

VANCOUVER YOUTH MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2020



HISTORICAL CRISIS COMMITTEE

BACKGROUNDER A



VANCOUVER YOUTH MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2020

Historical Crisis Committee

Director: Sam Bendl

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Dear delegates,

My name is Sam Bendl, and I am honoured to direct the Historical Crisis Committee for VYMUN 2020. As Director, I will try to encourage a creative atmosphere full of political intrigue to provide a unique experience that is both fun and educational. The topic of this year's committee will be Japan during the Great Depression.

Our topic, Japan during the Great Depression, will hopefully lead to the intrigue, cooperation, and underhanded deals between delegates that make an HCC truly exhilarating. The Great Depression was a major event for Japan, as they needed to develop creative solutions in order to pull themselves out of it and rebuild their country. This year's topic will cover the political, social, economic, and military challenges that Japan would have faced during the Great Depression delegates must find ways to minimize or negate the impacts of these threats to keep Japan afloat. During this time period, while some countries sunk into isolationism, others became increasingly militaristic. Delegates should be prepared to make harsh radical decisions for the greater good and see their country prevail.

If anyone has questions, queries, or concerns, please contact me so that I may put any fears or questions to rest. You can contact me at hcc@vymun.com for any questions, and I will try and get back to you quickly.

Sincerely,

Sam Bendl

Director of HCC | VYMUN 2020

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Map of Asia 1929¹

Questions to Consider

1. What was the view on imperialism and colonialism in the 1930s?
2. What was the Japanese view of their neighbouring countries during the 1900s, but especially the 1930s?
3. Who did Japan ally with during this time period, and why?
4. What caused the Great Depression, and how did it affect Japan?
5. How have countries combated economic depression in the past?

Overview

Japan is in a dangerous position. While facing economic and social collapse, the nation's army and navy are in a constant battle for supremacy. Delegates will need to solve the country's economic problems while balancing the impact it will have on the population of Japan. They will also be forced to decide on a budget that fights the ongoing issues and appeases both the army and navy to avoid conflict. Delegates will also need to decide whether to back the Army, Navy, or keep them fighting to stay on top; decisions will have different outcomes and consequences. Those who are a part of these military groups will need to garner support from delegates who have no previous affiliation to either of them if they wish to come out on top with the outcome they want. Of course, where there are those who support war and conquest, there are also pacifists who want a country

¹ <https://www.natgeomaps.com/hm-1921-of-asia-with-europe-and-a-portion-of-africa>

to prosper without the shedding of blood. Another point of contention is the rise of nationalism throughout the world and the impacts it will have on the politics of Japan and Asia. The leaders of Japan should also ponder whether an expansionist policy is worth the loss of life simply to kickstart the economy and bring glory to Japan. The future of Japan will depend on the actions you make during these committee sessions. Will your government be known as the ones who saved Japan from collapse and saved your neighbours from colonial claws, or the warmongers who brought their country to ruin for nothing but glory and pride?

Timeline

1192 - Sakanoue Tamuramaro becomes the first Shogun of Japan.

1281 - The Japanese push back the Mongols, who tried to invade Japan.

1542 - Japan has its first contact with Europeans when Portuguese traders are blown off course right into a Japanese port.

1548 - The first Japanese invasion of Korea comes to an end with Japan fleeing the Korean Peninsula.

1549 - The first Catholic missionaries arrive in Japan.

1575 - The Battle of Nagashino marks the beginning of the widespread use of guns in Japan.

1600 - The many states that occupy the three islands of Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu become united into a centralized state under the rule of the first Tokugawa Shogun into what we know today as Japan.

1603 - The Tokugawa Shogunate gains power, starting the Edo period.

1639 - Japan goes into isolation for fear of Catholic missionaries converting Japanese citizens.

1825 - The Tokugawa Shogun tightens the restrictions on foreign ships.

1842 - The first Opium War comes to an end between Great Britain and China; this marked the beginning of the end for the Qing dynasty and showed the fragility and backwardness of the Chinese military.

1854 - The American admiral, Mathew Perry, forces Japan to open trade with foreigners.

