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**POLITICAL REGIMES AND MASS MEDIA POLICY IN IMPERIAL JAPAN:
1868-1945**

Yale University

PH.D. 1933

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POLITICAL REGIMES AND MASS MEDIA POLICY
IN IMPERIAL JAPAN: 1868-1945

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of

Yale University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Gregory James Kasza

May 1983

ABSTRACT

POLITICAL REGIMES AND MASS MEDIA POLICY
IN IMPERIAL JAPAN: 1868-1945

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1983

The research focuses on the growth of state control over the mass media--film, radio, and the periodical press. A central issue is how the development of state power was affected by the rule of different political regimes over 1868-1945. The work is divided into four parts according to changes in the political regime. Each contains a general introduction to the regime structure and a description of media policy, covering the policymaking process, the legal and institutional framework of controls, statistical evidence of their enforcement, and a content analysis of media expression on key topics. At the end of each part, the relationship between the regime and state control over society is examined in comparative perspective.

Part I describes the media policies of the founders of the modern Japanese state after the Meiji Restoration (1868-1918). Their policies are contrasted to the less liberal programs of most twentieth-century state builders in Africa and the Middle East. Part II covers the rule of Japan's first democratic regime (1918-1932). Its media policies are found to be typical of those undertaken by many Western democracies, and the theoretical question of how media controls

can be reconciled with democratic principles is addressed. Part II covers a period of political transition (1932-1937). Special attention is given to official treatment of rightist media expression, and the conclusion explores the relevance of the concept of "fascism" to Japanese politics in the 1930's. Part IV examines mobilization of the mass media by the military-bureaucratic regime of 1937-1945. Its policies are compared to those of totalitarian single party regimes as well as other military regimes. Japanese mobilization is found to embody an extremely high degree of positive control given the nature of the regime and the complexity and level of development of the society it governed.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks are owed to Professor Hideo Sato of Yale University and the University of Tsukuba who served as the director of this dissertation. Professors Ishida Takeshi of the Social Science Research Institute of the University of Tokyo, and Professor Uchikawa Yoshimi of the Institute of Journalism and Communication Studies at the same university served as invaluable guides through the labyrinth of Japanese history. They also provided me with the introductions and bibliographical direction so essential to completing a project of this kind. Mr. Takejima Yasushi of the NHK Sogo Hoso Bunka Kenkyujo (Integrated Broadcasting Culture Research Institute), and Professor James McClain of the History Department of Brown University were also patient enough to read through rough drafts of various parts of the research, giving advice and critical reactions at the stage when they were most needed. Mr. Mimasaka Taro, a former editor of Nippon Hyoron, supplied the answers to many questions that could not be found elsewhere. Professor Okudaira Yasuhiro of the Social Science Research Institute and Professor Ito Takashi of the History Department of the University of Tokyo, Mr. Takamasa Ono of Japan's Supreme Court Library, and Mr. Ishizaka Takashi of NHK were of great help in introducing me to important research materials. I am also thankful to the librarians of the Institute of Journalism and Communications Studies of the University of Tokyo for many hours of assistance. Miss Donna Belli

did an excellent job of typing the manuscript at breakneck speed.

I owe a very special debt of gratitude to Professor Juan J. Linz of Yale University, who took this project under his wing in its final phase and spent countless hours going through various drafts of the manuscript line-by-line with the author. His discerning criticism and innumerable suggestions for improvement, his unflagging support, and his refusal to be satisfied have made this a much better piece of research than it could ever have been without his help.

This project could not have been undertaken without the generous financial support of a Social Science Research Council dissertation fellowship, a Fulbright-Hays grant administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and a fellowship from the Sumitomo corporation that paid for my graduate education at Yale University. Another kind offer of assistance from the Japanese Ministry of Education was declined. Many thanks to these institutions for making this research possible.

INTRODUCTION

This research focuses upon the growth of state control over society in imperial Japan (1868-1945), exploring the conditions that facilitated or impeded that growth, the motives that inspired it, the institutional and technological means by which it occurred, and the positive and negative effects it had upon the human beings subject to it. The expansion of state control over society is a prominent feature of almost all contemporary political systems. The modern state, comprising the institutions that make and enforce legally-binding commands over society, is increasing its share of available military, political, and economic resources, and using them to direct more and more aspects of social life. In many countries, the need for a dominant state to achieve economic development and social justice is considered axiomatic, and some people even perceive the state as a necessary guarantor of the cultural integrity and moral fiber of society. These assertions have generated considerable controversy, but all of the disputants seem to agree that rising state power is an ubiquitous trait of the modern world and that, for better or worse, it is bound to have a tremendous impact upon the quality of life everywhere.

A central issue to be addressed is how the growth of state power was affected by the rule of different political regimes in the imperial era. The two regimes to be examined closely are the democratic regime that governed Japan for most of the 1918-1932 period, and the military-bureaucratic regime that established its dominance in the 1937-1945

period. There is much debate over the likely relationship between these two regime types and the rise of state control over society.

Traditionally, democratic regimes have been associated with the protection of civil liberties against state encroachment, but this reputation has been tarnished somewhat in recent decades. Theorists as different as the liberal Friedrich Hayek and the socialist Michael Harrington have argued that many similarities exist between the state control policies of democratic and non-democratic regimes. In a few cases, such as the government of Salvador Allende in Chile, state control has grown dramatically in a democratic context. More typically, we find a gradual but steady increase in state functions in contemporary democracies. This fact raises a number of important questions. How do elected officials reconcile more and more penetrating state controls with political democracy and the conditions needed to sustain it? Does growing state power tend to be qualitatively different in democratic systems? Are democratic regimes able to implement new control policies through democratic mechanisms, or do new powers tend to strengthen the authority of non-democratic state institutions? Does a democratic electorate act as a brake or a stimulus to new state powers? These are some of the questions to be examined in the framework of prewar Japanese democracy.

The connection between military-bureaucratic regimes and rising state social controls is also complex. One assumes there will be fewer scruples of principle limiting the growth of state power under such regimes, but their ability to implement elaborate new programs of social control has been questioned. They tend to lack the organizational resources of single mass party regimes as well as the popular legitimacy of democratic regimes, making the adoption of new controls more diffi-

cult. Furthermore, the vested interests of military and bureaucratic elites make it seem unlikely they would adopt radical control policies seriously undermining the status quo. For these reasons, military-bureaucratic regimes, even those employing high levels of coercion against outright opponents, are not generally reputed to be great innovators in the realm of statist programs, especially where the military governs as an institution and not through an individual dictator. Military-bureaucratic regimes in many countries have even acquired a conservative image when their policies are compared to the more ambitious control schemes executed by populist leaders or revolutionary parties. In recent years, however, this image too has begun to change. In Latin America, for example, the rather passive conception of the military as defender of the constitution in times of public disorder has given way to broader understandings of national security, resulting in activist military-bureaucratic regimes out to effect lasting social transformations.¹ The Japanese experience over 1937-45 provides an excellent opportunity to evaluate the mobilizational potential of military-bureaucratic systems. During those years, Japan's political parties and labor unions were dissolved and replaced by bureaucratic mass mobilization units, thousands of businesses were forcibly merged or disbanded, and civil groups in all sectors were herded into state-regulated control associations. The restructuring program extended even to artistic and religious activities. Few regimes in recent history have exerted a comparable degree of control over society.

The development of state power is to be explored through an analysis of public policy toward the mass media: radio, film, and the periodical press (newspapers and magazines). The great advantage of

focusing on public policy is that one can study growing state control at a concrete level, linking state structure and official ideology with the actual exercise of power. A disadvantage is that the research cannot span the entire range of policy fields due to the complexity of the subject matter. A focus on media policy partially compensates for this defect, however, since the autonomy of the media from state control is closely related to the autonomy of many other areas of social endeavor.

State media controls frequently overlap with controls over political activity, the economy, religion, education, and the arts. The centrality of the media to organizational autonomy in these areas is a product of the large size of contemporary countries and the resulting anonymity of social relations among their inhabitants. It is impossible for many thousands or millions of people to organize common activities if their contact is limited to face-to-face meetings. Civil political groups rely heavily upon the mass media to win supporters and mount opposition to those in power. The media supply schools with most of their educational materials and scholars with indispensable vehicles for research. Religions need the media to propagate their doctrines, and artists to exhibit their work to society at large. Economic groups too are dependent on the media to organize and pursue their interests. Furthermore, media organs are businesses themselves, and as such they are often directly affected by economic controls or indirectly compromised by state controls over related enterprises such as those producing newsprint and negative film. A focus on the mass media unveils more of the overall picture perhaps than any other single policy field. In the context of imperial Japan, it allows one to address all the important shifts that occurred in the state-society relationship.

The research is presented in the form of an historical narrative rather than a static analysis so as to highlight the patterns of development of state social controls. We are immediately confronted by the anomaly that Japan's imperial era begins with a liberal revolution and concludes with a statist revolution, the latter occurring within the constitutional framework created by the former. There was no violent revolutionary upheaval or seizure of power by an external elite to account for the vast metamorphosis in policy direction. The Japanese experience demonstrates how the changing attitudes of established elites can generate a major expansion of state power, even within a constitutional setting originally designed to liberate social forces from the heavy restraints of an absolutist ancien regime. The fact that this constitutional system possessed certain features widely thought to inhibit the growth of state power gives this aspect of the research a relevance that extends beyond the Japanese context.

The study is divided into four parts according to changes in the political regime. The first covers the rule of the founders of the modern Japanese state after the Meiji Restoration (1868-1918). Their conception of the state-society relationship as exemplified in media policy provides an interesting contrast to the outlook of most mid-twentieth century state builders in other parts of the world. The years dominated by party governments (1918-1932) are treated in the second part, where the democratic character of the regime will be examined and the making and substance of media policy compared to the record of other democratic systems. The third part covers a period of transition between democratic and military-bureaucratic leadership (1932-1937), and the fourth the establishment of the military-bureaucratic regime (1937-1945).

In these last two segments, the data on media policy will be used to explore the relevance of the fascist and totalitarian concepts to the Japanese experience. Each part begins with a general introduction to the political regime in the period under study. There then follows a description of state media policy, covering the policymaking process, the legal and institutional framework of controls, statistical evidence of their enforcement, and a content analysis of media expression on a few key topics to gauge the impact of state interference at a concrete level. At the conclusion of each part, the relationship between the regime and state control over society will be examined in a comparative and theoretical perspective.

As is customary, the names of Japanese historical figures and authors are written with the surnames first throughout the text.

Notes

¹For example, see John S. Fitch, The Military Coup d'Etat as a Political Process: Ecuador, 1948-1966 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1977); Alfred Stepan, The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1971), and by the same author, The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1978).

PART I

THE RULE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS
AND ITS LEGACY: 1868-1918

CHAPTER I

THE REGIME BACKGROUND

The overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1868 brought to power a small group of men from Japan's western provinces who proceeded to engineer one of the greatest liberal revolutions in modern history. In contrast to most twentieth century revolutions, this one resulted in less state control over virtually every field of social activity than had prevailed under the old regime. The official four-tiered class system--samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant--was abolished. Japanese were enabled for the first time in centuries to travel freely from one part of their country to another. Controls over religious and intellectual life were rolled back, and independent economic endeavors were not only permitted but actively encouraged.

A remarkable aspect of this liberalization is that it occurred when the new elite was under many of the pressures typically cited by revolutionary elites today to justify a contrary course. Japan faced an immediate threat from Western imperial powers that had pried the country open to foreign contacts, exacted commercial treaties highly unfavorable to the Japanese, and demanded extraterritorial rights over their nationals residing in Japan, removing them from the reach of Japanese justice. In the process of forcing these concessions, Japanese ports had been bombarded by foreign warships against which they had no defense. In addition, the new elite was divided from within and faced

the danger of domestic reaction to its reform program, which crystallized into a civil war in the late 1870's. Japan's leaders did perceive a need to centralize political authority and bolster the state's military might to keep order at home and safeguard the country's independence. However, unlike the founders of most new states today, they believed that the unleashing of autonomous human energies in all walks of life was not only compatible with these goals but an essential means to them. Identifying their own country's ancien regime with the old absolute monarchies of Europe, they judged Japan's technological and military inferiority to be the result of excessive social regimentation and therefore sought to release human talents from existing restraints. The divergence of their path from that of more recent revolutionaries may be rooted not as much in a different set of circumstances as in a different reading of the prerequisites for building a prosperous, powerful nation.

The Meiji elite, so called after the reign of Emperor Meiji, was challenged by the need to create not only a new regime but a new state, starting with the most essential administrative offices. This task was accomplished over the 1868-1890 period, which concluded with the writing of Japan's and Asia's first modern constitution. The 1890 constitution, however, did not so much create a new state structure as ratify a structure erected in the preceding years. A modern conscript army and the bureaucratic ministries were in place by 1880. A prefectoral system of central control over local administration was instituted under the Home Ministry, whose career officials eventually came to monopolize appointments to the post of prefectural governor. These bureaucrats were granted clearly dominant powers over the popularly elected local assemblies organized later. A new peerage, initially designed to coopt

members of the old nobility but thereafter to constitute a meritorious elite, was created in 1884 to staff an appointed upper legislative chamber provided for in the new constitution. The Privy Council, an appointed body to advise the throne on imperial decrees, foreign treaties, and legal-constitutional issues, was organized in 1888. It was the only organ to deliberate officially on the constitution prior to its promulgation. Even the first cabinet was appointed in 1885, five years in advance of the national charter.¹

Virtually the only state institution to be freshly created by the constitution was the elected lower house of the Diet. This democratic component of the new state was considered a necessary brake on executive power and therefore essential to the project of constitutional government, understood as the negation of Tokugawa absolutism. All laws as well as increases in the national budget had to pass both houses of the Diet to take effect. The Diet also had the power to interpellate government ministers. Foreign treaties and declarations of war, however, were left outside the purview of the legislature, a crucial gap in its authority; military affairs had also been protected from legislative scrutiny in the Prussian constitution of 1850, the founders' most esteemed foreign model. These were prerogatives of the executive. In addition, great efforts were made to shield executive state institutions from lower house interference, lest the evils of party particularism corrupt their striving for the good of the whole. This was one reason the executive organs were set into place before the Diet. The ministers of state were to be appointed by the Emperor and responsible to him. In practice, the Meiji oligarchs themselves advised the throne as to the choice of a Prime Minister, who then named his collaborators. The armed forces

were granted independent control over their own internal affairs and a "right of supreme command" over the conduct of battle; the proper extent of this right would later become the subject of much controversy. In 1899, the oligarchs arranged to have the selection of military ministers restricted to the pool of active duty officers, meaning that if none agreed to accept a cabinet position a government could not be formed. In sum, the democratic constraint on executive action was matched by measures to prevent lower house representatives from infiltrating the executive branch.

It is noteworthy, however, that the Meiji constitution did not require parliamentarians to relinquish their Diet seats in order to accept a cabinet portfolio. Ito Hirobumi, director of Japan's constitutional project, seems to have left the door open to parliamentary government, contemplating the organization of his own political party. Ito later did found a party, and it did indeed take control of the cabinet in 1918, but by then it had long ceased being a tool of the oligarchy. Thus the constitution did not preclude lower house control over the cabinet, and the principle of "transcendentalism" (the notion that the military, bureaucracy, cabinet, peerage, and throne should stand above particular interests and the parties representing them) was only imperfectly inscribed in the Meiji charter.

The suffrage was at first rather narrowly confined by a tax restriction. Some 450,000 men were entitled to vote in the first general election of 1890 out of a national population of 40 million.² Those ineligible to run for elective office included the heads of noble families, active duty soldiers, Shinto priests, judges, and certain grades of school teachers, an attempt to insure the political neutrality of these

groups and screen them from party penetration.

If the constitution's first two objectives were to limit executive authority with an elected lower house and to protect a transcendental executive from party control, a third was to supply a source of legitimacy drawn from Japanese tradition so that the new state would win over popular loyalty and sentiment. The Emperor was to be that source of legitimacy. He was cited as the bearer of sovereignty, the constitution was proclaimed on his authority, and its provisions were said to flow from Japan's unique "national polity" (kokutai), rooted in an unbroken line of Emperors descended from the mythical Sun Goddess. The authority of every state organ and high official was formally derived from the monarch, and the people of Japan were described in the constitution not as citizens but as his subjects. This was a clear instance of an emperor who reigned but did not rule. The political functions granted to him could not be performed without the countersignature of a minister of state, and in practice the imperial seal was almost always a rubber stamp. Nonetheless, in theory he was the sovereign and his presence legitimized the constitutional system.³

For roughly thirty years after promulgation of the 1890 constitution, the Japanese state is best described as an oligarchical regime in the form of a constitutional monarchy, with the founding fathers occupying the premiership themselves until about 1900 and determining the appointment of other chief executives beyond that time. The last fifteen years of this period, however, saw a gradual erosion of their power and developments toward a democratic regime.

While the logic behind each component of the Meiji constitution can be understood in its own right, the scheme as a whole was fraught

with ambiguities and inner conflicts not unlike those plaguing the constitutional monarchies of nineteenth century Europe. The composition and prerogatives of the various state institutions were not defined so as to promote coordination among them. The cabinet, the Diet, and the military might be composed of mutually exclusive groups working for different objectives. There was also a theoretical inconsistency between the declared sovereignty of the Emperor and the limits placed upon his actual power (the Diet's legislative rights, the required countersignature of cabinet ministers), a shortcoming which later gave rise to fierce debates among Japan's constitutional scholars. Most importantly, the question of who would advise the throne regarding appointment of the Prime Minister once the founding generation had passed from the scene was left unanswered. It was thus a protean political framework that could accommodate actual changes of regime, if a "regime" be defined by the character of the top state elite and the method of its determination.

It is important to note the general conception of the state-society relationship underlying the Meiji constitutional framework. The Japanese did not share the individualistic orientation or the philosophical or religious theories of natural right, social contract, and popular sovereignty so deeply rooted in Western civilization. It was rather the conception of the "family nation" (kazoku kokka), more in tune with the Confucian values of filial piety, paternal benevolence, and harmony within the home, which dominated the oligarchs' view of the state and society.⁴ The idea of a family nation implies that there is always one public good, the interest of the family or society as a collective unit. This is neither a sum of privately-defined goods nor a common ground of intersection between them, but an indivisible good

pertaining to the whole. It is the task of the state to identify and pursue this collective good. The state does not simply dictate what is in the public interest, but like the proper head of a household--it is represented by the legitimating imperial father--it carefully forges a consensus among the family members based upon discussion (the Diet) and a concern which rises above selfish, personal desires (transcendentalism).⁵ Despotism arises only when selfish private interests corrupt the exercise of state authority so that it ceases to serve the collective good, and the constitution is meant to prevent that from happening.

There is a marked contrast between this conception of public and private interests and that adopted by America's founding fathers. The Japanese leaders did not accept that pursuit of the public good might ultimately conflict with legitimate interests of individuals or minorities. In their view, one could not measure the interest of the individual in isolation, but only in light of his being part of the collective; the collective interest was by definition in the interest of everyone. Inconveniences caused to individuals by pursuit of the collective good were temporary--in the long run, all stood to benefit. The contrary American notion of individual natural rights, which can be parleyed into legitimate minority group interests, led to serious concern with a potential tyranny of the majority; this theme was all but ignored in constitutional debates among the Meiji founders. The Japanese concept of the family nation contrasts sharply with the American e pluribus unum, which sees society as a conglomeration of diverse individuals and groups agreeing only to a state that represents limited common concerns. This contrast is not only a product of differing political philosophies and cultural traditions, but also reflects the distinct social structures

of the two countries. Japan was a country without permanent minorities, whereas America was full of them. A "permanent minority" would be a group which due to its ethnic or religious or other distinctiveness is in the very nature of things bound to see its interests as diverging from those of the majority and threatened if majority rule is unfettered. The presence of such groups contributed heavily to American sensitivity to minority rights and the decision to limit the reach of state power in principle. Their absence was implicit in the founding philosophy of the Meiji state.⁶

Japan's liberal revolution, then, was not effected in the name of the classical liberal values found in Western (and particularly Anglo-American) thought. The rights of subjects had the status of gifts bestowed by the Emperor, and the liberation of human activity from state control was carried out to serve the public interest. The new freedom granted to individuals was not accompanied by any ethical sanction for the satisfaction of selfish wants, as one encounters in Adam Smith's concept of the "invisible hand," which posits selfish behavior as unknowingly serving the common good. Rather, the praiseworthy individual was one who consciously used his liberty to serve the public interest, no matter what his station. The perception that political parties and business firms were among the most likely to contravene this morality, whereas transcendental state institutions were most apt to honor it, placed the claims of the latter a step higher than the claims of the civil groups in the minds of the founding fathers and those who inherited their point of view.⁷ The founders appear to have had few doubts that they themselves personified the collective interest of the family nation.

The history of the Japanese press under oligarchical rule allows one to measure the full impact of Japan's liberal revolution. At the same time, press policy demonstrates the limits placed upon social action in accord with the doctrine of the public interest expressed in the constitution. Meiji press history is not to be examined here in great detail, but its basic patterns are important as a background to the events of the interwar period. Some of the press legislation enacted in these early years endured to the end of the imperial era, and we are able to trace the origins of certain habits of governance that became engrained characteristics of the Japanese state. The Meiji record also provides an interesting comparative vantage from which to view the media policies of new states founded in the mid-twentieth century.

Notes

¹These events are most easily followed through W.W. McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, vol. 42, part 1, 1914.

²Data are from Nihon Kindaishi Jiten [Dictionary of Modern Japanese History], ed. Tonodani Katsu (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shinposha, 1958).

³The description of the constitution and its objectives is taken primarily from Ito Hirobumi, Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan (Tokyo: Chuo Daigaku, 1906), and Joseph Pittau, Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan: 1868-1889 (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1967).

Note that there were wide-ranging debates among the Meiji leaders regarding establishment of the new state, and the only ideas outlined here are those finally embodied in the constitution.

⁴A thorough study of this concept is in Ishida Takeshi, Meiji Seiji Shisoshi Kenkyu [Research on the History of Meiji Political Thought] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1954).

⁵On the comparable features of the traditional Japanese family, see Ruth Benedict, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1946), pp. 55-56.

⁶Though the "family nation" is no longer part of Japan's official ideology, its persistence in the public consciousness is one reason the Japanese are so reluctant to grant citizenship to immigrants, even to most of those in the local Korean community, which constitutes a large permanent minority (670,000) in Japan today. It would require a major overhaul of Japanese political culture to accommodate such a minority group as a regular, equal, and enduring part of society.

⁷Note that concern over party particularism was evident even among the American founding fathers. Professor Dahl has written:
 . . . that there might legitimately exist an organized group within the political system to oppose, criticize, and if possible oust the leading officials of government was until recently an unfamiliar and generally unacceptable notion. When the men at the American Constitutional Convention of 1787 expressed their fear of "factions" as the bane of republics, they spoke the traditional view.

Robert A. Dahl, ed., Political Oppositions in Western Democracies (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1966), p. xvii. For an example of this thinking, see Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, The Federalist Papers, intro. by Clinton Rossiter (New York: New American Library, 1961), nos. 9 and 10, pp. 71-84.

CHAPTER II

EARLY MEIJI PRESS POLICY: 1867-1889

Along with the railroad, iron furnaces, beer brewing, and countless other novelties, the periodical press was first imported into Japan in the mid-nineteenth century. It benefitted from a fairly high degree of literacy. Even in 1868, before the new rulers instituted compulsory education, about 43% of all boys and 10% of girls received some formal education outside the home.¹ Despite a thriving book industry in the cities, the only precedents for periodicals were one-page flyers printed sporadically on wood blocks to report on earthquakes, lovers' suicides, and other sensational events; as a rule, these did not contain political expression. In the early 1860's, however, a periodical press appeared within the foreign colony, and the state began to issue journals of its own. The latter were mostly translations of foreign newspaper articles published by the official institute for Western learning. When the Tokugawa regime fell, some ex-officials drew upon this experience to start their own periodical publications, of which there were initially five or ten appearing several times monthly. These journals were sharply critical of the new rulers. The Meiji leaders first responded through their own press organ, the Dajokan Nisshi, founded in Kyoto in February 1868, but they soon resorted to strong arm tactics against publishers of the old regime. After several abortive efforts to tame the opposition,² a decree in June 1868 demanded official approval for publications--all

applicants were denied, and their printing equipment and back issues were seized.³ But for state publications, no journals appeared in Tokyo for the next eight months.

From the time it again permitted a civil press in February 1869 until the constitution was proclaimed in 1889, the Meiji regime faced many arduous challenges. It initially lacked legitimacy and a fixed state structure, and it was threatened by Western imperialism and saddled with economic difficulties from its war of revolution. During this crucial period of regime consolidation, the press was largely a tool of civil opponents. Some press organs supported revolts of ex-samurai reactionaries in the 1870's, and thereafter most periodicals backed the rival leaders of the "freedom and civil rights movement." Confronted with such anti-system opposition, the regime restricted the press to defend its authority. The controls it imposed in various sets of regulations are enumerated in Table 1. At no time after 1869, however, did the regime repudiate its acceptance of a civilly-operated press with its own political role to play. We will now follow the development of press policy over the 1869-1889 period.

State Promotion of a Docile Press: 1869-1872

Official authorization for a periodical press in early 1869 was conditional. Prior state approval was needed to begin publication, censorship standards forbade reckless commentary on political and religious matters, and a copy of every issue had to be delivered to state offices on the day of publication.⁴ Nonetheless, the Meiji leadership was just as concerned with promoting the press in this period as controlling it.

Professor Okudaira has researched the various ways the regime contributed to press development in the early 1870's.⁵ In March 1872, the

TABLE 1

STATE RESTRICTIONS ON THE PERIODICAL PRESS: 1869-1890

	1869	1873	1875	1883	1887
<u>Required to Publish</u>					
License	x	x	x	x	
Notice					x
Security Deposit				x	x
<u>Debarred from Publishing</u>					
Foreigners			x	x	x
Women				x	x
Minors				x	x
Convicts/probationers				x	x
Owners and employees of a banned or suspended journal				x	
<u>Legal Obligations</u>					
Submission of copies	x	x		x	x
Mandatory corrections	x	x	x	x	x
Political censorship restrictions	x	x	x	x	x
Revelation of news sources				x	
<u>Legal Responsibility for Content</u>					
Owner			x	x	x
Manager			x	x	x
Editor	x ^a	x ^a	x	x	x
Author			x	x	x
Printer				x	x
<u>Administrative Sanctions</u>					
Suspend/ban publication			x ^b	x	x
Seize printing equipment				x	x
<u>Judicial Sanctions</u>					
Maximum prison sentence	c	c	3 yrs.	3 yrs.	3 yrs.

Sources: Mitoro Masuichi, *Meiji Taisho Shi I*, pp. 31-32, 119-126, 373; W.W. McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," pp. 534-535, 539-550.

Note: The table covers only those restrictions provided for by statute. The regime's first ordinances were brief and may not have included all those restrictions actually enforced.

^a Only the editor was specifically noted, but all infringing the regulations were declared responsible for violations.

^b This power was added by administrative decree in July 1876.

^c No specific term of imprisonment was codified in the law.

Finance Ministry began to purchase copies of Tokyo newspapers and distribute them in each of the (then) 75 prefectures. It also instituted low postage rates for newspapers and free mailing for manuscripts. In addition, several Meiji leaders individually supported newspapers in Tokyo, and local authorities assisted in founding papers in many provincial areas where there was initially no press at all.⁶ The state also contributed to the advance of printing technology.

These policies were formulated with several goals in mind. A pro-government press would be a valuable asset in consolidating power, and some measures were used to foster subservient journalism.⁷ Thus a paper chartered with help from government leader Kido Takayoshi was one of those to receive the boon of Finance Ministry distribution. Another paper in this program, later to become the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shinbun, long served as a platform for the Choshu clique within the state.⁸ Even more importantly, the press was seen as essential for the rapid dissemination of Western technology needed to strengthen the country; an 1869 ordinance regulating books specifically encouraged works on military science.⁹ Some officials also sought to introduce Western cultural practices, both for their own value and to convince the Western powers of Japan's progress toward "civilization and enlightenment," a precondition for the end of extraterritoriality.¹⁰ The government bought 500 copies of each issue of the English language Japan Mail for circulation abroad.

Liberality in the issuance of publishing permits and state promotion facilitated a rapid expansion of the periodical press. Japan's first daily newspaper appeared in 1871, its first magazine in 1873, and by 1875 there were 53 newspapers and magazines with an annual circulation of 15.8 million copies serving a population of 33 million people.¹¹ But the

obeisant political attitude hoped for in exchange was very short-lived.

Press Controls During the Insurgency of Ex-Samurai: 1873-1877

The Meiji elite split three ways in October 1873 over whether to attack Korea at once or postpone the venture pending further domestic reforms. Those leaders favoring immediate hostilities resigned. Some opted to take up arms against the state, others to campaign peacefully for oligarchical democratic institutions.¹² The press had engaged in lively partisan debate over the proposed Korean campaign, and its loyalties were divided after the rift. Some organs backed the rebels, while a majority supported the other clique that petitioned for an elected assembly in January 1874. Not only did existing journals take sides, but when a major figure left the state's employ, his subordinates usually departed with him and headed straight for the publishing business. The Korean issue presented the regime with a major political crisis.

On 19 October 1873, just days before the pro-invasion factions resigned, a fresh newspaper code was proclaimed to handle the expected crescendo of criticism. Its only real departure from the 1869 ordinance, however, was a longer list of prohibited items.¹³ The state proved unable to enforce this statute strictly and it did little to deter the opposition. The reactionary press of the clique preparing to revolt was scathing. The Hyonon Shinbun reported a petition urging the assassination of state leaders in March 1875;¹⁴ the following year it called for overthrow of the regime.¹⁵

To cope with the mounting crisis, two new laws were promulgated to sharpen press controls in 1875. The Newspaper Ordinance of June specified one to three years in prison for advocating revolution, and journalists responsible for inciting any crime that was subsequently

committed would face a punishment equal to that of the perpetrators.¹⁶ Unlicensed publishers were to be prosecuted in court, their publications banned from reappearing. The law was administered by the Home Ministry (created in 1873). One scholarly opinion is that this ordinance was modeled after early-mid nineteenth century French press laws.¹⁷ The Libel Law, enacted simultaneously, punished defamation according to the victim's social status. The four ranks delineated were commoners, state officials, the imperial family, and the Emperor, retribution ranging from a fine for slandering a commoner to three years in prison for publishing falsehoods related to the Emperor.¹⁸

The new legislation was tenaciously enforced. From mid-1875 to the end of 1877 at least 105 periodical press people were punished under the newspaper/libel law combination, by year: 1875--9, 1876--57, 1877--39.¹⁹ All but one served time in prison, the sentences ranging from 25 days to three years. Yet the opposition remained as virulent as ever, for the new regulations contained a fatal flaw. Once a state permit was obtained, the journal itself could not be closed for crimes related to content. If one editor went to jail, another could replace him and carry on under the same owner. Some press organs even hired strawmen to front as editors and serve jail sentences for violations. Officials were determined to close this loophole, and the way they did so reflects an approach to policy dilemmas that became habitual in the imperial Japanese state.

The government first considered amending the Newspaper Ordinance so that for certain violations a journal could be banned or suspended upon the conviction of its editor. The Council of Elder Statesmen (Genro-in) objected, however, since this would have stopped publication

during appeal proceedings, contravening the legal principle of staying the execution of punishment until appeals had run their course.²⁰ Judicial practices were a tender spot because the Japanese were struggling to convince the West that their courts were reliable enough to make extraterritorial rights unnecessary. To circumvent this objection, on 5 July 1876, the state simply enacted an executive decree: "If newspapers, magazines, or other news publications already approved are recognized as disturbing national peace, the Home Ministry shall prohibit or suspend their publication."²¹ This strategy bypassed the judicial system entirely and allowed the state to close a journal as a purely administrative measure, i.e., Home Ministry officials could now abolish press organs on their own authority. The alleged malefactor had no opportunity to defend his journal as he might defend himself in court, and there was no route of appeal to any higher body. The administrator's decision was final. Bureaucrats closed five periodicals in 1876 (out of a national total of 170), and seven in 1877 (of 156).²²

When this decree was challenged in court by the editor of a suppressed magazine, it was ruled that the right to stop publications was "inherent in the government." Upon appeal, the Supreme Court confirmed this judgment, contending that the Home Ministry inherently possessed whatever authority was required to fulfill its duties regarding public peace. The decree had served merely to publicize and transpose into statutory form a pre-existing administrative right.²³ When the publishers of banned journals applied for new press permits under other titles, the Home Ministry again pleaded for a new law to stop the practice, but the state's Legislative Bureau (Hoseikyoku) advised the ministry to "dispose of this matter conveniently within the realm of its own

competence." ²⁴ In December 1876, the ministry simply announced that it would deny permits to anyone whose publications had previously been banned or who had been guilty of serious crimes, and the matter was settled.

This episode illuminates the early Meiji conception of the state-society relationship. The first fact of political life is that the state possesses certain intrinsic duties or functions, one of which is to keep order. It is assumed that the existing state is the legitimate repository of these duties or functions. All means necessary to perform them inherently fall within the state's legitimate rights, and officials are the sole judges of what means are necessary. The only real limit to state power is self-restraint. There are no political facts other than the inherent functions and rights of the state (such as the natural rights of individuals or of regional or corporate groups) that need enter the equation for legitimate authority. In this system laws and administrative decrees serve to publicize the form that authority will take; they are not methods of legitimizing power itself. This conception of the state borrowed heavily from Japan's pre-1867 political and social traditions, but its formulation in these terms was strongly influenced by theories of inherent state administrative rights current in Europe, especially in German jurisprudence:

According to the Rechtsstaat concept, the state is a legal personality analogous to, but significantly different from, the legal personality (juristisch Person) of private law. Its distinguishing characteristic is its possession of sovereignty, which . . . implies at least the power to govern and the power to define its own competence and that of its organs. As a legal personality, the state is considered to be the subject--that is, possessor--of rights and duties (Rechtssubjekt), which are defined in the constitution and in other organic legislation by a process of autolimitation (Selbstbeschränkung). ²⁵

Since Japan had no constitution in the sense indicated before 1889, the boundaries of autolimitation were redefined with every ordinance and

and decree. Activities autonomous from state control were no more than a residual zone that officials had thus far chosen not to invade.

The expansion of state power by granting administrators wide discretionary authority was a logical development given the prevailing theory of the state, the concrete historical circumstances, and the convenience of administrative measures. Administrative flexibility relieved the state of having to frame or amend general statutes every time increments of real power were added, and it minimized resort to laborious trial procedures by facilitating quick policy decisions and execution. These are great advantages to a regime in the process of consolidation facing serious challenges. The fuzzy language of legal regulations was a concomitant of administrative license. What exactly constituted a disturbance of national peace, or libel against state officials? Unless the rules were applied consistently over a long period, one could not anticipate their meaning in practice. All that "disturbing national peace" signified to journalists was that if state officials were upset by a story they could dissolve the publication.

Press policy in the 1870's lends concreteness to the sentiments expressed by Itagaki Taisuke (one who resigned over the Korean invasion) and six others petitioning for an elected assembly in 1874:

When we humbly reflect upon the quarter in which the governing power lies, we find that it lies not with the Crown on the one hand, nor with the people on the other, but with officials alone . . . the manifold decrees of the government appear in the morning and are changed in the evening, punishments are prompted by partiality . . .²⁶

These influential victims of arbitrary power were torn between desires to restrict it and to participate in it, and concessions were exacted on both fronts with promulgation of the Meiji constitution. Yet, as subsequent press controls will demonstrate, the political principles and

habits of governance institutionalized in these early years were only partially modified with the onset of constitutionalism.

Even with its administrative freedom, the state had difficulty taming the press during the years of insurrection. The Home Ministry prohibited war reporting altogether during the Kumamoto uprising in 1876, but some journals continued coverage. During the Satsuma rebellion of 1877, the ministry instituted prior police censorship of all war-related stories, but many of the 39 press people convicted in that year were violators of this edict.²⁷ The state's desire for control was not yet matched by its capacity for enforcing regulations against the civil press.

Press Controls and the Freedom and Civil Rights Movement: 1878-1889

The state's victory on the battlefield in 1877 ended armed defiance of its authority, yet the groups pressing for an elected assembly renewed their struggle almost immediately with strong backing from the press. By October 1881, when the state committed itself to an elected assembly and a constitution, many newspapers were in the process of arranging party affiliations. The major party spectrum comprised the Jiyuto (Freedom Party, led by Itagaki Taisuke), the Rikken Kaishinto (Constitutional Progressive Party, led by Okuma Shigenobu), and the state-supported Rikken Teiseito (Constitutional Imperial Party). An educated estimate of their nationwide newspaper backing (including some journals run directly by the parties) in October 1882 is Jiyuto--31, Rikken Kaishinto--33, Rikken Teiseito--21, with only two newspapers in a neutral position.²⁸ The opposition press pulled no punches in its criticism of the Satsuma-Choshu state elite. In mid-1881, for example, journals flailed the government over a scandal in the disposition of state properties in Hokkaido,

aggravating dissatisfaction in civil society and bolstering the drive for an elected assembly.

Once the state was pledged to writing a constitution, however, the ruling coterie resolved to handle the project so as to retain its power and minimize concessions to the freedom and civil rights parties. The principal tools of the resistance were public meetings and the press, and the hammer of state authority came down squarely upon both. New regulations extended police powers over political associations and public assemblies in 1880 and 1882. Political associations required a state permit and were subject to dissolution. Prior approval was required for a public speech. The ratio of rejected to approved applications was one to 12 in 1882, one to nine in 1883, and one to four in 1884. The police broke up ten per cent of all public meetings held in 1882. 13% in 1883, and 17% in 1884.²⁹ Speakers could be banned from public oratory for up to one year. By 1880, the enforcement of press controls was more severe than ever before. The number of newspapers and magazines banned or suspended was as follows:³⁰

	<u>Bans</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>
1877	7	0
1878	1	5
1879	2	4
1880	2	16
1881	0	52
1882	7	104

A suspension could last for days, weeks, or months according to the will of officials. When Saionji Kinmochi, a relative of the imperial family, opened his own newspaper in March 1881 and called for a national assembly, officials resorted to an imperial ordinance to remove him from the enterprise.

Officials also strove to nurture supportive publications. The state printed its own journals, pushed ex-provincial lords to found differential newspapers in their old domains, and had local authorities buy out organs backing the civil parties.³¹ It also paid monthly stipends to cooperative newspapers. As press support for various parties reveals, this campaign had limited success. Coercion escalated where promotional measures had proven ineffective.

The Newspaper Ordinance of April 1883 was the most severe statute enforced against periodicals from 1869 until the late 1930's.³² Beyond the usual licensing system, publishers were required to pay a security deposit to cover possible fines and court costs. The amount was so high that within a month 47 press organs were forced to close for inability to pay.³³ If several journals were under the same ownership and one was suspended, the others would now be automatically suspended as well. Owners, managers, editors, and printers of a suspended journal could not work in those capacities for two years, and those barred from public speaking were also denied any employment in journalism. By increasing the liability of owners, the system was designed to foster internal censorship through resultant pressures that might be brought upon editors. The revelation of news sources was made compulsory.

The new ordinance empowered the Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministers to ban the publication of information within their areas of competence, and it authorized the Home Ministry to terminate any journal disturbing public peace or corrupting manners and morals. Public peace and manners and morals were the two vague prescriptions to remain at the heart of press censorship until 1945.³⁴ Both had been enunciated in earlier administrative decrees,³⁵ and their subsequent incorporation into the 1883

ordinance illustrates a typical pattern in imperial Japanese legislation. Major statutes were often promulgated to catch up with changes in administrative practice, rather than to define the parameters of future administrative action. The frontier of state policy would be staked out by piecemeal administrative innovations, while more formal legislation sanctioning these was enacted later or not at all. Under the new ordinance, bans and suspensions levied upon the periodical press were as follows:³⁶

	<u>Bans</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>
1883	4	61
1884	0	44
1885	0	27
1886	0	18
1887	0	24

Judicial penalties were relatively harsh, up to three years in prison for publishing without a permit and for violations related to content (see Table 2).

The state's repressive measures were more than enough to shield the constitutional project from outside interference. The Freedom Party disbanded in November 1884, and the Constitutional Progressive Party saw its most imposing leaders resign two months later. Those who remained active were dealt with harshly. In November 1887, the police cracked down on illegal publications, making some 50 arrests, and the next month almost 600 members of the opposition were exiled from Tokyo, including many working in journalism.³⁷

Officials never wavered, however, from their commitment to a privately owned and operated press. It would have been an easier task to terminate the civil press altogether than to enforce regulations upon so

TABLE 2

THE NUMBER AND CIRCULATION OF NEWSPAPER ORDINANCE
PERIODICALS AND STATE SANCTIONS
AGAINST THEM: 1875-1889

Year	Press Organs	Circulation (millions)	Organs Closed	Organs Suspended	Imprisoned ^a	Fined ^a
1875	53	15			8	1
1876	170	25	5	0	57	0
1877	156	33	7	0	39	0
1878	225	37	1	5	16	4
1879			2	4	20	2
1880			2	16	33	20
1881	292	64	0	52		
1882	240	59	7	104	33	37
1883	197	57	4	61	65	86
1884	269	61	0	44	69	125
1885	321	70	0	27	29	126
1886	402	81	0	18	16	36
1887	470	95	0	24	19	46
1888	510	111	0		4	37
1889	647	151	0	15 ^b		

Sources: For the number and circulation of periodicals, Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan, various volumes; for press organs closed or suspended, and prison sentences and fines over 1875-1880, Mitoro Masuichi, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 86-87, 73-77; for prison sentences and fines over 1882-1888, Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo [Criminal Statistics Annual Report], nos. 8-14, 1882-1888.

^aData on prison sentences and fines over 1875-1880 cover crimes against the Newspaper Ordinance and the Libel Law, those over 1882-1888 only crimes against the newspaper statutes.

^bThere were at least 15 journals suspended over the June-September interval--no other data available.

many antagonistic journals, but officials never succumbed to that temptation. Once the challenge to their authority had been blunted, they relaxed the Newspaper Ordinance in December 1887.³⁸ For the first time, they abandoned the licensing system and demanded only advance notification of intent to open a journal. The occupational restrictions on those working for suspended journals or banned from public speeches were rescinded, as was the obligation to reveal news sources. The 1883 ordinance, with these and a few lesser modifications, was the law in force when the Meiji constitution was proclaimed in February 1889 and the first Diet met in November 1890.

Notes

¹R.P. Dore, Education in Tokugawa Japan (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1965), pp. 254, 317-322. Dore asserts that by the end of the Tokugawa period (1603-1867), virtually all samurai, most town dwellers of fixed occupations, and many farmers of middle means were literate--*ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

²An earlier decree requiring state approval to publish had not been applied for lack of an office to administer it. However, critical publishers were singled out for attention. Fukuchi Gen'ichiro, later to become one of Japan's leading newspaper publishers, was jailed for 20 days in May 1868 for criticizing the new state; his printing blocks were confiscated, and his journal suspended--the article inviting these sanctions is reprinted in Mitoro Masuichi, Meiji Taisho Shi I Genron Hen [Meiji and Taisho History I Public Expression] (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1930), p. 11. Fukuchi's journalistic career is described in James L. Huffman, Politics of the Meiji Press: The Life of Fukuchi Gen'ichiro (Honolulu: U. Press of Hawaii, 1980).

³The decree is reprinted in Okudaira Yasuhiro, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu Hosei no Rekishiteki Kenkyu Josetsu" [Introductory Historical Research on Japan's Publications Police Laws], Horitsu Jiho, vol. 39 (April 1967), pp. 54-55. This was the first of seven articles by Prof. Okudaira to appear in the journal under the same title. They will hereafter be cited by the author's name, the abbreviated title "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," and the date of the issue.

⁴The ordinance introducing these requirements is reprinted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 373.

⁵Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," May 1967, pp. 107-108.

⁶Examples of individual patronage are Kido Takayoshi's assistance in the founding of the Shinbun Zasshi in May 1871, and Maejima Hisoka's similar role in regard to the Yubin Hochi Shinbun in June 1872. Kido was a central figure in many aspects of early press policy. See Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 16-19, and Huffman, Politics of the Meiji Press, p. 81.

⁷Government subsidies and privileges are extended to the press in many countries and it is not uncommon for them to be used for political seduction. For a general, though somewhat dated, treatment of the problem, see "International Press Institute Survey No. IV, Government Pressures on the Press," in International Press Institute Surveys Nos. I-VI (New York: Arno Press, 1972), pp. 63-69, originally published in 1955.

⁸Huffman, Politics of the Meiji Press, pp. 92-95.

⁹ McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," p. 532.

¹⁰ For the views of those advocating Western culture for its own sake, see William Reynolds Braisted, trans., Meiroku Zasshi: Journal of the Japanese Enlightenment (Tokyo: U. of Tokyo Press, 1976).

¹¹ Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan [Statistical Yearbook of Imperial Japan], vol. 1, p. 441.

¹² Oligarchical democracy results from an electoral system in which only a small part of the populace is allowed to vote, the criterion for the franchise usually being wealth.

¹³ It was forbidden to impede the law by ridiculing the national polity or advocating foreign laws, to append reckless commentary to political or legal topics, to obstruct the state with religious teachings, to disturb the public mind, and to publish information on state officials or their conduct or even trifling matters related to foreign affairs unless publicly announced. The ordinance is reprinted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 31-32, and translated in McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," pp. 534-535.

¹⁴ Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," June 1967, p. 42.

¹⁵ Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 41.

¹⁶ The documented is translated in McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," pp. 539-543.

¹⁷ Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," July 1967, pp. 66ff.

¹⁸ The Libel Law is reprinted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 47-49.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 73-75, where they are listed by name, publication, punishment, and date.

²⁰ Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," August 1967, p. 79.

²¹ Reprinted in Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," September 1967, p. 56.

²² Violation figures are from Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 86; total figures for periodicals are from Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan, vol. 1, p. 441.

²³The legal rulings on the decree are analyzed in Okudaira, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," September 1967, pp. 57-59.

²⁴Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁵Frank O. Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi: Interpreter of Constitutionalism in Japan (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1965), p. 10. The impact of German legal theory in Japan, and Minobe's important effort to forge a different understanding of constitutionalism, are given detailed treatment in this work.

²⁶From a translation in McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," pp. 427-428. The petition is analyzed in Nobutaka Ike, The Beginnings of Political Democracy in Japan (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), pp. 55-59.

²⁷Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 91; the censorship decrees are reprinted in Okudaira Yasuhiro, "Nihon Shuppan Keisatsu," September 1967, p. 62.

²⁸Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 112-113.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 118-119, the figures are those of the Home Ministry's Criminal Affairs Bureau. The Public Assembly Ordinance is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 115-117.

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 110.

³²The ordinance is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 119-126.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 110.

³⁴The Japanese term fuzoku, translated here as "manners and morals," has a meaning similar to the French moeurs. It encompasses not only sexual habits but all those aspects of culture and custom deemed important for a good life. This will become clearer when the specific censorship standards to guard fuzoku are outlined in the treatment of film in part II.

³⁵The manners and morals clause had first been added by decree on 12 October 1880. See Okudaira Yasuhiro, "Ken'etsu Seido" [Censorship System], in Ukai Kazunari, Fukushima Masao, Kawashima Takenobu, and Tsuji Kiyooki, eds., Koza Nihon Kindai Ho Hattatsu Shi 11 [Lectures on the Historical Development of Modern Japanese Law 11] (Tokyo: Gaiso Shobo, 1967), p. 145. The first version of the public order concept in press regulations was in the Home Ministry decree of 5 July 1876, in which it declared its right to ban and suspend journals from publication.

³⁶Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 86-87.

³⁷Ibid., p. 139.

³⁸The amended version of the ordinance is translated in McLaren, ed., "Japanese Government Documents," pp. 543-550.

CHAPTER III

PRESS CONTROLS FROM THE CONSTITUTION TO

THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1889-1918

Those groups pressing hardest for political input in the 1880's were granted that input through the elected House of Representatives provided for in the Meiji constitution. By 1909, party politicians holding seats in the lower house had held important cabinet posts. The struggle for power between the civil parties and the Meiji founders was just beginning, but the parties judged the system flexible enough to work within rather than against it. The conversion of opposition leaders into adherents of the regime was accompanied by similar changes in the orientation of the press. Journalism shed much of its political character and developed into a multifaceted business largely independent of the parties; anti-system agitation gave way to criticism within the established political framework.

The constitution contained many important provisions related to the press, one of which placed press policy squarely under the Diet's authority. A number of publishers and journalists won election to the lower house, including some imprisoned earlier for censorship violations, and they were anxious to liberalize the existing statutes. Though initially blocked by the House of Peers, in the end their demands were partly satisfied and partly modified by their new position within the establishment and the appearance of another opposition group in civil

society--an urban workers' movement. Within the bounds of the constitution, the interplay between the Meiji elite and Diet members connected with the press produced the Newspaper Law of 1909, the basic ordinance to govern newspapers and current events periodicals until 1945.

The Constitution and Press Controls

There were two potent constitutional mechanisms protecting the autonomy of the press, the legislative powers of the lower house and an independent judiciary. Article 29 of the 1889 constitution read: "Japanese subjects shall, within the limits of law, enjoy the liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings, and associations."¹ "Law" was by definition a statute approved by both houses of the Diet. Ministerial regulations did not qualify as "laws," and therefore could not interfere with the press according to this article. The judiciary was made sufficiently independent to resist pressure from the police or the cabinet. Ito Hirobumi wrote of the difference between the courts and the administration: "In the judiciary, law is everything, and the question of convenience is left out of consideration."² Though all judges were employees of the Ministry of Justice, their tenure was constitutionally protected except in cases of criminal misconduct or disciplinary punishment, the terms of both being fixed by law. Judicial impartiality was deemed especially important to convince the Western powers to abandon extraterritoriality. In a celebrated case in 1891, the Supreme Court rebuffed cabinet entreaties to condemn to death a would-be assassin of the visiting Russian Crown Prince, and instead ruled for life imprisonment.³ In sum, only a law passed by elected officials could limit the autonomy of the press, and the prosecution of offenders would be adjudicated by an independent court system.

This protective shield was emasculated, however, by other relevant provisions of the constitution. Military regulations were placed higher than the soldier's constitutional liberties (article 32), and these denied all active duty servicemen the right to engage in political writing, publications, discussions, and petitions.⁴ This has been a common liberal plank in many constitutions to keep the force of arms out of public debate, but it nonetheless involved a long blacklist of potential writers. Furthermore, although trials were to be conducted publicly in principle, the constitution empowered the courts to hold them in secret when necessary to safeguard public order or morality (article 59). Diet deliberations could also be closed to the public "upon demand of the Government or by resolution of the House" (article 48). Thus both the courts and the Diet could preclude press coverage of important political happenings.

Despite the Diet's formal jurisdiction over the press, the administrative powers inscribed in the constitution were to have an immense impact on subsequent press policy. Decrees and other regulations could be produced by any ministry as a proxy for imperial authority. Their legitimate purposes were "for the carrying out of the laws, or for the maintenance of the public peace and order, and for the promotion of the welfare of the subjects" (article 9). This wide formulation reflected a conscious decision not to limit the administration to execution of the law, as provided for in the French, Belgian, and Prussian constitutions. According to Ito Hirobumi,

Were the executive confined to the execution of the law, the state would be powerless to discharge its proper functions in the case of absence of a law. Accordingly, ordinances are not only means for executing the law, but may, in order to meet requirements of given circumstances, be used to give manifestation to some original idea.⁵

Ito thus rejected the dichotomy between policymaking and administration so strongly emphasized by his contemporary Woodrow Wilson.⁶ The notion that the bureaucracy was properly but a servant of the non-bureaucratic political elite was not adopted even in theory by the Meiji founders and was explicitly denied by their constitution. Bureaucratic measures could not contravene parliamentary law (article 9), but if laws were written in general terms, administrators could add the specifics, and where there were no laws at all, they might introduce "some original idea."

Yet, how could bureaucratic measures affect the press, when it was specifically provided that only Diet laws could compromise the rights of subjects? The answer is that there were no adequate means to prevent bureaucrats from overstepping their allotted authority. The judicial system, for all its independence, had no jurisdiction over administrative measures.⁷ Subjects victimized by illegal bureaucratic action could have recourse to an administrative court run by bureaucrats outside the regular judiciary, but the press laws did not even provide for this route of appeal. Only constant vigilance by the Diet could check bureaucratic intervention in press policy, but as will be amply demonstrated, the Diet was poorly equipped to play the role of watchdog.

If administrative ordinances were normally to yield before acts of the legislature, the reverse was true in emergency situations. Emergency imperial ordinances could be issued if there were "an urgent necessity to maintain public safety or to avert public calamities" when the Diet was out of session (article 8). Such ordinances had to be approved at the next Diet meeting or lose their validity. Article 14 went a step further and authorized the imperial declaration of a state of siege,

described by Ito as follows:

A state of siege is to be declared at the time of a foreign war or of a domestic insurrection, for the purpose of placing all ordinary law in abeyance and of entrusting part of the administrative and judicial powers to military measures.⁸

These two articles enabled the executive to take stringent steps against the press in crisis situations.

In sum, legislative and judicial protection for the press was limited by the application of constitutional clauses on the duties of soldiers, the secrecy of court and Diet proceedings, administrative prerogatives, and emergency executive powers. A final point is that the press had no defense whatever from the legislature itself. This was consistent with European constitutional practice; in fact, many Western constitutions made no mention of civil rights at all. Hypothetically, the Diet could pass a law eradicating press autonomy altogether, and it would be perfectly constitutional. It was assumed that the Diet's lower house, elected by subjects, would not acquiesce in overly oppressive legislation. With the passage of time, the validity of this assumption was to be severely tested.

The Changing Character of the Press

The press in this period drifted toward a less political orientation. Many leaders of the parties to which newspapers and magazines had been affiliated in the 1880's were now representatives in the Diet. This new forum for public expression and influence reduced their dependence upon the press. Their acceptance of the constitutional system lowered political debate from systemic questions to the plane of sub-systemic policy problems, and in the process, politics became less central to the interests of the reading public.

Journals downplaying politics for more general subject matter had appeared as early as the mid-1870's. They were long called the "little newspapers" in deference to the politically-inclined heavyweights dominating the periodical press. But the commercial bent of the little newspapers infiltrated most of the press in the years after the Sino-Japanese War (1895).⁹ Contents shifted increasingly towards human interest and society stories as journals competed for readers. Political material was not dropped but relegated to a less prominent position.

Political commentary became less partisan as the press retreated from party affiliations, and purely informative political reporting became more prevalent. Journals followed leading party figures in their propensity to criticize from within the constitutional order. The periodical press did not become compliant before the state. The critical tradition developed in the early Meiji period would endure until the late 1930's. Criticism merely lost its revolutionary edge and was offered from a more independent standpoint than before.

However, the experience of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars over 1895-1906 adds an important qualifier to the portrayal of the press as a critical instrument. During both conflicts, the periodical press was overwhelmingly supportive of Japan's imperialistic aspirations and the hawks making state policy. When tensions between Japan and China reached the boiling point early in 1895, hard line reporters sponsored meetings in Tokyo and Osaka urging an aggressive stance upon the government, and editorials called for war.¹⁰ Before the outbreak of hostilities with Russia, only three newspapers favored the avoidance of conflict, and all three eventually joined the chorus of imperialism. Reporters covering military maneuvers adopted a motion for "a prompt decision and

resolute action on the Russian problem" at the initiative of the Osaka Asahi Shinbun.¹¹ The only time the press attacked the state on war policy was when the Portsmouth Treaty was publicized in 1907; the treaty was condemned as a sell-out to the enemy. Thus a basically critical attitude on domestic issues was counterbalanced by spirited patriotic support for an imperialistic foreign policy.

This period also witnessed the embryonic emergence of a socialist press in Japan. Rapid industrialization from the mid-1890's soon led to the unionization of some 20,000 industrial workers in the Tokyo-Yokohama area.¹² The Public Peace Police Law was passed in 1900 to break up unions and suppress strikes. Though labor violence was not unknown, most early socialist intellectuals were inspired Christians who shunned revolutionary means. Nonetheless, their publications received a disproportionate share of the heaviest penalties meted out under the Newspaper Ordinance, especially for Marxist and anti-war material published during the Russo-Japanese conflict.

Legal Reform and Trends in Enforcement: 1890-1908

The party men dominating the House of Representatives had long been avid critics of police restrictions on the freedoms of expression and assembly. However, all legal codes in force in 1889 were endowed by the constitution with the status of laws, and the approval of both houses was required to amend or replace them. This meant that the 1887 Newspaper Ordinance was still on the books, and lower house reformers would have to do battle with the conservative House of Peers to effect any change.

From the first Diet meeting in 1890 to the twelfth in 1898, reform proposals for the Newspaper Ordinance were presented 19 times, for the

Public Assembly Ordinance 11 times, and for the Publications Ordinance (regulating the non-periodical press) eight times.¹³ In the second and third Diets, bills to liberalize the Newspaper Ordinance passed the lower house but died in the House of Peers. In the sixth and seventh Diets, similar bills consigned to a joint committee were blocked by the upper house participants. All proposed revisions of the newspaper code would have curtailed or eliminated the Home Ministry's administrative power to ban and suspend publication.¹⁴ The early drafts passing the lower house would also have abolished the security money system.

A Newspaper Alliance was organized to lobby against the obstructionism of the peers, but favorable state action had to await pressure from higher quarters. This materialized in the fall of 1896 when Okuma Shigenobu, a black sheep among the Meiji elite who had promoted the party movement in the 1880's, conditioned his entry into the Matsukata cabinet upon abrogation of the power to ban or suspend journals.¹⁵ The Prime Minister himself was a lukewarm subscriber to this position, but he went along to bring Okuma into the government. Matsukata presented a revision of the Newspaper Ordinance to tenth Diet (convened in December 1896) removing the administrative power to ban or suspend publications. This bill would allow the bureaucracy only to stop circulation of particular issues violating censorship standards. Even this authority was circumscribed when the lower house amended the bill so that an issue could be confiscated only if the violation were prosecuted in court. The cabinet accepted this amendment and continued its sponsorship of the measure, which then passed the upper house in March 1897. The administrative right to close a publication had been completely eradicated. The bill did empower the courts to terminate a journal for

serious violations of censorship standards, but this was still a liberal change. In court, the prosecution had to prepare a solid case, and the accused could present a defense, whereas administrative sanctions were arbitrary and beyond contestation. The judiciary was also better insulated than the police from the political interests of the reigning cabinet. All in all, this was a major victory for the lower house and a vindication of those determined to work for change within the constitutional system.

Tables 3 and 4 record the available data on the size of the periodical press and enforcement of the Newspaper Ordinance from 1890 to 1908. The dramatic decline in suspended journals following the 1897 reform demonstrates the disparate effects of administrative and judicial methods on law enforcement. The more equitable treatment of the courts is also evidenced by the number of acquittals of those prosecuted under the press laws.

Emergency imperial decrees authorized by the constitution were issued on three occasions over 1890-1908; after the attempted assassination of the visiting Russian prince in May 1891, the day war was declared against China in August 1894, and in the aftermath of the Portsmouth treaty negotiations in September 1905.¹⁶ In the assassination case, Premier Matsukata ordered pre-publication Home Ministry censorship of all articles on foreign affairs to block stories complicating relations with Russia and to cover up government pressure on the judiciary for a death sentence. The decree was lifted within a month, but when submitted to the next Diet for approval, it was rejected by the lower house, a blow to the cabinet's prestige. Emergency authority during the China War also required prior censorship of articles related

TABLE 3
 THE NUMBER AND CIRCULATION OF
 PERIODICALS: 1890-1908

Year	Press Organs	Circulation (millions)	Bonded Press Organs
1890	716	187	
1891	766	198	
1892	792	242	
1893	802	277	
1894	814	366	
1895	754	407	
1896	775		
1897	745		
1898	829		
1899	978		489
1900	944		535
1901	1181		658
1902	1328		744
1903	1499		785
1904	1590		817
1905	1775		906
1906	1988		995
1907	2300		1185
1908	2524		1276

Source: Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan,
 1890-1908.

TABLE 4

ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL SANCTIONS IMPOSED UNDER
THE NEWSPAPER ORDINANCE: 1890-1908

Year	Administrative	Judicial			
	Organs Suspended	Organs Suspended	Imprisoned	Fined	Acquitted ^a
1890	16				
1891	61		5	66	7
1892	87		4	80	14
1893	87		0	97	13
1894	140		21	161	40
1895	238		0	129	8
1896	25		2	79	5
1897		0	0	50	9
1898		0	1	65	13
1899		0	1	90	23
1900		6	2	97	26
1901		0	9	206	41
1902		0	8	155	28
1903		1	3	76	21
1904		1	7	578	21
1905		2	0	300	19
1906		2	2	54	5
1907		2	8	72	5
1908		7	18	19	1

Sources: For organs suspended, Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan, 1890-1908; for imprisoned, fined, and acquitted, Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 16-33, 1891-1908.

^aThe acquitted category includes only those who actually went to trial and were declared innocent (muzai). A number of people were arrested but had their cases dismissed for various reasons without going to court--they are not counted here.

to the conflict. More extensive powers were claimed when rioting broke out after the signing of the Portsmouth treaty. An imperial ordinance gave administrators the power to suspend any journal if it were "feared" that an article slandered the imperial family, the political regime, or the constitution, or incited criminal behavior. The decree was enforced from September 6 until November 29. During that span, 20 journals were suspended a total of 30 times, the ax falling twice on the Tokyo Asahi Shinbun, three times on the Osaka Asahi.¹⁷ These were major newspapers of the political center, not the tabloids of radical groups. A second decree empowered Tokyo police to suspend any periodical that was "a hindrance in present circumstances."¹⁸ These measures temporarily returned press policy to the so-called "dark age" of administrative license in the mid-1880's.

These events demonstrate that in critical periods, which provide the acid test of press autonomy in any country, the Japanese government could and did exercise unfettered control over the press. One must evaluate the relative liberality of regular laws in light of emergency powers that nullified protective statutes just when the press most needed protecting. Note that Japan was at war on only one of the three occasions when emergency imperial decrees were proclaimed.

A final trend in enforcement was harsh treatment of the few socialist and anarchist journals. An early precedent was the case of the weekly Heimin Shinbun (Commoners' Newspaper), published by a small group of Christian socialist intellectuals from November 1903.¹⁹ The paper preached socialism and pacifism during the Russo-Japanese War. The issue of 28 March 1904 earned publisher-editor Sakai Toshihiko two months in jail, reportedly the first prison sentence suffered by a socialist in

imperial Japan.²⁰ Prosecution of the 6 November 1904 edition for several anti-war articles resulted in two five-month jail sentences and two 50-yen fines, a judicial prohibition against further publication, and confiscation of the printing equipment. Appeal to a higher court saw this verdict upheld in January 1905.²¹ Later socialist journals found a similar reception. The courts usually refrained from stopping publication altogether, but sizable fines and short jail sentences could be just as lethal over time against journals run by a few individuals of modest means. The fact that the toughest press sanctions before 1909 fell almost exclusively upon leftists with little public support had an important bearing upon passage of the Newspaper Law.

The Newspaper Law of 1909: Passage and Provisions

The Newspaper Law is something of an historical anomaly. What began as another attempt by Diet members to liberalize the Newspaper Ordinance ended up as a new comprehensive law increasing state control. The original bill would have reduced prison sentences for press crimes, ended the judicial power to dissolve publications, opened pre-trial proceedings to newspaper coverage (the existing law did not permit this), and eliminated security money for periodicals appearing fewer than four times per month.²² The bill's sponsor, Matsumura Koichiro, had been a political reporter for the Osaka Asahi Shinbun. In lower house committee, leading officials of the Justice and Home Ministries (including Arimatsu Eigi and Hiranuma Kiichiro) spoke against the measure, and it was then delegated to a subcommittee of five representatives, all press people.²³ Working in close consultation with bureaucratic officials, the subcommittee reported back within days a Newspaper Law that defeated most objectives of the original reform proposal.²⁴ The bond money system

was not ameliorated but toughened by doubling the required amounts. The judicial power to terminate a publication remained intact. Treatments of pre-trial criminal proceedings were still disallowed, though here there was a slight relaxation in wording. Whereas the old ordinance had banned all information "related to the pre-trial examination," the law now specified the "contents of the pre-trial examination," presumably allowing publication of general information on the crime, so long as it was not specifically prohibited by the prosecutor. (One impetus for the original reform proposal had been the prosecution of 14 Tokyo newspapers for reporting the murder of a restaurant hostess in December 1908.) In addition, penalties for publicizing secret pre-trial proceedings and official documents were reduced from imprisonment to simple fines. Beyond this, however, there was no new leniency in punishments. Much more importantly, the draft authorized administrators to ban particular editions of a journal from circulation and seize all copies without resorting to prosecution. This major innovation soon became the principal source of bureaucratic power over the press. The Newspaper Law was approved overwhelmingly by the full committee and passed by both houses without significant amendment in March 1909.

Given the liberalizing trends dating back to the founding of the Diet, the scant criticism of the new legislation is remarkable. One Japanese scholar found that there was virtually no discussion of free expression during Diet consideration of the bill.²⁵ Another examining newspaper reactions concluded: "What is astounding is the fact that there was not even one criticism of the Newspaper Law from the contemporary press either during the process of Diet deliberations or after its promulgation."²⁶ Indeed, the Osaka Asahi editorialized on 15 May 1909

that the law was neither a step forward nor backward, remarking that the administrative right to seize particular issues was largely justified by journalistic abuses.²⁷ How is one to explain this atrophy of the liberalism so prominent in the press and the Diet just ten years earlier, when the lower house had removed the same power from a cabinet proposal?

Diet and press people accepted the legislation mainly because they were convinced by government spokesmen and recent trends in enforcement that its primary targets were political radicals and pornographers. Though the socialist and labor press was still miniscule, conservative state elites emphasized that preventive measures were necessary to nip such dangers in the bud. Premier Katsura Taro wrote in 1908:

We are now in an age of economic transition. Development of machine industry and intensification of competition creates a gap between rich and poor and this becomes greater and greater; and according to Western history this is an inevitable pattern. Socialism is today accepted by only a few but if it is ignored it will someday spread. Obviously therefore it is necessary to propagate public morals. What we call social policy will prevent socialism from taking root.²⁸

State officials focused Diet discussion of the Newspaper Law on the battle against radicals. For example, the Home Ministry's Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief defended the judicial power to terminate publication as follows:

Naturally, if one looks at past examples, the cases in which the courts have handed down a verdict of stopping publication have been extremely flagrant, one or just a few each year. . . In other words, in cases where a periodical embraces from the start the objective of carrying articles harming manners and morals or encouraging radical socialism, and when even one or two punishments [i.e., fines or imprisonment] give rise to absolutely no prospect of reform, the courts prohibit further publication. In fact, the application of this clause is extremely rare, as I have just said.²⁹

Recent experience could only confirm this statement. According to Professor Uchikawa, every political journal closed on court orders from the

legal reform of 1897 to passage of the Newspaper Law in 1909 had been connected with the labor movement or socialism.³⁰ The bureau chief justified higher security deposits in this way:

To publish a newspaper is to possess great influence in society, and we must make it so that those without considerable qualifications are unable to publish . . . It takes a good deal of money to publish a newspaper, but I think it would be extremely dangerous to allow those unable to pay this small deposit to possess this tool of civilization which . . . exerts such power.³¹

Even the new administrative right to ban the circulation of particular editions appeared to be aimed at obscenity and socialism. Japan's journalists had no experience with an independent administrative sanction of this sort. Under existing law, police could stop circulation only if the issue in question were prosecuted in court, and this happened only in blatant cases of illegality.³² The Home Ministry spokesman defended the need for change arguing that by the time the ministry decided to prosecute, it was often too late to remove the offending issue from circulation.³³ He did not indicate that the new power might be used against mainstream journals for offenses too minor to be prosecuted.

Another reason for the dearth of criticism was that on most points the Newspaper Law differed little from the 1897 statutes. Since the law held sway over newspapers and those magazines covering current events for the next 36 years (purely artistic, scientific, and statistical magazines were regulated under the Publication Law of 1893), its other principal tenets are enumerated here for reference:

Banned from publishing and editing were active duty military men, minors, convicts and probationers, and those residing outside the empire, but women were no longer disqualified.

To found a journal one had to notify officials ten days in advance,

report the names of the owner, publisher, chief editor, and printer, and pay a security deposit if current events were to be covered. Local authorities could suspend publications not meeting these requirements until they did so.

Inspection copies had to be sent to the central Home Ministry, local government, and the local and regional prosecutors' offices simultaneous with publication.

Forbidden contents included preliminary trial proceedings, closed judicial hearings and Diet deliberations, unreleased state documents or petitions to the state, incitement to crime or vindication of a criminal, desecration of the imperial family, matters undermining the constitution, advocacy of changes in the political regime, anything subversive of public order or manners and morals, and information banned by the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministers within their areas of competence..

Corrections of false or defaming stories submitted by the affected party had to be published without charge in the same length and size of print as the original report.

The Home Minister could stop circulation of any issue threatening public order or manners and morals, and prohibit further publication of similar contents.

A court of law could terminate a journal carrying items banned by the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministers, disturbing public order or manners and morals, or violating the clauses on the imperial family, political regime, or constitution.

Legal responsibility for the contents of an article was shared by the chief editor, subordinate editors who worked on the article, and the author, and for some offenses the publisher and printer as well.

Maximum prison sentences for various offenses were three months for inciting crime or vindicating a criminal, or for an editor who lied about his legal qualifications; six months to the publisher, editor, and author for disobeying a judicial writ to cease publication, disturbing public order or manners and morals, or violating a Home Ministry prohibition on certain contents; two years to publisher, editors, and author for items banned by the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministers, and to publisher, editors, author, and printer for articles violating clauses on the imperial family, political regime, and constitution. Other offenses were punished with fines, including the knowing sale or distribution of a banned edition.

Passage of the Newspaper Law reflects a reconciliation of sorts between the Meiji state elite and its principal civil opponents of the late nineteenth century. The opposition was comprised mainly (though not exclusively) of political and economic elites on the outs. The Diet offered these men a chance to improve their lot within the system, and while they continued the struggle for more influence through parliament, they discovered certain common interests with the Meiji leadership, above all a shared desire to control labor. Thus in 1909 the Diet did not act as anticipated (indeed, feared) by the authors of Japan's constitution. It reversed its course of the 1890's and for the first time tightened rather than moderated state control over the periodical press. The Newspaper Law turned out to be a more potent instrument than much of the mainstream press had imagined (available data on sanctions are in Table 5), but within class limits the law left considerable room for criticism of the state. There was no pre-publication censorship, and severe reproofs of basic state policies and the highest government officials were

permitted. The law did not prevent a large segment of the press from furthering the cause of democracy during the next decade. The autonomy and power of the press were clearly demonstrated when mass riots erupted over the high price of rice in August 1918. The government invoked emergency authority to ban all articles on the violence, but within days organized pressure from the major Tokyo newspapers compelled the retraction of this edict. Reporters gathered in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Fukui, Ishikawa, and Kyushu to call publicly for the cabinet's resignation.³⁴ The restrictions of the Newspaper Law, therefore, did not prevent the press from playing an active and critical role vis-a-vis the state.

TABLE 5

THE NUMBER OF PERIODICALS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL SANCTIONS
IMPOSED UNDER THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1909-1917

Year	Press Organs	Bonded Organs	Administrative		Judicial			
			Banned Editions	Procedural Suspensions ^a	Organs Closed	Imprisoned	Fined	Acquitted
1909	2768	1379	29	6	4	0	175	21
1910	1793 ^b	1172	58	11	1	8	124	9
1911	2077	1326	24	5	1	13	160	9
1912	2227	1412	31	8	1	5	109	0
1913	2647	1611	74	5	1	3	278	6
1914	2719	1636	453 ^c	2	2	4	183	9
1915	2851				2	18	129	3
1916	3066				1	4	264	2
1917	3018				0	28	284	16
1918	3123		513	7	0	16	629	16

Sources: For administrative sanctions, Nihon Teikoku Tokei Nenkan, vol. 35, 1914, p. 590; for organs closed by the courts, Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1930, p. 68; for other judicial sanctions, Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 35-44, 1909-1918.

^aThese were journals suspended for not reporting the intent to publish or not paying the required security money.

^bThe sudden drop in the number of press organs from 1909 to 1910 was due to new guidelines in the Newspaper Law for determining whether a journal had legally ceased publication. In other words, many journals that had stopped publishing previously were for the first time officially declared defunct.

^cThe high number of banned editions in 1914 was probably due to exercise of the Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministry rights to ban military/diplomatic information during World War I, which Japan entered entered in August of that year.

Notes

¹All translations of the constitution are from Ito Hirobumi, Commentaries on the Constitution.

²Ibid., p. 111.

³Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 169-170. This was the so-called Otsu Incident.

⁴Ito Hirobumi, Commentaries on the Constitution, p. 67. Disciplinary regulations in the armed forces were a direct responsibility of the Emperor, (in practice, of the services themselves), and beyond the competence of the Diet (article 12).

⁵Ibid., p. 21.

⁶See Mark V. Nadel and Francis E. Rourke, "Bureaucracies," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science 5: Governmental Institutions and Processes (Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1975), p. 386.

⁷Ito wrote:

Were administrative measures placed under the control of the judicature, and were courts of justice charged with the duty of deciding whether a particular administrative measure was or was not proper, administrative authorities would be in a state of subordination to judicial functionaries. The consequence would be that the administrative would be deprived of freedom of action in securing benefits to society and happiness to the people. . . . As the object of an administrative measure is to maintain public interests, it will become necessary under certain circumstances to sacrifice individuals for the sake of the public benefit. But the question of administrative expedience is just what judicial authorities are ordinarily apt to be not conversant with. It would, therefore, be rather dangerous to confide to them the power of deciding such questions.

Commentaries on the Constitution, pp. 120-121.

⁸Ibid., p. 31.

⁹Uchikawa Yoshimi, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei Katei to Sono Tokushitsu" [The Characteristics of the Legislative Process Behind the Newspaper Law], Tokyo Daigaku Shinbun Kenkyujo Kiyō, no. 5 (1956), p. 65.

¹⁰Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 192.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 192-196. The three newspapers initially opposing war were the Tokyo Mainichi, Tokyo Nichi Nichi, and Mantoho (I have also heard this last name pronounced Yorozu Choho).

¹²George M. Beckmann and Okubo Genji, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945 (Stanford: Stanford U. Press, 1969), p. 1.

¹³Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 189-190.

¹⁴Uchikawa, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei," p. 61.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁶The first two are reprinted in Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 169, 193-194.

¹⁷Official state figures, cited in Uchikawa, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei," pp. 69-70.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁹Some of the same people had been prosecuted in 1901 for their activities in the Social Democratic Party (Shakai Minshuto). The party's program advocated universal suffrage, abolition of the nobility and the House of Peers, free education, disarmament, nationalization of certain economic sectors, and various improvements in working conditions--see Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 211-213. It was printed in a party journal and reported in several newspapers. All were prosecuted for advocating "destruction of the social order." Oddly enough, though the authors were eventually acquitted, the editors of non-party journals carrying the story were found guilty and fined 20 yen apiece. See *ibid.*, p. 214, and Futagawa Yoshifumi, Genron no Dan'atsu [The Suppression of Speech] (Tokyo: Hosei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1959), pp. 152-153.

²⁰Futagawa, Genron no Dan'atsu, p. 155.

²¹Mituro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 220. Before the appeals court handed down its decision, the Heimin Shinbun closed its doors voluntarily, imitating Marx by printing its last edition in red as a sign of protest--Futagawa, Genron no Dan'atsu, pp. 155-156.

²²It is reprinted in Uchikawa, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei," pp. 93-95

²³Eight members of the original 18-man committee were active in the newspaper business, seven of these in management. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 82-83. The Newspaper Law is reprinted in Shunbara Akihiko, Nihon Shinbun Tsushi [A History of Japanese Newspapers] (Tokyo: Gendai Janarizumu Shuppankai, 1969), pp. 124-129.

²⁵Shunbara, Nihon Shinbun Tsushi, p. 130.

²⁶Uchikawa, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei," p. 85.

²⁷Shunbara, Nihon Shinbun Tsushi, p. 131.

²⁸Quoted in Kenneth B. Pyle, "The Technology of Japanese Nationalism: The Local Improvement Movement 1900-1918," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 33, no. 1 (November 1973), p. 55.

²⁹Quoted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 238-239.

³⁰Uchikawa, "Shinbunshi Ho no Settei," p. 79.

³¹Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 82.

³²According to the earlier 1883 law, circulation could be stopped only if there were an administrative decision to close down the publication altogether.

³³Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, p. 238.

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 271-277.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In 1924, the president of the Osaka Mainichi Shinbun described the Meiji Restoration as "the beginning of the Japanese renaissance," and the development of the press substantiates that judgment.¹ In a country where there were no precedents for an autonomous, civilly-operated periodical press, let alone a press voicing critical political commentary, 647 newspapers and magazines were in publication by the end of 1889, and 164 of these covered current events. By 1909, journals covering current events numbered 1,379. Within the historical context, then, the Meiji founders must be credited with a liberal revolution in press policy.

There was nothing inevitable about this revolution. There being no established press when the shogunate fell, the new state might have prevented one from emerging. Civil groups hadn't the power to sustain an autonomous press against the will of state leaders, as was demonstrated briefly in 1868. Nor was the state so inferior to civil institutions in technological or human resources as to be incapable of organizing an official press to serve its own ends. On the contrary, modern technology and capable personnel were more available to the state than to civil organizations in the early Meiji years. The foreign and domestic threats facing the regime could have been used to justify a state monopoly over political publications. Not only did early press organs serve the opposition, but their combative, partisan character was untempered by any

tradition of fairness or responsible reporting. Concocted stories abounded (e.g., false reports that government leaders had fallen in battle), and scurrilous tales of officials' private lives were commonplace. Yet, though the state took measures to protect its authority, it remained committed to a civilly-operated press with an independent political role. The Meiji founders not only allowed a civil press to exist, but also actively promoted its development at a time when most Japanese had never seen a newspaper or magazine. Even in 1877, the year of the Satsuma Rebellion, and in the 1883-1887 period, when the most onerous controls were in force, the growth of a critical press suffered but minor, temporary setbacks. If one's standard of comparison be the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate, the Meiji experience represents a radical liberalization.

To appreciate further the liberal orientation of Meiji rule, one may contrast it to the policies of more recent state builders. Brief surveys of state relations with the press in Africa and the Arab world provide interesting points of reference.

In 1974, Dennis Wilcox gathered data on the media policies of 34 independent black African countries, most having achieved independence from European colonialism in the mid-twentieth century. The press in these countries was smaller than that of Japan, since some 80% of their populations was illiterate, and the economic resources to maintain journals were scarce. However, one can compare the relative autonomy of those media organs that did exist. Of the 71 daily newspapers published in black Africa, 51 were owned by the state or ruling party. The 20 under private ownership were concentrated in ten of the 34 nations, and pre-publication censorship was conducted in four of the ten. Opposition

groups were legally allowed to publish in only three countries, but in two of these (Gambia and Liberia) there were in fact no opposition newspapers, and in the third (Botswana) there was no non-governmental press at all.²

Some of these polities, like Japan before the 1860's, had never known an autonomous native press before independence, and they merely continued the statist policies of the colonial power. This was true of most former French colonies (14 of the 34), where a local press had not been allowed to develop. In others, however, there was much more of an autonomous local press under colonial rule than after independence. This was especially true of ex-British colonies (also 14), where controls had been lax enough for the native press to participate actively in the independence movement. Among those independence leaders who had entered politics through journalism were Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Joseph Mobutu (Zaire), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Leopold Sedar-Senghor (Senegal), and the Nigerian Nnamdi Azikiwe, who wrote that "The most potent instrument used in the propagation of nationalist ideas and racial consciousness has been the African-owned nationalist press."³ Wilcox was led to conclude:

The history of press development in other countries shows that an active party press often was the first step in the evolution of a diverse and relatively independent press system. The opposition press of Africa, however, seems to have come into existence only prior to independence when it rallied the people against continued colonial domination.⁴

William Rugh's research on state press controls in 18 Arab countries in the late 1970's shows a similar contrast between their record and that of Meiji Japan. Rugh divides Arab press systems into three categories: diverse, loyalist, and mobilization (see Table 6). The diverse

systems are those approaching the pattern of late nineteenth century Japan, their traits being predominantly civil ownership, distinct political tendencies between journals, and the ability to vent considerable opposition to the government. The state does exercise various press restrictions, such as post-publication sanctions against radical criticism and special emergency powers, but these are not employed to quash all opposition to government leaders or policies.⁵ Only three of the 18 countries fit the diverse category, and Lebanon alone (considered prior to the civil war starting in 1975) could boast of a press as active and autonomous as that of Meiji Japan. It is noteworthy that the Lebanese system did not initially benefit from liberal state leadership, as did the Japanese. Rather, Lebanon developed the most independent press in the Arab world in the late nineteenth century as part of the Ottoman Empire, and this press survived the rigidity of the French mandate (1920-1941) to combat successfully the efforts of the first post-independence government to suppress political criticism.⁶ An autonomous press thus flourished in spite of state policy and not because of it. The loyalist press systems, the second type, prevail in countries where there has generally been no decisive break with the past (all but Tunisia are traditional monarchies), and where the press is relatively undeveloped; in three of the six countries, daily newspapers did not appear until the 1970's. These regimes allow no criticism of basic policies or the ruling elite, but they differ from the mobilization type in not exploiting the media as extensively for propaganda purposes. The mobilization press systems are characterized by state ownership, military or single party regimes embracing revolutionary socialist ideologies, and active use of the media to bolster state policies and authority. All of the mobil-

TABLE.6
 TYPOLOGY OF ARAB PRESS SYSTEMS IN THE 1970'S

	Mobilization	Loyalist	Diverse
<u>Press Characteristics</u>			
Ownership	agents of regime	private	private
Variety among papers	non-diverse	non-diverse	diverse
Attitude toward regime	support	support	pro and con
Style and tone	active, contentious	passive	varied
<u>Political Conditions</u>			
Ruling group	revolutionary	traditionalist	various
Public debate	none	none	active
Public opposition	non-existent	non-existent	institutionalized
<u>Countries</u>			
	Algeria	Bahrain	Lebanon
	Egypt	Jordon	Morocco
	Iraq	Qatar	Kuwait
	Libya	Saudi Arabia	
	The Sudan	Tunisia	
	Syria	United Arab	
	South Yemen	Emirates	

Source: Rugh, The Arab Press, p. 163.

Note: North Yemen and Oman were excluded from the table because the media in those countries were relatively undeveloped at the time Rugh's research was conducted.

ization regimes had experienced European colonial rule, five of them British administration, which, as in Africa, was more lenient towards a native press than that of the French.⁷ In each country independence introduced a phase of considerable autonomy for press organs serving different political interests, a respite lasting from just a few months in Algeria to three decades under the monarchy in Egypt (1922-1952). In each case, however, the consolidation of a new regime espousing a clear break with tradition was followed by the suppression of autonomous journals, a marked divergence from the Meiji pattern.

The contrasting approaches of Japanese state builders and the majority of their African and Arab counterparts can be explained partly but not wholly with reference to circumstances. In many African countries, post-colonial elites were challenged to build not just a new state but the first independent state ever to rule a culturally disunited population. The Meiji elite was blessed with a nation in the full sense of that word, and one that had been governed by a central state for several centuries. One can argue that the more arduous challenge in much of Africa logically produced less tolerance for media autonomy. However, this is not an exhaustive explanation for the acute differences between Meiji liberalism and the more statist policies of almost all these other regimes. For one thing, Meiji leaders could have cited many reasons of their own for preempting an autonomous press--the French revolutionaries of 1789 quickly reversed a liberal course when confronted by threats of foreign invasion and domestic reaction. For another, one should not assume that the establishment of order in contemporary less-developed countries is a priori so burdensome as to require a state monopoly over political expression. Not all of these 52 countries were plagued with severe

cultural divisions, and Lebanon, the only one to match the liberalism of Japan, was among those most handicapped in this respect. Yet a consociational arrangement was forged between its Christian and Muslim communities, and ultimately cultural diversity was made to strengthen rather than undermine press autonomy.⁸ India is another example of a culturally-fissured society where the native press was allowed to expand and diversify after independence; substantial press autonomy there has outlived the 1975-1977 state of emergency.⁹ Furthermore, in many if not most Arab and African countries, state elites do not strain to apologize for statist policies (as some intellectuals are prone to do on their behalf). They do not contend that media autonomy, while a noble ideal, is sadly unfeasible due to adverse conditions. Rather, one frequently encounters ideological and utilitarian arguments positing state control as a good in itself.¹⁰ It is evident that the disparities between Meiji press policy and that of these other regimes are rooted not only in varying circumstances but also in different assessments of the state's proper role in society.

Why did the Meiji elite not adopt the illiberal policies so characteristic of regimes founded in recent years? This is a question with many answers, but the one I would like to develop here is the changing impact of the international environment. In recent history, due to imperialism and to advances in communications bringing states into closer contact, elites creating a new state, a new regime, or even a major new policy have often turned to the example of highly esteemed foreign countries to identify the broad options available to them. This can be observed in advanced as well as underdeveloped nations. As Reinhard Bendix has argued, the politico-economic development of countries can no longer

be understood as a purely indigenous process, but only in terms of the interaction between foreign models and domestic traditions.¹¹ This is a truism in regard to Meiji Japan and the countries freed from colonial rule in the twentieth century. In 1880, Ito Hirobumi wrote:

Today, conditions in Japan are closely related to the world situation. They are not merely the affairs of a nation or province. The European concepts of revolution, which were carried out for the first time in France about one hundred years ago have gradually spread to the various nations. By combining and complementing each other, they have become a general trend. Sooner or later, every nation will undergo changes as a result. . . .

Now, European ideas and things are coming into our country like a tidal flow; moreover, new opinions concerning the form of government have become popular among the ex-samurai. . . . if we take a general view of the causes, it appears that this experience is common to the whole world. Like the rain falling and the grass growing, it is no wonder that we, too, have been affected.¹²

A principal reason the Meiji elite proved more tolerant of an autonomous press than so many recent state builders is that leading foreign models of the late nineteenth century were more liberal than those of the mid-twentieth century.

The liberal posture of the Meiji state largely resulted from emulation of the world powers of the day; as noted already, liberal policies contradicted Japan's historical practice and traditions. Furthermore, it was not so much the adoption of foreign philosophical principles such as natural rights or popular sovereignty that imbued respect for civil autonomy (though these did have some echo within the ruling elite), but rather a calculus of utility drawn from recent European history. Liberal policies were motivated by a conception of the public interest capsulized in the phrase "a rich country, a strong army," and the richest and strongest countries in the world boasted constitutional governments and a civilly-managed press with significant leeway for political criticism.

The logic of the founding fathers is captured in the following passage on the autonomy of religious beliefs taken from Ito's Commentaries on the Constitution:

In Western Europe, during the middle ages, when religion exercised an ascendant influence, it was mixed up with politics, internal as well as external, and was very often the cause of bloodshed; while in the countries of the East, strict laws and severe penalties were provided in order to suppress religion. But the doctrine of freedom of religious belief, which dates back four centuries, first received practical recognition at the time of the French Revolution and of the independence of the United States of America, when public declaration was made on the subject. Since then, the doctrine has gradually won approval everywhere, . . . In short, freedom of religious belief is to be regarded as one of the most beautiful fruits of modern civilization. . . . Freedom of conscience concerns the inner part of man and lies beyond the sphere of interference by the laws of the State. To force upon a nation a particular form of belief by the establishment of a state religion is very injurious to the natural intellectual development of the people, and is prejudicial to the progress of science by free competition. No country, therefore, possesses by reason of its political authority, the right or the capacity to an oppressive measure touching abstract questions of religious faith. . . . As to forms of worship, to religious discourses, to the mode of propagating a religion and to the formation of religious associations and meetings, some general legal or police restrictions must be observed for the maintenance of public peace and order. No believer in this or that religion has the right to place himself outside the pale of the law of the Empire, on the ground of his serving his god and to free himself from his duties to the State, which, as a subject, he is bound to discharge.¹³

This statement epitomizes the rationale behind Meiji liberalism. The autonomy of a particular social activity is posited as general practice in Western Europe and the United States, which are equated with "modern civilization." This autonomy is not legitimized with reference to a philosophy of human nature or universal moral principles; rather, to deny it would be "prejudicial to the progress of science by free competition." This utilitarian legitimacy drawn from the example of the West is compromised only by the legal duties of a subject, i.e., religions are not to deny conscription, the Emperor, the payment of taxes, and other

basic obligations. It was this same reasoning that led to a fairly autonomous periodical press, which was also copied initially from the West, useful for technological development, and referred to as a right "within the bounds of the law."

Most histories of Meiji Japan emphasize that a choice was made between two dominant European models, British parliamentary democracy and the Prussian system, and that the less liberal and democratic Prussian model was the one more closely followed in writing the constitution. This is one reason the Meiji founders are rarely referred to as liberal revolutionaries. The comparative perspective of the twentieth century, however, reveals that even the Prussian model was decidedly liberal alongside the state-society patterns being emulated today. The European constitutional monarchies of the last century were partly inspired by genuine liberal instincts--the landed nobility and rising bourgeoisie supporting these systems were opposed to the more statist alternatives of absolute monarchy and populism a la Bonaparte.¹⁴ Obviously, this liberalism had a strong class bias, and the corresponding class character of Meiji liberalism is evidenced by many factors, including the bond money required to found a journal. However, despite police restrictions and a few extreme incidents of suppression, Japan's borrowing from imperial Germany made it far more hospitable to civil political parties, political criticism in the press, and even to the labor movement than the great majority of regimes founded more recently in developing countries.¹⁵

The lessons the Japanese drew from their international environment are not those likely to be drawn by state builders in more recent times. Liberal principles and practice have been damned within Western Europe

by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and on its borders by Soviet Russia, countries embodying clear statist alternatives of ideological legitimation, institutional structure, and concrete policy. Nazism strongly influenced political change in Japan itself, as will be demonstrated. Both the bitterness of anti-colonial struggles and their success (exposing the European polities as weak) have also made liberal European models less attractive. In addition, the perception that the economic interests of developed states work against the prosperity of late developing areas discourages emulation. A final factor is that even the admirer of Western Europe or the United States today is presented with a more statist image than that of 100 years ago. He is just as likely to be impressed with the preponderance of public corporations, regulatory agencies, and state broadcasting monopolies as with the more liberal aspects of these polities. The goal of development is used today to justify statist policies, while in Meiji Japan it was the strongest argument for civil autonomy. The industrial democracies have also proven willing to help finance statist development models in recent decades in a way they were not prepared to do in the past. In sum, foreign models of the mid-twentieth century are far more statist than those examined by the Japanese in the 1880's.

If changes in the international environment have really had such a powerful impact, then in Latin America, where most independent modern states were founded in the nineteenth century, one should find press autonomy more closely resembling that of Meiji Japan than that of the Arab and black African polities reviewed above. There were in fact civilly-owned and operated daily newspapers in every Latin American country in 1928, most having independent press traditions dating back to

the turn of the century or earlier. It was possible to identify distinct political tendencies in the newspapers of at least 16 of the 20 countries.¹⁶ The liberal, critical tradition has since shown great resiliency, despite some degree of censorship by most regimes, and limited periods of harsh repression (e.g., Argentina in the 1970's, Peru 1968-1976, Chile since 1973). As of 1978, a civilly-run press remained active everywhere but in Cuba, the one country to undergo a thorough political transformation in recent years.¹⁷ Certainly more careful study would be required to ascertain the origins and precise extent of press autonomy in each of these countries. But this superficial evidence does suggest that the sway of liberal foreign models observable in Latin American constitutions and intellectual life in the nineteenth century may have strongly influenced state press policies, bequeathing a pattern of autonomy quite distinct from that found in most newly-independent countries in the mid-twentieth century.

On balance, the Meiji state-society system was closer to the état gendarme than to the more illiberal arrangements typical of modernizing polities today. The état gendarme refers to a state whose main function is to provide security and public order so that intellectual, technological, and economic activity can flourish in civil society. Japan may seem to diverge from the usual conception of the état gendarme in that the state was active in promoting civil associations which otherwise would have been slower developing. On this point, however, Japan may differ less from the American and European experience than is sometimes thought. Karl Polanyi has written of nineteenth century England:

There was nothing natural about laissez-faire; free markets could never have come into being merely by allowing things to take their course. Just as cotton manufactures--the leading free trade

industry--were created by the help of protective tariffs, export bounties, and indirect wage subsidies, laissez-faire itself was enforced by the state. The thirties and forties saw not only an outburst of legislation repealing restrictive regulations, but also an enormous increase in the administrative functions of the state, . . ."¹⁸

Despite state assistance, it is clear that the Japanese press developed primarily on its own steam--the promotional phase of state press policy was of minor significance. The mere tolerance for a fairly autonomous press, combined with a similar permissiveness shown to political and other civil associations bound to seek outlets for public expression, was the only essential contribution of the Meiji state to the emergence of the printed media as a dynamic civil sector. Though state promotion of the press was inferior to its activities in education and finance, it was rather similar to policy toward most business sectors.¹⁹

The institutional, ideological, and legal legacy of the Meiji founders has often been blamed for inviting the more statist media policies of later years, and this proposition will be closely examined in the chapters which follow; of the various political elites to rule Japan in the imperial era, the Meiji founders were the only ones to leave the media more autonomous from state control than they found them. The subsequent roles played by the Diet and bureaucracy are of particular interest. At this point, however, note that the Meiji constitution had shown itself compatible with more liberal directions while the founding fathers still dominated the cabinet. The 1897 newspaper code turned out to be the most liberal framework for press controls ever legislated in imperial Japan.

Notes

¹Hanazono Kanesada, The Development of Japanese Journalism (Osaka: The Osaka Mainichi, 1924), p. 17.

²Dennis L. Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 38, 53, 57-58.

³Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

⁵William A. Rugh, The Arab Press (Syracuse: Syracuse U. Press, 1979), pp. 89-90.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 52-55.

⁸Consociational democracy arises when elites in a country split into more or less mutually exclusive cultural groups agree on certain rules of the game to guarantee the basic integrity and minimum demands of each in exchange for support for the political system from all. See Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," World Politics, vol. 21 (January 1969).

⁹A concise survey of the Indian press was conducted by the Press Commission in the early 1950's and is reprinted in The Indian Press Year Book 1956, ed., G.H. Gates-Reed (Madras: Indian Press Publications, 1956), pp. 17-75; for patterns of ownership, consult pp. 20-21, 46-49, for political content, pp. 55-57, and for state restrictions, pp. 60-75.

¹⁰E.g., see Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, pp. 22-31.

¹¹Reinhard Bendix, Nation-Building and Citizenship (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964), p. 177.

¹²Quoted in George M. Beckmann, The Making of the Meiji Constitution (Lawrence, Kansas: U. of Kansas Press, 1957), p. 132.

¹³Ito Hirobumi, Commentaries on the Constitution, pp. 58-60.

¹⁴The position of the constitutional monarchists is brilliantly put forth in the figure of Count Mosca in Stendhal's The Charterhouse of Parma.

¹⁵ See Joseph A. Schumpeter's remarks on imperial Germany in his Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, 3d ed. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1950), pp. 341-344.

¹⁶ A Political Handbook of the World: Parliaments, Parties and Press, eds. Malcolm W. Davis and Walter H. Mallory (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1928). The 16 countries were Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. The information on El Salvador and Venezuela does not make it clear whether journals had distinct political tendencies or not, whereas Ecuador and the Dominican Republic did not have such press organs. The data on some of the smaller Central American countries must be viewed keeping in mind that some were still ruled by sultanistic regimes uncharacteristic of modern states.

¹⁷ Political Handbook of the World: 1978, ed. Arthur S. Banks (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).

¹⁸ Quoted in Henry Jacoby, The Bureaucratization of the World, trans. Eveline L. Kanes (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1973), p. 56.

¹⁹ For an overview of the state's role in these other areas, see William W. Lockwood, The Economic Development of Japan, expanded ed. (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1968), chap. 10, especially pp. 503-521, 560-566, 571-578. The state did maintain a monopoly over a few basic products (e.g., salt, tobacco), and establish a limited number of strategic pilot industries requiring a scale of investment beyond private means at the time, but it was out of most of the latter by the early 1880's.

PART II

DEMOCRACY AND LIBERTY UNDER PARTY

PRIME MINISTERS: 1918-1932

CHAPTER V

THE REGIME BACKGROUND

It is reasonable to treat 1918-1932 as a discrete interval when democratic institutions attained supreme influence within the Japanese state, but this does not imply radical discontinuity with the politics of surrounding years. One cannot conceive of the 1918-1932 period in Japan in the same terms as the Spanish republic of the early 1930's or the Weimar republic in Germany. In those cases, fresh democratic institutions were created and then demonstrably wrecked to set off politically coherent epochs. A radical and abrupt transformation of the top state elite and the most fundamental state policies clearly distinguished the republican years from the before and after. The shift to party Prime Ministers was not this drastic a change in Japan, nor were the returns to non-party premiers in 1922-1924 and 1932.

The ascent to party government in Japan was gradual. The Meiji founders had hoped to contain the influence of the Diet's House of Representatives, but the parties dominating the chamber used its budgetary and legislative powers skillfully to improve their fortunes. The price of passage for the government's program grew from support for certain party proposals to the concession of cabinet posts that were used to expand party power. A turning point perhaps was the appointment of Seiyukai Representative Hara Kei as Home Minister in 1906. Hara established a pattern by using his authority over the government's building

of railroads, schools, dams, and other projects to reward his party's constituents, and while in office he made the careers of higher civil servants dependent upon support for his party's objectives.¹ Due to his influence, the first party man was appointed to the House of Peers in 1912. Though mass political activity was not a major party weapon, violent demonstrations against oligarchical rule shook the nation in early 1913, and the last cabinet before the onset of party government was toppled by the Rice Riots five years later. In the process of widening their power, the parties generally became more conservative in their political orientation, making the prospect of party cabinets more palatable to other state elites. It is noteworthy that although the Meiji constitution did not provide for a democratic regime, the parties' campaigns to control the state were advertized as "Movements for Constitutional Government," a central theme being that party cabinets alone were truly consistent with the spirit of the national charter.

For these reasons, one should not picture the start of party government as too radical a break with the past. Prewar Japan's democratic regime did not revolutionize its political surroundings. Rather, it made its way within the context of a state comprising not only democratic but bureaucratic, monarchical, military, and aristocratic (the House of Peers, Privy Council, Elder Statesmen) institutions, each with its own formal and actual powers. Political periodization can be based upon changes in the relative power of these institutions and their organized civil support over time, but always with the disclaimer that none of the power contenders was ever totally eliminated. Shifts in power between state elites proceeded along sloping curves, not sharp angles. If this was true of the parties' rise to paramountcy before 1918, it would be equally

true of their demise after 1932.

On what basis do we refer to the Japanese state in this period as being under a "democratic regime"? The central empirical feature of contemporary democracies is that a large part of the top state elite is selected by subjects from among meaningful alternatives in elections that permit a genuine expression of preference. In no country are all or even a majority of officials chosen by the people, so democracy is never more than a partial feature of the state, but when the most powerful state leaders are elected we refer to a democratic regime and to the supporters of such a system as democrats. There are many reasons why one might favor a democratic regime, but the immediate premise is usually that people in civil society should have some input into the making of state policy. One can ascertain the degree of political democracy by examining three factors: (1) the number of people in civil society with an input into state policy, (2) the mechanisms that facilitate or impede that input, and (3) the weight of that input measured by the role of elected officials in the policymaking process. What follows are brief comments on these points in the Japanese context of 1918-1932.

The number of people with an input into state policy greatly increased in this period with expansion of the right to vote. Near universal suffrage for men was legislated by the Diet in 1925, so that between the general elections of 1924 and 1928, the electorate grew from 3.2 to 12.4 million out of a total population of 62 million.² Without a party Prime Minister committed to this innovation, it would not have occurred. Women were never granted the right to vote in prewar Japan, though even in the United States, which had democratic traditions predating those of Japan by over a century, women did not receive the franchise until 1919.

Women were not allowed to vote in Japan until after World War II, when they were also given the franchise for the first time in France. The general process of widening the suffrage was faster in modern Japan than in nineteenth century Great Britain.

In terms of mechanisms to facilitate or impede popular input, the right to organize interest groups and political parties is essential. The Japanese record was mixed on this point. On the whole, there was little state interference with political associations, but the glaring exception was the plight of leftist groups advocating systemic political change. The repression of these groups was a policy of long standing, but it was exacerbated under party Prime Ministers by the Peace Preservation Law of 1925, which will be discussed in some detail in relation to press controls. Concerning interest groups, many labor and tenant farmers' unions also suffered from police harassment. Bills to legalize their activities failed to pass the Diet despite strident efforts by a sizable minority of elected officials. The best that can be said is that repressive measures were not harsh enough to prevent a marked development of these groups. From 300 unions with 103,412 members in 1921, the labor movement grew to 818 unions with 368,975 members in 1931, though this still represented only 7.9% of all industrial laborers.³ Over the same period, tenant farmers' unions grew from 681 to 4,414 with over 306,000 members.⁴

The parties themselves were not ideal mechanisms for popular input, their responsiveness to the electorate dulled by the oligarchical character of party organization. The parties relied heavily upon local notables to muster electoral support, especially in rural areas. Many of these powerbrokers were not irrevocably committed to any one party for

material or ideological reasons and might switch sides between elections according to the flow of patronage. The re-election of some Diet members over many years indicates that fairly reliable political machines did exist in some constituencies, but direct party organization of the electorate was shallow compared to that orchestrated by mass parties in Europe at the time. Surely there was nothing comparable to the organizational network of Germany's Social Democratic Party, which in a town of 10,000 people could boast of sports societies, a first-aid organization, a party choir, labor unions, a shooting club, a construction company, a consumers' cooperative, youth and children's groups, a women's auxiliary, a savings association, a newspaper, and a paramilitary corps.⁵ Yet American parties and those in the developing countries have not generally achieved this level of local mass organization either.

The electoral system was also far from an ideal mechanism for conveying the popular will. Though the parties institutionalized the appointment of lower house representatives to the premiership, the method of appointment and the timing and manner of elections limited the degree of real popular input into organization of the cabinet. New Prime Ministers were first chosen by the Elder Statesmen (genro, a formal title bestowed by the Emperor on nine surviving members of the Meiji elite), after 1922 by the last man to hold this rank, Saionji Kinmochi. Saionji did not continue the oligarchical politics practiced in earlier years. The last oligarch to impose his own direction upon the state had been Yamagata Aritomo, who died in 1922. Saionji had not ranked among the leading founders and did not possess comparable influence. In the past, he had served as president of the Seiyukai party and greatly assisted the cause of party government. It was primarily under his cabinets in the 1906-

1912 span that party ministers had gained influence over state patronage and bureaucratic promotions. When a cabinet resigned or the premier died, Saionji would survey the political situation, hear the views of various political elites, and pass the name of the next Prime Minister to the throne, whence the request to form a cabinet was officially issued by the Emperor. What characterized the period of party supremacy is that, but for three short-lived cabinets in the 1922-1924 break, all the appointed premiers were presidents of one of the two largest parties in the lower house. When a Prime Minister died in office, the next president of his party was chosen to succeed him. If a cabinet resigned due to the failure of its policies, the president of the leading opposition party was appointed. Elections had no bearing upon the transfer of power in either case.

However, since the House of Representatives had to approve all laws and additions to the previous year's budget, no Prime Minister could govern effectively without a majority. If the incoming premier's party did not already control the lower house, he would have to call for elections or see his programs defeated. Inukai waited two months after assuming the premiership to call elections, Hamaguchi almost eight months, Tanaka ten months--see Table 7. These time intervals were not wasted. The Prime Minister would remove chiefs of police and prefectural governors affiliated with the outgoing cabinet and replace them with his own party's bureaucratic dependents. The abuse of state patronage and a highly partisan enforcement of electoral laws worked to favor the appointed Prime Ministers in the subsequent elections, which never failed to provide them with control over the lower house.⁶ Thus the judgment of the genro was never overruled in the ballot box.

TABLE 7

PRIME MINISTERS AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ELECTION
RESULTS: SEPTEMBER 1918-MAY 1932

Premier (Party)	Date of Appointment	Date of Elections	Parties	Votes	% of Votes	Seats	% of Seats
Hara (Seiyukai)	Sept. 1918	May 1920	Seiyukai	1,474,796	56.1%	278	59.9%
			Kenseikai	722,348	27.5	111	23.9
			Others	428,643	16.3	75	16.1
Takahashi (Seiyukai)	Nov. 1921						
Kato T. (no party)	June 1922						
Kiyoura (no party)	Jan. 1924	May 1924	Kenseikai	869,028	29.4	151	32.5
			Seiyuhonto	732,182	24.8	112	24.1
			Seiyukai	661,355	22.4	102	21.9
			Others	688,625	23.3	99	21.3
Kato K. (Kenseikai) ^a	June 1924						
Wakatsuki (Kenseikai)	Jan. 1926						
Tanaka (Seiyukai)	Apr. 1927	Feb. 1928	Minseito ^b	4,256,010	43.1	216	46.3
			Seiyukai	4,244,385	43.0	217	46.5
			Others	1,365,801	13.8	33	7.0
Hamaguchi (Minseito)	July 1929	Feb. 1930	Minseito	5,468,114	52.3	273	58.5
			Seiyukai	3,944,493	37.7	174	37.3
			Others	1,033,588	9.8	19	4.0
Wakatsuki (Minseito)	Apr. 1931						
Inukai (Seiyukai)	Dec. 1931	Feb. 1932	Seiyukai	5,706,356	58.6	303	65.0
			Minseito	3,382,700	34.7	146	31.3
			Others	634,060	6.5	17	3.6

Source: Nihon Kindaishi Jiten, pp. 768-769.

^aKato Komei formed a cabinet with the joint backing of the Kenseikai, Seiyuhonto, and Seiyukai.

^bThe Minseito was founded in June 1927 with a merger of the Kenseikai and Seiyuhonto.

It is difficult to estimate how far the use of patronage and police power went towards nullifying elections as a genuine expression of popular will, but there are indications that the independent views of the voters remained paramount. The margins of electoral victory varied considerably, from 56% to 27% in 1920, to a slight defeat for the Prime Minister's party of 43.1% to 43.0% in 1928, forcing the appointed cabinet to seek the support of independent representatives. Furthermore, the proletarian parties received 4.6% of the vote in 1928, 4.9% in 1930, and 2.7% in 1932, other small parties and independents winning 9.1%, 4.9%, and 3.7% in those same elections. These patterns do not justify a conclusion that elections were simply a sham. One does not read of widespread tampering with the counting of votes after the ballots were cast. It is also relevant that cabinets usually resigned in the wake of a serious crisis or failure, which would of itself tend to swing the electorate towards the party of the new Prime Minister. The continuing electoral dominance of the two major parties after 1932, when patronage and the police no longer worked in their favor, also speaks for the prevalence of genuine popular choice in the casting of votes. Nonetheless, electoral practices over 1918-1932 at least partially removed the choice of Prime Minister and dominant state party from the control of the voters.

How much actual power was wielded by democratic as opposed to non-democratic state institutions? Clearly the sway of state organizations closely linked to the vote--the Diet's lower house and the cabinet--was dominant in many respects. Mainstream party penetration of the bureaucracy by tying promotions to subservience was well established. The parties did not interfere with the examination system for state employment, but a loophole in the civil service laws permitting bureaucrats

to be sent on a compulsory leave of absence was used by each government to secure a cooperative group of top administrators. Most bureau and section chiefs in sensitive positions, as well as prefectural governors and police heads, were individuals of known affiliation with one or the other major party.⁷ The parties endeavored with some success to append senior political offices onto the bureaucratic hierarchy and to open certain top posts to free appointments, though the latter strategy was greatly hindered by the Privy Council.⁸ Party governments also exercised the power to make appointments to the House of Peers. This did not produce dramatic changes, but it did increase party influence over time. Virtually all cabinet members but the military ministers were party men from the Diet.

The army and navy were the two crucial state institutions to remain fairly immune from party infiltration. Party leader Hara Kei had managed to open the military ministerships to retired admirals and generals in 1913; retired officers were free to join political parties, whereas active personnel were not. This was a significant change, since the services could no longer wreck a cabinet by withdrawing their ministers and refusing to replace them. In practice, however, active duty officers continued to monopolize the positions, since to appoint a retiree would have undermined effective cooperation with the military. It is also noteworthy that in 1925 party Prime Minister Kato Komei became the only prewar chief executive to effect a marked reduction in the size and budget of the armed forces.

Yet, though democratic state institutions had clearly achieved paramount authority, they were still somewhat circumscribed in terms of both real and formal powers. Regular meetings of the Diet were restricted

to the December-March span, and extraordinary convocations were brief. This made politics a second career for most members and crippled the Diet's capacity to initiate and deliberate upon legislation or perform a watchdog role over other state institutions. Without a very sophisticated party organization to assist them in running the state, party ministers sometimes appear as supernumeraries alongside bureaucratic elites active in formulating policy. This is illustrated in every chapter on media policy. Moreover, just as the Diet's power was felt under non-party cabinets, so the constitutional prerogatives of other state organs were exercised in the era of party Prime Ministers. The legal domains of the armed forces, the Privy Council, the throne, the House of Peers, and the bureaucracy, as well as the institutionalized role of the Elder Statesmen--all remained shielded in varying degrees from the verdict of the polls. There were a greater number and variety of non-democratic state institutions with independent authority than are found in most democratic regimes. Democratic power stood atop the complex of state institutions, but non-democratic state organizations did not forfeit their status or disappear from the scene.

Japan's prewar democracy did not always shine by the lights of ideal standards, but it appears respectable enough alongside other real world examples. The abuse of patronage by incumbants to win reelection, the relative inability of democratic institutions to dominate the bureaucracy in policymaking, and the suppression of radical, anti-system groups are traits found in many of the world's most highly democratized political systems. The regime was vulnerable in two important respects: (1) the practice of appointing Prime Ministers from the lower house was never formalized by means of constitutional amendment, and

(2) official ideology remained one of imperial rather than popular sovereignty. Two lesser weaknesses were the excessive bitterness of interparty rivalry and the inability of the parties to hold the support of the intellectual class, which was alienated by the corruption and conservatism of party governments. However, a political scientist evaluating Japanese democracy in the late 1920's would also have found many reasons for optimism. For one thing, no major elite group in the state or civil society challenged the primacy of the parties. Until the last year of party government, no state institution could be characterized as disloyal, and there were no powerful anti-system parties at any time over 1918-1932. This put the regime on a much firmer basis than either the Weimar or Spanish republics, which were confronted by anti-system elites throughout their existence. The difference is largely explained by the gradual pace at which Japan's democratic institutions grew in influence, in contrast to the revolutionary inception of the latter two regimes. The institutionalization of competitive politics among a limited segment of the population followed by the gradual addition of new participants in the political process has been judged the developmental pattern most likely to produce a stable democracy.⁹ This was also the path to democratic politics taken by the United Kingdom and Sweden. In Japan, gradualism allowed for several decades of accommodation between the parties and other state elites, making for a relatively smooth transition to a democratic regime. Another asset from 1925 was a two-party system, in which there were several alternations of power and no deep ideological rifts between the two parties, the type of system prone to the moderate politics of "centripetal competition," to borrow the phrase of Giovanni Sartori.¹⁰ It is

likely that any observer in the mid-late 1920's would have concluded that Japan's democratic regime was steadily evolving into a permanent feature of the polity.

The autonomy of the mass media is intimately linked to the capacity for popular input into state policy by elections and other means in virtually all theories of political democracy. To offer one example, Robert Dahl's basic requirements for a polyarchy in a large contemporary country are as follows:

1. Freedom to form and join organizations
2. Freedom of expression
3. Right to vote
4. Right of political leaders to compete for support
5. Alternative sources of information
6. Eligibility for public office
7. Free and fair elections
8. Institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference¹¹

At least requirements two, five, seven, and eight would require the presence of mass media organs autonomous from state control. Granted that no democracy in the real world meets all of these standards perfectly, the close logical association between democratic procedures and mass media autonomy certainly leads one to expect liberal policies toward expression by democratic regimes. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that "censorship of the press and universal suffrage are two things which are irreconcilably opposed and which cannot long be retained among the institutions of the same people."¹² It is perplexing, then, to discover that Japan's elected leaders, while expanding the suffrage, not only failed to enhance the liberty of the media, but actually took deliberate steps to restrict it further, and that a good number of other democratic regimes have done the same. Moreover, many active democratic officials would see no inconsistencies between rule by the elected

representatives of the people and state control over public expression. Japanese state media policy over 1918-1932 offers us an opportunity to explore this anomaly and find out why the relationship between democracy and the media, apparently so clear in theory, is so variable in practice. State controls over film and radio are of particular interest, since the first major policies toward these new media were formulated under democratic governments.

Notes

¹See Tetsuo Najita, Hara Kei in the Politics of Compromise: 1905-1915 (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1967).

²Nihon Kindaishi Jiten, pp. 766, 839.

³Ibid., p. 908.

⁴Ronald Dore, Land Reform in Japan (London: Oxford U. Press, 1959), p. 72.

⁵William Sheridan Allen, The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town: 1930-1935 (New York: New Viewpoints, 1973), pp. 15ff.

⁶An exception to the general pattern was the 1924 election called by a transcendental (or non-party) cabinet before the appointment of a new Prime Minister; there was relatively little government interference, thanks partly to pressure from Saionji himself. On three occasions, premiers holding a majority were replaced due to death or incapacity by members of their own parties, and elections were not held at all. Only the first party Prime Minister, Hara Kei, called elections while holding a Diet majority, 20 months after taking office.

⁷Najita, Hara Kei, p. 44. The position of bureau chief (kyokuchō) was one step below the vice-minister's level, section chief (kacho) one rung lower. To give an indication of their numbers, there were six or seven bureaus each in the Home, Finance, and Commerce and Industry Ministries in the late 1920's. Those in the Home Ministry contained five or six sections apiece on the average. For the structure of prewar ministries, see Hata Ikuhiko, Senzenki Nihon Kanryosei no Seido-Soshiki-Jinji [The Personnel, Organization, and System of Prewar Japanese Bureaucracy] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1981).

⁸Robert M. Spaulding, Jr., "The Bureaucracy as a Political Force: 1920-1945," in James W. Morley, ed., Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1971), p. 44.

⁹Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1971), pp. 33-40.

¹⁰Giovanni Sartori, Parties and Party Systems, 2 vols. projected (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1976), 1:185-192. Japan met all of Sartori's criteria for a two-party system consistently after 1925, occasionally before that time. As Robert Scalapino has noted, when third parties participated in the ruling parliamentary majority, as they did in 1924, they were generally "transitional forces," often groups

temporarily split from one of the major parties which later rejoined the fold. See Scalapino, "Elections and Political Modernization in Prewar Japan," in Robert E. Ward, ed., Political Development in Modern Japan (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1968), pp. 285-286.

¹¹Dahl, Polyarchy, p. 3.

¹²Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 2 vols. (New York: Vintage Books, 1945), 1:190.

CHAPTER VI

FILM

Film, regarded by Lenin as "the most powerful means of educating the masses,"¹ was introduced in Japan in 1896, domestic production starting early in the second decade of this century. There being few theatres, the medium was initially promoted by road companies touring the country. From the outset, Japanese film production was in the hands of privately-owned, profit-making companies financially independent of the state and generally unconnected to other business sectors. By the mid-1920's, film had become an important mass medium. In 1926, the paying public for films numbered 153.7 million, and there were 15,348 pieces of film presented for mandatory state inspection before public showing.²

There was no integrated control system for film when the parties took over the cabinet. When the medium began to prosper in the 1920's, therefore, they were free to develop a comprehensive policy unencumbered by antecedent legislation. Remarkably, however, the parties never became involved in the regulation of film--the bureaucracy took complete charge. The manner in which this happened speaks to the general problem of bureaucratic power and accountability in democratic regimes. Film policy is also of special interest for the elaborate data available on censorship standards and their application, offering important insights into the political and social values of state elites. An effort has been

made to examine state intrusions into all segments of the industry: production, distribution, import and export, and theatre operations.

Bureaucratic Policymaking: The Regulations of 1925

Before 1925, state control over film was left to the discretion of the Home Ministry's local government and police officials, and it was subsumed under their general authority to regulate entertainment. Films were subject to censorship before public showing, and officials in each area determined their own inspection criteria and fees. This was but a small increment to the already voluminous responsibilities of the Home Ministry. In addition to its jurisdiction over film and the press, the ministry was in charge of public works, elections, health policy, the licensing of commercial enterprises, fire prevention, Shinto and other religious institutions, public baths, the labor movement and civil political organizations, land development, and the Emperor's public appearances. The Home Minister was sometimes referred to as the unofficial vice prime minister of Japan.

The growth of the film industry led to the centralization and standardization of control in May 1925, when the Home Ministry proclaimed its Motion Picture Film Inspection Regulations.³ This statute was a unilateral ministerial decree, neither requiring nor receiving cabinet discussion, Diet approval, or the imprimatur of any other ministry. With minor revisions, it guided state film administration for the next 14 years.

The 1925 regulations required state inspection of all films (and the narrative scripts accompanying silent movies) before public exposure. As a rule, central Home Ministry officials were to conduct the inspection,

and their license was good for three years. However, current events films requiring immediate inspection could be submitted to local government officials, whose approval was valid for three months within their jurisdiction. Officials were empowered to ban or restrict the showing of any film constituting a hindrance to public peace, manners and morals, or health, and to revoke the license of a film already passing inspection. All approved films were marked with an official seal noting any limits placed upon public showing of the work. Inspection fees were charged by the meter, and police were authorized to enter and examine any locale where films were shown. The maximum penalty for violations was a fine of 100 yen or, in lieu of payment, detention until such amount was worked off.

The purpose of these regulations was not to introduce a more Draconian order, but to systematize Home Ministry operations. This benefitted the film industry, since separate fees were no longer charged in each area where a film was shown, and central ministry approval obviated the need for repeated local inspections.

The decree was issued under the Home Ministry's authority to regulate entertainment, and this had important legal implications. The constitution protected the liberty of speech, writing, and publications against all interference unless authorized by parliamentary legislation. Had films been construed as a form of publication or speech, nothing but a Diet law could have initiated state control. However, by treating films for public showing as "entertainment" rather than "speech" or "publications," the Home Ministry denied the applicability of the constitution and empowered itself to handle the medium any way it saw fit. The illogic of denying film the status of speech or publications was not

lost on officials. In fact, the same Home Ministry regulated films sold over the counter for home use under the Publications Law. But this law required the submission of books for inspection just three days before public release, and that was not sufficient time to inspect all the incoming films destined for public showing. So the ministry expounded the awkward legal interpretation of publicly-shown film as "entertainment," thereby stripping film as a mass medium of all constitutional protection and leaving it at the mercy of bureaucratic decrees. The practice of unilateral bureaucratic policymaking evident in the ministry's press controls in the 1870's thus continued despite the presence of a constitution and rule by party cabinets. There is no evidence of party governments challenging ministerial power in this sphere, though one Diet member did protest the matter in March 1934:

. . . the influence of motion pictures is a tremendous thing . . . it is greater than the influence of lectures or speech and writing. If one reflects upon the influence of motion pictures today, I think it is truly as though the right of legislation were being transgressed for the government merely to handle this at its pleasure by means of arbitrarily manufactured ministerial decrees. It must be said that it is an infringement of the constitution that the basis of the ministerial decree upon which these Film Inspection Regulations depend does not conform to any old laws such as the Publications Law, the Newspaper Law, or the Public Peace Police Law, but is just a temporarily produced article. In short, I must say that you have disregarded the Diet.⁴

Nonetheless, state film control remained without a basis in law until 1939, and thus furnishes a prime example of bureaucratic autonomy in the formulation of important state policies.

Administrative Control in Practice

Home Ministry censors had some leeway in their handling of films. They were entitled to order a total ban from public showing, but rarely did they find a film so objectionable as to merit this sanction. More

often they labored as film editors and cut the offensive segments, approving the abridged version for public viewing. If scissors were inadequate to sanitize a film, officials might return it to its producers with instructions to reshoot certain scenes as a requisite for approval. Even when a film was beyond all repair and destined for prohibition, the censors usually forewarned its sponsors and had the film withdrawn from inspection before they were forced to administer the ultimate sanction. Finally, they might pass a film but restrict its showing to certain parts of the country, or to certain viewing facilities (e.g., indoor theatres or medical schools). In sum, film inspectors could exercise five options: to ban, to cut, to return for revision, to recommend withdrawal, and to impose locational limits.

The institutional structure of film censorship was rather highly centralized. As mentioned above, all but current events films were inspected exclusively at central Home Ministry offices. In practice, only a small number of films were presented to local authorities for approval (the number peaked at 10% in 1927).⁵ In extraordinary circumstances, such as the coronation of the Showa Emperor in Kyoto in November 1928, film inspectors were dispatched from Tokyo to handle the thousands of incoming petitions for local film endorsement.⁶ Police could request that a centrally-approved film be banned in their district due to special conditions, e.g., if the film might inflame local tenancy disputes. These solicitations were usually conveyed over the telephone and might be granted or rejected by Home Ministry authorities in Tokyo.⁷ If favorably received, the new prohibition was formally enforced as an areal limitation on the showing of the film.

If inspection was mainly the business of central ministry offices, enforcement was entirely a local matter, and local officials were well equipped to handle it. They had the power to license and regulate local theatre operations, censor film advertising, and inspect both films and theatre facilities. They were also authorized to limit the length of films shown and the duration of film entertainment programs until February 1932, when policy on these matters was standardized.⁸ Police were urged by their Tokyo superiors to inspect theatre, film, and script before the showing of any film cut by the censors or bound to arouse exceptional public interest.⁹ To summarize, local police officials were empowered to inspect current events films, to ban a previously approved film with the consent of central authorities, to oversee theatre operations, and to enforce compliance with the film regulations of 1925.

The Home Ministry clearly dominated the administration of film controls, but other state institutions were also involved. The Army and Navy Ministries sometimes requested extraordinary priorities from Home Ministry censors. For example, when additional troops were deployed in Manchuria in May 1928, the army urged extra caution with films that might touch upon military secrets, military discipline, anti-military sentiments, Japanese-Chinese relations, and the atrocities of war.¹⁰ These instructions were quickly incorporated into film inspection standards throughout Japan.¹¹ The Ministry of Education was consulted informally when censors had doubts about films for children.¹² Education officials also controlled the choice of films shown in the schools. Finally, Japanese customs officials were authorized to inspect imported films as well as publications, and they possessed their own set of censorship criteria. Films and publications passed through customs were still obliged

to undergo Home Ministry inspection prior to public release. To coordinate the inspection system and to inform other state organs of its activities, the Home Ministry published a bulletin on film censorship three times per month.¹³

Tables 8-10 summarize the administrative sanctions imposed from 1925 to 1932. Table 8 provides an overview and confirms the propensity of censors to avoid outright bans and concentrate their efforts on the cutting room. Table 9 shows that Japanese news films were almost never subject to administrative sanctions. The inescapable conclusion is that news film never became a major outlet for political dissidence. In fact, it was state policy to exempt news films from inspection fees, along with a few educational films and non-fiction films produced with official cooperation. Table 10 offers the best estimate of the proportion of other films clipped by the censors. This table excludes all films inspected without charge, extra prints of previously submitted films, and those reinspected after their permits expired. In short, all films in the table were first time inspections, and dramatic movies constituted a good portion of them. The annual percentage of these films to be cut during inspection ranged from 11% to 22%. These figures can unveil only a partial picture of policy effectiveness. There are no records showing how many films were altered in production based on the director's prior experience with censorship. Nor do we know how many informal phone calls were received at the Home Ministry from movie studios begging an advisory opinion on a scene scheduled for shooting the next day.¹⁴ Foreign films fared considerably worse than the Japanese, due to differing Japanese standards of propriety and to the efforts of Japanese film makers to stay within national censorship restrictions.

TABLE 8

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE
FILM INSPECTION REGULATIONS: JULY 1925-1932

Year	Total Films Inspected ^a	Bans ^b	Required to Reshoot ^c	Films Cut	Limited by Location	Withdrawn ^d
1925	6,887	11	10	1,239	7	6
1926	15,348	28	44	1,807	87	52
1927	16,101	7	28	1,237	7	23
1928	18,893	8	30	1,445	7	39
1929	16,574	8	39	1,039	2	42
1930	17,430	2	16	1,015	86	35
1931	15,691	6	10	775	27	79
1932	18,436			780	18	96

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1927-1933.

^aThe figures include Japanese and imported films, films submitted for the first time, resubmissions, and prints of previously submitted films.

^bThe figures include films withdrawn from inspection because sponsors were informed they would be banned. These films are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column, except in 1932, when the number withdrawn for this reason is unknown.

^cThe figures include films withdrawn from inspection because sponsors were informed that reshooting was required for approval. All films requiring reshooting were listed as withdrawals from 1928. These films are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column, except in 1932.

^dSome films withdrawn from inspection were removed at the convenience of their sponsors, and not due to official action.

TABLE 9

JAPANESE CURRENT EVENTS FILMS CUT UNDER
THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION
REGULATIONS: 1926-1932

Year	Films Inspected	Films Cut
1926	632	32
1927	1,780	25
1928	6,283 ^a	35
1929	1,599	3
1930	1,798	11
1931	2,293	23
1932	5,420	25

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1927-1933.

^aThe large number of current events films inspected in 1928 was due to coverage of the imperial coronation.

TABLE 10

PAID INSPECTIONS OF FILMS SUBMITTED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND
THOSE CUT UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION REGU-
LATIONS, BY AREA OF PRODUCTION: July 1925-1932

Year	Japanese Films			Foreign Films			Total
	Inspected	Cut	% Cut	Inspected	Cut	% Cut	% Cut
1925	1,037	205	19%	972	241	24%	22%
1926	2,005	315	15	1,456	374	25	19
1927	2,682	246	9	1,132	216	19	12
1928	2,383	335	14	1,032	266	25	17
1929	2,863	255	8	1,522	306	20	12
1930	3,160	315	10	1,507	201	13	11
1931	3,095	328	10	1,171	202	17	12
1932	2,942	302	10	1,279	207	16	12

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo,
1927-1933.

Judging from official records, violations of the film regulations were few--judicial and police fines imposed on violators were as follows:¹⁵

	<u>Judicial Fines</u>	<u>Police Fines</u>
1925	5	
1926	15	2
1927	6	4
1928	5	
1929	7	
1930	2	3
1931	5	
1932	12	

One cannot know how many violations escaped notice, but unauthorized revisions of the narratives to silent movies could not be detected unless police witnessed the performance.¹⁶ Note that any political association violating the film code could also be prosecuted under the Peace Preservation Law if the issue were serious enough, thereby inviting much harsher penalties.¹⁷ This law is discussed in Chapter VIII.

Censorship Standards

Censorship standards are an illuminating source for the study of state ideology and the state-society relationship. The censor passes judgment on virtually every idea and practice current in society, defining the bounds of heresy and revealing by omission where the state will not intervene. In Japan, the study of censorship is an interesting reflection of the values embraced by the bureaucracy. Though the bureaucracy's policymaking role is recognized in many countries, treatments of official ideology are usually limited to the statements of a few top state leaders--there is simply too little information about the beliefs

of administrators. Since Japanese bureaucrats were solely responsible for fixing concrete censorship criteria, however, these provide valuable insights into their thinking. The central censorship guidelines in media regulations were to protect public order and manners and morals. The ubiquity of these nebulous formulae in prewar statutes is a measure of the leeway for bureaucratic discretion in applying the law. One or another rendition of the public order or public peace concept (annei chitsujo, koan, chian) was inscribed in the constitution (articles 8, 9, 59, 70), the Public Peace Police Law, the Criminal Litigation Law, the Administrative Enforcement Law, the Postal Law, the Customs Law, various clauses of the civil and criminal codes, and many other statutes.¹⁸ Administrators themselves confessed to the ambiguity of such phrases, and they had complete control over their meaning in practice.¹⁹

We will now examine the specific censorship criteria enforced to safeguard public order and manners and morals under the film regulations of 1925, inserting examples from press censorship where useful (public order criteria for film and the press largely overlapped). The frequency of resort to the various standards against films is given in Table 11.²⁰ Note that this table classifies each piece of film cut by the censors, and since one motion picture might be cut in several places, the "cuts" listed here exceed in number those recorded in Table 8. The precise contents banned under the public order concept were as follows:

1. Imperial family--"Items feared to desecrate the sanctity of the imperial family." This was ever the foremost dictate of state censorship. It was applied broadly to shield from abuse the imperial regalia (sword, jewels, and mirror), Shinto shrines and the Imperial Mausoleum, and all members of the imperial household past or present.

TABLE 11

PIECES OF FILM CUT UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION REGULATIONS,
BY CENSORSHIP STANDARDS AND AREA OF PRODUCTION
(J--JAPANESE, F--FOREIGN): 1927-1932

	1927		1928		1929		1930		1931		1932	
	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F
<u>Public Safety</u>												
1. Imperial family	7	3	6	0	0	4	2	3	1	5	2	0
2. Nation	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	10	0	0	0
3. Constitution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. Social organs	10	8	23	35	28	50	150	9	162	52	22	39
5. National ethos	0	0	3	27	0	5	0	38	1	3	0	1
6. Foreign affairs	0	8	25	11	0	4	1	3	30	1	8	4
7. Class conflict	9	0	8	11	7	16	79	4	19	3	12	0
8. Group conflict	14	0	0	1	10	22	57	2	14	2	13	1
9. Crime	91	50	208	72	55	30	139	14	46	54	55	67
10. Public business	24	42	65	96	36	59	30	27	13	35	13	38
11. Other	59	161	156	80	76	65	265	107	147	52	215	60
Area Total	214	272	494	334	212	255	725	207	443	207	340	210
Annual Total	486		828		467		932		650		550	
<u>Manners and Morals</u>												
1. Religion	9	2	3	0	0	0	21	1	1	4	0	0
2. Cruelty/Ugliness	583	80	473	102	119	42	153	27	103	43	86	41
3. Sex-related	682	1119	764	972	663	700	551	356	508	425	541	523
4. Work ethic	2	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0
5. Education	38	18	71	14	43	26	39	3	46	57	40	11
6. Family	10	9	26	51	26	29	21	4	29	15	21	13
7. Other	178	47	234	104	187	73	225	55	204	52	199	62
Area Total	1502	1275	1579	1243	1038	870	1010	446	893	596	888	650
Annual Total	2777		2822		1908		1456		1489		1538	
Grand Area Total	1716	1547	2073	1577	1250	1125	1735	653	1336	803	1228	860
Grand Annual Total	3263		3650		2375		2388		2139		2088	

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1928-1933.

This last provision encompassed every Emperor in history, including not a few mythical personages. Thus in 1925 the censors cut the samurai drama Nichirin (Sun) because they feared that a "princess" in the story might be mistaken for an imperial ancestor.²¹ A magazine was stopped from circulation in December 1930 for challenging the veracity of mythical accounts of the imperial family in history textbooks.²² Some scholarly writings contradicting imperial mythology were permitted in this period, but they had to be carefully phrased in highly academic language.

Regarding film, a tricky problem was to censor shots of the imperial chrysanthemum crest, which could not be used as a prop. Flower crests were commonplace on samurai costumes, and the difficulty was to determine whether this one or that might be confused with the imperial crest. An expert was called in from another branch of the Home Ministry (which also regulated Shinto shrines), and he advised that no flower crest of 12-25 petals be permitted unless it was easily distinguishable from the Emperor's chrysanthemum. The prohibited range of petals would otherwise prevent any confusion.²³

News film on the imperial household was even more delicate. Emperor Hirohito's visit to Kansai in June 1929 was preceded by a list of injunctions to local film inspectors from the central Home Ministry: no errors in script or film headings, especially in the specialized language used to describe the imperial family; no mistakes in the order of events on the Emperor's schedule; no films making it appear that the Emperor's attendants are moving forward parallel to him; no shots showing the exhaust from the bodyguards' side car; nothing out of focus, etc.²⁴

2. Nation--"Items feared to harm the dignity of the nation (kokka).²⁵ This category was aimed at disparaging treatments of Japan, its culture, or its people; according to Tajima Taro, the chief Home Ministry film inspector, these were censored "whether true or not."²⁵ Since the Japanese were understandably disinclined to produce or import such films, this standard saw little service. It was used against the American film Thunder in the East, in which a Japanese naval victory was attributed to a British advisor whose virtues were set off against the foil of a bungling Japanese admiral. The French film Yoshiwara, named after Tokyo's old red light district, was also found objectionable. Censors felt the portrayal of prostitution made Japan look uncivilized, and they judged the plot, in which a passionate Japanese heroine committed treason and perished for love of a dashing Westerner, to be an insult to the Japanese people.²⁶

3. Constitution--"Items suggesting or advocating thought which undermines the constitution (choken).²⁷ This article prohibited denunciation of state organs legitimized in the constitution, thus protecting the armed forces as well as the Diet from revolutionary rhetoric or extreme abuse. It was also used against films advocating independence for Korea or the other colonies. Criticism of conscription and pacifistic Western religious films were cut under this principle for implicit rejection of the military. In one case, a narrator of the film Yonin no Musuko (Four Sons) was fined for changing the approved script to embellish his account of a mother's agony upon her son's departure for war.²⁷ This crime of "anti-militarism" was recorded in January 1929.

Oddly enough, press censorship shows that even in this period the Diet was less sheltered from abuse than the throne or the military.

Censorship did not shield the ruling parliamentary majority from scathing vilification of its policies, nor did it silence calls for dissolution of the Diet in session. In general, only arguments for the complete elimination of the legislature by illegal means were outlawed, though some articles falling short of this extreme were censored if penned by radical political groups. For example, the program of the Rono Seinen Kyogikai (Worker Farmer Youth Conference) demanded dispersion of the Diet in February 1929, accusing it of bourgeois exploitation, preparations for an imperialistic war, and the introduction of executions for labor leaders under a revision of the Peace Preservation Law.²⁸ There was no denunciation of parliamentarism per se, but censors felt the statement implied as much and banned it from circulation. Normally, however, the cabinet, the Diet, and the parties were left open to the most spiteful remonstrances from anyone unassociated with leftist causes.

4. Social organs--"Items suggesting or advocating the thought of overthrowing the basic principles of contemporary social life;"

7. Class conflict--"Items related to social disputes." These were the clauses under which most political and economic radicalism was scrutinized. The social organs criterion opposed the promotion of systemic social change and protected major institutions not enshrined in the constitution. Items doomed to the cutting board included arguments for the eradication of political parties, capitalism, or the system of private property, and those condemning the principles of free competition and profit. Films emphasizing class struggle were also subsumed under this article. The distinction between the social organs and class conflict categories was merely one between thought and action. If a

film espoused peasant rebellion in principle, as through the voice of a lecturer, it was clipped under the former category; if it depicted actual fighting between peasants and landlords, it fell prey to the latter. The number of Japanese-made films cut under these two headings rose significantly in 1929, peaked in 1930 and 1931, and dropped rather precipitously in 1932. There is no reason to challenge the official interpretation of this pattern, which was that the Manchurian Incident of September 1931 had diverted the attention of film makers from the economy to the adventure of foreign conquest.²⁹

Though censors began to complain of leftist films in 1929,³⁰ most were not the work of political activists. Spurred on by the success of Ikeru Ningyo (Living Doll), these so-called "tendency films" were produced mainly by the big studios; they drew audiences during the depression and garnered profits for a film industry itself hurting economically.³¹ They portrayed the contrasts between rich and poor, but generally steered clear of revolutionary propaganda. Many in fact were set against a backdrop of swords and samurai some decades, if not centuries, into the past.

If the encouragement of class struggle was taboo, press censorship was nonetheless fairly tolerant of class analysis. For example, in the August 1929 edition of the magazine Kaizo (Reconstruction), one writer commented: "As far as we the proletariat are concerned, the Hamaguchi Minseito cabinet differs not a bit in essentials from Tanaka's Seiyukai cabinet in that it is a government of the large capitalist landlords." Another contribution was titled "The Minseito Cabinet of Bourgeois Clerks."³² The magazine suffered no sanctions, and references to the class character of state institutions were not rare in journals

passed by the censor.

5. National ethos--"Items opposed to a firm belief in the nation (minzoku)." The national ethos principle was specifically intended to shelter the mythical foundations of nationalism. According to Tajima Taro, the consuming principle of Japan was a belief that her people were descendants of the gods, as written in the mythical Kojiki and Nihon Shoki. This belief or sentiment was not the product of academic study. He wrote that a scholarly film on the racial origins of the Japanese might be permitted for research, but not if it threatened the country's national ethos before its people. There is no record of such a film ever being produced.

6. Foreign affairs--"Items feared to damage good will in foreign affairs." This principle eliminated "undeserved" insults to foreign countries or people, and impediments to the realization of foreign policy goals. Such films became a noticeable problem only after the Manchurian Incident in 1931, no doubt due to domestic invective against the Chinese and international criticism of Japan.

8. Group conflict--"Items related to forceful struggles between groups." By this precept the censor cut scenes of fighting between non-class groups such as criminal gangs.

9. Crime--"Items showing how to commit a crime or how to conceal a crime or criminal which it is feared may lead to imitation." This canon was applied more often than any other in the area of public safety. Criminal behavior per se was not forbidden, only such deeds as might be emulated by a spectator. Today one often hears allegations that criminal violence in films influences actual behavior--the Japanese police documented this connection. In 1929, for instance, they found

232 crimes caused by the example of films (89 directly, 143 indirectly). The majority were various forms of stealing, but there were also two attempted rapes, two cases of arson, and one homicide. All but 13 of the perpetrators were less than 21 years of age.³³ Thus the police had rather definite ideas as to which crimes ought to be cut from motion pictures.

10. Public business--"Items feared to cause a hindrance to the execution of public business." This category guarded the censor and his collaborators in the state administration from criticism. Needless to say, it was interpreted rather loosely. Mack Sennett and the Keystone Cops were said to damage respect for the police and were offered by Tajima as examples of a "hindrance to the execution of public business."³⁴

We now turn to censorship criteria under the rubric of manners and morals:

1. Religion--"Items feared to damage the virtuous spirit of religious faith or disturb the praiseworthy customs of religious reverence and ancestor worship." Article 28 of the constitution guaranteed freedom of religion as long as it did not disturb public order or interfere with the duties of citizenship. Accordingly, not only state Shinto but also other officially recognized religions were screened from abuse by the censor. Unrecognized religions could be handled at the discretion of the film maker.³⁵ A notable beneficiary of this provision was the Salvation Army, an occasional target of nasty humor. Beyond the disparagement of recognized religions, film inspectors also cut general criticism of religion in which no particular faith was named.

2. Cruelty/ugliness--"Items related to brutality," and "Items giving rise to offensive feelings." Two categories in the original set

of censorship criteria are merged here. The first was directed at scenes of blood and gore one might find in a war movie. The second prohibited films of such things as people deformed by disease.

3. Sex-related--"Items related to illicit sexual relations," and "Items related to lewdness or indecency." Here again two original standards are combined. The first was aimed at extra-marital sex, the second was broken down into kissing, dancing, embracing, nudity, flirting, sexual innuendo, pleasure-seeking, and "others." Kissing was rarely permitted in foreign movies, and never in Japanese films unless the scene was of a mother kissing her child or the like, "because [kissing] in movies is not recognized as a virtuous Japanese custom according to healthy social convention."³⁶ Just as American audiences once grew accustomed to the one-foot-on-the-floor rule when a couple was filmed sitting on a bed, the Japanese public was treated to kissing scenes shot from the ankles down--two pairs of feet gingerly approached one another, and then the fellow's cigarette hit the floor to remove all doubts as to what was happening from the neck up.

4. Work ethic--"Items related to the ruin of work." This standard was seldom used, but its content is of some interest. It was leveled at the encouragement of laziness, the notion that work doesn't pay, and at scenes of despair in which a person's economic plight seemed hopeless. Films expressing admiration for the carefree "Ginza-man" lifestyle of the Western-oriented wealthy were also cut under this provision.³⁷

5. Education--"Items feared to become a hindrance to the development of knowledge and virtue or an obstacle to education," and "Items feared to provoke children's mischievous spirit or to impair the

authority of teachers." Once more two principles are combined for analysis. The first prohibited any contradiction of what was taught in the school system, e.g., a religious movie was cut for its account of faith healing. The criterion was applied mainly to elementary level education, but higher learning did not get away unscathed. Einstein's theory of relativity was checked out with professors at Tokyo Imperial University before bureaucrats would license a film about it.³⁸ The second dictate simply forbade the portrayal of misbehavior that might be imitated by children, and disrespect to the profession of teaching.

6. Family—"Items which strikingly run counter to the customs of a virtuous home." Censorship in defense of the family was intimately tied to the myth of Japan as a family nation. Tajima explained this stricture as follows:

Individualism does not recognize the supremacy of the national society. Because it denies that the national society rules the individual and, when necessary, may limit the individual's freedom, and stresses that the national society must exist only for the purposes and happiness of the individual, naturally it is contrary to the virtues of the home in our country.³⁹

In other words, the submission of the individual to his family was the basis of his patriotism and self-sacrifice for the state; the censor guarded the one as he would guard the other. Individualism and other corrupt family practices (polygamy and jus primae noctis are also mentioned) were regarded as foreign customs destructive of Japanese traditions.

Despite this long list of censorship criteria, a large number of film cuts were classified in the "other" categories, indicating that many more standards may have been in force. This demonstrates the remarkable latitude for bureaucratic application of a statute that spoke

only of public peace and manners and morals.

The wide range of topics subject to censorship denotes that officials sensed a responsibility for the whole human being under their charge. They were concerned not only with revolutionary politics or a narrow conception of pornography, but also with the family, religion, education, and economic life. In other words, bureaucrats did not recognize a clear boundary between legitimate interests of state and an inviolable sphere of civil activity. This reflects a highly paternalistic attitude toward subjects, an underlying belief that officials were not merely a political elite but a moral elite fully justified in laying down prescriptions for every aspect of social life. Administrators did not distinguish sharply between political and moral subject matter. In their view, politics and manners and morals were inextricably related and had to be considered in tandem. Censors discussed the evils of eroticism in the same terms (and often in the same sentence) they used to complain of socialist films.⁴⁰ The hazy boundary between politics and manners and morals paralleled the absence of demarcation between the public and private spheres.

Despite the breadth of censorship standards, however, the regulation of films in this period stayed well within the province of negative control. Bureaucrats strove to block objectionable contents from public exposure, but they did not exert positive control (or mobilization) by limiting film production to specified themes. The potential film maker was surrounded by forbidden fruit, but he was not steered into a single path. This was consistent with the basic thrust of periodical press censorship, but film control was more severe in that inspection was conducted before and not after public circulation had begun. This

factor, combined with the expense and expertise required to make films and the greater difficulty of concealing violations, prevented the medium from becoming a prominent vehicle for political debate and criticism in this period.

Notes

¹Quoted in Gayle D. Hollander, "From Soviet Political Indoctrination: Film," in Leonard J. Cohen and Jane P. Shapiro, eds., Communist Systems in Comparative Perspective (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1974), p. 273.

²These are official figures from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Katsudo Shashin Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo [Motion Picture Film Inspection Annual Report], 1927, hereafter cited with the abbreviated title Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo.

³The regulations are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei [Mass Media Controls], 2 vols., intro. and ed. Uchikawa Yoshimi, Gendai Shi Shiryo 40-41 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1973), vol. 1, document 2, pp. 6-8. A first step towards uniformity was the Rules for the Management of Motion Picture Entertainment prepared by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police in 1917 and circulated to police offices nationwide. Adoption of these norms by other police bureaus was optional. See Taikakai, ed., Naimusho Shi [History of the Home Ministry], 4 vols. (Tokyo: Chiho Zaimu Kyokai, 1970), 2:738.

⁴The statement of lower house Representative Hoshijima Jiro in committee hearings, 25 March 1934, reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 55, p. 350.

⁵The number of locally-inspected films declined markedly in the mid-1930's so that by 1938 only 151 films (.03%) were examined by local officials. This trend accelerated as Japan became further mired in war. The figures are recorded in Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1928-1939.

⁶See Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 24, pp. 205-208.

⁷Tajima Taro, Ken'etsu Shitsu no Yami ni Tsubuyaku [Murmuring in the Darkness of the Inspection Room] (Tokyo: Dai Nihon Katsudo Eisha Kyokai, 1938), pp. 278, 296. These are the memoirs of the chief Home Ministry film inspector.

⁸In 1932, individual films were limited to 6000 meters and programs to a maximum of four hours, including at least a ten minute intermission. Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1933, p. 55.

⁹This recommendation emerged from a conference of film police officials held in Tokyo, 4 August 1925. See Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 5, pp. 11-12.

¹⁰See Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 25, p. 209.

¹¹The Military Police also occasionally played a role in film censorship. The MP's were charged by a number of statutes with the protection of military secrets, and they were consulted by Home Ministry censors on the propriety of military-related films. They sometimes took more direct action. In January 1926, a squad entered a theatre in Osaka and proceeded to cut some 20 meters of a Home Ministry approved film, claiming it violated the Military Base Zone Law--apparently an area inside base facilities had been photographed. This action elicited no protest from Home Ministry officials, who advised their local police bureaus to refer such matters to Tokyo to be worked out in consultation with Military Police Headquarters. Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1928, pp. 68-69. The role of the Military Police in mass media censorship is not well documented, but it appears that direct involvement of this sort was rare.

