly marked by the Japanese occupation of the Korean royal palace and by the naval engagement near Feng 豐 Island, the British government did not take action on the tough line supported by O'Connor, British minister in China, to prevent war, and rather chose to silently watch Japanese actions. On the 26th O'Connor reported by telegram to his home government that the Russian Minister Cassini had informed him that he had been instructed to act with O'Connor in procuring acceptance by China of temporary joint occupation pending settlement, and added, "All I hear inspires grave misgivings as to China's capability to resist aggression and prompts stern languages at Tokio."⁸⁹⁾ On July 28, the Chinese minister in England, Kung Chao-yüan 龔照璣, informed the Foreign Office of a telegram from Li Hung-chang which said that regarding the proposal to separate the troops of China and Japan and prolong joint occupation of Korea, which China had agreed to, Li had proposed to Cassini that the Chinese troops be moved to P'yongyang 平壤 and the Japanese troops to Pusan 釜山; further Cassini said that if the Japanese should reject such an arrangement the powers would be prepared to "take measures." Kimberley, however, in a telegram sent

that same day to O'Connor said that he had replied to the Chinese minister that the British government was not prepared to convey this threat to the Japanese government.⁹⁰⁾ Further, in a despatch sent on the 28th to O'Connor, the British government decision was explained as follows:

"We had warned the Japanese generally of the serious consequences which might ensue from a conflict between Japan and China, but it was quite another thing to intimate to them that, if they did not agree to the particular arrangement suggested by the Russian Minister, we would take measures."⁹¹⁾

This decision was arrived at with the agreement between Kimberley and Prime Minister Rosebery.⁹²⁾ With this the British decision to silently observe the actions of Japan was reaffirmed. Therefore, when a telegram from O'Connor arrived on the 29th reporting that the Tsungli Yamen had received word of the Japanese occupation of the Korean Palace and intended to break relations and recommending that the only way to prevent a war was for the British and Russian governments to issue an ultimatum to Japan demanding that they withdraw their troops from Seoul within four days and that if the Japanese refused, the British and Russians should take joint action to block the increase of troops in Korea by either side, the Foreign Office did not send a definite reply, judging that the July 28 telegram to O'Connor answered his suggestion.⁹³⁾

Thus, even before the mutual declarations of war announced by China and Japan on August 1, the British government had affirmed up their decision not to intervene. Since they assumed that the Russians would not intervene in the situation, we can imagine that the British had made such a decision, judging that if there was a Sino-Japanese war, Japan would emerge victorious and that this would remove Korea from her vassal relationship to China, and that Britain could then join together with Japan in blocking southern advances of Russia.

The biggest question for British Far Eastern policy after the outbreak of the war was how to maintain the recently won Russian cooperation and continue to block Russia's independent intervention in the conflict. On August 1, Kimberley told the Russian Ambassador Staal that he desired to continue Anglo-Russian cooperation,⁹⁴⁾ and he sent a telegram to Lascelles, British ambassador to Russia, instructing him to seek Russian support for the proposition that England and Russia ought to invite the other powers to join in addressing to the governments of China and Japan a collective remonstrance protesting against a resort to war to decide the question and that in order to protect the commerce of neutral countries frank communications should be maintained by the British naval commander-in-chief on the China Station with the Russian naval commander.⁹⁵⁾ The Russian Foreign Minister Giers

felt that it was not an appropriate time for a joint remonstrance to China and Japan, but he agreed that naval cooperation was acceptable and that efforts of Russia and Britain toward peace ought to continue.⁹⁶⁾ At a special conference on August 21, the Russian government decided on a policy of non-intervention and pledged themselves to cooperate with the other powers for working toward an early return to peace.⁹⁷⁾

Up to this point, I have examined developments in British Far Eastern policy with regard to what information the British government had on Russian intentions in Korea and how they responded to that information, but needless to say, it was not just these international political concerns and strategic questions alone that determined British Far Eastern policy of that time. As has been noted by other scholars, one of the factors which determined her policy was the fact that Britain who had been able to preserve the near monopoly position in trade with the Far Eastern countries, particularly with China, certainly feared that war might harm her trading activities.

With regard to this question, O'Connor had suggested in cables of June 28th and July 1 that it might be wise for England to warn Japan that she would find unacceptable disruption of trade in the Chinese treaty ports or attacks on those ports.⁹⁸⁾ In a reply on July 2, Kimberley sent a telegram stating that he had told Aoki that the British government could not view with indifference a disturbance of trade with the treaty ports; legally, however, we [Britain] had no right to insist that if those ports were blockaded by a belligerent power, trade with them should, nevertheless, remain unrestricted.⁹⁹⁾ With regard to disruption in commerce as a result of war, it was not seen as a problem by the British Foreign Office until it was pointed out to Kimberley in a cable dated July 22 from N. T. Hannen, consul-general in Shanghai 上海, and based on that Kimberley cabled the chargé d'affaires in Japan Paget and instructed him to request that the Japanese government not institute any warlike operations against Shanghai, or its approaches, as any interruption of communication with that port would effect the vast commercial interests of Great Britain.¹⁰⁰⁾ From this we can clearly see that the chief factor in determining British Far Eastern policy was the considerations of Russian intentions that have been outlined in this chapter, and that commercial considerations were only of secondary importance.

Therefore, British diplomatic activities which were initiated with the intent of blocking a Russian centered solution to the Sino-Japanese conflict saw a shift from a policy based on an English-Chinese-Japanese block as the chief obstacle to Russian southern advances to a Anglo-Japanese block for that same purpose. British foreign policy having gained the cooperation of Russia whose basic advantages and disadvantages stood in opposition to those of Britain, thus prepared to face the war situation.

III. Russian Far Eastern Policy and the Beginning of the Sino-Japanese War

I. Russian Efforts to Mediate Sino-Japanese Problems at the Request of Li Hung-chang

Although it is not clear when the Russian government first became interested in the Tonghak 東學 Rebellion that broke out in Korea in 1894, there is no question that Russian diplomats resident in the Far East began to pay attention to the unstable situation in Korea early in that year. On February 21, the Russian minister in Japan, M. A. Hitrovo, reported in a letter to the chargé d'affaires in Seoul, K. I. Waeber, that he had heard of plans for a rebellion led by the father of the Korean King, the Taewön'gun 大院君, and that some Japanese were involved in these plans.¹⁾ The Russian minister in China A. P. Cassini in a March 10th despatch to his home government reported that anti-government feelings were spreading among the Korean people throughout the country, that China was ready to send her squadron to Korean waters, and that if those popular dissatisfactions should break out in open rebellion it was likely that not only China but Japan would probably intervene. Given this situation, he argued, the Russian government could not afford to ignore the situation.²⁾

Following this, the peasant army that gathered round the Tonghak party attacked the government troops, and on June 3 the Korean government officially requested the Chinese government to send troops to suppress the rebellion. In response to this, the Japanese government on June 7 informed the Chinese government that in accordance with the 1885 Sino-Japanese Convention of Tientsin they were also going to send troops to Korea. With regard to the Chinese despatch of troops, Cassini reported to the Foreign Ministry on June 5 that in response to the Korean request, the Chinese were sending 1500 troops and he predicted that Japan would immediately take steps to defend her own interests. Therefore, even though his home leave had already been approved, he proposed to postpone his departure and sought instructions from his home government.³⁾ As for the Japanese sending of troops, Hitrovo telegraphed the fact on June 8 following a meeting with Foreign Minister Mutsu 陸奥.⁴⁾

What attitude did Russia adopt to this sudden change in the situation resulting from the mutual despatch of troops? The Russian diplomats in the Far East were at first more concerned about the Chinese despatch of troops than that of Japan. For example, K. I. Wogack, the Russian military attaché to China and Japan, reported on June 4 and 14th his fears that China would take advantage of the situation offered by the despatch of troops to incorporate Korea into China.⁵⁾ Meanwhile Waeber, who was on his way to Peking to

replace Cassini during his leave, stopped in Tientsin and on June 8 met with Li Hung-chang 李鴻章. On that occasion he was convinced that the Chinese were deliberately exaggerating the reports of the rebellion with the intention of taking drastic actions, and he discussed with Li the possible dangers of the Chinese despatch of troops and urged him to withdraw the Chinese forces as soon as the rebellion had been suppressed.⁶⁾ Cassini also believed that the Chinese despatch of troops would give "a good impression to Russia's enemies,"⁷⁾ and told the Japanese chargé d'affaires in Peking, Komura Jutarō 小村壽太郎, that he understood the necessity of Japan's despatch of troops.⁸⁾

As we have already noted in chapter one, Russia was convinced that any threats to the situation in Korea would come from China who was backed by England, and therefore as soon as the Chinese and Japanese despatched troops, they began to pay attention to the actions of England. On June 8 Hitrovo sent a telegram to the Foreign Ministry, reporting the unverified accounts that England had stored at Port Hamilton 巨文島 enough provisions to supply her Pacific squadron for three months.⁹⁾ In the following period he continued to keep a close watch on British naval movements and reported that the British squadron, using as a pretext the necessity to rescue a British commercial vessel, had stopped at Port Hamilton and was cruising in the vicinity.¹⁰⁾

On the basis of these reports from her diplomats in the field, the Russian government probably continued to have doubts as to Chinese intentions in Korea and also to have suspicions that England was planning some kind of activity with regard to the Korean problem.

It was under these circumstances that Cassini visited Li Hung-chang in Tientsin on June 20 on his way home on leave. Li took advantage of this opportunity to appeal to Cassini on the basis of the 1886 Russo-Chinese verbal agreement and requested that Russia ask Japan to withdraw her troops simultaneously with those of China.¹¹⁾ Earlier, on June 6, Li had already directed Yüan Shih-k'ai 袁世凱 to inform P. G. Kerberg, the secretary of the Russian mission in Seoul, who was acting in Waeber's absence, that the Chinese despatch of troops was in response to a request of Korea in accordance with China's established precedent to protect her vassal state, and that it had no connection with Russia.¹²⁾ On June 8, the same message had been conveyed to Waeber.¹³⁾ However, Li Hung-chang was quickly to be confronted with an unexpected situation that resulted from the swift entry of Japanese troops into Seoul and the Japanese proposal to reform conjointly with Japan the internal administration of Korea on June 16, and this led to a change in his attitude toward Russia and an approach to Russia to act as a mediator in China's dispute with Japan. Cassini immediately reported to the Russian government the request from Li Hung-chang and noted that Li stated that Britain had already offered her mediation, but that since he thought Russia had direct interests in Korea it would be more appropriate for her to act as mediator. Cassini argued that this offered an opportunity

for Russia not only to expand her influence in Korea and in the entire Far East but to eliminate an armed struggle in Korea, which was extremely undesirable for Russia, and that such an opportunity should not be missed.¹⁴⁾

Foreign Minister N. K. Giers agreed with Cassini's views and was especially convinced that it was essential to prevent British intervention. After receiving the approval of Tsar Alexander III, on June 23 he instructed by telegram the Russian minister in Tokyo, Hitrovo, to appeal to the Japanese government to come to an agreement with China for a simultaneous withdrawal of troops.¹⁵⁾ It would seem that for Russia, who up until this time had assumed that any threats to Korea would come from China, the appeal from Li Hung-chang, while unexpected, was very welcome. It is important to note here that at the time Russian government took this action they were unaware that China had rejected the Japanese proposal of June 16 for joint action to reform the internal administration of Korea, and that in response to that rejection, Japan on the 23rd announced her intention to maintain her troops in Korea and carry out the internal reform on her own. On the 24th Cassini in a telegram to his home government recounted a conversation with Li Hung-chang in which Li said that China had rejected the Japanese proposal for the joint administration of Korean internal affairs on the basis of the 1886 Tientsin verbal agreement.¹⁶⁾ However, the instructions to Hitrovo had been cabled the day before this report was received.