1860 - The second Opium War comes to an end with Britain and France, forcing China to open free trade with the West and legalize the opium trade.

1868 - The Tokugawa Shogunate is overthrown, marking the beginning of the Meiji Restoration.

1871 - Germany is formed at the end of the Franco-Prussian war.

1896 - The First Sino-Japanese war comes to a close with China signing an agreement with Japan promising them all the trading rights that Western powers had in China at the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

1901 - The Boxer Rebellion, a rebellion that attempted to expel foreign occupiers, comes to an end.

1902 - The Anglo-Japanese alliance is signed, marking an era of cooperation between the two countries and a warning to Russia that further expansion in the East will not be tolerated.

1905 - The Russo-Japanese war comes to an end with Japan kicking the Russian Empire out of Manchuria.

1910 - Korea is formally annexed by Japan after years of being a Japanese client state and puppet.

1912 - The Chinese Emperor H'sain-Tung, or Puyi, is ousted in favour of a republic by Sun Yat-Sen.

1914 - Japan honours its alliance with Great Britain and joins the First World War.

1915 - Zhang Zuolin takes power in Manchuria.

1918 - The Russian Civil War starts.

1918 - World War I ends, and the construction of the Treaty of Versailles begins.

1919 - Relations between the US and Japan are soured when the US refuses to include a racial equality clause in the Treaty of Versailles.

1921 - The Russian Civil War ends with the Communists winning the bid for power in Russia.

1923 - The Anglo-Japanese alliance is ended.

1927 - The Chinese Civil War starts between the Chinese Communists and the Kuomintang, the Chinese Republican Party.

1928 - Zhang Zuolin, the Warlord of Manchuria, is assassinated.

1929 - The US Stock Market crashes, plunging the world economy into chaos.

Historical Analysis

European Contact and its Influence

Japan's first contact with the West was in 1542 when Portuguese sailors who were blown off their course, causing them to accidentally sail into the Southern Japanese Islands of Ryukyu. This was an important event in Japanese history as the Europeans brought gunpowder weapons with them, such as muskets and cannons. The introduction of guns and modern industry into Japan caused a dilemma over whether Japan should stick to their ancient culture or industrialize to keep up with other Asian nations. The place of guns in the Japanese military was cemented at the battle of Nagashino in 1575, where 3000 men armed with guns were able to hold off thousands of horseback Samurai². During this time, Japan was not unified. What we know today as "Japan" consisted of many mostly independent states that all swore fealty to the Emperor, who, in reality, had no actual power. These independent states were known as "Daimyos" and were constantly fighting each other. Japan was only unified in 1600, and even then, it was heavily decentralized. Despite having

² <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Nagashino>

varying degrees of power throughout the years, the Japanese Emperor had always been the ruler of Japan, and it's daimyos. The Emperor only obtained his power back after the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The Shoguns were the leaders of the Emperor's armies who effectively held all the power in Japan, a title that has existed for hundreds of years. There had been many different Shoguns from many of the great families of Japan, but the last one to hold the title of Shogun was from the Tokugawa family. The end of the Tokugawa Shoguns caused what is known as the Meiji Restoration: the start of Japan's industrialization and it's rise onto the world stage as a heavily industrialized nation.

The Drive to Industrialize

Japan's first attempts at expansion were met with failure during the Chinese invasion of Korea in 1592.³ This attempted expansion proved that Japan would be unable to expand any time soon as most countries in Eastern Asia were tributary states under China and could thus ask for protection from China if they were ever attacked. This realization caused a period where Japan paused any attempts at external expansion until they started to industrialize their nation.

Japan industrialized at a rapid pace, once it was finally introduced into their country. Japan realized they must industrialize if they wished to compete with other countries in terms of the production of goods because of their severe lack of raw natural resources. For Japan, industrialization was the main focus of their country to ensure the rapid introduction of industry. Meanwhile, in other Asian countries, it wasn't as much of a concern as they were dealing with other problems, such as internal strife or fighting off the West. Japan received much help from the West when it came to figuring out how to shape their newly industrialized nation. One major reason Japan industrialized successfully without interruption was both a blessing and a curse; they lacked almost any natural resources. The lack of resources meant that Western countries had no reason to attack or assert influence over the country. This allowed Japan to have stable relations with the West as they were strong enough to convene as near equals. The industrialization significantly increased Japan's military output, which increased the power and influence of the military. With Japan industrialized and with a much greater capacity to produce goods needed for a war, they were finally ready to expand their borders onto the mainland.