¹²Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 8, p. 16.

¹³This report contained special censorship instructions from the ministry to its local offices, statistics on the imposition of sanctions, and brief accounts of how particularly pernicious films and those posing unusual administrative problems had been handled. Each issue was printed in 1600 copies, and the mailing list included the Army, Navy, and Education Ministries, Military Police Headquarters, and Japanese government or military offices in Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, the South Seas, and Sakhalin. See Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1928, pp. 67-68.

¹⁴Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, p. 292, for evidence of this practice.

¹⁵Figures from Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 51-58, 1925-1932. Note that it was not a legal violation to submit a film for inspection that was later banned, only to show such a film after inspection, or change the film or script, was a crime.

¹⁶Memos from the Home Ministry to local police urging diligence against such violations were not uncommon. Memos to this effect circulated in 1928 and 1929 are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 26, pp. 209-210, and document 30, p. 215.

¹⁷This possibility was pointed out in the general report issued at a meeting of Kansai Region film inspectors held in October 1925. See *ibid.*, document 8, p. 16.

¹⁸Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho [Publications Police Report], no. 6, p. 98. These reports were produced from October 1928 to March 1944, usually on a monthly basis.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 97; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Showa 5-Nen ni Okeru Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan [Publications Police Survey for 1930], reprinted ed. (Tokyo: Ryukei Shosha, 1981), p. 326. These were reports printed annually from 1930 through 1935. They will hereafter be cited with the title Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, followed by the year of issue.

²⁰Several categories under manners and morals have been collapsed together in the table for purposes of analysis, as will be explained below.

²¹Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 18, p. 32.

²²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 16, p. 99.

²³Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, pp. 255-256.

²⁴Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1930, pp. 84-85.

²⁵Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, p. 263.

²⁶Ibid., p. 266.

²⁷Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1930, p. 88.

²⁸This piece was handled under the Publications Law, but the same public order standards were enforced under that law as under the Newspaper Law. Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 6, p. 105.

²⁹Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1934, p. 2.

³⁰Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1930, pp. 4-5.

³¹For a concise treatment of tendency films (keiko eiga), see Tanaka Jun'ichiro, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi [History of Japanese Film Development, 4 vols. (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1957), 2:12-15.

³²Quotations from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 12, p. 77.

³³Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1930, pp. 113-115.

³⁴Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, p. 330.

³⁵Ibid., p. 319. The state divided religions into two groups for

administrative purposes. The first, "recognized religions" (konin shukyo), comprised all those formally sanctioned by the state early in the Meiji period: 13 sects of Shinto, 11 Buddhist religions with 56 sects, and a number of Christian groups. For some religions founded thereafter, a second category of "analogous to religions" (ruiji shukyo) was used. After 1914, the Ministry of Education regulated the recognized churches, the Home Ministry the second category, though the Home Ministry also maintained special duties in relation to state Shinto. It is unclear from Tajima's work whether both of these categories were protected by censorship, excluding only religions belonging to neither, or whether only the first-mentioned recognized religions were protected. On the state classification of religions and instances of persecution, see Watanabe Osamu, "Fashizumu-ki no Shukyo Tosei" [Control over Religion in the Fascist Period], in Tokyo Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyujo "Fashizumu to Minshushugi" Kenkyukai, ed., Senji Nihon no Hotaisei [The Legal System of Wartime Japan], Fashizumu-ki no Kokka to Shakai 6 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1979).

³⁶Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, p. 330.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 363-367.

³⁸Ibid., p. 371.

³⁹Ibid., p. 379.

⁴⁰E.g., "In today's situation, erotic love movies are not inferior to [socialist films] in the evil social influence they project; rather, if one looks at things from the point of view of the rise and fall of public spirit, one must recognize that they are even more fearful." Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1930, p. 5. See also the volume for 1934, p. 2.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRESS

The 1918-1932 period was one of tremendous growth in the size and quality of the periodical press. Journals registered under the Newspaper Law rose in this span from 3,123 to 11,118.¹ Magazines of high intellectual caliber appeared catering to the growing number of middle class readers with advanced educations, and a handful of daily newspapers established themselves as national opinion leaders. The Osaka Mainichi Shinbun, for example, grew in circulation from 260,000 in 1912 to 670,000 in 1921 and 1,500,000 in 1930.² Major press organs developed a new professionalism and prestige in this period. Ownership patterns had already been drifting away from the one-man operations of the early years to a corporate format, and the Tokyo earthquake of 1923 greatly spurred this trend, since the many publishing houses ruined in the disaster could not be rebuilt by single individuals. In the early 1920's, prominent newspapers introduced entrance examinations for reporterial jobs. In 1921, the Asahi's first exam attracted but three or four applicants for each slot; in 1928, there were over 500 competing for some ten positions.³ The newspaper's columnists now included not only university professors and other leading intellectuals, but even retired bureau chiefs from the state administration.⁴ This new respectability was in some measure a logical accompaniment to the rule of party governments. There were few senior party politicians without some

experience in journalism; Prime Minister Hara Kei had been editor of the Osaka Mainichi Shinbun from 1897 to 1900, and Prime Minister Kato Komei had once been president of the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shinbun. Many journals were long-standing supporters of the democratic cause, and in the early 1920's it was newspapers that led the drive for universal manhood suffrage.

The course of state press policy in this period was influenced by three factors: the legal and extra-legal control devices developed by the bureaucracy, the appearance of an active leftist and labor press that inspired new legislation to quash radicalism, and a substantial movement in journalistic circles to liberalize the Newspaper Law. Overall, the period was one of brutal suppression for political extremists, yet liberal treatment for mainstream critics of the state, even though the latter failed in their effort to soften the regular press laws.

Administrative Controls

The Newspaper Law allowed bureaucrats to inflict two direct sanctions upon periodicals. One was to ban the circulation of specific editions violating censorship standards--police could seize both the printed issues and the stereotypes. Publishers suffered an immediate economic loss on unsold issues and later might be prosecuted in court. Fledgling magazines were especially vulnerable to the material loss, since a weekly or monthly edition involved a greater relative investment than one edition of a daily newspaper. The other administrative power was to suspend publication of journals for procedural violations, i.e., for failing to report the intent to publish or pay the required bond. Police could stop publication until the proper procedures were

followed. Table 12 indicates the frequency of resort to these sanctions and those described below.

Beyond these two measures, officials devised extra-legal methods to control the press, just as they had in film policy. When contents did not justify a ban on circulation but bordered on an offense, journals were given a warning not to publish similar articles again. When the objectionable parts of a journal were few, publishers were sometimes permitted to offer it for sale after making deletions--this spared them unnecessary financial injury.⁵ Deletions were first allowed for books in the early 1920's, and later afforded regularly to magazines. Daily papers could not avail themselves of this option because the need for immediate sale left them no time to make the required changes. The most important control policy without a legal basis was the pre-publication warning system for newspapers. Officials would notify the journals not to report on certain current events related to public order. The warnings took three forms: instructions--publication will probably result in a ban on circulation, admonitions--publication may bring a ban on circulation depending on the social situation and the nature of the article, and consultations--publication will not be punished, but a moral appeal is made not to report the incident.⁶ One such warning is documented as early as 1923, and they were probably employed sporadically before then, but it was under party governments that they first saw constant service. Some were dispensed nationwide, others limited to particular regions. The warnings often counseled against any coverage except for official press releases, lending them a mobilizational character beyond censorship. Like deletions, they could be of benefit to publishers. The ambiguity of censorship statutes made it difficult

TABLE 12
 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS ENFORCED AGAINST DOMESTIC PERIODICALS
 SUBJECT TO THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1918-1932

Year	Press Organs	Dailies	Bonded Organs	Banned Editions	Post- Publication Warnings	Deletions	Procedural Suspensions	Pre- Publication Warnings Ins-Adm-Con ^a
1918	3123			513	1080		7	
1919	3333			200	518		3	
1920	3532			339 ⁱ	750		2	
1921	3980	813	3056	445	529		5	
1922	4562	865	3403	98	667		4	
1923	4592	893	3603	819	1088		3	1 - 0 - 0
1924	5854	948	4184	299	678	0	6	0 - 0 - 0
1925	6899	1012	4739	175	789	0	16	1 - 0 - 0
1926	7600	1035	5089	295	884	1	13	0 - 0 - 0
1927	8350	1093	5438	355	773	2	17	1 - 2 - 4
1928	8445	1150	5482	389	558	4	4	8 - 1 - 5
1929	9191	1221	5917	442	998	4	6	2 - 1 - 3 ^b
1930	10130	1215	5995	539	1127	6	4	5 - 0 - 4
1931	10666	1280	6290	881	1546	9	11	4 - 10 - 1
1932 ^c	11118	1330	6301	2246	4348	48	4	44 - 19 - 1

Sources: For pre-publication warnings up to 1929, Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 8, pp. 135-138; for banned editions, post-publication warnings, and procedural suspensions over 1918-1920, Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 21, pp. 201-203; all else is from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931-1935.

^aThe abbreviations refer to "instructions," admonitions," and "consultations."

^bThe data on pre-publication warnings for 1929 are complete only through May.

^cThe sharp rise in sanctions in 1932 was not due to the end of party governments in May. Bans on circulation averaged 251 per month over January-April, only 150 over June-December, and 37 of the 64 pre-publication warnings were given before Inukai's murder.

to predict the permissible range of reportage on current events, so advance warnings could help one avoid sanctions. Nonetheless, these were bureaucratic attempts to upgrade state control without any legal substructure.

Censorship Standards

The regular censorship guidelines to safeguard public order and manners and morals have been reviewed in Chapter VI and require only brief elaboration here. Manners and morals standards for the press were somewhat more focused on sexual matters than those used for film, while regular public order standards were very similar in substance. The public order taboos operative in 1931 were as follows: desecration of the imperial family; rejection of the monarchy; propaganda for the theories or strategy of communism, anarchism, and other revolutionary movements; emphasis upon the class character of the state or the law; agitation for terror, direct action, or mass violence; the advocacy of independence for the colonies; rejection of the parliamentary system by illegal means; challenges to the foundation of the armed forces; hindrances to diplomatic relations; the revelation of secrets important to military or foreign affairs; agitation or praise for crime, and impediments to the investigation of criminal suspects; matters disturbing the business world or otherwise arousing social unrest.⁷ The last entry was a catch-all for offenses escaping the other guidelines. Table 13 enumerates administrative sanctions for violations of these regular public order standards and pre-publication warnings. Note that the regular public order prohibitions are known today only through secret documents. They were not publicized at the time, and bureaucrats would

TABLE 13

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC
 PERIODICALS FOR PUBLIC ORDER VIOLATIONS
 UNDER THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1918-1932

Year	Banned Editions	Post-Publication Warnings	Deletions
1918	478	159	
1919	181	246	
1920	327	430	
1921	411	226	
1922	70	221	
1923	771	578	
1924	267	240	0
1925	154	287	0
1926	251	319	1
1927	331	328	1
1928	345	292	4
1929	374	383	0
1930	504	503	5
1931	832	737	8
1932	2081	3555	43

Sources: Data for 1918-1920 are from Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 21, pp. 201-203; data for 1921-1932 are from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931-1935.

not even discuss them in the Diet unless the minutes were stopped. Since the police were not committed to a fixed set of known standards and did not identify the offending passages when an edition was banned, there was no reliable guide as to how public order might be construed in regard to any particular story.

Circumstantial censorship criteria peculiar to the press made it even harder to anticipate the censor's next move. Reading through examples of banned material, one is often startled to find rather innocuous articles inviting sanctions while more radical pieces were passed over. Moreover, one state document admitted that "there are often cases of accounts of absolutely the same content being disregarded in one journal but causing another to be banned from circulation."⁸ If the inconsistency of officials was one reason for these anomalies, another was the consideration given to circumstantial factors. In 1931, the following circumstantial criteria were in use: the publication's purpose--purely academic journals were handled more leniently than those of political groups; the readership--periodicals aimed at youth or workers were judged especially harshly; the publication's circulation and influence--substantial journals were the most carefully watched, while those produced by small radical groups were sometimes overlooked as a harmless means for potentially more dangerous elements to blow off steam; the social climate--enforcement was more severe in times of disorder, such as after the Tokyo earthquake, or around May Day, when the possibility of agitation turning into concrete disturbances was greater than usual; geographic distribution--journals sold where there had been violent tenant or labor disputes or a run on the banks received closer scrutiny; the extent of completed circulation--

official action might be waived if all offending issues had been disseminated at the time of discovery; the proportion of objectionable material--this pertained to how much of the journal's contents violated standards on content. Given the bureaucratic power to formulate substantive censorship standards, the ambiguity of the standards themselves, and the further discretion afforded by circumstantial considerations, the press control system was more one of rule by men than rule by law.

Pre-publication warnings on current events comprised a third set of censorship standards applied only to newspapers. The principal subject matter of these warnings will now be reviewed, with reference only to "instructions" or "admonitions" that might bring a ban on circulation if disobeyed.⁹ There were at least 23 such warnings against reporting bank failures to bolster public confidence during the depression (1929-4, 1930-4, 1931-7, 1932-8). Another common function was to cover up political crimes. There were nine warnings on offenses of *lèse majesté*, starting with the attempt on the Crown Prince's life in 1923 (the Toranomon Incident), and seven warnings not to report the arrest or pursuit of communist suspects, the first occurring in June 1928. Events embarrassing to the military were also frequent objects of warnings. Among the dirty linen buried by at least 11 warnings were the embezzlement of ordnance by military personnel (December 1927), radical statements by young army officers (October 1931), the suicide of a major in the Shanghai expeditionary force (March 1932), and espionage by a typist at Manchukuo's Police Affairs Office (August 1932). Most critical was the "instruction" imparted on 16 May 1932 to hush up the complicity of naval officers in the assassination of Prime Minister

Inukai (the 5/15 Incident). Items to be omitted from press reports were (1) the status, names, and personal histories of the criminals, (2) anything indicating the incident was connected with the military, and (3) the motives of the perpetrators and predictions that similar events might recur. The radical cabals of low-ranking officers were ominous signs of danger in these years, but the state endeavored to screen them from the public, even when they cost the life of the last prewar party Prime Minister.

The biggest theme of pre-publication warnings was Japan's military and political thrust into Manchuria starting in September 1931. There were some 19 warnings over 1931-1932 to gag the reporting of military activities related to Manchuria. Escalation of Japan's involvement was veiled beneath warnings not to recount troop departures for the front or the calling up of reserves. There were 14 more warnings clouding over the establishment of Manchukuo as a puppet state. For example, the Home Ministry ordered silence on initial plans for an "independent" Manchukuo (September 1931), on the building of railroads (several instances), the participation of Japanese nationals in Manchurian politics and administration (February 1932), transportation and customs duty policy (March 1932), a visit by the Litton Commission to Japanese army officials (April 1932), the Manchurian Central Bank (May 1932), and the Japanese-Manchukuo Treaty accompanying recognition of the new state (August 1932). Often the warnings were lifted after officials announced the event as a fait accompli, impeding criticism until it was without effect. The main purpose was sometimes to keep foreign countries in the dark, but the system also withheld vital information from the Japanese people. Since the founding of Manchukuo was a

momentous event in Japanese history, state efforts to block information and public debate are highly significant.

Most newspapers and magazines needed little urging to support the state's objectives on the Asian mainland, but on other issues they were not easily intimidated by official directives, and even on the Manchurian question the imperatives of reporting the news and boosting sales frequently took precedence over obedience to the law. After a brief review of judicial sanctions, the effectiveness of state censorship will be examined in three sections. These will cover the impact of the administrative ban on circulation (the principal weapon used against the press), censorship of the radical left, and a content analysis of critical articles in leading press organs.

Judicial Sanctions

The ultimate judicial penalty of closing a publication altogether fell into disuse in this period--only one journal was closed, this for a public order violation in 1929. In effect, then, the press had nothing to fear from this power. The sentences meted out to individuals for violating the Newspaper Law are recorded in Table 14. Fines were clearly the principal judicial penalty. Only 66 offenders were sentenced to prison in 15 years, and none received a term of more than six months. The impact of fines varied with the financial resources of the journal. They were not a viable deterrent against the larger periodicals, but might be deadly against weaker publishers. The more severe court sentences against leftists arrested under the Peace Preservation Law are enumerated later in this chapter (see Subjugation of the Radical Left).

TABLE 14

JUDICIAL VERDICTS IN TRIALS OF INDIVIDUALS
PROSECUTED FOR VIOLATING THE NEWSPAPER
LAW: 1918-1932

Year	Sentenced to Prison	Fined	Acquitted
1918	16	629	16
1919	5	193	10
1920	4	143	8
1921	6	210	1
1922	8	128	2
1923	2	226	5
1924	3	280	3
1925	6	189	0
1926	2	255	0
1927	0	197	0
1928	3	179	2
1929	4	404	0
1930	0	262	0
1931	0	197	1
1932	7	169	0

Source: Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 44-58, 1918-1932.

Note: The data cover the results of regular trials and summary sentences handed down by the court of first instance (the original tables are titled Zaimai Betsu Tsujo Dai Isshin Tokubetsu Ho Han Shukyoku Hikokunin no Ka Kai Sono Hoka, and Zaimai Betsu Ryakushiki Jiken Tokubetsu Ho Han Shukyoku Hikokunin no Ka Kei Sono Hoka, respectively).

Some sentenced to prison were fined as well, but only those suffering fines without prison are listed under "Fined" in the table.

Appeals against these sentences were very few and rarely ended in favor of the accused.

The Modest Impact of Administrative Controls

Police efforts to stop the circulation of particular editions were of very limited effect. Journals subject to the Newspaper Law submitted inspection copies simultaneous with publication, and there simply wasn't time to seize an offending edition before it hit the newsstands. The Home Ministry kept detailed records of its attempts to impound banned periodicals. In 1932, the confiscation rate for 236 selected Newspaper Law publications banned by bureaucrats was only 25% of their total circulation.¹⁰ Despite ongoing efforts to stiffen enforcement, performance was slow to improve. In 1935, 433 editions of newspapers with known circulation were banned, but only 23% of all copies was intercepted before sale.¹¹ One would expect better results for magazines, which circulate more slowly, but even here execution was mediocre. In 1935, there were 103 Newspaper Law magazine editions with known circulation banned, yet just 26% of the total was grabbed before sale.¹² Furthermore, data for 1933 show that the confiscation of journals violating public order was less than half the rate for those offending manners and morals, in that year 27% to 58%.¹³

One implication is that the pre-publication warning system could not keep information from the public. Violations of the warnings were commonplace, as Table 15 demonstrates, and the country's most influential newspapers were among the offenders. Some unlawful editions were circulated before state notification, but many publishers consciously ignored official warnings to stay abreast of their competitors--sensational headlines sell newspapers. Judicial sanctions did not discourage this practice, since they were almost always limited to fines inferior to the profits earned by major newspapers from a special edition. However, the

TABLE 15

EDITIONS BANNED FOR VIOLATIONS OF PRE-PUBLICATION
WARNINGS, BY SUBJECT MATTER OF THE
WARNINGS: 1931-1932

Year	Subject Matter	Banned Editions
1931	Military activities in Manchuria	156
	Manchurian-Mongolian independence	41
	Financial conditions of various banks	37
	Radical statements by young army officers	16
	The Manchurian Railroad	11
	Manchurian-Korean air routes	1
	Total	262
1932	Shanghai Incident	437
	Manchurian-Mongolian Incident	259
	Crime of lese majeste	130
	Assassination of Prime Minister Inukai	94
	Disturbances of the business world	69
	Arrests under the Peace Preservation Law	52
	Military secrets	39
	Total	1080

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 43-44, and Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, pp. 70-72.

Note: More than one warning may be counted under each subject.

violations were heavily concentrated around the event in question and fell off sharply afterwards. The official warning on Inukai's assassination was violated 89 times in May 1932, when the crime occurred, but only five times more during the rest of the year. A *lèse majesté* incident in January 1932 drew 128 violations in that month, only two thereafter.¹⁴ This indicates that although the warnings did not curtail initial reporting of big events, they did prevent extended public discussion of them.

Beyond the leniency of the law, publishers' tactics to frustrate enforcement were another cause of administrative failure. To avoid police confiscation, publishers began distribution before submitting inspection copies (sometimes falsifying or smearing the date of publication), shipped banned issues packaged as other products, delivered censor's copies the day before a holiday or weekend when inspection would take longer, or made two sets of stereotypes to continue publication if one were seized.¹⁵ Other tactics were to submit galleys or self-censored copies to officials and then change the contents for final printing, publish articles by radical writers under other names, or, if a piece was flunked by bureaucrats one year, present it under a new title the next--there is evidence this occasionally worked.¹⁶

An accepted method of avoiding the ban on circulation was the use of blank type--words, sentences, or even whole paragraphs feared to run afoul of the censor were replaced by X's and O's. Sometimes each X or O would replace one character of the Japanese language, and readers were challenged to supply the missing words. Today it is often difficult to fill in the blanks, but prewar readers, including the censors, became quite adept at it. For example, consider the following passage

from the Musansha Kyoiku (Proletarian Education) dated 5 October 1929:

The capitalist landlord class has learned that the Japan Communist Party is upholding abolition of the monarchical system as its immediate policy. Moreover, as the Japan Communist Party stresses very justly, the realization of a communist society is that our working class overthrow . . .¹⁷

In the original, the editor substituted blank type for the underlined words to escape the sure sanctions for supporting the Communist Party or opposing the monarchy. Words like "communist," "revolution," "monarchy," and "Emperor" were frequently X'd out of leftist literature or replaced by euphemisms, e.g., "proletarian party" for "Communist Party." In this instance, however, the blanks were not obscure enough; officials read in their intended meaning and banned the magazine from circulation. Blank type was used by even the most prestigious magazines starting in the mid-1920's. The practice demonstrates that magazines took administrative sanctions seriously enough to exercise self-censorship, but it also shows the laxity of press controls in this period. The missing words symbolized a desire to break the law, and that desire was being publicly advertized with every X and O. Officials may have tolerated blank type as a flawed but useful expedient given their inability to stop patently illegal issues from circulating--the latter shortcoming could not be corrected administratively because the Newspaper Law was quite specific about censor's copies being submitted simultaneous with publication.

Subjugation of the Radical Left

The suppression of Japan's prewar revolutionary left was primarily the work of party governments. The last round of mass arrests occurred in late 1932 under a non-party premier, but this was just the finale to

a relentless record of persecution.¹⁸ There had been mass arrests of communists and other radicals in June and September 1923, December 1925, March and August-October 1928, April 1929, and November 1931. Leftist publications were a major target of the anti-radical campaign. Not only were the regular press laws used heavily against the left, but a Peace Preservation Law was passed in 1925 to exacerbate the penalties for revolutionary propaganda--this law was more severe than any press-related statute since the Meiji revolution. We will now examine state policy toward leftist journals looking into its motivations as well as effects.

The Newspaper Law, like the press legislation preceding it, was applied with special harshness against the left. In 1931, for example, there were 283 newspaper editions banned from circulation for violating regular public order censorship standards, and 241 were leftist.¹⁹ An early cause célèbre in this period was the Morito Incident of January 1920. Morito Tatsuo, an economics professor at Tokyo Imperial University, published a scholarly article on Kropotkin, analyzing his contention that monarchies were rooted in serfdom and parliamentarism in wage slavery. Morito praised Kropotkin's vision of anarcho-syndicalist society, while rejecting illegal means to realize it. The courts sentenced him to three months in prison for disturbing public order under the Newspaper Law, and he simultaneously lost his teaching post. The case was typical of public order violations in that there was no evidence of riots, strikes, or other crimes being perpetrated under the article's influence. In dispute was a hypothetical supposition that readers would be so affected as to pose a threat to order.²⁰ Thus the law was used to control the spread of ideas, not to punish writings

connected with violent crimes. Indeed, the effort against the left could not but focus on thought control--there was no pattern of terrorist or violent behavior to combat.²¹

Date on the suppression of leftist periodicals are sketchy before 1930, but they were harassed throughout the 1920's. As of January 1929, the Japan Communist Party's Musansha Shinbun (Proletarian Newspaper--founded in 1925, published six times monthly) had suffered 73 bans on circulation, and the Labor Farmer Party's Rodo Nomin Shinbun (Labor Farmer Newspaper--founded in 1927, published weekly) had received 24.²² In 1929 leftist periodicals sustained a total of 241 bans on circulation under the Newspaper and Publications Laws.²³ The more detailed breakdowns available for 1930-1933 are given in Table 16. Sanctions were concentrated on the most radical journals, while moderate labor party and trade union publishers encountered much less interference. Of all leftist periodical editions banned from circulation, those related to communism or anarchism constituted 64% in 1930, 73% in 1931, 91% in 1932, and 70% in 1933. Typical reasons for sanctions were the rejection of parliamentary politics for violent direct action, attacks on the monarchy and the military, and the vindication of radicals under arrest. Sanctions against the more moderate journals were for supporting strikes, denouncing the tax system, demanding a moratorium on loan repayments, and agitating for a mass movement, though rarely for illegal acts.²⁴ The number of leftist periodical editions banned from circulation dropped to 217 in 1934 and 75 in 1935, reflecting the disappearance of the extreme left as a viable political force.²⁵

It was once thought that the mainstream parties had been forced to pass the Peace Preservation Law in 1925 to win conservative support for

TABLE 16

DOMESTIC LEFTIST PERIODICAL EDITIONS BANNED UNDER
THE NEWSPAPER LAW AND PUBLICATIONS LAW, BY
POLITICAL TENDENCY: 1930-1933

Year	Communist Party Related	Anarchist	Left ^a	Center ^b	Right ^c	Others	Total
1930	197	45	13	9	3	107	374
			<u>Left/Center^d</u>				
1931	305	48		44	11	69	477
			<u>Social Masses Party Related^e</u>				
1932	543	93		60		2	698
1933	397	50		52		137	636

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1930-1935.

Note: Political tendencies are described as they were in official documents; "Center" and "Right" are designations within the spectrum of leftist parties and unions.

Publications Law violations are included because many leftists used cultural journals for indirect political expression.

^aThese were periodicals supporting the Rodo Nominto (Labor Farmer Party). This was initially a moderate leftist party, eventually infiltrated by revolutionaries. Its inaugural platform called for a minimum wage, an eight-hour work day, arms reduction, democratic reorganization of the military, and the repeal of laws restricting the rights of labor to organize, strike, and bargain collectively. Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, pp. 100-102.

^bThese were organs supporting the Zenkoku Taishuto (National Masses Party) and its affiliated unions, a moderate coalition of labor groups striving for legal change.

^cThese were organs supporting the Shakai Minshuto (Social Democratic Party) and its affiliated unions; it was a moderate party backing parliamentarism and capital-labor cooperation.

^dThis category comprised organs of the Zenkoku Rono Taishuto (National Labor Farmer Masses Party), formed in July 1931. It advocated parliamentary action as well as "daily struggle," and called for rural relief, an end to unemployment, and more political freedom. It opposed the Manchurian intervention. Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, p. 90.

^eThis party was formed in July 1932 combining the forces described in notes "c" and "d" above. It claimed to be anti-communist and anti-fascist, and recognized Manchukuo but opposed withdrawal from the League of Nations.

the universal manhood suffrage act. Recent research has disproven this hypothesis, however, and in fact party support for the bill had several precedents.²⁶ In 1900, the Diet had legislated the Public Peace Police Law, which affected publications by outlawing the circulation of literature agitating for strikes or walkouts.²⁷ In February 1922, party Prime Minister Takahashi presented to the Diet a Bill for the Control of Extreme Social Movements originally prepared by his predecessor Hara Kei.²⁸ This proposal would have punished communist and anarchist propaganda with up to seven years in prison. It was presented five months before Japan even had a communist party, demonstrating the deep official concern over the Bolshevik revolution, which Japan had tried unsuccessfully to stop with military intervention in 1918. It failed to reach a vote in the Diet. Finally, an emergency imperial decree (referred to as the Peace Preservation Decree) was issued by a non-party premier after the Tokyo earthquake in September 1923, prescribing ten years in prison for spreading false rumors with the goal of undermining public order.²⁹ This decree was subsequently approved by the Diet and remained on the books until replaced by the Peace Preservation Law, which borrowed some of its language.

The Peace Preservation Law punished agitation (sendo) for the abolition of private property or changes in the national polity (kokutai) with up to seven years behind bars, ten years if one advocated violent crimes or joined an organization to achieve these ends.³⁰ "Agitation" was another of those vague concepts so common in Japanese law. The Justice and Home Ministries tried to distinguish agitation from simple propaganda by defining it as the act of supplying "a special stimulus appealing to the emotions by one's own free will."³¹ In practice, it

was entirely up to bureaucrats where to draw the line and publications often fell within their understanding of agitation. The law was first applied against some 37 university students and a labor organizer for planning a Marxist economic revolution (the Gakuren Incident--December 1925 to April 1926). Eighteen eventually went to prison, and written materials they had circulated were used as evidence to convict them for "agitation."³² "Thought control" because the central slogan of Peace Preservation Law enforcement in the late 1920's, and the Home Ministry's Special Higher Police who administered the law were frequently referred to as the "thought police." The Peace Preservation Law marked a new plateau in the effort to eradicate ideas, but the conviction that the state was justified in suppressing mere thoughts in the name of public order had its roots in use of the regular press laws, as demonstrated by the Morito affair. The basic underlying assumption, that subjects were incapable of responsibly forming their own opinions on certain social issues, was the same in both cases. The Peace Preservation Law was used exclusively against leftists until 1935--the data on arrests and sentences are given in Table 17.

Why did Japan's democratic regime turn to such extreme measures? Certainly the class character of the Diet was one factor. Businessmen were the best represented constituency in the Diet in the 1920's--228 of the 464 representatives elected in 1924 had worked as business executives.³³ Some of these men sought to smother the labor movement while others pursued an accommodation with it, but none wished to see workers succumb to leftist ideology. Another instinct was to defend the regime from a revolutionary threat. The radical left was opposed not only to the monarchy but also to democratic government. The Bolshevik revolu-

tion had strengthened leftist forces all over Europe and the belief that Japan should act quickly to avoid similar problems was widespread. One reason many supported the suffrage bill was to mollify potential radicals; the Peace Preservation Law would corral those who persisted in revolutionary ambitions.³⁴ The data make clear that it was not the labor movement as such but only a minority of anti-system extremists that suffered especially severe repression.

Many believe democracies to be fully justified in eradicating revolutionary groups. A recent study of democratic regimes held that "The exclusion from political competition of parties not committed to the legal pursuit of power . . . is not incompatible with the guarantee of free competition in our definition of democracy."³⁵ Even if one adopts this position, however, it is difficult to justify the Japanese state's anti-radical campaign in this period. Though leftist ideas achieved a faddish acceptance among some intellectuals and university students, irrational fears, similar perhaps to those aroused by Senator McCarthy in the U.S. in the 1950's, pervaded the response to what was a modest threat by objective standards. The Japan Communist Party had become public enemy number one by the mid-1920's, yet it probably never counted over 500 members, and its success at organizing labor was slight. Most of its time was consumed by internecine quarrels and propaganda efforts, the latter sustained by irregular financing and an inflammatory program from the Communist International. The Peace Preservation Law was gross overkill against such an opponent. Political violence from the left was insignificant--more salient was the brutal treatment of leftist prisoners. In the panic after the Tokyo earthquake in 1923, nine radical leftists were beheaded by police, and the anarchist Osugi Sakae and two members

TABLE 17

ARRESTS, PROSECUTIONS, AND PRISON SENTENCES PURSUANT TO THE
PEACE PRESERVATION LAW: 1928-1934

Year	Arrested	Prosecution Suspended	Prosecuted	Imprisoned	Sentences Over 5 Years
1928	3,426	16	525	98	14
1929	4,942	27	339	237	40
1930	6,124	292	461	174	29
1931	10,422	454	307	269	18
1932	13,938	774	646	504	87
1933	14,622	1,474	1,285	801	57
1934	3,994	831	496	1,074	88

Sources: Figures for arrested, prosecution suspended, and prosecuted from Chian Iji Ho, pp. 646-647; figures for imprisoned and sentences over 5 years from Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 54-60, 1928-1934.

Note: Data on imprisoned and sentences over 5 years are decisions of the court of first instance (Tsujo Dai Isshin).

All persons covered in the table were leftists.

A lengthy preliminary examination often intervened between arrest and indictment, so those prosecuted in a given year may not have been arrested in that year. Further, trials might last from one year to the next, so court decisions were not necessarily handed down in the year prosecution was initiated.

"Prosecution Suspended" means that a second arrest for a similar crime could reopen prosecution for the first as well.

of his family were murdered by military police.³⁶ A contributor to

Kaizo in February 1929 wrote:

Since the communist incident of last year [the mass arrests of March 1928], we repeatedly hear rumors of "torture" and the cry of "unjust detention." . . . these atrocities, this unjust exercise of police authority, are prone to occur with impertinence when the antagonist belongs to the labor movement or the proletarian class movement. . . . Because I entertain a deep suspicion that the recent unjust exercise of police authority may be influenced directly or indirectly by an imprudent mood among the statesmen who stand above, I would especially like to ask their reconsideration on this occasion.³⁷

Again after the October 1932 arrests, several leftists died in police hands.³⁸ To comprehend the attitude of the authorities, consider a post-war interview with Miyashita Hiroshi, who had been a high-ranking interrogator of the Special Higher Police:

Interviewers: Kobayashi Takiji, on about the day he was arrested on 20 February 1933, was murdered by torture at the Tsukiji Station [a police station in Tokyo]. Were there no voices even within the Special Higher Police saying that this was a blunder?

Miyashita: I don't think they killed him through torture. One wouldn't say they killed him [koroshita]. It's a matter of them making him die [shinaseta]. Of course that's a blunder. Because they made him die. There is absolutely no saying they did a good thing, it's a blunder. A great failure. However, within the department there was no to-do about responsibility. There was no business about who was responsible or had to be tracked down.³⁹

The penalties for "agitating" with one's pen could be severe indeed. Murder by the police was rare in imperial Japan, but physical abuse of jailed leftists was standard fare. Even during the greatest showcase trial in Japanese history, the public prosecution of communists in 1931-1932, one of the defendants appeared in court showing wounds from a bad beating. The newspapers picked up the matter and the abuse ceased, if only temporarily.⁴⁰ Japanese democracy would have been quite secure

without the Peace Preservation Law and the police brutality associated with it.

The Range of Acceptable Criticism

When a Japanese approached a newsstand looking for a critical analysis of major state policies, just what did he find? Our purpose in asking this question is not to identify a few radical publications that slipped by the censor, but to gauge the normal boundaries of legally allowed criticism. Attention thus turns to mainstream periodicals of high circulation that were known to take a critical stance: the Asahi Shinbun, a national newspaper with over a million readers, and Chuo Koron and Kaizo, two monthlies printing over 100,000 copies each. Even more than the Asahi, the latter two journals provide an excellent test of permissiveness. They were so-called "integrated magazines" combining political and social criticism, literary contributions, and neutral reportage, and they prided themselves on a liberal display of partisan argument. In 1933, they were the only two mainstream magazines outside the cultural field to commemorate Marx's death.⁴¹ Their appeal to intellectuals and undeniable quality placed them above all competitors--even classified state documents referred to them as the "matchless twin stars" of the magazine field.⁴² In this section, three content analyses are offered to measure state tolerance for criticism: the reactions of the Tokyo Asahi to the Peace Preservation Law, a special collection of articles in Kaizo lambasting state censorship, and critical responses to the Manchurian Incident in both Kaizo and Chuo Koron.

Asahi editorials strongly opposed passage of the Peace Preservation Law.⁴³ They accused the cabinet of betraying democratic principles by

using the police to thwart popular participation. An editorial titled "The Suicide of the Constitutional Protection Cabinet" suggested the bill might be a response to the "stupid arguments" of the Privy Council against the suffrage bill also on the Diet's agenda.

The Asahi agreed with the goal of suppressing movements out to disrupt the national polity, the constitution, or social institutions, but it denounced the Peace Preservation Law for inviting abuses of authority.⁴⁴ A call for reform of the House of Peers might be construed as rejection-of the parliamentary system, or criticism of military education as repudiation of the draft, bringing moderates into conflict with the new legislation. The result would be "an absolute trampling of human rights and the suppression of speech." The Asahi emphasized the precarious position of labor unions under the statute. In a country where there was neither a trade union law nor recognition for the right to strike, labor unions per se might be seen as destructive of the property system, and the whole labor movement placed in jeopardy. The newspaper pointed out that many party leaders backing the Peace Preservation Law had opposed a similar bill three years earlier, and it accused them of a hypocritical about-face now that they controlled the cabinet.⁴⁵ The Tokyo Asahi concluded its editorial of February 14 with the words:

In the name of protecting the constitution and for the state [kokka] and the people, we hope that the government will not present this evil law, and if it is presented, we demand that the Diet reject it.⁴⁶

In 1928, when Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi prepared to add the death penalty to the Peace Preservation Law by emergency imperial decree, the Asahi again opposed. More biting even than its editorials were a pair of articles by Uesugi Shinkichi, a leading constitutional scholar

at Tokyo Imperial University, carried on June 23 and 24.⁴⁷ Uesugi was a renowned arch-conservative, a stalwart advocate of imperial absolutism, who had once written "It is clear from whatever position one views it, the spirit of our constitution excludes parliamentary government. . . ."⁴⁸ Yet he waxed eloquent in attacking the emergency decree. How, he asked, could the government simply decree the death penalty when jurists were debating its abolition? Uesugi scoffed at the idea that the communist threat justified emergency measures, and he disparaged alarmist rhetoric fomenting needless anxiety at home and soiling Japan's reputation abroad. A cabinet bill for harsher punishments had failed to pass the previous Diet, and Uesugi contended that to flout the Diet's prerogatives with an unwarranted emergency decree was unconstitutional. Such a decree would "expose to danger all the rights of liberty recognized in the constitution."⁴⁹ College students arrested under the Peace Preservation Law deserved a better education, he wrote, not capital punishment.

Short of revolutionary rhetoric, it is hard to imagine more forceful arguments against the Peace Preservation Law and the emergency imperial decree (which was declared and later approved by the Diet) than those run by the Tokyo Asahi Shinbun.

An editorial and seven articles of the September 1926 Kaizo were devoted to criticism of the Newspaper and Publications Laws. The immediate inducement was a ban on circulation of the July issue for portraying adultery in one piece and consent to violence in another.⁵⁰ This sanction, however, came amidst a broader movement in civil society to liberalize censorship. New legislation was pending in the Diet, and the Literary Writers' Association, Publishing Association, and Magazine Association had pooled resources to lobby for reform.

Kaizo's editorial pinpointed the acute financial strains caused by bans on circulation--small companies could be ruined by two or three sanctions on consecutive issues.⁵¹ It also denounced official arbitrariness in law enforcement, noting that press controls might someday devolve upon a reactionary cabinet or an unscrupulous Home Minister. The editorial outlined the proposal of the three associations demanding more concrete censorship standards, the right to appeal administrative sanctions, and a joint bureaucratic-civil committee to review administrative decisions. It concluded: "We believe that if the present oppression continues, our art and thought will degenerate into an empty corpse completely without spirit, and with the progress of our country's culture absolutely stymied, it is difficult to hope for the enhancement of our national essence."⁵²

The articles attacked the press laws from many different vantages. Minobe Tatsukichi, a democratic-oriented constitutional scholar and Uesugi's rival, argued that literary and academic works should be exempt from censorship, naming a banned novel that he deemed excellent. He joined virtually all the writers in scoring the ambiguity of censorship criteria and calling for a route of appeal.⁵³ Masamune Hakucho, a well known naturalistic novelist, had recently had a line struck from a literary piece in Kaizo, his first such experience. He wrote that press controls had never concerned him much, but that if censorship were milder he would probably have addressed subjects hitherto excluded from his work--this may have been a widespread attitude among non-radical writers.⁵⁴ He confessed to a special interest in reading banned books. Another author, Fujimori Seikichi, demanded absolute freedom of expression. He mocked the reasoning behind press controls in the Meiji constitutional

system:

"We grant you the freedom of expression. However, you have no right to express what has been prohibited." That is too clear a contradiction in logic. . . . Considering the matter calmly, today's system and methods absolutely cannot be imagined as a reality in the cultural epoch of the twentieth century. They resemble barbaric feudal customs. It is a pure and simple right to kill and be excused [kirisute gomen]. The attitude is just like that of the old samurai, only since they are state officials it doesn't matter how many they slay.⁵⁵

To kill and be excused referred to the samurai's right over the lower orders in pre-Meiji Japan.

Omori Yoshitaro of the Labor Farmer Party analyzed censorship from a Marxist perspective. He argued that the ban on circulation was an indispensable feature of capitalist society. "The capitalist class . . . must necessarily force its own scholarship, thought, and art on all of society in order to maintain its supremacy."⁵⁶ It was futile to assail press policy with reason and justice when it had such solid economic foundations. "In the end, . . . one cannot perfectly resolve the issue of the ban on circulation, which has such deep roots in capitalist class conflict, if one does not remove its real basis."⁵⁷ The state should be pressed to reveal its working censorship criteria so that their capitalistic roots could be exposed. Omori cited the Labor Farmer Party (then penetrated by communists and soon to be abandoned by moderate unions) as the proper vehicle of the movement for free expression. The party was outlawed by the state in April 1928.

The editorial and three of the Kaizo articles were marred by the use of blank type. Nonetheless, the writers had thoroughly castigated censorship policy and articulated a variety of solutions, from moderate to sweeping reformism to a call for radical change.

The Manchurian Incident was a clash between Japanese and Chinese troops arranged furtively by high-ranking officers in Japan's Kwantung Army as a pretext for expanding Japanese control over Manchuria and contiguous areas. It occurred on 18 September 1931. In some ways, press response to this issue is a poor measure of state control. There is no sure way to disaggregate the effects of pre-publication warnings and censorship from what by all accounts was spontaneous and nearly unanimous public approval of Japan's aggressive stance.⁵⁸ Not knowing that the episode had been stage managed by Japanese troops, mainstream newspapers and the general public resolutely supported a bellicose foreign policy, just as they had during the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. Nonetheless, even a self-imposed conformity of opinion on this issue is an important reference point when considering later state controls, and the issue's inherent significance justifies a search for criticism in journals accessible to all Japanese.

The experience of Chuo Koron is particularly instructive. The magazine took a dovish position in its editorial of October 1931, probably written just after the incident. It accused elements in Japan of exploiting minor conflicts in Manchuria to impose an aggressive policy. The newspapers were scored for rousing Japanese antipathy in a biased way, and the editorial opposed sending troops, stating that Japan's ultimate goals could not be gained by force.⁵⁹ The editor received a post-publication warning from the Home Ministry.⁶⁰

The next month's edition was banned from circulation for an article by Inomata Tsunao titled "Monopoly Capitalism and the Crisis in Manchuria and Mongolia."⁶¹ Inomata was a founder of Japan's original Communist Party and had been arrested in the first "Communist Party Incident" of

June 1923, consequently losing his professorship at Waseda University. By 1931, he had abandoned the communists and joined the Labor Farmer Faction (Ronoha) of Marxist intellectuals then catalogued among the legal left. His essay was so decimated by blank type that it is nearly illegible. A full four pages of the article were ripped out by the magazine itself to avoid sanctions, yet it was still banned from circulation. It is discernible that Inomata blames capitalism for the contemporary economic crisis, and this in turn for the imperialistic struggle in China. He praises the Soviet system for its immunity to the depression and its anti-imperialist policy. The omissions from sentences on the Chinese Communist Party seem to disguise the author's esteem for its battle against Japan and other imperialist powers.⁶² Restraints on free expression are castigated, but here again the piece is unquotable due to gaps in the prose.⁶³

Chuo Koron published no further articles as radical as Inomata's on the Manchurian Incident, but it did carry several critical essays more moderate in posture. Yoshino Sakuzo, a democratic theorist of national prominence, contributed an article in January 1932 attacking the government's plea of self-defense to justify its war in Manchuria.⁶⁴ The defense of treaty rights did not warrant military action to extract new obligations, expel hostile warlords, and install pro-Japanese figures in their stead. Yoshino argued that the state's position differed from the logic of popular support. Most Japanese saw Manchuria as a "treasure mountain" of natural resources needed for the Japanese economy.⁶⁵ The government was avowing self-defense merely to avoid the bad name of imperialism. Thus Yoshino discarded the official line and recast the issue in these terms:

Is it bad for us to establish rights in Manchuria for our own existence? This is the urgent problem now confronting us.⁶⁶

He lamented that neither the newspapers nor the working class parties had offered any real challenge to state policy.

The proletarian parties are silent and the newspapers unanimously glorify military action. In this manner the unity of national opinion has been made complete.⁶⁷

Another moderate protester was Yanaihara Tadao, an economics professor at Tokyo Imperial University, who wrote on the Manchurian affair for both Kaizo and Chuo Koron.⁶⁸ In Kaizo, he portrayed the Manchurian Incident as a clash between Japanese imperialism and Chinese nationalism, and he cautiously defended the Chinese cause. Japan supported the new state of Manchukuo to protect its special rights in the area, but according to Yanaihara, levels of investment and immigration did not justify such rights. Manchukuo contradicted the pattern of recent state-building in that it was not based on the national principle; Manchurian nationality was related to that of the Chinese. He compared Chinese nationalism to the forces behind the Meiji revolution, arguing that its anti-foreign component would dissipate once independence and unity were achieved. Japan's interests were better served by promoting Chinese nationalism (and thus, implicitly, abandoning the puppet state of Manchukuo) than by trying to forge a closed economic unit of Japan and Manchuria. After all, Japanese trade with Manchuria was only 30% of its trade with China. Yanaihara described Japan as an "unreined, unruly horse" in its military ventures in Manchuria and Shanghai.⁶⁹

A translation of the Litton Commission report on the Manchurian situation was appended to the November 1932 Chuo Koron; this report,

sponsored by the League of Nations, belied Japan's claim of self-defense and the alleged spontaneity of the formation of Manchukuo. The magazine's editorial, however, was patronizing toward the report--the Western observers had done their best, but they just didn't comprehend conditions in the East. The editorial noted that Japan would not budge an inch in response to the report, and that it was hard to imagine how Japan could remain in the League of Nations.⁷⁰ In the December 1932 issue, the magazine completely reversed its editorial stand of October 1931:

It is anticipated that soon there will be a direct confrontation between the League of Nations and our country at Geneva centered on the problem of recognizing Manchukuo. . . . There is no doubt that our country ought to reject staunchly any demands for changes in the present state of affairs, this constituting meddling with our freedom of action. We can no longer recognize the interference of Westerners in matters pertaining to the Far East or in the great undertakings related to the destiny of oriental peoples. . . .

The establishment of an Eastern Monroe Doctrine is absolutely necessary. . . . One thing clear in modern history is that peace in the East and the felicity of Eastern peoples will begin from the repulsion of unjust oppression by Western power--for a long time we have hoped [for it], but we could not very well be confident. Since this has started at least in the Far East through the opportunity presented by the problem of Manchukuo, we are pleased.⁷¹

The state had no power to compel a statement of this kind. Despite editorial backing for Manchukuo, however, the publication of the Litton Commission's report demonstrated a continued willingness to air other points of view.

To summarize, there was much less public debate on the Manchurian question than on other state policies. Judging from the Chuo Koron experience, this was partly due to press controls. The moderately critical essays by Yanaihara and Yoshino were phrased very carefully to pass inspection, and both writers noted the restraints on free expression.

The censor's impact is also evident in what was not written--none of the articles, for example, took up the role of the Japanese military. Since the incident was not premeditated in Tokyo, and local military decisions had turned it into a major crisis, this is truly remarkable. Commentators had to skirt the core of the problem when it most required attention. As documented in Yoshino's article, however, there was also a dearth of dissension in civil society behind the passivity of the press. Note that the articles reviewed above represent the extremes of criticism in mainstream journals, not the middle range of published opinion.

The Failure of Liberal Reform

Efforts to liberalize the Newspaper Law began soon after its effects were felt by the press. The House of Peers shelved a reform bill passed by the lower house in 1912, and subsequent reform proposals were presented at three consecutive Diet meetings over 1919-1922, none finding success. The new prestige of the press and its influence with party men set the stage for a major effort at liberalization in the mid-1920's.

The prevailing zeal for reform can be grasped from the Kaizo articles on press legislation already reviewed. Publishers resented the economic losses on banned editions, and writers railed against the "feudal" restraints upon their creativity. An organized press lobby drafted a set of guidelines for change, and in December 1924 newspaper representatives met with sympathetic Diet members to turn these into a new legal proposal.⁷² The bill they prepared retained the Home Minister's right to stop circulation of particular issues, but only for desecration of the imperial family, items banned by the Army or Navy Ministers, agitation for violent direct action that specified the means

of effecting it, and contents strikingly offensive to manners and morals--the general precept against disturbing public order was dropped. The Home Minister would have to identify the criminal passages when he ordered a ban on circulation, and his judgment could be appealed to the administrative court. The bill also relaxed prison sentences, the duty to publish corrections, and restrictions on reporting pre-trial criminal investigations. The judicial power to dissolve publications was to be abrogated, and the editor and printer absolved of all legal responsibility; the publisher alone would answer to the law. All in all, this was a moderate proposal designed to pass the upper house. It would retain censorship to deal with revolutionary or obscene contents while freeing the mainstream press from police harassment.

In March 1925, the bill passed the lower house almost unanimously. It looked to have a good chance in the upper house as well, but before the peers could consider it, Prime Minister Kato Komei announced that his government was elaborating its own bill to replace both the Newspaper and Publications Laws, and consequently the lower house draft was never brought to a vote. This was a bitter blow to the press.

The government's own integrated press bill, submitted at the next two regular Diet meetings, reversed almost all the liberal clauses of the earlier reform measure.⁷³ There was no provision for appeal against administrative sanctions, censorship standards were increased and again framed in highly abstract language, the judicial authority to dissolve publications was retained, and the maximum prison sentence was lengthened from two to three years. About the only part of the first reform bill to survive intact was the Home Minister's obligation to identify the guilty passages when he banned an issue from circulation. The

government's proposal was opposed by most of the press and never reached a vote in the lower house.

The motives of Kato and his successor Wakatsuki in endorsing such a statute are unclear, but it must be recalled that administrative power in this period was largely at the disposal of the Prime Minister, who used it not only to keep order but to win elections. As evidenced also by sponsorship of the Peace Preservation Law, the same state power that appears so fearful in the hands of others may be seen as a great asset from atop the roost. In any case, the bill's provisions appear to be written by the bureaucracy for the bureaucracy, and it holds important lessons for the study of state control over society. The government's draft would have legitimized several extra-legal administrative controls already in use, but despite its defeat these controls were not abandoned. For example, it would have legalized pre-publication warnings on current events, but these had been employed before 1925 and were used regularly after 1927, despite their illegality. Literally thousands of newspaper editions were banned from circulation for transgressing these warnings, even though the Diet had refused to approve them. This was a blatant constitutional violation, but if party cabinets acquiesced, there was no institution to terminate the abuse. The practice of demanding deletions before circulation was also inscribed in the government's bill, but this too had been used earlier and became a regular practice in the late 1920's. The bill's list of forbidden contents was being employed by censors long before its submission to the Diet. The very reference to these practices in the bill demonstrates the government's awareness that they required a legal basis, but what are we to conclude from their previous use and amplification after the bill failed to pass? Like the

1883 Newspaper Ordinance, Kato's press law was designed to catch up with administrative practice, not to fix its limits. The bill's failure to pass therefore had no effect on the development of new administrative press controls.⁷⁴

In sum, the constitutional guarantee of a free press within the bounds of parliamentary law was nullified by the reality of bureaucratic power allied to the values and interests of party Prime Ministers. There was a border dispute in the Japanese state, arising partly from the terms of the constitution itself, between administrative and parliamentary jurisdictions. The areas to be monopolized by parliament were mapped out clearly enough, but they had no institutional protection other than the precise dictates of legislation and the watchfulness of the Diet. These proved utterly inadequate to check bureaucratic incursions into every sector of media policy.

Notes

¹Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p.2.

²Ito Takashi, Showa Shoki Seiji Shi Kenkyu: Rondon Kaigun Gunshuku Mondai o Meguru Sho Seiji Shudan no Taiko to Teikei [Research on Early Showa Political History: The Opposition and Cooperation of Various Political Groups Related to the London Naval Arms Limitation Problem] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1969), pp. 435-436, note 1.

³Ibid., pp. 436-437, note 2.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Deletions could take two forms. A sakujo sanction was where officials decided initially that the offense was not serious enough to justify a ban on circulation and informed the publisher of what should be deleted prior to sale. Bunkatsu kanpu was where the publication had received a ban on circulation, but the publisher requested that he be allowed to cut the objectionable parts and salvage the rest. This latter measure was begun in September 1927, but the sakujo sanction was probably enforced unofficially on a small scale before the 1920's. See Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, pp. 115, 118.

⁶"Instructions" is a translation of shitatsu, "admonitions" of keikoku, and "consultations" of kondan.

⁷Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 9-13.

⁸Ibid., p. 10.

⁹Principal sources are Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 8, pp. 135-138; Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 44-47; and Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, pp. 74-78.

¹⁰Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p. 125. Illegal (i.e., unreported) publications, whose total circulation was unknown, were excluded from the survey.

¹¹Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 437.

¹²Ibid., p. 433. Even for Publications Law books and magazines, which had to submit censor's copies three days before publication, the rate of confiscation was just 13.7% in 1932, and 26.9% in 1933--Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p. 124. The police did improve their record in this area, however; 63% of all copies of banned books were seized in 1935--Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 423.

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Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p. 125. Under the Publications Law, only 20.4% of books and periodical editions banned for public order violations was seized in 1933, while 44.5% of those banned for manners and morals offenses--*ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁴Figures on both events from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, p. 73.

¹⁵Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1930, pp. 91-93, and Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 71-73.

¹⁶Taikakai, ed., Naimusho Shi, 1:807.

¹⁷Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 14, p. 118.

¹⁸Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, p. 238.

¹⁹Calculating from the figures in Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 44, 91, 107. There were 262 more non-leftist newspaper editions banned for public order violations, but these were for disobeying pre-publication warnings, not regular public order standards.

²⁰In the eyes of the Tokyo District Court, it was enough that the piece might "sew misgivings among the general public regarding the sovereignty of our state or promote a tendency to hold the property rights of the individual in contempt." Quoted in Futagawa, Genron no Dan'atsu, p. 185.

²¹Communist Party members engaged in a series of bank robberies in October 1932 when starved for funds; the Peace Preservation Law had made contributions illegal. Other than the promotion of strikes, however, there is little evidence of violent crimes before this time. See Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, pp. 236-237.

²²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 5, pp. 147-148.

²³Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1930, pp. 103, 183, 243.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 104.

²⁵Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, pp. 216, 264.

²⁶At best, the timing of the two measures may have been designed to placate members of the Privy Council or the House of Peers who had doubts about expanding the suffrage. See Peter Duus, Party Rivalry and Political Change in Taisho Japan (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1968), pp. 203-205; Richard H. Mitchell, Thought Control in Prewar Japan (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell U. Press, 1976), pp. 57-62. Mitchell remarks that the Kato cabinet saw the Peace Preservation Law as "one law in a series designed to stem the radical tide." Ibid., p. 57.

²⁷The law is reprinted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 434-438.

²⁸The bill is reprinted in Chian Iji Ho [The Peace Preservation Law], intro. and ed. Okudaira Yasuhiro, Gendai Shi Shiryo 45 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1973), document 2, pp. 3-4.

²⁹The decree is reprinted in ibid., document 5, p. 50.

³⁰The Peace Preservation Law as originally passed in 1925 is reprinted in ibid., document 8, p. 107.

³¹Quoted in an analysis by Kiyose Ichiro, a Diet member who argued vigorously against passage of the law--ibid., p. 109.

³²See ibid., document 34, p. 541--the document is a reprint of the appellate court decision.

³³Ishida Takeshi, "The Development of Interest Groups and the Pattern of Political Modernization in Japan," in Robert E. Ward, ed., Political Development in Modern Japan, p. 308.

³⁴Duus, Party Rivalry, p. 199.

³⁵Juan J. Linz, The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1978), p. 6. An International Press Institute study took a similar stand: The press is not above the law. There is therefore no suggestion of indicting governments for not granting absolute liberty to the press or for not tolerating attacks which might endanger their existence.

"International Press Institute Survey No. IV," p. 7.

³⁶Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, p. 71.

³⁷Quoted in Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 6, p. 68.

³⁸ Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, p. 237.

³⁹ Miyashita Hiroshi, Tokko no Kaiso [Recollections of the Special Higher Police] (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1978), p. 126. The interviewers were Ito Takashi and Nakamura Tomoko.

⁴⁰ Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, p. 219.

⁴¹ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p. 226.

⁴² Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, p. 271. Chuo Koron dated back to 1899 with antecedents under other titles to 1887, and by the early 1920's it had a circulation of some 120,000 copies--see Chuo Koronsha 70-Nen Shi [A Seventy Year History of the Central Review Company] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1955), pp. 3-4. Kaizo was founded in 1919, and its attention to labor problems soon boosted circulation to comparable levels. The journals typically ran to several hundred pages in length.

⁴³ The editorials on this issue dated January 17, February 14, March 5, and March 12, 1925, are reprinted in Chian Iji Ho, document 7, pp. 100-104.

⁴⁴ This argument was put forward in the editorial of 17 January 1925.

⁴⁵ For example, the editorial of 14 February 1925 stated: The constitutional protection cabinet has put out the Peace Preservation Law, and the Kenseikai, which as a party out of power preached absolute opposition to the Bill for the Control of Extreme Social Movements and buried it, is supporting this evil law. For the party as absolutely the party of government to move to abandon the program [it had embraced] until today is something difficult to excuse in any manner.
Chian Iji Ho, document 7, p. 101.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 103.

⁴⁷ Uesugi's articles are reprinted in Ibid., document 13, part 5, pp. 193-196.

⁴⁸ Quoted in Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 301, note 44.

⁴⁹ Chian Iji Ho, document 13, p. 193.

⁵⁰ Kobayashi Eisaburo, Matsuura Sozo, Daigoho Susumu, and Seki Tada, eds., Zasshi "Kaizo" no 40-Nen [Forty Years of the Magazine "Kaizo"] (Tokyo: Kowado, 1977), p. 95.

⁵¹ Kaizo, September 1925, pp. 1-3.

⁵² Ibid., p. 3.

⁵³ Minobe also advocated repeal of the prosecutor's right to ban pre-trial information, since it aimed at deceiving the public about current events and forced newspapers to collaborate in the deception. The fact that he seems to have been unaware of the Home Minister's own illegal pre-publication warning system supports the view that this power had been used very sparingly before 1926. Minobe Tatsukichi, "Shuppanbutsu no Hatsubai Kinshi" [The Ban on Circulation of Publications], Kaizo, September 1926, pp. 98-101.

⁵⁴ Masamune Hakucho, "Hatsubai Kinshi ni Tsuite" [Regarding the Ban on Circulation], Kaizo, September 1926, pp. 104-106.

⁵⁵ Fujimori Seikichi, "Hatsubai Kinshi Mondai ni Tsuite" [Regarding the Ban on Circulation Problem], Kaizo, September 1926, pp. 107-108.

⁵⁶ Omori Yoshitaro, "Kekkyoku wa Keizaiteki Shihai Kankei" [In the End, the Connection with Economic Domination], Kaizo, September 1926, p. 102.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 103.

⁵⁸ Public support is attested to by the British ambassador--see James B. Crowley, Japan's Quest for Autonomy (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1966), p. 126. It is also verified by the publications police--Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, p. 217, and Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, p. 203. See also the comments of Yoshino Sakuzo cited below in the text.

⁵⁹ "Manmo Mondai ni Kansuru Hansei" [Reconsideration of the Manchurian-Mongolian Problem], Chuo Koron, October 1931, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, p. 176.

⁶¹ Inomata Tsunao, "Dokusen Shihonshugi to Manmo no Kiki," Chuo Koron, November 1931; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 144, 176.

⁶² Inomata, "Dokusen Shihonshugi to Manmo no Kiki," p. 24.

⁶³Ibid., p. 33.

⁶⁴Yoshino Sakuzo, "Minzoku to Kaikyū to Senso" [Nations, Classes, and War], Chuo Koron, January 1932.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 31.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 33.

⁶⁸Yanaihara Tadao, "Manmo Shinkokka Ron" [Discourse on a New State in Manchuria-Mongolia], Kaizo, April 1932, and "Manshu Keizai Ron" [Discourse on the Manchurian Economy], Chuo Koron, July 1932.

⁶⁹Yanaihara, "Manmo Shinkokka Ron," p. 28.

⁷⁰"Ritton Hokoku Sho" [The Litton Report], Chuo Koron, November 1932, p. 1.

⁷¹"Toyo Monroshugi no Kakuritsu" [Establishment of an Eastern Monroe Doctrine], Chuo Koron, December 1932, p. 1.

⁷²The press resolution and the proposed bill are reprinted in Mitoro, Meiji Taisho Shi I, pp. 336-348.

⁷³The original bill, with changes before its second submission noted in parentheses, is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 349-360. The bill was first prepared under Prime Minister Kato Komei, but presented to the Diet on both occasions by his successor Wakatsuki Reijiro.

⁷⁴Subsequently, Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi organized a Criminal Affairs Council that produced another plan for an integrated press law in August 1928. Minobe Tatsukichi was a member, but an influential newspaper association (21-Nichi Kai) refused to participate due to the increasing rigidity of press controls under the Tanaka cabinet. See *ibid.*, p. 364. The plan contained several liberal features, including elimination of security deposits and the judicial power to dissolve publications, creation of a commission to preside over the levy of administrative sanctions (presumably with civil participation), and allowance for compensation when damage was suffered from illegal sanctions (thus an appeals system was advocated). However, there was no relaxation of censorship standards. The council's plan never produced a legislative proposal. It is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 364-366.

CHAPTER VIII

RADIO: THE EVOLUTION OF NHK

Asia's first radio broadcast originated from Tokyo on 1 March 1925, just four years after the world's first transmission from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Though the timing of radio's appearance enabled party governments to determine its relationship to the state, it was the bureaucracy that formulated most aspects of policy. Furthermore, when party politicians did get involved, the substance of their contribution was not what one might have expected. From the outset, the state imposed a more severe control structure upon radio than it had on film or the press. The latter media were developed primarily by civil organizations which the state then endeavored to restrain, not always very successfully. In broadcasting, however, a more or less autonomous set of civil associations was never allowed to emerge. Instead, the medium was subjected to a tightly controlled system of mixed civil-bureaucratic management. The founding of radio is of considerable historical and comparative significance. As the only medium created under Japan's pre-war democracy, it permits one to compare the outlook of elected officials to that of the Meiji founders in their policy toward the periodical press. Furthermore, unlike the regulation of film and the press, most initial features of state control over radio endured unchanged to the end of the imperial era. Military-bureaucratic elites had no need to mold a "New Order" for radio as they did for the other media--they merely exploited

further the arrangements made by their democratic predecessors. Thus the first chapter on radio tells most of the story.

Fortunately, the making of radio policy can be documented in some detail, affording a rare glimpse into the inner workings of the state and the values guiding the decision-making process. Connoisseurs of contemporary politics must learn to savor a good tale of bureaucratic intrigue just as an old epic historian must have relished an encounter between the Pope and Napoleon. Our players are of lesser stature. Their office titles are certainly more worthy of remembrance than their names. But they are the stuff of which modern state power is made, and as such their activities merit the most careful study.

Bureaucratic Planning for Radio

The first private petitions for broadcasting permits were filed at the Communications Ministry in 1921. Charged with execution of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law, the ministry required licenses even for experimental radio equipment set up for research. In response to the incoming petitions, two preliminary plans for radio administration were prepared. The first was a Draft Proposal approved by a large body of Communications officials in August 1923 after a year of study.¹ The second was a Research Summary drawn up in the ministry's Transmission Bureau.² To the extent that later policy conformed to these two designs, that policy was a bureaucratic artifact. The common points put forward in them will now be described.³

Management/Ownership. The issue of civil versus state management and ownership of radio was hotly debated, but both the Draft Proposal and the Research Summary favored a civil operation. The Research Summary was

explicit in its reasoning. State control was not mandatory because radio, despite its "public character," was not absolutely necessary to society. Moreover, the state had limited capacity to handle such a complex business. Finally, civil management prevailed in foreign countries except Germany, where there was mixed civil-bureaucratic control. These arguments are of some interest. Absolute necessity is a very liberal standard for state management, though it later pointed to a different conclusion when radio's full significance was realized. The state's limited capacity is also a noteworthy point. The mushrooming of bureaucracy and budget to absorb new responsibilities would be observed on every policy front in the late 1930's, but in 1923 bureaucrats shunned a program demanding a major new commitment of resources. The example of foreign countries was an unusually fortuitous circumstance. In Europe, state control would be the rule by 1930. Here, as in so many Japanese policymaking forums, foreign precedents were carefully weighed.

Another plank in both proposals was to license only one radio station in each part of the country.⁴ A national monopoly was rejected because the involvement of local notables in each area was thought necessary to radio's success. Competing companies in the same region, however, would raise technical difficulties and endanger the economic viability of the stations.⁵ Officials therefore advocated that several petitioners be combined into a single managerial unit in each area. Ideally, each enterprise would attract local investors from among newspapers, wireless electronics companies, and other leading businesses. In this way the stations would be technically and financially self-sufficient. The enterprises would be under the joint private ownership of the investors.

Finances. The financial system envisioned by bureaucrats confirms that radio was not seen as just another private business. Both plans banned commercial broadcasting. The legality of commercial broadcasting under the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law was doubtful, but according to the Research Summary the main reason was that "commercials aim at the benefit of the advertiser and are rarely related to the general benefit of the listener" (article 3, no. 7). It advised that operators not be licensed unless they were ready to work for the public interest and not merely for gain. In fact, while both plans allowed for profit-making broadcasting companies, they also agreed that profits should not exceed ten per cent of capital investment; if there was income left over, listening fees would be reduced. The plans would grant each company a local monopoly, so a profit ceiling was needed to prevent unjust exploitation of the listeners.

A ban on advertising has immense consequences for radio's relationship to the state. How else can a broadcasting station support itself short of reliance on officialdom? Even today's non-commercial public television networks in the United States must appeal for donations on the air, but if commercials were tabooed altogether, the station could not advertise itself any more than it could sell soap or coffee. The end of advertising is the beginning of radio's dependence on the state. This anti-commercial policy sharply prejudiced other aspects of the Communications Ministry plans. For example, the potential economic health of several stations in one region would be an entirely different matter if advertising were allowed.

The two plans provided that payments from the producers and owners of radio receivers would help finance the broadcasting stations. The

logic was simple. Those who made and sold radios or listened to them were the ones to benefit from the medium, so they should pay for it. Manufacturers would pay according to their sales or capital, while those owning receivers would pay a monthly fee. This opened a Pandora's box of state controls needed to safeguard the flow of income. For example, the plans required the state to license the production and purchase of all radio receivers. Buyers would be registered for the purpose of collecting fees, and those caught with unlicensed equipment would forfeit their right to own a radio. The supervision of producers would prevent them from selling radios on the sly without proper registration. In the absence of such restraints, the system could not function.

Programming/Censorship. Beyond the exclusion of commercials, both plans posed restrictions on entertainment. The Research Summary stipulated that music and entertainment would be secondary to news, weather, and practical knowledge. Since this was contrary to Western practice, officials appended an explanation. The character and tastes of the Japanese and their style of living were different from those in the West. Japan was not yet wealthy enough to accommodate a pleasure-seeking way of life, and many Japanese (unlike Westerners) worked all day and well into the night, so radio entertainment should not lure them from their jobs. Radio would have to attract an audience with programming of practical value.

Both plans called for prior censorship of all programs. The content, starting time, and duration of each broadcast would have to be reported one day before transmission. The ministry's local offices would monitor all programs, ordering an immediate stop to any illegal presentation. The Research Summary prohibited from radio all items

contrary to public order or good morals, including those banned under the press laws.

State mobilization of radio was also justified in the bureaucratic proposals. Broadcasters would have to air any program ordered by the state in the public interest. The Draft Proposal empowered the state to purchase or commandeer broadcasting enterprises if necessary to keep public peace.

Technical Specifications. The plans imposed a number of technical restrictions, including limits on wattage, transmission frequencies, and the band width of radio receivers.

Legal Basis. The statutory framework anticipated for radio controls was a paragon of legal sophistry. Both Communications Ministry proposals hoped to administer radio under the existing Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law. This law dated from 1915 and was not intended to accommodate radio. Logic seemed to dictate a new bill. Civil radio management was difficult to justify before article 1 of the existing law, which read simply: "The government will manage wireless communications and wireless telephone." Nonetheless, ministerial interests won out over logic. A new law would require first a cabinet decision, forcing the Communications Ministry to run a gauntlet of bureaucratic rivals anxious to claim a piece of radio authority for themselves. From the cabinet, the bill would pass to the Diet, where there might be a scramble to profit from the new medium, or changes made in the terms of radio administration.⁶ In short, if the Communications Ministry were to monopolize radio policy, a new law would have to be avoided at all costs.

The principal cost was a farfetched interpretation of the existing law. The 1915 statute allowed for civil operation of such facilities as

ship-to-shore wireless and experimental equipment "when the appropriate minister recognizes a special need." Since the state technically remained in managerial control, however, how could this clause be used to sanction civil ownership and management of radio? The Research Summary answered this question as follows:

. . . as a matter based on the recognition of a special need for the facilities, they are not of course to escape the category of state-managed wireless telephone. However, considering further the relationship to the grand principle of exclusive [state] management of mass communications, broadcasting is not the sort of report generally sent and received among the masses. Consequently, it does not belong to the category of mass communications. Rather, since one must recognize it as a communication for private use, the approval of civil management [in this case] does not violate the [general] principle of exclusive state management. (article 2, no. 2).

This interpretation would administer radio under the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law, while excepting it from the law's provisions because it was not a means of mass communication! This last contention was not only absurd but irrelevant, since article 1 of the law made no mention of "mass" communications, but declared state management of "wireless communications and wireless telephone," pure and simple.⁷

These legal acrobatics were partly to defend Communications Ministry jurisdiction, but they also aimed at a more liberal policy than a strict reading of the law would permit. This latter fact deserves emphasis. One would not find bureaucrats in the late 1930's searching for legal loopholes in favor of greater civil autonomy. But if this was a liberal interpretation of the law, it also left radio legally defenseless against future incursions of state power. Radio would henceforth be the exception in a field where the rule was state management. It would owe its exceptional status entirely to the judgment of the Communications Minister, who at any moment might decide that radio was a mass medium after

all, or that there was no longer any "special need" for civil broadcasting facilities. Without new legislation, there was no question of radio ever acquiring a protective legal shield against state interference. What the Communications Ministry granted it could also take away, so the survival of civil broadcasting companies would ever depend upon their relationship with that ministry. Quite clearly, bureaucratic plans foresaw a symbiotic tie between officials and broadcasters. The latter would be formally private but also necessarily subservient to ministerial wishes.

Bureaucratic Plans Become State Policy

From December 1923 to May 1924, by means of two ministerial documents and a public announcement to investors, the Communications Ministry transformed into state policy virtually all the positions assumed in its prior internal deliberations. It relied entirely upon the authority of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law. The Tokyo earthquake of 1923 had forced the ministry to accelerate its plans, since the torrent of rumors and panic after the disaster highlighted the potential utility of radio to the state.

By means of a ministerial decree in December 1923, officials fixed the broadcasting radius of stations, the wave length for transmissions, and the cost of a permit to operate.⁸ An official notification (tsutatsu) from the central ministry to its regional offices in February 1924 contained the following provisions: Newspaper Law censorship standards would be enforced, and there would be no music except at night or on holidays; prior reports of program contents could be made orally, and for certain programs (including the news) general content and the

announcer's name would suffice; the Communications Ministry and other state agencies were authorized to order official broadcasts; ministerial personnel would monitor all transmissions; broadcasting technicians would have to pass proficiency tests; advance ministerial approval was required for the production of every model of radio receiver. One history of Japanese telecommunications has remarked upon the "police-like" tone of this notification.⁹ In May 1924, the Communications Ministry held meetings with the petitioners from Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya. It announced that there would be no commercials, that only one station would be permitted in each city, that management would combine news and electronics firms, and that profits would be limited to ten per cent.¹⁰

This record provides a striking example of bureaucratic power. In just a few months, the ministry was able to institute a detailed new policy without any external interference, ignoring the Diet's constitutional authority over speech by virtually rewriting an old law to suit its purposes. Before any broadcasting licenses were granted, however, the Kiyoura non-party cabinet fell and the democratic government of Prime Minister Kato Komei took office.