In Tokyo, Hitrovo had serious doubts as to the effectiveness of such an appeal to the Japanese government, since Japan was rapidly mobilizing her military forces and since Li Hung-chang had not informed Cassini of the Japanese proposal to China.¹⁷⁾ Hitrovo met with Foreign Minister Mutsu on June 25 and presented his government's position; as he had expected, the Foreign Minister strongly stressed the need for an internal reform of the Korean administration which China had rejected, and stated that therefore an unconditional withdrawal of troops was impossible. Hitrovo then reported to his own government that in his private conviction the present cabinet, having gone too far into the Korean problem which became much heated in Japan, could not retreat without some plausible excuse or pretended success.¹⁸⁾

Meanwhile, on June 25 Kerberg who was in Korea reported to the Foreign Ministry that the Korean government had, in view of the termination of the disturbance, made an appeal to the representatives of America, France, England, Germany and Russia asking each of them to inform their home governments that trouble would possibly arise from the presence of foreign troops and that it was desirable for the troops to be withdrawn on the basis of a Sino-Japanese agreement; further they hoped that the powers would help to effect such a peaceful settlement of the issue.¹⁹⁾

At this point, we can say, Russia was offered a choice of two courses of action: to continue her mediation efforts which had been initiated at the request of Li Hung-chang and were designed to bring about a simultaneous

withdrawal of Japanese and Chinese troops, or to support the appeal of the Korean government to the powers. Giers selected the second course, thinking that the claims of the two parties were complicated and obscure and that such Russian official mediation as Li Hung-chang expected could only work if both parties come to an agreement. This decision was communicated by telegram to Cassini and Hitrovo on June 28.²⁰⁾

Thus, the Russians brought an end, for the moment, to their independent efforts at mediation. We should note at this point that the original inspiration for this mediation effort was not based on a thorough consideration of the positions and intentions of the two parties but had simply come in response to Cassini's recommendation following Li Hung-chang's request, and that it should not be taken to mean that Russia necessarily supported the Chinese position. Nor did it mean that Russia had a desire to intervene in the Korean question. From this time on the Russian position was to maintain equidistance from both countries while keeping a careful watch on the developing situation.

2. Proposal for a Three Power Conference of Russia, China and Japan

As we have seen in the previous section, on June 28th the Russian government decided to end their independent efforts at mediation of the Sino-Japanese conflict. However, the ministers in Peking and Tokyo, Cassini and Hitrovo, were not all together satisfied with this decision and after consulting together argued for a new approach of a Russian-Chinese-Japanese three power conference to work to settle the Korean problem.

On July 1, Cassini sent the following telegram to the Russian Foreign Ministry:

"China evidently wishes to avoid war, while Japan is seemingly seeking it, confident that success will be on her side. Danger is threatening from the part of Japan, not that of China. Li has declared that China recognizes the necessity of reforms in internal administration of Korea and agrees that the problem of reforms should be examined and solved in a convention between commissioners of Russia, China and Japan either at Seoul or at Tientsin. The above concession of China gives us indisputable advantages. Seemingly Japan aims at eliminating Russian participation."²¹⁾

Cassini therefore sought urgent instructions as to how to proceed. Meanwhile Hitrovo met with Foreign Minister Mutsu on June 30 and then sent the following cable to the Foreign Ministry:

"In general, I have the impression that convincing the Japanese by words is always useless If a peaceful outcome of the incident is by all means desirable, a solution to the problem, according to my conviction, is not in Peking or Tokyo, but in Seoul. Let the Korean government, while requesting the withdrawal of Japanese troops, propose internal reforms under the supervision of Chinese, Japanese and Russian commissioners, and the Japanese will be deprived of any pretext."²²⁾

To summarize then we have seen that following the Chinese rejection of the Japanese proposal for joint action in reforming the internal administration of Korea, on June 22 the Japanese government made their decision to proceed independently to bring about such a reform regardless of China's intentions, and on the basis of their argument of the absolute necessity for such a reform they rejected the Russian appeals for a withdrawal of troops presented on June 25 and June 30. Taking a lesson from the developments to that point, Cassini and Hitrovo came to believe that their earlier assumption that any threats to Korea would come from China was incorrect and now argued that if war were to break out, the responsibility would lie with Japan. Therefore, we can say, they believed that the establishment of a conference of Russian, Chinese and Japanese commissioners would remove the pretext for Japan's refusal to withdraw her troops by guaranteeing an internal reform in Korea, and would thus also block independent Japanese action along those lines. At the same time Russia's right as a neighboring country to have a say on the Korean question would also be preserved.

What was the Chinese response to the Russian proposal for a three power conference on Korea? Following his meeting with Li Hung-chang on June 20, Cassini had remained in Tientsin and continued contacts with Li Hung-chang. On June 25, claiming that he had received instructions from his home government regarding Russia's proposal toward Japan, Cassini sent the following message to Li Hung-chang via A. I. Pavlov, attaché at the Russian legation in Peking:

"The Russian Tsar has already cabled our minister in Tokyo directing him to request the Japanese government to open negotiations with China for a mutual withdrawal of troops, and to discuss the administrative reform issue after the troops are withdrawn. If they should not agree, I would imagine that the Russian government may use some force. Russia has a very strong interest in the situation in the Far East. Fortunately at present the situation is peaceful, however if the Japanese should disturb that peace, China and Russia could not ignore the situation."²³⁾

With regard to the three power conference of Russia, China and Japan, let us turn to the texts of the two telegrams that Li Hung-chang sent to the Tsungli Yamen 總理衙門 on June 30:

"I sent Sheng 盛 and Lo 羅 to see Cassini and inquire whether there had been any answer from Tokyo and Cassini replied, 'We haven't received a reply yet. I am planning to send telegrams to the Russian government and also to our minister in Tokyo asking them to urge Japan to join us in preserving peace in the Far East or to request Japan to send her high-ranking official to Tientsin 天津 to discuss the question of Korean administrative reform. This should bring a settlement to the problem.' Sheng and Lo replied, 'That seems to be a good plan. However, Japan is presently increasing her military forces in Korea and is threatening Korea. Whatever response the Koreans may have made to the Japanese demands ought to be cancelled. Only then will China be able to hold a conference with Japan.' . . . Cassini feels that since Russia is a neighbor of Korea she should be able to join in the conference on the same footing as China and Japan, and he believes that the conference will only advise Korea to reform those parts of her internal administration that are corrupt and should not change the general situation in Korea; he does not seem to have any other aims."²⁴⁾

"Cassini sent attaché Pavlov and a consul to call on me and only convey the message that, 'According to a telegram from the Russian minister in Japan, he met with Foreign Minister Mutsu and Mutsu said that Japan could not withdraw her troops but that without some provocation they would not fire first.' I said to them, 'Earlier Cassini said that the Russian Tsar had sent telegraphic instructions to your representative in Japan appealing for a Japanese withdrawal of troops, and he said that if Japan refused he was certain that Russia would take other measures. What is the Russian government's position now?' . . . With regard to the idea of a three power conference to discuss the reform question, this had been mentioned in the daytime meeting as Cassini's personal opinion, and as Pavlov did not touch upon it I did not attempt to get an answer from Pavlov."²⁵⁾

From this we can see that the three power conference had been suggested to Li's advisers Sheng Hsüan-huai 盛宣懷 and Lo Feng-lu 羅豐祿 on June 30, and that since Cassini explained that it would only advise a reform of the Korean government but would not change the "general situation in Korea 朝鮮大局" which naturally included the suzerain-vassal relationship between China and Korea, Li Hung-chang was willing to go along with this proposal; however, Li placed his hopes rather on the effect of the Russian appeals to Japan, of which Cassini had informed Li on June 25, and especially on the forcible measures that Cassini then suggested Russia might take against Japan; Li Hung-chang saw the proposal for a three power conference as only an unofficial one.

Nevertheless, Cassini did not wait for instructions from his own government with regard to the three power conference proposal, and on July 2 sent

Pavlov to advance the negotiations. In a telegram to the Tsungli Yamen on July 2, Li Hung-chang reported:

“Cassini sent attaché Pavlov with the message that, ‘According to a telegram from our minister in Tokyo, Mutsu 陸奧 said that first China had to agree to a three power conference to discuss and lay down conditions as regards Korean internal administrative reform, and that if she did that, then Japan could withdraw her troops; if she did not do that, then the Japanese government could not defend themselves against the Diet’ I replied, ‘. . . Russia is now acting as a mediator. China can only agree to a conference. As to what steps should be taken, it is essential to first withdraw troops simultaneously.’ Pavlov replied, ‘Japan is afraid that after the troops are withdrawn China will take obstructive measures and that the discussions will come to nothing. Will China accept a plan in which China advises Korea to reform her internal administration, and Russia and Japan also offer their cooperation; the conditions as regards administrative reforms should be laid down, if the three power conference can reach agreement?’ I replied, ‘Up to this time, Korea has handled her own domestic affairs. If there is to be reform, certainly China can advise Korea to reform. Russia and Japan as neighboring countries can frankly help this and advise Korea. However, Russia should stick to the original position of first compelling Japan to withdraw her troops and then the three countries can send their commissioners to hold a conference.’ Pavlov replied that he would inform Cassini. However if we consider the message conveyed by the Russian minister and the communications of the Chinese Minister to Japan Wang 汪, Japan is holding to an uncompromising position and their military forces in Korea have risen to 10,000 men. I fear that we are not going to be able to persuade them with words alone to remove their troops.”²⁶⁾

In this discussion Pavlov, referring to a telegram from Hitrovo in which he said that Foreign Minister Mutsu had agreed that if China would join in a three power conference Japan would withdraw her troops, recommended Li Hung-chang to accept that plan. However we can find no record of any discussion between Mutsu and Hitrovo of the three power conference in *Nihon gaikō bunsho* 日本外交文書, *Kenkenroku* 蹇蹇錄, or in Russian language materials, and thus this would appear to be a fiction created to pressure Li Hung-chang to agree to join a three power conference. On the other hand, Li Hung-chang, while agreeing that China together with Russia and Japan would advise Korea to reform her internal administration, made it the preliminary condition for holding such a three power conference that Russia, in compliance with her earlier promise, should first compel Japan to withdraw her troops. But, to the Tsungli Yamen, Li also could not help admitting that it was going to

be difficult to bring about an unconditional withdrawal of Japanese troops.

On July 3 Cassini sent a telegram to the Russian Foreign Ministry in which he reported on the Li-Pavlov meeting and said that China wished Russia to induce Japan to withdraw her troops from Korea simultaneously with the Chinese, and, in return for Russia's services, had formally recognized Russia's right to participate with China and Japan in the reorganization of the Korean internal administration; Li Hung-chang asked that Russia might render assistance to inclining Japan to give her consent to solving the problems of Korean reforms conjointly with Russia and China, which should take place immediately after the withdrawal of both Chinese and Japanese troops from Korea. He then argued that this proposal, "is extremely advantageous both for us and for Japan, by which would be secured for the future the maintenance of order in Korea and set aside the predominant influence of China, and which would be the only solid guarantee against new attempts at the violation of the integrity of the kingdom on the part of any other power."²⁷⁾ Thus, Cassini suggested anew that Russia should adopt the above plan.