Japan ended a long period of isolation soon after they industrialized. The end of the isolation was exhibited soon after, in 1894, when a war against China was started⁴. War broke out when Japan sent troops into Korea to end a rebellion. This happened to go against some treaty stipulations that had been signed jointly with China and sparked another conflict between the two nations. The war was rather one-sided as China's attempt to modernize its military catastrophically failed. The Japanese feared the Chinese navy as it had many powerful ships, but they were all outdated and under-maintained while simultaneously being manned by undisciplined sailors. The Japanese rolled over the Chinese army and navy and eventually won the war. In the peace treaty, the Treaty of Shimonoseki⁵, they took the island of Taiwan, marking the first major expansion since 1457 and the conquest of Hokkaido. They also conquered the Liaodong Peninsula but were forced by Russia to relinquish those gains in exchange for a payment from China. The treaty also freed Korea from

³ <https://archive.org/details/samuraiinvasionj0000turn>

⁴ <https://sinojapanesewar.com/>

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-Shimonoseki>

Chinese influence, only to leave them under the influence of Japan. This new conquest only perpetuated Japan's expansionist views.

Japanese Expansionism

In the early 1900s, Russia started to expand its influence into Manchuria. They leased the Liaodong Peninsula from China and started to develop Port Arthur as a naval base. This greatly angered the Japanese as Russia had forced them to surrender the peninsula at the end of the Sino-Japanese War and caused great anti-Russian sentiment in Japan. Russia even went as far as to move troops into Manchuria to secure the railroads there under the guise of suppressing the Boxer Rebellion. At the time, it wasn't Russian ambitions in Manchuria that angered Japan the most; it was their growing influence in Korea, which Japan was so close to finally pulling into their sphere of influence. The Russians even got the Korean Emperor to rule from the Russian legation for many years. Even when the Emperor left the legation, he was always guarded by Russian soldiers. As a result, the Japanese declared war.

The Japanese attacked Port Arthur three hours before their declaration of war. This greatly shocked the Russians, as they didn't even think the Japanese would attack, let alone before even declaring war. The only reason the Russians provoked the Japanese was because they believed that Germany would be on their side if they attacked. They were led to believe this because Kaiser Wilhelm had sent Tsar Nicholas a letter praising him for fighting the "Yellow Peril" and called him the "Defender of the White Race."⁶ The Germans, however, did not join the war. Kaiser Wilhelm encouraged the Russians to go to war in Asia because he thought it would end the Franco-Russian alliance. So when Russia went to war, they were greatly under-prepared and faced many of the same problems as China when they had fought the Japanese. A significant issue that Russia faced when fighting the Japanese was that they had no way of moving their army across Siberia. This meant that only a small portion of the Russian army was stationed in Manchuria, and was unable to fend off the entirety of the Japanese army while they waited for reinforcements to arrive. Things did not go well for the Russians. The Japanese took advantage of the disorganized Russian forces and attacked as quickly as possible. The Chinese wanted the Russians out of Manchuria as much as the Japanese did, and so they offered the Japanese their support in the war; the Japanese declined. Despite being told the Japanese didn't want help, the Chinese sent them intercepted telegram messages from the Russians and gave Japanese officers gifts. Another bit of indirect assistance came from the English when they denied the Russians Baltic Sea Fleet access through the Suez Canal, and thus they needed to go all the way around the Cape of Africa. This assistance meant that the fleet only arrived after the war had ended. The Japanese were often seen as the lesser of two evils by the population of Manchuria as they sent people to occupied areas to make sure the people were healthy and the roads were in good condition. Everyone knew these improvements were only self-serving as better roads made transportation easier, and healthy people meant Japanese soldiers wouldn't get sick. Still, the locals thought it benefited everyone.