Democratic Government and Radio Policy

There was nothing to stop the new cabinet from revising the bureaucracy's plans for radio, and in fact several good reasons could be cited for doing so. The managerial combination of news and production-related investors urged by the Communications Ministry had run into snags. In Osaka, the attempt by one group of petitioners to secure the one available license was bitterly denounced by the others. Furthermore, the journal Musen to Jikken (Wireless and Experimentation) was founded in May

1924 representing interested parties in civil society. Its contributors argued that radio should develop autonomously before-legal controls were imposed, they favored several stations in each area and free competition, and they demanded greater flexibility in programming.¹¹ Japan's new party government, however, did not respond favorably to these entreaties.

The Communications Minister, Inukai Tsuyoshi, was a leading party politician, a member of the Diet since its first meeting in 1890 who would later rise to the premiership. Inukai interfered with only one aspect of the ministerial design for radio. Confronted by vexing squabbles among petitioners, he determined to license only non-profit, public interest broadcasting companies.¹² It was the minister personally who pushed this idea against the opposition of his bureaucratic subordinates. They had developed a painstaking consensus against the public interest option, partly because public interest firms were thought to be less dynamic than profit companies. When Inukai first submitted his proposal to a body of middle-upper ranking administrators (the ministry's sanjikan kaigi), they opted to stick with the original profit-making design. When Inukai again beckoned them to rethink the matter, they refused, asking why an issue apparently settled by their superior was being tendered for discussion at all.¹³ The bureaucratic position on this matter was clearly more liberal than that of the presiding party minister.

Why did Inukai opt for the more statist public interest format? Basically, he felt the bickering among petitioners was caused by the profit guarantees of the listening fee system--remove the object of greed, and the discord would cease. Perhaps to overcome the objections of his underlings, Inukai had an internal document prepared upholding the

desirability of public interest firms. It provides an interesting measure of the statism/liberalism in the thinking of at least one influential democratic leader.¹⁴ The paper listed numerous defects of broadcasting for profit: the stations would be dominated by the power of capital; listener's fees would remain high to sustain profits; it would be difficult to expand facilities or regulate program content in accord with the public interest; it would present many dangers to public peace and morals; it would complicate official supervision and inflate the state budget; should it become necessary for the state to purchase the companies, a huge compensation would have to be paid. In contrast, the paper noted four virtues of public interest firms. Since exclusive state management was the general rule for telecommunications, public interest companies were more appropriate for being more amenable to official control. They would be more likely to maximize the listener's benefit and the public good. They would be less open to the evils accompanying monopolistic businesses. And finally, public interest firms would manage programming and other operations in an impartial and just manner, which was especially important given the great social influence of radio.

This position paper demonstrates that the public interest doctrine of the early Meiji elite was still a powerful influence in Japanese governments of the 1920's. Though the parties were often disparaged as the pawns of big business, radio policy was strongly swayed by the taint of illegitimacy associated with civil interests as against an overriding public good.

Petitioners were informed of the switch to public interest companies in August 1924. If bureaucrats disagreed with the new policy, prospective investors in Osaka were furious about it. Businesses had

pledged to invest large sums in what had been billed as a profit enterprise. They argued that profits would not affect the imposition of state control.¹⁵ They also pointed out that the law on public interest companies allowed a remuneration of ten per cent to investors, but the Communications Ministry denied such compensation. They finally tried to circumvent state policy by setting up a profit company in a special relationship with Osaka's public interest broadcasting station, procuring its equipment, arranging for loans, collecting listener's fees, etc.¹⁶ This plan was rejected outright by the ministry. Thus the money invested in Japanese radio was to be no more than a donation yielding no gain whatsoever. It is not known how many investors pulled out at this stage, or exactly why so many stayed with the enterprises. Some may have counted on future business considerations from the stations, but the others were apparently persuaded to contribute to an important cultural innovation without reward.

Terms of the First Broadcasting Licenses

At the same time they announced the public interest switch, officials instructed all applicants in each city to unite in a single broadcasting enterprise.¹⁷ When these arrangements were concluded, each group had to obtain two permits from the Communications Ministry, one for its existence as a juridical person, the other for construction of transmission facilities. These were issued between November 1924 and February 1925, and a ministerial order came attached to each permit. The contents of these orders were very basic to state control over radio during the next 20 years.

The order attached to recognition of the companies as juridical persons required ministerial approval for the use of surplus funds, the

appointment and dismissal of top executives, and all major borrowing. A thorough system of reporting was instituted. Before each business period, operational plans and a budget were to be submitted, and afterwards an account of business and financial activities. Ministry officials were authorized to order special reports and to express their views in company meetings, and the companies were bound to obey state dictates on the construction of new facilities. The state could annul any company decision in violation of these regulations or the articles of incorporation, or damaging to the public interest. Executives responsible for such decisions could be dismissed. In case of noncompliance, the state could rescind the company's permit to exist. The final clause of this order allowed the Communications Ministry to amend its contents "whenever it is recognized as necessary for the public interest."¹⁸

The second order, accompanying the approval of transmission equipment, was more sweeping. It fixed the exact name, call sign, transmission frequency, electric power, hours of operation, and the cost of listener's fees for each station. The ministry could adjust the amount of the fees or withdraw the right to collect them. Prior day reporting of program content was instituted, and the regional Communications Bureau Chiefs were empowered to order broadcasts in the public interest. Commercials were banned. Technical personnel had to be licensed by officials and could be dismissed by them. The state could command changes in broadcasting facilities, restrict or ban their use, assume direct management, or purchase all or part of them. This authority was unconditional. All obligations of station operators, including the construction of new facilities at the state's behest, had to be performed with their own money. The approval of facilities might be

revoked if the station failed to comply with regulations, and this order too was open to change at any time.¹⁹ The approval for the facilities was good for ten years.

These two ministerial orders give eloquent testimony to the vast authority claimed by the state over radio. The terms speak for themselves. At the time these orders were promulgated, none of the other mass media were exposed to anywhere near this rigid a control structure.²⁰

The Founding of NHK

The Communications Ministry merged the three independent broadcasting companies into a national monopoly, NHK, in August 1926. Movement towards amalgamation began in November 1925, when the Tokyo Broadcasting Company requested a relay capability to new stations soon to appear around the country. The Osaka and Nagoya stations were not mentioned, but national integration of broadcast management was implicit in the proposal.²¹ The imminent licensing of new regional broadcasters in late 1925 gave the issue a certain urgency. An immediate merger would involve only three companies--later it would mean negotiating with six or seven.

Shortly thereafter, an opinion paper was circulated by a group of Communications Ministry officials subscribing to unified national management. Their primary concern was to assure the rapid spread of radio throughout the country. The original plan to license one independent station in each area now seemed a hazard to this ambition. The Nagoya Broadcasting Company had a shaky financial record and was handicapped by the paucity of local programming. How would stations in smaller cities fare? Short on programming and technical expertise, they would end up charging exorbitant listening fees to stay in business. Given

their lower power output, reception from any distance would require expensive vacuum tube receivers, whereas a national system of potent wire relays would enable most Japanese to use the cheaper crystal sets. A relay system could best be achieved under unified national management with bureaucratic and civil participation (kanmin rengo).²²

Plans for integration advanced quickly. The opinion paper was followed by a ministerial research report in January 1926, which directed bureaucrats to prepare bylaws for a new national company. In another month, the ministry had contrived a 100-page plan for the merger, including the articles of incorporation for the new firm. This plan was placed on the desk of Communications Minister Adachi Kenzo on 22 February 1926. Adachi was a Minseito party leader, a Diet member of 24 years standing.²³ His subordinates asked him to choose between two contingency plans, one for a profit company and one for a public interest firm. Evidently there was still some support for a profit company within the bureaucracy. Adachi became the second party minister to choose the public interest alternative.²⁴

The Communications Ministry now embarked upon some behind-the-scenes lobbying. The Vice-Minister (the highest career bureaucrat) traveled to Osaka, where the stiffest resistance was expected, to discuss the merger privately with the chairman of the board. He presented the ministry's decision for amalgamation as irrevocable, and threatened to build another station in Osaka if the present company refused to cooperate.²⁵ A new station would obviously mean extinction for the old. Similar discussions were held with executives of the other stations. The Communications Ministry then formally submitted its unification scheme to the boards of directors of the three companies on 30 April 1926.

All capital invested in the existing firms would be transferred to the new monopoly, so those with a stake in the independent stations would not lose their status as owners or their money. Tokyo was compliant. Nagoya agreed in principle while pressing for greater transmission power. Osaka came forward with a counterproposal. Given the terms of their license, the Osaka directors could not reject a merger out of hand, but a majority of them voted to make the consolidated organ a profit-making company, and they were unanimous that the new system should have two poles of equal importance, Tokyo and Osaka. They were staunchly averse to a preponderant central office and insisted that it serve merely to coordinate between the branches.²⁶ An Osaka delegation presented these proposals to Minister Adachi on May 1. There followed the first of many heated arguments over the terms of the merger. The Osaka group had to retreat on the issue of profit since it hadn't the support of the other stations, but it did elicit a pledge that the central office would have but modest authority. The Vice-Minister followed with a letter affirming a paternal relationship between the Osaka branch and all new installations to the west. On May 8, the Osaka board of directors approved the new system, pending further discussions on particulars, on the basis of his assurances.²⁷

On 25 May 1926, the Communications Ministry convened a meeting of station representatives to discuss the new firm's articles of incorporation. True to its promise to the Osaka company, the branches of the coming monopoly were granted more decision-making authority than in earlier drafts. However, the articles contained the extraordinary proviso that the first executive officers would all be appointed by the Communications Minister. Normally, top executives were to be selected

by investors from among themselves, but the articles allowed the minister to fill 74 key posts in the central and branch offices; his appointees would serve for two years. The ministry announced its choices on August 6, just two weeks before the scheduled dissolution of the three original broadcasting companies. All eight managing directors (riji), two each for the central office and the Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka branches, were retiring Communications Ministry officials.

Objections were raised immediately. When Tokyo company directors called upon the Parliamentary Vice-Minister (a Diet representative) to protest, he responded as follows: the appointees were to insure cooperation between NHK and the Communications Ministry; when their terms were up, or new branches were founded, ministry officials would again be appointed to executive posts; and if there were efforts to block the founding of NHK over the issue, the ministry was prepared to place radio under state management.²⁸ The threatening nature of this reply only aggravated tempers further.

On 18 August 1926, two days before the scheduled merger, delegates from Osaka presented a petition against the appointments signed by all of the company's senior executives. The same day the Tokyo company's board of directors passed a formal declaration to the same effect. Furthermore, the Tokyo document was actually broadcast that evening on the radio. This was the first and last time a blatantly partisan political broadcast was made by anyone in imperial Japan other than a state official. Leading newspapers came out strongly behind the petitions. Minister Adachi responded more tactfully than his Parliamentary Vice-Minister. He explained that the ministry's appointments were one time only, though the need for state-civil cooperation should be considered

when future executives were elected. He affirmed the ministry's legal right of direct control, but stated it would never be asserted recklessly (tacitly denying the earlier threat of direct state management). He did not, however, renege on any of his appointments. Thus did a leading party politician collaborate in the transformation of Japan's only broadcasting company into a quasi-bureaucratic organ. The three independent stations dissolved themselves on 20 August 1926. Their investors were not appeased by the minister's statement, but rather resigned to the inevitability of defeat.

Ministerial approval of NHK as a juridical person was accompanied by an official order even more overbearing than those received earlier by the independent stations. Business and budgetary plans had to be approved in advance by the ministry, not merely reported as before. Executive salaries and the duties of all managing directors also required approval--this made it impossible to work around NHK's ex-bureaucrats by shifting their responsibilities to other offices. NHK was given five years to make radio accessible by crystal receiving sets throughout Japan, and all expenses incurred in the process were to be borne by the broadcasting company. In addition, all the ministry's earlier powers over broadcasting remained intact.

How did the state and involved civilians evaluate the emergence of Japan's new broadcasting monopoly? Minister Adachi expressed his thoughts in an address to NHK's first general investors' meeting:

It goes without saying that the broadcasting business exerts an enormous influence on the nation's general culture. Further, when necessary for the state (kokka), namely, when the state confronts an emergency, broadcasting is a great, unrivaled communications medium that can be used for state duties. . . . I think, then, that it is proper to say that this undertaking for the most part is to be treated as an affair of state.²⁹

These remarks show a new respect for radio's potential political value. Among other things, the British government's use of broadcasting during the May 1926 coal miners' strike had impressed Japanese officials and raised their estimation of radio.³⁰ Accordingly, from the early advocacy of profit companies and moderate assessment of radio's social impact, policy had changed to support for a quasi-bureaucratic organ using private money. A single national radio network partly run by ministerial veterans promised a speedy and integrated course of expansion and simplified the task of state control.

There was little jubilation on the other side of the table. Even among the Tokyo station directors, who had once favored a merger, the ministry's ploy of inserting its own people had come as a shock. The former operators in Osaka were even more dismayed. Their early difficulties in forming a company due to the ministry's late demand that all petitioners combine, their sense of betrayal at the shift away from profit companies, the threats by which the state compelled them to negotiate away their independence, and an obdurate regional pride repelled by the idea of subserviance to the state and to Tokyo, all made them unwilling participants in the project of consolidation. It was unknown whether they would actually vote to dissolve until the day of reckoning arrived, but investors in the Tokyo and Nagoya companies had already agreed to disband, and this probably decided the issue. Their feelings about the merger were bared in the Tokyo Asahi Shinbun on 19 August 1926:

Representatives of the Osaka Broadcasting Company, Directors Sagara and Yamane, visited Tokyo on the 18th. However, according to Director Yamane:

The Osaka Broadcasting Company had already had enough of the Communications Ministry's insincere attitude up to now, but lately discussions advanced so rapidly towards a three-station merger that we had resigned ourselves to the irresistible trend of events. But as the Communications Ministry's

attitude has actually become arrogant and insulting to us, the argument that it wasn't necessary to dissolve so readily became widely shared yesterday at the Osaka board of directors' meeting. On the one hand, even we are not about to be silent in the face of Vice-Minister Tanomogi's unspeakably rude bombast [threatening direct state management], and after having ascertained the Communications Ministry's attitude and policy directly in an interview with Minister Adachi today, we have resolved to open a board of directors' meeting straightaway upon our return to Osaka tomorrow morning to reach a final decision.³¹

Two days later, the Osaka directorate voted for dissolution.

Notes

¹The Communications Ministry organized a study group in June 1922 headed by its Transmission Bureau Telephone Section Chief (Tsushinkyoku Denwa Kacho), who had just returned from a research trip to the U.S. In August, this group produced the first version of the Draft Proposal Related to Privately Established Wireless Telephone (Hosoyo Shisetsu Musen Denwa ni Kansuru Gian). It was then submitted to a more diverse and elite committee of ministry bureaucrats who discussed, amended, and formally sanctioned it on 30 August 1923. The committee comprised mainly section chief rank officials. This method of slowly building a consensus among various offices is a well-known feature of Japanese state decision making (in some forms referred to as the ringisei system).

²In March 1923, a new Telephone Section Chief took over and re-opened the whole question of radio's establishment within the confines of the Transmission Bureau. The upshot was the Research Summary (Chosa Gaiyo), apparently finished in the spring or early summer of 1923; it was very influential even though it lacked wider sponsorship.

³The main points of the Draft Proposal and a complete reprint of the Research Summary may be found in Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK), ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi Shiryo Hen [A 50-Year History of Broadcasting, Documentary Volume] (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1977), pp. 41-46.

⁴A low-power station might operate within the range of a high-power station as long as the two had different functions, e.g., one might be a school network, the other devoted to general programming. Thus they would not be competing for the same audience.

⁵Technical problems included interference between various radio signals and the procurement of enough local expertise to run several businesses competently. As for the economics, the availability of sufficient capital for several stations in one area was doubtful.

⁶NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi [History of Japanese Broadcasting], 2 vols. (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1965), 1:31. Presumably, Diet men might pressure the ministry to license stations in which they had a financial interest, or urge station construction in many areas to please constituents. State railroad building and other public services had been manipulated politically for years. Party use of the railways as pork barrel is well documented in Najita, Hara Kei, pp. 69-79, 87-90.

⁷Article 2, sections 1-5 of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law list specific cases in which privately-operated wireless facilities may be approved, while section 6 enables the minister to approve "other" facilities when he recognizes a "special need." Sections 1-5 condition approval upon the facilities not being used for "mass communications," thus the "grand principle." However, the blanket clause covering any "special need" makes no mention of use for mass communications.

⁸By this time 41 notices of intent to apply for broadcasting licenses had been received by the ministry. The decree was titled Regulations for Privately-Established Wireless Telephone for Use in Broadcasting (Hosoyo Shisetsu Musen Denwa Kisoku), and it is reprinted in NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, pp. 47-48. Although the word "rajio" was already part of the Japanese language, the ministry could not depart from the wording of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law, which spoke only of "wireless telephone," thus the elongated titles.

⁹Nihon Musen Shi [The History of Japanese Wireless], 13 vols. (Tokyo: Denpa Kanri Iinkai, 1951), 7:25.

¹⁰NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:41.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 36-38.

¹²Japanese companies were legally divided into two groups: Public Interest Juridical Persons (Koeki Hojin), and Profit Juridical Persons (Eiri Hojin). The public interest category was further subdivided into Corporate Juridical Persons (Shadan Hojin) and Foundation Juridical Persons (Zaidan Hojin). The foundations were similar to those in the U.S., associations making use of a fund perhaps left by some wealthy philanthropist. The Corporate Juridical Persons were a diverse group recognized for tax purposes as performing a public service. Virtually all the public interest companies referred to in this study were of the corporate variety. Financing was varied. Stock flotations, state subsidies, contributions, and the sale of goods and services might all supply income. The state demanded business reports and notice of managerial changes from these companies, but the mere label "Public Interest Juridical Person" tells very little about the degree of state control, which varied considerably from case to case.

¹³Nihon Musen Shi, 7:32-33.

¹⁴The document is reprinted in NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:44.

¹⁵Osaka Hosokyoku Enkaku Shi [Historical Development of the Osaka Broadcasting Company] (Osaka: Nihon Hoso Kyokai Kansai Shibu, 1934), p. 20.

¹⁶NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:47-48.

¹⁷Osaka Hosokyoku Enkaku Shi, p. 20.

¹⁸The order accompanying approval of the Tokyo Broadcasting Company is reprinted in NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 164.

¹⁹The order accompanying approval of the Tokyo Broadcasting Company's transmission facilities is reprinted in *ibid.*, pp. 164-166.

²⁰These orders partly overlap and partly supplement the decree and notification by which the Communications Ministry first made its radio policy official (see above Bureaucratic Plans Become Radio Policy), but these earlier administrative ordinances remained in force.

²¹Nihon Musen Shi, 7:106; NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:65.

²²On the opinion paper, see NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:143-144.

²³Adachi later served as Home Minister in the Hamaguchi and second Wakatsuki party cabinets. Earlier in his career, he had founded two journals during a stay in Korea.

²⁴Nihon Musen Shi, 7:112.

²⁵NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:149.

²⁶Osaka Hosokyoku Enkaku Shi, p. 149.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 158-161.

²⁸Ibid., p. 208.

²⁹Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 196.

³⁰This was mentioned by the Communications Ministry's Parliamentary Vice-Minister in remarks cited in the Tokyo Asahi Shinbun. NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:160.

³¹Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 143-144.

CHAPTER IX

RADIO: STATE CONTROL IN PRACTICE

Radio expanded rapidly over 1926-1932. NHK's branch stations grew from three to 19, its employees from 395 to 2,249, and contracts for radio receivers rose from 361,066 to over 1.4 million.¹ National broadcast relay capability, allowing all stations to air a program from one source simultaneously, was acquired in November 1928. A second broadcast channel devoted to educational programming opened in Tokyo in April 1931 and in Nagoya and Osaka over the following two years. Despite rapid growth, however, radio was still primarily a medium of the cities in 1932. In that year 25.7% of metropolitan households owned a radio, but only 4.5% in rural counties (gun).² The rural rate would not surpass the 25% level until 1940.

State control over the day-to-day operations of radio was extensive. Only in regard to radio did media policy definitely cross the line from censorship to mobilization. Yet mobilization in this period remained rudimentary, and the branches of NHK enjoyed significant autonomy from the central office. There was some continuity in state regulation from the three-company period through the founding of NHK, so control measures over the entire span will be examined.

Censorship

As noted above, pre-broadcast censorship was instituted in the Communications Ministry notification of February 1924. At first, local

ministry officials censored scripts directly on station premises, but this was soon discontinued.³ Instead, program material was delivered to state offices, including the script, the speaker's name, and the scheduled time of broadcast. Oral reporting was generally allowed for news, lectures, and music, and this could be conveyed over the telephone. For oral reports, a general summary of contents was usually sufficient. Programs could be banned, cut, or revised by state officials.

In practice, censorship was a cooperative endeavor of the state and radio personnel. Instructions on forbidden content were regularly sent to the stations (both before and after NHK), and their people worked with program sponsors to cut illicit material before filing program reports.⁴ Normally, if state censors did find something amiss, rather than take official action they merely informed the stations and the appropriate changes were made.⁵ Coordination on prior program reporting was not always perfect,⁶ but the informality of telephone reporting and the stations' direct execution of censorship orders speak of mutual trust between officials and broadcasting employees. So far as is known, neither NHK nor the Communications Ministry kept statistical records of censorship activities.

Cooperation between the state and civil management was also evidenced in use of the circuit breaker. There was always a danger that live shows would stray from the authorized script onto illegal ground, so in December 1926, the Communications Ministry ordered NHK to equip its transmitting stations with circuit breakers that could stop a program in progress.⁷ These were mandatory even for broadcasts on location outside NHK studios.⁸ The stations employed program inspectors to operate these devices during all broadcasts.⁹ There were two sound monitors in

the inspector's room, one carrying the actual transmission and one a studio monitor. If the speaker wandered from his approved script, the inspector turned a key temporarily halting transmission. He continued to follow the program on the studio monitor, and when the illegal material ceased he would restore transmission power. Direct telephones from state offices were installed in the inspectors' rooms to streamline official orders.¹⁰ Communications bureaucrats monitored all programs from their own listening facilities, so they were constantly on the lookout for illegal contents.¹¹

Use of the circuit breaker at NHK's Tokyo branch was documented for a two-year period starting in April 1931. During that time, there were 40 interruptions in 26 programs for an aggregate duration of 16'30".¹² Most cases were for commercial advertising on shows unrelated to politics (e.g., lectures on sunburn, rabbit meat, and the cultivation of figs). Only six of the programs clearly addressed state policy (all on foreign affairs), and they were cut a total of 4'27". This record is more than just local in application, since most programming in these years came through the national relay, and most relay transmissions originated in Tokyo. Prior censorship was obviously very effective. There may have been more interruptions before 1931, when the censorship system was less polished.¹³

Beyond the application of regular press law standards, virtually any state institution could put a muzzle on radio. It merely had to forward a list of forbidden items to the Communications Ministry; in emergencies, any responsible state office could issue direct orders to the broadcasting stations, even to stop a program in progress.¹⁴ The ministries took full advantage of these privileges. For example, in

October 1925, the Agriculture and Forestry Ministry banned information on the size of the rice crop to avoid extreme price fluctuations.¹⁵ In June 1932, it ordered that broadcasts from the race track not include the pedigree or breeding district of thoroughbreds or the amounts bet and paid out.¹⁶ In May 1925, the Imperial Household Ministry sent instructions on reporting the Emperor's medical condition, and in January 1932, it banned all speculation on the contents of imperial edicts before their official proclamation.¹⁷ To expedite administration, direct telephones linked the Home Ministry's Criminal Affairs Bureau to the Tokyo Communications Bureau, and all regional Communications Bureaus to the stations under their jurisdiction; there was also a specially-coded telegraph connection between the central Communications Ministry and its branch offices, though here too telephones were used at least as early as February 1930.¹⁸ The availability of such technology was essential to the efficient implementation of controls.

A unique feature of radio censorship was the categorical prohibition of all political argument.¹⁹ Government leaders could advertise official policy, but critics could not attack it, and state institutions were harbored from all censure. The Communications Ministry even banned the reporting of temporary suspensions in telephone service (another of its responsibilities) due to thunderstorms.²⁰ The writ against criticism of the state gained in specificity in response to particular cases. For example, in September 1926, a clergyman speaking from NHK's Osaka station used such phrases as "the army which has destructive objectives" and "armies and warships whose duty is to kill human beings."²¹ The regional Communications Bureau Chief was subsequently reprimanded by his superiors for permitting "careless remarks concerning the duties of the military."²²

More controversial was a lecture by Seiyukai party figure Mori Kaku upon his return from Manchuria in November 1931. Since a Minseito cabinet was in power, Mori's prepared remarks were scrupulously checked; he was told that any deviation from the text would mean the circuit breaker. However, he added the one word "recently" to the original sentence "Japanese diplomacy is not respected by China and the League of Nations." The "recently" turned the statement into a slur against the ruling cabinet. The broadcast inspectors failed to notice, but the aroused indignation of the Minseito soon brought the matter to their attention.²³ Talk of punishing those responsible was quieted only by Mori's appointment in December as Chief Cabinet Secretary in the new Seiyukai government. In January 1932, however, the Communications Ministry urged its branches to tighten the censorship of two types of broadcasts:

1. Any expression or contents feared to be interpreted as criticism or denunciation of legal regulations, measures based upon these regulations, administrative policies or facilities established pursuant to legal regulations, or the decisions of any lawfully organized Diet session or other meeting.
2. The exposition of an opinion or claim tainted with a politically disputatious character which is biased in favor of one party or faction, or an expression or contents which constitute an attack on, or a rebuttal of such an exposition.²⁴

Thus slip-ups were answered by more diligent efforts to avoid similar problems in the future. The uproar over Mori's rather trifling offense demonstrates just how tightly the system was run. It is said that Communications bureaucrats cut such words as "extremely" and "absolutely" in principle lest a statement on any topic invite outside criticism.²⁵ Even the tone of the broadcaster's voice was ordered to be coldly neutral.²⁶

Broadcasts for or against political parties were proscribed, including all manner of election campaigning, but Diet debates could have

become an exception to this rule.²⁷ The original Tokyo Broadcasting Company requested ministerial approval for Diet broadcasts in August 1925.²⁸ The ministry disowned the matter, however, pointing out that "even in England, when the Prime Minister was asked about this during the winter meeting of Parliament in 1925, he replied that the issue required further investigation, and in the U.S., though the President's speeches at the opening of Congress and at his inauguration have been broadcast, this has not been extended to legislative proceedings."²⁹ The ministry gave the Diet the same consideration shown to other state institutions--it could decide on radio exposure for itself.³⁰

In December 1925, both houses spurned the proposal. The lower house gave the following reasons: the broadcasts might violate the constitutional right of free speech within the Diet;³¹ no other country permits legislative broadcasts; Diet broadcasts would encompass both opposition party questions and responses from ministers--why not just sanction speeches by the ministers?;³² since the Communications Ministry has repudiated political speeches generally, it would be unjust to grant a privilege to the Diet which is denied to everyone else.³³ The House of Peers reported that opinion was so negative as to preclude the need for thorough study.³⁴ The Diet may have been the freest public arena for political expression in imperial Japan, especially in the 1930's, and if its deliberations had been broadcast, the political awareness of the general public would have been immeasurably greater. Thus there was a lot at stake in the decisions of December 1925.

Needless to say, radical ideas hadn't much of a chance on radio, but there were a handful of roundabout cases. In May 1929, a lecture on Soviet art and education transmitted in Osaka and Nagoya earned a

Communications Ministry notice condemning it as "indirect propaganda for the Soviet Russian Revolution."³⁵ In November 1933, a dramatic performance sponsored by the Japan Proletarian Cultural League (its members using aliases) also prompted a ministry warning against this "thought group" which "stirs up class thinking."³⁶ On November 29, a general notice went out on the "thought problem":

On broadcast content, regardless of whether the show is a lecture, news, fine art, or whatever, you are of course to eliminate anything which introduces an extreme "ism," theory, movement, or actual deed related to the national polity, political system, the economy, or morals, as well as anything which aids or abets related groups and their members. Furthermore, even when it comes to indirect terminology and clever phrasing which at first glance doesn't seem related to such matters, you must strictly avoid anything feared to foment an atmosphere which would lead one to infer such things, judging from the timing of the broadcast, the context of the speeches, etc.³⁷

The references to "thought groups" and the "thought problem" instead of just the usual ban on political programs reflects the spread of thought control terminology and concerns into regular censorship after the Manchurian Incident. Given the standing orders against political argument, however, radio policy did not really change much as a result.³⁸

Programming and Mobilization

Beyond the exclusion of undesirable contents, how did the state positively influence radio programming? For one thing, programming was relatively austere in response to official wishes. There were three basic program categories: information, education, and entertainment. Though the schedule was rather evenly divided between them, entertainment topped the 30% mark in only six years over 1925-1942, in contrast to the 60% share of entertainment programs in Germany and England.³⁹ Radio's second channel was devoted entirely to education. NHK's central office established norms for the time allotted to various shows, so much

to Japanese music, to Western music, to theater, etc. The branches, however, retained some latitude in their choice of programs. In one period, for example, the Osaka station carried 22% more entertainment than had been prescribed.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, programs piped through the national relay system were constantly on the rise, constricting the freedom for local transmissions. The proportion of the broadcast schedule originating in the national relay rose from 17% in 1928 to 79% in 1933.⁴¹

State announcements from a host of agencies were broadcast over radio. There were special slots for official news, but it was so boring that the items were often mixed into regular news programs.⁴² Announcements from the highest local government authorities and the Communications Ministry were mandatory, requests from the dozens of other state and public interest organs optional. The latter were granted about ten minutes in each day's local news.

General news reports, however, were not supplied by the state. They were initially provided by local newspapers that had invested in radio. The reports were edited by some branch stations and read verbatim by others, but all were subject to censorship. From November 1930, national radio news was purchased from Japan's two wire services, but NHK never developed its own news-gathering operations. The newspapers, fearing for the appeal of their extra editions, steadfastly opposed any independent radio news capability. Radio's dependence on external news sources was to facilitate the tightening of state control in the mid-1930's.

Before the Manchurian Incident, governments made little use of radio to promote their policies. The first policy announcement by a cabinet

member was Prime Minister Hamaguchi's speech on economic recovery in August 1929, over four years after Japan's first broadcast.⁴³ The Manchurian crisis, however, called for a new approach. Just three days after the conflict began, the Chinese government undertook a vigorous crusade to convince world opinion that Japan was the unlawful aggressor. Consequently, representatives of NHK and the Army, Foreign, and Communications Ministries met in Tokyo to discuss a counter-strategy.⁴⁴ They concluded that Japan's ability to persuade other countries required a united public opinion at home, and plans were made to mobilize radio to consolidate public support. Impressive results were achieved during the 12 months after the incident began in September 1931. There were 228 special lectures and educational programs on the conflict, 76 given by active duty military men, and 30 more programs on its diplomatic ramifications. There were 56 broadcasts of incident-related events, including military maneuvers, troop departures, memorial services for the war dead, and meetings of patriotic societies such as the reservist associations. There were 30 regular programs on the "Children's Hour" series devoted to the matter, 42 entertainment shows, and 24 programs on series devoted to women's interests, bearing such titles as "The Power of Women to Guard the Home Front," and "The Activities of Japanese Women in Manchuria."⁴⁵ A total of 410 programs in one year, not counting the barrage of special news bulletins that upped daily news coverage in Tokyo from 40 minutes in 1930 to 64 minutes in 1931.⁴⁶

The invasion of programs normally unrelated to policy matters is especially noteworthy. A crude example was NHK's petition to the Communications Ministry in March 1932 to start a children's news show, which appeared from June as "The Children's Newspaper." The entire paragraph

describing the kind of stories planned for the program read as follows:

There is news which holds a special interest for children. For example, the exploits of military dogs; a true story about a [Japanese] child in China whose father is to return home but who persuades his father to let him stay behind for his country's sake and joins a volunteer corps; a youth has a dream of Yamada Nagamasa [an early Japanese pioneer in Asia] and sets out to join the Chinese army, but on route he sees his mistake and seeks help from Japanese soldiers; a young girl escapes from Shanghai and returns to Japan unaided, etc. There is no time to list all of these sorts of military episodes. Even in peacetime, things like a courageous young man rescuing a drowning girl, or those which deeply move children to be filial sons and daughters. We believe that not a few sports and other special news items of interest will be used.⁴⁷

This was but a small dose of what lie ahead.

Radio's servility to the state soon made intellectuals cynical about broadcasting contents. The feminist novelist Nogami Yaeko wrote in early 1932.

Because I sense acutely radio's general power to propagate ideas, or, to go a step further, its enormous power of agitation, I think I would like to hear even information on each day's social events told in the voice of their true social reality, as if they had been filmed as they happened, and not arranged in a montage with mistaken ideology. When I see that radio has been serving as a state organ since the start of the war, this desire becomes all the stronger.⁴⁸

At about the same time, the author Ryutanji Yu commented: "The lack of interest and enthusiasm for contemporary radio among the intellectual class is just like a burnt out cinder."⁴⁹ There is no evidence, however, of similar skepticism among the general public. The Manchurian Incident produced an unprecedented spurt of new listening contracts as people turned to radio for the fastest news from the Asian mainland.⁵⁰

Personnel and Financial Controls

The basic components of state control over radio's personnel and finances have already been covered--it only remains to show how these were used in practice. The initial influx of bureaucrats set a strong

precedent. NHK's branch stations got a measure of revenge by laying off one managing director apiece in 1927 on a plea of economic hardship (thereby cutting loose three ex-officials), but personnel controls only strengthened over time.⁵¹ In December 1929, the Communications Ministry demanded prior approval for the hiring of all those performing substantive tasks in the program or technical fields. Among requirements for program personnel were that they be individuals of "moderate thoughts."⁵² Furthermore, by 1929 NHK had voluntarily hired more ex-bureaucrats than had ever been foisted upon it by the state. Each of the seven branch stations had general affairs, technical, and broadcasting divisions. All general affairs managers were ex-Communications Ministry officials, as were five of the seven technical division managers, the other two being ex-navy men. Only the broadcasting division heads had civil backgrounds, and four of these were prominent businessmen chosen to thank investors for support. All NHK central office division managers were ex-Communications bureaucrats.⁵³ This indicates that despite some smoldering resentment among investors over the personnel issue, the ties between the ministry and those actually running NHK were essentially fraternal. The two sides did not lose their distinct institutional identities, and there were contentious issues between them, but as often as not the ministry was quarreling with its own alumni. This was partly an arranged marriage with the ministry's initial appointees serving as middlemen--they were in a good position to hire their one-time bureaucratic colleagues into NHK. But the availability of technically qualified personnel within the state also had to be a major factor. Since telecommunications had hitherto been a state monopoly, there were probably few qualified applicants from civil society for many of the positions. In any case, there

are no signs of an ongoing, deepseated hostility between NHK employees of civil and bureaucratic backgrounds--eventually they formed a fairly amicable partnership.

The ministry exercised a veto over outside speakers on radio through the censorship system, and their personal background was increasingly stressed as a factor in program approval. In May 1929, echoing the contemporary anxiety over thought groups, officials demanded the speaker's occupation, court rank (if any), educational background, and any other salient data as part of program reports.⁵⁴ In January 1932, just after the Manchurian Incident, a new command to NHK read in part:

Hereafter, you will be all the more strict in your selection of performers. Of course, you will avoid anyone who might easily give rise to the least bit of public criticism, and in the broadcasting field also take care to avoid re-using anyone who has caused even minor problems in the past.⁵⁵

According to the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law, there were legal penalties for lying and for offending morals or public order over wireless facilities, and these were intensified in April 1929, but there is no recorded instance of a violator being punished, which speaks for the thoroughness of censorship and the advance screening of speakers.⁵⁶

Financially, the establishment of radio was probably the best deal the Japanese state ever made. Investors saw their money used to finance expansionary plans made to the state's specifications without profiting a cent. Judging solely from the results, one might easily conclude that radio's licensing was a clever swindle to finance an official project with private money.

The Communications Ministry took full advantage of its power over each year's budget. Conditions were attached to the annual budget approval, and it was often accompanied by a notification containing

further orders. For example, the 1929 budget approval declared NHK's work of testing and authorizing radio receivers to be a "subsidiary business" requiring a Communications Ministry permit. The appended notification required that NHK undergo a detailed audit every February and August. The 1930 notification demanded the standardization of office structure, salaries, and labor in all NHK branches.⁵⁷ Thus budget powers were used to dictate not only financial but other matters as well.

The state's principal financial boon from NHK was ministerial control over use of the company's assets, but there were other benefits as well. The Communications Ministry also required NHK to pay 20 sen (or .2 yen) annually for each listening contract. In 1928, listeners paid 12 yen per year to NHK, so the ministry's take came to 1.6% of NHK's annual income from listening fees. In later years the price of listening contracts decreased, so the ministry's percentage grew relative to NHK's total revenue.⁵⁸

The Communications Ministry was not allowed to corner the market on radio money, however. Economic hard times spurred the aspirations of local governments (Home Ministry jurisdiction) to impose their own tariffs on radio listeners. In November 1931, the cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe took a common stand on the issue. Negotiations between the Communications and Home Ministries then compelled NHK to pay local governments the equivalent of one month's listening fee for every receiver owner in their districts; in exchange, the Home Ministry agreed to nix any further local attempts to tax listeners directly. When the agreement took effect in 1932, the financial picture looked like this:

Total paid listening contracts	1,034,491	
NHK revenues (yen)	9,310,419	(nine yen annually per contract)
Local government share	775,868	(75 sen annually per contract, or 8.3% of NHK's revenues)
Communications Ministry share	206,898	(20 sen annually per contract, or 2.2% of NHK's revenues)

So NHK turned a profit after all, but not for its investors. Communications Ministry and NHK brass were reluctant signatories to the Home Ministry deal. The local government money was avowedly earmarked for health projects, but tuberculosis was not in their sphere of the "public interest." They were compelled to submit because the Home Ministry had sided with its local government offices against them, only one example of bureaucratic jousting over radio policy.

Intrastate Conflicts over Radio

Both the Home Ministry and the Education Ministry challenged the Communication Ministry's dominance over radio policy in this period. The Communications side won an initial victory in an accord with the Home Ministry in 1925, in which the latter's involvement was limited to clearing the censorship requests of certain other agencies. In 1928, however, the Home Minister tried to claim radio censorship by asserting that all matters pertaining to public order were properly his business. In a memo to the Communications Ministry, he outlined a new law to confirm his jurisdiction. The Communications Ministry, however, overcame this challenge by pushing a revision of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law granting it exclusive censorship authority--this passed the Diet in 1929.⁵⁹ In 1933, the same debate was reenacted in an inter-ministerial Thought Policy Committee.⁶⁰ Acrimonious exchanges between bureau chiefs of the two ministries ended in a reaffirmation of the status quo.

The Education Ministry made its bid in late 1930 when official approval was given for NHK's education-oriented second channel. The Education bureaucracy called for dual jurisdiction, since all juridical persons active in educational work belonged to its bailiwick; it also claimed the right to censor educational programs. These arguments were put forth at the bureau chief level. The Communications Ministry responded that radio was more than just an educational organ, and reasserted its own authority over all wireless facilities. Education Ministry authority over broadcasting was declared to be "meaningless."⁶¹ The issue was then kicked upstairs to the Vice-Ministers' level, where it again failed of resolution. Finally, in January 1931, the Parliamentary Vice-Ministers settled the matter in the Communications Ministry's favor--its only concession was to appoint an official consultant with the Education Ministry. This dispute delayed the start of regular broadcasts into Japanese schools until April 1935, and Education officials withheld formal recognition of radio as a tool of instruction until 1941. On both sides, organizational imperatives took precedence over the "public interest."

This brief review of bureaucratic border wars is significant for several reasons. First, they served to exacerbate radio censorship, since the Communications Ministry feared that the slightest slip-up might be exploited by its competitors to press their claims. Further, by defining the boundaries of such quarrels, it is made clear that they had nothing to do with more liberal treatment for the medium. Regardless of who won these jurisdictional skirmishes, the outcome would have no effect on radio's autonomy from the state. Finally, it is worthwhile to throw in a reminder that although "state" is constantly used

as a collective noun in these pages, it was not a solitary actor with a unified will. For analytical purposes, it is legitimate to isolate a group of institutions according to shared functional characteristics and label them with one word, but despite the boasts of certain philosophers and statesmen, modern state agencies comprise neither a spiritual personality nor a well-oiled machine of complementary parts. The error of ascribing greater unity to states than the facts warrant is familiar enough to justify occasional warnings to the contrary.

Notes

¹NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, pp. 603, 618, 608.

²NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, vol. 1, chart titled Rajio no Nendo Betsu Toshi Gunbu Fukyuritsu, no page number.

³The responsible local offices were the regional Communications Bureaus (Teishinkyoku) in Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya. These branch offices were subordinate to the central ministry's Telephone and Telegraph Bureau (Denmukyoku) and Engineering Bureau (Komukyoku), which handled the administrative and technical sides of radio, respectively, from May 1925. They had been created from the splitting up of the earlier Transmission Bureau. When notifications from the central ministry to its branches are referred to in the text, they indicate cables sent from the central Telephone and Telegraph Bureau to the regional Communications Bureaus.

⁴NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:80.

⁵Nihon Musen Shi, 7:164, document dated February 1930.

⁶For example, a message of 8 December 1925 urges greater punctuality in reporting on news broadcasts at least one hour before air time--Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 10, pp. 18-19. Another notice on 9 March 1933 demanded vigilance in acquiring and reporting scripts for all programs that might touch political subjects--NHK Sogo Hoso Bunka Kenkyujo, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1) Taisho 14-Nen-Showa 20-Nen [Established Rules--Broadcasting Compilation (1) 1925-1945], Hoso Shiryo Shu 6 (Tokyo: NHK, 1972), p. 20. Elaborate, direct state supervision was imposed on broadcasts of ceremonies involving the imperial family--see *ibid.*, pp. 15-17, documents dated 2 November 1923 and 10 December 1928.

⁷Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 12, pp. 19-20. The circuit breaker function was required in an earlier document dated 22 May 1925, but it is not clear if it was actually installed at that time--see *ibid.*, document 1, p. 2.

⁸This was required as of February 1930--NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 56. However, special outdoor circuit breaker facilities had been demanded at least as early as the imperial coronation ceremony of November 1928--see NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), pp. 15-16, document dated 2 November 1928, and pp. 16-17, document dated 10 December 1928.

⁹In July 1928, the Communications Ministry demanded that the program inspector be one of the board of directors or the station's broadcasting division manager, and that either he or a responsible proxy operate the circuit breaker at all times. NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 15, document dated 17 July 1928.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 1, p. 3.

¹²Shumoku Tokei Hyo [Statistical Chart of Events], unpublished, volumes for 1931-1932 and 1932-1933, made available to the author at the NHK Sogo Hoso Bunka Kenkyujo.

¹³On 18 January 1932, there were seven interruptions during two shows, which drew the attention of the Asahi Shinbun the next day. Six were interruptions of a stand-up comedy routine, one of a lecture on winter sports. Though this incident has been cited in various scholarly sources, it must have been something of a record for the circuit breaker and was certainly not representative of its general use.

¹⁴See the revision of the February 1924 ministerial notification in NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 56.

¹⁵Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 9, p. 18.

¹⁶NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), pp. 19-20.

¹⁷NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:60; Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 36, pp. 220-221.

¹⁸Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 4, p. 11, and document 23, pp. 204-205; NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, document dated 13 February 1930, p. 56.

¹⁹This was formally inserted in a ministerial communique in December 1925, but it had been enforced from the first broadcast--Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 10, p. 19. More detailed reasoning behind the ban can be found in NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan Showa 6-Nen [Radio Yearbook 1931] (Tokyo: Seibundo, 1931), pp. 139-142.

²⁰NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:228.

²¹Sendai Teishinkyoku, Hoso Kantoku Jimu Teiyo [Summary of the Business of Broadcast Supervision] (n.d.), p. 94. This document was probably prepared about 1936.

²²Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 11, p. 19.

²³This incident is related in the magazine Hoso (Broadcasting), no. 5, 1939, in an article reprinted in NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:137-138.

²⁴Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 37, p. 221.

²⁵NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:228; in Japanese, the words were "hijo ni" and "mattaku."

²⁶Ibid., p. 190, according to a Communications Ministry notice of October 1933.

²⁷Elections were preceded by special warnings from the Communications Ministry against any partisan political messages--e.g., see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 22, p. 204, a warning of 19 January 1928 just prior to a general election. Professor Nomura of Tokyo Imperial University was set to broadcast a speech about the upcoming general elections on 13 February 1930 when at the last minute ministry officials demanded changes in his address. The professor, who had prepared an evaluation of both ruling and opposition party platforms, refused to budge and his spot was cancelled--NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:195. In February 1932, a program in which various party leaders were to announce their platforms was also dropped--ibid., p. 228.

²⁸NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 278, document dated 7 August 1925.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰The matter was referred to the chief secretaries of the House of Peers, the House of Representatives, and the cabinet--ibid., document dated 16 September 1925. Meanwhile, the ministry allowed the Tokyo station to make all technical preparations needed to transmit from the floor of the Diet.

³¹Article 52 of the Meiji constitution read:
No Member of either House shall be held responsible outside the respective Houses, for any opinion uttered or for any vote given in the House. When, however, a Member himself has given publicity to his opinions by public speech, by documents in print or in writing, or by any other similar means, he shall, in the matter, be amenable to the general law.

³²It is not known how this issue was discussed among Diet members, but it seems likely the party in power did not look forward to the prospect of opposition attacks on its policies being broadcast around the country.

³³NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, pp. 278-279.

³⁴Ibid., p. 279.

³⁵ Sendai Teishinkyoku, Hoso Kantoku Jimu Teiyo, p. 95; NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 17.

³⁶ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 47, pp. 257-258; the same group had been refused air time by both the Kumamoto and Kokura stations.

³⁷ Ibid., document 48, p. 258.

³⁸ The examples of illegal programs slipping through the censorship screen should not be misinterpreted; such cases were very rare. The pacifistic remarks on the army, the lecture on Soviet society, and the proletarian drama were found on a list of "Important Examples of Problem Broadcasts" covering the years 1925-1936--there were only 18 cases on the entire list. It is taken from Sendai Teishinkyoku, Hoso Kantoku Jimu Teiyo, pp. 94-96.

³⁹ NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 610; NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:183.

⁴⁰ NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 45.

⁴¹ NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:135.

⁴² For evidence of this practice, see ibid., pp. 238-239; NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 113.

⁴³ NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:195.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 196; Kakegawa Tomiko, "The Press and Public Opinion in Japan, 1931-1941," in Dorothy Borg and Okamoto Shunpei, eds., Pearl Harbor as History (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1973), pp. 541-542. The participants were Lt. Gen. Hata Hikosaburo, chief of the Army Research Group (Chosa Han), Shiratori Toshio, head of the Foreign Ministry's Information Division, Hatakeyama Toshiyuki, the Communications Ministry's Telephone and Telegraph Bureau Chief, and Nakayama Ryuji, managing director of NHK's Tokyo branch, an ex-Communications Ministry bureaucrat.

⁴⁵ All data from NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1933, pp. 6-25.

⁴⁶ NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 284.

⁴⁷ Petition dated 19 March 1932, reprinted in ibid., pp. 285-286.

⁴⁸ Quoted from the journal Chosa Jiho, January 1932, in NHK ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:293-294. In the same issue, Saito Ryutarō wr

These days radio is uninteresting. I'm getting tired of it. One restraint after another is imposed by state officials who are like obstinate swine and have no comprehension of things. The best thing would be to liberate it from these restrictions and make it free, but even within the limits of present restraints, one can think of numerous methods preferable to those being used now.

Ibid., pp. 294-295.

⁴⁹Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 295, originally from the Chosa Jiho of February 1932. In this same issue, Okuya Kumao, the Literary Section Head of NHK's Osaka outlet, wrote:

Those on the left often say that Japanese broadcasting is trying to fulfill its foremost function as an organ for the diffusion of reactionary thought. If one looks at the relationship with supervisory state officials, the scope of the limits on broadcast contents, etc., one cannot disagree with this observation, but it is only the organization and the system which foist [upon radio] varied functions favorable to a reactionary course—it is certainly not inevitable that we must advance along this road.

Ibid.

⁵⁰Year-end statistics for listening contracts show a net increase of 128,469 from 1929 to 1930, 276,830 from 1930 to 1931, and 363,944 from 1931 to 1932. The Manchurian Incident occurred in September 1931. Figures from NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 608.

⁵¹Nihon Musen Shi, 7:174.

⁵²On the December 1929 policy change, *ibid.*, pp. 165-166. For the state's criteria of competence, NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 22, document dated 28 March 1930.

⁵³Figures from Nihon Musen Shi, 7:178-179.

⁵⁴NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), p. 17, document dated 22 May 1929.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 19, document dated 29 January 1932.

⁵⁶Nihon Musen Shi, 7:162-163. According to the amendments of 1929, a person disturbing order or violating manners and morals over wireless could suffer up to two years in prison and a 500 yen fine

⁵⁷Examples from *ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

⁵⁸Listening fees were reduced to 75 sen per month in April 1932 and 50 sen per month in April 1935. To give the reader a feel for the

relative expanse of owning a radio receiver, consider the following Tokyo prices in 1932: one month's newspaper subscription--95 sen; one admission to a movie theatre--80 sen; a bottle of beer--34 sen; 500 grams of sugar--22 sen; a pack of domestic cigarettes--15 sen, figures cited in NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:176. It is obvious why radio was still considered something of a luxury item in depression years when some farmers sold their daughters into prostitution to avoid starvation.

⁵⁹Consistent with prewar Japanese legal practice, the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law makes no mention of any particular ministry, but only the "responsible minister." However, by placing censorship within the clauses of the law, the pre-existing administrative ordinances giving the Communications Ministry all authority contained in that law automatically put the new censorship function into its domain.

⁶⁰NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:166.

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 166-167.

CHAPTER X

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The first part of this concluding section will examine how media policies were made in Japan's democratic regime, the second part will look into the motivations behind them. Both will place the Japanese experience in a broader comparative perspective.

The Policymaking Process

According to Mattei Dogan, two widespread traits of policymaking in contemporary democracies are executive dominance over the legislature and the paramountcy of career administrators over politicians within the executive.¹ Both characteristics stood out in prewar Japan. Executive dominance is beyond discussion--91% of all laws enacted by the Diet under the Meiji constitution (1890-1947) originated in the executive branch.² Media policy in the democratic period, when the Diet's influence was presumably at its apex, illustrates the general point. The only major media bill initiated by the Diet over 1918-1932 was the press legislation of 1924, and this was defeated partly due to cabinet opposition. The Diet took no part in formulating or approving policy toward radio and film. The ascendancy of bureaucrats over politicians within the executive was also in evidence. Executive politicians played no apparent role in film policy, made only one substantial modification of bureaucratic plans for radio, and gave in to the bureaucracy in the decision to obstruct the Diet's press bill, which would have curbed

administrative prerogatives.

This pattern does not seem consistent with the highly politicized character of the bureaucracy. As noted earlier, the careers of top administrators depended upon their serving the interests of party officials. Such politicization is generally thought to reduce bureaucratic influence over policy, since it enables party cabinet ministers to assert their will on any issue.³ It is documented that party politicians were indeed the prime movers behind some key legislative measures such as the general manhood suffrage act. Within the executive, Communications Minister Inukai demonstrated the politicians' power to dominate when he overturned the bureaucratic design to license profit-making broadcasting firms. Politicians, then, had the power to control policy, but the media record shows that this power usually lay dormant--on the whole, the politician's input was secondary to that of the bureaucrat. The reasons why will now be explored.

The foremost reason for the bureaucracy's weight in policymaking was its superiority in necessary resources--expertise, organization, and personnel. The prewar bureaucracy was an educational elite recruited primarily from Tokyo Imperial University; entry and promotion hinged upon success in a rigorous series of qualifying exams.⁴ Its organizational superiority was bolstered by the understaffing of cabinet and ministers' offices, forcing executive politicians to rely heavily upon administrative line positions below for the preparation of policy proposals.⁵ The bureaucracy's advantages in personnel and time over the Diet and cabinet are well illustrated by the founding of radio. The initial three-station radio structure was launched between November 1924 and March 1925, coinciding almost perfectly with a meeting of the Diet, but the cabinet and

Diet were occupied with more pressing problems. Prime Minister Kato was struggling to hold together a shaky three-party coalition, and the legislature's attention was focused upon two historic bills, general male suffrage and the Peace Preservation Law. Likewise, when bureaucrats proposed the creation of NHK to Minister Adachi in February 1926, the parties had other matters to attend. Premier Kato had died on January 28, and a new cabinet had to be formed. From April 1926, when the ministry's plans for NHK were made public, to the actual merger in August 1926, the Diet never met. But for a very brief exchange in March 1923, radio was not even discussed in the Diet.⁶ Of course, radio's significance was not obvious to everyone in 1924-1926, but if bureaucrats recognized it more quickly than the parties, that reflects their ability to devote more time to the subject.

A second element favoring administrative influence was a legal system allowing bureaucrats to use their superior resources with minimal clearance through political channels. Ministerial notifications and decrees were used to set censorship standards, to fix most conditions for the emergence of radio, and to regulate every aspect of film policy. Decrees could be approved by a single minister, while other regulations were issued on the authority of career officials themselves. Parliamentary laws could limit the scope of bureaucratic ordinances, but they rarely did so due to their lack of concreteness and the bureaucracy's interpretive skills.

A third factor contributing to bureaucratic leadership was that bureaucrats and politicians were basically agreed on policy objectives. Both party control over senior appointments and the movement of retired bureaucrats into party ranks buttressed this agreement. Ex-bureaucrats

comprised 10% of the lower house membership over the five elections from 1920 to 1932, and they were even more numerous among party elites--of the eight party Prime Ministers, seven had been civilian bureaucrats and one a military bureaucrat in the Army Ministry.⁷ Administrators and politicians never battled as distinct groups over media policy. The bureaucracy did work to thwart the liberal Diet press law in 1924-1925, but it was, after all, a party premier who took the decisive steps to sabotage it. Bureaucratic film controls differed little from the press regulations set by the Diet in 1909. Party Communications Ministers evidently agreed with the basic bureaucratic blueprint for radio--they changed the one part they disliked--and no group of Diet members was so opposed as to protest the matter. If politicians rarely overturned administrative decisions, one reason is that they rarely felt the need. Bureaucratic policymaking was often undemocratic in that the involvement of elected officials was slight, but not anti-democratic in the sense of contravening the preferences of party government leaders.

A fourth cause of bureaucratic strength was that the parties lacked a deep organizational base in civil society--this constricted their role in filtering the demands of social groups, while increasing that of the bureaucracy. The more diverse and organized party support, the more likely interest groups will approach the state through party mediation. When this happens, politicians will inevitably be active in formulating policy responses, as they were when periodical press interests channeled their claims through the Diet. When organized party penetration of society is shallow, interest groups are more likely to take their demands directly to the bureaucracy, as did the petitioners for broadcasting licenses. When this happened, the parties largely

disappeared from the policy picture. The parties' neglect of radio illustrates well their indifference towards developing a wider and better organized constituency. Instead of turning radio into an amplifier for party propaganda, they surrendered the medium to a politically sterile trio of public interest companies caught in a web of bureaucratic controls. There was not one political association among the 100-plus applicants for a broadcasting license! Not that party governments ignored radio altogether, but if one notes that the first broadcast from the Diet in session was a speech by Premier Tojo Hideki in November 1941, the magnitude of the parties' lost opportunity can be appreciated. So thoroughly conditioned were they within the elitist confines of the Meiji constitutional system that the parties did not seek to reinforce their preeminence with a mass base. Their failure to do so reflects a startling naivete regarding the realities of modern power politics, and it greatly facilitated interest aggregation through the bureaucracy, augmenting the latter's policymaking role.

A fifth reason politicians were largely excluded from policymaking is that bureaucrats planned it that way. The Home Ministry kept film policy out of parliament by treating the medium as "entertainment" rather than public expression; the latter would have constitutionally required Diet jurisdiction. The Communications Ministry denied that radio was a mass medium in order to regulate it under an inappropriate existing law and avoid the need for a new bill. It also conducted most of its year-long preliminary study of radio in secrecy. These agencies saw new policy fields as opportunities to expand their personnel, budgets, and authority, and they were naturally reluctant to submit their plans to the cabinet or Diet, where politicians and other ministries

might alter them and stake their own claims to the organizational assets being created.

A sixth cause of bureaucratic dominance was its autonomy from the regular courts. Had civil litigants been able to challenge the legality of administrative policies in court, the ministries would have been less free to circumvent the legal prerogatives of the Diet (and the Diet less free to abdicate its responsibilities). Judicial oversight might very well have compelled Diet consideration of new laws to regulate film and radio.

A seventh reason for bureaucratic supremacy over policy was the legitimacy attached to bureaucratic action within the political system. The willingness of bureaucrats to make full use of the aforementioned advantages was partly due to this legitimacy, which had both historical and legal foundations. In the Tokugawa period, administrative, political, and military authority had been jointly exercised by the samurai without a clear distinction between political and administrative offices and responsibilities.⁸ The aura of legitimacy surrounded all functions of the ruling class equally. The Meiji bureaucracy was initially staffed by ex-samurai, including many protégés of the founding fathers, so the sense of legitimacy attached to administrative acts remained alive.⁹ As was shown in the treatment of early press ordinances, the Meiji state explicitly asserted the legitimacy of unilateral bureaucratic policy-making; indeed, prior to the constitution, the state was structurally little more than a collection of bureaucratic agencies. The constitution then legitimized administrative authority not only through its grant of ordinance powers but also by making each minister directly responsible to the throne--this latter feature was complemented by the

imperial appointment of all senior career officials, whose status was thus bestowed by the Emperor himself. The notion of the bureaucracy as a keeper of the public interest properly above the sectarian wrangling of party politics could only enhance the formal legitimacy of its policy-making role.

To summarize, though party politicians could dominate policymaking when all of their influence was brought to bear, they were incapable or unwilling to exert this influence in an ongoing manner over most aspects of media policy. The bureaucracy was well equipped to govern in this area by (1) its superiority in organization and expertise, (2) its independent authority to issue ordinances and other regulations, (3) its basic agreement with politicians on the substance of policy, (4) its extensive interaction with interest groups, owing in part to the thin party base in society, (5) the success of tactics to exclude politicians from the decision-making process, (6) its autonomy from the regular courts, and (7) the historical and legal legitimacy of its policymaking functions.

One may be provoked to ask if the bureaucracy's potency in policy-making does not undercut the description of the 1918-1932 period as one of rule by a democratic regime. One response is to examine whether or not these traits are found in other regimes judged on balance to be democratic.

Bureaucratic superiority in organization and expertise is widely cited today to explain the declining policymaking role of elected officials, especially in Western Europe.¹⁰ B. Guy Peters lists information and expertise as the most formidable advantages bureaucrats possess over politicians in the policymaking process.¹¹ Certainly the staffs serving

executive branch politicians and some legislatures today are more formidable than those found in Japan in the 1920's. Examples are the huge Executive Office staff serving the American President, and the "ministerial cabinets" supporting individual ministers in France and Belgium.¹² However, these staff capabilities are more than matched by the growth in state functions and bureaucratic size over the last 60 years--the inability of politicians to control the course of policy remains a widespread problem.¹³

The generous formal ordinance powers of the prewar Japanese bureaucracy have few direct parallels in democratic regimes today. However, the authority delegated to regulatory agencies and ministries charged with implementing complex policies can amount to almost the same thing.

Everywhere in Europe, parliaments have been declining in power. Legislative functions have been partly transferred to the executive branch, as seen by the importance of delegated powers which allow the public administration to set regulations. These regulations make possible the implementation of laws in matters that rightfully belong to parliamentary bodies. Laws promulgated as guidelines or decrees issued by the executive also point to this delegation of law making authority. Even bills passed by parliament are generally prepared and proposed by the government--in actual fact, by top administrative officials.¹⁴

It is perilous to generalize about the agreement on values and objectives that may exist between politicians and bureaucrats in democratic regimes. A major survey done in Western industrial democracies in the early 1970's, however, showed that the principal difference between the opinions of bureaucrats and politicians on the subject of state intervention in society was that more bureaucrats tended toward a moderate, centrist position, while more politicians advocated change. Only 16% of the combined respondents favored a major shift in the present

degree of state intervention.¹⁵ One is not led to expect that policies adopted unilaterally by the bureaucracy would clash sharply with the preferences of ruling politicians, though the likelihood of this happening differs by country--e.g., at present, it is much less likely in Britain than in Italy or the United States. It has been pointed out that politicians and bureaucrats rarely line up as groups on opposite sides of an issue.¹⁶

Regular contacts between bureaucrats and major interest groups affected by their policies (so-called clientela relationships) have been documented in many contemporary democracies.¹⁷ In reference to West Germany, Mayntz and Scharpf have written that "the federal bureaucracy's relations with organized interest groups are well developed, firmly established, and considered an integral aspect of ministerial work."¹⁸ In their survey of Western democracies, Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman found that 59% of top administrators reported regular contacts with interest groups, compared to 72% of party politicians.¹⁹

Bureaucratic efforts to avoid the interference of politicians are also a feature of other democratic regimes. Peters writes: "In general, we can expect agencies to attempt to get as large a share of the budgetary pie as possible and at the same time seek to maximize their own independence from political control."²⁰ Secrecy is one tool used for this purpose virtually everywhere.²¹

Supervision of the bureaucracy through administrative rather than regular courts has been the rule in many democratic regimes; the practice continues today in Italy, France, Sweden, and West Germany.²² Such courts are sometimes quite effective in keeping bureaucrats within the bounds of formal statutes, but they generally lack the power to judge

the constitutionality of bureaucratic regulations. In Japan, the lack of jurisdiction of the administrative court over media controls probably allowed an unusually high degree of bureaucratic discretion in interpreting such concepts as "public order," but it would not have forced new Diet laws to govern film or radio. Bureaucratic abuses of constitutional law can only be stopped by the jurisdiction of regular courts empowered to rule upon such matters, and these have been lacking in many democracies besides that of prewar Japan.

The legitimacy of bureaucratic policymaking was certainly more formalized in prewar Japan than in most democratic regimes. There is, however, an historical legacy of bureaucratic legitimacy in many West European countries, where administration began as the province of the monarch's personal entourage, and evolved into fixed offices entrusted with the royal seal.²³ On this point, both the Japanese and European experiences differ rather sharply from that of the United States.

To summarize, though there were some factors peculiar to Japan that heightened the policymaking role of the bureaucracy, on the whole the causes of bureaucratic influence were rather typical of those found in many other democratic regimes. One must remember that elements especially favoring the prewar Japanese bureaucracy, such as its ordinance powers and formal legitimacy, were counterbalanced by the sure party control over senior administrative promotions, which far exceeded that of most democratic ruling parties today.

Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman have summarized research on the bureaucrat-politician relationship in democratic regimes into four prominent interpretations: (1) politicians make policy, bureaucrats only execute it, (2) both make policy, but bureaucrats contribute only facts

and instrumental knowledge, while politicians articulate values and interests, (3) both make policy and articulate interests, but bureaucrats mediate the narrow interests of organized clienteles, while politicians voice the broad, diffuse interests of society at large (the antithesis of what the Meiji founders perceived), and (4) the pure hybrid--bureaucrats and politicians play interchangeable roles in policy formulation.²⁴ These categories are not mutually exclusive, since roles may differ from policy to policy, but the last one seems to offer the best general fit for Japanese policymaking over 1918-1932.

Though we have placed the Japanese policymaking process in a broader perspective, no pretense is made of having answered satisfactorily the concern which prefaced these comparative references, namely, that the bureaucracy's weight in policymaking might compromise our customary use of the concept "democratic regime." It has merely been demonstrated that this concern is shared by people in all those countries supposed to be governed by an elected political elite. Scholars often refer to military regimes as "military-bureaucratic," since uniformed elites are highly dependent upon their administrators. In the same vein, it may be more correct to speak of "democratic-bureaucratic regimes," for that would better describe the way they function in practice.

The reality of democratic-bureaucratic rule has important implications for one's assessment of state control over society. Even where the highest offices are elective, control policies do not necessarily possess the democratic legitimacy associated with government by popular representatives. Controls initiated by elected officials invariably acquire much of their substance from the bureaucrats who administer them, and this bureaucratic input is bound to increase as state controls

proliferate, because while the bureaucracy usually expands to manage new functions, the number of elected officials charged with oversight generally remains constant. The more powerful a democratic-bureaucratic regime, then, the more bureaucratic and the less democratic it is likely to be. Furthermore, many control measures may be instituted without the involvement of elected officials at all. In some cases, the policymaking process may even be the same as that in an authoritarian regime. There was certainly little difference between the way Japanese press policy was made in the 1870's and film policy in the 1920's. In sum, even if there were no problems connected with representation itself--and there are many in contemporary countries where a few hundred electees must fulfill the wishes of many millions of voters--the control policies of democratic regimes would not necessarily possess a quality differentiating them from the acts of non-democratic regimes. In scholarship, this conclusion calls for more comparative studies of policy content and formulation across regime types to gain a better comprehension of just how distinctive or indistinctive democratic regimes are in practice. For subjects, it means that the presence of an elected political elite no longer allows one to be complacent about the danger of illegitimate state power.

Media Policy in Democratic Regimes: The Disparity
Between Democratic and Liberal Values

Japan's democratic regime imposed harsher media controls than had the Meiji founding fathers. The autonomy of radio was so severely curbed that it never became a meaningful forum for political discussion. Though film and press controls stayed fundamentally within the framework of the état-gendarme, neither was as liberal as Meiji policy. Films were censored prior to public showing and abandoned to bureaucratic ordinances

without even the bare recognition of constitutional protection.. Press policy was exacerbated by the Peace Preservation Law and the beginning of regular pre-publication warnings. To discuss the general problem of democracy and media autonomy based upon this record, it will be useful first to compare it to that of other democratic regimes.

Karl Loewenstein's research shows that the legal and institutional restraints on state power in interwar European democracies were generally no better than those in Japan:

Some of the European democracies such as France and England do not possess formal guarantees of fundamental rights as integral parts of their constitutional set-up. Even where a Bill of Rights or similar statements embody the classical concepts of liberal democracy, such as in the Scandinavian countries, in Switzerland or in Czechoslovakia, as a rule the absence of judicial review deprives them of actual enforcement. The combination of fundamental rights guaranteed by a constitutional document with judicial protection against state interference is an almost unique feature of American constitutional law. In addition, in most European countries the customary juristic technique for reconciling constitutional ideals with actual state necessities is that of allowing restrictions of liberal fundamentalism by ordinary legislation of the parliament, or, as it was frequently the case in Germany under the Weimar constitution, by way of constitutional amendment. Hence, deviations from the standard principles of abstractly conceived political liberty are more easily accomplished in Europe and seem less repugnant to public opinion than in this country [the U.S.]. Everywhere in Europe, with the possible exception of England, the residuary spirit of the police state which is inclined to subordinate liberty to the paramount requirements of public order and peace has mollified and vitiated the rigorism of the classic liberal theory, and public opinion thus was and is more tolerant toward legislative limitations of abstract notions of liberty.²⁵

On laws related to the press, Loewenstein uncovered many parallels to the Japanese experience. Legislation outlawing extreme criticism of constitutionally-established political institutions was enforced in Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and Finland.²⁶ The circulation of false news or unfounded rumors and allegations concerning the state was a crime in France, Finland, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and Lithuania.²⁷ The publication of corrections ordered by the state

was compulsory in Czechoslovakia, Norway, and Weimar Germany, and the nineteenth century French regulations still on the books in the 1930's were probably the model for Japan's own statutes on the subject.²⁸

Press controls in the Weimar Republic were much tougher than those in Japan. Newspapers could be suspended for eight weeks and magazines for six months for endangering public order or slandering the state. An ordinance of July 1931 enabled both the central and provincial (Laender) German states to foist official declarations upon periodical press organs to be published without amendment or comment.²⁹ There were also numerous European laws punishing political acts that threatened public order.

Even the more severe Japanese restraints upon radio have had many analogues in other democratic polities. As of 1978, privately owned and managed radio broadcasting existed in not a single country in the democratic heartland of Western Europe.³⁰ Radio was restricted to state and/or public interest companies in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. One must move to the fringes (Finland, Malta, Portugal, Spain) or the outlands (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, Lebanon, the United States, postwar Japan, Colombia, Costa Rica, Venezuela) to find democratic regimes that had left radio largely in private hands. Of course ownership patterns alone do not prejudge the issue of control over content--in Belgium and Britain, for example, radio is free to carry political debate. However, comparisons indicate that in most democratic polities allowance for civilly-owned broadcasting stations increases the scope of partisan argumentation and criticism of the state. Public interest firms may also be more easily

mobilized in times of crisis, e.g., the way the British state used radio to deal with a coal miners strike in 1926 (which impressed the Japanese), or the French state manipulated radio and television during the 1968 riots. The Japanese pattern of public interest ownership and a minimum of partisan political content was not at all extraordinary for a democratic regime.

Worldwide patterns of radio ownership show no constant relationship between democratic politics and the existence of civil radio. In Latin America, where virtually every country but Cuba (since the early 1960's), Jamaica (since 1977), and Peru (minimum 25% state ownership since the early 1970's) has stations under completely civil ownership, the principal explanatory factors are the scarcity of state resources to operate radio when it was first established between the wars,³¹ the availability of those resources in civil society, and the liberal legacy of the nineteenth century. Conversely, the greater technical and financial capabilities of the more advanced European states when radio appeared may best explain the prevalence of the state/public interest formats among them. In the black African and Arab countries, where state monopolies over radio are universal,³² the vital factors appear to be the colonial legacy (the colonial power typically establishing and monopolizing radio itself and then handing it over to the new state after independence), the dire lack of civil resources for creating broadcasting firms in some countries, and the generally statist models adopted by new regimes in the mid-twentieth century. Nowhere is democracy as useful an indicator as those just listed for predicting the presence of civilly-owned radio stations.

It is established that political censorship has been practiced by

many democratic regimes. The prewar Japanese pattern of moderate controls over the press, tougher restrictions on film, and rather rigid supervision of radio has not been unusual. Granted that relatively liberal treatment of the press and slight mobilization of the media as active state weapons would distinguish most democratic regimes from the more statist systems in most (though not all) non-democratic polities, the question remains: if democracy ideally calls for freedom of expression, why do democrats impose any controls affecting media content?

To dispense with the easiest answer first, democrats may support media controls because they are not good democrats. No political camp is ever short of half-hearted, self-serving, or ignorant followers. Many advocates of open elections to the top state elite lack an idealistic belief in democratic principles or a good understanding of what their implementation requires. One might support a democratic regime because its policies favor one's material interests, because the electoral system will bring certain groups to power and exclude others, or because voting rights succeed in diffusing popular unrest that might otherwise take more dangerous forms. All of these motives were operative to some degree in the prewar Japanese Diet. The dominant parties primarily advanced the fortunes of landlords and businessmen, many of whom had no qualms about limiting the democratic input of tenants or trade unions, or passing a Peace Preservation Law that severely punished propaganda against private property. Their motives thus furthered policies one might not expect from people cherishing democratic procedures as ends in themselves.

It would be a mistake, however, to attribute media controls in democratic regimes entirely to a dearth of sincerity or understanding.

There are numerous reasons why the best of democrats have consented to controls on public expression, and some of these will now be explored with reference to prewar Japan and other countries.

Many upholding media autonomy as part of the democratic ideal would compromise it to safeguard a more or less democratic regime in adverse social-historical conditions. Some examples:

1. Free access of revolutionary groups to the media may be seen as threatening the viability of democratic institutions. In a period when democracy was under fire from both leftists aroused by the Bolshevik Revolution and rightists stimulated by fascism, this was a perception shared by many in Western Europe and Japan. Japanese press censorship was harsh with revolutionary attacks upon the political system, but quite mild with non-revolutionary union propaganda, showing that media controls were not simply meant to defend business interests but political institutions.

2. Media criticism of non-democratic state institutions may be viewed as imperiling the stability of a democratic regime. It may seem blatantly anti-democratic to jail someone for condemning the prerogatives of a monarchy or the military, but if democratic institutions have been nurtured successfully within a constitutional framework providing for these, and their repudiation might generate a national crisis jeopardizing democracy altogether, where does the true democrat cast his lot?

3. One may believe that media autonomy will work against stable democracy in the absence of favorable social conditions such as a high general level of education or standard of living. People who are uneducated and have little material stake in society may be seen as easy prey for a demagoguery leading to incompetent governments and ultimately

damaging respect for democratic institutions. The connection between democracy and the appearance of tyrants was strongly argued in classical Greek philosophy, and populism has probably soiled the reputation of democracy as much as any other factor in Europe and Latin America over the last 200 years. Many Japanese Diet representatives (following the Meiji founders) advocated "gradualism" in the incorporation of new social groups into active political life,³³ and this thinking influenced media controls, conditioning perceptions of censorship, the bond money requirement for journals, and the limits on partisan debate over radio.