What attitude then did the Russian home government take to the three power conference that Cassini had been promoting in his discussions with Li Hung-chang? On July 7 Foreign Minister Giers sent the following telegram to Cassini in response to his report of July 3:

"Our efforts are directed toward eliminating the possibility of collision between the Chinese and the Japanese. Our influencing Japan to withdraw the troops from Korea has a character of friendly advice. Though we perfectly appreciate Li Hung-chang's confidence in us, we consider inconvenient our direct interference in Korean reforms, for behind this proposal there is apparently hidden the desire to draw us into the Korean disorders and to get our help."²⁸⁾

Further, in response to Cassini's telegram of the 7th requesting an urgent response to the Chinese,²⁹⁾ Foreign Minister Giers immediately informed Tsar Alexander III and then sent off a telegram on the 10th, instructing Cassini that, "We never wish to interfere in the present Korean disorders, following the Chinese and the Japanese."³⁰⁾

Thus the Russian government had refused to support the three power conference that had been promoted by Cassini and decided not to intervene in the Korean internal affairs; what factors led to this decision? We can see from the July 7 telegram to Cassini that the Russian government did not trust the intentions of Li Hung-chang. Later, in a letter to Cassini dated August 8, after the outbreak of the hostilities, Giers explained the decision not to intervene in the Korean internal affairs in the following way:

"The Imperial Government is constantly guided by the aim not to be

carried away by any one-sided proposals made by one or the other of the two powers hostile to each other in the Far East and not to be drawn by them into a partial estimate of the situation Therefore we do not regret at all that we refused the proposal made to us by Li Hung-chang, through you, to interfere directly in the question of Korean reforms, and to take upon ourselves, so to speak, an authoritative mediation in favor of the existing status quo, i.e., as Li Hung-chang naturally understood it, in favor of China. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs clearly acknowledged that the reforms served only as a pretext for a collision between the Chinese and the Japanese and that in consequence of our unofficial mediation we might, against our will, easily become open enemies of Japan under the banner of China and the cunning viceroy of Pechili."³¹⁾

Thus Russia's rejection of the three power conference was the result of the government's estimate that if they were to go along they might be drawn into the strategy of Li Hung-chang which was endeavoring to involve Russia on China's side in the Sino-Japanese conflict.

As we have already seen in the first chapter, from the time of the special conference of May 1888 on, Russian policy had assumed that the main threat to Korea would come from China, and they had considered making approaches to Japan to block this. Thus, we can say that the refusal to go along with the three power conference proposal was simply an extension of this policy which was friendly to Japan and suspicious of China, and that the views of the diplomats in the field, Cassini and Hitrovo, that if war were to break out the instigation would come not from China but from Japan was unable to change the basic policy of the Russian government. Besides, there was another reason why the Russian government believed that the proposal for the three power conference was part of the strategy of Li Hung-chang, and this was more direct reason.

As we have already seen from the June 30 and July 2 reports of Li Hung-chang to the Tsungli Yamen, this proposal was in fact made to Li by Cassini; however, in reporting to his own government on July 1 and July 3 Cassini presented the proposal as the work of Li Hung-chang. The Russian government continued to believe that this proposal came from Li as we can see in the August 8 letter of Giers to Cassini and was expressed by Giers at the special conference of the Russian government on August 21. On that occasion, Giers said, "Li Hung-chang made us a proposal to participate in solving the problem concerning the internal organization of Korea together with China and Japan."³²⁾ Cassini used this approach, arguing that the proposal for the three power conference meant a major shift in China's position because China, who had previously been very hostile to any signs of Russian interference in Korea, for the first time recognized it; and recommended his home government to adopt that proposal. However, we can say, such an approach of

Cassini rather resulted in causing the Russian government to believe that the proposal was part of a Chinese strategy to induce Russia to support China and take a stand hostile to Japan.

While this three power conference plan had originally been promoted in the talks between Cassini and Li Hung-chang, the Tsungli Yamen who had negotiations with the British Minister O'Connor had not put much trust in this plan although the Li-Cassini talks had limited the scope of Yamen's action;³³⁾ further, Hitrovo in Tokyo had not even communicated this plan to the Japanese government.³⁴⁾ Therefore it is very doubtful whether there was any hope of realizing this plan. In any case, when the Russian government decided not to interfere in Korea, this plan was no longer viable.

3. Decisions with regard to Cooperation with England

Although the proposal for the three power conference was thus blocked by the decision of the Russian government, this in turn brought about certain results that the Russian government had not predicted. As we have seen in chapter two, this proposal for a three power conference became known to the British legation in China and the British government interpreted this as a threat of Russian independent intervention in Korea and this in turn led to the British proposal of July 7 to the French, German, Russian and American governments to take part in a joint intervention between China and Japan, for the purpose of effecting a peaceful settlement of the question at issue between those two powers.³⁵⁾

On the other hand the Russian Foreign Ministry, while having rejected the idea for a three power conference, still did not wish that her rejection would cause China to seek British advice,³⁶⁾ and in a July 9 telegram to the Russian ambassador in England, E. E. Staal, directed him to find out whether China had requested British help in resolving the conflict with Japan.³⁷⁾

Since the British proposal for joint intervention took place at the same time as the above Russian action and the British proposal was communicated to the Russian government on July 9,³⁸⁾ it is not difficult to imagine that the Russian government suspected the British government of attempting to seize a leadership role in the efforts to resolve the Sino-Japanese clash.³⁹⁾ Therefore, the Russian government gave the British only an evasive answer, stating that Russia had recommended that both China and Japan arrange for the withdrawal of their troops from Korea as soon as order was restored, and that they should settle by diplomatic methods any difficulties that remained; China was seemingly disposed to listen to the advice of Russia, but Japan maintained that the causes of the disorder in question had not yet been eliminated nor had order been completely restored.⁴⁰⁾ The Russian government continued to delay her response to the British, assuming that Russian interests in Korea, as a neighboring power, were too serious for them not to preserve perfect

freedom of action in any eventuality which might occur, and that therefore they could not give a definite reply to the British proposal for joint intervention until they knew what form the pressure on China and Japan was to take.⁴¹⁾

With regard to the British proposal for five power joint intervention, as we have seen in chapter two, France like Russia avoided giving a direct reply, America refused to take part in a joint action, and only Germany offered to support the efforts of Britain by diplomatic means. Realizing that the plan for joint intervention would not work and desiring to prevent for the moment a direct clash between the Chinese and Japanese forces in Korea, Britain, on July 14, adopted a plan to separate the troops of China and Japan in Korea from each other and temporarily prolong their joint occupation of Korea. The British then urged the Chinese and Japanese to accept the plan, and on July 16 called in Staal, the Russian ambassador in London, told him of the responses of Germany, France and the United States to the proposal for joint intervention, stressed the necessity for Britain and Russia to take a leading role in reaching a settlement, and sought Russian support for the plan.⁴²⁾

On July 18 Foreign Minister Giers, in a memorial to the Tsar, recommended support for the British proposal and in the 22nd telegrams he instructed Cassini and Hitrovo to cooperate with the British ministers in Peking and Tokyo to advise the Chinese and Japanese governments to accept the plan for a separation of both troops and their continued mutual occupation of Korea. He also requested the support of the French and German governments for the Anglo-Russian efforts to this effect.⁴³⁾ On the same day Giers told F. Lascelles, the British ambassador to Russia, what action he had taken and on that occasion he stressed that Anglo-Russian cooperation had to be on an equal footing.⁴⁴⁾

As we have seen in section two, on June 28, the Russian government abandoned their plans to mediate the Korean problem, a mediation that had been initiated at the request of Li Hung-chang, and in its place had chosen to support the appeal of the Korean government to Britain, Russia, Germany, France and the United States to urge a mutual withdrawal of Chinese and Japanese troops. Thus, we can say that Britain's proposal for a joint intervention by the five powers in fact corresponded to the appeal of the Korean government, and that therefore there was clearly room for the Russian government to accept such a proposal. However, although the Russian government, having decided not to pursue the three power conference proposal, showed a major retreat from efforts to resolve the situation under Russian auspices, they dared delay a definitive response to the British proposal for joint intervention because of fears that Britain was trying to seize leadership. When the Russian government learned that the aim of pressure on China and Japan was to bring about a separation of the troops and to prolong the joint occupation

of Korea and when they learned on July 17 the details of the Japanese demand for a domestic reform in Korea and realized that Japan was unwilling to come to an agreement with China,⁴⁵⁾ they at last decided to cooperate with British efforts, meanwhile themselves contacting France, Germany, China and Japan and insisting that such cooperation would be carried out on a basis of equal standing with Great Britain.

It was at this point that Britain and Russia finally reached diplomatic agreement re the Sino-Japanese conflict. In spite of the fact that the British and Russian governments instructed their ministers in Japan and China to work together to put pressure on the two countries to separate their troops from each other and in spite of the fact that this action had the support of Italy as well as France and Germany, Japan went ahead with her decision to begin war, and with the naval engagement near Feng 豐 Island on July 25, the two nations entered a state of war.

4. Russian Far Eastern Policy after the Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War

Before Japan and China declared war against each other on August 1, the Russian government had decided on a policy that called for non-interference in the internal affairs of Korea, and called for cooperation with Britain and the other powers to bring about a solution to the crisis. Then, what attitude did the Russian government take to the actual war that had started?

As we have already seen, even before the outbreak of hostilities the British government was convinced that if war did break out, it would result in a Japanese victory and had taken that assumption as the basis of their Far Eastern policy; on the Russian side there does not seem to have been such a clear prediction of the war situation. On August 7 Foreign Minister Giers drafted the following two memorials for Tsar Alexander III arguing what ought to be done in case of a Chinese or a Japanese victory.⁴⁶⁾

Russia's first concern, Giers said, was to insist that both China and Japan agree not to carry out military activities in the northern regions of Korea, specifically in the area of Hamgyōng Province 咸鏡道 where Goshkevich Bay 造山灣 and Port Lazareff 永興灣 were situated, and that Japan not try to establish naval bases on the coast of northern Korea near the Russian border.⁴⁷⁾ In the case of a Chinese victory, Giers said, the Tientsin verbal agreement of 1886 should be revived in which Russia and China had agreed to a mutual non-aggression on Korean territory, and on the basis of that, the Chinese government should be obliged to withdraw their troops from Korea. In anticipation of such a case, Giers instructed Cassini on August 10 to inform the Chinese government that, "In conformity with the verbal agreement of 1886, the significance of which was recognized by Li according to your telegram of June 12,⁴⁸⁾ we are on our part guided by a sense of perfect dis-

interestedness in the Korean question."⁴⁹⁾

In the case of a Japanese victory, Giers argued that it would seem impossible that Japan would grow in power as a result of her acquisition of Korea. If Japan should come to share a common border with China and Russia, she would lose the advantages that she had as an island country. However, if Japan was to occupy the Korean Peninsula, and if she was to close the Broughton Strait 朝鮮海峡 between Tsushima 對馬 and Pusan 釜山, it would be possible for her to block the passage of Russian ships from the Japan Sea into the Pacific. Free passage through the Broughton Strait was the most important interest for Russia with regard to the Japan Sea. If Japan was to occupy both shores of the strait, this could create for Russia a "new Bosphorus" problem in the Far East. Therefore Giers argued that it was advisable to gain Japanese agreement that there would be no settlement with regard to navigation through the Broughton Strait without the agreement of Russia.

The above was the analysis of the Russian Foreign Ministry immediately after the outbreak of the war. The Russian government called a special conference to discuss its Far Eastern policy on August 21. This meeting was attended by N. K. Giers, minister of foreign affairs, P. S. Vannovskii, minister of war, N. M. Chikhachev, director of the Naval Ministry, S. Iu. Witte, minister of finance, N. P. Shishkin, vice minister of foreign affairs, and D. A. Kapnist, director of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The minutes of this meeting together with the minutes of the special conference of May 8, 1888 are included in, "First Steps of Russian Imperialism in the Far East," in *Krasnyi Arkhiv*, vol. 52.⁵⁰⁾ In comparing the minutes of these two special meetings, it is not at all difficult to see the continuous line that runs through Russian Far Eastern policy from 1888 down to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war.