The Japanese won the war and made peace with the Russians before they could bring the bulk of their army over to Manchuria. In the peace deal, the Treaty of Portsmouth, they forced the Russians to give up the Liaodong peninsula, the Southern half of Sakhalin, and the Russian railways in

⁶ <http://www.gwpda.org/wwi-www/willnick/wilnicka.htm>

Manchuria.⁷ This was much less than the Japanese people expected to gain in negotiations, which resulted in riots for three days after signing the peace treaty. The relative mildness of the treaty was due to American mediation by Theodore Roosevelt, which caused the beginning of anti-American sentiment in Japan. The defeat of Russia was a shock to everyone in the West as this was the first time a Western power had lost to an Asian nation. Russia lost much more than its concessions in the peace deal: it lost most of its prestige, most of its navy, and the support of many of its citizens.

Japanese Relations

Japanese relations with the West were quite friendly compared to the Western treatment of other Asian nations. This was likely due to a lack of interest in a country that was so depleted of resources. Japan took advantage of this to gain treaties with the West. Japan was especially friendly with Great Britain, as they both feared the might of Russia. This culminated in an alliance that was signed in 1902. Japan maintained good relations with Britain and France but had soured relations with both the US and Russia. Two major events caused the anger at the US among the Japanese people: the first was when Theodore Roosevelt supported the Russians on not paying reparations after the Russo-Japanese War, and the second event was when Roosevelt refused to add a racial equality clause into the Treaty of Versailles after World War One, causing the Japanese delegation to walk out in protest. Thus, when the Tsar was overthrown by Lenin in Russia, it left the USA as the one country that Japan saw as an enemy. The matter was not helped by the USA's growing influence in the region as the USA also had a foothold into Asia and the Philippines. The Japanese treaty with Britain was broken off due to the growing tension between Japan and the US, as the British didn't want to wage war with the US because of some distant Asian nation. Thanks to Japan's friendship with the West, there was next to no protest when Japan annexed the Korean Peninsula in 1910. This meant Japan now had a springboard into the rest of Asia and had a border with Manchuria, now semi-independent while still technically being a part of China.

Around 1915, Zhang Zuolin, a bandit who worked for the Japanese during the Russo-Japanese War, became a warlord who held sway over the majority of Manchuria. He was a powerful man who tried to rid Manchuria of any foreign influence present in the region. This included the Japanese, who were heavily invested in the area. The Japanese tried to kill him in 1916 and failed. They once again sent assassins after him in 1928; this time, they succeeded. The absence of a strong local leader left the region with a power vacuum and instability that even the Chinese government can't fill despite technically controlling the province. China's reliance on Warlords to maintain control in its borderlands means that it will be hard for the government to restore order to Manchuria without the rise of a new regional power. This current situation calls for swift action and could easily be taken advantage of by Japan as an excuse to invade under the guise of re-establishing order. This would allow Japan to exploit the many resources present in Manchuria.

Between the turn of the century and now, Japan has industrialized at an exponential rate. This angered the countries around them, including some colonial powers with land in Asia who all fear a powerful Japan. This increasing militarization has come at a cost to the unity of the Japanese military; the increase of budget and power for the military has caused a brutal inter-service rivalry between the two main components of the said military, the army and the navy. Both groups support different plans in terms of Japan's expansion. Commanders in the army support going

⁷ https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Treaty_of_Portsmouth_ending_the_Russo-Japanese_War

west, into Siberia or China, while the navy intends going south, into the European colonies of Malaysia and Vietnam. This rivalry hasn't been a friendly one and has often led to violence against some of the supporters who don't happen to be in the military. The increase of militarization has been supported by the ancient culture of Japan, which promotes fighting and dying, for glory, especially the glory of Japan. Currently, this cultural idea is still quite prominent in the country despite the steady decrease of people who have stopped supporting it since the introduction of guns. In addition, the build-up of the Japanese navy has made the US start to feel threatened and fear some kind of show of force.