Beyond the compromises imposed by historical conditions, many who cherish democracy may place even more value upon other social goods, e.g., propagation of a religion or certain marital and sexual practices, and would force the media to respect these despite the breach of democratic principles. Rousseau, perhaps the first great philosopher to declare freedom a moral good, nonetheless argued forcefully for censorship to protect those religious and social mores engendering compassion among fellow citizens.³⁴ Joseph Schumpeter has written: "Communities which most of us would readily recognize as democracies have burned heretics at the stake--the republic of Geneva did in Calvin's time--or otherwise persecuted them in a manner repulsive to our moral standards--colonial Massachusetts may serve as an example."³⁵ Prewar Japanese democrats were not so intolerant or brutal, but they did employ censors to punish certain opinions on religion, the family, hard work, and sex. As in most democratic countries, the law also punished libel, which brings media autonomy into conflict with the values of privacy and freedom from defamation.

Finally, there are even democrats who endorse media controls

precisely to maximize "freedom of expression" and "alternative sources of information," two of Professor Dahl's requirements for a model polyarchy. Though irrelevant to prewar Japanese democracy, this contention may be plausible where the media are dominated by a small, unrepresentative minority or by foreigners, so that most of society is denied access and the opportunity to hear different ideas debated.³⁶ Media autonomy from the state does not guarantee freedom of expression.

In sum, even committed and knowledgeable democrats who see media autonomy as an integral part of democratic procedures may advocate media controls to deal with adverse historical circumstances, to protect other social goods, or to provide more people with access to the media. In the early 1970's, 254 senior bureaucrats and 277 parliamentarians from Britain, West Germany, and Italy were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, "The freedom of political propaganda is not an absolute freedom, and the state should carefully regulate its use"--40% of the bureaucrats and 27% of the politicians expressed agreement.³⁷ It should be clear from the foregoing that these people are not necessarily opponents of democracy. The practical and moral dilemmas confronting those who would espouse both democracy and media autonomy are complex, their solutions sometimes far from obvious.

It should be emphasized that the attitudes just discussed are not confined to democratic leaders but may well be the majority view of the electorate. If a majority desires media controls, its representatives might easily argue that they have a democratic duty to comply. There is no sure way to gauge public opinion on media controls in prewar Japan. It may be indicative, however, that even the liberal press bill drafted by journalists themselves in 1924 did not call for an end to censorship,

but only for clearer standards and softer punishments.

Democratic regimes may inflict stringent controls not only on the mass media but also on other key areas of social activity such as education and the economy. These instances have occasionally reached such extremes that the foes of expanding state power become foes of democratic institutions. This was true of many constitutional monarchists in early nineteenth century Europe and more recently is exemplified by some supporters of military regimes in Latin America. Since both sincere and half-baked democrats may campaign for or against media autonomy, and because a few opponents of state control may not be democrats at all, it is necessary for theoretical and empirical precision to distinguish between democracy and the concept of liberalism.

If democracy pertains primarily to the role of civil society in electing the top state elite, liberalism applies more directly to the outputs of state policy as they affect civil society. A model liberal state would be one placing a minimum of impediments and conditions upon civil undertakings in the mass media, the economy, education, the arts, religion, and politics. In practice, no modern state performs minimal functions, so to label an actual state-society system "liberal" involves a relative judgment, just as it does when we call a regime "democratic." Supporters of a liberal state in the real world are just as varied a lot as the backers of democracy. They may be motivated by a high-minded philosophy of natural rights or by the profits (for publishers and advertisers) to be had when social organizations (the mass media) are free of state interference. They may disagree over whether liberal tolerance is desirable toward all or just a few social sectors, or over how liberal principles should be bent to meet an adverse environment or to accommodate

other social values, and so forth. The important point here is that in a given historical situation political actors basically supportive of liberal policies are not necessarily democrats, and those advocating democracy are not always liberals, regardless of the complementary relationship that many would argue should ideally exist between the two values.

It is remarkable how little empirical research has been devoted to the study of liberalism, i.e., to analyzing systematically the degree and type of state control over social activities in different countries. A principal reason for this neglect is that the study of state control over society is generally subsumed under the study of regime types, and this in turn is largely due to the a priori relationship assumed to exist between democracy and liberalism. In fact, the two terms are often used interchangeably, or combined in concepts like "pluralism" or "liberal democracy" (for which there is normally no opposite of "illiberal democracy"). It is assumed that the less democratic a polity is, the less liberal it will be, so attention is focused on the character of the state elite, and the degree of liberalism is then inferred from that variable. A focus on policy rather than methods of elite recruitment unveils a more complex picture. If one does not differentiate between liberalism and democracy, one cannot explain in general conceptual terms the simultaneous support for universal manhood suffrage and the Peace Preservation Law in Japan in 1925. Nor can one adequately comprehend the degrees of press and radio autonomy that exist under different regimes in the world today. Accurate empirical description of the state-society relationship demands that the two terms be separated.

Given the paucity of empirical research, it is somewhat surprising to find that a number of political theorists have stressed the need to

disaggregate democracy and liberalism. Most have appeared during or since the interwar period, when patently statist (i.e., illiberal) policies were embraced by many democratic regimes, but these did have some precursors. Though his thought is too intricate to elaborate upon here, Rousseau posited that the expanding power of the permanent body of officials was the inevitable demise of every republic and even refused to grant legislative powers to the state. In his view, then, statist encroachments upon popular freedom were a very real problem even in a polity far more democratically organized than any existing at present. Alexis de Tocqueville derived the same lessons from his study of the French Revolution and American political culture that recent theorists have learned from the interwar experience:

The Americans hold that in every state the supreme power ought to emanate from the people; but when once that power is constituted, they can conceive, as it were, no limits to it, and they are ready to admit that it has the right to do whatever it pleases. They have not the slightest notion of peculiar privileges granted to cities, families, or persons; . . . These ideas take root and spread in proportion as social conditions become more equal and men more alike. They are produced by equality, and in turn they hasten the progress of equality. . . . The unity, the ubiquity, the omnipotence of the supreme power, and the uniformity of its rules constitute the principal characteristics of all the political systems that have been put forward in our age. . . . Our contemporaries are therefore much less divided than is commonly supposed: they are constantly disputing as to the hands in which supremacy is to be vested, but they readily agree upon the duties and the rights of that supremacy.³⁸

De Tocqueville was perhaps the first to argue that democracy was not only compatible with statism but a direct cause of it. His themes have been developed by many in our century. Schumpeter has tried to prove that democratic regimes might all but obliterate autonomous business and labor organizations without abandoning an open electoral process.³⁹ His prognosis seems partially borne out by the economic policies of some postwar democratic states such as France or, to offer an

extreme, Chile under Salvador Allende.⁴⁰ Jose Ortega y Gasset has written:

Liberalism and democracy are confused in our heads, and frequently when we want the one, we shout for the other. . . .

Liberalism and democracy happen to be two things which begin by having nothing to do with each other, and end by having, so far as tendencies are concerned, meanings that are mutually antagonistic. Democracy and liberalism are two answers to two completely different questions.

Democracy answers this question--"who ought to exercise the public power?" The answer it gives is--the exercise of public power belongs to the citizens as a body. . . .

Liberalism, on the other hand, answers this other question--"regardless of who exercises the public power, what should its limits be?" The answer it gives is--"whether the public power is exercised by an autocrat or by the people, it cannot be absolute; the individual has rights which are over and above any interference by the state."⁴¹

Isaiah Berlin has made a similar point:

Self-government may, on the whole, provide a better guarantee of the preservation of civil liberties than other regimes, and has been defended as such by libertarians. But there is no necessary connection between individual liberty and democratic rule. The answer to the question "Who governs me?" is logically distinct from the question "How far does government interfere with me?"⁴²

Viewing European democracies from the grim perspective of 1938, Karl

Loewenstein wrote:

Liberal democracy, style 1900, slowly gives way to "disciplined" or even "authoritarian" democracy of the postwar depression pattern. Critics of such trends may contend that the cure for which it is intended to serve, may easily become a disease which ultimately will destroy what is essential in democratic values. Such objectors are evidently under the delusion that democracy is a stationary and unchangeable form of government. . . . legislation against political extremism, with its attendant inroads into liberal constitutionalism, is only one aspect among many others of the fundamental transformation to which constitutional government has to submit in our time. State sovereignty--that is, the full display of the coercive powers of the state--is resurrected while political pluralism is in retreat. Even in democracies, the Commonwealth may again become the Leviathan.⁴³

These are rather extreme statements of the problem, but they are rooted in evidence similar to that which presents itself in prewar Japan.

Democracy, if defined primarily as a set of procedures for determining the top state elite, demands meaningful electoral choice, and this makes some degree of autonomy for at least one mass medium imperative in any large democratic polity--without it, no genuine expression of political preference would be possible, and the thesis of political democracy would be ruled out by definition. However, the data on media controls show that democrats have differed sharply over just what minimum degree of autonomy remains compatible with democratic politics. If support for democracy cannot be reconciled with the most radically statist media policies, one nonetheless finds democrats at many locations along the liberal-statist scale of values. The mere presence of democratic institutions does not tell us very much about the level of state media control. One must conclude that in this and other policy areas it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the concepts of democracy and liberalism and explore their relationship free of preconceptions. There may be many other instances where men of lukewarm democratic affinities like the Meiji founders have proven to be more liberal than their fellow countrymen who fervently support the democratic method.

Notes

¹Mattei Dogan, "The Political Power of the Western Mandarins: Introduction," in Dogan, ed., The Mandarins of Western Europe (New York: Sage, 1975), p. 19.

²Robert M. Spaulding, Jr., "The Bureaucracy as a Political Force: 1920-1945," in James W. Morley, ed., Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1971), p. 37.

³Dogan, "Political Power," pp. 13-14.

⁴See the data and analysis in Robert M. Spaulding, Jr., Imperial Japan's Higher Civil Service Examinations (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1967), especially the tables on pp. 260-261, 275-277, 346-348.

⁵Tsuji Kiyooki, "Decision-Making in the Japanese Government: A Study of Ringisei," in Robert E. Ward, Political Development in Modern Japan (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1968), pp. 462-465, 472.

⁶The Communications Minister was questioned in the upper house Finance Committee on 13 March 1923. He was asked if radio would be civilly managed and how many stations would be licensed. The reply confirmed civil management and plans to license two or three stations, one in each of the largest cities--this was consistent with the provisions of the Draft Proposal then under discussion within the ministry. Nihon Musen Shi, 7:21-22.

⁷It should be noted that Inukai Tsuyoshi had been a bureaucrat only briefly and never really undertook an administrative career. On the extra-parliamentary careers of prewar Diet Members, Ishida, "The Development of Interest Groups," pp. 306-309.

⁸Edwin Dowdy, Japanese Bureaucracy: Its Development and Modernization (Melbourne: Cheshire, 1972), pp. xii-xiv.

⁹Bendix, Nation-Building and Citizenship, pp. 191-193.

¹⁰Anthony King, "Political Parties in Western Democracies: Some Skeptical Reflections," Polity (Winter 1969), pp. 135-137; Alfred Grosser, "The Evolution of European Parliaments," in Mattei Dogan and Richard Rose, eds., European Politics A Reader (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 449-453; Dogan, "Political Power," pp. 7-9.

¹¹B. Guy Peters, The Politics of Bureaucracy: A Comparative Perspective (New York: Longman, 1978), pp. 169-170.

¹² Ibid., pp. 114-117.

¹³ For a recent discussion of the issue, see Joseph LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), chap

¹⁴ Dogan, "Political Power," p. 7; see also Grosser, "Evolution of European Parliaments," p. 449; James B. Christoph, "High Civil Servants and the Politics of Consensualism in Great Britain," in Dogan, ed., The Mandarins of Europe, pp. 45-46.

¹⁵ Joel D. Aberbach, Robert D. Putnam, and Bert A. Rockman, Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1981), pp. 119-128. Since the sample included politicians from opposition parties that had never formed a government, some undoubtedly espousing strong ideological positions, even this finding may exaggerate differences among bureaucrats and the politicians actually running the governments of these countries. The specific result referred to was from the following question: "In general, what is the respondent's preferred degree of state involvement in the economy and society?" The data were gathered on roughly equal samples of bureaucrats and parliamentary politicians in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the U.S., and in Sweden from a bureaucratic sample only—N=1108. Responses were: Much more state involvement and/or social provision--11%, Some more state involvement and/or social provision--27%, Present balance--42%, Some more individual initiative--16%, Much more individual initiative--5%.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 21; Peters, Politics of Bureaucracy, pp. 174-175.

¹⁷ Clientela ties constitute a special relationship between an agency and a particular interest group or groups within its functional domain. Where such groups do not exist, they may be created by the bureaucracy, as occurred with NHK. The Indian bureaucracy has engaged in similar institution-building in civil society--LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations, p. 359. The nature of clientela links (the term was coined by LaPalombara in his research on Italian politics) is summarized within a broader framework for the classification of bureaucracy-interest group connections in Peters, Politics of Bureaucracy, chap. 6.

¹⁸ Ranate Mayntz and Fritz W. Scharpf, Policy-Making in the German Federal Bureaucracy (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1975), p. 156.

¹⁹ Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman, Bureaucrats and Politicians, pp. 213-215.

²⁰ Peters, Politics of Bureaucracy, p. 174.

²¹ "It is not merely in the so-called dictatorial or bureaucratic

states that secrecy is used as a weapon. In democratic Western countries the periodic outbreak of enormous scandals involving administrative behavior is probably just a mild indication of what other unsavory patterns the mask of secrecy guards." LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations, p. 303.

²²David H. Bayley, "The Police and Political Development in Europe," in Charles Tilly, ed., The Formation of National States in Western Europe (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1975), pp. 330-341, 370. De Tocqueville wrote as follows of the origins of administrative justice in pre-revolutionary France:

Since the King had little or no hold on the judges . . . he very soon came to find their independence irksome. Hence arose the custom of withdrawing from the ordinary courts the right of trying cases in which the King's authority or interest was in any way involved. Such cases were heard by special courts presided over by judges more dependent on the King, which, while offering his subjects a semblance of justice, could be trusted to carry out his wishes.

The Old Regime and the French Revolution, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1955), p. 52.

Even in countries where the regular courts exercise some jurisdiction over administrative acts (these include the U.S., Britain, Denmark, and Norway), there are usually complementary administrative tribunals that handle most public complaints--Peters, Politics of Bureaucracy, pp. 226-227.

²³LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations, p. 246. In France, once the structure of offices had become complex and the scope of recruitment to them less restrictive, commoners entering high office automatically received noble status; in Prussia, ennoblement was granted as a special privilege to only the most effective of top administrators--see Hans Rosenberg, Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience, 1660-1815 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), pp. 141-143.

²⁴Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman, Bureaucrats and Politicians, pp. 4-20.

²⁵Karl Loewenstein, "Legislative Control of Political Extremism in European Democracies II," Columbia Law Review, vol. 38, no. 5 (May 1938), p. 767-768.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 738-739.

²⁷Ibid., p. 749.

²⁸Ibid., p. 750, including note 112.

²⁹Ibid., p. 750; Oron J. Hale, The Captive Press in the Third Reich (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1973), pp. 11-12.

³⁰Political Handbook of the World: 1978. The nearest exception is the Netherlands, where the state owns all broadcasting facilities, but programming is consigned to a handful of non-commercial associations representing the country's major religious and political groups. See Johan Goudsblom, Dutch Society (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 118-119.

³¹Venezuela, where the effort to maintain a radio monopoly under a dictator's son proved short-lived, may be one example--Fred Fejes, "Public Policy in the Venezuelan Broadcasting Industry," Inter-American Economic Affairs, vol. 32, no. 4 (Spring 1979), pp. 3-4.

³²Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, chap. 5; Rugh, Arab Press, chap. 6.

³³Najita, Hara Kei, pp. 22-23.

³⁴Jean Jacques Rousseau, Letter to D'Alembert, trans. Allen Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell U. Press, 1968), and The Social Contract, trans. Judith R. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), book IV, chaps. VII-VIII.

³⁵Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, pp. 240-241.

³⁶By foreign control is meant a direct, material presence that may hinder the development of domestic means of public expression, e.g., the influx of American magazines into Canada, or the dominant position of American, European, or Mexican films in some countries where a national film industry cannot buck the competition.

³⁷Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman, Bureaucrats and Politicians, p. 177. The high percentage of bureaucrats resulted primarily from the Italian sample--57% of Italian bureaucrats agreed or agreed with reservations, while only 33% of the German bureaucrats and 22% of the British did so; see Robert D. Putnam, "The Political Attitudes of Senior Civil Servants in Britain, Germany, and Italy," in Dogan, ed., The Mandarins of Western Europe, p. 107.

³⁸De Toqueville, Democracy in America, 2:307-308.

³⁹Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, part IV, especially pp. 240-245, 296-302.

⁴⁰Dogan writes of France (before Mitterand became President): Government is the biggest employer in France, with one-sixth of manpower engaged in industry. Moreover it is the major investor, having made 20% of total investments during the sixties. The state monopolizes the production of coal, electricity, gas, potassium fertilizers, and atomic energy. It owns the railroads

and airlines, and more than two-thirds of river and maritime fleets. It controls the major automobile and airplane manufacturers and the largest banks (and therefore nearly three-quarters of bank deposits). It is also the largest insurance firm. It controls a majority share in the arms and electronics industries and also in highway projects. More than five hundred public enterprises make the government the major industrialist in France.

"Political Power," p. 6.

⁴¹Jose Ortega y Gasset, Invertebrate Spain, trans. Mildred Adams (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1937), p. 125.

⁴²Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," reprinted in his Four Essays on Liberty (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1970), p. 130.

⁴³Loewenstein, "Legislative Control II," p. 774.

PART III

MEDIA CONTROLS IN A PERIOD OF POLITICAL

STALEMATE: 1932-1937

CHAPTER XI

THE REGIME BACKGROUND

The appointment of a non-party Prime Minister after Inukai's assassination in May 1932 touched off efforts for a realignment of political power within the Japanese state. The two large Diet parties (the Seiyukai and Minseito) and military and bureaucratic elites jockeyed for position without the emergence of a dominant force among them. The result was a succession of weak "national unity" (kyokoku itchi) cabinets headed by ineffectual Prime Ministers without wholehearted support from any quarter. Major policy initiatives were virtually impossible due to the leadership vacuum and the lack of consensus.

This was nonetheless a critical period of transition marking the retreat of party power and the rise of the military and bureaucracy as increasingly independent political actors. The gradual shift from party to military-bureaucratic predominance paralleled in many ways the change-over from oligarchic to party rule in the 1906-1918 time frame. In the former period, the parties had steadily increased their share of ministerial portfolios; in the latter, it was they who lost cabinet seats to bureaucrats and generals. In the earlier period, the parties had cracked the "transcendental" cocoon around the bureaucracy by linking promotions to cooperation; in the latter, party influence was uprooted and the bureaucracy became a power unto itself. The military was not as successful as the parties had been in directly interfering with bureaucratic

personnel policy, but a different strategy proved just as effective in the long run. A cluster of inter-ministerial committees with military participation appeared within the state over the 1932-1937 span, many charting new state controls in various policy fields. The geneology of these committees from informal discussion groups to dominant state planning organs is a key to the subsequent evolution of Japanese politics. The example of the Cabinet Information Committee and several other such bodies active in media policy will serve as vivid illustrations of this phenomenon. Mass political activity was not an essential factor in the formative years of either the democratic or military-bureaucratic regimes, but in both cases the rising elites did on occasion call their supporters into the streets, e.g., the parties' encouragement of popular unrest for "constitutional government" in early 1913, and the military's use of the reservist associations during the Minobe affair in 1935. Likewise, there was no systematic resort to violent tactics in either case, though both elite groups were fast to make political capital of violent events perpetrated without their instigation, such as the Rice Riots of 1918, and the rebellion of junior officers in 1936. Outbreaks of violence were exploited to accelerate changes that in fact had been some time in the making. It is interesting that the genro or Elder Statesmen were generally opposed to both the rise of the parties in 1906-1918 and that of the military in 1932-1937, but in each case they were only able to retard change and not to prevent it. In short, these two periods of transition within the Meiji constitutional framework bear many points of resemblance. We now turn to a chronology of important developments over the years 1932-1937.

The Elder Statesman Saionji Kinmochi selected non-party Prime

Ministers Saito Makoto (May 1932-July 1934) and Okada Keisuke (July 1934-February 1936) to stymie the growing political influence of the military and restore a policy of international cooperation after the Manchurian Incident. Their terms comprise phase one of the period of national unity cabinets. The label "national unity cabinet" had first been used during the 1895 and 1905 wars, and its recurrence reflects the atmosphere of crisis in Japan after the Manchurian Incident and the assassinations of the early 1930's. Neither Saito nor Okada had a strong political base, and they were therefore unable to fulfill the genro's mandate through positive measures. Rather, since both were conservatives, it was hoped that their tenure would thwart momentous policy shifts long enough to cool military ambitions. This would restore conditions for a return to party Prime Ministers, Saionji's ultimate goal. One factor dissuading Saionji from an immediate return to party government, however, was his desire for peace; the Seiyukai, which held a 65% majority in the lower house from 1932 to 1936, was strongly pro-imperialist. Thus the reign of national unity cabinets was partly a holding action until a new party option became available, perhaps after a well-timed election.

This strategy succeeded in blocking drastic policy innovations, but the piecemeal changes effected in this phase point to the waning of party power. There were five party ministers each in the cabinets of Saito and Okada, but in the latter the parties lost the key Home and Finance Ministries, and the three Seiyukai ministers were expelled from their party for participating.¹ In addition, the Saito cabinet acted to protect bureaucrats and police officials from removal for political reasons.² The reshuffling of administrators had been a key to party control over the bureaucracy, but resentful bureaucrats had now eliminated

political tampering. This meant that the bountiful patronage dispensed by prefectural governors and other state offices no longer served to cement the ties between elected officials and their constituencies.³ The end of party dependency also engendered unaffiliated cliques of so-called "new bureaucrats" (shin kanryo), who formulated their own policy programs. Three became ministers in the Okada cabinet in 1934, and others were granted various top administrative posts.⁴ Close linkages developed between some new bureaucrats and military policy planners, supplanting party connections and portending an alliance that would dominate the state within the decade. Thus Saito's reform had depoliticized the bureaucracy, but not depoliticized it. Add to these factors vociferous rightist criticism of the parties and the growing defensiveness of their supporters in the media, and the state of their fortunes is unmistakable. Their decline was abetted immeasurably by the inability to unite on a strategy for saving the democratic regime. Whereas some leading elements in the Seiyukai insisted on the restoration of majority party government, a number of Minseito leaders favored a national unity cabinet for affording their party a chance to rebuild its strength. There were also members of both leading parties working for a coalition to restore democracy, as had been arranged in 1924.⁵ There was never a resolution of these contrasting approaches. The factionalism that divided the parties internally was a great obstacle to forging an alliance between them.

The first phase of national unity cabinets failed utterly to dampen the political and expansionist aspirations of the military. In a manner without precedent, the Army Ministry spoke out unilaterally on a wide range of political issues in its pamphlet The True Meaning of National

Defense and a Proposal for Its Strengthening, circulated publicly in October 1934. In December of that year, the army won a signal victory with creation of the Manchurian Affairs Bureau, which allowed it to dominate policy in the Manchurian puppet state. It used this power to experiment with control designs that it would later seek to re-import into Japan. The Army and Navy Ministries both played prominent roles in the persecution of conservative democratic scholar Minobe Tatsukichi in 1935, pressing Prime Minister Okada for public declarations to "clarify the national polity" (kokutai meicho) that were a victory for Minobe's vilifiers. In sum, though the Saito and Okada cabinets proved a stumbling block to sharp political turnabouts, trends toward declining party power and rising military influence were very evident.

The most striking event in this period was the attempted coup d'etat by young army officers on 26 February 1936 (the 2/26 Incident) that ended in failure with the execution of the chief conspirators. This was the last in a series of violent assaults planned by small rightist cabals against the state, all but one involving military personnel. Thereafter, efforts to expand the political role of the military were monopolized by senior officers who spurned violence and operated ostensibly within the Meiji constitutional system, though such men had spoken for the army and navy as institutions all along.

The 2/26 rebellion signals the start of phase two in the period of national unity governments, covering the cabinets of Hirota Koki (March 1936-January 1937) and Hayashi Senjuro (February-May 1937). Though the rebellion was crushed, it was still a great blow to Saionji's plans because its aftermath witnessed an upsurge in political activity by the military leadership. This was matched, however, by a tough reaction

against military interference in the Diet. The conflict between the two elite groups, having simmered just beneath the surface during most of phase one, erupted into open confrontation during phase two. New state control policies urged by the armed forces were central issues of contention. The principal events of phase two will now be briefly reviewed.

The 2/26 Incident marked the end of political violence involving military officers, but it proved to be a catalyst for less disruptive political intervention. The army's Imperial Way Faction generals, thought to have inspired the rebels perhaps more than they actually did, were purged after the revolt (as were some new bureaucrats, for the same reason).⁶ However, this left the army in the hands of officers loosely identified as the Control Faction, several of whom had long directed planning for statist policies to strengthen Japan's military capabilities.⁷ They bolstered the army's efforts to exact control legislation from the cabinet and Diet after the 2/26 Incident. For example, Army Minister Terauchi Hisaichi blackballed three planned appointments to the Hirota cabinet,⁸ and he and Navy Minister Nagano Osami dominated the government's policy designs. Their most audacious act was to offer the cabinet a radical proposal for state reorganization. Its main purposes were to neutralize the Diet and to centralize decision-making in new cabinet organs to be staffed by military officers and their bureaucratic allies. One new cabinet body would undertake research, management, and budgetary regulation of important state business, while another was to control administrative personnel policy. The plan called for a reorganization of the Home Ministry and local government, and for mergers of the Foreign Ministry with the Colonial Affairs Ministry, and the

Agriculture and Forestry Ministry with the Commerce and Industry Ministry. Finally, it advocated revision of the Diet Law and the Election Law, and called for other parliamentary reforms without specifying their substance. The preamble declared this program to be consonant with the imperial constitution. Predictable hostility from the bureaucracy and the Diet blocked the implementation of these changes, but the proposal is noteworthy as an unprecedented military effort to restructure the state.⁹

Other evidence confirms that Saionji's design to obstruct military ascendancy with standby Prime Ministers was increasingly frustrated after the 2/26 Incident. In May 1936, the rule that only active duty officers could serve as military ministers was reinstated, allegedly to avert the rehabilitation of Imperial Way generals who had been placed on the inactive list. This meant that if the army or navy refused to offer a minister, no cabinet could be formed; if either withdrew its minister, the existing cabinet fell. The services had not enjoyed this power since 1913 and the army soon proceeded to use it with impunity. Terauchi resigned to topple the Hirota cabinet in January 1937, the first time a military minister had so undermined a government since 1912. The Elder Statesman then sought to replace Hirota with retired General Ugaki Kazushige, a moderate (in the circumstances) with considerable support from the mainstream parties and big business. However, a meeting of middle-upper ranking officers in the Army Ministry rejected him as too conservative, and consequently the army's ruling triumvirate (the Army Minister, Chief of the General Staff, and Inspector General of Military Education) sabotaged the appointment by refusing a minister.¹⁰ The army's patience with moderate governments was clearly running out. This episode typifies the way the army and navy engaged in political activity as institutions, and not

as tools of any individual military leader. It also demonstrates that, despite bitter factional struggles within, the army's top brass could close ranks when dealing with other state elites. Without such internal cohesion and respect for the official military hierarchy, the power to decline a minister would have counted for nothing—a single general ready to break with his peers and accept the post would have nullified it.

Ugaki's place was taken by retired General Hayashi Senjuro, a man more to the military's liking. Whereas Ugaki's name had been associated with troop reductions in 1925, Hayashi had illegally dispatched units from Korea to assist the Kwantung Army during the Manchurian Incident in 1931.¹¹ He had also just served as Army Minister in the Okada cabinet. In that post he was responsible for the 1934 ministerial pamphlet, which had condemned freedom, individualism, and internationalism; its opening words were "Battle is the father of creativity and the mother of culture."¹² Hayashi had personally forced the cabinet to take action against the democratic scholar Minobe in 1935. By February 1937, then, one could publicly damn freedom and become the Prime Minister of Japan. One trait of the 1932-1937 span is that as time passed the label "moderate" was applied to individuals more and more open to military meddling in policy. Especially after the 2/26 Incident, the specter of a radical militarist alternative reshaped perceptions of where people stood along the political spectrum. Hayashi had not been seen as a moderate in 1931 or 1934, but by 1937 some conservatives felt reassured by his role in purging Imperial Way Faction generals after the rebellion—at least he would not lead a military coup. He could also be viewed as more patient than the state control planners working under Colonel Ishiwara Kanji on the General Staff, even though he presented economic control legislation to the Diet

in response to their designs.¹³

The phase two national unity cabinets following the 2/26 Incident thus differed markedly from their predecessors. Whereas Saito and Okada had been genuine conservatives, the policies of the Hirota and Hayashi cabinets plainly skewed "national unity" in the direction of greater military power within the state. There were four party ministers in the Hirota government, none in the most powerful ministries thanks to military pressure, while Hayashi offered portfolios to just three party men conditional upon their withdrawal from party rolls. Only one, representing a small party of no significance, accepted. Despite increasing military weight within the cabinet, however, the governments of phase two had little success in pushing their legislative programs through the Diet.

Diet members railed against the military during the special session after the 2/26 Incident and at the next regular meeting of December 1936-March 1937. One highlight was an exchange between lower house Representative Hamada Kunitaro and Army Minister Terauchi in January 1937. Terauchi took Hamada's condemnation of military forays into politics as an insult to the armed forces and demanded an apology. The congressman replied that he would commit ritual suicide if the Diet judged his remarks to be insulting, but that the minister should disembowel himself if it did not. Terauchi did not insist upon a vote. Instead, he resigned shortly thereafter to terminate the Hirota cabinet out of frustration with its lack of clout in the Diet, but the ensuing Hayashi government was equally ineffective. Hayashi's slight to the parties in organizing his cabinet set the tone for things to come. The Seiyukai and Minseito passed a joint resolution demanding his cabinet's downfall on 28 May 1937,

about one month after elections had confirmed their dominant position in the House of Representatives, and the cabinet was dissolved three days later. The electoral strength of the two leading parties proved very resilient. Between them they garnered 77% of the vote and 80% of the seats in the February 1936 election, and 71% of the vote and 75% of the seats in the next balloting of April 1937.¹⁴ These results substantiate that their decline was due less to a crisis of popular support than to the maneuvering of other political elites.

Thus the period from May 1932 to May 1937 was a political standoff from start to finish. Whereas predominantly conservative cabinets frustrated military ambitions in phase one, Diet opposition performed the same function in phase two.

In the realm of media policy, there were a number of critical events in this period despite the political stalemate. The biggest structural change was the creation in 1936 of the United News Agency (Domei Tsushinsha), a state-controlled wire service that all but monopolized the receipt and distribution of foreign news. This led to a high degree of standardization in the foreign reporting of Japanese newspapers. Other structural shifts, such as the managerial centralization of NHK and the new statutes governing film exports and radical propaganda, were generally of moderate proportions, reflecting the disunity at the political center. The most impressive facet of media controls in this period was a display of what can be achieved by the full power of censorship. Censorship is frequently downplayed for being but a "negative" form of control, i.e., one designed to silence opposition but not to compel support for the state. This negative control, however, was employed to redefine sharply the boundaries of political discourse in Japan in 1935.

The Minobe crisis of that year marks an historical turning point after which it was no longer possible to defend the values of freedom and democracy in the media in a frank, unapologetic manner, and the censor played a vital role in bringing this about. The affair also illustrates the repudiation of liberal principles by the mainstream parties, and the military's ability to put more people on the street to decry freedomism than its remaining adherents could to defend it. This momentous event will be described below in some detail. The power of censorship was also exercised with new force against scholars and civil religious institutions, and, most interestingly, against the radical right.

Media controls enforced against the political right are of particular significance because they allow us to evaluate a widespread characterization of Japanese politics in this period as "fascism from below." The thesis of fascism has been applied to Japan for a number of different reasons. There were inevitably comparisons drawn between rightist political violence in Japan and that of fascist movements in Europe in the early 1930's. Japan's later military alliance with Germany and Italy also seemed to justify a common classification for the three countries, and in consequence U.S. wartime propaganda and the rhetoric of the war crimes trials laid heavy emphasis upon the theme of a fascist Japan. In addition, many Japanese Marxists were swayed by the views of the Comintern to identify the regime as fascist, and their ideas have strongly influenced postwar historiography.¹⁵ These causes have compounded to produce a situation in which most Japanese scholars no longer ask whether or not the regime was fascist, but automatically apply that label and proceed to investigate the particular Japanese traits of fascism.¹⁶ This approach has increasingly been brought into question.¹⁷

A great many documents have been republished in recent years bearing upon the Japanese right wing in the interwar period, but scholars have yet to examine and synthesize much of this material. The perspective of Home Ministry bureaucrats and police in charge of media controls, who undoubtedly studied more rightist materials than anyone at the time or since, can be described below as one important source bearing upon the subject.

Notes

¹Ito Takashi, "'Kyokoku Itchi' Naikaku Ki no Seikai Saihensei Mondai 1" [The Problem of Reorganizing the Political Arena in the Period of the "All-nation" Cabinet 1], Shakai Kagaku Kenkyu, vol. 24, no. 1 (August 1972), p. 59. Ito documents the fact that the loss of influential ministries was a heavy blow to the parties.

²See Gordon Berger, Parties Out of Power in Japan: 1931-1941 (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1977), pp. 64-65, for details.

³Ibid., pp. 69-71.

⁴Spaulding, "Bureaucracy," pp. 65-66. The three were Home Minister Goto Fumio, Finance Minister Fujii Masanobu, and Foreign Minister Hirota Koki, who succeeded Okada as premier; Spaulding notes that Hirota's placement in this category has been debated.

⁵Berger, Parties, pp. 45-58.

⁶This merely gave rise to a new generation of new bureaucrats, labeled the "new 'new bureaucrats'" (shin shin kanryo), who like their predecessors pursued political aims without deference to the parties. For the sorting out of these and other labels affixed to bureaucratic cliques in this period, the best source is Hashikawa Bunzo, "Kakushin Kanryo" [Renovationist Bureaucrats], in Kamishima Jiro, ed., Kenryoku no Shiso [The Ideology of Authority], Gendai Nihon Shiso Taikei 10 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1965).

⁷The Imperial Way Faction was a rather well-defined group of officers of a particular regional background whose rhetoric tended to emphasize ideological ardor. There was a contrary clique (the Seigun Ha) centered around officers from the old Choshu province, who had dominated the army since the Meiji Restoration. However, the so-called Control Faction was not an organized group, but refers generally to those officers opposed to regional factionalism and deeply involved in mobilization planning for total war. See Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, pp. 246-249, 276-279, and his "Japanese Army Factionalism in the Early 1930's," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 21, no. 3 (May 1962).

⁸Though Terauchi forced Hirota to withdraw three scheduled cabinet appointees and change the assignment of a fourth, he failed to compel a reduction in the total number (four) of planned party ministers. See Ito Takashi, Ju-gonen Senso [The Fifteen Year War] (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1976), pp. 159-160.

⁹For a thorough treatment of this proposal and the reactions to it, consult Ide Yoshinori, Nihon Kanryosei to Gyosei Bunka [Japan's Bureaucratic System and Administrative Culture] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1982), pp. 100-112.

¹⁰Ito Takashi, Ju-gonen Sense, pp. 171-173.

¹¹Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, pp. 125-126.

¹²In Japanese: "Tatakai wa sozo no chichi bunka no haha de aru." The Army Ministry pamphlet is reprinted in Ishikawa Junkichi, ed., Kokka Sodojin Shi Shiryo Hen Dai 5 [The History of State Total Mobilization, Documentary Volume No. 5] (Tokyo: Kokka Sodojin Shi Kankokai, 1977), pp. 251-269.

¹³Although Hayashi personally supported the statist program of the General Staff, his actions on its behalf were tempered by the less extreme views prevailing among other senior officers. Col. Ishiwara himself envisioned a military-dominated mass party in control of the Diet, which was not the consensual view of the army at this time. See Berger, Parties, pp. 96-99, including n. 21, 114-116, and Mark R. Peattie, Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1975), pp. 246-255.

¹⁴The precise results were as follows (Nihon Kindaishi Jiten, p. 769):

Date of Elections	Parties	Votes	% of Votes	Seats	% of Seats
20 February 1936	Minseito	4,447,653	39.9%	205	43.9%
	Seiyukai	4,191,442	37.6	171	36.6
	Others	2,493,385	22.3	90	19.3
30 April 1937	Minseito	3,677,076	36.0	179	38.4
	Seiyukai	3,585,654	35.1	175	37.5
	Others	2,940,946	28.8	112	24.0

¹⁵Beckmann and Okubo, The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945, chap. 9. For examples of postwar scholarship influenced to some degree by this point of view and defending use of the concept of "fascism," see Abe Hirozumi, "Nihon Fashizumu no Kenkyu Shikaku" [Viewpoint on the Study of Japanese Fascism], Mibu Shiro, "Nihon Fashizumu Kenkyu ni Yosete--Benmei Shikan Hihan" [Criticism of the Apologetic View of Japanese Fascism], and Yoshimi Yoshiaki, "Senzen ni Okeru 'Nihon Fashizumu' Kan no Hensen--1931-nen kara 1937-nen made" [Changing of Left-Wing Theses on Japanese Fascism from 1931 to 1937], all in Rekishigaku Kenkyu 451 (December 1977).

¹⁶The background to this problem is discussed in Ito Takashi, "Showa Seiji Shi Kenkyu e no Hito Shikaku" [One Point of View on the Research of Showa Political History], Shiso 624 (June 1976), pp. 949-954.

¹⁷See *ibid.* Also, Gordon Berger, "Showa Shi Kenkyu Josetsu--Atarashii Hikoteki Hoho o Motomete" [Introduction to Research on Showa History--In Search of a New Comparative Method], Shiso 624 (June 1976); Peter Duus and Daniel I. Okimoto, "Fascism and the History of Pre-War Japan: The Failure of a Concept," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 39, no. 1 (November 1979).

CHAPTER XII

THE PRESS

There were only minor changes in the structure of press controls in this period. More significant than these were the new victims of existing controls, who included many centrist democratic thinkers and civil rightists. Censorship against these elements was important to the course of Japanese history and is very revealing of the changes taking place within the state elite in these years.

Developments in Law: The Growing Statism of Party Politicians

The Diet's refusal to sanction comprehensive military control programs cannot disguise the increasingly statist attitudes of elected officials in this period; these were very evident in press policy. In March 1933, the Seiyukai and Minseito sponsored a joint resolution urging the government to suppress radical ideas, and it passed by a margin of 218 to 34.¹ In response, the cabinet organized the Discussion Committee for Countermeasures on Thought one month later. This was an elite bureaucratic body comprising Vice-Ministers and bureau chiefs from the Home, Army, Navy, Justice, Education, and Communications Ministries. It produced a Concrete Plan for Policies to Manage Thought that was approved by the cabinet in September.²

One of the thought committee's proposals was to subject phonograph records to the Publications Law and to stiffen that law's punishments for contents disturbing public order. When a bill incorporating these

provisions came to a vote in lower house committee, a moderate labor party representative, Matsutani Yojiro, moved that the public order penalties be dropped:

We have arrived at a situation in which we must respect the freedom of expression. From the point of view of the advance of culture, I think this is a matter of course. However, no matter, judging from the various documents and legal bills presented recently by the government, its policy is gradually running contrary to this tendency. The control of expression is becoming extremely severe . . . Above all, these words "disturbing public order" are exceedingly vague and depending upon the government's discretion they can be interpreted however one wishes. . . . I must say that considering all of our people there is no law more dangerous than this one.³

None of the other eight committee members seconded Matsutani's amendment, and the bill passed the full house in March 1934. There were other proposals in the military-bureaucratic thought plan that also later became law. For example, police surveillance of released thought criminals was legalized in May 1936, and preventive arrest in March 1941.⁴ The Discussion Committee for Countermeasures on Thought is one example of a temporary military-bureaucratic panel with no authority to act on its own that nonetheless exercised great influence.

The major Diet parties continued to demand anti-radical policies both before and after the thought committee concluded its deliberations. In August 1933, the Minseito announced its "Outline of Countermeasures for Thought," and the Seiyukai released its own program under the same title in December. The Seiyukai document called for the "total mobilization" of women to restore good morals to the home, and tougher controls over the universities to curb radicalism.

The Seiyukai's platform had already found concrete expression in the actions of party leader Hatoyama Ichiro. Hatoyama was Education Minister in both the last party and first national unity cabinets, and in May 1933 he set a dangerous precedent by ordering the dismissal of

Professor Takigawa Yukitoki of Kyoto Imperial University. Takigawa was a political centrist, but he was fingered as a "red" by two Diet members, one a Seiyukai representative in the lower house.⁵ A lecture on Tolstoy's views of criminal punishment and a text on criminal law were his offenses. The book was so respectable that parts of it had been broadcast on NHK for public education the year before--no matter, in 1933 it was banned from circulation. The entire law faculty resigned to protest Takigawa's dismissal, but Minister Hatoyama stood firm.⁶ When the episode was concluded, six resignations had been accepted, and two other professors had declined to return; the rest capitulated and reassumed their duties.

Yet Hatoyama was hardly a radical statist. In fact, during World War II he was closely watched by the military as a suspected "freedomist" for his efforts to restore civilian leadership. Though his political rise was blocked during the American occupation, he went on to become Prime Minister of Japan in 1954 and was a founder of the Liberal Democratic Party that has governed the country ever since. That this man could be a principal in the Takigawa affair shows just how far the political pendulum had swung toward statist values.

A final example of the Diet's statist proclivities came in the wake of the 2/26 rebellion. In May 1936, the Diet passed a new law aimed primarily at rightist propaganda circulated without the required legal formalities. The penalty was three years in prison for anyone intending to undermine military discipline, to agitate the business world, or to confuse the public mind with written materials lacking the publisher's name and address or failing to submit censor's copies.⁷ Extreme rightists were not normally prosecuted under the Peace Preservation Law because they

accepted the emperor system, and the Army Minister defended the new bill as necessary to restore military discipline.⁸

Diet passage of this measure illustrates well the dilemma faced by party politicians at the time. The aftermath of the attempted coup elicited one of the stormiest Diet sessions of the 1930's. The Justice Ministry was accused of harboring "fascist" bureaucrats,⁹ the Home Minister was advised to arrest the Finance Minister along with the officers and bureaucrats of the Cabinet Research Bureau if he really wished to calm the business world,¹⁰ the military was scored as the source rather than the object of seditious literature,¹¹ and restraints upon free expression were vilified in strong language to the applause of those present. But when the votes were counted, the law to control illegally circulated radical materials had passed with just a few modifications.¹² Legislators, despite their outbursts against the military, could not bring themselves to roll back press controls and open up public debate--instead, they bolstered bureaucratic powers once again to deal with the more fearful prospect of a rightist revolution. In this way, radical junior officers, while incapable of effecting a revolution, nonetheless succeeded in paralyzing the democratic opposition. Those Diet men castigating state press controls in May 1936 neglected to mention that many powers they now censured, such as the pre-publication warning system,¹³ had been introduced under party Prime Ministers. Authority claimed for oneself can look very different in the hands of another.

In sum, party men contributed significantly to the growth of state control over the media at a time when state power was steadily slipping from their grasp and into the hands of their political rivals--the specter of rightist violence was a major reason.

Administrative and Judicial Sanctions

The data on administrative sanctions under the Newspaper Law show that 1934 marked an abatement of the political crisis centered in 1932; see Tables 18 and 19. There were no events in 1934 or 1935 matching the sensationalism of the Manchurian Incident or the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai, and consequently violations of pre-publication warnings fell from 1080 in 1932 to 337 in 1934. This accounted for much of the decline in editions banned for public order violations from 2081 to 589 over the same period. Another cause of the dropoff was the demise of extreme leftist publications over 1933-1934. According to police, journals supporting the Communist Party or the related Japan Proletarian Cultural League were near collapse in early 1934 and had all but disappeared by year's end.¹⁴

An extraordinarily detailed breakdown of editions banned for violating regular public order censorship standards (excluding violations of pre-publication warnings) is available for 1935--see Table 20. By this time, rightist periodicals were the heaviest offenders in many categories. For example, 12 of the 20 newspapers and all 14 magazine editions banned for disturbing military discipline were rightist. Rightist journals also sustained a majority of the sanctions for advocating direct action and illegal domestic change. State policy toward rightist periodicals receives extended discussion below (see the section titled Censorship of the Rightist Press).

Pre-publication warnings to newspapers and violations of them are broken down by general subject matter in Table 21. The number of violations reveals the limited impact of the warnings, but as stated before they did obstruct lengthy public debate of some vital issues.

TABLE 18
 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS ENFORCED AGAINST DOMESTIC PERIODICALS
 SUBJECT TO THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1932-1937

Year	Press Organs	Dailies	Bonded Organs	Banned Editions	Post- Publication Warnings	Deletions	Procedural Suspensions	Pre- Publication Warnings Ins-Adm-Con ^a
1932	11,118	1,330	6,301	2,246	4,348	48	4	44 - 19 - 1
1933	11,860	1,389	6,676	1,732	3,379	219	19	44 - 9 - 0
1934	11,915	1,432	7,003	1,185	2,242	249	5	45 - 1 - 0
1935	12,101	1,441	7,180	925	3,775	171	1	33 - 1 - 0
1936				981	3,470	117		
1937				595	5,498	94		

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, nos. 88-110.

Note: For an explanation of the various sanctions, see pp. 120-121. Japan was ruled by party Prime Ministers until 15 May 1932. The China Incident occurred 7 July 1937.

^aThe abbreviations refer to "instructions," "admonitions," and "consultations."

TABLE 19

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC
 PERIODICALS FOR PUBLIC ORDER VIOLATIONS
 UNDER THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1932-1937

Year	Banned Editions	Post-Publication Warnings	Deletions
1932	2,081	3,555	43
1933	1,531	2,366	197
1934	589	1,298	214
1935	653	2,468	138
1936	796	2,297	91
1937	498	4,566	78

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932-1935; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, nos. 88-110.

TABLE 20

DOMESTIC PERIODICAL EDITIONS AND BOOKS BANNED
FOR VIOLATING REGULAR PUBLIC ORDER
CENSORSHIP STANDARDS IN 1935

Standards	Newspaper Law			Publications Law		Total	% of Column Total
	News-Papers	Maga-zines	News Agency Bulls.	Maga-zines	Books		
<u>Advocating:</u>							
Communism ^a	11	4	2	4	7	28	5.8%
Anarchism	5	3	0	3	1	12	2.5
Illegal change	13	3	4	1	5	26	5.4
Direct action	33	8	5	1	5	52	10.7
Mass violence	1	1	2	1	1	6	1.2
Violent acts	5	0	1	0	1	7	1.4
Illegal movements	7	1	4	0	0	12	2.5
Colonial independence	5	0	1	1	0	7	1.4
Crime	1	1	0	0	0	2	.4
Criminals	5	0	0	0	1	6	1.2
Social unrest	8	2	4	0	0	14	2.9
War	5	2	0	0	3	10	2.1
<u>Rejecting/slandering:</u>							
Imperial family	50	13	2	3	24	92	19.0
Monarchical system	1	0	1	1	0	3	.6
National polity	1	0	1	0	1	3	.6
Private property	1	0	0	0	0	1	.2
Law/state authority	6	1	2	1	1	11	2.3
Courts	1	1	1	0	0	3	.6
Parliamentary system	4	0	0	0	0	4	.8
Military/war	9	10	4	2	3	28	5.8
Foreign policy	10	5	5	3	3	26	5.4
<u>Disturbing/hindering:</u>							
Constitution	8	5	2	6	5	26	5.4
Foundation of military	5	4	1	2	0	12	2.5
Military discipline	20	13	15	1	9	58	12.0
Foreign affairs	4	1	1	0	2	8	1.6
Business world	2	1	1	0	0	4	.8
<u>Other</u>	13	3	1	4	3	24	4.9
<u>Total</u>	234	82	60	34	75	485	100.0
<u>% of row total</u>	48.2	16.9	12.4	7.0	15.5	100.0	

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935.

^aHere two categories are combined, one for promoting the Communist Party and one for promoting communism in general

Most politically sensitive were warnings related to communist arrests, military radicalism, and Manchurian affairs. Regarding the communists, two warnings in February 1933 and one in January 1934 banned all information on Peace Preservation Law arrests. The 1934 warning specifically forbade the reporting of casualties due to police brutality. Warnings related to the military again encompassed the radical plotting of junior officers, e.g., in November 1934 there were instructions against coverage of a coup planned by cadets at the Military Academy (Shikan Gakko), for which several were arrested (though none indicted) by the Military Police. Factional conflicts within the army were also shielded by warnings, including the murder of General Nagata Tetsuzan by a fellow officer in August 1935. Warnings on Manchuria continued to cover up Japan's dominant role in Manchukuo. In December 1933, there were instructions not to report Japanese involvement in Manchukuo's adoption of an emperor system. In March 1934, there were orders against covering anti-Japanese activities in the area. Most warnings on Manchuria dealt with Japan's penetration of the local economy.

Data on court decisions against violators of the Newspaper Law are given in Table 22. The figures show no departure from the patterns of previous years. Fines continued to be the most common punishment, while prison sentences remained very few. The data do not evidence any judicial sensitivity to variations in the political climate; in this respect, they differ sharply from the figures on administrative sanctions.

The Limits of Criticism (Focusing on the Minobe Crisis)

The campaign against legal scholar Minobe Tatsukichi in 1935 marks an important turning point in state control over public expression. With the radical left routed as an organized political camp, the full force of

TABLE 21

PRE-PUBLICATION WARNINGS AND PERIODICAL EDITIONS BANNED
FOR THEIR VIOLATION, BY SUBJECT MATTER OF THE
WARNINGS (W = WARNINGS, B = BANNED
EDITIONS): 1933-1935

Subject Matter	1933		1934		1935		Total	
	W	B	W	B	W	B	W	B
Imperial family	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Military	20	129	25	209	15	143	60	481
Manchukuo ^a	9		9	73	2	26	20	99
Foreign affairs	10	82	7	28	12	14	29	124
Crimes/investigations	13	192	3	20	4	76	20	288
Other	1	14	1	7	1	16	3	37
Total	53	417	46	337	34	275	133	1,029

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933-1935.

Note: The total number of violations of pre-publication warnings in 1936 was 524, and in 1937, 240. There are no breakdowns available for these years, but the high number in 1936 was partly due to the many offenses related to the February 26 rebellion. In 1937, 214 of the 240 violations occurred between July and December, indicating that most were probably related to the China Incident of July 7.

^aViolations of warnings related to Manchukuo were combined with the figures for "Foreign affairs" in the data for 1933.

TABLE 22

JUDICIAL VERDICTS IN TRIALS OF INDIVIDUALS
PROSECUTED FOR VIOLATING THE NEWSPAPER
LAW: 1932-1937

Year	Sentenced to Prison	Fined	Acquitted
1932	7	169	0
1933	0	236	0
1934	4	271	0
1935	0	223	0
1936	2	159	0
1937	0	102	1

Source: Nihon Teikoku Shihosho,
Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 58-63, 1932-1937.

Note: The data cover the results of
regular trials and summary sentences
handed down by the court of first instance
(Dai Isshin).

censorship was turned against moderate writers hitherto considered part of the establishment. If Professor Takigawa's dismissal was one step in this direction, the persecution of Minobe touched off a comprehensive official campaign against the Zeitgeist of "freedomism" (jiyushugi). Rightist journals were consequently able to dominate public discourse for the first time. The concept of freedomism applied to all the values associated with Japan's prior democratic regime. Most of those called "freedomists" had supported the regime while pushing for further liberal and democratic reforms; leftist thinkers would describe them as "bourgeois democrats." If the Asahi Shinbun epitomized the freedomist tendency among newspapers in the 1920's, Minobe Tatsukichi was one of its foremost intellectual adherents. Minobe was a model of respectability. He was a professor emeritus at Tokyo Imperial University, where until retirement in 1934 he had been the most influential constitutional scholar on the Law Faculty. He had served as an advisor to several governments, and his public service had been rewarded with a seat in the House of Peers. Minobe was thus a prominent spokesman for a way of thinking that had dominated Japanese politics for over a decade. He would be attacked not just as an individual, but as a representative of many leading figures in government, the media, and the universities, and his downfall had a profound effect in all these fields of endeavor. A careful study of the Minobe affair reveals the views of many key political actors on state control over the press. It also allows us to descend from abstract statistics to examine the impact of media controls at the level of personal experience in the volatile political climate of the mid-1930's.

A brief review of Minobe's scholarly work is important for understanding the campaign against him. His Emperor-as-organ theory was the

most widely accepted academic interpretation of the Emperor's constitutional role. It held that the state was sovereign and the Emperor exercised his authority as the highest organ of the state specified in the constitution. The alternate view was that sovereignty resided in the Emperor himself, and the constitution had not affected his absolute, personal authority, which was an eternal principle of Japan's unique national polity.¹⁵ Minobe felt that the national polity concept was an important source of spiritual esteem for the imperial house, but irrelevant to constitutional-legal questions such as the locus of sovereignty. Although this debate could get nasty in academic circles, it was unknown to the general public before 1935. In practice, the Emperor's function was performed as Minobe's theory would lead one to expect. The Emperor almost never imposed his personal will upon the policymaking process. Rather, his role was largely a formal one hemmed in tightly by legal processes and the prerogatives of other state organs inscribed in the constitution. Nonetheless, acceptance of the organ theory did have important practical ramifications. It declared the Diet to be another direct organ of the state, i.e., it participated directly in the exercise of the state's sovereign power, whereas the ministries (including the army and navy) and other state institutions were labeled indirect organs, since their functions were merely delegated from the Emperor as direct organ. This interpretation favored parliamentary as opposed to military-bureaucratic control over the cabinet. According to the Ministry of Education, the organ theory was backed by 18 of Japan's 30 top intellectuals in public law at the start of 1935.¹⁶

Behind his denial of absolute imperial sovereignty, Minobe's actions as a political advisor and commentator also rankled his opponents. He had

defended a narrow interpretation of the military's constitutional right of supreme command in debates over the London naval agreement in 1930.

He had also castigated the Army Ministry's pamphlet The True Meaning of National Defense and a Proposal for Its Strengthening in the November

1934 Chuo Koron:

Reading this pamphlet, my first impression is that a tendency toward pro-war, militaristic thought comes out strikingly throughout the whole thing.

It starts at the very beginning with a phrase eulogizing war: "Battle is the father of creativity and the mother of culture." We think that "creativity" and "culture" can only arise from great individual genius and free research, which are mainly the products of peace, and that war to the contrary destroys these things.¹⁷

And to the pamphlet's urging that Japanese "cut away the thinking of internationalism, individualism, and freedomism that ignores the state, and truly unify the spirit of national consensus," Minobe responded:

To abandon internationalism is nothing other than to make an enemy of the world . . . In the end, this aims at the self-destruction of the state. The authors probably intend to promote nationalism by this, but an extreme nationalism that denies internationalism, on the contrary, can only mean a fall into national self-destruction and defeat . . . The rapid progress of our country that has been a wonder of the world since the Meiji restoration is mainly a result of this individualism and freedomism. How could one possibly bring about this kind of rapid cultural development by binding the people into a slave-like, servile existence? Individual freedom above all is the real father of creativity and mother of culture.¹⁸

Citing divergences between the army pamphlet and government policy, Minobe asked repeatedly why the ministry was sowing discord within the state and confusion among the people when its avowed purpose was national unity.

This article demonstrates how far rebukes of the state were still allowed to go in 1934.¹⁹ It also establishes that Minobe was not just an armchair scholar but one of the most dignified and blunt state critics in the periodical press.

Minobe's thought became a major issue when he was attacked in the Diet in early February 1935. In both houses, government ministers were

asked why his books had not been banned. The two Diet interpellators were reservist generals belonging to a patriotic group called the Meirinkai (The Illustrious Virtue Society). The Meirinkai, founded in 1933, professed to follow legal, parliamentary methods to achieve its ends of breaking the power of the established parties, forging an autonomous foreign policy, withdrawing Japan from the London naval accords, and safeguarding the right of supreme command.²⁰ Minobe's upper house critic had launched a similar public attack on Professor Takigawa two years earlier. The Diet remonstrances were supported by allegations in the right wing press and petitions and meetings by reservist branches and other rightist groups. Minobe was labeled a traitor and by some even a communist.

Minobe defended his work in the Diet, and the government was initially unresponsive to the charges against him. Prime Minister Okada stated in the House of Peers:

Reading through the whole of Dr. Minobe's work, I do not believe there are mistakes regarding the ideal of the national polity . . . I am not a supporter of the Emperor-as-organ theory, but when it comes to an academic theory, rather than our speaking out, I don't think there is any course but to entrust the matter to scholars.²¹

This statement took refuge in the general principle of censorship not to interfere with purely academic theories (a principle that was hardly sacrosanct, of course). In the lower house, the Home, Education, and Justice Ministers voiced similar sentiments, and the premier added that his government had no plans to ban Minobe's books.²² When Army Minister Hayashi appeared before the Diet in early-mid March, however, he took a different line. He denied that the organ theory had had pernicious effects on the army--to say otherwise would have touched off a witch hunt for officers embracing the theory, playing into the hands of his military

rivals. But Hayashi also agreed that the organ theory had transcended academic debate and become a matter of general concern requiring strong measures.²³ This is exactly what Minobe's accusers in the Diet had been insisting,²⁴ and Hayashi's statement baldly contradicted the cabinet's contention that the issue should be ignored as a purely academic affair. Meanwhile, Diet Representative Eto Genkuro stoked the flames by formally registering a charge of *lèse majesté* against Minobe in court, and the clamor in civil society intensified.

The reason for Minobe's eventual demise was that certain segments of the state elite tried to capitalize on his plight. The Seiyukai sought to exploit the affair to topple the Okada cabinet, accusing it of harboring a treasonous doctrine. If Okada fell, the practice of appointing majority party Prime Ministers might be reinstated, resulting in a Seiyukai cabinet.²⁵ In other words, the Seiyukai would have Minobe's head to revitalize Japanese democracy. This ironic circumstance did not cause the party any ideological disquiet. Its president, Suzuki Kisaburo, belonged to two prominent right wing societies.²⁶ It was hardly farsighted, however, to further the party's fortunes at the expense of a leading democratic theorist, and to endanger thereby the position of many state officials opposed to militarism. On March 23, both the Minseito and Seiyukai sustained a motion for clarification of the national polity. This had become the slogan of rightists out to expunge Minobe's organ theory for besmirching said national polity.

Army Minister Hayashi had his own motives for contributing to Minobe's downfall. He was trying to outmaneuver the army's Imperial Way Faction that had been pushing hard on the ideological question. By getting out in front of the "clarification" campaign, Hayashi protected

himself from charges of moral impurity while endeavoring to remove Imperial Way leaders from key posts. Thus he sanctioned General Mazaki's desire to purge the army of the organ theory in April 1935,²⁷ and then eliminated Mazaki (an Imperial Way officer) as Inspector General of Military Education in July. The Navy Minister aligned himself with Hayashi in pressing the cabinet for stern measures. Both were anxious to get the Minobe affair behind them, since it served as a rallying point for more radical military cliques, but they did not mind sacrificing Minobe along the way. No faction in the armed forces was interested in sparing a man who had minimized the right of supreme command, championed the London naval agreement, lambasted the army's ideological exhortations, and symbolized values impeding the development of a national defense state in which the military and its bureaucratic allies would have the ascendancy.

Elements in the military and the Diet were the principal threats to Minobe, but he also had sympathizers within the state determined to keep him out of prison. Paramount among them was the Emperor of Japan, who directly and indirectly made his opinions known to the cabinet. Prime Minister Okada and Justice Minister Ohara also sought to defuse the crisis to protect the many high officials with a personal stake in the outcome; a formal condemnation of Minobe would leave them vulnerable as subscribers to the same political tendency. These included the President of the Privy Council, the Cabinet Legislative Bureau Chief, and the Lord Privy Seal. Along with Saionji Kinmochi, they were part of what was called the "senior statesmen block" (jushin burokku).

The bureaucracy was divided on the Minobe affair. Many Justice Ministry officials had studied under Minobe, while others had been tutored

by his arch-rival Professor Jesugi, an advocate of absolute imperial sovereignty, or were associates of Baron Hiranuma Kiichiro, an ex-minister of right wing sympathies. Loyalties were split accordingly, but Justice Minister Ohara tipped the scales in Minobe's favor. Home Minister Goto Fumio was a leading "new bureaucrat" opposed to the revival of party power; he had no qualms about seeing Minobe officially denounced,²⁸ but he stayed by the cabinet's position in public utterances.

On 30 March 1935, the Army and Navy Ministers committed themselves to thorough eradication of the organ theory. Their will was communicated to the cabinet, which then mandated the Army, Navy, Home, and Education Ministers to suppress the theory within their domains.²⁹ On April 9, the Home Ministry banned three of Minobe's books and demanded revisions of two others before reprinting. The Diet had just adjourned, and the rightist invective against Minobe had cooled temporarily to honor a visit from the Emperor of Manchukuo, who arrived in Japan on April 6. Cabinet members sympathetic to Minobe could not ignore military pressure, and during the lull they hoped to kill the issue by appeasing their opponents with half-way concessions. The book bans were part of their response. Minobe was cleared of *lèse majesté*, a crime requiring proof of criminal intent. He had also been accused under the Publications Law, however, and Justice officials met with him in early April hoping to elicit a recantation allowing them to suspend prosecution. Oddly enough, the one aspect of Minobe's work deemed a potential violation of the Publications Law was not the organ theory per se but his defense of the right to criticize imperial rescripts.³⁰ When Minobe denounced the banning of his books, however, this opportunity to terminate the controversy was lost. His words to newsmen:

I bow to the penalty arising from an application of the law. But Kempo Seigi is in its twelfth edition and Kempo Satsuyo is in its fifth. How is it that though both have been in publication many years it has now become necessary to take administrative action against them? If these works conflict with the law, then all the successive home ministers up to now are properly responsible for overlooking this fact. And, of course, if there are punishable aspects of my theory, then the successive university presidents and ministers of education who took no action all the long while that I lectured on the constitution as a university professor are likewise responsible. How has this come about?³¹

The answer was no secret, least of all to Minobe, who had criticized the abstractness of censorship guidelines as far back as 1926. Ambiguous statutes permitting arbitrary bureaucratic implementation and offering no means of appeal made everyone a potential violator. The same laws framed originally to deal with pornographers and revolutionaries now took their toll of conservatives.

The ban on Minobe's books, though partly designed to get him off the hook, was a devastating blow to centrist critics of state policy. All interpretations of the organ theory, including those of the Home and Justice Ministries and the right wing, agree that the issue was not so much Minobe's scholarship, which most of his denouncers had never read, but the survival of the freedomist perspective and its adherents opposed to military-bureaucratic dominance over the state.³² The Minobe affair was unique among censorship cases in its profound impact on subsequent expression in the media. Since the turn of the century, the mainstream Japanese press and scholarly community had been fairly tolerant of press controls because debate was generally allowed within the prevailing constitutional system. At least until pre-publication warnings began to see heavy use over 1928-1932, critical commentary short of the revolutionary threshold had almost always been possible. The ban on Professor Minobe's books was the first clear sign that this era had come to an end where

military sensitivities were involved, and those sensitivities now stretched all the way to questions of constitutional law. If a man of Minobe's stature could be put on a chopping block before the entire nation, no one was secure.³³

Minobe was forced to resign all his public offices in September 1935 to escape prosecution under the Publications Law,³⁴ and he was thereby spared imprisonment, in a manner of speaking. By year's end he was barricaded in his house behind a police guard and had long since been abandoned by most friends, who refrained from contact out of fear for their lives.³⁵ He was shot and wounded by an assassin entering under false pretenses in February 1936, thus the "bloodless 5/15 Incident," as his downfall was labeled, was not so bloodless after all.

The ban on Minobe's books only began the cabinet's retreat before persistent demands from the military, the Seiyukai, and rightists in civil society. Prime Minister Okada was compelled, mainly by the Army Minister,³⁶ to make two official declarations to "clarify the national polity" in August and October 1935. The organ theory was scored on both occasions, most conspicuously on the latter. Meanwhile, 37 books on constitutional law besides those of Minobe were ordered not to be reprinted or to incorporate revisions before new editions.³⁷ One was by Kanamori Tokujiro, Minobe's supporter as chief of the Cabinet Legislative Bureau. On 7 January 1936, Kanamori quit the bureau. Among Minobe's other sympathizers, Privy Council President Ichiki Kitokuro retired in March 1936. Justice Minister Ohara departed when General Terauchi refused to serve with him as Army Minister in the Hirota cabinet formed the same month.³⁸ The Lord Privy Seal Makino had already withdrawn pleading ill health in December 1935.³⁹ In other words, those state leaders

associated with Minobe's cause were purged in short order. This was an important facet of the crescive regime transition, since it eliminated important obstacles to greater military influence within the state.

How did the press respond to the Minobe crisis, which was the year's biggest story and had such fateful implications for all critics of the state? Most big newspapers initially avoided the issue, partly to evade rightist vituperation and partly hoping that the uproar would die down. Diet members had also criticized Minobe's work in early 1934, but nothing had come of it, and there had never been such a controversy over scholarship before, so in early-mid February it was reasonable to assume that the issue might go away if ignored. According to the Home Ministry, when Minobe's books were maligned in the lower house on February 7, only the Mancho Ho even bothered to explain the organ theory, taking a noncommittal stance in its editorial.⁴⁰ The Tokyo Asahi and Tokyo Nichi Nichi overlooked the incident and were consequently rebuked in a rightist tabloid.⁴¹ What the right needed most was publicity. Nor did these two newspapers react when the campaign shifted to the House of Peers on February 18. Only the Teito Nichi Nichi Shinbun came out strongly behind Minobe in an editorial titled "Which is the Treasonous Thought?" The Home Ministry again found mainstream newspapers taking an "extremely evasive attitude" after Minobe's Diet speech on February 26 and the accusation of *lèse majesté* two days later.⁴² Regular newspapers tilting to the right, however, were less bashful in condemning his ideas and demanding state sanctions.⁴³ No major newspaper came out solidly behind Minobe as the smear campaign escalated during March. Even sympathetic comments did not extend to a defense of the organ theory. At this point, no one could have imagined the issue would deflate of its own accord. The

barrage against Minobe was loud and incessant, but it was met by only a few lukewarm articles on his behalf. When his books were banned on 9 April 1935, the Jiji Shinpo, Tokyo Asahi, and Teito Nichi Nichi registered negative comments, but again most mainstream newspapers stood aloof, and in any case the time for resolute action had passed. Thereafter it was against the law to defend the organ theory in print.

As usual, leading magazines were more daring than the newspapers, but there were no forthright protests like those published when Kaizo was banned from circulation in 1925, a matter of far less significance than the Minobe crisis. The Chuo Koron of April 1935 carried an article by Morito Tatsuo, who had lost his teaching position in 1920 for writing on Kropotkin. He mocked the accusations of treason against "a moderate constitutional theory that had become a matter of common sense," and noted the irony of "bourgeois" press controls designed to smash Marxism being turned on bourgeois writers.⁴⁴ Suzuki Anzo, a student defendant in the first Peace Preservation Law trial in 1926, penned a descriptive historical account of the organ theory debate in the April Kaizo and then wrote the toughest protest on record for the same month's Shakai Hyoron (Social Commentary). In the latter he cited a text published in 1912 holding that the Diet was intended to obstruct monarchical dictatorship, thus indirectly legitimizing the organ theory, and he wrote that Minobe's work was doomed for impeding the control policies being advanced on many fronts, i.e., as a "liberal" doctrine by our definition of the term.⁴⁵ That Minobe's theory of state sovereignty, which borrowed heavily from the German doctrines entering Japan in the late nineteenth century, could be suppressed for its liberalism in 1935 makes it an excellent yardstick for measuring the statist values of his foes. Shakai

Hyoron had just been founded in March 1935 by a group of leftist intellectuals--it folded in August 1936 after most of them were arrested under the Peace Preservation Law (the Komu Academy Incident). Comparing Suzuki's sharp remarks in the offbeat Shakai Hyoron with the rather neutral, descriptive character of his article in Kaizo, one sees how cautiously the Minobe affair was handled by a prestigious magazine normally very critical of the state. In April, Bungei Shunju carried one article sympathetic to Minobe as a person and another emphasizing the political significance of his fate, and Keizai Orai (later Nippon Hyoron) published several articles critical of the bans on his books in May.⁴⁶ Both were important "integrated" magazines. Professor Kuryu Takeo of Tohoku Imperial University submitted an article to the July Chuo Koron, "The Grief of a Solitary Legal Scholar," in which he obliquely praised the organ theory and warned against momentary political interests overwhelming the law.⁴⁷ However, one thing the Home Ministry stressed in its survey of press coverage was that no legal scholar or critic ever wrote a straightforward defense of the organ theory, even before April when this was legally permissible. By contrast, not a single rightist journal failed to treat the issue during March, April, and May.⁴⁸

The instinct for self-preservation was one reason for the puny response of Minobe's would-be defenders. Rightist groups held numerous rallies and roamed menacingly through the streets of Tokyo during the crisis. Police protection was provided to some of Minobe's associates who had been threatened, and a mass arrest of rightist gang members occurred in May 1935. According to Frank Miller, the Metropolitan Police warned of terrorism if Minobe were not prosecuted, and there were "riotous disturbances" before the offices of the Tokyo Asahi and

Yomiuri newspapers.⁴⁹ One can grasp the atmosphere from the words of scholar Kawai Eijiro, one of the few unafraid to speak out, in an article in the Teikoku Daigaku Shinbun (Imperial University Newspaper) on April 15: "By means of threats of _____ not permitted by national law, the Doctor's mouth has been shut, and things have been brought to a situation where people are not allowed to breathe one word related to this unless they gamble their positions and their lives."⁵⁰ The missing word(s) was replaced by blank type. The intimidation was enhanced by the claims of many rightist thugs to have masters in high places, for given the presence of respectable as well as vulgar elements in the rightist camp and the close ties between the reservists and active duty military officers,⁵¹ one could never know whether or not the claims were valid.

Perhaps the most fraudulent aspect of the movement to clarify the national polity is that the military sustained it against the Emperor's wishes. The diary of General Honjo Shigeru, the Emperor's Chief Aide-de-Camp, is filled with the monarch's admonitions on behalf of Minobe. For example, this is Honjo's recollection of the Emperor's conversation on 9 March 1935:

As for me, the military's concern is exceedingly troublesome . . . It goes without saying that the words of article four of the constitution that the Emperor is the ruler of the state are the organ theory. The opinion that the organ theory stains the sanctity of the imperial house sounds plausible at first, but in reality it is the very debate about this sort of thing that desecrates the sanctity of the imperial house.⁵²

David Titus, an American expert on the imperial institution, has written:

As often as the emperor explained the theory and castigated the Army's opposition to it, Honjo justified the Army's stance: the Army believed the emperor to be god manifest; to make the emperor a person would be troublesome for "troop education and supreme command." When the emperor told the ranking naval Aide-de-Camp, Idemitsu Mambei, that the military was contradicting imperial wishes regarding Minobe's theory, Idemitsu replied that the emperor

should "transcend" such debates. Throughout the controversy over Minobe's theory, which raged in the Diet and elsewhere from March into October 1935, "advice" to the emperor from the Chief Aide as well as the ranking naval Aide amounted to a staunch defense of the military's position and outright contradiction of the emperor's views.⁵³

None of the state officials crusading against Minobe seriously entertained the idea of personal rule by the Emperor. The ideological question was but a convenient vehicle for realizing political ambitions, be they to overthrow the cabinet, to displace anti-militarist officials, or to undermine an opposing faction within the military. Thus the only thing ever clarified about the bewildering concept of the national polity was that Minobe's theory had offended it and that his supporters had to be purged.

The psychological impact of the Minobe crisis cannot be underestimated. This was the first major collision between democratic and anti-democratic ideals in public discourse, but only a few individuals had spoken up for democracy. Not one key political institution had resolutely defended the organ theory; most had been either mute or antagonistic. Though physical intimidation, the fear of legal reprisals, and factional rifts help to explain the timidity of democratic forces, the absence of even one major group ready to offer public resistance still remains somewhat perplexing. After 1935, Japan's freedomists were like a guard dog who had retreated backwards at the first sign of an intruder--it would be all the more difficult for them to regroup and put up a fight further to the rear.

The Limits of State Control (Focusing
on the 2/26 Incident)

The revolt led by junior officers in 1936 posed a rugged challenge to the publications police, and the full panoply of their regular and

emergency powers was brought into play. The Home Ministry dispensed a pre-publication warning on February 26 banning all reporting of the affair, and martial law was declared by emergency imperial decree at about 1:00 a.m. the next day, imposing pre-publication censorship of all related stories. The nature of the event itself was enough to guarantee an all-out effort by the police. It was unknown whether sympathetic units outside Tokyo might join the rebellion, so control over information was vital to maintain order. Nonetheless, every deficiency of the control system stood out in relief during and after the incident.