For example, at the earlier May 8, 1888 conference, it was argued that, "As our experience of late years has proved, our political interests in the Far East group chiefly around Korea because of her geographical location." Taking that position as the basis the conference then discussed Russian Far Eastern policy in three parts, the headings of which are as follows: (1) Is acquisition of Korea by Russia desirable and what consequences might be expected from it? (2) Can danger from Korea threaten Russia? (3) What measures should Russia take to counteract Chinese designs on Korea? From this we can clearly see that the 1888 conference stood on the assumption that for Russia the most important factor in Far Eastern policy was the question of Korea. On the other hand, at the beginning of the August 21, 1894 special conference, Giers began by saying, "By an Imperial order, the conference ought to debate what policy should we follow now in view of the war which has broken out between China and Japan, and what decision must we make if one of the belligerents, being victorious, should intend to violate the terri-

torial integrity of Korea." From this we can see that he believed that the outbreak of war might threaten one of the bases of Russian Far Eastern policy determined at the May 8, 1888 conference, i.e. preserving the status quo in Korea.

Giers then went on to outline the events that had led up to the outbreak of hostilities and the actions that Russia had taken, beginning with Russia's appeal to Japan at the request of Li Hung-chang, the decision not to support the three power conference of Russia-China-Japan, and the cooperation with England for pressure by the powers to assure a separation of Chinese and Japanese troops and the continued mutual occupation of Korean territory. He then suggested that Russia should not interfere in the war and by no means show preference to either side, but should make efforts, jointly with the governments of Great Britain and other interested powers, to persuade the belligerents to stop hostilities and to come by diplomatic means to the earliest peace agreement on the basis of maintenance of the status quo in Korea. Such a course that Giers suggested was based on his view of Korea that, "Korea, being insignificant by herself, might, because of her weakness, turn into an instrument of aspirations hostile to us if she should fall under the rule of one of the belligerents." This statement is in fact almost identical to the opening notes of the second part of the minutes of the May 8, 1888 special conference and shows the continuity in Russian Far Eastern policy.

However, when the 1888 special conference considered Chinese and Japanese foreign policies, it had almost completely denied the possibility of Japanese aggression against Korea, whereas in the August 21, 1894 conference Giers touched on the problems that had already been mentioned in the August 7 memorials, that Japan was occupying southern Korea and might possibly close the Broughton Strait. But in any way Giers' opening address to the 1894 conference ended with a very optimistic view, "The maintenance of the status quo in Korea seems realizable the more so that both Japan and China have asserted that they never want to violate the territorial integrity of Korea."

Most of the other participants at the conference put their views more or less exceeding the framework set by the Foreign Ministry. Witte, minister of finance, agreed with Giers that for the time being Russia should not interfere in the war, but warned that in case either China or Japan would win a victory Britain might intervene in the situation. Therefore it was essential for Russia to begin making preparations for the eventuality. The Director of the Naval Ministry, N. M. Chikhachev, noted that in the case of such British intervention it would not be difficult for Russia to occupy Goncharoff Island 馬養島 which lay near the Korean mainland and possessed an excellent anchorage, but argued that unless there were some special reasons for doing so, this should not be done. P. S. Vannovskii, minister of war, noted that at present Japan seemed to be winning the war, and that

if Japan were to conquer Korea she might become a dangerous neighbor for Russia. It was quite possible that under such circumstances, China would then seek an alliance with Britain. He suggested that as a warning Russia might take certain military precautions such as preparing the troops of the South Ussuri region near the Korean border.

In response to these contentions Giers argued that of course Russia should not remain an indifferent spectator in the event of British support of either belligerent, but for the time being there was no ground to suspect that Great Britain would change her policy in the Korean question, since she desired nothing but the earliest conclusion of peace between China and Japan and the preservation of the existing order of things on the Pacific coast. The special conference did not give further consideration to this issue.

In the end, the special conference adopted in principle the estimate and policy suggested by the Foreign Ministry, and made the following conclusions:

1. Since any active interference of Russia in the Sino-Japanese war would not serve Russian interests, Russia should continue to work with the other interested powers in the Korean question and should make efforts to encourage China and Japan to cease hostilities as soon as possible and settle the Korean question by diplomatic means.
2. To abstain from issuing a special declaration of neutrality.⁵¹⁾ To continue to prevail upon China and Japan to respect Russian interests and especially to call their attention to avoiding anything that might give cause for misunderstandings on the Russo-Korean frontier.⁵²⁾
3. To bear in mind that the desirable outcome of the Sino-Japanese war is the preservation of the status quo in Korea.
4. As to the question of strengthening the troops in anticipation of unforeseen events in the region adjacent to the Korean frontier, to take financial measures for it when necessary.

Thus as we can see from the above, the special conference of August 21, 1894 adopted a policy line little different from that of May 8, 1888, regarding the Korean question as key to its Far Eastern policy, and seeing the preservation of the status quo in Korea as the most desirable solution, and decided no new positive policy aiming at a change in the status quo.⁵³⁾

Conclusion

Looking back over the events as they developed we can see that the special conference of May 8, 1888 renounced Russian intentions of any aggressive acts in Korea and took as the basis for Russian Far Eastern policy the preservation of the status quo in Korea. And, assuming that threats to Korea would come not from Japan but from China who was backed up by

Britain, the conference decided on a policy to make China stick to the maintenance of the status quo in Korea on the basis of the 1886 verbal agreement of Tientsin. However during the two months of the diplomatic conflict following the Chinese and Japanese despatch of troops to Korea in early June 1894 the Russian leaders came to know that it was Japan, not China which might invade and conquer Korea, and that contrary to their predictions, Britain was not necessarily backing China. Therefore the analysis of the situation which had justified the policy selected in 1888 was no longer appropriate to the actual situation.

In spite of that, before the outbreak of the war Russian government chose a policy that rejected the efforts of their own diplomatic representatives to bring about a Russo-Chinese-Japanese three power conference to resolve the issue, and announced their decision not to interfere in Korea's domestic affairs and not to intervene in the Sino-Japanese conflict. The special conference of August 21, taking place after the outbreak of hostilities, decided on a policy which still had as its base the desire to maintain the status quo and which continued to put its hopes on the recently realized diplomatic cooperation with Britain and the other powers and rejected the choice of a positive and independent Russian initiative.

As for Great Britain, until June 1894 when the clash of Sino-Japanese interests over Korea became known, she had maintained a policy of friendly relations with both China and Japan in an effort to block a Russian advance into the Korean Peninsula. At the base of this Far Eastern policy was a tacit recognition of the existing situation that China had de facto control over Korea. As the clash between China and Japan came into the open, and especially as reports of Russian plans to intervene in the Korean question began to circulate, Britain proposed to the other powers a joint intervention to block independent Russian action. When this approach failed, Britain began to give more weight to Japan rather than China as a potential block to any Russian southern advance. England strove to gain Russian cooperation, and as soon as she assured herself that Russia would not intervene, she chose to silently watch Japan's initiating war with China.

In this fashion Russia and Britain, although they stood in a basically adversary position with regard to Far Eastern problems, were to continue to cooperate with regard to the Sino-Japanese war and keep a close watch on the developing war situation. This was in spite of very different ideas about the situation as we have seen in the fact that Britain was convinced of Japanese military superiority, while Russia had come to no clear prediction of what might happen.

In fact by the time that hostilities broke out, the Russian government also feared that not China but rather Japan might possibly destroy the status quo in Korea. As the war developed with Japanese successive victories, such a fear became more and more probable. Together with this, as the Japanese

extended hostilities from Korea into Manchuria and China proper, and when they at last demanded the cession of the Liaotung 遼東 Peninsula on April 1, 1895 at the peace conference at Shimonoseki 下關, the fact became evident that the basic Russian policy line growing out of the May 8, 1888 special conference that had seen the Korean question as the key issue in Russian Far Eastern policy ended in complete collapse. With this, the primary issue of the Far Eastern problem became concern for the partition of China herself.

In these circumstances the British government saw no necessity to change its policy which had put great weight on Japan as a block to a Russian southern advance and decided not to object to the Japanese peace terms. With this the Anglo-Russian cooperation which had continued since the outset of hostilities in spite of various unstable conditions collapsed. Russia was then faced with a choice of whether to try to block the granting of the Liaotung Peninsula to Japan, or whether to acquiesce and acquire some corresponding compensation at the expense either of China or of Korea. As is well known, Russia chose the former course, leading to the three power intervention of Russia, Germany and France. This problem will be considered in a future study.

Abbreviations Used in the Notes

- CJCS** *Ch'ing Kuang-hsü ch'ao Chung-Jih chiao-she shih-liao* 清光緒朝中日交涉史料, 1932-1933, reprint, Taipei: Wen-hai, 1970.
- CJHK** *Ch'ing-chi Chung-Jih-Han kuan-hsi shih-liao* 清季中日韓關係史料, Taipei: The Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1972.
- CSL-KH** *Ta-Ch'ing li-ch'ao shih-lu* 大清歷朝實錄 for the Kuang-hsü 光緒 period, 1937-1938, reprint, Taipei: Hua-wen, 1970.
- LWCK** Li Hung-chang 李鴻章, *Li Wen-chung kung ch'üan-chi* 李文忠公全集, 1908, reprint, Taipei: Wen-hai, 1962.
- WCSSL** *Ch'ing-chi wai-chiao shih-liao* 清季外交史料, 1932-1935, reprint, Taipei: Wen-hai.
- NGB** *Nihon gaikō bunsho* 日本外交文書, Tokyo, 1936-.
- FO 17** Great Britain, *Foreign Office General Correspondence, China.* (Microfilm. Reference is to volume and frame number.)
- FO 46** Great Britain, *Foreign Office General Correspondence, Japan.* (same as above)
- FO 405** Great Britain, *Foreign Office Confidential Prints, China.* (Microfilm. Reference is to volume and document number.)
- KA** *Красный Архив*, Москва, 1922-1941.