The Great Depression

The Great Depression was a time of economic stagnation and decline. One of the consequences of the Great Depression was the stagnation of trade. This stagnation in trade was caused by nations closing their borders to imports, in the hopes that it would encourage internal production and demand for goods created by local companies. This was disastrous to all exporter nations, especially Japan. Japan could not afford to import raw goods, which also meant that they could not produce any goods either due to the crippling lack of natural resources on mainland Japan. It brought unemployment because all the companies that exported their goods to other countries had to shut down. The many nations also found that the Great Depression could not be rectified simply by throwing money at it. The money had to get back into circulation and had to be used. The Great Depression also started the widespread introduction of social policies such as unemployment pay and pensions. These policies didn't solve the Great Depression, but they did relieve its impact on some of the most vulnerable of the population. Subsidies were also used to keep companies afloat, but they were often abused to pay the people at the top of the company while firing or not paying those who needed it more at the bottom of the company. The culmination of these consequences created a loop that made it hard to get free of one or more of them.

Past Action

Many countries tried to fight the Great Depression with tariffs on foreign goods, mainly the US with actions such as the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, where their tariffs were the second-highest in history. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was quite beneficial to both countries, and it wasn't scrapped due to any ill will between the two, meaning, it could be saved or renewed under the right conditions or circumstances. The peace agreement signed after the First Sino-Japanese War, the Treaty of Shimonoseki, greatly angered China. Perhaps it could be revised to improve relations with China, or maybe it could be harshened to improve Japan's situation at the cost of angering China further. After the Russo-Japanese war, due to the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth, Russia was forced to remove their troops from Manchuria, give up the South Manchuria Railway, and cede Southern Sakhalin to Japan. After this accord was assigned, Japan signed a secret agreement with the US called the Taft-Katsura agreement. The agreement mandated that Japan recognize American control over the Philippines while the USA recognized Japan's control over Korea and condoned the Anglo-Japanese alliance. This agreement could be used as an example of Japanese goodwill towards the US in order to improve relations between the two countries. In 1907, France signed the Franco-Japanese treaty so as to create a larger alliance to fight the Central Powers. The Soviet-Japanese Fishery Agreement, signed in 1928, was a good start to Russian-Japanese relations under the new soviet government.

Current Situation

The US stock market is about to crash, and Japan expects to be greatly affected. The year is 1929, and Japan is an exporter nation that relies heavily on trade. The islands of Japan contain few natural resources, but they have recently conquered the resource-rich lands of Korea and have their eyes set on the fertile lands of China. The crash will mean that Japan won't only be unable to sell their goods to other countries, it also means they cannot produce them in the first place due to the crippling tariffs foreign governments are likely to place on their raw resources. The lack of trade in the world will force most of Japan's industries to close down, creating catastrophic unemployment and political instability. The newly disadvantaged people created by the crash may start to demand radical change, and will need to be appeased to avoid riots or a potential revolution. The influence of reactionaries in the country should also not be ignored, as if people become disenfranchised, they will become more radical. The lack of trade coming from the United States will mean that oil is scarce in Japan, forcing ships to dock and tanks to roll to a halt. This lack of fuel will be disastrous for the military, and if Japan wishes to have an effective fighting force, the nation will need to find another source of fuel or brave the terrible tariffs imposed by the US.. Possible alternatives for an oil exporter include Great Britain, France, or Iraq, as they all hold much of the oil-rich regions of the Middle east. The country's militarization has put Japan many years ahead of the rest of Asia in terms of military thought and technology, but this does not mean Japan is by any means unstoppable. Japan has always had a relatively small population due to near-constant internal fighting between Daimyos, famine, and relatively limited space to grow crops. This is quite possibly the biggest weakness of Japan and should be dealt with as quickly as possible.