The state was utterly incapable of blocking early reports of the revolt. From February 26 until the mutineers surrendered three days later, there were 206 periodical editions banned for violating the pre-publication warning. Among the violators were many newspaper giants, including the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shinbun, Osaka Asahi Shinbun, Osaka Mainichi Shinbun, Hochi Shinbun, and Nagoya Shinbun. The Tokyo Asahi missed the stampede because army rebels briefly occupied its offices, threatened its employees with the wrath of heaven, and proceeded to dump the printing type all over the floor. The paper retaliated by turning out thousands of leaflets later dropped by the army on the rebel position successfully urging a return to the barracks.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, the confiscation rate for 84 major newspaper editions violating state orders during the last four days of February was a paltry 26%, or 1.4 million of the 5.4 million copies placed in circulation.⁵⁵ Officials were fairly pleased with these results considering that the bigger newspapers were involved.⁵⁶

The state's predicament is documented in a police report received from Fukuoka, one of Japan's largest cities. The rebels had begun to assassinate state officials at 5:00 a.m. on the 26th, but when the pre-

publication warning reached Fukuoka at 8:40 by telegram, a special edition of the Osaka Mainichi was already on the streets, and newsstands were decorated with billboards advertising the imminent arrival of the Fukuoka Nichi Nichi and the Kyushu Nippo. The police did not await written orders to ban the issues, but removing them from circulation was another matter. The newspapers turned a deaf ear to official warnings. The police report stated the "in light of the gravity of the incident, the newspapers resigned themselves to the penalties and violated the pre-publication ban, and there was observed a frenzied concern to try to publish the news."⁵⁷ At least two policemen were assigned to watch each major newspaper, keeping contact with publishers and inspecting printing facilities to block illegal publication. Yet even this was to little avail. On the 26th, the Osaka Mainichi circulated five special editions in Fukuoka, the Osaka Asahi three, the Fukuoka Nichi Nichi four, and the Kyushu Nippo one; the Osaka papers were regional editions published locally. The frustrated police began to take delivery men into custody to stop the torrent. Mobile units were organized to inspect newspaper plants and sales outlets, but on February 27, four more major newspaper editions covered the event. Pre-publication censorship finally became operative by the evening editions of the 27th, and it was generally respected. Prior censorship continued until March 2.

Thanks to police vigilance, Fukuoka was free of coup-related violations in March, but not so most of the country. There were 148 press infringements of official warnings in 25 prefectures in March, distributed during the month as follows:⁵⁸

Date	Prefectures with Violations	Total Violations	Violations in Tokyo/Osaka
March 1-10	24	75	37
March 11-20	8	40	27
March 21-31	9	33	22
Total	41	148	86

The geographic spread is significant. The records show no violations whatever in 22 of Japan's 47 prefectures, and most were concentrated in the two largest metropolitan areas (62, or 41%, in Tokyo alone). Violations of prior warnings on the revolt continued in the following months, however:⁵⁹

Month	Banned Editions	Deletions	Post-Publication Warnings
April	45	13	63
May	19	3	24
June	5	1	19
July	18	2	26
August	7	1	6
September	6	1	4
October			
November	1	1	

The leaders of the insurrection were executed in July.

This episode confirms that the administrative control structure had not changed significantly since the rule of party Prime Ministers. Pre-publication warnings could truncate public discussion of key issues (especially outside the metropolitan areas--almost 50% of the populace resided in rural districts), but it could not halt the spread of unsettling facts. Punishments were simply not stringent enough to curb offenses. Intentional disregard for state commands was not witnessed only during critical events. Officials complained that the big newspaper companies frequently ignored prosecutors' orders not to report on criminal investigations.⁶⁰ In December 1936, for example, five of the country's leading tabloids were taken to court for willful offenses against two such warnings.⁶¹ Both a commitment to reporting the news

and the sales at stake encouraged the flouting of official directives. In this area, high principle and material interest made a happy marriage, and owners and reporters could stand together.

The shortcomings of enforcement were due mainly to the control system itself, not to bureaucratic incompetence. Though the Fukuoka report was probably reproduced in police bulletins as a model for other locales, the technological level of police operations was generally very high. The time consumed in sending a pre-publication warning around the country was recorded on 29 January 1937. The warning in question was against reporting a statement by General Hayashi Senjuro critical of military colleagues hindering his efforts to form a cabinet. The formal decision to issue the warning was made at the Home Ministry in Tokyo at 12:10 p.m.; Osaka had been informed even earlier. Counting from that time, the instructions were telephoned to police offices in 38 prefectures in an average time of 32 minutes, and wired to the others in an average of 67 minutes. Prefectures reported back in an average time of one hour (still counting from 12:10) that all major newspapers in their jurisdictions had been notified, and in an average time of two hours and 45 minutes that all other newspapers had been informed. This degree of efficiency still allowed 36 violations spanning 17 prefectures (nine offenses in Tokyo, six in Osaka).⁶² The limits of administrative control are important for establishing just how freely (or unfreely) the news flowed in this period, and for the comprehension of subsequent efforts to correct the manifest flaws in the system. A bill requiring magazines subject to the Newspaper Law to submit censor's copies one day before publication, and allowing local officials to seize any journals offered for sale before the receipt of copies died without a vote in the lower

house in 1934. Its submission demonstrates bureaucratic discontent with the existing system.⁶³

Censorship of the Rightist Press

The civil right wing unquestionably played an important political role in the 1930's, but its relationship to the state is usually described from the somewhat subjective viewpoint of its opponents. Those victimized by the dominant political currents of the 1930's have tended to portray the civil right wing as an intimate ally of rising military-bureaucratic elites, since both groups worked against leftist and freedomist elements. However, when one examines the right wing as an object of state policy, a very different picture emerges. If the right was seen as a useful tool by some officials, it was also perceived as a threat to public order that had to be carefully contained. This aspect of the relationship comes out clearly from a survey of rightist press development and state responses to it.

A rightist press existed in Japan before the 1930's, but it was not a major factor in law enforcement or public discussion. In January 1930, officials counted only 27 right wing newspapers and magazines.⁶⁴ Twenty-one were published but once a month, and 16 had first appeared in or after 1925. The recent arrivals were weaned on anti-Marxism and received a boost from the mass arrests of leftists, but the police judged their influence to be "feeble."⁶⁵

State documents consistently cite the Manchurian Incident of September 1931 as opening a new phase of growth in the rightist press.⁶⁶ The figures in Table 23 sustain this assertion; rightist periodicals more than doubled between 1930 and 1932. Of the 22 leading right wing journals identified by authorities in mid-1932, ten had debuted since

TABLE 23

THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE RIGHTIST PERIODICALS BY
POLITICAL/THOUGHT TENDENCY: 1932-1935

Year	Type of Journal	Total Active Journals	Political/Thought Tendency		
			Pure Japanist ^a	National Socialist	Other
1932	Newspapers	27	11	2	14
	Magazines	32	11	5	16
	Total	59	22	7	30
1933	Newspapers	31	9	4	18
	Magazines	42	16	4	22
	Total	73	25	8	40
1934	Newspapers	35	30	3	2
	Magazines	59	52	5	2
	Total	94	82	8	4
1935	Newspapers	43	37	3	3
	Magazines	47	42	2	3
	Total	90	79	5	6

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932-1935.

^aThis category is usually rendered as "pure Japanist" (junsui Nihonshugi), occasionally as "Japanist," and once in the magazine classification of 1932 as "pure Japanist/ultra-nationalist" (the latter term--kokusuishugi).

^bThis category is rendered as "agriculturist" (nohonshugi) or "agriculture self-governmentist" (nohon jijishugi).

the Manchurian Incident, and only one predated 1925.⁶⁷ The end of party government was another important stimulus for the right, since it opened up new possibilities in domestic politics, but imperialism was the primary cause of expansion. It not only stirred nationalistic groups to greater efforts, but also created the readership for new journals appealing to the aroused patriotism of the average subject. Imperialistic issues favored the right until mid-1933, especially the clash between Japanese and Chinese troops in Shanghai in early 1932, the founding of Manchukuo in July 1932, and withdrawal from the League of Nations in March 1933. There were no comparable international stimuli in 1934, and consequently there was no increase in rightist periodicals between 1934 and 1935, though their influence on public debate was just beginning. We will now examine police reactions to the rightist press chronologically through the early-mid 1930's.

A police report in 1930 summarized the guiding spirit of nationalistic groups this way: "We recognize an absolute sovereign power based upon our national polity and we will defend it to the last, hoping for greater and greater exaltation of imperial honor."⁶⁸ Beyond this abstract foundation, however, the various organizations were divided on doctrinal and practical matters. Officials classified them in 1930 as Japanists, simple nationalists, or national socialists. Japanists argued the unique merits of Japan's national polity based upon Confucian, Buddhist, or Shinto ideas. The journal Gekkan Nihon (Monthly Japan), run by Dr. Okawa Shumei and his Emperor Jinmu Society, was listed as a Japanist organ of the Shinto persuasion. Okawa was later jailed for complicity in Prime Minister Inukai's assassination. Simple nationalists were a diverse category without a common philosophy, some merely drumming up patriotic

spirit while others had more specific social programs. The journals of the National Foundation Society (Kokuhonsha) run by Baron Hiranuma Kiichiro, ex-Minister of Justice and future Prime Minister, were in the simple nationalist category. The society numbered bureaucrats, businessmen, and Diet members in its ranks. Also in this classification was Kaizo Sensen (Reconstruction Battle Line), journal of the Great Japan Production Party, which comprised employees of small-medium size firms in Osaka. The party's involvement in a planned coup d'etat was discovered in July 1933 (the Shinpeitai Incident). The "simple nationalist" category, in other words, was a very mixed bag. The national socialists incorporated Western-style socialism into their nationalistic ideology and politico-economic platform. They were strongly influenced by the thought of Takabatake Motoyuki, Japan's pioneer national socialist who had earlier flirted with the left and was the translator of Marx's Capital.⁶⁹ Since the other groups accepted capitalism or advocated reforms short of its abolition, the national socialist organizations stood out for their economic radicalism. They were also the weak sister of the trio. In early 1930, the Home Ministry counted four journals as national socialist, seven as Japanist (three Confucian, three Shinto, and one Buddhist), and 16 as simple nationalist.⁷⁰ At that time, the right wing press was not generally seen as a revolutionary force, and to some extent it was considered a boon to the campaign against communism.⁷¹

A fragmentary police survey in July 1932 showed that rightist journals had not suffered many sanctions in past years, but this was about to change. The banned editions of all rightist publications from 1931 to 1935 are given in Table 24. Sanctions more than quadrupled in

TABLE 24

DOMESTIC RIGHTIST AND LEFTIST PERIODICAL EDITIONS
AND BOOKS BANNED FOR VIOLATING REGULAR PUBLIC
ORDER CENSORSHIP STANDARDS: 1931-1935

Year	Political Tendency	News-papers	Maga-zines	Books	Propa-ganda Sheets	Total
1931	Right	15	7	6	15	43
	Left	241	188	181	1,963	2,573
1932	Right	64	42	16	64	186
	Left	349	349	174	2,310	3,182
1933	Right	95	60	23	173	351
	Left	329	306	141	1,866	2,642
1934	Right	216	55	18	203	492
	Left	132	85	28	309	554
1935	Right	105	42	18	117	282
	Left	41	34	16	177	268

Sources: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931-1935.

Note: Newspapers were banned under the Newspaper Law, books and propaganda sheets under the Publications Law, and magazines under both. Violations of pre-publication warnings are not included in the table.

1932 over the previous year. The principal offense was advocating violence or revolution; this accounted for 51 of the 64 rightist newspaper editions banned in 1932. Some specifically applauded Prime Minister Inukai's assassination or the Blood Brotherhood (Ketsumeidan) murders of industrialist Dan Takuma and ex-Finance Minister Inoue Junnosuke in February 1932.⁷²

Due to the profusion of rightist groups and the ideological fuzziness of many, their police classification became even less precise in 1932 and 1933. Right wing newspapers were lumped into only two categories, pure Japanism and national socialism. This simple distinction, which passed over the differences between pure Japanist journals, was adopted because the national socialist tabloids more frequently broached illegality. Their theories were more systematic, they harbored a number of ex-leftists, and they rejected parliamentarism and private property, advocating nationalization of the means of production.⁷³ The national socialists spoke of class struggle and saw themselves as a workers' vanguard out to form a dictatorship. Such radical postulates were rarer among pure Japanist journals, which were often vague on practical questions, stressing instead spiritual renovation through collectivist concepts like the family nation.⁷⁴ Most Japanists rejected party politics but not the Diet (only the Diet was inscribed in the constitution), many supported the decentralization of authority, and they either ignored or rejected the notion of class struggle, taking a somewhat negative view of socialism. Officials saw the Japanists as taking firm control of the right wing in 1933. Only one of the 40 leading non-cultural rightist magazines was described as purely national socialist and it was banned almost every issue.⁷⁵ Japanist journals advocating violence or

vindicating jailed rightists received similar treatment, however. For example, the Great Japan Production Party's Kaizo Sensen was banned 11 out of 12 editions in 1933, and Gekkan Nihon founded by Dr. Okawa (in prison at the time) received a ban or post-publication warning on almost every issue.⁷⁶ Officials used the term "fascism" rather loosely in 1932, applying it to the overall rise of the right wing, to national socialist periodicals, and even to Baron Hiranuma's National Foundation Society.⁷⁷ The accusation against Hiranuma was apparently so widespread that he explicitly denied it.⁷⁸ Despite the dichotomous classification, official documents noted an influx of some national socialist ideas into Japanist journals, so one cannot draw the boundary between them too sharply.⁷⁹

The Japanist camp continued to overwhelm national socialism in 1934 but also absorbed more of its influence. National socialist newspapers received a disproportionate share of state sanctions. Only 144 editions of the 30 Japanist newspapers were banned, but 72 editions of the three national socialist newspapers.⁸⁰ The last national socialist magazine outside the cultural field ceased to print in December.⁸¹ However, officials now distinguished between two strains of Japanist magazines, one very conservative, reactionary, and "idealistic" (kannenteki), the other more "progressive" (shinpoteki) and outspoken on concrete political and economic questions. The progressive groups, highly critical of party politics and capitalism, were becoming the mainstream of the Japanist right.⁸²

A new feature in 1934 was the appearance of four agriculturist (nohonshugi) journals. These were partly offshoots of the rural depression, especially cruel in northeastern prefectures. They opposed Western

capitalism, materialism, the culture of the city and modern industry, and the notion of a powerful national socialist state, appealing instead for greater self-government in the farm villages to rebuild unity between the Emperor and his subjects.⁸³

Agriculturism and orthodox national socialism remained strictly minority views within the rightist press, but both were nonetheless very important to Japanese politics in the 1930's.⁸⁴ Agriculturism had little impact on state economic policy, which consistently favored the military budget over farm relief, but rural conditions directly inspired many rightist plotters from 1932 to the attempted coup of 1936. Moreover, the desertion of conscripts to assist their farming families was keenly felt within the military as a whole. In 1934, the rural crisis became a major theme in the Japanist and mainstream press. National socialist ideas also had greater sway than the size of their press would indicate, due to their influence in less doctrinaire Japanist circles, and through the example of Nazi Germany, which impressed Japanese officials more than national socialist activities at home. The lesson here is the precariousness of deducing the significance of conditions and ideas solely from the quantity of published work devoted to them.

Table 24 shows that over 1932-1934 control of the rightist press became a central concern of the Home Ministry. The relative numbers of sanctions imposed on the right and left cannot substantiate a comparative judgment on degrees of repression; the imprisonment of so many leftists under the Peace Preservation Law places their persecution on a different plane. But they do show that although some nationalist groups had fellow travelers and a few even members within the state, rightist arguments for violence and revolution were met with systematic countermeasures.

The police viewed 1935 as a year of decline for rightist organizations and their press--the number of rightist journals even dropped slightly. A trend toward more moderate ideas, already noted in rightist magazines in 1934,⁸⁵ continued in 1935. According to Home Ministry censors, these groups realized that assassinations and plots against the government inevitably failed.⁸⁶ They were therefore changing their strategy, and radical ideas had been "moderated strikingly" compared to the rhetoric of 1931 and 1932.⁸⁷ A shortage of sensational events and disunity were two big reasons cited for the rightist decline. Dissolution of the Emperor Jinmu Society in February 1935 was taken as symptomatic of the confusion and discord among rightist forces.⁸⁸ The new moderation led officials to conclude that the general thrust of the right was toward "the healthy establishment of the Japanist camp and its theories."⁸⁹ The only rightist publications on the upswing were books--712 in 1935 against 232 the year before. But books follow periods of political activism with more of a lag time than periodicals (they take longer to write), so this evidence does not falsify the picture of a stagnant right wing. Only 11 rightist books were devoted to "research on fascism," compared to 217 on matters of principle, 89 on the Emperor-as-organ theory, 70 historical biographies, 67 on Far Eastern thought, 47 on politics, 40 on economic controls, and 30 on Japanese classics.⁹⁰ The censors now used the term "fascism" to refer to the politics of Hitler and Mussolini, noting the paucity of books on the subject and their critical approach. Indiscriminate borrowing from foreign models was opposed in these works in the name of Japan's unique spirit and Shinto traditions, reflecting a tendency toward anti-foreign attitudes.⁹¹

Yet, despite the rightist standstill in civil society, the

influence of rightist periodicals swelled during the Minobe crisis thanks to support from within the state. The rightist press denounced Minobe's theories as an affront to the national polity, as a product of freedomism and individualism in a period requiring "totalitarianism," and as a denial of imperial sovereignty.⁹² Although these arguments were encouraged by official attacks on Minobe, however, more radical rightist polemics on the issue were banned from circulation. The reasons why rightist periodical editions were banned in 1935, excluding violations of pre-publication warnings, are given in Table 25 (a subset of Table 20). Official reports discuss the categories under which rightist coverage of Minobe was censored. Many rightist treatments of the organ theory were banned for desecrating the imperial house, e.g., for hinting that the throne was surrounded by traitorous advisors.⁹³ Others drew sanctions for demanding direct action against organ theory proponents--these were "fairly numerous."⁹⁴ Proposals for using military force to expunge the theory were outlawed for disturbing military discipline, and calls for illegal domestic change over the matter were also hit with sanctions.⁹⁵

This evidence contradicts the view that military-bureaucratic elements and the civil right wing formed a tightly-knit alliance. Rightist harangues were indeed encouraged by Minobe's official tormentors, but agitation for unsponsored illegal action beyond the scope of the official campaign was not allowed. While certain military and Diet officials manipulated rightist groups, the Home Ministry prevented them from straying in an unpredictable and potentially dangerous direction. It is not surprising, then, to find that many rightist journals derided the state's handling of the Minobe affair for what they saw as a bias

TABLE 25

DOMESTIC RIGHTIST PERIODICAL EDITIONS AND BOOKS
BANNED FOR VIOLATING REGULAR PUBLIC ORDER
CENSORSHIP STANDARDS IN 1935

Standards	Newspaper Law		Publications Law		Total	% of Column Total
	News-papers	Maga-zines	Maga-zines	Books		
<u>Advocating:</u>						
Illegal change	12	2	1	3	18	10.9%
Direct action	29	7	0	3	39	23.6
Mass violence	1	0	0	1	2	1.2
Violent acts	3	0	0	0	3	1.8
Illegal movements	1	1	0	0	2	1.2
Crime	1	1	0	0	2	1.2
Criminals	5	0	0	0	5	3.0
Social unrest	3	1	0	0	4	2.4
War	1	1	0	0	2	1.2
<u>Rejecting/slandering:</u>						
Imperial family	16	7	0	2	25	15.1
Private property	1	0	0	0	1	.6
Law/state authority	2	1	0	0	3	1.8
Courts	0	1	0	0	1	.6
Parliamentary system	2	0	0	0	2	1.2
Military/war	2	0	0	0	2	1.2
Foreign policy	0	1	1	0	2	1.2
<u>Disturbing/hindering:</u>						
Constitution	5	2	0	2	9	5.4
Foundation of military	3	0	0	0	3	1.8
Military discipline	12	13	1	6	32	19.4
Foreign affairs	2	0	0	0	2	1.2
Business world	1	0	0	0	1	.6
<u>Other</u>	3	1	0	1	5	3.0
Total	105	39	3	18	165	99.6
% of row total	63.6%	23.6	1.8	10.9	99.9	

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935.

towards freedomism.⁹⁶ The Okada cabinet had not been toppled, the exponents of the organ theory had not been prosecuted, government pronouncements on clarification of the national polity were found wanting, and more concrete responses such as creating the Education Renovation Council were passed off by some as window dressing.⁹⁷ There was also dissatisfaction with the Metropolitan Police arrests of nationalist gangsters (boryokudan) in May 1935.⁹⁸ There were 132 rightists prosecuted under various statutes in 1935, more than in any subsequent year, at least 67 punished with fines or imprisonment, compared to 113 leftists prosecuted under the Peace Preservation Law.⁹⁹ Many rightist publications touching upon factional struggles in the army were also banned from circulation.¹⁰⁰ Of course, censorship of the right could have been much tougher. Bureaucrats might have banned any criticism of the leading theory of the Emperor's constitutional role. However, reading through 30 rightist propaganda leaflets on Minobe allowed to circulate in early 1935, one finds very few clear-cut violations of core censorship standards then in force.¹⁰¹ In sum, the attempt by some officials to make use of the right wing stopped well short of permitting the more radical rightist journals to threaten violent action or champion their own revolutionary program.

In 1936, stories on the military rebellion were the focal point of state sanctions against the rightist press. In March, 28 rightist newspapers and five current events magazines were banned for transgressing the pre-publication warning on the revolt, and two more magazines and 30 propaganda sheets on the incident were banned under the Publications Law. Principal reasons for banning the propaganda were approval for the rebellion (19 sanctions), reproducing the rebels' manifesto (five), demands

for a cabinet run by the imperial family, for a military government, or for the imperial proclamation of a Showa Restoration (five).¹⁰² From March to July, there were 18 indictments of rightists for violations of the Newspaper and Publications Laws connected with the 2/26 Incident. Some rightists were also tried under the special anti-radical law passed by the Diet after the revolt.¹⁰³ One case was prosecuted for reprinting a letter one of the rebels wrote to his mother before his execution. It read as follows:

It is I, who before now have caused you countless misfortunes, and today once more I must send you sorrowful tidings. Thinking of Yoshida Shoin's song of filial affection, there is no way for me to apologize. However, Mother, I ask you not to grieve too much. In order for the empire to continue its advance in the way of the gods, and so that people, parents and children and brothers and sisters in harmony, may enjoy their work, rejoice in the flowers, amuse themselves with sake, and offer congratulations of "Long Life!" to the imperial reign, a small number of people chosen by heaven must taste agony, suffer grief, abandon their lives, and break their bones. I, who hope for the honor of those loyal to that fate, think there is nothing I could be more thankful for than to have been born in Japan and to be able to die for the Emperor. The history of Japan is a trail of the lifeblood shed by our ancestors to protect and foster the national polity. Now our lifeblood will become the eternal prosperity of the imperial throne. Our aims will certainly be inherited by those who come after us. No matter what people may say or what things may seem for a while, in some way, Mother, please be proud of my aims in your heart. If an interview should be permitted one of these days, I think I would like to see your face once more. When I think that in heaven and earth the only person who could love someone like me from the heart is you, Mother, longing deeply permeates my body. If any of the relatives would be good enough to come, I think I would like to see them. I beg you please to care for your health in this hot weather.¹⁰⁴

The evidence does not show a great rash of rightist press violations after the 2/26 Incident despite extra vigilance by the police. Considering the nature of the event, the level of official sanctions points to a relatively passive response from the rightist press. Even the Diet's special anti-radical law aimed at the right saw little service

and nearly fell into disuse after March 1937. The scarcity of violations is understandable, however, in light of the earlier official descriptions of rightist publications. A marked trend toward moderation had characterized rightist journals for the previous two years. There had been fewer calls for violence and the strategy of direct action was losing its adherents. The most extreme national socialist groups had become almost a null factor. The young officers themselves engaged in scant propaganda efforts. As active duty soldiers, they were forbidden from publishing legally, but they had little interest in reaching a mass audience anyway. Even with downtown Tokyo under their control, they did not try to seize the national radio station, as feared by state officials, or to disseminate printed materials directly among the public.¹⁰⁵ Their goal was a political transformation engineered at the top (preferably creation of a military cabinet under General Mazaki), not a popular uprising. There was considerable sympathy for the rebels even among non-revolutionary nationalists, but the state had pursued a consistent policy of censoring rightist praise for violence, and the clear reaffirmation of that policy after the incident left rightists with the choice of going to court or biting their tongues--most opted for the latter. Although the 2/26 Incident has been called a turning point for the right, denoting the end of violent challenges to state authority, the truth is that most rightist journals had confined their appeals to legal means for some time, and this plot hatched by 21 junior officers and a few privy civilians was not representative of the right wing as a whole. Most earlier assassinations and plots had also been the work of very few individuals. Most of the rightist press played the same role after 1936 as during 1935, attacking democrats and liberals

with as much effect as the state would countenance, and otherwise offering divergent advice on spiritual renovation, economic controls, and other matters, some groups even emerging as staunch critics of the new military-bureaucratic shogunate they saw enveloping the throne.

If nationalist journals suffered a blow from the 2/26 Incident, it came less from legal sanctions than from the reading public; circulation plummeted. Data collected by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police on "thought" newspapers kept under close surveillance show that people in the capital made a sharp left turn in their reading habits after the failed coup. This may be one of the clearest signs of popular disapproval on record--see Table 26. Notice that there are no drastic changes in the number of active journals that might explain the fluctuations without reference to popular taste.

TABLE 26

THE CIRCULATION OF "THOUGHT" NEWSPAPERS KEPT UNDER
SURVEILLANCE BY THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN
POLICE: FEBRUARY-JULY 1936

Month	Rightist		Leftist	
	Journals	Circulation	Journals	Circulation
February	51	892,340	34	165,700
March	50	439,315	34	207,700
April	49	324,090	33	221,700
May	47	309,260	33	232,300
June	45	267,420	32	245,600
July ^a	43	378,652	32	251,100

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 96, pp. 100-101.

Note: The one active anarchist newspaper was included in the leftist category in the table, though classified separately in the original document.

^aInterest in rightist journals rose in July due to the executions of the ringleaders of the 2/26 rebellion and the assassin of General Nagata. No data are available for later months.

Notes

¹Masu Medea Tosei, 1:1i.

²Ibid., document 46, pp. 256-257.

³Ibid., document 55, p. 354.

⁴The first was accomplished by the Shiso Han Hogo Kansatsu Ho, the second by the Kaisei Chian Iji Ho (a revision of the Peace Preservation Law).

⁵These were Miyazawa Hiroshi of the House of Representatives, and Baron Kikuchi Takeo of the House of Peers (also to be involved in the Minobe crisis). See Kuroda Hidetoshi, Showa Genron Shi e no Shogen [Eyewitness Account of the History of Expression in the Showa Period] (Tokyo: Kobundo, 1966), p. 242.

⁶See *ibid.*, pp. 241-254, for a concise account of the incident. For more details on official views of the matter and critical reactions in the press, see Shiso Tosei [Thought Control], ed. Kakegawa Tomiko, *Gendai Shi Shiryo* 42 (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 1976), documents 26-34.

⁷The bill's formal title was Law for Emergency Control of Illegal Subversive Written Materials (Fuon Bunsho Rinji Torishimari Ho). If any person involved in producing a document had his correct name and address on it, it would not be treated under this law--see *Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho*, no. 91, p. 4.

⁸Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 75, p. 415.

⁹Ibid., p. 419.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 417.

¹¹Ibid., document 77, p. 625.

¹²The original government draft had called for up to three years for anyone spreading rumors bound to disturb public order by means other than publications, if he did so with the intentions listed in the law. This provision was scrapped by the Diet; it was not forgotten, however. The Law for Emergency Control of Speech, Publications, Assemblies, and Associations (Genron, Shuppan, Shukai, Kessha Nado Rinji Torishimari Ho), which passed the Diet in December 1941, provided up to two years in prison for spreading lies or rumors about the "situation." It is reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 76, pp. 403-407.

- ¹³ See *ibid.*, vol. 1, document 75, p. 416.
- ¹⁴ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1934, pp. 197-198. The disavowal of communism by former leaders Sano Manabu and Nabeyama Sadachika from prison in June 1933 led to a cascade of renunciations from leftist prisoners, disheartening communist sympathizers still active and generating disputes among them that ended up ruining many of their cultural periodicals still in publication.
- ¹⁵ Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, pp. 60-67.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 200.
- ¹⁷ Minobe Tatsukichi, "Rikugunsho Happyo no Kokubo Ron o Yomu" [Reading the Discussion of National Defense in the Army Ministry Report], Chuo Koron, November 1934, p. 126.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- ¹⁹ For a rundown of other critical responses to the army pamphlet, see Ishizeki Keizo, "Kokubo Kokka Ron to Kokutai Meicho" [The National Defense State Theory and Clarification of the National Polity], in Waseda Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyujo and Pure Fashizumu Kenkyu Bukai, eds., Nihon no Fashizumu I: Keiseiki no Kenkyu [Japanese Fascism I: Research on the Formative Period] (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1979), pp. 52-59.
- ²⁰ The upper house member, Baron Kikuchi Takeo, was also an associate of Hiranuma Kiichiro in the latter's National Foundation Society. According to Kikuchi, the brief against Minobe had been partly prepared by Minoda Koki of the Genri Nihonsha (The Principles of Japan Company), to which Minobe's lower house attacker, Eto Genkuro, also belonged. See Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, p. 257.
- ²¹ Quoted in Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Iwayuru "Tenno Kikan Setsu" o Keiki to Suru Kokutai Meicho Undo [The Movement to Clarify the National Polity Triggered by the So-Called Emperor-as-Organ Theory], Shiso Kenkyu Shiryo Tokushu Dai 72-Go, reprinted ed. (Tokyo: Toyo Bunkasha, 1975), pp. 101-102. This was a secret document prepared by the Justice Ministry for the reference of its officials in the late 1930's.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 250; Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, pp. 220, 236 note 43.
- ²³ Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 223.
- ²⁴ E.g., Viscount Mimurodo Yukimitsu argued the theory had outgrown the status of an academic matter in the House of Peers' Foreign

Affairs Committee (Gaiko Iinkai) on March 4, several days before Hayashi's interpellation; see Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, p. 261.

²⁵Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 70.

²⁶The two right wing organizations were the Emperor Jinmu Society and the National Foundation Society. Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 224.

²⁷Mazaki's order is reprinted in Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Iwayuru "Tenno Kikan Setsu", pp. 150-151.

²⁸Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, p. 259.

²⁹Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Iwayuru "Tenno Kikan Setsu", p. 150; Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 228.

³⁰Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 230.

³¹Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 231.

³²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 105; Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Iwayuru "Tenno Kikan Setsu", pp. 88-90; Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 71.

³³On the unprecedented nature of the Minobe crisis, see Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 82.

³⁴Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 242.

³⁵See the remarks of his son quoted in Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, p. 266.

³⁶Okada's diary is quoted to this effect in *ibid.*, pp. 264-265.

³⁷They are listed individually in Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Iwayuru "Tenno Kikan Setsu", pp. 255-257.

³⁸Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 252.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 142.

⁴¹Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 336 note 41.

- ⁴²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 142.
- ⁴³E.g., the Osaka Jiji Shinpo on March 7, the Kokumin Shinbun on March 16--see *ibid.*, p. 143.
- ⁴⁴Quoted in Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 72.
- ⁴⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.
- ⁴⁶See Omori Yoshitaro, "Hito to Shite no Minobe Tatsukichi Hakase" [Dr. Minobe Tatsukichi as a Person], and Jonan Inchi (a pseudonym for Mitarashi Tatsuo), "Minobe Sodo no Hyori" [The Inside and Outside of the Minobe Commotion], in Bungei Shunju, April 1935; cf. Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, pp. 267-268. Also, articles by Ito Masanori, Sugiyama Heisuke, and Kiyosawa Kiyoshi in Keizai Orai, May 1935.
- ⁴⁷In Japanese, the title was "Hito Hogakusha no Tansoku." See Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 72.
- ⁴⁸Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, pp. 158, 163-164, 105.
- ⁴⁹Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, pp. 240, 229.
- ⁵⁰Quoted in Ishizeki, "Kokubo Kokka Ron," p. 75.
- ⁵¹On the latter point, see Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, p. 263, and Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 341 note 100.
- ⁵²Quoted in Kuroda, Showa Genron Shi, p. 266.
- ⁵³David Anson Titus, Palace and Politics in Prewar Japan (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1974), p. 163.
- ⁵⁴Ben-Ami Shillony, Revolt in Japan: The Young Officers and the February 26, 1936 Incident (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U. Press, 1973), pp. 141, 193.
- ⁵⁵The confiscation rates are listed for each edition in Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 91, pp. 304-314.
- ⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 281.
- ⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 217.

⁵⁸Figures from *ibid.*, pp. 36-38.

⁵⁹Figures from *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, nos. 92-99. These data cover only newspapers, news agency bulletins, and a few current events magazines (the only press organs to receive pre-publication warnings); there were further violations among the books, propaganda leaflets, and magazines administered under the Publications Law.

⁶⁰*Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 100, p. 123.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 124; the Miyako, Hochi, and Tokyo Nichi Nichi newspapers were prosecuted in one instance, the Osaka Mainichi and Osaka Asahi in the other.

⁶²All figures from *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 101, pp. 26-29.

⁶³This was the Shuppanbutsu Nofu Hoan--see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 52, pp. 268-271.

⁶⁴*Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 17, pp. 21-23.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁶⁶E.g., see *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, pp. 152-153.

⁶⁷Figures from *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 47, pp. 127-136. Even in the book market, which is slower to react to current events, the Manchurian Incident made itself felt before the end of 1931. Nationalist and anti-Marxist books were 12 of the annual total of 614 books related to social thought in 1930, but rose to 69 of 686 in 1931 due to a boom after September. See *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1930, p. 88, and Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1931, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁸*Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 17, p. 21.

⁶⁹*Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, p. 260.

⁷⁰*Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 17, pp. 28-29.

⁷¹The second installment of a police report on nationalist groups in the *Naimusho Keihokyoku*, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 18, was titled "Trends Toward Anti-Marxism in Japan."

⁷²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, pp. 206, 213-216, 261-262.

⁷³Ibid., p. 260.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 259.

⁷⁵Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1933, pp. 24+, 285.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 192-193, 196.

⁷⁷Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, pp. 258-264.

⁷⁸Miller, Minobe Tatsukichi, p. 208.

⁷⁹E.g., see Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1932, p. 260.

⁸⁰Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1934, p. 154.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 225.

⁸²Ibid., p. 218.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 160-161.

⁸⁴Even in 1934, when there was more sensitivity to rural problems than in earlier years, only three of 232 rightist books published were categorized as "related to the problems of the farm villages." The top two categories were "related to the Japanese spirit"--139 books, and "related to international defense problems"--17. Eight books were related to national socialism. Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1934, p. 116.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 217.

⁸⁶Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 109.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 103, 43.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 109.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 103.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 46-47.

⁹¹By contrast, the debate over fascism in leftist circles was lively, focusing on the issue of whether there was such a thing as fascism in Japan. Those who took the negative argued that fascism was supposed to signify the rule of finance capital (the Comintern's view), not rule by a "feudalistic" military-bureaucratic caste. The other interpretation was that although the bourgeoisie did not control the state, fascism, due to the peculiarities of Japanese capitalism, had presented itself within the power structure (rather than outside of it as in Europe) in the form of military-bureaucratic elites, for whom finance capital was a faithful servant. This was a state summary of arguments in leftist newspapers and magazines--ibid., pp. 58-59.

⁹²Note that the term "totalitarianism" (zentaishugi) had been associated with the right for some time and was usually used to signify a general collectivist ethic and not with the meaning it generally has in postwar social science.

⁹³Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, p. 219.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 221.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 220.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 111.

⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 106-108.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 111.

⁹⁹Chian Iji Ho, p. 651, Table 3.

¹⁰⁰Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 67, pp. 378-383; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Gaikan, 1935, pp. 313, 344.

¹⁰¹Shiso Tosei, document 35, pp. 266-310.

¹⁰²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 91, pp. 38, 46-47.

¹⁰³Note that some monthly police reports do not contain a complete count of administrative sanctions by rightist and leftist groups under this law. For judicial sanctions, see Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 99, p. 124.

¹⁰⁴Quoted in Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 95, p. 202.

¹⁰⁵Shillony, Revolt in Japan, pp. 159-161, 183.

CHAPTER XIII

FILM

Officials showed a growing awareness of film's role in shaping public opinion after the first talkie arrived in Japan in August 1931. Ex-Prime Minister Saito Makoto, Chairman of the Great Japan Film Association, stated in 1935:

. . . film is a mode of expression which agrees with modern man's taste and feeling, and further both in terms of economics and time it suits his basic life style in many ways. . . . In truth, film is the favorite child of the era, it occupies the seat of honor among popular amusements, makes the most direct contact with the masses, and holds their preference perfectly within its grasp. This being the case, it possesses a power unmatched by the other literary¹ and fine arts, by newspapers, magazines, or other publications.

At the time Saito spoke, Japan was already the world's third ranking film producer behind the United States and Germany. There were no radical changes in the film control structure in these years, but growing official concern was evidenced in several ways: censorship standards became more exacting, there were efforts to discourage film imports and promote films of service to the state, and most importantly, several bureaucratic committees began to prepare for a major shift in policy. Their activities eventually produced the Film Law of 1939, illustrating the great influence of new bureaucratic bodies in the late imperial era.

Censorship Standards and State Sanctions

Censorship standards grew more rigid in this period due to the

greater recognition of film's importance and to the increasingly tense international situation. In the fall of 1936, for example, officials formally announced a new severity in dealing with sex-related films and those touching upon the imperial family, the national polity, the military, the police, or bureaucratic officials. The stiffening of morals censorship was closely related to official discouragement of foreign social customs after withdrawal from the League of Nations. In October 1936, shortly after the announcement of harsher censorship, a film titled Seppun no Sekinin (The Responsibility of a Kiss) was presented for inspection as an all but open challenge to the authorities. After censors changed the name to Ren'ai no Sekinin (The Responsibility of Love), they sheared some 1000 meters of the film.² The open expression of lovers' sentiments was one of many inimical foreign customs authorities were determined to uproot in the mid-1930's; there was even a campaign to remove imported words like "mama" and "papa" from the Japanese language.³ In a period of war and rising nationalism, the concepts "foreign" and "immoral" became closely associated. Needless to say, gaps adding up to 1000 meters of film made a shambles of the artistic quality of a movie, but Japanese officials placed little value on art for art's sake. In November 1936, an important Home Ministry film censor, Tatebayashi Mikio, published an article in the magazine Eiga to Rebyu (Movies and Reviews), in which he stated:

As far as we are concerned, from the vantage of film administration, our approach is blind to artistic quality. Items unwanted by the state, though they may be "fine art," we discard and ignore. For state officials this is the correct attitude.⁴

Another new feature of censorship in this period was the attention given to radical rightist films. These increased in number after the

Manchurian Incident just as left-leaning "tendency films" declined.

Home Ministry film inspector Tajima Taro wrote in 1938:

Until seven-eight years ago, this kind of so-called "red" [film] alone formed the center of the problem, but times change and from five-six years ago, wearing a Japanese disguise, we have seen the rise of radical rightism. Hence, due to the rise of so-called "actionism," which requires extreme vigilance, we have had to be that much more on our guard. As for the school of thought referred to as actionism:

Generally speaking, they reject or make light of election campaigns and struggle within the Diet, and emphasize mainly extra-parliamentary propaganda and agitation and organizations to train the masses; the tendency to approve tacitly of public mass action, especially direct action, is considerable. In short, they shun parliamentary methods and have recourse to extra-parliamentary action, but there is a danger that this action is often tainted with an illegal, direct, terrorist, coup-d'etat-like coloration, (according to Suga Taro, L.L.B.).⁵

Thus during 1932-1933, the focus of concern with political radicalism shifted from the left to the right. Notice that Tajima implicitly takes the radical right to be an illegal foreign import much like the left, though this one wears a "Japanese disguise." The new trend toward right wing and military-related films began to abate in 1934;⁶ on this point, film records mirror the experience of the printed media, which also saw a slackening of rightist activity in 1934 and 1935.

What Japanese film censors in the 1930's understood by the "radical right" may differ from the perceptions of many postwar analysts. Support for an aggressive foreign policy was widespread and quite acceptable--radicals comprised only the small minority agitating for violent political crimes. To illustrate the difference, it is useful to review a film that might be seen as radical today but was not deemed so by the prewar censor.

In June 1933, the Osaka Mainichi Shinbun decided to produce an educational film to address the critical issues facing the nation.

The Osaka Mainichi was one of Japan's largest national newspapers, and its film news department was a leader in the field. After long deliberations, the paper's management selected a narrator it saw as an impartial, moderate voice to evaluate the state of the nation: General Araki Sadao. Araki was then the Army Minister, and would later serve as Minister of Education. In the film Hijoji Nihon (Japan in Crisis), Araki asked his audience if Asia was peaceful as American and then Japanese warships occupied the screen. He spoke of Japan's mission from god to bring peace to Asia and declared that the moral superiority of the Japanese race was known throughout the world. While viewers pondered a map of China marked with the incursions of Russia, England, France, and the U.S., Araki called for national unity and asked if Japan were ready to accept its great responsibility. He criticized an exaggerated concern with moneymaking and the aping of Western civilization. A little skit was then enacted in the film, in which a boy of traditional manners forced one of Western tastes to behave himself. The general glorified the Manchurian Incident as having restored respect for Japan and united all Japanese in spirit, regardless of social class. How would Japan overcome the present crisis? After evoking the image of Amaterasu, the mythical sun goddess credited with founding Japan, Araki expounded upon the three imperial symbols: the mirror (justice), the jewels (benevolence), and the sword (courage). It was the mission of Japan to spread the "imperial way" (kodo) embodied in these three great principles. The next war, unlike those of the past, would demand total mobilization, and this in turn required the spiritual unity of all behind the nation's mission and ideals.⁸

Scholars today see General Araki as an ambivalent fellow traveler

of the radical young officers who rebelled in February 1936. Though he curried their favor, he apparently did so hoping to dissuade them from violent action.⁹ The postwar military tribunal judged Araki to be a Class A war criminal (the film just reviewed was used as evidence against him), and sentenced him to life imprisonment. In June 1933, the staff of the Osaka Mainichi newspaper judged him to be the very personification of "moderation and neutrality" at a time when radical opinion was deemed the property of communism or socialism on one side and Nazi-styled totalitarianism on the other.¹⁰ The ideas expressed in Araki's film, though certainly not shared by everyone, were quite respectable in Japan at the time and irreproachable in the eyes of the censor. Radical rightist calls for violence, however, made even less headway in the world of film than revolutionary leftist ideas had before them. If one reason was that radical rightist groups were typically small bands of zealots with little interest in film for mass propaganda, another was the watchful eye of the censor.

The results of film censorship are summarized in Tables 27, 28, and 29. The sharp rise in the number of films inspected in 1937 was due to the China Incident in July of that year (see Part IV). The number of current events films cut by censors remained negligible (e.g., in 1936, only two were cut out of 7,494 submitted for inspection). The percentage of other films cut during first inspections (Table 28) dropped somewhat for domestically-produced films but rose for imports, perhaps reflecting growing patriotism at home as well as the increasingly severe scrutiny of foreign films.

Violators of the censorship system were very rare considering the number of films produced. In the five years from 1933 to 1937,

TABLE 27

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE
FILM INSPECTION REGULATIONS: 1932-1937

Year	Total Films Inspected ^a	Bans ^b	Required to Reshoot ^c	Films Cut	Limited by Location	Withdrawn
1932	18,436			780	18	96
1933	14,984	13	23	633	25	36
1934	17,468	4	45	651	25	53
1935	21,075	10	41	456	27	51
1936	25,008	6	40	510	27	78
1937	41,560	5	21	395	63	40

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1933-1938.

^aThe figures include Japanese and imported films, films submitted for the first time, resubmissions, and prints of previously submitted films.

^bThe figures include films withdrawn from inspection because sponsors were informed they would be banned. These films are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column, except in 1932, when the number withdrawn for this reason is unknown.

^cThese films were formally listed as having been withdrawn from inspection; they are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column in the table except in 1932, when the number withdrawn for reshooting is unknown.

TABLE 28

PAID INSPECTIONS OF FILMS SUBMITTED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND
THOSE CUT UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION
REGULATIONS, BY AREA OF PRODUCTION: 1932-1937

Year	Japanese Films			Foreign Films			Total
	Inspected	Cut	% Cut	Inspected	Cut	% Cut	% Cut
1932	2,942	302	10%	1,279	207	16%	12%
1933	2,837	261	9	1,176	247	21	12
1934	3,247	269	8	1,138	306	26	13
1935	3,734	222	5	1,368	227	16	8
1936	4,288	263	6	1,375	246	17	9
1937	2,991	192	6	1,482	200	13	8

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1933-1938.

TABLE 29

PIECES OF FILM CUT UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION REGULATIONS,
BY CENSORSHIP STANDARDS AND AREA OF PRODUCTION
(J--JAPANESE, F--FOREIGN): 1932-1937

	1932		1933		1934		1935		1936		1937	
	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F
<u>Public Safety</u>												
1. Imperial family	2	0	15	1	1	3	1	4	3	2	3	2
2. Nation	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	2	0	3	2	0
3. Constitution	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
4. Social organs	22	39	39	30	15	65	4	31	7	36	4	16
5. National ethos	0	1	0	22	0	6	1	4	0	2	1	0
6. Foreign affairs	8	4	1	1	3	5	2	0	0	3	1	8
7. Class conflict	12	0	4	0	3	1	5	6	11	6	1	6
8. Group conflict	13	1	5	5	4	18	0	2	3	12	0	5
9. Crime	55	67	37	64	83	55	37	39	65	40	14	14
10. Public business	13	38	11	48	8	51	7	39	9	41	9	22
11. Other	215	60	101	108	67	168	45	134	65	161	70	63
Area Total	340	210	214	282	184	373	104	262	163	306	105	136
Annual Total	550		496		557		366		469		241	
<u>Manners and Morals</u>												
1. Religion	0	0	7	0	3	0	3	0	7	0	3	0
2. Cruelty/Ugliness	86	41	90	73	45	89	22	39	66	74	37	31
3. Sex-related	541	523	298	583	403	844	232	396	260	462	190	372
4. Work ethic	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	2	0
5. Education	40	11	25	6	24	34	16	15	48	9	32	17
6. Family	21	13	25	11	0	3	4	28	2	5	7	7
7. Other	199	62	147	166	94	126	91	49	80	64	66	55
Area Total	888	650	592	839	571	1096	368	527	466	617	337	482
Annual Total	1538		1431		1667		895		1083		819	
Grand Area Total	1228	860	806	1121	755	1469	472	789	629	923	442	618
Grand Annual Total	2088		1927		2224		1261		1552		1060	

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1933-1938.

only 63 fines were levied by the courts to violators of the film regulations.¹¹ Over the same span, there were but 59 films banned from further showing for having been screened without inspection, and 116 for unauthorized revisions of the film or narrative script.¹² Only a fraction of these violations would have involved political expression. The figures stand in contrast to the far more numerous press law violations and reflect the conformity induced by prior censorship as well as the small number of political activists producing films.

Import/Export Controls and State Film Promotion

The official dislike for foreign films found further concrete expression outside the area of censorship. In April 1937, the Home Ministry undertook to discourage film imports and promote domestic works supportive of state policy. It raised inspection fees for foreign movies by 50%, explaining the move as follows: ". . . in addition to the fact that they are contrary to sympathetic manners and customs, the languages are foreign, and, moreover, because they use dramatic terminology that is hard to understand, the process of inspection is extraordinarily difficult."¹³ Simultaneously, the ministry decreed that Japanese films which "elevate national consciousness, establish public morality, correct the understanding of Japan's domestic and international situation, serve as propaganda [senden] for the administration in matters pertaining to the military, industry, education, fire prevention, nutrition, etc., or contribute to the advancement of public welfare in other ways," would henceforth be inspected without charge. Non-fiction films to be exempt from inspection fees were referred to

as "bunka eiga" (culture films). This was a term borrowed from the Nazis (kulturfilm) and used to describe educational, documentary, and propaganda films which served the ends of the state.¹⁴ Also passed free of cost were films for entertainment produced with official guidance or support, and those recommended or recognized for excellence by the state. The extra income accruing from the imports would help to cover losses on patriotic films inspected without payment.

The Home Ministry also decreed a new film export inspection system in December 1935. Inspection procedures would resemble those used for current events films, in that both central and local officials were empowered to grant approval.¹⁵ In 1936, the first full year of implementation, 1,052 films were inspected, 15 of these cut, and another 19 withdrawn before inspection was completed.¹⁶

Planning for Mobilization

More important than the policy innovations instituted in this period was a process of committee meetings and study, planning and lobbying, which forms a vital background to the major policy transformation of late years. If there had been a violent revolution in Japan in 1940 or 1941, one would examine the 1932-1937 period for civil disturbances, the growth of radical political groups, and other signs of impending upheaval. As it happened, however, the years 1940-1941 witnessed a policy revolution initiated from within the state. The genesis of this revolution is traceable to a cluster of new administrative committees which labored over radical policy blueprints in the preceding years. In regard to film, their efforts were set in motion by a call from the Diet in February 1933.

Lower house Representative Iwase Makoto launched the process with his "Motion for the Creation of a National Film Policy," approved in committee at the 64th Diet session. Iwase argued that film was as influential as the press or the school system, and the state should not content itself with a passive censorship while ceding production to private companies out for profit. Alluding to the Manchurian Incident, Iwase remarked that Japan's image abroad would suffer if "truthful" films of good quality were not made and exported. Private firms were not performing this task at present, and so the field was abandoned to foreign films presenting an eccentric view of the country.¹⁷ His motion was that Japan follow the lead of other states in establishing an official organ to play a positive, active role in the "guidance and control" (shido tosei) of the medium of film.¹⁸

A little over a year passed before Iwase's initiative bore fruit in the form of the Film Control Committee (Eiga Tosei Iinkai), sanctioned by the cabinet in March 1934. Preparatory efforts had included a four-month study of foreign film control practices and numerous gatherings in the conference room of the Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief of the Home Ministry, in which Home and Education officials (most of section chief--kacho--rank) participated. Their achievement appears deceptively modest at first glance. Despite an impressive roster of members (the Home Minister himself acted as chairman), the committee's only mission was "research and discussion." A long slate of topics was drawn up for investigation: proposals for an integrated film law, state film production and distribution, state subsidies to film makers, negative film manufacture, compulsory showing of educational films, censorship, imports and exports, etc. But there was neither the authority nor the budget required to take action.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the Film Control Committee overcame its handicaps to play an essential role in policy development. In early 1935, both houses of the Diet passed a resolution calling for enlargement of the organ, more planning for controls, and the creation of a fitting institution to promote public spirit and culture in films. The committee capitalized on the last of these recommendations, and in November 1935, to compensate for its lack of legal muscle within the state, it created the Great Japan Film Association (Dai Nihon Eiga Kyokai) to project its influence outward. The association was a bureaucratic-civil hybrid formally approved by the Home and Education Ministers. High-ranking bureaucrats belonging to the Film Control Committee were permanent appointees to the directorate, and leading film studios participated and contributed financial support. The goals of the association were to eliminate the ill influence of movies on the public, to further the renovation of manners and morals, and to promote the "rational" development of film.²⁰

It is not clear whether the industry's reaction was principally one of passive acquiescence or active support (hoping to turn the association into its lobby with the state).²² What is certain is that the Great Japan Film Association pumped out a steady stream of rhetoric for tougher film controls over the next five years. Its magazine, Nihon Eiga (Japanese Film), became a clamorous mouthpiece for promoters of a special law for film, carrying numerous articles by bureaucrats who later helped to frame such legislation, men like Home Ministry censor Tatebayashi Mikio.²³ In October 1937, the association published a 158-page translation of all laws and administrative codes pertaining

to film control in Nazi Germany.²⁴

The Film Control Committee and the Great Japan Film Association spearheaded the campaign for a comprehensive film law both in the state and in civil society, but there were other state agencies also supportive of a new film control system.

Military thinking is partly revealed in the Summary Working Plan Related to Information and Propaganda prepared by the Planning Division of the cabinet's Natural Resources Bureau in May 1936.²⁵ "Natural Resources Bureau" was the euphemistic title of an agency working on contingency plans for total war. The bureau was established in May 1927 and formally invested with various planning functions by the Natural Resources Research Law of 1929. From the start, the Number One and Two Section Chiefs were military men of about Lt. Col. rank, and from 1929 the post of Planning Division Chief was held by general officers.

The bureau prepared a blueprint for state propaganda activity just before and after the outbreak of a total war. It proposed a central state control body to lord over seven separate media associations, each embracing all active media organs in its field. One of the seven was for the film industry. All censorship and mobilization functions were to be concentrated in the central body. The design was modeled on the Reich Chambers of Culture fashioned by Nazi Propaganda Minister Goebbels in September 1933.²⁶

The Cabinet Information Committee, created in June 1936, was initially almost as innocuous in appearance as the Film Control Committee, but later evolved into a likeness of what had been envisioned in the Natural Resource Bureau plan. This committee, which was struggling

to coordinate state information output without much real authority to do so in the late 1930's, also gave its support to new film legislation, and later became directly involved in its implementation.

These antecedents, along with the Diet support already noted at several stages, created a broad constituency within the state for a new control structure. States often set up powerless commissions so that a problem can be buried rather than solved, but in Japan legally impotent bureaucratic organs such as those just described became the cornerstones of policy development. Their impact, however, does not substantiate the ge-koku-jo thesis that lower officials came to control policy by manipulating their superiors;²⁷ on the contrary, the sway of agencies like the Film Control Committee was owed precisely to the high rank of its leading members in other state institutions that were empowered to act. Regular committee members included the Home Ministry's Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief and the Education Ministry's Social Education Bureau Chief, men near the pinnacle of power in the state administration. These were the posts to which every career official aspired as the ultimate reward for distinguished service. It was the presence of such leaders on the committee, not their manipulation by subordinates, that was the key to its effectiveness. The committee's efforts would later result in the Film Law of 1939, the only major bill enacted for a particular mass medium in the late imperial era.

Notes

- ¹Quoted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 84, p. 650.
- ²Iwasaki Akira, Nihon Gendai Shi Taikei: Eiga Shi [Outline of Modern Japanese History: Film History] (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shinposha, 1961), p. 161.
- ³Ibid., p. 162. German derivations, however, were soon on the upswing.
- ⁴Quoted in ibid., p. 164. The magazine Eiga to Rebyu was published by the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shinbun, an affiliate of the Osaka Mainichi Shinbun.
- ⁵Tajima, Ken'etsu Shitsu, p. 271.
- ⁶Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1935, pp. 1-2.
- ⁷According to the testimony of Mizuno Yoshiyuki, head of the newspaper's film department, before the International Military Tribunal of the Far East, reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 44, pp. 253-254.
- ⁸The script and descriptions of the film footage are given in ibid., document 43, pp. 230-252.
- ⁹Crowley stresses Araki's ultimate opposition to terrorist action and politicization of the military--Quest for Autonomy, pp. 178, 253, 272-273. Ben-Ami Shillony, though in basic agreement, gives greater weight to the gestures by which Araki led the young officers to expect his support--Revolt in Japan (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1973), pp. 18, 36.
- ¹⁰Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 44, p. 254.
- ¹¹Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 59-63, 1933-1937.
- ¹²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1934-1938.
- ¹³Quoted in Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:228.
- ¹⁴Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1938, pp. 2-3. The first official use of this term I encountered in writing was in the Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo of 1937, p. 2, which notes the number of "culture

films" released in 1936. There, however, the term was given a somewhat wider meaning which encompassed dramatic movies supportive of the state as well. The meaning given in the text here was the most commonly used. Toho studios opened the film industry's first culture film division in 1937.

¹⁵The new export regulations are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 70, pp. 396-398.

¹⁶Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1937, p. 54.

¹⁷Many foreign films were indeed biased against the Japanese--see Jacobus tenBroek, Edward N. Barnhart, and Floyd W. Matson, Prejudice, War, and the Constitution (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1968), pp. 29-32.

¹⁸Iwase's remarks are cited in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 51, p. 264. The Diet committee which adopted his motion was the one with regular oversight responsibilities for the Home Ministry.

¹⁹For information on the Film Control Committee, see *ibid.*, pp. 265-267, and document 73, pp. 402-404.

²⁰According to speeches at the association's inauguration--see *ibid.*, document 84, pp. 649-651.

²¹Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, p. 168.

²²Okada Susumu, Nihon Eiga no Rekishi [The History of Japanese Films] (Kyoto: San'ichi Shobo, 1957), p. 190. Okada deduces support from the participation of Shochiku studio's Kido Shiro. It is not illogical that some industry people welcomed the association as a new sign of recognition for them (the film business lacked social prestige at the time), saw some promise of state subsidies in the future, and otherwise found nothing objectionable in a patriotic organization that, in any case, had no legal teeth with which to bite.

²³For numerous examples of Tatebayashi's contributions to Nihon Eiga, see Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, pp. 168-171.

²⁴Doitsu Eiga Ho [German Film Law] (Tokyo: Dai Nihon Eiga Kyokai, 1937). The Japanese were keen students of foreign film controls and had access to a mountain of information. In 1929, legal scholar Yanai Yoshio published his Katsudo Shashin no Hogo to Torishimari [The Protection and Control of Motion Pictures] (Tokyo: Yuhikaku), a 1000-page study of state film administration around the world. Eighteen pages of the Home Ministry's Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo of 1932 were devoted to an outline of censorship practices in 62 countries. The survey of 1933 preliminary

to establishment of the Film Control Committee has already been noted. References to foreign practices were almost invariably included in arguments for stiffer state film controls.

²⁵This plan, Joho Senden ni Kansuru Jisshi Keikaku Koryo An, is reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 1, document 78, pp. 627-641.

²⁶The seven Nazi Chambers of Culture differed in only one instance from the list of proposed Japanese media control associations. Common were organs for film, radio, the press, music, fine arts, and the theatre, but the seventh German chamber was for literature, while the Japanese was for a state wire service. A monopolistic state news agency was in the making in Japan at the time this plan was drawn up, and this probably accounts for the difference.

²⁷See Maruyama Masao, Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics, ed. Ivan Morris, expanded ed. (London: Oxford U. Press, 1969), p. 113.

CHAPTER XIV

RADIO

Radio, like film, greatly increased in importance during the period of political transition. By the end of 1936, receiver owners exceeded the 2.9 million mark (in a population of 70 million), more than doubling in the space of four years. Radio's political utility was vividly highlighted during the revolt of junior officers in February 1936. The government skillfully used the medium first to calm public fears and then to broadcast its ultimatum to the rebels. Unlike the other media, there were some significant structural changes in the radio control system in this period which require attention. These include the centralization of NHK in 1934, the subsequent intrusion of state officials into radio programming, and NHK's participation in the founding of an official news agency.

The Centralization of NHK

In 1934, the Communications Ministry revoked most of the autonomy it had granted to NHK's branch stations in 1926. Since that time, the branches had had dominant voting power in central decision-making bodies, their own boards of directors, and considerable independence in programming and business and financial planning. The ministry grew unhappy with these arrangements for two reasons: the redundancy of offices and functions made for an unnecessarily expensive operation,

and after the Manchurian Incident there was a desire for greater state direction from the center.

The ministry's drive for greater economy was expressed in its budget approval commands, especially in 1930 when it ordered a reduction in listeners' fees, the expansion of facilities, and a cutback in total expenses, all at the same time. This touched off a discussion of organizational reforms. In early 1932, both the Tokyo and Osaka branches proposed a reduction of employees, a mandatory retirement age, and other cost-cutting measures, but their designs did not compromise branch autonomy. The Manchurian Incident then intervened in September 1931 and official concern shifted from economizing to the issue of central control. From this point, the military strongly supported efforts for structural change. From 1932, the leading advocate of reform was Tamura Kenjiro, the Administrative Section Chief of the Telephone and Telegraph Bureau in the Communications Ministry. NHK's license as a juridical person was set to expire in February 1935, and in late 1933 the ministry endorsed Tamura's wish to force a reorganization by that time. If it became necessary, the state could unilaterally dictate the terms of a new license, so Tamura would hold the trump card of coercion up his sleeve during all negotiations with broadcast management.

In early 1934, Tamura and two NHK employees secretly composed a plan to restructure the broadcasting company. As their efforts neared fruition, Tamura quietly met with various NHK executives to impress upon them the imperative of change. The subject of organizational reform was then raised openly at a central NHK board of directors'

meeting on 9 April 1934, and a group of top NHK directors was charged with formulating a concrete proposal. They returned on April 21 with a copy of the plan prepared earlier under Tamura's direction. One week later, NHK's central board forwarded this plan to the Communications Ministry without major amendments, essentially asking the ministry to approve its own work, which it did on May 7. In another week, the document was presented to a general investors' meeting with a statement stressing the new awareness of radio's influence after the Manchurian Incident and its mission of service to the nation.¹ Since Tamura already had the support of many NHK executives voting at the meeting, the investors' approval was a foregone conclusion.

The structural innovations were laid out in the new articles of incorporation and their accompanying bylaws. Branch boards of directors were eliminated. NHK's president and central board members were granted 40% of the votes at investors' meetings. The head office took charge of the budget, business plans, and national relay programming for all transmitting stations. It was stated that NHK would manage and fund other businesses related to broadcasting (almost certainly with the upcoming project of a state news agency in mind). The company president was empowered to create advisory committees, their organization and membership subject to Communications Ministry approval (anticipating new program control organs with official participation). Finally, all active NHK executives were to resign and the Communications Minister would appoint the first office holders under the new system.

The provision on investors' meeting voting rights drew the sharpest criticism before the reforms were approved. Central office managing

director Komori Shichiro, an ex-bureaucrat, defended these clauses before the investors. If special voting rights were determined solely according to amounts invested, he stated, these rights properly belonged to the listeners, since 90% of the company's financial assets were now derived from listeners' fees and not from the original investors.

However, though at first glance it may seem odd for NHK's executives to exercise [these special voting rights], if one considers broadly that the maintenance of the listeners' interest is the same as maintaining the public interest, and that guarding the public interest is the task of the state, then at first it seems proper for the government itself to possess [these rights]. However, I think the point here is just that the government itself will not take hold [of these voting rights], but has granted them to NHK executives who have the confidence of the Communications Minister, and they have been made to exercise these special voting rights.²

Eloquent testimony to the logic applied to questions of state power: the public interest and the state's interest are one and the same thing.

The architect of the 1934 reform, Tamura Kenjiro, was given his day in the sun when permitted to speak for his bureau chief at the general investors' meeting that approved the new structure. From now on, he declared, programming would not simply answer to popular desires but promote the "Japanese spirit" and provide leadership for the people to follow.

Originally, based upon Article 2 of the Wireless Telegraphic Communications Law, NHK was specially granted a concession for a business that was supposed to be managed by the government. Therefore, NHK's management of the broadcasting business, as an extension of the Communications Ministry as it were, takes the form of acting as an agent for government business. Consequently, I would like to ask here that it be clearly understood that government supervision of the management of the broadcasting business must naturally differ in substance from that of other public interest juridical persons.³

Tamura was later rewarded with the post of Telephone and Telegraph Bureau Chief, the most powerful ministerial seat with broadcast

authority below the Vice-Minister's level. The elimination of branch autonomy had removed the last great obstacle to positive state mobilization of radio.

Personnel Controls

The Communications Ministry's renewal of appointment privileges was also unpopular with the investors. Retiring ministry officials appointed in 1934 included six of 14 top executives in the central office (including all three managing directors), five of nine new board members, and six branch executives serving around the country. Another central office manager was an ex-official of the Education Ministry.⁴ Terms of office were fixed at three years, but as a rule the appointments were extended once, leaving these executives in place until 1940. There was some resentment among lifetime NHK employees over the influx of retiring bureaucrats, especially since some were simply being rewarded for ministerial service. There was a joke current within NHK that to be a company executive one had to be a "three tei" man:

teikoku daigaku--an imperial university graduate
Teishinsho--a Communications Ministry official
teino--an imbecile⁵

More serious than the new wave of retirees, however, was the direct role granted to active state officials in program selection. There were some modest precedents for this. In 1929, an advisory committee including state officials was organized at NHK's Tokyo branch (similar bodies followed in Nagoya and Osaka) to assist with program planning, but it met only four times yearly and its influence was slight.⁶ In October 1933, more weighty broadcast councils were

created incorporating Communications, Home, and Education Vice-Ministers and bureau chiefs, and in 1934 Army and Navy personnel as well.⁷

These organs did not actually arrange the broadcast schedule, but they did develop general program policies and give advice on particular program-related issues.

The real breakthrough occurred in June 1934, just after the centralization of NHK, when the Broadcast Programming Council (Hoso Henseikai) was established. This council was given final authority over the broadcast schedule for all national relay transmissions, which by 1934 constituted over 80% of all broadcasts.⁸ It met twice (later once) monthly to review future broadcast plans, and it had the power to add or exclude particular programs. Previously, this had been the function of NHK's broadcasting division chiefs' conference at the three central stations of Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya, involving radio employees alone. Members of the Broadcast Programming Council included section chiefs from the Communications, Home, and Education Ministries, and later officials from the Cabinet Planning Board and the Cabinet Information Committee as well. The latter two agencies comprised both military and civilian bureaucrats and were active in planning for wartime mobilization. After 1936, the Cabinet Information Committee's weight on the council increased steadily, and in June 1937 it became the regular channel for central state offices requesting broadcast time from NHK. A number of so-called "renovationist bureaucrats," known for their statist inclinations, participated on the council and used their influence to tilt more and more programs to state purposes.

NHK and the United News Agency

In 1930, NHK had begun to purchase its news reports from Japan's two wire services, Rengo and Dentsu, and in 1936 it directly contributed to the merger of these two into a monopolistic state wire service, the United News Agency (UNA--Domei Tsushinsha). Thereafter all of NHK's national news programs would originate from this one source, so that radio conveyed only the state's view of events. The founding of the UNA was not only important to state control over radio and the press; it also set a notable precedent for the later consolidation of many other media organs.

The Manchurian Incident provided the immediate inspiration for a state news agency. Japanese officials felt they were losing the propaganda battle for world opinion after the incident, and in May 1932 Army and Foreign Ministry bureaucrats organized an informal committee to bolster official propaganda efforts. One problem had been a lack of coordination in information output, the Foreign Ministry channeling its press releases primarily through Rengo, the Army Ministry having a similar special relationship with Dentsu.⁹ Bureaucrats from four other ministries were subsequently added to the information committee, and as a result of its deliberations the Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministries jointly called for a single national wire service in September 1932.¹⁰

Rengo and Dentsu reacted very differently to the prospect of a merger. Rengo was a non-profit company in weak financial shape whose employees labored without pay--it offered to surrender its facilities free of charge.¹¹ Dentsu, on the other hand, was a profit-making company whose president and stockholders opposed amalgamation. Two

associations of provincial newspapers also supported Dentsu's continued independence, since it provided them with an alternative source of news facilitating competition against the national newspapers.¹² The Foreign and Communications Ministers finally authorized creation of the United News Agency in November 1935 without Dentsu's participation. The UNA's bylaws required state approval for the hiring and firing of top executives, and empowered the two ministers to direct the firm's operations when necessary for the public interest.¹³ In December, the Communications Ministry took action against Dentsu. It unilaterally decreed new regulations requiring a ministry permit to transmit or receive international broadcasts or telegrams. Permits were granted exclusively to personnel of the United News Agency, bringing Dentsu's services in this area to an end. This measure took effect on 1 January 1936, and Dentsu agreed to hand over its news dispatch operations to the UNA two months later.

NHK supported the state wire service concept from the beginning. The program material radio received from Rengo and Dentsu was often inferior to newspaper reporting, and a more efficient wire service would improve the quality of radio news. The state was equally anxious to see NHK participate in the news agency project. One of the UNA's primary objectives was to bolster Japan's overseas broadcasting power, and a major concern was how to finance the construction of new facilities. The large newspapers subscribing to the UNA were opposed to military financing, and Foreign Ministry funding was partly vetoed by the Finance Ministry as economically unfeasible.¹⁴ In this situation, the availability of NHK capital was a godsend. In the first six months of 1936, NHK invested 100,000 yen in the UNA and lent it another three million

at cut-rate interest (two million of the loan was still outstanding in 1940). An NHK division manager had helped prepare the news agency's articles of incorporation, and five NHK executives were made UNA directors, at least three of them ex-Communications Ministry bureaucrats; one of these was Nakayama Ryuji, who had played a big role in war-related broadcast planning after the Manchurian Incident.¹⁵

Thereafter, all of NHK's national news came either from the UNA or straight from the ministries or the military. Without its own news gathering facilities, radio could not independently corroborate the information fed to it by the state through these channels. For example, when junior officers rebelled on 26 February 1936, NHK sent people only to the UNA and to Metropolitan Police headquarters to gather news. It was hard to distinguish fact from rumor during the first day, but no one was sent to the site of the action. The news reports occupying every minute of air time on the 26th were all official state announcements read verbatim. Only at 2:50 a.m. on February 27 did NHK send two men around the city, and their report that all was quiet was NHK's only contribution to news of the event.¹⁶ With press coverage limited by official constraints, radio was the country's principal source of information until the end of February, but the only real news source was the state.¹⁷ National news broadcasts continued to originate entirely with the state until 1945, and thanks to its unique international communications facilities, the UNA became the almost exclusive source of daily foreign news reports carried in the Japanese press.

The inter-ministerial committee which originally proposed the wire service merger was formally recognized as the Cabinet Information Committee in July 1936. Its only concrete responsibility beyond

numerous advisory functions was official supervision of the United News Agency, including the provision of state funds. The state made an annual budgetary outlay for the news agency which came to 1.1 million yen in 1936--the money was furnished by the Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministries and dispensed through the cabinet budget by the information committee.¹⁸ In September 1936, the committee determined its program objectives for the UNA. The wire service was described as an agent of state policy with a mandate to disseminate information in accord with official views. Its ultimate goal was to win the "thought war" against Reuters, Tass, AP, and other wire services, and to acquire a dominant position in Asia similar to that of Reuters in Western Europe.¹⁹

To summarize, the state succeeded in isolating radio from autonomous news sources as well as exerting a more general influence over the content of radio shows through the Broadcast Programming Council. These direct forms of control would be greatly expanded in later years, largely at the initiative of the Cabinet Information Committee. The state's role in forcing a merger of the two wire services turned out to be a dress rehearsal for the subsequent consolidation of thousands of media companies according to the plans of military-bureaucratic elites.

Notes

¹Nihon Musen Shi, 7:201. Another sign of war-related thinking in this period, though less direct, was a speech by the Communications Minister at NHK's ninth anniversary celebration on 22 March 1934, when he spoke at length on the increasing state use of radio in England, the U.S., and especially Nazi Germany--see NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:314.

²Quoted in NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:314.

³Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 312.

⁴Nihon Musen Shi, 7:207. This last man was put in a post overseeing educational programs, one of several moves to smooth over the inter-ministerial haggling that had impeded broadcasting into the schools.

⁵The crossover of state officials and increasing involvement of active officials were such that later wrangles over executive appointments cease to mean much in terms of real state control. For example, in 1940, the NHK president succeeded in resisting several ministerial appointments. But the president, none other than Mr. Komori quoted above on the public interest, had himself been a Communications Ministry bureaucrat in the 1920's. He had been appointed as one of NHK's first managing directors by the Communications Minister in 1926 (reportedly against his will), promoted by the minister to senior managing director after centralization in 1934, and voted NHK president in 1936 by a board of directors stacked with ministry appointees. It is therefore difficult to construe Komori's rejection of several ex-bureaucrats as a sign of decreasing state control. Many ex-officials continued to make the transition in any case.

⁶The first Broadcasting Advisory Committee was established in Tokyo in February 1929. It had two sections, one devoted to programs of art and entertainment, the other to social education. Only the latter included state officials, namely, the Telephone and Telegraph Bureau Chief, two members of the House of Peers, the Education Ministry's Social Education Bureau Chief, and one other Education official. The bylaws of the Tokyo Broadcasting Advisory Committee and a similar organ started in Osaka in March 1930 are reprinted in NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1931, pp. 349-354.

⁷The principal documents on the founding of the Broadcast Councils are reprinted in NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), pp. 1-7; see also NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:135, 192.

⁸On the Broadcast Programming Council, see NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:339-340, and NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1935, pp. 86-88. The official

documents of state authorization are reprinted in NHK, ed., Reiki--Hoso Hen (1), pp. 7-9. Membership was listed annually in the Rajio Nenkan volumes.