NOTES

Introduction

- 1) Tabohashi Kiyoshi 田保橋潔, *Kindai Nissen kankei no kenkyū* 近代日鮮關係の研究 (*A Study of Modern Japanese-Korean Relations*), 2 vols., Seoul, 1940; reprint, Tokyo: Hara shobō, 1973. The chapters from this book on the period of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war appear almost in the same form in Tabohashi Kiyoshi, *Nisshin sen'eki gaikōshi no kenkyū* 日清戰役外交史の研究 (*A Diplomatic History of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-1895*), Tokyo: Tōkō shoin, 1951. Furthermore, this book was translated into Russian and has been widely used by Soviet scholars. Табохаси Кийэси, *Дипломатическая история японо-китайской войны (1894-1895)*, Москва, 1956. In this essay, citations follow the *Kindai Nissen kankei no kenkyū*. Shinobu Seizaburō 信夫清三郎, *Nisshin sensō—sono seijiteki gaikōteki kansatsu* 日清戰爭—その政治的・外交的觀察 (*The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895; Political and Diplomatic Observations*), revised and enlarged by Fujimura Michio 藤村道生, Tokyo: Nansōsha, 1970. (hereafter Shinobu [Fujimura]). This book was originally published in 1934 but its sale was banned almost immediately after publication. Nakatsuka Akira 中塚明, *Nisshin sensō no kenkyū* 日清戰爭の研究 (*A Study of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895*), Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1968. Fujimura Michio, *Nisshin sensō—Higashi Ajia kindaiishi no tenkanten* 日清戰爭—東アジア近代史の轉換点— (*The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895; A Turning point in the Modern History of East Asia*), Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1973. Fujimura Michio, "Nisshin sensō," in *Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi* 岩波講座日本歴史 (*Iwanami Lectures on the History of Japan*), vol. 16, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1976. Pak Chong-gūn 朴宗根 (Boku Sō-kon), *Nisshin sensō to Chōsen* 日清戰爭と朝鮮 (*Korea and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895*), Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1982.
- 2) Mutsu Munemitsu 陸奥宗光, *Kenkenroku* 蹇蹇錄, ed. Nakatsuka Akira, Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1983.
- 3) *FO 17* and *FO 46* are held in the collection of the central library of Tokyo University and *FO 405* is in the collection of the Toyo Bunko.
- 4) "Из эпохи японо-китайской войны 1894-95 г. г." (hereafter "Из эпохи"), *KA*, L-LI, 1932, 3-63.
"Первые шаги русского империализма на Дальнем Востоке (1888-1903 гг.)" (hereafter "Первые шаги"), *KA*, LII, 1932, 34-124.
- 5) "Russian Documents relating to the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-95," *The Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, XVII, 3-4, 1933-1934, 480-515, 632-670.
- 6) Wang Hsin-chung 王信忠, *Chung-Jih Chia-wu chan-cheng chih wai-chiao pei-ching* 中日甲午戰爭之外交背景 (*The Diplomatic Background of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894*), Peking, 1937; reprint, Taipei: Wen-hai, 1964. T. F. Tsiang, "Sino-Japanese Diplomatic Relations, 1870-1894," *The Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, XVII, 1, 1933, 1-106.
- 7) Liang Chia-pin 梁嘉彬, "Li Hung-chang yü Chung-Jih Chia-wu chan-cheng 李鴻章與中日甲午戰爭 (Li Hung-chang and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894)," *Ta-lu tsa-chih* 大陸雜誌, LI, 4-5, 1975, 155-186, 227-254. Mi Ch'ing-yü 米慶餘, "Sha-O tsai Chia-wu chan-cheng chung ch'ung-tang le shen-me chüeh-se 沙俄在甲午戰爭中充當了什麼角色 (What Role Did Tsarist Russia Play in the War of 1894?)," *Li-shih yen-chiu* 歷史研究, 1979, No. 8, 85-94. Liang's essay offers an outline of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations from the 1870s to April 1895 when the Treaty of Shimonoseki 下關 was signed. He relies heavily on Tabohashi, Nakatsuka and other Japanese language studies. Mi's essay reflects the Sino-Soviet tension of recent years. Although he relies heavily on Chinese translations of the materials contained in *KA*, L-LI, LII, he argues that Russia made Japan provoke the war with China, and that Russia was pursuing an aggressive policy toward Korea before the outbreak of the war. I do not agree with this interpretation. Other recent

- Chinese studies in the field include Chin Chi-fêng 金基鳳, "Kuan-yü Chung-Jih Chia-wu chan-cheng te ch'i-yin wen-t'i 關於中日甲午戰爭的起因問題 (The Origin of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894)," *Shih-chieh li-shih* 世界歷史, 1981, No. 6, 44-51 and Ts'ung Pei-yüan 叢佩遠, "P'ing Jih-O chan-cheng ch'ien O-kuo te Yüan-tung cheng-ts'e 評日俄戰爭前俄國的遠東政策 (Tsarist Eastward Expansion before the Russo-Japanese War)," *ibid.*, 1981, Nos. 5-6, 40-48, 52-55. Chin, mainly based on the Japanese language studies, argues that the ruling class in Japan and its agent provoked the war with China. Ts'ung uses *KA* and American, European and Soviet research results. However, both Chin and Ts'ung mention only briefly the Far Eastern policies of Russia and Britain in the period before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war.
- 8) Philip Joseph, *Foreign Diplomacy in China 1894-1900; A Study in Political and Economic Relations with China*, London, 1928. R. Stanley McCordock, *British Far Eastern Policy 1894-1900*, New York, 1931. William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism 1890-1902*, 2nd ed., New York, 1951. Kurt Krupinski, *Rußland und Japan; ihre Beziehungen bis zum Frieden von Portsmouth*, Berlin, 1940. Lung Chang, *La Chine à l'aube du XXème siècle; Les relations diplomatiques de la Chine avec les puissances depuis la guerre sino-japonaise jusqu'à la guerre russo-japonaise*, Paris, 1962.
 - 9) Andrew Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy 1881-1904*, Berkeley, 1958.
 - 10) George Alexander Lensen, *Balance of Intrigue; International Rivalry in Korea and Manchuria, 1884-1899*, 2 vols., Tallahassee (Florida), 1982.
 - 11) А. Л. Нарочницкий, *Колониальная политика капиталистических держав на Дальнем Востоке 1860-1895 гг.*, Москва, 1956. Г. В. Ефимов, *Внешняя политика Китая 1894-1899 гг.*, Москва, 1958.
 - 12) Б. Д. Пак, *Россия и Корея*, Москва, 1979.

Chapter I

- 1) Memorandum by Bertie, 7 June 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 3; Admiralty to Currie, 20 January 1886, *British Parliamentary Papers; China No. 1 (1887), Correspondence respecting the Temporary Occupation of Port Hamilton by Her Majesty's Government*, no. 50.
- 2) Rosebery to O'Connor, 1 April 1886, *ibid.*, no. 55. For the Chinese text of Tseng's communication, see *CJHK*, no. 1147(1).
- 3) Currie to Macartney, 14 April 1886, Inclosure, *China No. 1 (1887)*, no. 56. See also *CJHK*, no. 1147(2).
- 4) Salisbury to O'Connor, 12 December 1885, *China No. 1 (1887)*, no. 47.
- 5) O'Connor to Salisbury, 7 January 1886, *ibid.*, no. 52.
- 6) *WCSL*, 65: 2a.
- 7) *CJHK*, no. 1147.
- 8) Memorial of Tsungli Yamen, 3 January 1887, *ibid.*, no. 1193.
- 9) For a detailed account of the event, see Tabohashi, vol. 2, 34-47. For the developments between late 1884 and July 1885 with regard to the attempt to conclude the first "Russo-Korean secret agreement," see *ibid.*, 1-17; Lensen, vol. 1, 31-53; and Пак, 82-92.
- 10) Lin Ming-te 林明德, *Yüan Shi-k'ai yü Ch'ao-hsien* 袁世凱與朝鮮 (*Yüan Shih-k'ai and Korea*), Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1970, 154-155, 261; Пак, 94-95; Lensen, vol. 1, 69-73.
- 11) *LWCK*, *Tien-kao* 電稿 (hereafter *Telegrams*), 7: 24b.
- 12) *Ibid.*, *Hai-chün han-kao* 海軍函稿 (hereafter *Admiralty Letters*), 2: 5a-8b.
- 13) Li Hung-chang to Prince Ch'ün, 14 August 1886, *ibid.*, 2: 3b-4b.
- 14) *Ibid.*, 2: 8b; *Telegrams*, 7: 31b.
- 15) *Ibid.*, *Admiralty Letters*, 2: 4b.
- 16) *Ibid.*, 2: 9a; *CJCS*, no. 466; *CSL-KH*, 230: 10b.
- 17) In Нарочницкий, 393 and Пак, 96, part of the secret note is quoted, which was enclosed in Waeber's despatch of August 18, but it is not clear if the whole note was communicated by telegram. In reference to this problem, Yüan Shih-k'ai 袁世凱 in three tele-

- grams to Li Hung-chang 李鴻章 that arrived on August 13 said that he had made the Seoul telegraph office prevent Waeber's sending a telegram to his home government, but that Waeber might have entrusted the telegram to a Japanese merchant ship that left from Inch'on 仁川 for Yentai 煙臺. *LWCK, Admiralty Letters*, 2: 6b-7a, 8a.
- 18) *Ibid.*, 2: 13a, *Telegrams*, 7: 33b.
- 19) *Ibid.*, 7: 34b.
- 20) Нарочницкий, 393. On the Hunch'un Protocol, see Chao Chung-fu 趙中孚, *Ch'ing-chi Chung-O Tung-san-sheng chieh-wu chiao-she* 清季中俄東三省界務交涉 (*Sino-Russian Negotiations over the Manchurian Border Issue 1858-1911*), Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1970, 150-160.
- 21) *Tseng Hui-min kung shou-hsieh jih-chi* 曾惠敏公手寫日記 (*Tseng Chi-tse's Diary in Manuscript Form*), Taipei: Hsueh-sheng shu-chü, 1965, vol. 7, 3675-3684; *Tseng Hui-min kung i-chi* 曾惠敏公遺集 (*A Posthumous Collection of the Works of Tseng Chi-tse*), *Tsou-shu* 奏疏, 6: 12a.
- 22) Нарочницкий, 394-395. According to *Tseng Hui-min kung shou-hsieh jih-chi* 曾惠敏公手寫日記 *Tseng Chi-tse* 曾紀澤 met with Vlangali on August 6, 7 and 11, but the diary does not touch on the content of the discussions.
- 23) *LWCK, Admiralty Letters*, 2: 4b. 頃又函約駐京俄使來津晤商一切, 俄使謂已電請本國示遵。儻其惠然肯來, 必當曉以大義, 屬其勿受朝鮮亂黨之愚而傷兩國多年睦誼。
- 24) *Ibid.*, 2: 9b-10a. 前邀駐京俄署使來津面商巨文島之事, 昨接復函, 擬不日到津。
- 25) *Ibid.*, 2: 5a.
- 26) Нарочницкий, 395.
- 27) *LWCK, Admiralty Letters*, 2: 15a-17b.
- 28) *Ibid.*, 2: 14a-b. 查元朝曾屢派員往監國政, 卒釀禍變而止。其時尚無各國通商之事, 今則牽掣更多。俄固不願, 猶可以口舌爭。日初與立約, 即認朝鮮為自主獨立之國, 明係不讓他人干預。……茲明知我屬, 而認為自主, 一防我掠地侵佔, 一利韓貧弱為他日併吞地步, 意極很惡。若遽派員監國, 無論韓君臣觀望反側, 操縱輕重之閒難得妥洽, 日人必先決裂, 陰嗾各國連合阻撓, 恐有進退維谷之時。韓雖可慮, 有俄在旁, 日斷不遽生心。我當壹意聯絡俄人, 使不侵佔韓地, 則日亦必縮手。
- 29) *Ibid.*, 2: 4a. 英俄日聞韓有內亂, 必派兵船前往巡護, 俄日甚或派陸兵登岸。
- 30) *LWCK, I-shu han-kao* 譯署函稿 (hereafter *Tsungli Yamen Letters*), 18: 39b-41b.
- 31) *Ibid.*, 18: 42a. 朝鮮如永遠遵守屬邦名分, 中朝斷無侵占其地之理。所恐俄國有此意耳。俄國若無此意, 則朝鮮必無旁人敢來侵佔。俄國能否與我立一密約。
- 32) *Ibid.*, 18: 42b.
- 33) *CJCS*, no. 482; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 7: 42a-b. 拉謂我兩國既經約定, 倭英必不敢生心, 巨文亦當自退, 並免旁人誦惑難開。意頗真誠。此與英外部節略內各國會商擔保稍異。但韓後慮實在俄倭, 於他國無涉。俄既與我約明, 倭必縮手, 無須與彼商會。
- 34) *CJHK*, no. 1177(2); *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 45a-b.
- 35) *CJHK*, no. 1177(3); *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 45b-46a.
- 一, 中俄兩國為捐除彼此誤會起見, 議明朝鮮一切情形以後無有更變, 均照歷來及現在辦法。所有一切變法, 與朝鮮現在情形有礙, 或生出膠轕枝節, 即與中俄兩國願共保有平靜之意不符。
- 二, 俄國除擔保太平外, 並無他意, 不願取朝鮮土地。中國亦自不行如此之事。
- 三, 日後如有意外難於預料之事, 與朝鮮現在情形大有關繫, 或與俄國在朝鮮之利益有礙, 致使不得不變朝鮮現在情形, 中俄兩國或由彼此政府, 或由彼此駐韓大員, 公同商定辦法。
- 36) *CJHK*, no. 1177; *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 44a-b; *Telegrams*, 7: 45a.
- 37) *Ibid.*, 7: 45b; *CJCS*, no. 489. 中俄兩國願朝鮮實在平靜, 並為捐除誤會起見, 兩國政府約明不改變朝鮮現在情形, 並永遠不佔據朝鮮境內土地。
- 38) *Ibid.*, no. 493; *CSL-KH*, 232: 11b.
- 39) *CJCS*, no. 491; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 7: 46a.
- 40) *CSL-KH*, 232: 13a-b; *WCSL*, 69: 14b. 中俄因韓立約, 原恐俄懷他意。若因此被俄牽制, 轉不如不約為愈。蓋俄不侵韓, 乃其本分應爾, 安能與我為上國者相提並論, 牽就立約。……