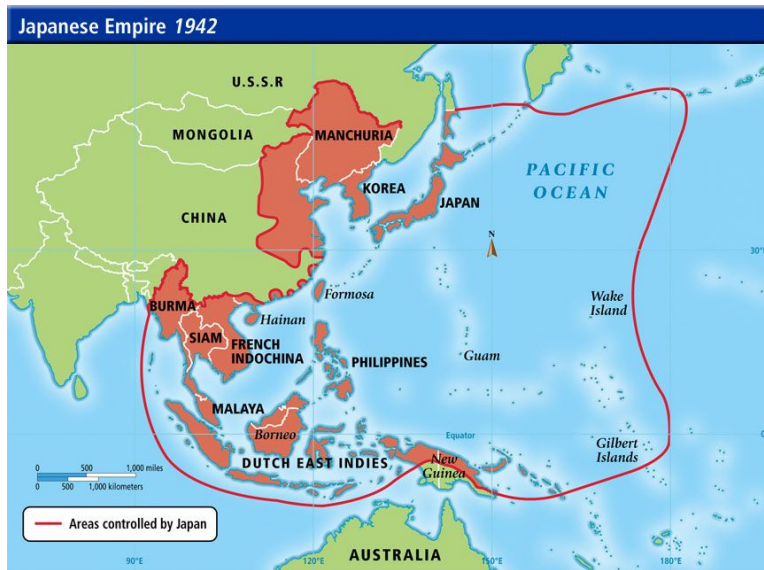
Possible Solutions

Economic Empowerment and Social Progression

Japan could attempt to solve the Great Depression in ways many other nations did, through isolation and focus on the internal economy rather than the outside world. Japan's industry is mostly focused on trade, which is profitable until the world goes into a global recession. If Japan could rebuild its economy focusing on the internal markets, it could ignore the after-effects of the Great Depression. But when one focuses on one's markets, it helps to make sure that everyone in that market can buy items to stimulate the market and keep it thriving. This could be achieved by bringing in policies such as unemployment pay and universal health care, resulting in people having more money to spend on Japanese products. Creating big projects, such as dams or mass housing that employ as many citizens as possible, can be a great way of getting cash flow back into the community while also creating things that benefit everyone. Many of these policies could be paid for by simply reducing the military budget, which would also, eventually, solve the problem of a highly influential military. Defunding the military would see a furious military leadership, who could possibly incite unrest, or a rebellion. A rebellion of such kind would force those in the military into two groups, loyalists and militarists.

Expansionism

Expansionism advocates would be in favour of invading neighbouring countries for resources. This solution would attempt to solve Japan's economic problems but would come at the cost of human



life and angering the global community. Japan has been trying to expand its border since 1592 and has only recently started being able to do this recently thanks to its head start on industrialization giving it a significant edge against all of its neighbours. Japan recently annexed its client state of Korea, setting a precedent for future Japanese Asian expansionism. Korea acts as a good springboard for further incursions into China since it borders Manchuria, which Japan

holds considerable influence over. Other possibilities for expansionism would be the colonies of the Dutch and English to the south. These colonies are rich in rubber, oil, and human resources. Western rule is falling out of favour in many Asian colonies. They could be encouraged to replace their colonial rulers through a revolution in exchange for greater freedoms under Japan. Alternatively, these lands could be taken through conquest. A war could be very beneficial to the stalled country's economy as it would provide a new wealthy customer for the companies to supply the Japanese military. If delegates pursue this avenue, it should be thoroughly thought out as a big war will result in the death of many Japanese citizens and possibly even a defeat, while too small a war could be a pointless loss of human life without creating enough demand to restart the economy.⁸

Trade

Japan has always been a country reliant on trade due to its lack of raw resources. During the Great Depression, global trade was greatly restricted due to governments trying to encourage industry in their own countries. If Japan could get other nations to open up their countries to incoming trade, Japan would not need to shift its industry's focus towards the home market. It will be hard to get other nations to sign on to such an agreement as there would be no reason for them to do so and thus need something back from Japan. Of course, Japan could also utilize its massive navy to open countries by force, but this could anger the countries' citizens and cause embargoes or even reprisals in said countries. If this is the option delegates chose to pull Japan out of the depression, then it would be incredibly helpful to have the support of the navy, which could be gained by increasing its budget or giving more naval officers places in power. However, this would be one of the most effective ways to get Japan back to normal as it would only require extensive diplomacy or a show of force without needing a change from the citizens or economy of Japan. The war hounds in Japan's government would not be happy with such a peaceful settlement; however, they must be appeased somehow if this is the committee's route.