⁹Naisei Shi Kenkyukai, ed., Yokomizo Koki-Shi Danwa Sokkiroku [Record of a Conversation with Yokomizo Koki], 2 vols. (Tokyo: Naisei Shi Kenkyukai, n.d.), 1:26.

¹⁰Uchikawa, "Shiryo Kaisetsu" [Commentary on the Documents], in Masu Medea Tosei, 2:lix.

¹¹Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, supplementary document 2, p. 542.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 542-543.

¹³*Ibid.*, supplementary document 1, p. 540.

¹⁴NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:336.

¹⁵Nihon Musen Shi, 7:196-197.

¹⁶NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:392.

¹⁷Nakayama Ryuji, Senso to Denki Tsushin [War and Electronic Communications] (Tokyo: Denki Tsushin Kyokai, 1942), p. 67.

¹⁸Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, supplementary document 3, p. 546.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, supplementary document 4, pp. 548-550.

CHAPTER XV

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Since 1932-1937 was a period of regime transition, one cannot draw general conclusions linking a distinctive regime type with the level of state control over society. At most, it was established that as long as all state organs could exercise their full authority under the Meiji constitution, none would be able to expand state control drastically without the agreement of the others. The awkward separation of powers between conflicting state institutions made this a period of relative inaction in the field of media policy.

The events of 1932-1937 supply a good basis for characterizing the major forces to do battle in the Japanese political arena over the next eight years. The first part of this conclusion will evaluate the concept of "fascism" as a tool for analyzing these forces, drawing upon the media police records and placing the Japanese right wing in a comparative perspective. The second part will offer an alternative conceptual framework.

Fascism, the Civil Right Wing, and the State

Thus far the terms "rightist" and "nationalist" have been used as the most neutral words available for describing a certain segment of the Japanese press; the labels employed by officials for the various journals have also been noted. To what extent can one properly describe these press organs as supportive of fascism, and what impact did they

have on state policy?

To determine the relevance of "fascism" in Japan, one must first define the concept, and this is no easy task; like "democracy" and most other important political concepts, the term has been applied to many diverse phenomena. The criteria guiding the following definition were that the substance of the concept remain as faithful as possible to its dominant historical usage, that it likewise reflect widespread scholarly usage, and that it be specified so as to maximize its analytical utility. Historically, fascism has referred to a type of political movement flourishing mainly in interwar Europe--the concept entered Japan from Europe, and the debate over fascism in Japan has always revolved around the extent to which local political forces resembled those labeled "fascist" in Europe at the time. One must have a clear conception of what fascism was in interwar Europe, then, to discuss its relevance to Japan. Comparative studies have produced a set of attributes describing the movements in the European context; I rely primarily on the work of Juan Linz and Eugen Weber.¹ Though modest deviations might not rule out a particular case, it is the combination of these traits, not one or two separately, that define the phenomenon.

1. An extremely nationalistic ideology, often based upon historical myths, which asserts a superiority over other nations and projects a national mission of military greatness.

2. A collectivist ethic that rejects the institutionalization of social conflict and seeks to wreck the structures that organize such conflict. A fascist movement is anti-parliamentary (since parliament institutionalizes political conflict), anti-liberal (in that it rejects the restriction of state authority to well-defined limits and the right

to pursue one's own good against allegedly national interests), and anti-capitalist and anti-communist in the systemic sense of these terms (since capitalism institutionalizes economic conflict through the market and communism posits class struggle). The positive content of fascist collectivism varied in emphasis, e.g., participation in Germany, corporatism in Italy.

3. Para-military tactics of street brawls and assassination combined with efforts to achieve power by legal means, or at least a willingness to resort to violence when useful for the movement or necessary to shield it from the violence of the state or competing groups.

4. A core membership drawn primarily from those disadvantaged by the political and economic crises of the interwar period; the movements frequently had their greatest appeal to youth, demobilized soldiers, and to petit bourgeois/lower middle class groups, though their class support varied with the social structures and conditions of each country.²

5. A distinct rhetoric and style employing military symbols (uniforms, flags, salutes, marching in formation) and an appeal based upon emotion and idealism, often conveyed through the charisma of an individual leader.

6. An anti-clerical or at least non-clerical ideology and organization.

If state reports on Japanese rightist journals are fundamentally correct, the majority did not support fascist movements. The evidence is that (1) most were more moderate than fascists in their criticism of parliamentary and capitalist institutions, (2) the great majority, at least from 1934-1935, did not advocate violent tactics, and (3) few adopted the ideological slogans of European fascism or addressed the

European movements in a positive, emulatory vein.

Rightist journals were often bitterly critical of the two major political parties, but they rarely espoused elimination of the Diet. This was not just a political tactic to avoid repression--the Diet was established in a constitution bestowed by the Emperor, and the centrality of the throne in rightist ideology thus discouraged outright rejection of constitutional tenets. The major police criterion for distinguishing "Japanist" journals from the few "national socialist" press organs in the early 1930's was the more moderate position of the former on the Diet and capitalism. Such moderation was especially noticeable in many journals of the "idealist right," so called for its emphasis upon traditional Japanese spiritual values combined with a neglect of (or even opposition to) radical structural changes. One example is Baron Hiranuma's National Foundation Society, which was definitely not a fascist organization. In this case, the elevated social status of the membership, a basic opposition to para-military tactics (despite occasional apologies for their perpetrators and a readiness to make political capital of violent incidents), and the highly qualified criticism of parliamentarism and capitalism would suffice to invalidate the hypothesis of fascism.

There was a spate of sympathy for violent acts of protest in the rightist press in 1932 and 1933, but police reports indicate such views became exceptional over the next two years due to state suppression and the failure of direct action. Of course, it is one thing to express sympathy with violence, quite another to adopt it as one's own tactic for acquiring power, and this distinction introduces a major difficulty in comparing the Japanese right with European fascism, namely, that very few of the Japanese organizations aimed at taking control of the state.

While some were bands of thugs out to profit from intimidation, many acted mainly as ideological lobbyists to influence state policy and public opinion--even those engaging in violence, such as the young officers' groups, were typically small conspiratorial societies with no pretensions of promoting a social movement or seizing power. Their concrete objectives, when these were spelled out at all, were usually to provoke change at the top, e.g., to induce the establishment of a military government led by senior officers (who definitely did not belong to fascist movements).³ Most prominent fascist groups in Europe organized political parties to capture the state, and thus the definition of fascism refers to violence as a tactic to achieve power, but in Japan rightist violence was more like the terrorism seen in Western Europe today, designed for self-gratification and sensational publicity to influence the thinking and actions of others.

It is clear from the small number of Japanese groups embracing national socialism and the scanty evaluations of European fascism in the rightist press that few were patterning themselves after European models. This is not really surprising, since the events that most spurred the growth of the Japanese right, the Manchurian Incident (September 1931) and Inukai's assassination (May 1932), both occurred before Hitler's rise to power.⁴ Even those groups overtly aping fascism, such as the Great Japan Youth Party (Dai Nihon Seinento) and the Eastern Way Society (Tohokai), both founded in 1936, might not fit into the fascist category. The Eastern Way Society, for example, aspired to be a mass movement and sought to win whole or partial control of the state. Members wore black military field caps and shirts and dark red neckties after the military style of fascism, and its founder, the "Japanese Hitler" Nakano Seigo,

visited fascist leaders in Europe and returned home to sing their praises. However, the Eastern Way Society stuck to elections and parliamentary methods as means to power, making it at best an outlier somewhat akin to the Belgian Rex of Leon Degrelle.⁵

The contention that "fascism" is a poor description of most of the Japanese right wing must remain tentative. There are other important sources on the subject, and those used here have their limitations. They represent only the views of state officials, which may turn out to be systematically biased in some respects. Furthermore, not all important rightists published--the young officers' groups, for example, generally did not. Nonetheless, media police reports are valuable for covering the public statements of a wide variety of individuals and organizations on the right. They provide a broad overview, whereas many descriptions of the right wing have mistakenly generalized from just a few incidents or groups (e.g., the police data disprove the notion that the 2/26 Incident--planned by less than 30 people--somehow represents a turning point for the right as a whole).

More solid assertions can be made regarding the impact of Japanese rightist groups on the state and public policy. The state responded to them with police measures that grew in severity the closer these groups approached the fascist or any other revolutionary model. Sanctions were common against rightist journals preaching violence or the outright elimination of constitutional state organs. The few periodicals judged by officials to be national socialist in orientation were frequently banned from circulation, in some cases almost every issue. Official tolerance for "healthy" Japanism signified approval only for nationalist rhetoric falling short of these extremes. This was true throughout the 1930's and

it reflects the fact that no fascist or other civil rightist group in Japan ever seized control of the state, a point deserving further comment.

Not a single member of any rightist body approaching our definition of fascism ever served as a general, a minister of state, or even an administrative bureau chief in late imperial Japan. The presence of elite fellow travelers who flirted with radical rightist groups or manipulated them for political purposes does not change the fact that no civil rightist movement ever seized power. Wherever fascist movements appeared, segments of the established elite sympathized with parts of their program and tendered support. Some traditional elites resented the same parliamentary institutions assailed by fascism, while others commended its nationalism and open aspirations for conquest as a counterpoise to the internationalism of leftist and some centrist parties. Yet even in Germany, where a miscalculating establishment allowed a fascist party to take power, and in Spain and Rumania, where fascists and the military jointly formed regimes, most scholars have carefully distinguished fascist movements from their political bedfellows. The likes of Hindenburg, Franco, and Antonescu ultimately represented institutions, social strata, and ideological positions distinct from those of the Nazis, the Falange, and the Iron Guard.⁶ The chasm separating the Eastern Way Society and the Great Japan Youth Party from Japan's military and bureaucratic elites was no less deep. There was the same fundamental tension between the conception of orderly, controlled change by military-bureaucratic elites (even those seeking a radical policy transformation) and the romantic individualism and spontaneous action of rightist extremists. Most of Japan's civil rightists sacrificed their political autonomy to feast on crumbs from the table of official power. Those who persisted in an

independent and threatening political program, such as Okawa Shumei and Nakano Seigo, were inevitably targeted for repressive measures.

The notion that civil rightists or junior officers in Japan were pulling the strings behind basic state policy does not hold for media controls, nor to my knowledge has a convincing case been made for this thesis in any other domestic policy field.⁷ Rather, their influence extended only as far as their activities served the ends of state elites, who adopted policies more readily explicable in terms of their own thinking and power struggles between them. As Professor Ishida Takeshi has put it:

We might be able to say that radical "renovationists" outside the government played the role of a loud-mouthed hawker at a circus show called the New Order Movement. While we should not fail to see a momentum of historical change (discontinuity) in the fact that the mass mobilization efforts were in need of such hawkers, we should also not forget that the shows performed inside the tent were produced by the elite of the same old Japanese Empire, even though the elite now included some new elements called "renovationist bureaucrats" who were highly skilled in the techniques of control and management, and the acts put on the stage were selected so as to better suit the public taste.⁸

This is not to disregard the role played by radical rightist groups, fascist or otherwise, in Japan during the 1930's. The assassinations, intimidation, and propaganda effected by these elements were very important to the course of events. This has already been shown in regard to the Minobe affair. Their participation at the grass roots level of bureaucratic mobilization structures like the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, a facet of their activities hitherto poorly documented, may have been just as significant. But the great transformation in the state-society relationship over 1937-1945 was planned and carried out primarily by state elites--this will be illustrated below in the realm of media policy.

Fascism, then, offers a dubious description of most Japanese rightists, and no rightist movement of any description ever controlled the state. One influential scholar, Maruyama Masao, nonetheless refers to Japanese politics in the late 1930's as "fascism from above." If a minimal condition for a "fascist" regime would be that a fascist movement dominate the state, what are we to understand by "fascism from above?" The best argument for this depiction is that the Japanese state adopted many policies similar to those of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, but even if this is true, it is still more confusing than helpful to speak of a fascist regime in Japan.⁹ The state structure and state-society relationship in the Soviet Union have been more frequently cited as parallels to Nazi Germany than the Japanese regime of 1937-1945,¹⁰ but our comprehension is not enhanced by referring to the USSR as fascist or to Hitler's regime as communist. Political scientists have highlighted the similarities without blurring the differences between these regimes by resorting to concepts like "single mass party regimes," "totalitarianism," or "mobilizational regimes."¹¹ The existence of some common control policies in Nazi Germany and imperial Japan does not justify a portrayal of the latter as fascist. Indeed, to overlook the eventual supremacy of military-bureaucratic elites would be to miss the real significance of the Japanese experience. It is precisely that Japan forged a state of such tremendous power over civil society under the direction of military and bureaucratic institutions, and not a fascist movement or single mass party, that makes it so instructive--no other regime of this type has ever exercised the same degree of control over such a complex, developed society.

An Alternative Conceptual Framework

If the fascist/anti-fascist dichotomy fails to describe the dominant political forces in late imperial Japan, how are we to characterize them? One approach has been to name all advocates of systemic political and socio-economic change (communists and rightists alike) "renovationists," and treat all others as adherents of the status quo in varying degrees.¹² "Renovationist right" and "renovationist bureaucrats" were terms current in the 1930's to identify elements subscribing to radical structural change. The renovation-status quo construct is most appealing as an account of intellectual history, since different radical schools did feed into one another, e.g., the communist attack on democracy and capitalism greatly affected the thinking of renovationist bureaucrats. However, the concept of renovationism by itself cannot handle the complexities of political history. Whatever their similarities in thought, the various renovationist forces frequently clashed over fundamental policy questions.¹³

A different set of concepts for describing late imperial politics will now be developed around the three dimensions of regime preference, domestic policy orientation, and foreign policy orientation.

Regime preferences answer the question "Who should govern?" Four basic positions were taken. One was for the restoration of democracy, meaning a cabinet controlled by elected Diet representatives. There were many democrats in the larger factions of the Seiyukai and Minseito, men anxious to regain their lost authority. As noted above, they differed on strategy, some seeking government by the majority, others rule by an inter-party coalition. A second regime preference was for conservative authoritarianism, i.e., cabinets led by non-party premiers chosen by the genro and ruling within the established political structure, similar to

the Saito and Okada cabinets and the pre-democratic Meiji pattern. This position was supported by the genro Saionji and like-minded individuals in the bureaucracy and the peerage (the senior statesmen block). Some of the older business combines were in favor (judging, for example, by their support for Ugaki), and in the late 1930's some elements of the "idealist right" such as Hiranuma Kiichiro moved toward this position. A third regime preference was for militarism, signifying a cabinet organized by active-duty officers and/or civilians ready to do their bidding. A mass mobilization organ was often included in militaristic schemes, and the army was usually to play the leading role. Supporters included a number of senior officers, especially those with service in Manchuria or involved in preparations for total war, as well as many civil rightist groups, some bureaucrats, and some of the newer, defense-oriented industrial combines. Fourth came the proponents of a single party regime, who championed a new mass party to eclipse the existing parties and bring a novel civilian elite to power. This position found favor with some "renovationist" right-wing groups (e.g., Nakano Seigo's Eastern Way Society), other minor Diet parties (e.g., the Social Masses Party), some minority factions of the Minseito and Seiyukai, Prince Konoe Fumimaro and his intellectual backers in the Showa Research Society, and a few military officers. It also aroused considerable enthusiasm in the press.¹⁴

The contest between regime preferences ended in the triumph of militarism. Democratic forces never recovered from their decline over 1932-1937, and the existing parties were finally dissolved in August 1940, though some cliques remained active behind the scenes and reasserted themselves when the war turned against Japan. Conservative authoritari-

anism was dealt a severe blow when the 2/26 Incident terminated the Okada government. Its advocates were constantly in retreat thereafter, though they made a last effort to control events in 1939-1940 (ending with the Yonai cabinet), and likewise reappeared in the waning months of the war to pick up the pieces. Single mass party forces steadily strengthened after 1937, but discord among them led to failure, leaving Japan under a military regime by mid-1941.

Domestic policy orientations can be located between the two poles of liberalism and statism, but distinctions must be made under each concept. By 1938, only the senior statesmen block and perhaps a few agriculturist rightists favoring decentralization could be characterized as comprehensive liberals, i.e., generally opposed to most new control policies then under consideration. More common was the selective liberalism of those who acquiesced in new state powers generally, but would oppose those adversely affecting their personal interests, struggling at least to extract favorable terms for any unavoidable state intervention. Most powerful civil associations, including the older industrial combines and major media organs, were selective liberals, as were many Diet members in both houses. One should also distinguish between crisis statists and ideological statists. The former consented to the incremental addition of state controls only to deal with the economic and wartime crises, (and they would therefore reject certain control proposals as unnecessary to meet these challenges and foresee some return to normalcy once the crises had passed). Most Diet members, many bureaucrats in the established ministries, and the great majority of the Japanese people were crisis statist of this sort. Selective liberalism and crisis statism could be embraced by the same person in

regard to different control policies. Ideological statisticians were those espousing a systematic quantum leap in state control not only for crisis management but also as a praiseworthy and enduring end in itself. So-called "renovationist" rightists, as well as many bureaucrats and military officers (especially those serving in the vital cabinet planning organs) were ideological statisticians. The record on media controls shows that by 1940 ideological statisticians in the military and bureaucracy had seized the initiative in policymaking, and that their designs, though partially modified to overcome liberal opposition, were generally accepted due to the support for crisis statism prevailing among other elites.

Regarding foreign policy orientation, the key divide is between imperialism and advocacy of peace. "Imperialism" refers to the expansion of Japanese rule over territory governed by other states using coercive means. Other than leftists fast disappearing into the prisons and the senior statesmen block, there were no active, coherent political forces opposing imperialism after the mid-1930's. A number of distinctions can be drawn among imperialists according to motivations, the choice of potential enemies, and strategies for conquest, but these transcend the bounds of this research.

In sum, though current terms such as "renovationist bureaucrats" or the "idealist right" may be used to refer to specific groups, the conceptual framework described above is offered as a better tool for scholarly analysis than the fascist/anti-fascist and renovation-status quo categories. It may be briefly outlined as follows:

<u>REGIME PREFERENCE</u>	<u>DOMESTIC POLICY ORIENTATION</u>	<u>FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION</u>
Democracy	Liberalism--comprehensive	Peace
Conservative Authoritarianism	or selective	Imperialism
Militarism	Statism--crisis or	
Single Mass Party	ideological	

We will now analyze the way in which the political struggle produced a military-bureaucratic regime led by ideological statist and pursuing an imperialistic foreign policy by mid-1941.

Notes

¹Juan J. Linz, "Some Notes Toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective," in Walter Laqueur, ed., Fascism: A Reader's Guide (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1976); Eugen Weber, Varieties of Fascism (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1964). Note that the attributes listed below are neutral as far as explanations of the movements and their political effects are concerned. The point is merely to offer a description allowing one to determine whether a political organization belongs to this class or not.

²The manner in which particular socio-historical conditions left their imprint upon fascist movements in interwar Europe raises the issue of whether "fascism" should be used as a universal concept or restricted in applicability by region and/or time. Arguments for the temporal restriction are that the postwar and great depressions and the Bolshevik Revolution (as a catalyst for the revolutionary left, a principal foil against which fascism developed) created a unique environment affecting the character of movements in that era. Similarly, the aftereffects of World War I (which was not, after all, a world war) and the long history of reactions to the French Revolution that produced much of fascist ideology in Europe would argue for a regional delimitation. Here I wish only to make note of these questions, not to try to resolve them. For the purpose of argument, I will proceed on the tentative assumption that "fascism" may be applied with profit outside the European context. For an example of an historically specific approach to fascism, see Ernst Nolte, Three Faces of Fascism (New York: New American Library, 1969), especially pp. 17-25. For a treatment that leans toward a more general use of the term, consult A. James Gregor, Interpretations of Fascism (Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press, 1974), chap. 8.

³Maruyama Masao, Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics, ed. Ivan Morris, expanded ed. (London: Oxford U. Press, 1969), pp. 51-57.

⁴Official records describing the Japanese right in 1930 did not indicate that the example of Fascist Italy had had a major impact on the development of rightist groups.

⁵The Eastern Way Society won two per cent of the vote in 1937, and three per cent in 1942 as the only political body to reconstitute itself after creation of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association. Silenced finally by the Tojo government, Nakano committed suicide in 1943. See Ishida Takeshi, "'Fashizumu-ki' Nihon ni Okeru 'Kokumin Undo' no Soshiki to Ideorogi" [The Ideology and Organization of "Popular Movements" in Japan During the "Fascist Period"], in Tokyo Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyujo "Fashizumu to Minshushugi" Kenkyukai, ed., Undo to Teiko Jo [Movements and Opposition, vol. 1], Fashizumu-ki no Kokka to Shakai 6 (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1979), especially pp. 72-75; Tetsuo Najita, "Nakano Seigo and the Spirit of the Meiji Restoration in Twentieth-

Century Japan," in James W. Morley, ed., Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan.

⁶See Stanley G. Payne, Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism (Palo Alto, Ca.: Stanford U. Press, 1961), especially chaps. 14-17. Interesting on the German case is the chapter on Franz von Papen in Joachim C. Fest, The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970). On Rumania, see Weber, Varieties of Fascism, pp. 102-105.

⁷Contrary views may be overly swayed by the role of middle-ranking officers in initiating the Manchurian Incident in 1931. This was an extraordinary exception to the dominant pattern of state decision-making, and in any case one that cannot be attributed to any organized rightist political group.

⁸Ishida Takeshi, "Elements of Tradition and 'Renovation' in Japan During the 'Era of Fascism,'" Annals of the Institute of Social Science (U. of Tokyo), no. 17, 1976, p. 137.

⁹Eugen Weber has argued that the concepts of fascism and national socialism (a term he uses to describe the state policies associated with fascist regimes) be kept distinct, since many supporters of national socialist policies may never have belonged to fascist movements, and among fascists themselves there have arisen serious disputes over the party's program, especially over its socialist components (e.g., Hitler's differences with Gregor Strasser). I strongly concur with the differentiation between membership in a fascist movement and support for some of the policies pursued in Germany and Italy. Many of these policies have been implemented by states of all descriptions, and to submerge the definition of the movement entirely into a simple matter of favoring all or some of the policies followed by fascist regimes would be to lose sight of the very different roles played by the movements themselves in various countries and their historical significance entirely apart from questions of state policy.

¹⁰For an argument on the similarities between Bolshevism and Italian Fascism, treated under the generic concept of "developmental dictatorships," see A. James Gregor, Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1979), especially chap. 9.

¹¹On use of the concept of totalitarianism, for example, see Juan J. Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Nelson Polsby and Fred Greenstein, eds., Handbook of Political Science 3 (Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley Press, 1975), vol. 3

¹²This approach has been developed by Ito Takashi, one of Japan's best historians—it runs throughout his works cited in the bibliography. Ito's analysis is somewhat more complex, adding the dimension of progressive-reactionary to distinguish left and right political tendencies. No

attempt is made here to analyze all aspects of his interesting use of this framework. For a sketch of Ito's approach, see Michael Leiserson, "Political Opposition and Political Development in Japan," in Robert A. Dahl, ed., Regimes and Oppositions (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1973), pp. 363-364.

¹³ Marxist scholars have naturally rejected a common label for communists suffering in prison and bureaucrats lording over the state. Even within the political right (broadly understood), renovationists were deeply divided on policy issues, as illustrated by Nakano Seigo's campaign against Prime Minister Tojo and the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, only one of many examples.

¹⁴ Note that some democrats and militarists also spoke of setting up a one-party regime. The single mass party option referred to here, however, involved a new political structure placing the state under a new elite; by contrast, a fusion of mainstream Seiyukai and Minseito factions was a conservative scheme to sell old goods in a new package, and militaristic plans for a mobilization organ were aimed at creating a loyal servant of existing military-bureaucratic elites, not a new center of power.

PART IV

MILITARY-BUREAUCRATIC MOBILIZATION: 1937-1945

CHAPTER XVI

THE REGIME BACKGROUND

The statist revolution carried out in Japan from 1937 to 1945 was not triggered by a sudden revolutionary upheaval—there was no counterpart to the storming of the Winter Palace or the *Machtergreifung*. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify certain events as turning points. One was Diet passage of the State Total Mobilization Law in April 1938. This was a sweeping enabling act that largely transferred the Diet's legislative prerogatives to the realm of executive imperial decrees during wartime. It gave the government *carte blanche* to dissolve or reorganize virtually every civil association in Japan, and it provided for new control structures that might intervene in all aspects of managerial decision-making. A second turning point was the cabinet's launching of a New Order (Shintaisei) movement in mid-1940. State powers authorized by the earlier mobilization law were widely activated as part of this program, effecting a radical reorganization of civil institutions, including the mass media. One outcome of the New Order was the dissolution of Japan's political parties in August 1940 and the subsequent birth of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA), a state-run mobilization system that organized the entire populace for ideological indoctrination, the regulation of consumption, and civil defense. A third vital dimension of the revolution was the strengthening of cabinet policy-making organs controlled by military-bureaucratic "renovationists." This

did not occur as one event, but the two changes that stood out were the merger of several bodies into the Cabinet Planning Board (Kikakuin) in October 1937, and the expansion of a relatively weak division into the Cabinet Information Bureau (Johokyoku) in December 1940. The Cabinet Planning Board drafted the mobilization law of 1938 and later guided much of its implementation related to the economy. The Cabinet Information Bureau exercised mobilization powers over the mass media. There were also several foreign policy events that served as catalysts to these changes. One was the escalation of an unplanned skirmish between Japanese and Chinese troops in July 1937 into a full-scale war over the next six months. A second was the signing of the Axis Pact with Germany and Italy in connection with the New Order in September 1940. This was followed one year later by the decision to set a deadline for the commencement of war against the U.S., Britain, and Holland. A salient thread tying these crucial events together is that all occurred under the two governments of Prince Konoe Fumimaro (June 1937-January 1939, and July 1940-October 1941).

Konoe must be ranked alongside Ito Hirobumi and Douglas MacArthur as one of the three most influential figures in Japanese politics over the last 100 years--his relative anonymity is therefore quite surprising. One reason for it is that he resigned just seven weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor, leaving his successor General Tojo Hideki to bear the brunt of direct responsibility. After the war, many Japanese were prone to exaggerate the military's role in leading the nation into conflict, and this too served to keep Konoe's part from being fully appreciated. His own writings after the war reinforced the tendency to overstate the military's culpability. In fact, Konoe left his mark upon this period

of Japanese history as surely as Roosevelt left his upon the New Deal. There is no better introduction to the statist revolution effected in the closing years of the imperial era than a study of this man's thought, character, and political career.

Konoe's first cabinet resulted from frustrations with the increasingly tense political stalemate of the previous five years; both the Elder Statesman and the army were driven to ponder untried alternatives. Some military leaders concluded that the only way militaristic and statist politics could surmount the parliamentary barrier was for them to back a non-mainstream political party that might win a Diet majority at the next election. Army Minister Terauchi began to explore this possibility in early 1937, and schemes for a military-supported party surfaced constantly thereafter. But prospects for early success were dim. For one thing, there was no army consensus behind this course of action, let alone an inter-service consensus. Furthermore, no party in early 1937 was ready to challenge the primacy of the Minseito and Seiyukai. The spring election of that year still left these two parties with 76% of all lower house seats, the next party in line holding only 8% of the total.¹ In short, there was no quick solution to the dilemma faced by the more unreserved militarists in the army. The Elder Statesman was in an equally painful predicament. The strategy of appointing no-name conservatives to the premiership had failed to stem the tide of military influence. Besides, it was no longer a viable option, since the army was prepared to veto such appointees by refusing a minister. The army sought an effective ally as Prime Minister, a departure from both conservatives (Saito, Okada) and reasonably supportive figures who lacked leverage in the Diet (Hirota, Hayashi). The Elder Statesman desired a

more forceful premier who would reassert civilian leadership, yet somehow the appointment would have to be palatable to the military. The impasse between these seemingly irreconcilable positions was broken when each side decided to pin its hopes on Konoe, who became Prime Minister on 4 June 1937.

This was not the last time contradictory expectations would be brought to Konoe's door, for he was at once an attractive standard bearer and an enigmatic figure. Konoe possessed many qualities of the charismatic leader--he had a keen intellect, he was a good speaker (a rarity among Japanese politicians), and at 45 he was the youngest head of state since the Meiji Restoration. No Prime Minister before or since has equalled his popularity. If anyone could break the agonizing deadlock between the mainstream parties, the army, and the Elder Statesman and his allies at court, Konoe seemed the one to do it. Yet, though he had served as speaker of the House of Peers and had long been a public figure, his political commitments were difficult to read.

The ambiguity of Konoe's loyalties was due to his conception of statesmanship, his personal style, and a set of concrete political preferences that didn't put him solidly in any of the battling camps. Once groomed to succeed Saionji in the role of court advisor, Konoe saw his mission as a statesman to be one of forging unity among Japan's political elites, not joining one group to subdue the others.² He was therefore reluctant to alienate any of the principal elite groups, and this allowed diverse interests to see in him an acceptable alternative to the reigning political standstill. Konoe's personal style could also nurture incompatible expectations, since he was usually taciturn in face-to-face meetings, a good listener slow to show his hand.³ This enabled him to maintain an

astonishing mix of associates, ranging from civil rightists (Nakano Seigo, Inoue Nissho) and purged Imperial Way Faction generals (Mazaki Junsaburo), to the Elder Statesman and other like-minded peers, civil intellectuals with leftist antecedents (some in the Showa Research Society--Showa Kenkyukai), and members of both mainstream and minor political parties. In terms of concrete political preferences, Konoe was an imperialist, a statist though without a methodical statist ideology, and an opponent of conservative authoritarianism, democracy, and militarism, who vacillated over just what political arrangements could be substituted for them in the circumstances he faced. These views made each of the main power contenders a conditional collaborator and potential adversary. Konoe's thinking on these subjects merits further discussion in light of his sway over the course of events.

Konoe was an imperialist of long standing. He published his evaluation of World War I just as the conflict was winding down in December 1918, and it is a key to understanding his world view.⁴ He rejected the allied portrayal of the war as one between immoral aggressors and advocates of peace, and instead presented it as a clash between powers for and against the international status quo. According to Konoe, the status quo had been unjust, since Britain and France exploited vast colonial empires that left little room for the expansion of a late-developing power like Germany. In other words, Germany had been in the right as a challenger to the unjust status quo. Konoe argued that Japan was in the same situation as Germany and should oppose the structure of peace being contemplated by the victors. This peace was but an attempt to guard the status quo for reasons of self-interest. Poor in resources, Japan would find itself in difficult straits if established colonies remained closed

to outside commerce. Konoe urged that Japan go to the Versailles Peace Conference demanding an end to economic imperialism and racism against non-white peoples. If the postwar system merely safeguarded existing empires, as Konoe anticipated it would, then Japan would be disadvantaged and should oppose.

Though Konoe makes occasional references to a world without imperialistic domination, he did not consider it a realistic possibility.⁵ He was part of the Japanese delegation to Versailles, where its appeal for an anti-racist declaration was spurned by the United States, and the League of Nations system confirmed his fears that the postwar structure of peace would preserve the unjust interests of the victors. Konoe assumed that the world would continue to be one of antagonistic empires, and in that context justice required that each of the great powers share in the wealth, including Japan. He expressed much less aversion to imperialism per se than to the Western monopoly of it, which was unjust because it violated the "equality of opportunity of peoples" and their "equal right to existence."⁶ He chided his countrymen who glibly swallowed the rhetoric of democracy and humanism that camouflaged the greed of Britain and the United States. This made him a dissenter to the majority view of Japan's state leaders until the Manchurian Incident.

Konoe reiterated these ideas on many occasions in later years,⁷ most poignantly in a personal memo written in early 1940.⁸ In it he declared that Japan's ten-year policy of international cooperation after Versailles was viewed with contempt by other countries, especially China. The Manchurian Incident had effectively obliterated this policy and put matters in the hands of young military officers. One could not agree with all they said, but their course of military expansion was Japan's

"inevitable destiny" (hitsuzen no unmei), from the Manchurian Incident to the China Incident to the dream of a Great East Asia Co-Prosperity sphere. Without these bold strokes, Japan would be denied necessary raw materials and markets by the impenetrable economic blocks of the great powers. Efforts to obstruct these initiatives were wrong and doomed to failure.

Essentially, Konoe advocated that Japan adopt the same imperialistic policies that Western powers had been following in Asia and elsewhere for several hundred years. To explain his outlook is not to defend it, but it was by no means unique to Japan, which itself had undergone a political and social revolution in the late 1800's to fend off the threat of Western domination. It would be prejudice to attribute Konoe's attitudes to some allegedly aberrant form of nationalism, when this very perspective also characterized British, French, and American expansionist policies. The difficulty of assessing Konoe's position objectively is that while many take such attitudes for granted in regard to their own country, they find the same views reprehensible (and call them by different names) when embraced by the people of other nations.

Japanese imperialism differed from the earlier boom years of Western imperialism in that it peaked after the first "total war," when foreign expansion had far greater implications for the domestic state-society relationship. In this regard, Konoe was caught in a trap between his advocacy of conquest abroad and his opposition to military government at home, a trap that ensnared many Japanese in this period.

Konoe's anti-militarism is well documented. In 1921, he criticized the independence of the Army General Staff (Sanbo Honbu), which impinged

upon the authority of the Army and Foreign Ministries.⁹ The service ministers at least had to function under countervailing pressures from the cabinet and the Diet, Konoe stated, but the General Staff system needed revision to avoid accusations of "militarism" (gunkokushugi). In a published article in 1936, he warned against the danger of military dominion over policy, comparing the situation to that of Germany before WWI, when in his analysis the army had prepared for war against Russia and the navy against England, the result being a disastrous war on both fronts.¹⁰ During his first cabinet, Konoe successfully resisted the impositions of the General Staff on policy toward the China Incident, (paradoxically, the General Staff had opposed escalation, which would ruin long-term plans to bolster military strength).¹¹ In his 1940 memorandum, he denounced the military's right of supreme command for hampering the Prime Minister's efforts to control policy.¹²

Yet how was one to embrace imperialistic expansion and simultaneously contain the policymaking role of the military, when the one was a partial function of the other? To prepare for and wage a full-scale war of conquest demanded policy innovations aimed at every sector of society, and planning for a domestic wartime system had long been a preserve of the armed forces and their bureaucratic confederates. They were already vigorously pushing their programs, as evidenced during the Hirota and Hayashi cabinets. In fact, their enthusiasm for Konoe was rooted in the belief that he might win passage for their legislative proposals.¹³ Konoe, whose statism was very much derived from imperialistic fervor, did not let them down. He later recorded that his goal upon assuming the premiership in 1937 was to realize Japan's "destiny" for expansion, doing his best to suppress reckless military elements while adopting military demands that were "rational."¹⁴

But as the China Incident developed into a major war, partly due to decisions made by Konoe himself at crucial stages, the military's statist designs were increasingly accepted as rational.

Konoe's terms in office witnessed the enlargement of hybrid military-bureaucratic policymaking organs, the passage of legislation empowering the state to execute their plans, and concrete implementation of those plans in all important policy fields. Konoe actively supported these developments. In 1938, he threatened to resign in order to win Diet approval for the electric power control law, a product of military-bureaucratic planning.¹⁵ He also financed a rightist gang out to intimidate the parties during consideration of the State Total Mobilization Law.¹⁶ He took a personal hand in elevating the Cabinet Planning Board and Cabinet Information Bureau, whose renovationists strongly swayed the actions of his governments. These measures of policy and state reorganization, inextricably tied to imperialism, greatly strengthened those very mechanisms of military-bureaucratic power that had to be dismantled to restore stable civilian control. In this manner, Konoe's imperialism severely compromised his efforts to reassert civilian authority over the state. He did not see it this way, of course. He perceived the new cabinet policymaking organs as devices for increasing his own control over military and bureaucratic policy input. But in fact these organs (1) greatly amplified the military's presence in policymaking circles, (2) took the lead in formulating policy designs which Konoe then adopted as his own, and (3) outlived Konoe's cabinets to stand as bastions of military influence within the state. Thus despite his anti-militarism and a fairly successful struggle to rule his own governments, it was perfectly logical that Konoe's last cabinet was followed in October 1941

by the premiership of an active duty general in the army. Many Diet members, relatively conservative bureaucrats, business executives, and other Japanese also accepted militaristic and statist policies out of patriotic support for imperialism, though certainly not all did so as enthusiastically as Konoe.

Beyond his backing for imperialism, another difficulty Konoe faced in combating militarism was to decide just what form of civilian government might be practicable. He opposed Saionji's strategy of appointing impotent conservatives to the premiership. Such governments were irresponsible because the chief executive hadn't the real power to govern. Furthermore, one of Saionji's objectives in this strategy was to deter imperialistic policies, which Konoe had judged to be Japan's inevitable destiny. This was one reason Konoe had refused the premiership when it was first offered to him just after the 2/26 Incident--he could not concur with the Elder Statesman's goals. He often advised Saionji that the only way to stave off military supremacy was for civilian leadership to take the "initiative" (sente) in charting an expansionary course.¹⁷ This would redirect popular sentiments and steal away the issue that had catapulted the military to political prominence. However, Konoe did not believe either of the principal Diet parties was equipped to play this role. They were too preoccupied with the pursuit of narrow advantages to formulate grand policy designs.¹⁸ It was precisely the military's clarity of overall purpose that made its input into policy circles so compelling. Konoe had written in praise of representative institutions as against "fascism" in 1922,¹⁹ but he was not a democrat in principle. Given the condition of Japan's leading parties, the predictable military veto of their revival, and his own conception of a statesmanship above

partisan biases, Konoe rejected the restoration of a democratic regime in the late 1930's.

If conservative stalling tactics and a resurgence of the major parties were ruled out, a valid conclusion was that a durable civilian government would have to be grounded in a new political party. Konoe managed his first cabinet with a judicious choice of ministers and by playing off segments of the army against one another, but already he was the focal point of several schemes for a new party. He did not commit himself to any such project during his first term, but behind-the-scenes maneuvering was so rife that he was able to feign willingness to start a new party in order to scare the existing Diet parties into passing the State Total Mobilization Law.²⁰ Two central questions in Japanese domestic politics over roughly the 1938-1940 period were whether Konoe would organize a new party, and, if so, what form it would take.

Three ephemeral cabinets of the 1932-1937 variety intervened between Konoe's two terms of office. The Prime Ministers were chosen for their relatively conservative orientations, and none had a big impact. The first was Hiranuma Kiichiro (January-August 1939). Hiranuma illustrates the phenomenon of perceiving moderates further and further to the right. At pains to deny he was a "fascist" in the early 1930's, his rightist inclinations were fairly confined to spiritual principles and opposition to the mainstream parties. Statist policies made only modest headway under his government, and this lent him the image of a conservative in 1939. Such was the changing perception of many in the so-called "idealist right," which focused more on traditional values than structural change. He was succeeded one month before the start of World War II by retired General Abe Nobuyuki (August 1939-January 1940). Though initially

backed by the army and known to be pro-German, in practice Abe also turned out to be a moderate next to the radical statist seeking a formal alliance with Germany. With only one minister each from the Minseito and the Seiyukai, he had no real constituency in the Diet. His cabinet underwent harsh criticism for the increasing poverty of the people's livelihood due to the war and a bad agricultural harvest. He resigned faced with a petition for his ouster in the Diet and deserted by the army leadership. The next premier, retired Admiral Yonai Mitsumasa (January-July 1940), represented a last ditch effort by the Elder Statesman and his collaborators to turn the political tide. Yonai was known to favor warmer relations with Britain and America, and he recruited two ministers each from the Seiyukai and Minseito, but his cabinet too was short-lived. Konoe had opposed his appointment from the first. There was already considerable momentum for a new party among rightists, minority factions of the Minseito and Seiyukai, and the more statist military-bureaucratic elites. A speech questioning Japan's aims in the China war by Diet Representative Saito Takao in February 1940 infuriated the military and resulted in a lower house vote to expel Saito from parliament. The house then approved a unanimous resolution supporting Japan's "holy war" (seisen) in China on March 9.²¹ The Saito affair shortened patience with a Prime Minister of Yonai's opinions. The last straw was Germany's remarkable run of military triumphs in the spring. A new cabinet was imperative if Japan were to get on the bandwagon, and with this in mind, the Army Minister withdrew to end Yonai's government.

The stage was set for Konoe's inauguration of a New Order in Japanese society in August 1940, which promised a resolution of the new party issue. Even more than in June 1937, contradictory expectations were

directed Konoe's way. The more stentorian voices in the military, such as that of Military Affairs Bureau Chief (Gunmukyoku-cho) General Muto Akira of the Army Ministry, pushed for a new party that would transform the Diet into a tool of the armed forces and execute their mobilization policies. It is not clear whether there was a broad consensus for this plan in the army's upper echelons, but Muto was the most conspicuous Army Ministry spokesman in the early stages of the New Order. By contrast, leading factions of the Minseito and Seiyukai saw themselves as the backbone of a new party that would supply all future Prime Ministers, thereby restoring Diet-centered politics, albeit in a novel form. Some minority factions, however, joined Diet representatives of the "renovationist right" (that advocating structural change) in espousing a party that would exclude the existing Diet leadership and displace the cabinet as the state's policymaking nucleus. These groups drew most directly from the Nazi experience. Meanwhile, the "idealist right" insisted upon a popular organ devoted to ideological purity rather than behavioral regimentation, fearing the contamination of a party intermediary between subject and Emperor. While "renovationist bureaucrats" working with statist planners in the army were ready to follow their patrons, the established ministries were wary lest the new party invade their jurisdictions. This was especially true of the Home Ministry, lord over local government and overseer of many religious, economic, and other civil associations. The ministry was anxious to see its existing administrative network absorb the new party's branch offices.

Konoe was ill prepared to meet this situation. Less than two months before his second term began, he was lobbying for an appointment as Privy Seal to succeed Saionji as cabinet designator and top advisor

to the throne. When Saionji frustrated this ambition due to their divergence of views, Konoe somewhat ruefully accepted the challenge of leading another cabinet.²² His desired role of a mediating statesman was better suited to a noble advisor than to a Prime Minister in the midst of a political dogfight. Konoe was obviously not a man burning with desire to stand atop the Japanese state. Even when his political prowess was most evident, as when he outmaneuvered the General Staff on China policy and won passage for the State Total Mobilization Law, he was constantly brooding over resignation.²³ The conflicts surrounding the premiership weighed heavily upon him despite his many political successes and tempting opportunities. Though talk of a new party had been rampant since his first cabinet, Konoe had not refined his ideas on the subject or formed his own political organization. That is why so many contrary hopes could be focused on his person in the summer and fall of 1940.

It is questionable how explicitly Konoe ever articulated his overall conception of the New Order, but certain aspects of the design seem clear. It would displace the existing parties, and Konoe personally spurred their dissolution with public attacks on party particularism, democracy, and freedomism.²⁴ All the parties had formally disbanded by mid-August 1940, their members hoping to improve their fortunes by cooperating with the New Order. Konoe was not clear, however, on where they would stand in the new scheme of things. The New Order would include a mass mobilization structure organizing all Japanese by occupations and social activities. The social units were to include newspaper publishers as well as sports, artistic, and religious organizations.²⁵ A decision-making body would stand atop this structure to plan its activities, and this body would control the Diet. Konoe envisioned the New

Order as concentrating power so as to overcome the sectionalism of the bureaucracy and independent political action by the military. Yet it was unknown whether the ruling body of the New Order would form a parallel structure to usurp their prerogatives or itself assimilate military-bureaucratic elites to coordinate their input. Its relationship to the cabinet and to established bureaucratic jurisdictions, and its implications for the right of supreme command and the constitutional responsibility of ministers individually to the throne, all these matters were either left undetermined or kept under wraps.

Even this simplified account shows that the various blueprints for the New Order were mutually exclusive, but Konoe never took the decisive step of coherently presenting his own scheme and moving against its opponents. Even the members of the old political parties, whom he had abused most directly, were not denied hopes for a comeback within the new political structure. Instead, in August 1940 he invited delegates from all significant groups promoting a New Order to join a preparatory commission to determine the character of the coming system. The commission included Diet members of diverse opinions, both tendencies in the civil right wing, military officers, and spokesmen for the traditional bureaucratic ministries, as well as leaders from agriculture and industry.²⁶ Unison among so many clashing interests was naturally unattainable. Many explanations have been offered for why Konoe assembled this *mélange* and never acted to impress his own concept upon the New Order. There was his notion of a statesmanship above narrow interests that made political infighting distasteful. This may have been reinforced by a certain weakness of character reported by his closest friends, who found him to equivocate in the face of adversity despite his political talents.²⁷ On

the other hand, a hard-nosed appraisal of the situation may have given him pause. There was no sure way of compelling the military or the bureaucracy to play second fiddle to the New Order he envisioned. Indeed, there was no organizational infrastructure upon which to build the mass mobilization system apart from the Home Ministry's local authorities and the Military Reservist Associations. To establish a New Order with its own structural underpinnings would undoubtedly be a time-consuming feat involving serious political conflicts. To embark upon this project while engaged in an arduous war in China might undermine national unity to the point of adversely affecting the war effort, and this possibility bore heavily on Konoe's calculations.²⁸

The final outcome of the new party movement was the Imperial Rule Assistance Association. It became a vital conduit for mobilization policies directed at the general populace, but it made no impact on the policymaking process. The IRAA embodied the solution which least affected the status of existing elites. It did not encroach upon the jurisdiction of established ministries, since its local units were neighborhood associations the Home Ministry had been remolding into vehicles of state control since 1939, and the ministry's governors doubled as the IRAA's prefectural chiefs. It certainly did not challenge the authority of the cabinet or its radical policy planning organs. And although there was a general election in 1942 for which an IRAA commission endorsed 81.7% of the winning candidates, even this did not constitute a drastic transformation of the Diet. Of the IRAA's 466 nominees, 234 were incumbents, and 200 of these won re-election. Another 47 incumbents were victorious without an endorsement, so overall 53% of the lower house remained intact, and almost all of the old mainstream party leaders retained their seats.

Gordon Berger has put this result into perspective as follows:

The total number of new men elected to the Lower House was 199, higher than in the elections of 1930 (127), 1932 (123) and 1936 (125), but not significantly different from the 181 new men elected in 1928. Furthermore, the rather high influx of new faces was at least partly attributable to the unique five-year time span between the 1937 and 1942 elections.²⁹

The so-called "imperial rule assistance election," then, did not signify a great changing of the guard in the House of Representatives, though this result is open to different interpretations. The continuity of faces may appear as a defeat for those out to replace the old Diet elite altogether. At the same time, the fact that so many well-known ex-party men stood for election under IRAA auspices and joined a parliament now largely without influence might be construed as their acceptance of second class status in the new system--in that case, their very presence would help to legitimize military-bureaucratic rule. There were no cabinet ministers recruited from the old membership of the Seiyukai or Minseito from June 1941 until April 1943. Of course, the 1942 election did not touch the upper house at all. Though the IRAA disappointed those radical renovationists seeking a real single party regime, its mobilization functions turned out to be one more of Konoe's contributions to the growth of military-bureaucratic control over society. Konoe, an imperialist and a statist but not a militarist, had aimed at bolstering the authority of civilian governments, but in the fall of 1941 he ended up bequeathing to his country the very militaristic legacy he had consciously been trying to avert.

The Cabinet Information Bureau, a secondary committee with little authority before 1937, was expanded under Konoe's two cabinets into the principal state media control organ. Its renovationist bureaucrats and military officers shared Konoe's belief in Japan's destiny to build a

great empire, and they set out to remodel the mass media into state instruments appropriate for the coming political epoch. At their initiative, the film and publishing sectors were so thoroughly restructured that no one familiar with their appearance in 1937 would have recognized them five years later. Though radio was already ideally organized for state control, official interference ballooned to effect a sharp transformation of its functions. CIB officials understood their policies not as temporary expedients to last for the duration of the conflict, but as permanent measures heralding the arrival of a new state-society system. Their perception of the war as symptomatic of a vast metamorphosis in world politics, economics, and culture provides an indispensable ideological background to the changes they wrought. The way in which these men managed to reshape one of the most advanced media systems in the world and harness it to their purposes is in many ways a microcosm of the general pattern of state-society interaction in this period. It demonstrates that Prince Konoe's New Order was not only or even mainly the tale of a still-born political party, but comprised a massive onslaught of state control policies that largely recast the organizational landscape of Japanese society.

Notes

¹The results of this and some other prewar elections are given in the appendix to Ward, ed., Political Development in Modern Japan, pp. 593-603.

²Gordon Berger has written: ". . . Konoe defined his own political role in the Showa era as being that of a mediator, who might foster consensus and compromise where the parties would not or could not act effectively as conflict managers." Parties, p. 111. Konoe confirmed this view upon assuming the premiership in 1937, and he soon sought an amnesty for imprisoned right-wing terrorists that would eventually be extended to communist convicts as well--Oka Yoshitake, Konoe Fumimaro (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 1972), pp. 55-62. Strong opposition from the army, the Elder Statesman, and the palace forced abandonment of this venture, but it illustrates Konoe's firm desire to overcome divisiveness.

³Oka, Konoe, p. 73.

⁴This was in an article titled "Eibei Hon'i no Heiwashugi o Haisu" [Rejection of Pacifism on Anglo-American Terms], published in Nihon Oyobi Nihonjin, 15 December 1918. I rely upon the synopsis in Yabe Teiji, Konoe Fumimaro, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Konoe Fumimaro Denki Hensan Kankokai, 1951), 1:76-81.

⁵In a 1933 article also, Konoe mentioned that free commerce and emigration would be minimal requirements for a just world without imperialism, but he quickly dismisses these as possibilities in the near future and proceeds to justify Japan's military expansion into Manchuria and Mongolia with reference to the imperialistic policies of the Western powers. See *ibid.*, 1:240.

⁶*ibid.*, 1:79.

⁷In a lecture in 1921, Konoe reasserted that the League of Nations had not escaped the rule of national self-interests and speculated that it might be rendered useless in the future--*ibid.*, 1:111.

In a 1933 article, Konoe justified Japan's expansion into Manchuria, arguing that true peace could only be achieved by eliminating "irrational conditions" in the world. Among the irrationalities cited as causing war were the unjust distribution of territory and natural resources and the separation of racial and linguistic groups.

Here is a people extremely replete with the power to develop, with an extremely excellent capacity to multiply, but this people is compelled to lead a cramped existence on its narrow territory. Meanwhile, there is a country blessed with nature's riches, a sparse population possessing a vast territory. How can one pretend that such a distribution of land is a rational state of affairs? . . . Until today the advanced countries have unfairly carved up

or annexed the land rich in natural resources using highly unscrupulous methods. . . . To maintain this situation, they preach pacifism and oppress those who would do away with this situation as the enemies of humanity. On this earth, there is no talk as self-serving as this.

Quoted in *ibid.*, 1:239-240. Konoe goes on to praise Japan's expansion into Manchuria and declares that the Western powers are unfit to sit in judgment of this policy.

In 1936, Konoe published an essay criticizing Japan's conciliatory foreign policy before the Manchurian Incident as blind following of the great powers--*ibid.*, 1:226.

⁸The document is not dated, but one scholar places it during the Yonai cabinet, which ruled from January to July 1940--Oka, Konoe, p. 102. It is titled "Genro Jushin to Yo" (The Elder Statesman, Senior Statesmen, and I), and it is reprinted in Yabe, Konoe, 1:220-224.

⁹This information is from Yabe, Konoe, 1:111-113. The General Staff and the Army Ministry separately recruited alumni of the War College (an elite training program open only to top graduates of the Military Academy), thereby creating two rather distinct career patterns for those destined to hold positions of leadership. James Crowley writes:

In effect, this created two groups of officers with differing professional experiences and perspectives. While this point should not be overemphasized, it is apparent that extended duty in the war ministry would cultivate a keen awareness of the political and economic factors limiting army policies and planning; and protracted assignments in the general staff would nourish a style of reasoning based on strategic and intelligence estimates. Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, pp. 84-85.

¹⁰Yabe, Konoe, 1:227; compare Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, p. 390.

¹¹Oka, Konoe, pp. 81-82; Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, pp. 360-373.

¹²Yabe, Konoe, 1:225. Crowley has written of the right of supreme command:

Historically, the "right of supreme command" had invested each service with complete control over all its internal administrative affairs; and it had confirmed complete control of the conduct of military operations in time of hostilities. It had not, however, been viewed as empowering the service ministers or general staffs with the right to set national policy, as witness the conduct and determination of policy during the Sino and Russo-Japanese Wars, World War I, and the Siberian intervention. The proposition that the "right of supreme command" invested the general staffs and/or the service ministers with a veto power in cabinet decisions on national defense was first articulated during the London Naval Treaty controversy.

Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, p. 386. The dispute over ratification

of the naval treaty occurred in 1930. The right of supreme command was subsequently used to justify the independent actions of field armies that turned the Manchurian Incident into a campaign for territorial expansion. The proper extent of this right remained a subject of controversy thereafter.

¹³Oka, Konoe, p. 54; Crowley, Quest for Autonomy, pp. 323-324.

¹⁴Yabe, Konoe, 1:225.

¹⁵Ito Takashi, 15-Nen Senso [The Fifteen Year War] (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1976), p. 213.

¹⁶Berger, Parties, pp. 147-149.

¹⁷Yabe, Konoe, 1:224.

¹⁸Ibid., 1:225-226.

¹⁹Ibid., 1:123.

²⁰Berger, Parties, pp. 155-156.

²¹Ibid., p. 249.

²²Ibid., pp. 252-253. Note that Saionji's selection of a Prime Minister had to be based on a canvassing of many important elite groups and not just his own views, whereas the choice of a Privy Seal, the chief palace advisor on political matters charged with affixing the Emperor's seal to official documents, was more confined to the court's inner circle, where Saionji could exert greater influence. There is nothing contradictory, then, about Saionji recommending Konoe for the premiership as the best consensus candidate available, but vetoing his appointment as Privy Seal in the hope of finding someone more to his liking.

²³Oka, Konoe, pp. 84-85.

²⁴Berger, Parties, p. 277.

²⁵Ibid., p. 303.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 290-291.

²⁷Yabe, Konoe, 1:228.

²⁸Berger, Parties, pp. 274-275, 297-300, 309-311.

²⁹Ibid., p. 348; figures preceding the quotation are from *ibid.*, p. 347.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PRESS: THE CONSULTATION SYSTEM

Press controls began to advance from negative censorship to positive mobilization of content immediately after the China Incident of July 1937. This was accomplished without legal innovations through regular consultation meetings instituted between state officials and press representatives. This chapter describes how these meetings were used to deliver mobilization directives, to initiate the pre-publication censorship of magazines, and to blacklist writers over the 1937-1945 period. The following chapters will address the restructuring of the press industry that was implemented in these same years.

Early Wartime Mobilization

Immediately following the China Incident, the Home Ministry employed its pre-publication warning system to discourage the revelation of military secrets and articles indicating Japan was at fault.¹ The warnings were composed in close contact with the army and navy. Police officials were advised to relay them in polite "consultations" (kondan) with media people, employing "unofficial announcements" (naishi) to "positively guide" (sekkyokuteki ni shido) newspapers, news agencies, and leading magazines.² These phrases soon became standard in official documents. "Positive guidance" meant overstepping mere taboos to indicate how stories should be written.

When the incident failed of lasting resolution in the early stages,

the Army Ministry (July 31), Navy Ministry (August 16), and Foreign Ministry (December 13) activated their powers to ban items from publication under article 27 of the Newspaper Law, just as they had during the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, and World War I.³ Their orders were plugged into the Home Ministry's own pre-publication warning system. The Home Ministry would telegraph them to its local government and police offices under joint signature, (e.g., signed by Home's Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief and the Army Ministry's Military Affairs Bureau Chief), and all bonded newspapers would be notified. The operation ran around the clock and special telephones were installed to handle urgent commands.⁴ A special pre-publication censorship system was instituted for articles dealing with military matters in a narrow sense, (e.g., strategy or troop movements). These had to be approved by local Home Ministry officials before printing; if passed, they were stamped, for example, "Approved by the Army Ministry."⁵ The administrative sanctions for violating Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministry warnings were those always employed by the Home Ministry, (bans on circulation, deletions, etc.). When press reports were sent back from a war zone, they had to be censored first by field army or fleet information units, then run through the Home Ministry system in Japan. Photographs went through the same procedures as articles, and film censors were given instructions identical to those received by publications' authorities. In its essentials, this system was just like the one used during earlier wars.

The information prohibited within the Newspaper Law framework, according to both the Home Ministry's own censorship standards and the commands of the other ministries, will now be reviewed briefly for the period just after the China Incident. The treatment here is further

developed in later sections.

Many items banned from publication pertained to weaponry and the progress of hostilities. These included photos or descriptions of armored columns, the location of troops, the exact date a battle transpired, and the names and ranks of commanding officers.⁶ Most armies try to conceal such data from the enemy in wartime, but the effort could have serious political implications. For example, on 11 July 1937 Japanese and Chinese field armies reached a cease-fire agreement, but the Army Ministry Newspaper Group (Shinbunhan) contacted major newspapers to stop special editions on the story, casting doubts upon its reliability. Meanwhile, they had NHK broadcast that the enemy's sincerity was questionable and the accord might turn out to be "wastepaper."⁷ These actions could enervate domestic pressure for peace. Prohibited news on conscription, munitions production, and the departure of troops for China might have had foreign security justifications, but it would also blind the Japanese people to the conflict's rapid escalation. Reports on the cruel treatment of Chinese soldiers or civilians were also banned, but stories on Chinese brutality were acceptable.⁸

The Home Ministry itself issued public order warnings to kill open debate over China policy. On 13 July 1937, the instructions were to avoid anti-war and anti-military views, portrayals of the Japanese as warlike people or Japanese foreign policy as aggressive, and references to foreign press reports that might lead popular judgment astray.⁹ Quotations from foreign newspapers and letters to the editor were methods Japanese papers sometimes used to air criticism too sensitive to publish as their own. The catalog of Home Ministry injunctions to crush policy debate grew steadily. The following enumeration of forbidden contents was put out by

the Book Section of the Criminal Affairs Bureau in August 1938

(paraphrasing):

1. Differences of opinion with the government or military on the nation's basic China policy.
2. A lack of unified public support for China policy.
3. Indications that we have territorial ambitions in China, that the new states in central and northern China are Japanese puppets, or doubts on the significance of this as a holy war.
4. Fostering a tendency toward peace or weakening public resolve to sustain a long war.
 - a. Signs of willingness to make peace with the Chiang Kai Shek government within the cabinet, the military, the Senior Statesmen, or political or business circles.
 - b. Reports of an intention to soften Japan's policy not to negotiate with the nationalist government ("kokumin seifu o aite ne sezu").
 - c. Impressions that our government or diplomatic authorities are planning a policy of peace toward Chiang.
 - d. Exaggerated reports that third countries may offer their good offices to mediate between Japan and China.
 - e. The view that the Hankow offensive has fulfilled our military objectives, leaving an optimistic impression.
5. Arguments hindering foreign relations, especially friendly ties with Germany and Italy.
6. Predictions of a cabinet change or a turnover in military ministers.
7. Rumors related to the incident.
8. Agitation for illegal or radical means to strengthen the domestic wartime system.
9. Encouragement for mass action to protest foreign policy or the effects of the incident on the people's livelihood.
10. Indications Japan lacks natural resources, stories of bank failures, or any other weak points creating uncertainty about the country's ability to wage war.
11. Singular stress on unemployment, bankruptcies, or other ill influences of the incident on the people's livelihood.

12. Exaggerations of war profiteering or the crippled condition of the people's income that might foster anti-war sentiment.
13. Stories of the problems faced by families whose sons have been drafted, such as those related to livelihood, chastity, government compensation, or inheritance squabbles, or reports on the private lives of soldiers returning home if they tend to engender unrest or dissatisfaction among troops departing for the front.
14. Introduction of gaudy new fashions fostering ostentation or frivolous tastes contrary to the spirit of frugal consumption.
15. Lascivious or suggestive accounts of bars, cafes, dance halls, or prostitution.
16. Provocative presentations of obscenity, rape, immorality, lovers' suicides, or other sexual matters.¹⁰

These instructions give only a small indication of the new severity in morals censorship after the China Incident. Starting in May 1938, officials strove to harden manners and morals standards by calling in groups of editors for "consultation." Those summoned included editors of the most respectable magazines in fields ranging from women's interests to popular entertainment. The war was sometimes cited as a major reason for the crackdown.¹¹ In late 1937, the state had begun a National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement to modify living habits and prepare the nation psychologically for a long war, and the new moral code was part of it. To give an example, a policy adopted for consultations with women's magazines in May 1938 called for stricter enforcement against the following (paraphrasing):

1. Vulgar novels or those dealing with love relationships based upon romantic sentiment (ren'ai), e.g., stories of love affairs by married women or those confusing the ideal of chastity for young women.
2. Lovers' suicides or other incidents exerting an ill influence on women's cultural education.
3. Stories of true confessions, especially those related to sexual desire.

4. Provocative articles related to sex, e.g., "The Worry of Not Being Able to Attain Satisfaction," "The Difference Between Virgins and Non-Virgins," "Secret Advice on Hygiene for New Brides."
5. Articles on health matters connected with sex, things such as venereal disease or contraception.¹²

The public order and morals standards reviewed above were different in form from any previously used by the Home Ministry. In the past, regular censorship standards had never been divulged to press people, much to their annoyance. Only pre-publication warnings, given to stop reports of current events, had been communicated to the press. But these new strictures were regular censorship guidelines conveyed directly to editors in meetings called by police and bureaucrats. These "consultation meetings" (kondankai) soon became an institutionalized feature of Japanese press controls. They endowed regular censorship standards with a new character, since they were now conveyed explicitly to editors and changeable from one meeting to the next. The many functions of consultations as a method of control will now be examined.

The Consultation Format

Despite the innocuous-sounding title, the "consultation meeting" is one of the real keys to understanding state power in late imperial Japan. It was widely employed to subordinate not only the media but big business, religion, art, and education. The consultation system refers to ongoing direct contact between officials and subjects initiated by the former to extend state control. It involved telephone calls, individual interviews, and group meetings that might be held in conference halls or the private rooms of restaurants--contact might be scheduled at fixed intervals or arranged sporadically. For the press, the largest gatherings could involve 30-50 editors, and most sessions were held in secret. Communi-

cation was usually oral,¹³ the press people taking notes when officials delivered a lengthy presentation.

The consultation format developed logically out of the prominent bureaucratic policymaking role evident from the Meiji restoration, but its institutionalized use after the China Incident signified a sharp boost in independent administrative authority. Though consultations had not been a dominant mode of control in the past, there was a similarity of style in the state's handling of short-term problems such as the founding of NHK in the 1920's. Consultations also bear resemblance to postwar "administrative guidance" (gyosei shido), which refers to extra-legal but institutionalized advice from state agencies aimed at controlling the behavior of civil associations. It has recently been documented in such areas as medicine, broadcasting, and the economy. Industries prosecuted for anti-trust violations have pleaded in court that they were only following "administrative guidance."¹⁴ The pre-1945 consultation system was far more penetrating, but it supplies an instructive background to postwar bureaucratic style.

Consultations allowed officials to exercise mobilizational press powers that they acutely desired but had no legal means to acquire. They were deeply concerned with the limited effect of earlier press controls. There had been hundreds of violations of pre-publication warnings related to the Manchurian Incident, despite sweeping press support for Japan's position. The leniency of punishments, the profitability of printing hot war news, and the general enthusiasm for military success were strong inducements to ignore the warnings. When officials compared their performance in September 1931 with that in July 1937 after the China Incident, they found about the same number of violations (July 7-31: 77 banned

editions, two deletions, and 254 post-publication warnings--data for all publications).¹⁵ This was still some improvement over 1931, since more 1937 violators were small local journals, which usually offended by noting the departure of hometown boys for the front or describing military equipment.¹⁶ Nonetheless, these were so many holes that could not be plugged without greater positive control. As the China Incident escalated into a major war, the conviction also grew that favorable reports should not be left to chance but systematically attuned to the demands of state policy. There were no aboveboard means to accomplish this in 1937. The one prospect for new legal powers was passage of the State Total Mobilization Law in March 1938. However, to secure Diet approval for the bill, Prime Minister Kono had to pledge it would not be activated in response to the China Incident, but only in case of another war. Later this promise was honored more in the breach than the observance, but it was politically impossible to use this law against the press in 1938.

In this circumstance, top officials from the Home, Army, Navy, and Foreign Ministries met in the spring of 1938 under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Information Division to explore other routes for mobilizing the press. The decision to upgrade the information organ from a committee to a division had been made by the cabinet in April 1937 and effected the following September. The consultation system, already instituted by the Home, Army, and Navy Ministries on a modest scale, was endorsed by the inter-ministerial group as the most ready tool for bolstering positive press controls. The Home Ministry conveyed the group's conclusions to its local offices on 13 July 1938.¹⁷ The ministry's preface declared that the China Incident had engaged Japan in a "total war." It asserted that the same news could be written to leave different impressions, and it was

therefore necessary to shape the basic editorial attitude behind the news. This could be done by supplying newspapers with material for articles and offering "positive internal guidance" (sekkyokuteki naimenteki shido). "Internal guidance" was official jargon for the instructions imparted through consultations.

Many state offices became involved in giving consultations. The Home Ministry had begun periodic meetings as early as October 1937, and the military also started regular consultations shortly after the China Incident.¹⁸ The Cabinet Information Division came to play a major role, especially from mid-1940, and also involved were the Foreign Ministry, the Military Police, the headquarters of the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement, the Culture and Thought Divisions of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association that succeeded it, and on occasion other agencies as well.

The targets included most of the periodical press, and the consultation system permitted great flexibility in aiming instructions at various types of newspapers and magazines. Guidance directives might specify all bonded newspapers, major daily newspapers only, integrated magazines, economic magazines, foreign policy magazines, newspapers with foreign correspondents, major news agencies, or different combinations of these.¹⁹ There were special consultation meetings for children's magazines, women's magazines, and other select types, not to overlook those with groups of authors (especially novelists) that were not addressed to any particular press organs.²⁰ Specific features and functions of the consultation system over the 1937-1945 period will now be examined in detail.

Mobilization Directives

Three mobilization directives delivered in consultations are described in this section, one each on the economy, foreign policy (the signing of the Axis Pact), and domestic politics (Diet coverage in early 1941). The mix of positive mobilization and censorship in these directives was typical of the consultation control system.

The Cabinet Information Division prepared consultative guidance for newspaper treatment of the economy in May 1940.²¹ It stated that some recent articles had been unreasonably critical of the impoverishment of consumption and the transitional steps toward a wartime economy, creating an uneasy outlook among the people. Newspapers were called upon to promote cooperation with official policy and foster a wartime economic morality among the populace. Specific points to be put across were seven: (1) stress the importance of price controls and avoid articles spurring inflationary trends; (2) portray the disequilibrium between supply and demand as normal in wartime, and convince people that discontent with the shortage of commodities is due to insufficient wartime consciousness; (3) advance the spirit of saving to slow spending and beat inflation; (4) avoid provoking unrest over the rising national debt, the slow rate at which it is being paid off, and the declining market value of bonds; (5) present criticism of economic control policies so as to promote controls, and not to foster aversion to them; (6) urge the elimination of hoarding and black market operations; (7) avoid pessimistic coverage of food supply difficulties, publicize plans for greater food production, and emphasize the need to curtail rice consumption.²²

When the Axis Pact was signed with Germany and Italy on 27 September 1940, both the Home Ministry and Cabinet Information Division prepared

guidance for the press. First, an abbreviated review of the Home Ministry document, (paraphrasing):

1. No stories opposing or slandering the treaty. Examples:
 - a. The pact involves the loss of an autonomous foreign policy by Japan.
 - b. Germany and Italy are the only parties to benefit.
 - c. The pact resulted from the machinations of pro-German and pro-Italian elements in Japan.
 - d. It will distract from a resolution of the China Incident.
2. No signs of disagreement over the treaty within Japan.
3. No categorical condemnations of the Soviet Union or assertions the treaty will hinder Japanese-Soviet relations, though articles denouncing the intrigues of the Comintern are acceptable. [Examples omitted.]
4. Do not fan antagonism toward the U.S. as an enemy country in connection with the treaty. [Examples omitted.]
5. No insistence that our so-called South Seas Strategy be implemented militarily right away in connection with the treaty.
6. No exaggerated accounts of the treaty's economic effects, or any which might cause great unrest among the people, "even if the information is true" (jijitsu no hodo to iedomo). Examples:
 - a. Hints that stock prices may plunge.
 - b. Views feared to make financial circles overly cautious.
 - c. Matters that might provoke depositors to withdraw their money.
 - d. Overblown treatments of the negative influence on trade.²³

This notification was sent to local government offices to be used in press consultations nationwide and to add to censorship standards for administrative sanctions.

The Cabinet Information Division's draft was the twelfth in its series of "Outlines for Newspaper Guidance" and had a more mobilizational character than the Home Ministry instructions. It was aimed at dissemination of the following points (paraphrasing):

1. The keystone of the Empire's foreign policy is to establish the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and play a leading role in creating a new world order. The treaty is predicated upon German and Italian approval of our aims, their cooperative intentions, and our common stand on forging the new world order.
2. The Empire's purport in this treaty is not immediate participation in the war in Western Europe, but rather to halt the spread of the evils of war and promote completion of the new world order. Further, cooperation with Germany and Italy is not only an appropriate and necessary policy for resolution of the China Incident but a pivotal dimension of the Empire's foreign policy in conformity with the new circumstance of the great world transformation. However, to deal with the many inevitable frictions and obstacles foreseeable on the road to this transformation, it is necessary for the Empire to harden its vital determination.
3. Since we stand at a turning point in the prosperity or decline of the Empire, the government is steadily advancing domestic and foreign policies with firm resolve. For the future of these policies, the nation must believe in the government, establish the state's New Order with a solemn attitude, and strive for realization of the High Degree National Defense State [Kodo Kokubo Kokka], and each subject must faithfully perform public service at his post, "One Hundred Million with One Spirit" [Ichioku Isshin].
4. As the Empire's great course has become more fixed with this treaty, refrain from posing impatient arguments, spurring narrow-minded sentiments, or exacerbating reactionary opinion, which will turn into rash anti-foreign movements, and properly maintain the dauntless attitude of a great people.²⁴

Another pair of documents from the Home Ministry and the Cabinet Information Bureau (a bureau as of December 1940) show how a special consultation became the cornerstone of state control over Diet reporting in January 1941. The Diet meeting in progress was the first since Japan's political parties had dissolved themselves in August 1940.

The Home Ministry paper reviewed existing censorship, beginning with state controls over the Diet minutes. The minutes were an official state document and therefore technically free from press restrictions, but the Diet often enforced prevailing censorship standards on its own. If a speech transgressed the Army, Navy, Foreign, or Home Ministries' pre-publication warnings or general public order standards, the presiding

chairman could revise the minutes or the speaker himself could request that his remarks be stricken or changed. The Home Ministry supplied both houses with an up-to-date list of pre-publication warnings.

The press reporting of Diet speeches was subject to all the usual censorship restrictions. What a peer or representative could say in session was not necessarily publishable in the newspaper. In practice, however, the Home Ministry was slow to punish reports of illicit Diet speeches due to the potential for controversy. There was strict enforcement if cut or revised Diet minutes were cited in their original form, or if a reporter allowed into a formally closed committee meeting wrote up speeches violating censorship guidelines; in the lower house, reporters were often admitted to closed committee hearings. If a Diet debate was officially declared secret or the minutes stopped, there was severe enforcement against disclosures. Diet members' statements to the press outside of parliament were scanned for violations just like any other material.