- 韓爲華屬，保全周至。苟非干名犯義，斷不別有措置。俄與韓修睦通商，亦斷無侵擾之心。
- 41) Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 22 October 1886, *CJHK*, no. 1178; *LCWK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 49a.
- 42) Нарочницкий, 395.
- 43) *CJHK*, no. 1180; *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 51b-54a.
- 44) See above, note 41.
- 45) Tsungli Yamen's note to Walsham, 31 October 1886, *CJHK*, no. 1181; see also Walsham to Iddesleigh, telegram, 5 November 1886, *China No. 1 (1887)*, no. 67.
- 46) Нарочницкий, 528-529, 555-556; Пак, 100.
- 47) Minutes of the Special Conference of 8 May 1888, "Первые шаги," *КА*, LII, 54-61.
- 48) Нарочницкий, 563-564.
- 49) *Ibid.*, 564-565; Пак, 103.
- 50) *CJHK*, no. 1180; *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 18: 52b. 朝鮮爲中國藩屬，中國有保護之責，如有內亂，中國不能不派兵前往，亂平之後即仍撤回。
- 51) Нарочницкий, 557. With regard to this matter, Li Hung-chang reported in a letter to the Tsungli Yamen dated June 9 that he had inquired of Minister Kumani through I. V. Paderin, the Russian consul in Tientsin, as to the Russian government's policy toward Korea, and that the response was that Russia intended to respect the verbal agreement of Tientsin in which Russia and China both agreed not to change the existing situation in Korea. *CJCS*, no. 595; *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 19: 15a. In a telegram to Yüan Shi-k'ai dated June 25, Li Hung-chang informed Yüan of this reply that he had received from the minister as to the Russian government's intentions, and urged Yüan not to believe the rumors that he heard in Seoul. *Ibid., Telegrams*, 10: 6b-7a
- 52) Пак, 102.
- 53) Нарочницкий, 557.
- 54) *LWCK, Telegrams*, 8: 29b; *CJCS*, no. 538 (3).
- 55) *CJHK*, no. 1357.
- 56) *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 19: 20b-22a.
- 57) *Ibid.*
- 58) *CJCS*, no. 606.
- 59) *WCSL*, 77: 10b.
- 60) *CJHK*, no. 1376.
- 61) *Ibid.*, no. 1385; *CJCS*, nos. 609, 610; *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 19: 22a-b; *Telegrams*, 10: 33a-34b.
- 62) *CJCS*, no. 608.
- 63) *Ibid.*, no. 613; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 10: 42b. 韓約緩議，……始恐他國有事於韓，現似無慮，俄君願守太平不改現局，只要兩國言明，即可談及。
- 64) *Ibid., Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 19: 21a.
- 65) Нарочницкий, 558.
- 66) *Ibid.*, 569.
- 67) *Ibid.*, 554.
- 68) *CJCS*, no. 734; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 12: 20b-21a.
- 69) *Hsü Wen-su kung i-kao* 許文肅公遺稿, *Han-tu* 函牘, 2: 4a.
- 70) *Ibid.*, 2: 16a.
- 71) *LWCK, Tsungli Yamen Letters*, 19: 32a.
- 72) *Yamagata Aritomo ikensho* 山縣有朋意見書, ed. Ôyama Azusa 大山梓, Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1966, 196-200.

Chapter II

- 1) Hirose Shizuko 広瀬靖子, "Nisshin sensō zen no Igrisu Kyokutō seisaku no ichikōsatsu—Chōsen mondai o chūshin to shite 日清戦争前のイギリス極東政策の一考察—朝鮮問題を中心として (British Attitudes towards the Opening of Korea, 1878-1883)," *Kokusai seiji*

- 國際政治, 51, 1974, 138-142.
- 2) *Ibid.*, 150-152.
 - 3) Rosebery to O'Connor, 19 January 1894, *FO 17/1190/19-20*.
 - 4) O'Connor to Kimberley, 1 July 1894, *FO 17/1214/37*. O'Connor uses the phrase "our alliance with China." Langer, although he didn't use archival materials of the British Foreign Office, refers to "a sort of unofficial Anglo-Chinese entente" in the period from 1885 to 1894. Langer, 170.
 - 5) For the 1893-94 negotiations over treaty revision, see *Aoki Shūzō jiden* 青木周藏自傳, ed. Sakane Yoshihisa 坂根義久, Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1970, 201-227.
 - 6) Memorandum by Bertie with minutes, 12 January 1894, *FO 46/445/5-11*. Attached to this memorandum are minutes from Sanderson which said, "I think we shall do wisely to move in a leisurely manner in the direction of negotiation," and from Rosebery which said, "This seems to me to sum up our policy at this moment."
 - 7) *Aoki Shūzō jiden*, 269; see also Aoki to Mutsu, despatch, 5 May 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 30.
 - 8) O'Connor to Rosebery, 3 February 1894, *FO 17/1192/148-151*.
 - 9) Paget to Kimberley, 7 June 1894, *FO 46/440/19*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 2.
 - 10) Memorandum by Bertie, 8 June 1894, *FO 46/445/279-282*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 3.
 - 11) Kimberley to Paget, 8 June 1894, *FO 46/439/19*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 4.
 - 12) Paget to Kimberley, 10 June 1894, *FO 46/440/20*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 5.
 - 13) Bertie to Kimberley, 12 June 1894, *FO 46/444/77*. As to whether the Tientsin Convention of 1885 provided grounds for Japan to send troops to Korea, there is a major scholarly disagreement. For example, Pak Chong-gŭn 朴宗根 and Fujimura Michio 藤村道生 argue that the Tientsin 天津 Convention itself did not legalize such a despatch of troops. See Pak, 22-23; Fujimura (1976), 24. However, at the very minimum, the British Foreign Office thought that the Tientsin Convention did make such a despatch of troops legal.
 - 14) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 12 June 1894, *FO 17/1204/26*; cf. *FO 405/60*, nos. 6, 138. See also Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 20 June 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 47a; *CJCS*, no. 1005.
 - 15) Kimberley to Paget, despatch, 13 June 1894, *FO 46/434/73-75*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 7. See also Aoki to Mutsu, telegram, 14 June 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 613.
 - 16) Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, 51-57; Fujimura (1973), 66.
 - 17) Kimberley to Paget, despatch, 23 June 1894, *FO 46/434/77-84*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 15. See also Aoki to Mutsu, telegram, 24 June 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 619.
 - 18) Memorandum by Gubbins, 16 June 1894, *FO 46/444/92-95*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 8.
 - 19) Nakatsuka, 134; Fujimura (1973), 65.
 - 20) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 22 June 1894, *FO 17/1204/31*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 13.
 - 21) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 25 June 1894, *FO 17/1204/33*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 17.
 - 22) O'Connor to Kimberley, 28 June 1894, *FO 17/1204/35-36*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 20.
 - 23) Kimberley to Paget, 28 June 1894, *FO 46/439/23*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 21.
 - 24) Paget to Kimberley, telegram, 29 June 1894, *FO 46/440/25*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 25.
 - 25) O'Connor to Kimberley, 3 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/40*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 32.
 - 26) Kimberley to Paget, 3 July 1894, *FO 46/439/32-33*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 33. For a Japanese translation of this document, see *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 641, appendix.
 - 27) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 2 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/38*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 28.
 - 28) Nakatsuka, 143.
 - 29) Mutsu to Aoki, telegram, 3 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 640. The British government knew about this Japanese proposal on July 6. *FO 46/444/113-114*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 40.
 - 30) Tabohashi, vol. 2, 500; Shinobu [Fujimura], 589.
 - 31) Kimberley to O'Connor, 6 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/70-72*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 42.
 - 32) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 2 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/38*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 28.
 - 33) *CJCS*, no. 1057; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 60b-61a.

- 34) *CJCS*, no. 1059; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 61a-b.
- 35) *CJCS*, no. 1099; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 16: 8b-9a. For information on Li Hung-chang's expectations of Russian pressure on Japan, see Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 6 July 1894, *CJCS*, no. 1091; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 16: 7b-8a.
- 36) For the minutes of the discussions between Komura and the Tsungli Yamen on July 9, see *CJCS*, no. 1122(1); *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 603, Inclosure 2.
- 37) Kimberley to O'Connor, 3 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/65*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 34.
- 38) O'Connor to Kimberley, 6 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/43*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 44.
- 39) Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 30 June 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 56b; *CJCS*, no. 1043.
- 40) Cassini to Giers, telegram, 1 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 26, *КА*, L-LI, 22; Cassini to Giers, telegram, 3 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 35, *ibid.*, 26-27.
- 41) Giers to Cassini, telegram, 7 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 40, *ibid.*, 29; Giers to Cassini, telegram, 10 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 48, *ibid.*, 32.
- 42) Tsungli Yamen to Li Hung-chang, 4 July 1894, *CJCS*, no. 1062; *LWCK, Telegrams*, 16: 3a.
- 43) Memorandum by Bertie, 7 July 1894, *FO 17/1212/140-144*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 45.
- 44) *Ibid.*
- 45) Kimberley to O'Connor, 7 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/76*; Kimberley to Paget, 7 July 1894, *FO 46/439/43*; cf. *FO 405/60*, nos. 46, 47.
- 46) Kimberley to Dufferin (in Paris), Malet (in Berlin), Howard (in St. Petersburg), and Pauncefote (in Washington), 7 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 48.
- 47) Pauncefote to Kimberley, telegram, 9 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 58.
- 48) Malet to Kimberley, telegram, 10 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 61.
- 49) Howard to Kimberley, telegram, 10 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 60.
- 50) Dufferin to Kimberley, telegram and despatch, 13 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, nos. 73, 75.
- 51) A. Vagts, *Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten in der Weltpolitik*, 2 vols., London, 1935, vol. 2, 940.
- 52) Nakayama Jiichi 中山治一, "Nisshin sensō to Teisei Doitsu no Kyokutō seisaku 日清戦争と帝政ドイツの極東政策 (Far Eastern Policy of Imperial Germany and the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95)," *Nagoya daigaku Bungakubu kenkyū ronshū* 名古屋大學文學部研究論集, 2 (Shigaku 史學 1), 1952, 244.
- 53) Shinobu [Fujimura], 594; Fujimura (1973), 80.
- 54) Rotenhan to Kiderlen, 16 July 1894, marginal note by Kiderlen, 20 July 1894, *Die Große Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, vol. 9, no. 2213.
- 55) *Ibid.*, footnote.
- 56) Kimberley to Malet, despatch, 9 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 57.
- 57) Fürst Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, *Denkwürdigkeiten der Reichskanzlerzeit*, Berlin, 1931, 8.
- 58) Kimberley to Howard, despatch, 16 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 98.
- 59) In fact the French Foreign Minister Hanotaux, even before responding to the British proposal, had sent a telegram to Montebello, French ambassador to Russia, seeking information from Russia regarding her attitude toward the British proposal for joint intervention. Hanotaux to Montebello, 9 July 1894, *Documents diplomatiques français 1871-1914*, sér. 1, vol. 11, no. 188, note 3. However, the response to this cable is not included in the collection *DDF*.
- 60) Aoki to Mutsu, telegram, 12 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 658.
- 61) Fujimura (1976), 26; Fujimura (1973), 80; Shinobu [Fujimura], 594.
- 62) See above, note 46.
- 63) Memorandum by Bertie, 12 July 1894, *FO 46/446/23-25*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 70.
- 64) Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, 89-90. On July 14, Aoki delivered a English translation of the "second notification of a break in relations" to the British Foreign Office. Aoki to Kimberley, 14 July 1894, *FO 46/444/126-130*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 76.