Confederation

⁸<https://35prs.wordpress.com/2014/06/>

Currently, the few independent countries remaining in Asia are weak, but if they aligned together, they could become an economic and military powerhouse. Historically, Asian nations have had little cooperation, making it easy for the colonizers to annex the vulnerable nations. If the remaining countries of Asia could join together into a Pan-Asian confederation, they could fight off the forces of the West and the effects of the Great Depression. This would create a brighter future for all of Asia, but Japan would be equal to all its partners in the confederation and wouldn't be able to exploit any other member nations for a better Japan. All of this would be very difficult, however, as the committee would likely need first to convince China to join such a union before any smaller countries would think of joining. The problem with needing China to join is that Japan and China have always been enemies, and thus, getting your age-old enemy to participate under one nation with Japan would be a challenge. Even once a committee gets China and some of the smaller countries in Asia to join the confederation, Japan still faces resistance when it comes to Western powers who hold vast colonies in Asia and are afraid of Asian nations seizing their colonies.. A big point of contention is whether delegates will want to liberate colonies or reassure the West that they will leave them and their colonies alone. Even if given assurances, there could be a major effort to undermine the new nation because a new world power, especially one that's not European or North American, could greatly threaten the current power holders' positions as de facto rulers of the world. This solution would pacify those in the government who would want war for the sake of war, but it would only anger those who want for the glory of Japan or those who wish to personally gain from foreign conquest.

Subjugation

Japan avoided being colonized by industrializing at a breathtaking rate. the same could not be said about many unfortunate Asian countries. But in the coming times, subjugation to a foreign power could be in Japan's best interests. If there were no other choices, perhaps it could be possible for Japan to trade its sovereignty in exchange for a promise of foreign investment and development into the country. This drastic decision would possibly fix the economic problems of the country but would greatly anger the citizens and limit the possibilities for diplomacy with foreign nations. In the event conflict takes a turn for the worse, it is possible that such a solution could be used as a last resort ;however, this would only be possible if Japan is still in a position to negotiate. A potential military coup would be another threat ;however, this would only be possible if at least one branch of the military still held any power.

Bloc Positions

The world surrounding Japan is a dangerous place for a small country free of colonial influence. Delegates will be required to make decisive decisions and commit to their cause. Meanwhile, China is in the middle of a brutal civil war and is greatly divided even in the areas unaffected by the conflict. In terms of relationships with western powers, the following applies: Japan is heavily reliant on US oil, but are most amicable with Great Britain and are the closest geographically to Russia. The Soviet Union is relatively due to the aftermath of their brutal civil war and the harsh transition into their new government and economic system. This moment of weakness is likely only temporary, however, as they have a sizable population and a vast country full of resources needed to build a formidable industrial force. Delegates need to figure out what role the Soviet Union will play in the future of Japan before someone decides to realize it's potential. The United States is currently the world's economic powerhouse, with some of the world's largest industries. The US will be severely weakened when their economy crashes, presenting the opportunity for a Japanese

rise to dominance. Great Britain currently holds an empire that spans around the globe and is Japan's sole loyal ally. Britain would serve a great help if Japan is ever attacked. Britain's close proximity to the Japanese home islands allows, in the event of an invasion, for them to provide assistance. However, any attempts to expand would likely end up extending into a British area of influence and would therefore anger them. The Germans are neither large nor overly industrial. An alliance with Germany would not be overly beneficial, but it would almost guarantee the invasion of Western powers. Delegates would not need to fear any sort of retaliation from Germany as their claws don't extend as far as Asia, but Germany could possibly join forces with any other Western powers angered by Japanese actions. Japan will need to come up with methods of freeing itself from the disastrous influence of the Great Depression while also maintaining their independence and their internal stability. No matter the cost, Japan must bring itself out of the Great Depression and rise to her place in the sun.

The Navy (IJN)

The Imperial Japanese Navy has always played a crucial part of Japan's Military. As an island nation, a navy is vital for a successful defence and needed if they wish to expand. Thus, the IJN has always had a large amount of influence in Japan. The IJN has many allies in the government of Japan, such those in the Ministry of Trade who rely on the navy for the safe passage of goods. The IJN's first priority should be to secure more influence and funding for themselves, and the secondary priority being to block the IJA at all costs.