- 65) Admiralty to Foreign Office, 16 July 1894, *FO 17/1212/184-188*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 89.
- 66) According to the Intelligence Division report of the War Office, the estimate of a Chinese force of 600,000 included 470,000 in infantry of all kinds, 100,000 in cavalry, and 30,000 in artillery. As for the Japanese army in peace, they estimate an infantry of 55,000, a cavalry of 4,000, an artillery of 6,000 and other services of 10,000, and describe the infantry as "very good," the artillery as "good," and the cavalry as "indifferent." The conclusion of that long report reads as follows: "To sum up: The Chinese army may in all ways be considered as an unknown quantity. Though certain portions of that army are a little better drilled than the undisciplined rabble described above, still, in general, it may be said that they are so entirely lacking in training, organization, and leaders, that a war under existing conditions, and as far as all human experience goes, could have but one issue. The Japanese army, on the other hand, could reckon on their war footing of over 200,000 men. Their army is well equipped and organized, and ready for work. They are very rapid marchers, willing, obedient, and nationally enthusiastic. Their transport and medical services are well organized and in efficient condition, their arms are good and are in the hands of the troops, and in this, as in every other respect, the Japanese army bears comparison with the Chinese much in the same way as the forces of nineteenth century civilization compare with those of medieval times. The only possible means by which China could hope to be successful in a struggle with Japan would be by protracting operations indefinitely, say over a period of two or three years, in the meanwhile straining every nerve to reorganize on European models. It is doubtful, even in the event of Japan allowing them time, that the Chinese would prove themselves capable of sustained effort in this direction. China has never yet attempted to realize the meaning or use of the word "army," and from time immemorial to the present day the profession of arms has been deemed contemptible." Military Intelligence Division to Foreign Office, 16 July 1894, *FO 17/1212/189*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 91.
- 67) McCordock, 98-99.
- 68) *Ibid.*; Langer, 174; Shinobu [Fujimura], 477.
- 69) Kimberley to O'Connor, 14 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/95*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 80.
- 70) Kimberley to Paget, despatch, 14 July 1894, *FO 46/434/100-104*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 82.
- 71) See above, note 58.
- 72) O'Connor to Kimberley, despatch, 13 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 366; *CJCS*, no. 1148 (1). See also Tabohashi, vol. 2, 505-508.
- 73) O'Connor to Kimberley, despatch, 18 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 369.
- 74) *Ibid.*, Inclosure.
- 75) Shinobu [Fujimura], 397; Nakatsuka, 147-148; Fujimura (1973), 83; Fujimura (1976), 26. As has been pointed out by Nakatsuka and Fujimura, in order to bring on the beginning of the war, Japan hurried the signing of the new treaty, and Aoki had reached an agreement with the Foreign Office to sign the treaty on July 14. However on July 14 Kimberley announced a delay in the signing of the treaty and requested explanations from the Japanese government concerning two incidents. The first involved an official request made by the Japanese minister in Korea to the Korean government to dismiss the British naval instructor Lieutenant Coldwell (according to British Foreign Office records, Lieutenant Callwell), and the second involved reports that the Japanese had erected military telegraph wires across the foreign settlement at Inch'on 仁川. This decision was a major shock to the Japanese government as we can see from the comment of Foreign Minister Mutsu 陸奥 in *Kenkenroku* 蹇蹇錄, p. 125, "I felt that we have failed in revising the Anglo-Japanese treaty though we were within one step of completing the task, and therefore I was much disappointed." However, the reports on the Coldwell case and the construction of the telegraph wires were based on reports of events made to O'Connor and Paget from the acting consul-general in Seoul and were only cabled to the British Foreign Office on July 14, and the British govern-

ment did not yet have detailed reports verifying the facts. The Japanese government immediately announced that there was no basis in fact for the reports, and the treaty was signed on July 16. See *FO 405/60*, nos. 78, 81, 82, 84-87, 90, 94; *NGB*, vol. 27, nos. 47-52, 55, 662. Then, if we consider the position of the Japanese government, it is quite possible that if Britain had refused to sign the treaty it might have prevented the Sino-Japanese war, or at the very least postponed it. It is therefore still a question whether the British signing of the treaty on July 16 in fact meant a British approval of Japan's intention to begin war with China. With regard to this, in a telegram to O'Connor dated July 16, Kimberley said, "A new Treaty of Commerce with Japan has been signed today. . . . Its signature now has nothing to do with Corean affairs but perhaps it may make Japan more amenable to our advice." Kimberley to O'Connor, 16 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/115*. Naturally, we do not have to accept at face value the statement that, "Its signature has nothing to do with Corean affairs"; but at least to the extent that I have examined British Foreign Office records, I have not been able to find any evidence that the British Foreign Office linked the negotiations for treaty revision to efforts to settle the Sino-Japanese conflict. Therefore it would seem that the British authorities did not believe that the signing of the treaty would immediately lead to an outbreak of war between China and Japan. Thus we could say that the July 14th postponement of the signing of the treaty was nothing more than a chance to verify the pro-British position of the Japanese government occasioned by the reports of the dismissal of Coldwell and the construction of the telegraph cables. Later, the British government concluded that the reports were incorrect, and Gardner, acting consul-general in Seoul, was reprimanded by Kimberley for sending misleading messages. Kimberley to O'Connor, despatch, 26 September 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 500.

- 76) Mutsu to Paget, 19 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 605; see also Paget to Kimberley, telegram, 19 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 115.
- 77) Mutsu, *Kenkenroku*, 92.
- 78) Tabohashi, vol. 2, 520.
- 79) Shinobu [Fujimura], 596.
- 80) O'Connor to Kimberley, telegram, 18 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/60*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 114.
- 81) Komura to Mutsu, telegram, 20 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 669; Komura to Mutsu, despatch, 23 July 1894, *ibid.*, no. 606.
- 82) Tabohashi mistakenly assumed that the Chinese proposal was drafted by O'Connor because *CJCS*, *LWCK*, and *WCSL* on which he relied do not contain any reports on the Li-Cockburn negotiations.
- 83) Kimberley to Paget, telegram, 20 July 1894, *FO 46/439/59-60*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 124. See also Paget to Mutsu, 21 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 670.
- 84) Kimberley to Malet (in Berlin), Howard (in St. Petersburg), Ford (in Rome), and Phipps (in Paris), 19 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 116.
- 85) Kimberley to Ford, despatch, 19 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 117.
- 86) Ford to Kimberley, telegram, 20 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 121; Malet to Kimberley, telegram, 20 July 1894, *ibid.*, no. 122; Phipps to Kimberley, telegram, 25 July 1894, *ibid.*, no. 163.
- 87) Lascelles to Kimberley, telegram, 23 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 141.
- 88) Giers to the Russian ambassador in Paris, telegram, 13 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 54, *KA*, L-LI, 35.
- 89) O'Connor to Kimberley, 26 July 1894 (received 27 July), *FO 17/1204/66*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 169. Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Bertie, wrote on the telegram, "Stern language unless of a menacing character is not likely to deter the Japanese from making the most of their opportunity . . ." and Kimberley had added, "I quite agree."
- 90) Kimberley to O'Connor, telegram, 28 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/141*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 183. According to a memorandum drafted by Permanent Under-Secretary Sanderson on July

- 28, "I told Sir H. Macartney that I doubted whether the foreign Representatives would feel authorized to use this last threat." *FO 17/1212/248-250*. Macartney was an employee of the Chinese legation in England.
- 91) Kimberley to O'Connor, despatch, 28 July 1894, *FO 17/1190/205-207*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 185.
- 92) Kimberley had written in the draft of the despatch to O'Connor cited just above, "I do not think we can threaten the Japanese in the manner proposed by the Russian Minister," and Rosebery had added, "Nor do I." *FO 17/1190/208*.
- 93) O'Connor to Kimberley, 28 July 1894, *FO 17/1204/70*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 187. The complete text of the telegram reads as follows: "Yamen have received news from Soeul that Japanese have seized King and surrounded palace. They proposed notifying powers using good offices that in consequences of this action peaceful negotiations were impossible. I advised delay pending result of proposal made to Japanese government respecting provisional occupation. Could we insist in concert with Russia on Japanese accepting proposed arrangement, and vacating Seoul within four days, and in case of refusal make Anglo-Russian demonstration and prevent landing of more Japanese and Chinese troops on Corea. I consider some step of this sort can alone avert war at this moment." Written in on the telegram is, "In consequence of capture of King by Japanese Yamen preferred to notify impossibility of negotiations. He has advised delay. Suggests ultimatum to Japan by England and Russia to be followed up by joint action." Bertie then wrote in, "The Tel. to him of last night answers this suggestion," and Kimberley also added his signature.
- 94) Staal to Giers, telegram, 1 August 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 91, *КА, L-LI*, 54.
- 95) Kimberley to Lascelles, 1 August 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 217.
- 96) Lascelles to Kimberley, telegram, 5 August 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 254; Giers to Cassini, telegram, 9 August 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 104, *КА, L-LI*, 61.
- 97) See section 4 of chapter 3.
- 98) See above, notes 4, 22.
- 99) Kimberley to O'Connor, 2 July 1894, *FO 17/1202/61-62*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 29.
- 100) Hannen to Kimberley, telegram, 22 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 133; Kimberley to Paget, 22 July 1894, *FO 46/439/66*; cf. *FO 405/60*, no. 134.

Chapter III

- 1) Nitrovo to Waeber, 21 February 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 1, *КА, L-LI*, 4-5.
- 2) Cassini to Giers, 10 March 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 2, *ibid.*, 5-6. Enclosed in this despatch was the Russian translation of a report from the Chinese minister-resident in Seoul Yüan Shih-k'ai to Li Hung-chang that had secretly been passed on to the Russians.
- 3) Cassini to Giers, 5 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 4, *ibid.*, 7-8.
- 4) Nitrovo to Giers, 8 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 6, *ibid.*, 8-9.
- 5) Нарочницкий, 606.
- 6) *Ibid.*; Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, telegram, 8 June 1894, *CJCS*, no. 970. According to Пак, the Li-Waeber talks were held on June 7. Пак, 108. See also Waeber's telegram, 4 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 36, *КА, L-LI*, 27.
- 7) Нарочницкий, 606.
- 8) Komura to Mutsu, telegram, 17 June 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 615.
- 9) Nitrovo to Giers, telegram and despatch, 8 June 1894, "Из эпохи," nos. 6, 8, *КА, L-LI*, 8-9, 13-14.
- 10) Нарочницкий, 607.
- 11) Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 20 June 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 47a; *CJCS*, no. 1005.
- 12) Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 6 June 1894, *CJCS*, no. 959.
- 13) *CJCS*, no. 970.

- 14) Cassini to Giers, telegram, 22 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 16, *KA*, L-LI, 16-17. All of the documents included in "Из эпохи" are dated but it is not clear whether these were the dates that they were sent. I suspect that on the telegrams that came from diplomats resident overseas, some may be filed according to the date on which they arrived at the Foreign Ministry in St. Petersburg. For example we know that Cassini sent a telegram with regard to his meeting with Li Hung-chang of June 20 to his home government on the same day. We can date this from the report of Li Hung-chang to the Tsungli Yamen dated June 21, which says, "The Russian minister came to Tientsin. He strongly desires a mutual withdrawal of troops by Japan and China, and he sent a telegram of more than 700 letters to his home government yesterday. He requested his government to instruct the Russian minister in Japan to strongly advise the Japanese to withdraw their troops." *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 48b; *CJCS*, no. 1007.
- 15) Giers' memorial to the Tsar, 22 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 15, *KA*, L-LI, 15-16.
- 16) Cassini to Giers, 24 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 19, *ibid.*, 17. This telegram seems to be based on the Li-Cassini meeting of June 21. Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 21 June 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 49a; *CJCS*, no. 1009.
- 17) Hitrovo to Giers, telegram, 25 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 20, *KA*, L-LI, 18.
- 18) Hitrovo to Giers, telegram, 25 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 21, *ibid.*, 18-19. For the minutes of the Mutsu-Hitrovo meeting, see *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 620. In his report of June 27 Hitrovo argued that the Satsuma 薩摩 and Chōshū 長州 faction based government was hoping to recoup its domestic loss of support by taking an aggressive policy with regard to Korea. Ōyama Iwao 大山巖, Saigō Tsugumichi 西郷從道, Kabayama Sukenori 樺山資紀 and Yamagata Aritomo 山縣有朋 were all members of the pro-war faction, while Foreign Minister Mutsu 陸奧 did not believe that war was desirable. Нарочницкий, 585.
- 19) Kerberg's telegram, 25 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 22, *KA*, L-LI, 19.
- 20) Giers' memorial to the Tsar, 28 June 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 23, *ibid.*, 19-20.
- 21) Cassini to Giers, 1 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 26, *ibid.*, 22.
- 22) Hitrovo to Giers, 1 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 27, *ibid.*, 22-23. For the June 30 Mutsu-Hitrovo meeting, see Mutsu, *Kenkenroku* 蹇蹇錄, 80; *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 633. At the beginning of Hitrovo's telegram is the statement, "Today in a long conversation the Minister for Foreign Affairs tried . . ." which suggests that the telegram was sent on June 30.
- 23) Li Hung-chang to Tsungli Yamen, 25 June 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 51b-52a; *CJCS*, no. 1025. 俄皇已電諭駐俄使轉致倭廷，勒令與中國商同撤兵，俟撤後再會議善後辦法。如倭不遵辦，電告俄廷，恐須用壓服之法。俄以亞局於彼關係甚重，現幸平安，若任倭人擾亂，華俄未便坐視。
- 24) *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 56b, *CJCS*, no. 1043. 派盛羅道往喀使處催問倭京回信，喀謂，尙未接到，擬再電俄廷並駐倭使，令倭必須共保東方和局，或請倭派大員來津會議善後事宜，方有收場等語。盛等謂，似可議，但倭現添兵脅韓勒逼，無論韓已答應何項，均應作廢紙，我華方准與會議云。……喀意謂，俄爲韓近隣，願同會議，只勸韓酌調內政之苛暴者，必不更動朝鮮大局。似尙無他觀觀。
- 25) *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 57b-58a; *CJCS*, no. 1048. 頃喀使派巴參贊及領事來稱，駐倭俄使電謂，往晤陸奧，不肯撤兵，若無別項緣故，倭兵不先開仗云，並無他語。鴻謂，喀前稱俄皇電諭勒令撤兵，如不肯撤，俄另有辦法。現俄廷意旨若何。……至三國會議善後一節，係日間私議，巴等未提，鴻不便深問。
- 26) *LWCK, Telegrams*, 15: 60a-b; *CJCS*, no. 1056. 頃喀使遣巴參贊等來稱，接駐日俄使電云，陸奧謂，必須中國先允三國議定改韓內政條款，方能撤兵，否則無言對議院。……鴻答，……今俄國出爲調停，中國亦僅能允會議，至如何議法，必須先同撤兵。巴謂，倭恐兵撤後，中國梗阻，仍議不成。可否允許，中國必勸朝鮮酌改內政，俄日一同助力，其條款候三國會議意見相同乃定。鴻答，朝鮮內政向係自爲，欲其酌量更改，中國可勸他辦理，俄日隣邦亦可舉助勸他，但俄國仍應照初議，勒令先行撤兵，再各派使會議。巴允告喀。惟窺俄使轉述語

- 意，並接汪使來函，倭狼堅持，其駐韓已一萬人，恐非空言所能勸退。
- 27) Cassini to Giers, 3 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 35, *КА*, L-LI, 26-27.
 - 28) Giers to Cassini, 7 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 40, *ibid.*, 29.
 - 29) Cassini to Giers, 7 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 42, *ibid.*, 29-30. Cassini's telegram seems to have been sent on July 6. In a telegram to the Tsungli Yamen on July 6 (which arrived on July 7) Li Hung-chang quotes from Cassini's telegram sent on July 6 to his home government. The content of what Li quotes corresponds in substance to that of "Из эпохи," no. 42. See *LWCK, Telegrams*, 16: 7b-8a; *CJCS*, no. 1091.
 - 30) Giers to Cassini, 10 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 48, *КА*, L-LI, 32.
 - 31) Giers to Cassini, 8 August 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 102, *ibid.*, 59.
 - 32) "Первые шаги," *КА*, LI, 63.
 - 33) Tsungli Yamen to Li Hung-chang, 4 July 1894, *LWCK, Telegrams*, 16: 3a; *CJCS*, no. 1062.
 - 34) On July 9 Komura Jutarō 小村壽太郎, the Japanese chargé d'affaires in Peking, was questioned as to the Japanese government's attitude to the proposal for a three power conference of Japan, China and Russia during a meeting with the Tsungli Yamen. Komura responded, "I have heard of the proposal from the British minister. However, nothing has been communicated from my government. So I have no way of knowing whether reports are true or false." Komura to Mutsu, 16 July 1894, *NGB*, vol. 27, no. 603, Inclosure 2.
 - 35) *FO 405/60*, no. 48.
 - 36) Giers' memorial to the Tsar, 8 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 43, *КА*, L-LI, 30.
 - 37) Giers to Staal, 9 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 46, *ibid.*, 31.
 - 38) Lascelles to Giers, 9 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 58, *ibid.*, 37-38. Giers has added a minute to Lascelles' note which reads, "I dare think that we ought to wait for Staal's reply to our inquiry." Alexander III has added a "yes" below this.
 - 39) Staal's response to the query of July 9 said that China had not directly requested assistance from Britain but that Britain believed that China would welcome a joint intervention by the five powers. Alexander III has added to this, "It is evident that the British wish to take into their hands the whole business and to play the leading role." Staal to Giers, 11 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 49, *ibid.*, 32.
 - 40) Howard to Kimberley, 10 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 60.
 - 41) Giers to the Russian ambassador in Paris, 13 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 54, *КА*, L-LI, 35.
 - 42) Kimberley to Howard, despatch, 16 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 98.
 - 43) Giers' memorial to the Tsar, 18 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 63, *КА*, L-LI, 39-40.
 - 44) Lascelles to Kimberley, telegram, 23 July 1894, *FO 405/60*, no. 141.
 - 45) Waeber to Giers, telegram, 17 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 62, *КА*, L-LI, 39. Waeber reports that the contents of Japan's demand for reform, which was presented with a three day limit for a reply, were as follows: within ten days to begin reorganization of the administration, construction of railways and telegraphs, within six months to regulate finances and maritime customs, and within two years to reform legal procedure, army, police, and public education. Giers wrote on this telegram, "It seems to me that this fantastic claim proves that the Japanese do not want any agreement with China," and the Tsar Alexander III had written his comment of "yes."
 - 46) Нарочницкий, 609-610; Пак, 111. In Пак, the memorials are dated to August 8.
 - 47) With regard to this, Giers cabled Hitrovo on August 7 to the effect that he considered seizure of power by the Taewōn'gun 大院君 only temporary, but that Russia did not intend to intervene in the Sino-Japanese war and directed him to inform the Japanese that they should, "pay attention to the necessity to treat us with due respect and especially to avoid everything which might give pretext for misunderstandings in the Korean districts neighboring to our territory." "Из эпохи," no. 100, *КА*, L-LI, 57. In a telegram dated August 10 to S. M. Dukhovskoi, governor-general of the Priamur

- Region, Giers informed him that instructions in the above sense would be given to Russian diplomatic representatives abroad. "Из эпохи," no. 105, *ibid.*, 62.
- 48) This dating follows the Russian calendar, and refers to the June 24 telegram of Cassini cited earlier. See above, note 16.
- 49) Giers to Cassini, telegram, 10 August 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 106, *КА*, L-LI, 62.
- 50) Minutes of the Special Conference of 8 May 1888, *КА*, LII, 54-61; Minutes of the Special Conference of 21 August 1894, *ibid.*, 62-67.
- 51) This was decided at the suggestion of Director of the Naval Ministry, N. M. Chikhachev. The fact that England did issue a declaration of neutrality and Russia did not was the result of a lack of an ice-free port on Russia's part. Because she lacked such a port in the Far East, Russian squadron in the Pacific had wintered at Japanese ports. If she were to issue a declaration of neutrality and were to prohibit the belligerents from using her ports, the Japanese would possibly take the same steps. Нарочницкий, 644.
- 52) See above, note 47. On October 13 Hitrovo met with Foreign Minister Mutsu and informed him that he had been instructed to inquire whether, "You intend to land forces in the region of the Tumen River 豆滿江 (圖們江) If in fact that is the intention of the Japanese government, the Russian government has the right to be informed. This is because the Russian region bordering on Korea might suffer heavy damage as a result of such an action." Mutsu to Prime Minister Ito, 13 October 1894, *НГБ*, vol. 27, no. 797.
- 53) Within the Russian government there certainly was no absence of discussions of some military steps with regard to the Korean question. For example, on July 1 War Minister Vannovskii asked Giers for information with regard to a Russian occupation of some Korean territory which was contemplated as means for military demonstration; the troops in the Priamur military district were ordered to prepare for such an eventuality. Vannovskii's letter to Giers, 1 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 32, *КА*, L-LI, 25-26. Пак, 110.

D. A. Kapnist, director of the Asiatic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also thought that if Japan did not respond to appeals for peace by the powers Russia might consider defense measures, such as temporarily occupying Port Lazareff as well as guarding the Russian legation in Seoul by a small force. Memorandum by Kapnist, 19 July 1894, "Из эпохи," no. 66, *ibid.*, 41-42. However, we cannot say that these steps represented Russian intentions to take advantage of the Sino-Japanese conflict to invade Korea or expand Russian power in the Far East. These moves were rather based on what was described as the final step in the May 1888 special conference; at that conference it had been decided that in case of a Chinese occupation of Korean territory, Russia as a final step might temporarily occupy some Korean coastal point close to the Russian border. In such a case, the conference decided, Russia should declare to China that the Russian troops would evacuate the occupied territory as soon as China withdrew her forces from Korea. In the case of Vannovskii, he cites the decision of the May 1888 conference at the head of his letter and in the case of the Kapnist's suggestion, he proposes to make "a diplomatic statement that we are ready to evacuate that point as soon as Japan and China come to an agreement for the withdrawal of their troops from Korea and carry it out." Thus we can say that in both cases the suggestions were following the guidelines for preservation of the status quo in Korea that had been set out at the 1888 special conference.