All members of Japanese military support going to war, but where opinions differ is what should be the focus of Japan's next conquest. The view most accepted by those in the IJN is that the British and Dutch colonies in Malaysia and Indonesia are ripe for conquest. This view is held because of the colonies' relatively close proximity to Japan, supported by the fact that it is both resource-rich and comprises thousands of islands, making it an ideal target for a powerful navy. Put simply the people of this bloc put the navy before all others and would consist of members of the Navy and its supporters.

The Army (IJA)

The army has always been needed in Japan; even when they weren't fighting foreign countries, there were always struggles for power, influence, and land on the islands of Japan. This means there is a deep culture based on honour brought by fighting their own country men. This, however, does not apply to foreign nations. The historical loyalty of the army has led to this bloc being extremely tight knit. The army has two main differing schools of thought for where Japan should further expand her empire: one group believes that Japan should take China, as they have always been an ancient enemy, and are both manpower and resource-rich. The other group believes that Japan should finish what it started against Russia and take Siberia from the communists as it is oil-rich and sparsely populated, which will make it easy to take and hold. Both of these places would put the navy at a disadvantage as the majority of their countries are landlocked. Ultimate victory for the Japanese army would be as follows: The Japanese Navy loses most of their power and allies, Japan successfully expands her borders, the country is kickstarted due to the introduction of the war economy.

The Pacifists

Japan has never been a country focused on bringing peace to itself and its neighbours, but times have changed, and maybe so too should Japan. Many in Japan believe that conquest is the way to

forward Japan's interests, but there are some more level-headed people who believe that the same end result can be achieved through diplomacy and trade. This bloc will need to focus on stopping any attempts by the expansionists to start wars, while also ensuring Japan is recovering fast enough to prevent reactionaries from gaining influence in the country. The members of this bloc will also need to be wary about the expansionists for other reasons, as pacifists have often been silenced by the influential institution of the Japanese military. The Pacifists would not be unified in a common way to rebuild Japan; the only unifying factor that they share is that none believe Japan should be saved through expansion. Japan must prosper but does not need glory at the cost of Japanese lives. This should be your ultimate goal, and thus you must help other delegates of the committee see this as well.

This bloc would focus on maintaining peace with our neighbours at any cost. The Pacifists would want to save Japan through ways other than war, and their main goal is to stop the warmongers in the committee and then focus on how to stop the Great Depression through peaceful means. This bloc would contain anyone who supports solutions other than expansionism and wouldn't contain anyone who is currently in the army or the navy.

The Pan-Asians

Nationalism is on the rise in Asia.. With the rest of the world divided between the Western colonial powers, it leaves Asia as the one continent that hasn't been entirely subjugated. There is potential to shift from nationalism to a joint interest of all Asian nations. This means the Imperialists will be coming once again to colonize what's left, but is Asia ready? Asia is divided because of centuries of conflict, but if they aren't able to stand together, they will quickly fall when the Imperialist West comes back to conquer the penultimate frontier. The unity of Asia would allow for new markets for the Japanese industry as well as security in the currency of Japan due to the overwhelming manpower that could be fielded by a Pan-Asian army. A decision that must be made is whether or not the communities currently oppressed by Western powers should be included in this country as well or whether they will be abandoned. A decision to include these oppressed peoples is guaranteed to cause conflict with their current overlords. An additional important decision is whether or not this new nation will only include East Asians or if all nations in the continent will be welcome (British Raj, Central Asia, Afghanistan). If delegates decide to include all citizens, the nation will likely double in size, all at the cost of greatly decreased stability and a much larger conflict to free these regions. The largest challenge this bloc faces would be convincing Japanese supremacists that joining such a union would be in Japan's, and their own best interests.

This bloc would try to unite the people of Asia in order to remove colonizers from the continent and ensure the prosperity of the member states. This bloc would not centre around putting Japan first, but rather about putting the freedom and wellbeing of all Asians first. The members of this bloc should focus on limiting the power of non-Asian nations that hold colonies in Asia, through methods such as avoiding treaties and diplomacy with said nations, inciting rebellion in their colonies, and encouraging other Asian nations to do the same.

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