The Home Ministry's pre-publication warning system was often used to ban coverage of Diet deliberations. Formal warnings were complemented by consultative guidance as early as mid-1939. In addition to total bans on reporting, some instructions ordered that only interpellations of government spokesmen and their speeches be reported, others that the speeches alone be covered. Most of the affected debates touched upon foreign affairs and economic policy.²⁵

The Cabinet Information Bureau sought to toughen these controls significantly during the first non-party Diet. On 10 January 1941, the bureau was authorized to ban from publication state secrets and items hindering foreign affairs or official policy,²⁶ and it made use of this

new power during the Diet meeting. The CIB's Governor (Sosai) personally conducted a consultation with top editorial staff members of Tokyo's major newspapers. Since it was the first Diet without parties, he stated, Japan's people as well as her enemies were watching it closely. It was feared that with the parties' dissolution some members might seek to advertise themselves with re-election in mind--the press must criticize such behavior. There should be absolutely nothing downbeat in treatments of the first "Imperial Rule Assistance" Diet, whether in reporting, opinions, editorials, society columns, photos, or cartoons. All should work to promote state policy in a constructive way. Concrete guidance to this end was as follows (paraphrasing):

1. Don't just inform. During the Diet meeting, give plenty of space to resolving the China Incident in order to lift public consciousness and for foreign propaganda. Stories high-lighting the shortage of goods, popular discontent with the living standard, or a decline in national strength have a negative impact at home and abroad.
2. Don't take any unduly critical stance toward the Diet to flatter the tastes of your readers, but take it up in a serious vein.
3. Don't draw attention to questions posed merely to advertise the speaker, but criticize the inappropriateness of such practices.
4. Don't speculate on the contents of secret meetings in the Diet. Naturally there must be many in the crisis situation [jikyokuka].
5. Confusion on the floor or purposeful obstruction of the proceedings should be treated in a simple manner calling for reflection.
6. Work to further the views that (a) Diet members not persist in posing the same question to government spokesmen, (b) members should request secret sessions when inquiring into military, foreign, or economic affairs because of their great repercussions, and (c) to expedite business Diet members should reveal their questions informally [naishi] to government spokesmen before scheduled interpellations.²⁷

To see that state guidance was effective, a new system of control over Diet reporting was imperative (quoting):

The reporting of newspapers and news agencies related to Diet discussions has hitherto been left to the absolutely free discretion of the companies, and positive government guidance and control has not been imposed beyond the level of occasional orders prohibiting publication [i.e., pre-publication warnings]. However, it is necessary to show the people the reality of an "Assistance Diet" as this Diet comes in the first year of implementing the Imperial Rule Assistance movement, and, further, we are facing the fourth year of the [China] Incident and it is recognized at this time that various social strata have taken a rather serious shock. Therefore, it is to be expected that fairly penetrating arguments will be heard on many areas of domestic and foreign policy, starting with the natural problems of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association and the difficulties of unemployment and occupational change from small and medium size commercial and industrial firms. One can see that prior to next year's lower house general election there will be a mushrooming of the old style of speeches aimed at local constituencies [omiyage enzetsu] and irresponsible discussions. However, it is feared today, when we must strive to overcome the hardships of our time and unify the direction the nation must follow, "One Hundred Million with One Spirit," that to continue the customary non-interference with Diet articles would have the result of splitting public opinion and produce an unsatisfactory situation from the perspective of executing state policy.²⁸

The CIB Governor recalled coverage of the Saito Takao incident the year before. Saito had strongly criticized the government's China policy and its declaration of a "New East Asian Order" in the Diet in February 1940. The presiding chairman had deleted part of his speech from the minutes, and military pressure helped persuade a majority of Diet members to expel Saito from the lower house on March 7. The official remarked that although political columns had labeled it a traitorous speech, some society columns had hinted indirectly at sympathy for Saito, confusing the public's judgment. "In the situation of the country at present, one acutely senses the need to be rid of the freedomist period concept of journalism."²⁹

The antidote was a daily CIB consultation at the Diet with both political and society page newspaper editors. Bureaucrats would attend all Diet sessions and use the consultations to ban some items from publication and discourage the papers from printing others. This new state management of

Diet reporting evidences the transition from censorship to mobilization and illustrates perfectly the meaning of "positive internal guidance." The contrast between Home Ministry and CIB approaches to Diet reporting reflects the more conservative, censorship orientation of the former compared to the activist, mobilizational character of the latter. In the eyes of the CIB, Home Ministry censorship had left Diet reporting "to the absolutely free discretion of the companies."

Mobilizational directives also contained forms of editorial interference unrelated to content. Positive guidance might require that a certain size of type be used. (e.g., words related to venereal disease),³⁰ that views be inserted into editorial and opinion columns (e.g., foreign policy positions),³¹ that a particular event not be the lead story or reported at the top of the page (e.g., a Japanese-Soviet border clash near Manchuria),³² or that no special editions appear on a given event (e.g., the temporary resolution of the China Incident by field armies). In consultations with book publishers, new titles were sometimes ordered for forthcoming works.³³

Prior Censorship of Magazines

Consultations for magazine guidance developed into pre-publication censorship of galleys during 1939-1941. Officials had been dissatisfied with magazine censorship for some time, especially regarding the extensive use of blank type (X's and O's) to keep articles just within legal bounds. The participants at a National Conference of Special Higher Police Section Chiefs in September 1936 argued that blank type had an adverse effect because it aroused interest and readers were often able to guess the missing words. The inspection of galleys was praised as an

admirable substitute.³⁴ However, since the Newspaper Law did not require censor's copies until publication started, there was no immediate prospect for galley proof inspection.

The consultation system opened up new possibilities. The Home Ministry ran a monthly consultation for some of Tokyo's more influential magazines from late 1937. Officials grew increasingly bold in this forum until in 1939 they instituted the censorship of galleys, eliminating unauthorized use of blank type and the need for administrative sanctions as well. Chuo Koron sustained its last ban on circulation in March 1938, its last deletion in June.³⁵ Thereafter, bureaucrats cut what displeased them before the final printing. This marked a sharp upgrading of state control, especially considering the poor confiscation rates for journals suffering bans or deletions. The new policy had no legal foundation whatsoever.

The Cabinet Information Bureau later took charge of this system. Though Home Ministry censors served concurrently in the bureau after its inauguration in December 1940, CIB consultations were usually dominated by its own officials, who included young military officers. The CIB modified prior censorship from May 1941 by demanding a description of planned contents and authors by the tenth of every month.³⁶ Whole articles were stricken from editorial plans (and others often proffered as possible replacements) even before the type was set for running off a galley.³⁷ All this initially went forward in the guise of a "consultation" which strictly speaking editors had no legal obligation even to attend. The submission of a table of contents for prior review spread to most politically and socially significant magazines in the summer and fall of 1941 in conjunction with paper control and other adjustments to

the New Order for publishers.³⁸

One should remember that the Home Ministry and CIB were only the primary gears in a much larger consultation machine that also encompassed meetings with the military (monthly for integrated magazines like Chuo Koron and Kaizo), the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, and other state agencies. All were involved in "positive guidance."

The Blacklisting of Writers

Blacklisting was another product of the consultation system. In December 1937, the Home Ministry arrested about 400 intellectual and labor leaders previously classified within the legal left (the Popular Front Incident--Jinmin Sensen Jiken). This was followed in February 1938 with a roundup of about 45 intellectuals including moderate leftist university professors and members of the Social Masses Party (the Scholars' Group Incident--Gakusha or Kyoju Gurupu Jiken). The Peace Preservation Law was used in both cases. It was not technically illegal to publish articles by people under arrest, assuming one had a manuscript, but in consultations the Home Ministry forbade in principle the publication of anything written by those arrested, regardless of the contents. Officials threatened administrative sanctions and possible prosecution for any violator.³⁹ Doubts about the acceptability of particular articles or writers were to be referred to the ministry for a decision. These arrests, enveloping the Labor-Farmer Faction (Ronoha), eliminated most remaining leftist writers critical of the state and effected an overnight metamorphosis in the body of regular contributors to journals like Chuo Koron and Kaizo. Among those jailed, Minobe Ryokichi had been published in Kaizo 13 times, Arahata Kanson 22 times, Ishihama Tomoyuki

26 times, Arisawa Hiroshi 28 times, Mukozaka Itsuo 37 times, Omori Yoshitaro 37 times, Suzuki Shigesaburo 44 times, Inomata Tsunao 48 times, and Yamakawa Hitoshi close to 200 times.⁴⁰ As related in Chapter VII, Inomata had earned the November 1931 Chuo Koron a ban on circulation for his article opposing Japanese imperialism in Manchuria. Omori had contributed to the September 1925 Kaizo roundtable criticizing Japan's press laws and had also written a sympathetic article on Minobe Tatsukichi for the April 1935 Bungei Shunju. His article "Hungry Japan" (Ueru Nihon) had been ordered totally deleted from the September 1937 Kaizo for reproving the program of heavy industrialization behind the war economy; even the title was to be blotted out from the table of contents.⁴¹ Another man arrested was Ouchi Hyoe, who had edited the university journal carrying Morito Tatsuo's controversial article on Kropotkin in 1920. In short, a lot of old debts were paid off with the arrests of these men. They had been leading political commentators at the critical edge of the mainstream press, and the clauses of the Peace Preservation Law had to be stretched beyond all previous interpretations to prosecute them on the trumped up charge of aiding the Comintern.⁴²

The next step was to blacklist writers who were not under arrest. This first happened in a Home Ministry consultation for major Tokyo magazines in March 1938. They were told unofficially to reject any articles by Oka Kunio, Tosaka Jun, Hayashi Yo, Hori Makoto, Miyamoto Yuriko, Nakano Juji, or Suzuki Anzo.⁴³ Suzuki had authored the most intrepid defense of Minobe Tatsukichi in 1935. The state said nothing to the writers themselves; all the pressure was applied to the journals. Again, contributions from these individuals were marked for rejection regardless of content. Press controls now transcended the censorship of

substance and encompassed the ideological and organizational affiliations of writers as policy targets in and of themselves.⁴⁴

Chuo Koron editors report a similar incident in a Cabinet Information Bureau consultation on 26 February 1941. Six freedomist writers unassociated with the left were barred by name: Yanaihara Tadao, Yokoda Kisaburo, Baba Tsunego, Kiyosawa Kiyoshi, Tanaka Kotaro, and Mizuno Hirotoke.⁴⁵ Yanaihara had written against the Manchurian venture in 1932, and the Home Ministry had ordered total deletion of his pacifistic article in the September 1937 Chuo Koron. This had resulted in the loss of his chair at Tokyo Imperial University and prosecution for violating the Newspaper Law.⁴⁶ These freedomist writers, who opposed militarism or imperialism or both, had supplanted the moderate leftists arrested in 1937-1938 as the principal contributors to Chuo Koron and Kaizo, but they were now muzzled just like their predecessors. Once again, the blacklist was transmitted as an "unofficial announcement" (naishi) without the authors being told. Baba, one of many who had made a living from political commentary, described his situation this way:

Until the year when the Great East Asian War started [1941], I was writing political commentary for the newspapers once a week and for so many magazines each month. Little by little I became unable to write, and during the war I was absolutely silenced. If one looks for the reason, it was that newspapers and magazines stopped accepting my manuscripts. However, no official or military man ever confronted me saying this article is bad or ordering me not to write such and such a thing, or even spoke with me.⁴⁷

Baba had written articles critical of the military for some time.⁴⁸

The CIB consultations of February 1941 in which these writers were banished had been organized on a company-by-company basis, and Kaizo editors do not recall a blacklist being ordered at that time.⁴⁹ At this stage, then, the proscriptions against writers were sometimes dictated selectively. But what is interesting is that several of these

writers had ceased to appear in Kaizo already due to the fear of sanctions. Yokoda had last been published in September 1939, Baba in January 1940. In 1941, their work was still carried in the magazine's supplements on the crisis "situation," but the editors would not risk a ban on circulation by publishing their articles in Kaizo proper. Likewise, Chuo Koron had stopped accepting Baba's articles for almost a year before he was blacklisted in consultation.⁵⁰ "Positive guidance" was so effective that journals were anticipating the will of the state before any direct commands were given.⁵¹

By January 1941, Special Higher Police offices had card files on individuals with suspicious backgrounds and editors were urged to phone in for advice if uncertain about a writer's suitability; an answer was promised within two minutes.⁵² In January 1942, Chuo Koron received a list of some 20 authors to avoid from the Special Higher Police Section of the Metropolitan Police. No specific reprisals were threatened for noncompliance, but the restructuring of the press industry then in progress and the state's control over the paper supply gave ominous overtones to any suggestions from official quarters. Other than those already mentioned, regular contributors to disappear from the columns of Chuo Koron due to state pressure during the Pacific War included Imanaka Jimaro, Tsuchiya Takao, Aono Kiyoshi, Ashida Hitoshi, Abe Shinnosuke, Iwabuchi Tatsuo, Ogura Kinnosuke, Osaki Hidesane, Kimura Kihachiro, Saigusa Hiroto, Sekiguchi Yasushi, Taira Teizo, Tanigawa Tetsuzo, Tozawa Tetsuhiko, Nashimoto Yuhei, Maruyama Masao, Machida Shinso, Masuda Toyohiko, Miyazawa Toshiyoshi, and Morito Tatsuo.⁵³

The Atmosphere of the Consultation Meeting

This section will begin to address two related questions. First, to

what extent did consultations involve coercion as opposed to non-binding appeals and information of the sort offered at background press briefings in many countries? Second, was the personal interaction in consultations most like a friendly chat, a formal lecture, or a bitter exchange between antagonists? The consultation was a complex control mechanism and these questions do not have simple answers.

A salient feature of the consultation was a blurring of the distinction between orders enforceable by sanctions and nonobligatory appeals. There were basically three types of information communicated: pre-publication warnings on coverage of current events, regular censorship standards (now wider in scope with the inclusion of blacklisting and other editorial restrictions enforced with the same sanctions), and noncompulsory guidance. Pre-publication warnings were the most distinct of the three because they were generally delivered to each publisher in writing. However, when announced in consultations, they were often accompanied by noncompulsory advice as to how the subject matter should be treated. Army Ministry warnings against sentimental coverage of families seeing conscripts off at the train station were complemented with suggestions as to how the story should be written.⁵⁴ The same was true of warnings on how to report the deaths of Japanese soldiers in battle. The unmistakable message was "Write it up in this patriotic fashion, and that way you'll both help your country and steer clear of the censor." The boundary between regular censorship standards and non-binding pleas was even more ambiguous. Indeed, one hesitates even to speak of "regular" censorship standards in this period, since they were modified at virtually every consultation and officials often neglected to distinguish them from optional recommendations. As before, bureaucrats could impose sanctions

at their discretion whether a standard had been identified in advance or not.

The history of Japanese press controls endowed all consultative messages with a tinge of compulsion. Administrative sanctions had always depended upon bureaucratic assessments, not legal technicalities. There had never been a sharp line between the provisions of Diet-approved laws and the bureaucratic ordinances and conventions supplementing them. "Positive guidance" was no more legal than the Home Ministry's pre-publication warning system, but it could be enforced just as easily. No one ever challenged the administration's legal right to blacklist authors or conduct pre-publication censorship. To repeat, there was no route of appeal against bureaucratic sanctions, regardless of whether one had violated a formal warning or an informal supplication. There is no record of press people boycotting a consultation because they were not legally required to be there. Highly critical postwar studies written by victims of the system do not generally dwell on the formal illegality of state controls as scholars are inclined to do. That bureaucrats could bring off these innovations and make them stick was taken for granted. The loose admixture of pre-publication warnings, regular censorship standards, and positive guidance was a hyperextension of the continuity between laws, ministerial decrees, and bureaucratic discretion that had always characterized the enforcement of press controls. Experience taught that one could ill afford to make light of any directives coming from the bureaucracy and so lent an air of coercion to even those precepts presented as optional recommendations.

There were wide variations in the affability or tension found in consultations. The larger gatherings tended toward formality, officials

delivering prepared statements and allowing a few minutes for questions or comments.⁵⁵ Though the available evidence is sketchy, there is no indication that anger or nastiness were common. The ideal of "positive guidance" was not to beat the subject into submission, but to make him a willing collaborator by applying persuasion against the background of the wartime crisis. The possibility of sanctions was well understood but rarely flaunted. The state's goal was to influence the editorial policy that colored all news and commentary to appear in a journal, and bitter confrontations were not thought the best way to accomplish this. Furthermore, almost all press people supported the war effort and were willing to comply with the state's propaganda strategy. It was mainly those few journals persisting in an independent line that were sometimes faced with naked intimidation in consultations with the authorities.

The integrated magazines were perhaps the biggest obstacle to state press policy in this period. It wasn't that they contravened specific instructions, but that one step beyond those instructions they strove to display an autonomous orientation. They were too prestigious to be shut down before Pearl Harbor, and their status and journalistic traditions limited the penetration of positive guidance. Regular consultations in which their line-up of stories was berated and long-time contributors blacklisted were hardly conducive to amiability. On occasion, there were wrathful words from the state's side of the table.

On 26 February 1941, the Cabinet Information Bureau called in the company president and top editorial staff of Chuo Koron for a consultation. It was led by a navy captain and Army Major Suzuki Kurazo, both CIB officials. They accused the journal of an uncooperative attitude and suggested a change of editorial direction to finally eliminate the

evil customs of freedomism. The publisher, Shimanaka Yusaku, replied that he had no fundamental objections to assisting state policy, but that one could not determine people's thinking simply by giving orders as in the military. He advised his interlocuters to leave dealings with the intellectual class to the magazine, which possessed greater expertise. At this point, Suzuki went into a rage. He stood up and shouted that because this sort of individual was still in the publishing business people turned up their noses at state policy. He claimed Shimanaka was instilling a freedomist attitude in his staff, that he (Suzuki) was collecting evidence from younger employees to prove it, and that he was ready to smash the magazine.⁵⁶ The other state officials present were embarrassed by this outburst, but Suzuki remained a central figure in magazine consultations for the next year and a half.⁵⁷ The impact of this incident will be better appreciated when it is shown how many newspapers and magazines were in fact smashed by the state in 1941, and when the subsequent fate of Chuo Koron itself is related. But if consultations were rarely so turbulent, threats were indeed communicated more subtly in this forum on other occasions, including suggestions that particular editors should consider resignation.⁵⁸ Thus consultations with those trying to maintain some editorial independence could be quite different from the more typical soft sell approach. So far, only consultations aimed at editorial policy have been described. The role of the consultation meeting as a mechanism for coarser forms of state control will be explored more fully in the next two chapters.

Notes

¹Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 2, p. 2.

²Ibid., pp. 2-3.

³The ministerial decrees putting these powers into effect are in *ibid.*, documents 1, 3, and 7. The military and Foreign Ministries had not formally exercised their Newspaper Law powers at the time of the Manchurian Incident, though the Home Ministry had incorporated their requests into the pre-publication warning system on its own authority, as was always done for other ministries.

⁴Ibid., document 2, p. 4. Note that the language used to describe pre-publication warnings originating in the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministries was different from that of the Home Ministry's own warnings. Warnings most likely to bring a ban on circulation, which I have translated "instructions" in English, were shitatsu under Home Ministry nomenclature, but genju keikoku if coming from the other ministries, "advice" was keikoku under both systems, and "consultation" was kondan under the former but chui under the latter. These differences were significant, since a violation of "instructions" from the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministries could mean up to two years in prison, whereas violation of a similar injunction from the Home Ministry brought a maximum six-month sentence. When Article 27 powers were first instituted, press organs receiving a genju keikoku cosigned by the Army, Navy, or Foreign Ministries had to acknowledge it in writing so that potential liability was clear; see *ibid.*, p. 12. When a warning might be issued under either the regular Home Ministry system or under Article 27, the latter was always used--*ibid.*

One must be careful to distinguish the chui and kondan of the pre-publication warning system from other meanings of the same terms. "Chui" was also the official label for post-publication warnings, which continued in this period, and to complicate matters further, it was frequently used in its vernacular meaning as the most common word in the admonition "Be careful!" One often finds it in notices sent from the Home Ministry to its local offices that are neither pre- nor post-publication warnings but simply general orders on how to conduct censorship. The term kondan, originally used to describe a pre-publication warning based solely on a moral appeal without the threat of punishment, was given a much wider meaning in reference to the "consultation meetings" (kondankai) instituted after the China Incident.

⁵Ibid., p. 8. If local officials had doubts about a particular story, it was forwarded to the central Home Ministry and then referred to the other ministries' information offices for a decision. The other ministries were also consulted before prosecution was initiated for violations of their strictures.

⁶See *ibid.*, document 2 for army contents, document 4 for navy.

⁷ Kuroda Hidetoshi, Chishikijin Genron Dan'atsu no Kiroku [Record of the Suppression of Intellectuals and Speech] (Tokyo: Hakuseki, 1976), p. 19.

⁸ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 15, p. 137.

⁹ *Ibid.*, document 2, p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, document 19, pp. 145-146.

¹¹ For example, see the reasoning cited at a conference of publications police officials in August-September 1938 for tougher enforcement against advertisements related to morals in *ibid.*, document 22, pp. 154-155.

¹² *Ibid.*, document 16, pp. 137-138. For evidence that these prohibitions were actually communicated to editors, see Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 91-92, where the author describes a "consultation" of 5 September 1938 in which some of these very standards were discussed.

¹³ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 15, p. 133, and document 30, p. 241.

¹⁴ Seven articles in the magazine Jurisuto 741 (1 June 1981) are devoted to administrative guidance. See the Asahi Shinbun, 5 February 1981, p. 1, for a taste of the controversy caused by administrative guidance inducing price fixing, production limits, and other illegal oligopolistic practices.

¹⁵ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 2, p. 10.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ The Home Ministry notifications, including a full copy of the committee's resolution titled Shinbun Shido Yoryo (Outline for Newspaper Guidance) is reprinted in *ibid.*, document 15, pp. 133-134. The Cabinet Information Division subsequently continued to produce orders for newspaper guidance under the same title in a numbered series.

¹⁸ See Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 41, and Hatanaka Shigeo, Showa Shuppan Dan'atsu Sho Shi [A Short History of the Suppression of Publications in the Showa Period] (Tokyo: Tosho Shinbunsha, 1965), pp. 84-85.

¹⁹ See the directives gathered in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 30, pp. 239-241, for examples of such specially earmarked guidance in mid-1939.

²⁰Foreign language newspapers published in Japan were often omitted from orders sent to other press organs in the late 1930's, making them better sources of information in some respects, but also rendering them unrepresentative of what most Japanese were reading. For some examples in 1938, see *ibid.*, document 15.

²¹Reprinted in *ibid.*, document 39, pp. 266-267; this was the eighth mobilizational directive put out by the Cabinet Information Division under the title Shinbun Shido Yoryo.

²²*Ibid.*

²³*Ibid.*, document 46, pp. 274-275.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*, document 57, pp. 328-331. The document suggests a marked pickup in prohibitions from 1940.

²⁶This happened by means of an imperial rescript activating article 20 of the State Total Mobilization Law. *Ibid.*, document 54, pp. 324-325.

²⁷From a CIB document dated January 1941--*ibid.*, document 58, p. 332.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 333.

³⁰*Ibid.*, document 21, p. 153, issued in the fall of 1938.

³¹*Ibid.*, document 23, p. 164, dated September 1938.

³²*Ibid.*, document 15, p. 135, dated July 1938.

³³*Ibid.*, document 21, p. 153.

³⁴Galleys are printed copies made for the purposes of correcting the type before the actual printing of issues to be circulated. Information on the conference is from Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 111.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 133.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 149; Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 36.

- ³⁷ Several articles blocked from Chuo Koron in CIB consultations in 1941 are listed in Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 39-40.
- ³⁸ Mimasaka Taro, Fujita Shikamasa, and Watanabe Kiyoshi, Yokohama Jiken [The Yokohama Incident] (Tokyo: Nihon Edita Sukuru Shuppanbu, 1977), p. 59; Ohara Shakai Mondai Kenkyujo (Hosei Daigaku), ed., Taiheiyo Sensoka no Rodo Undo [The Labor Movement During the Pacific War] (Tokyo: Rodo Junposha, 1965), p. 184.
- ³⁹ Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 37; Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 85-86.
- ⁴⁰ Kobayashi, et.al., Zasshi "Kaizo", p. 133.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 155-156. Just before his arrest, Omori had submitted a film review for publication in the January 1938 Chuo Koron. The journal went on sale December 19, just days after the mass arrest and probably before the related consultation. The magazine was banned from circulation, but at the publisher's request the police consented to release it if the article were completely ripped out. This incident gave teeth to the promise of sanctions.
- ⁴² Ouchi's interrogator, Miyashita Hiroshi of the Special Higher Police, has said he was at a loss to build a solid case according to previous Peace Preservation Law standards, and remarked upon the novel use of the Comintern connection, which was untrue but nonetheless insisted upon by prosecutors due to Comintern endorsement of popular front strategy to oppose "fascism" in 1935--see Miyashita, Tokko no Kaiso, pp. 145-151.
- ⁴³ Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 38; Mimasaka, Fujita, and Watanabe, Yokohama Jiken, p. 61; Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 88.
- ⁴⁴ It is not clear whether the March 1938 blacklist was communicated to other journals as well or if police were content to strike these writers from influential journals only.
- ⁴⁵ Mimasaka, Fujita, and Watanabe, Yokohama Jiken, pp. 61-62; Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 146; Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 56.
- ⁴⁶ Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 44-45; see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 12, pp. 118-123, for a complete rundown of Yanaihara's prosecution under the press laws for this article ("Kokka no Riso"--The Ideal of the State) and his books also.
- ⁴⁷ Quoted in Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 59.

⁴⁸Notable was his "Gunbu wa Kokumin o Shido Shieru Ka" [Can the Military Lead the Nation?] Kaizo, January 1937, written during the partial respite for critics between the 2/26 Incident and the China Incident.

⁴⁹Kobayashi, et.al., Zasshi "Kaizo", pp. 179-180.

⁵⁰Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 102.

⁵¹There were other examples of this as well. In August 1940, one large magazine company sent its own list of over 50 desirable themes to contributors, e.g., novels stressing the need for counterintelligence, describing the recovery of wounded soldiers, or recounting the hearty life of Japanese immigrants in the colonies. See Takasaki Ryuji, Sensoka no Zasshi [Wartime Magazines] (Nagoya: Fubaisha, 1976), p. 39.

⁵²Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 57-58.

⁵³Chuo Koron 70-Nen Shi, p. 317.

⁵⁴See the pre-publication warning of 15 August 1937 in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 2, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁵E.g., see the account of a CIB consultation of January 1941 reprinted in ibid., document 56, pp. 526-528.

⁵⁶Description from one of the participating editors, Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 24-25.

⁵⁷The complaints of the magazines may have had something to do with his eventual replacement, though hard evidence is lacking; see ibid., pp. 65-66.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 81-82. This book is full of examples of different types of consultations, the richest source on the subject. State records are usually limited to the briefing papers prepared by officials ahead of time and do not include accounts of what actually transpired in the consultations.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE PRESS: 1938-1940

The state forcibly dissolved most of Japan's press businesses in the 1937-1945 period. The legal basis for their demise was the State Total Mobilization Law, but though the law was passed in early 1938, it was not activated to authorize dissolutions until late 1941. By then, naked police power complemented by state control over the paper supply had already decimated the Japanese press. This process will be traced here from 1938 to 1940, while the next chapter will follow it from the launching of Konoe's New Order in late 1940 to the end of the war.

The State Total Mobilization Law

The first move towards restructuring the periodical press was passage of the mobilization law in March 1938. This law was the work of the Cabinet Planning Board, whose staff of radically statist officers and bureaucrats was charged with planning wartime state economic controls. For all its ultimate impact on the media, items affecting the press were afterthoughts to a statute aimed primarily at the economy. The law was an enabling act to be used only during war. It allowed the government to impose sweeping controls over labor, industry, and other civil sectors by means of imperial decrees without begging the Diet for a separate law in each case. It was not, then, just another law itself, but a new

legal framework replacing regular constitutional procedures of governance.

The bill's passage was a major political undertaking. To secure Diet approval, Prime Minister Konoe declared it would not be evoked during the China Incident and intimated he might organize a new party to challenge those leading the Diet if it were defeated.¹ The solid backing of this astute and powerful Prime Minister was a prerequisite for Diet endorsement.

Both Minseito and Seiyukai party headquarters were attacked by several hundred rightists dressed in khakis on 17 February 1938 in the midst of debate over the bill. The Seiyukai offices were occupied until the next day before police arrested the trespassers, who called for a single national party to replace existing party organizations. One of those involved later claimed the intrusions had been launched with the blessing of both Konoe and Home Minister Suetsugu Nobumasa; this would explain the procrastinating response of the police, the significance of which was not lost on the parties.² Prior to this incident, rightists had been visiting the homes of individual representatives to apply pressure, guided to their residences by plainclothes police.³

Three aspects of the total mobilization law touched the press. First, it empowered the government to ban or limit the publication of information when necessary for mobilization and to seize offending copies and printing blocks in case of violations (article 20). In terms of real state control, this clause was meaningless, since the same powers were incorporated into enforcement of the Newspaper Law.⁴ Second, businesses "related to information, enlightenment, and propaganda necessary for state total mobilization," which included all publishing companies, were made subject to general mobilization powers (article 3;

section 7). In wartime, the state was authorized to command the establishment, abolition, suspension, transfer, joint management, or entrusting of any mobilization business, as well as changes in its functions and the formation or dissolution of corporations running such businesses (article 16, section 3).⁵ This would give the state an unqualified power of life and death over every newspaper, magazine, news agency, and book publisher in Japan. The state could also expropriate all or part of the facilities of any mobilization business (article 13), order or prohibit changes in equipment (article 16, sections 1-2), control the hiring and firing of employees and their salaries (articles 4, 6), and regulate the companies' production, distribution, and consumption of goods (article 8). The gravity of these powers eluded most Diet members, who displayed their ignorance of existing press controls by lavishing attention instead upon the inconsequential censorship provision. A few members did pinpoint the implications, however, arguing that newspapers would be transformed into state organs and lose their credibility at home and abroad.⁶

The insertion of newspapers as mobilization businesses was characterized by duplicity on the state's part. When word leaked about their possible designation as mobilization businesses, Japan's leading newspapers sent 89 delegates to confer with the Governor of the Cabinet Planning Board on three occasions. They were first told that the law would not apply to daily papers, but when they requested that a specific exemption be written into the bill, the eventual answer was no. This apparent subterfuge served to deflect criticism while the bill was under Diet consideration.⁷ The only assurance given in Diet hearings was that the commandeering of newspapers and their facilities was

"for the most part" (hotondo) not being contemplated.⁸

Finally, the law authorized officials to set up control associations to regulate groups of enterprises (article 18, section 1). The state could make membership in these associations compulsory and dictate the rules they would enforce. Thus, the concept of intermediate state bodies relaying commands downward to civil organizations was clearly outlined in law in early 1938.

The law's principal justification was that a modern total war required total mobilization. The Justice Minister declared to the lower house:

This is a matter of wartime. Because this is a situation in which the entire nation must fight for victory or defeat, subjects tender all their strength and all their goods. If one discusses this with peacetime thinking, one can speak of qualifications for a certain type of goods or a certain business. But at a time when the nation gathers all its strength to fight, it is necessary to concentrate all of the nation's material resources and all of its might. Consequently, regarding the composition of these regulations, one cannot stipulate what about lead or what about gold. Because⁹ everything is all right, everything that exists is put forward.

No one disputed this logic.

Opponents contended that the law was either unnecessary or unconstitutional. It seemed unnecessary to some because the constitution permitted rule by decree during emergencies and declaration of a state of seige during foreign wars when regular laws and civil rights would be held in abeyance. The government responded that the law would serve to alert the people to future sacrifices and provide a solid legal foundation for wartime measures.¹⁰ In fact, the whole scheme was designed to wipe away the policymaking role of the Diet. It is noteworthy that Kono'e's pledge not to invoke the law to deal with the China Incident was not part of the Cabinet Planning Board's original design. If passed as

initially conceived, the law would have begun to erode the Diet's prerogatives at once.¹¹ Existing constitutional mechanisms were not available for immediate use (Japan was not in a state of siege in 1938), nor would they have nullified the Diet's authority so thoroughly. Emergency decrees had to be approved afterwards by the Diet or lose their force, whereas the terms of a state of seige were not nearly as specific as the mobilization law--a temporary emergency could hardly be used to justify a massive consolidation of industries. Only this law could offer blanket prior authorization for a specified but almost unlimited range of action the executive branch might decide to undertake. The argument for unconstitutionality was that the law usurped the Diet's prerogatives by moving all legislation into the realm of imperial decrees, including the power to compromise the rights of subjects. The Justice Minister answered this challenge as follows:

. . . it is decided in part two of the constitution that to restrict the rights, freedoms, and property of subjects one must do so by means of law. Accordingly, it is prescribed in the varicus clauses of this bill that we will limit or divest subjects of their rights, freedom, and property. The manner and degree are merely left to imperial decrees, but the scope of writing these decrees is determined in the articles [of the law] and beyond that subjects will not be troubled.¹²

It was true that civil rights had no defense from the law. It was sophistry, however, to pretend that the mobilization bill was just another law or that it limited the scope of pursuant decrees, when in effect it transferred the power of legislation to the executive and placed virtually no restraints on what its decrees might exact.

When some Diet members compared the law to Germany's enabling legislation and claimed it would usher in a "fascist" despotism as in Germany and Italy, the Home Minister replied:

I think "fascist" politics was born in response to the necessities and special conditions of Italy. In our country there is an authorized constitution based upon our grand national polity that stands proud in the world. Regardless of what sort of politics there are in other countries, in our country politics conforms to the spirit of this great authorized constitution.¹³

Yet government spokesmen wielded the German and Italian examples as a double-edged sword to promote the bill. On the one hand, German precedents in particular added prestige and legitimacy to new mobilization powers, just as the British model had been used to justify policies in the 1920's. At the same time, however, government officials pointed to the violent, revolutionary character of European fascism as a frightful inevitability should the bill fail to pass. For example, the Governor of the Cabinet Planning Board stated that the law would dispel the unrest of soldiers returning home from battle, unrest that might otherwise explode as it had in Russia, Germany, and Italy.¹⁴ This implicit threat must be evaluated in light of the rightist terror of the early-mid 1930's and the ambivalent response of some state elites towards it, the lazy reaction of the police to the assaults on party headquarters, Konoe's feints toward forming a one-party system, and a reported statement by the Home Minister that freedomism was a hotbed for communism,¹⁵ all of which filled in the backdrop of intimidation.¹⁶

The State Total Mobilization Law marks the Diet's exit from the state press control picture for all practical purposes. The Diet did maintain a modicum of influence in the mobilization system through a commission of 50 members, 30 to be drawn from the Diet, that would deliberate upon mobilization decrees, but this commission never rejected or amended any of those affecting the press. Several even more restrictive laws on expression passed later did not have a big impact

on publications.¹⁷ Press policy, ever a bureaucratic affair de facto, was set to become a bureaucratic affair de jure as well. To repeat an earlier observation, the only constitutional guarantee of an autonomous press lay in the assumption that the lower house would block excessively severe control policies. This assumption proved to be utterly unfounded in 1938. In fact, since the reform of 1897, the House of Representatives had hardened press controls again and again. Only the liberal newspaper bill that just missed becoming law in 1925 can be marked to its credit.

The mobilization law is a key to the course of Japanese politics in the 1937-1945 period. It permitted a shift of parliamentary functions to expanding military-bureaucratic state organs and allowed them to manage a revolution in the state-society relationship without abandoning the Meiji constitution. Had the Diet forced a constitutional crisis by stopping the legislative reforms necessary to expand military-bureaucratic power and legitimize new control policies, the state-society relationship could not have evolved the way it did without a clearer break with the past, be it in the form of a single state party under Konoe or dissolution of the Diet altogether by a military-bureaucratic cabinet. The retreat of the Diet majority and the remarkable elasticity of the constitution made it possible to avoid such a showdown.

Many motives were operative within the Diet. The fear of confronting a new state party led by Konoe was widespread. No one had to instruct Japan's major parties as to how the police could sway election results, and Konoe's Home Minister, Suetsugu, was a known opponent of the parties chosen precisely to give the Prime Minister leverage against them.¹⁸ But the threat of political combat at home was of less moment than the reality of a war in China. The constellation of political

forces around the mobilization law was very much a product of the war. The war helped to win support from the established ministries for a project authored by renovationists in the cabinet bureaucracy, thus providing the government with internal cohesion. The war greatly reinforced the atmosphere of crisis and thereby enhanced the believability of a radical alternative (a party under Konoe) should the bill fail to pass. Most importantly, the war supplied a non-partisan vindication of the law that Diet members had no ideological predilections to resist. Most were staunch supporters of Japanese imperialism and free of principled liberal scruples, and the contention that total war demanded total mobilization was hard to refute. If some representatives attacked the mobilization law, others felt it didn't go far enough and urged the founding of a ministry of propaganda and the inclusion of a new power to suspend publications.¹⁹ In sum, the mobilization law owed its existence to military-bureaucratic policy planners, a pliant constitution, a capable Prime Minister, and the war. It was eventually used to legitimize a revolution in policy and to shift most legislative authority to the executive branch, facilitating the formation of a military-bureaucratic regime without a tumultuous political upheaval.

The Phase of Illegal Consolidations

In August 1938, the Home Ministry embarked upon a systematic campaign to force the dissolution or merger of smaller newspapers and magazines throughout Japan. This was five months after a government spokesman had assured the Diet that "for the most part" such actions were not being considered. Given the excellent documentation of most aspects of press policy in this period, the lack of reference materials

on the origins of this project is remarkable.²⁰ Since the state had no legal power to compel press consolidations until 1941, this policy may have received no formal authorization. It was instituted by the Book Section of the Criminal Affairs Bureau of the Home Ministry, and not by the Cabinet Information Division, which became involved only in mid-1940.²¹ The source of this radical scheme, then, was a long-established office in one of the oldest ministries, rather than one of the newer cabinet organs dominated by renovationist officials. Unfortunately, there are no further details on the policy's inception.

If its origins are vague, the policy's effects are devastatingly clear. The Home Ministry itself tallied the number of periodicals vanquished by its program of "adjustment and integration" (seiri togo) from the end of July 1938 (just before the project began) to the end of November 1941. This terminal date is especially useful since it falls just before the start of the Pacific War and two weeks before the Newspaper Business Decree (Shinbun Jigyo Rei) gave the state general legal authority to coerce consolidations. The results of the Home Ministry policy were as follows:²²

	<u>July 1938</u>	<u>November 1941</u>
<u>Newspaper Law</u>		
All periodicals	12,943	4,585
Bonded	7,964	3,480
Unbonded	4,979	1,105
<u>Publications Law</u>		
Magazines	15,325	13,497
<u>Grand Total</u>	28,268	18,082

The operative goal outside the metropolitan areas was to leave one general daily newspaper per prefecture (ikken/isshi). By October 1939,

Tottori had become the first "perfectly adjusted" (seiri kansei) prefecture, and by 1 December 1941, 16 of Japan's 47 prefectures had been reduced to one general daily newspaper apiece.²³ As of August 1941, 528 general dailies had been merged with other papers or dissolved at state direction, leaving a national total of 202.²⁴ The main objectives of consolidation were to curtail competition (viewed as a major reason for the flouting of state directives), to conserve scarce materials, and to facilitate control by simplifying the business structure. The desire for greater control over content was a central motive. Publications Law magazines were much less affected in this phase than Newspaper Law press organs, and officials explained the discrepancy this way: "It is recognized that Publications Law magazines have less social influence than Newspaper Law magazines, and consequently their adjustment was not enforced that much, this being one reason there is not a great difference [in number] from before adjustment [began]."²⁵ The difference in the decline of Publications Law and Newspaper Law journals also demonstrates that natural attrition would have claimed only a fraction of the total Newspaper Law press organs uprooted by the state in this period. State action was clearly the predominant cause for the sharp decreases.

Front line implementation was handled by the Home Ministry's Special Higher Police, the same responsible for executing the Peace Preservation Law, and their principal method was pressure through consultation meetings. The police would inform the owner that his journal was an unnecessary drain on vital resources and an obstacle to state policy, and they would recommend dissolution or a merger. There were recalcitrants, even after paper control was coordinated

with the program. Some publishers would pay exorbitant prices for scarce open market paper to stay in business. Rougher methods were occasionally employed to deal with them. Journals would be ordered to hand over lists of their subscribers and advertisers. In some cases, advertisers were visited one-by-one by the police and ordered to discontinue using the journal or be prepared to face arrest. In others, readers were told to cancel their subscriptions.²⁶ But overt coercion was the exception, pressure applied through consultations the rule.

An article in the Chugai Shogyo Shinpo of 16 August 1940 describes how local newspapers and trade journals were dealt with in Tokyo:

Control over expression. From the perspective of pulp limitation, the Censorship Section of the Metropolitan Police has embarked upon control of the capital's newspapers and magazines. They [the police] have steadily taken resolute action to strengthen controls, starting in July of last year, when they swept away the local newspapers being published in the boroughs [ku], to February of this year, when they ordered the dissolution of pernicious [furyo] newspaper companies. Since June, they have started an internal study of various types of trade newspapers. Those related to automobiles have already been adjusted, but it has finally come about that by the end of September controls will be implemented over newspapers and magazines related to engineering, insurance, medicine, dentistry, railroads, and industry. That is, the authorities for their part are of the opinion that the many small newspapers and magazines exact an excessive amount of subscription and advertising fees, and furthermore, they think it is a great waste in the "situation" that there be a tendency towards the duplication of readership due to a profusion of the same varieties [of journals]. With the aim of reducing the present number of some 8000 newspapers and magazines by 80% during this year, once they have obtained the submission of notices to disband from the various trade newspapers at the Censorship Section, they then advise them as to respective mergers. Looking at trends among those completing the submission of dissolution notices up to the 14th [August 1940], the pattern has been to control the transportation and communications [fields] from 70 firms [i.e., journals] to 14, engineering from 30 to six, insurance from 60 to nine, and firms related to dentistry and medicine from 30 each to two. Those related to industry are still under study, but continuing, it [consolidation] has also reached publications on fisheries and forestry, the final expectation being a drop to about 20% of the present number on average. Those not complying with mergers are made to disband as they are. Moreover, regarding publications now put out by non-profit corporate and

foundation public interest organizations, the Censorship Section has not approved of advertising, its policy ultimately to allow it to the extent of the front and back covers, in this way making it unlawful for those companies that had hitherto earned revenue from advertising like regular businessmen.²⁷

Political and economic news agency bulletins were undergoing the same process.²⁸

According to police in the fall of 1941, the consolidations went forward "comparatively smoothly,"²⁹ and one reason is that Japan's newspaper giants did not intervene to protect the smaller firms.³⁰ The three newspapers of national renown, the Mainichi/Nichi Nichi chain, the Asahi, and the Yomiuri, had for years competed for the readership of local newspapers in various parts of Japan. Whereas the Mainichi/Nichi Nichi and Asahi took to publishing regional editions, the Yomiuri's strategy was to buy into local papers. This competition became especially vicious after the China incident, when all firms were squeezed by the shortage of newsprint, and the larger gained a special advantage from their ability to send correspondents to the battle front. While the three giants ignored the plight of the smaller papers, the latter for their part were not united into an interest group that might represent them at the national level. The result is that thousands of journals were eliminated in this first phase without any weighty civil institution rising to their defense.

Police identified the decline of the parties as another factor contributing to the ease of consolidation.³¹ Unlike most of the larger metropolitan dailies, many local newspapers had retained some affiliation with either the Minseito or the Seiyukai. According to police, the decay of party politics had diluted this relationship so that party competition no longer justified the retention of more than one newspaper

in each locale. An obvious corollary is that the parties themselves hadn't the strength or determination to protect publications that had long advanced their fortunes. By August 1940, of course, the parties had formally ceased to exist. The retreat of party rivalries from newspaper columns was cited as but one facet of the growing convergence of contents, impelled also by the centrality of official announcements in the news and the United News Agency's dominance of wireless reporting from abroad. The uniformity of contents was an effective argument against the need for more than one paper in any area.

One illustration of the newspaper industry's reaction to consolidations can be drawn from the closure of the daily Tokyo Yukan Shinpo in July 1939, about a year after the forced closures began. The affair had its peculiarities, but the unusually harsh treatment of this paper was probably intended as an object lesson. State officials attributed the considerable impact of this case in newspaper circles to the adjustment of "corrupt, harmful" newspapers then in progress.³² The Tokyo Yukan Shinpo dated from 1914 and had a circulation of 12,000 to 20,000. Its president and founder, Nakajima Tetsuya, had worked at the Asahi Shinbun early in his career and was 61 years old. He was arrested along with the journal's publisher, business manager, a writer, and an editor for violating a pre-publication warning issued on the Army Ministry's authority. The warning was not to disclose the presence in Japan of Wang Chao Ming, ex-Vice President of the Chinese Nationalist government, who was negotiating to form a new state in China with Japanese backing.³³ The Tokyo Yukan Shinpo ignored the warning and reported the story. Prosecution was initiated not only under the Newspaper Law, but also under the Law for the Pro-

tection of Military Secrets (Gunki Hogo Ho), which could punish violators with life imprisonment. Under intense police pressure, Nakajima announced from jail that he was closing the paper on 12 July 1939. This was technically a voluntary decision, like all the others shutting down publications in this period. Amid apologies to his readers and a grateful farewell to his employees, Nakajima declared:

Speaking frankly, for several years now, especially since the [China] incident, it has become day by day more difficult to fulfill [the terms of] the founding proclamation of our company. The trend of the times has come to where it does not permit one to brandish the pen of freedom. Moreover, another fact of the matter is that along with this [trend] my attachment to the newspaper business itself has gradually faded of late. The problem with the article of June 14 has done no more than to spur me on unexpectedly and accelerate my decision to discontinue publication.³⁴

The demise of the Tokyo Yukan Shinpo was widely discussed in the trade journals of the newspaper industry, but a police survey of related stories found only one supporting Nakajima's stance. This was published in Shinbunshi Nihon on June 30. It repeated his views that the inability to publish foreign newspaper reports had led to a secret, ambiguous politics, and it opposed the paper's closure. On July 17, even this journal reversed itself, attacking Nakajima for not heeding the crisis "situation," and treating the paper's dissolution as a matter of course.³⁵ Most tabloids had taken this position from the beginning. Shinbun Hihan professed "not one iota of sympathy" (ittten no dojo wa nai), and Shinbun Kaiho called Nakajima's offense an irremovable stain on the history of Japanese journalism.³⁶ The police report on the Tokyo Yukan Shinpo affair noted that the paper had disregarded a pre-publication warning at the time of the 2/26 Incident as well.³⁷ It has been said that officials running consultations kept report cards on the performance of journals that were later used for planning

"adjustment and integration."³⁸ Past disregard for pre-publication warnings and "positive guidance" was not forgotten.

Another view of newspaper reactions to consolidation policy was presented in the industry's Nihon Shinbun Nenkan (Japan Newspaper Yearbook) of 1941. It reported: "Against the government's newspaper controls, while newspaper circles continue to keep silent, only one person has daringly offered criticism, and that is Miki Bukichi, president of the Hochi Shinbun, who has advocated that 'The Newspaper Policy [suitable to] the New Order is to Abolish the Regional Editions of the Large Newspapers.'"³⁹ The Hochi Shinbun, founded in 1895, was the fourth largest Tokyo daily, but still something of a one-man operation. It was not engaged in the scramble for regional readers, and Miki took the side of the small firms. He contended that if the state's objective were merely to save paper, it need only eliminate the regional editions of the newspaper giants. In his view, one could not determine whether a newspaper served public policy just on the basis of its circulation. If the state's purpose were to expand control over expression, this could be achieved by strengthening the United News Agency and seeking further cooperation from local papers. Finally, he argued, if the state's goal were to be rid of harmful journals contravening the public interest, then these alone could be suppressed --there was no need for a general strategy of mergers and dissolutions.⁴⁰ Miki's questioning of the state's objectives was not unnatural considering that the policy of consolidation had never been debated in the Diet or enunciated by any government. His Hochi Shinbun was itself forced to merge with the Yomiuri, which had already become the majority shareholder, in August 1942. Thus the Hochi succumbed like so many smaller, local papers,

caught in a vise between state power and the financial hegemony of the three national dailies.

The futility of contesting police powers was the main reason for compliance with consolidation directives. To repeat the refrain, there was no recourse open to subjects victimized by the police in imperial Japan. It was vain to dispute the legality of police action when there was no court competent to adjudicate one's complaint, and the prospects for appealing to the parties or to public opinion on such matters were obviously bleak by the late 1930's.

Control over the Paper Supply

State control over access to newsprint was a potent weapon in restructuring the press. Paper was already in short supply at the time of the China Incident, and this forced eight large newspapers to reduce their size of type and number of pages in August 1937.⁴¹ The Oji Paper Company, which dominated the market, instituted its own rationing system for inability to satisfy the demand.

The state's first intervention came in August 1938 as a purely economic policy related to the war. The Law for Emergency Measures on Imports and Exports (Yushutsu-Nyu Hin Nado Rinji Sochi Ho) authorized control over the production, distribution, and consumption of products of which any amount was imported. Since a small quantity of wood pulp was imported, the Commerce and Industry Ministry subsequently ordered limits on paper distribution to newspapers by the two largest producers (Oji and Hokuetsu) to conserve foreign exchange and scarce resources.⁴² Other companies continued to produce for the open market. The paper shortage was undoubtedly one reason for the Home Ministry's consolidation

policy, but although rationing and consolidations began at roughly the same time, they were initially unrelated. In fact, the economic measures benefitted the same small, local newspapers the Home Ministry was out to ruin, since those consuming fewer than 12,000 reams per annum were not subject to the paper quotas imposed through Oji and Hokuetsu.⁴³ A completely free market would have seen them outbid by the larger companies. Paper controls spread to magazines in September 1938.

Paper control became a political weapon on 22 May 1940, when the Committee for the Control of Newspaper and Magazine Paper was ensconced in the cabinet. Its purpose was to harden control over content. An opinion paper circulated on cabinet stationary in February 1940 offers a glimpse of official thinking at the time.⁴⁴ The anonymous author commented that censorship had practically eliminated harmful articles and ministers had secured cooperation from the press, but control was unsatisfactory. Papers still ran articles on the "interest standard" (kyomi hon'i), i.e., to appeal to the reader's interest, as dictated by the goal of profit. This meant that whenever state control was lax, criticism reasserted itself, as witnessed by the ridiculing of Prime Minister Abe Nobuyuki in the winter of 1939-1940. Most disturbing was the exacerbation of popular discontent with economic controls and the shortage of goods, where pessimistic accounts and reproofs against the state were products of the interest standard and freedomism. In response, the author outlined four possible strategies to assert greater control over editorial policy. The first was moral solicitation, but given the commercial, profit orientation of the newspapers, this method had reached a saturation point. Papers might still run a hot news item despite the application of maximum moral pressure.⁴⁵ A second approach

was to reinforce legal powers, either by revising the Newspaper Law or implementing the State Total Mobilization Law, but neither was politically feasible at the moment. A third possibility was more rigid application of administrative sanctions against the press, but this also had limits, and it could create an unfavorable reaction. The final option was to control the business side of newspapers, and this received the author's full endorsement. Since the papers' first priority was to sell, their business managers could ultimately overrule editors and determine what was printed. Fortunately, the Commerce and Industry Ministry was already in command of the paper supply.⁴⁶ The author advocated that an inter-ministerial committee be set up for political control over paper rationing, with the Cabinet Information Division handling the administrative chores, and this is exactly what happened three months later in May 1940. At about the same time, the smaller newspapers and book publishers were brought into the paper control system.⁴⁷

The Committee for the Control of Newspaper and Magazine Paper was established by cabinet decision to advise the Commerce and Industry Ministry (still charged with formal allocation) on paper rationing to all publishing companies. When the Cabinet Information Division was upgraded to a bureau in December 1940, its Governor became chairman of the committee, and its Vice-Director, Okumura Kiwao, became the committee's managing director. Although nominal control over newsprint was later passed to the press control associations, real authority remained in the hands of the cabinet information organ from May 1940 until the end of the war.

Paper control was a big boost to the power and prestige of the

Cabinet Information Division. Previously it had organized consultations to deliver "positive guidance," but it had no concrete means to enforce its will upon the press; sanctions were all administered by the Home Ministry. Now its officials were besieged with visits and petitions from Japan's top press executives.⁴⁸ Officials wasted no time in coordinating paper regulation with the Home Ministry's consolidation design.⁴⁹ Hereafter, journals lined up for "adjustment and integration" were starved for paper..

On 17 June 1940, the Committee for the Control of Newspaper and Magazine Paper fixed its basic policy, noteworthy for being the first official endorsement of press consolidations.⁵⁰ The committee's resolution noted that while the leading newspapers were cooperative and supported state policy, they had still not rid themselves of the "critical, objective attitude of the past." Due to competition for profits, the press was still irresponsibly publishing information guided by the interest standard. Two policies could correct this situation, one being "adjustment and integration" (the Home Ministry's consolidation project), the other paper allocation based on journalistic "quality." The committee deemed it "a pressing business of today to renovate and adjust the newspaper and magazine industry that is in a confused state of excessive disorder, doing away with those papers and magazines that are harmful or whose existence is without social value, while supporting the development of healthy newspapers and magazines endowed with the quality of responsibility for their state mission." The paper supply would be regulated to reach these objectives. The committee's decision was formally reported to the supposedly conservative cabinet of Prime Minister Yonai on 26 June 1940. On this

date, then, the state's highest decision-making body tacitly approved the use of paper controls to destroy newspapers and magazines out of line with state policy or "without social value." The cabinet did not lend its imprimatur to any specific blueprint for consolidations, however. Guidelines for the elimination of minor journals were formulated and implemented by the Home Ministry and after 1940 the Cabinet Information Bureau without discussion by the cabinet itself.

Cabinet indulgence or no, consolidation policy in this period, like the blacklisting discussed earlier, is an irrefutable example of unconstitutional state power. But for the dormant judicial authority to close publications, the state had absolutely no legal warrant to compel mergers or dissolutions of press organs for political or any other reasons until December 1941. It was only then that activation of the State Total Mobilization Law legalized newspaper consolidations. As so often happened in imperial Japan, the policy of wrecking press organs predated its legal authorization by several years. With the cabinet's connivance, civilian and military bureaucrats had taken to eradicating civil associations without the slightest legal right.

Though media controls over 1937-1945 are analyzed here in parts, note that many events described successively were occurring at the same time. The prior censorship of magazines, the "positive guidance" on press coverage of particular issues, and the blacklisting of writers must be pictured against a background of thousands of journals being liquidated by the state. The atmosphere of consultations designed to interfere with editorial policy can only be fully grasped when one sees that running parallel to these were other consultations terminating journals altogether, both managed by the same Home Ministry and

Cabinet Information Bureau.

Notes

¹Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 80; Berger, Parties, pp. 155-156.

²Ito Takashi, 15-Nen Senso, pp. 216-217.

³Berger, Parties, pp. 147-148.

⁴According to rumors repeated by Diet members during committee hearings, the Cabinet Planning Board had not included this censorship article in its original draft of the law, and neither the Home Minister nor the Army Minister was opposed to its removal. Rather, it was the Home Ministry's Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief who had initially urged its inclusion; see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 11, pp. 94, 106, 88. The first version of the law presented to the Diet had stipulated that the government could suspend publication of any journal violating mobilizational directives twice, but this clause had been removed by the cabinet to defuse potential opposition. The real purpose of the article had been the new power of suspension, leaving the remainder rather meaningless after its exclusion. Censorship authority under this law was decreed and granted to the Cabinet Information Bureau on 10 January 1941. It did boost the bureau's influence, but since all state agencies could ban items through the Newspaper Law system anyway, it was not a very significant addition to state control from the standpoint of the press--the decree introducing CIB censorship is in *ibid.*, document 54, pp. 324-325.

Some Diet members did press government spokesmen to demonstrate what mobilization law censorship added to the Home Ministry's pre-publication warning system, since the public order formula could be employed to ban virtually anything. One response was that the pre-publication warnings were only administrative conveniences and mobilization powers should have a firmer legal foundation; see the remarks of Home Minister Suetsugu in the lower house on March 9 in *ibid.*, document 11, p. 97, and of the Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief in the same, pp. 102-103. This position triggered a rather pointless discussion of the legality of pre-publication warnings, pointless because no one contested the Home Ministry's right to employ them. Another government argument was that the new law would allow greater restrictions on economic reporting, such as banning coverage of expropriations under the total mobilization law itself; see the remarks of the Vice-Governor of the Cabinet Planning Board to the lower house in *ibid.*, p. 101. The economy was the one area where newspapers voiced negative opinions related to the war effort, and a backlash from big business was anticipated during establishment of the New Order. However, the censorship clause in the new law did not add new powers to deal with this problem.

⁵The State Total Mobilization Law is translated in T.A. Bisson, Japan's War Economy (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1945), pp. 212-221.

⁶E.g., see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 11, p. 113.

⁷See the exchange on this episode in upper house hearings in *ibid.*, document 13, pp. 127-128.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 124, in the words of the Governor of the Cabinet Planning Board.

⁹*Ibid.*, document 11, p. 70.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 72

¹¹There were even inconsistencies in the Diet statements of government spokesmen on this point. For example, the head of the Cabinet Planning Board announced the intention of employing mobilization censorship as soon as the law was passed, while this was declared unnecessary by the Army and Home Ministers; see *ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 66.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 60-61; the prior accusation is found in *ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁶Just as it was about to pass the State Total Mobilization Law, the Japanese lower house expelled Social Masses Party Representative Nishio Suehiro for a speech including these words:

We must consider this bill from the viewpoint of the future international situation and our country's historic mission. The contradictions of the capitalistic politico-economic system have not only sprung up in this country but internationally. . . . Prime Minister Konoe must carry out renovationist policies properly in the manner of Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin.

Quoted in Ito Takashi, 15-Nen Senso, p. 214. If many mainstream party members were uncomfortable with references to Hitler and Mussolini, the mention of Stalin was anathema. But it was precisely the general renown of Germany and Italy combined with the disinclination to emulate their experience in toto that allowed Japanese statisticians to exploit their example.

¹⁷For example, the Diet passed the Genron, Shuppan, Shukai, Kessha Rinji Torishimari Ho (Law for the Emergency Regulation of Speech, Publications, Assembly, and Associations) in December 1941. This law required a license for all Newspaper Law periodicals, which had not been necessary

since 1887. It also granted the power to suspend further publication of a journal if an edition were banned from circulation for a violation of content, a power that had been stricken from the original State Total Mobilization Law. The control association system was so developed by late 1941, however, that these powers had little meaning by that time. Other aspects of this law, punishing rumors and requiring licenses for political associations and meetings, were more significant. The law and the decree governing its implementation are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 74, pp. 377-378, and document 79, pp. 444-445.

¹⁸ Berger, Parties, pp. 141-142.

¹⁹ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 11, pp. 116, 83.

²⁰ The only reason we know that it began in August 1938 is that the Home Ministry's Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 141 (pp. 37-40) lists the number of active periodical press organs just before consolidation started, and the list is dated at the end of July.

²¹ Tashiro Kanenobu of the Cabinet Information Division makes it clear that when the cabinet began to use paper controls to further consolidations in May 1940 he and his colleagues worked with a plan that had been prepared earlier by the Home Ministry's Censorship Section (the old Book Section had been so renamed by the time Tashiro wrote); see Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei no Hanashi [Speaking of the New Order for Publications] (Tokyo: Nihon Denpo Tsushinsha, 1942), p. 8.

²² All figures are from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no 141, pp. 37-40.

²³ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 97, p. 496.

²⁴ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 139, pp. 39-43.

²⁵ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 141, p. 37.

²⁶ These methods are recounted in Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 118. It has been reported that in February 1941 the Cabinet Information Bureau demanded lists of subscribers from various magazine publishers, sometimes leading to their harassment by the police. Apparently subscribers to Chuo Koron, Kaizo, and Nippon Hyoron within the military were singled out for attention; see Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 36.

²⁷ Quoted from Nihon Shinbun Nenkan Showa 16-Nen [The Japan Newspaper Yearbook 1941] (Tokyo: Shinbun Kenkyujo, 1941), pp. 8-9. The Censorship Section referred to was a branch of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police, which was organized in an exceptional manner as Japan's

largest local police office. It should not be confused with the Censorship Section (also Ken'etsu Ka) to emerge in the Home Ministry's central Criminal Affairs Bureau when the Book Section was so renamed in December 1940.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁹ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 140, p. 4.

³⁰ Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 118.

³¹ Information in this paragraph is from Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 140, pp. 4-5, which covered policing of the printed media during September-October 1941.

³² Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 31, p. 247.

³³ This he later did in Nanking in March 1941. The warning was the least severe of the three types, amounting to little more than a moral appeal, making the arrests an extraordinarily tough reaction--see Chapter XVII, footnote 4. This case demonstrates that even disobedience to an apparently non-obligatory appeal from officials could result in harsh penalties.

³⁴ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 31, p. 250.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 247-248.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 249-250.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 245.

³⁸ Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 24.

³⁹ Nihon Shinbun Nenkan 1941, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 39.

⁴² Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 62.

⁴³ Ibid.; Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 121.

⁴⁴The opinion paper is reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 34, pp. 261-263.

⁴⁵Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 125, p. 12.

⁴⁶The essay noted that the Cabinet Planning Board and Cabinet Information Division already had some influence over the Commerce and Industry Ministry's paper controls, but no further details were given.

⁴⁷Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, pp. 62-63.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰The committee's decision is reprinted in Senzen no Joho Kiko Yoran [Outline of the Prewar Information Structure], unpublished manuscript, 1964. This document was prepared by ex-officials of the Cabinet Information Bureau; it was made available to the author by Professor Ito Takashi.

CHAPTER XIX

THE NEW ORDER FOR THE PRESS: 1940-1945

The term "New Order" (Shintaisei) became the official slogan for Konoe Fumimaro's second cabinet in August 1940.¹ For the mass media and other social sectors it portended a policy revolution which drastically restructured active civil associations and subjected them to penetrating positive controls. The framework of the New Order for the press was typical of that for most major industries--officials liquidated the vast majority of firms and herded the survivors into control bodies through which they could exercise State Total Mobilization Law authority. The experience of the press thus exemplifies a much broader pattern for the expansion of state control over society.

New Order Policymakers and Their Ideology

One salient feature of the New Order was a shift in policymaking initiative from the established ministries to the newer cabinet planning organs. In media policy, this involved a transfer of leadership from the Home and Communications Ministries to the Cabinet Information Bureau. Its expansion into a bureau (kyoku) in December 1940 brought the CIB staff up to 510 full-time employees. These included 118 ranking bureaucrats, 52 of them permanent CIB officials, 24 on temporary assignment from the Foreign Ministry, 14 from the Home Ministry, ten each from the Army and Navy Ministries, and eight from the Communications

Ministry.² Within about 18 months, they managed to engineer a radical mobilization of the mass media. This section explores the career backgrounds and ideology of some of the leading figures among them.

The key administrators associated with the New Order are usually referred to as "renovationist bureaucrats" (kakushin kanryo). They were successors to the "new bureaucrats" appearing after 1932. The "new bureaucrats" had been so labeled more for their independence from the parties than for a common ideological outlook, but a number were purged after the attempted coup of February 1936 as alleged sympathizers. This spawned a second generation of new bureaucrats, or the "'new' new bureaucrats." These "new new bureaucrats" were the same who came to be called "renovationist bureaucrats" later in the decade. In fact, the word "renovation" was connected with them as early as 1936.³ Both the terms "new new bureaucrats" and "renovationist bureaucrats" connoted a closeness to the military and support for far-reaching statist policies. Renovationists were dominant in the Cabinet Planning Board (and its predecessor, the Cabinet Research Division), the Cabinet Information Bureau and its earlier manifestations, and by 1940 in the Commerce and Industry Ministry, whose authority increased immensely with economic mobilization. The cabinet organs were unique in recruiting both civilian and military officials, and they also hired some personnel from civil society, including a few ex-leftists. The most influential renovationists were career administrators originally employed by the established ministries, who did temporary tours of duty in the cabinet organs or held simultaneous posts in their ministries and the cabinet. Many moved back and forth between the two, so they were not exclusively associated with the cabinet, but that is where they had their greatest

impact.

Three of the leading CIB renovationists about whom we have some solid information are Okumura Kiwao, Miyamoto Yoshio, and Kawamo Ryuzo. Kawamo was the chief government spokesman in negotiating a New Order for the film industry. Miyamoto was a CIB section chief governing radio from late 1941 and then took over newspaper authority in mid-1942. Okumura was appointed Vice-Governor (Jicho) of the CIB in October 1941, effectively putting him in charge of the entire operation. He was easily one of the five or six most influential bureaucrats in the Japanese state from about 1936 to 1943. He had earlier helped to plan communications policy in Manchuria, and he had personally framed the seminal legislation to control the electric power industry in the mid-1930's--it was then that he had enunciated the principle of "private ownership/state management."⁴

These men conformed in several respects to the standard portrait of renovationist officials. They were all relatively young. Okumura, the oldest, was but 41 when he took command of the Cabinet Information Bureau. The cabinet organs thus gave younger men a chance to wield greater authority than they could in the established ministries, where promotion was tightly linked to seniority. Furthermore, all three completed their university training in the 1920's. Exposure to Marxist ideas on college campuses in that period is considered a vital shared trait of the leading renovationist administrators.⁵ Some even expressed disappointment that the subsequent suppression of communism had left their juniors in the bureaucracy without a good foundation in social criticism.⁶ Okumura had graduated in 1925, Kawamo in 1926, and Miyamoto in 1928--all were alumni of the Law Faculty of Tokyo Imperial

University. Finally, their role in promoting statist policies brought them an influence and notoriety they would otherwise not have known. All three had begun their careers in the lowly Communications Ministry, and it was their early commitment to statism that won them passage into the cabinet organs. Bureaucratic novices were able to choose their ministries in the order on which they scored on the state administrative exams, and the Communications Ministry was generally near the bottom of the list in preference. It was a ministry with relatively little responsibility for national policy. Thus the stakes of these men in the cabinet information office were both substantive (the desire to promote statist policies), and occupational (greater authority for the cabinet organs meant more attractive and consequential careers for them). All three advocated tougher state control policies well before the China Incident, all were founding members of the Cabinet Information Committee in 1936, and all strove thereafter to increase its authority.⁷ Okumura was also a key figure on the Cabinet Planning Board in the crucial period when the State Total Mobilization Law was being drafted. The cabinet offices did indeed bring these men into the limelight. On the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, it was Miyamoto who broadcast the call to assemble before the radio prior to Prime Minister Tojo's declaration of war, and the premier's address was followed by Okumura's own patriotic speech. These career patterns demonstrate why one should be wary of any general characterization of bureaucrats as being oriented toward routine or the status quo. If some bureaucrats will have vested interests in maintaining the administrative hierarchy, others may have much to gain by changing it, and reorganization within the state itself may break through the bonds of seniority that hold the prevailing policy

outlook in place.

The ideology of these New Order administrators is essential for understanding late imperial politics, but it is a difficult subject. The Japanese state did not have any one authoritative spokesman over the entire 1937-1945 period, nor was there a political bible with the sanctity of a Mein Kampf. Furthermore, even though one can identify the principal renovationist policymakers, many did not publish at the time, and their ideas were not necessarily identical. Unfortunately, postwar interviews with these men have done more to obfuscate than to clarify their motives. Most have portrayed their actions in retrospect as a mere function of the wartime crisis.⁸ The American occupation authorities, whose impression of late imperial Japan was overly swayed by the chaos evident in the last two years of war, helped to reinforce the view that Japanese domestic policymaking had been a matter of uncoordinated reactions to crisis. A careful examination of what top renovationist administrators were thinking when the New Order was founded, however, presents a very different picture. Here we find not ad hoc responses to crisis, but a sophisticated and coherent theoretical framework for a revolution in the state-society relationship. Fortunately, both Okumura and Miyamoto have left detailed prewar records of their political thought. Their views cannot be presented as definitive renditions of New Order ideology, but they do provide valuable insights into the thinking behind media policy.⁹

The most basic premise of their outlook was that the world was undergoing a great historical transformation, one that would remold every aspect of society and culture--the belief in this great historical divide has been described as the most common denominator of military and

bureaucratic renovationist thought.¹⁰ Okumura wrote in 1938:

The motion of the world which mankind is experiencing at present is an historic cultural revolution that promises to correct and alter fundamentally the mode of existence we have been living in modern society. It is a revolution in law, a revolution in politics, a revolution in society and the economy.¹¹

And Miyamoto:

The world now is altogether accomplishing a great metamorphosis in terms of both states and people. Nothing shall escape it; politics and economics and culture, and thus thought and speech, and broadcasting and film that are the products of this new age, all are [undergoing this change] as one.¹²

In their view the historical age of freedom (or "freedomism") was in its death throes. This passing epoch revolved around individual rights and interests, capitalism and profit, democracy and party politics, and unrestrained competition. The role of the state was merely to defend society from foreign attack, to provide police protection for life and property, and to adjudicate disputes between people--the freedomist state was the état gendarme. The age of freedom had begun with the French Revolution and served a valid historical purpose in overthrowing the old absolutism. But this stage itself was now fraught with internal contradictions which in turn called for its overthrow. Freedomism had led to the strong devouring the weak, making real freedom the luxury of only a few. Within countries, this meant class struggle and the development of capitalist domination to its final monopolistic phase.¹³ A healthy collective existence had become impossible. Internationally, the few great powers--the United States, Britain, and France--oppressed and exploited colonies and treated their people like slaves. Free trade had given way to closed economic blocks resulting in inevitable conflict between nations. Both within and between nations, then, freedom had led not to the good of the whole but to the selfish

benefit of the few able to take advantage of its opportunities. If the old absolutist systems had represented a private interest against the public welfare, free societies had come to embody the same thing in a different form.

The new era in the process of formation was most commonly identified by Miyamoto as that of the national defense state, by Okumura as that of "totalitarianism" (zentaishugi, in this case borrowing from contemporary European usage).¹⁴ It was the negation of everything represented by the historical stage of freedom. The individual was to find spiritual oneness with the whole of society. The nation would no longer be a mere sum of individuals, but possess a collective will and collective ideals. The welfare of the individual would be realized through the welfare of the nation, his freedom through the nation's freedom and strength in world affairs. In economics, this meant the introduction of a planned, controlled economy, in law the priority of the public over the private interest, in politics the end of party competition furthering narrow interests and the concentration of power in the cabinet. The new state would play an activist, integrating function. Unlike a socialist state, it would not represent a single class, emphasize materialism, or obliterate private interests altogether, but it would permit private pursuits only to the extent of their serving the good of the whole. Militarily, the country would be prepared to fight a total war.

Germany and Italy were already totalitarian or national defense states, and Japan was well fixed to enter the new age as well.¹⁵ The unifying concept of the family nation personified in the Emperor, and the bushido code of the samurai and nationalistic Yamato spirit were

an ideal basis for the new state-society system. General Ludendorff's comment that of all nations Japan was the most fit to become a national defense state was a favorite citation in renovationist writings.¹⁶

It was emphasized, however, that the historical change underway was not a return to the past but the beginning of a new stage in history. Traditional spiritual collectivism was to be grafted onto a society that would embody the bureaucratic values of order, rationality, planning, and organization. Such was the dual mentality reflected in renovationist ideology.

What did the new era portend for media policy? Freedom of thought had produced an anarchy of opinion ending in subjectivism and spiritual confusion. Public discussion degenerated into an exchange of irresponsible attacks and criticism motivated by the greed for profit. The freedomist state had limited itself to a minimal, passive role, acting only to curb the worst abuses. Cultural values had been set on a pedestal above the state and the nation and discussed in international terms. To maximize the nation's collective unity and strength for the coming era, repression would not suffice. The spirit and will of subjects would have to be redirected from private to public interests. Public expression would have to be liberated from the profit standard so it could progress from doubt and criticism to consent and constructiveness.¹⁷ This did not mean the state would manufacture all ideas and culture, but it would insist that these serve the collective purposes of the nation. This is why so many countries were organizing propaganda ministries to regulate the media and the arts.

While Japanese trends of the 1920's were clearly identified with

the fading era of freedom, the renovationists were more cautious in dealing with the Meiji founders. It is obvious that from their point of view the Meiji state had introduced freedomism into Japan. They could laud the historical role of a free society in doing away with the old absolutism, and they could commend the Meiji elite for not having succumbed entirely to the freedomist creed, but their own project was clearly a rejection of much that the Meiji state represented. The Meiji political enterprise was so closely associated with the imperial house, however, that forthright criticism had to be avoided. The renovationists were thus conspicuously silent on the subject of Ito Hirobumi, Yamagata Aritomo, and the other Meiji state builders. This is an important point to reflect upon when considering the continuities and discontinuities in Japanese politics between the late nineteenth century and creation of the New Order. Though the renovationists ostensibly paid homage to the Meiji constitution, their true estimation of it is perhaps best revealed in the terms of the State Total Mobilization Law.

It is evident that these men did not perceive their revolution in media policy as a mere response to the demands of modern warfare, though that aspect too is analyzed in their writings. The war was just the most visible symptom of a more profound transformation underway in politics and the social system--it was this underlying transformation that made war inevitable. The renovationists believed that just as the era of freedom had brought the countries best incorporating its principles to world dominance, so its passing would see them give way to those nations best exemplifying the national defense state or totalitarianism.

The majority of the Japanese people did not see matters from such an intensely ideological standpoint. Renovationist ideas were not confined to the backroom--Miyamoto and Okumura were, after all, two of the state's foremost propagandists. But the historicism and critique of capitalism they borrowed from Marxism and their unabashed admiration for Germany and Italy were undoubtedly less cogent to most Japanese in 1940 than the immediate demands of war. Moreover, many social leaders and state officials ready to cooperate with war-related mobilization were utterly opposed to the ideological statism of Okumura, Miyamoto, and their CIB colleagues. We will now examine the way in which the cabinet renovationists translated their interpretation of history into concrete policy proposals, and then see how those proposals succeeded or failed of realization due to the resistance of their patriotic but much less doctrinaire fellow countrymen.

Planning for the New Order in Mid-Late 1940

Prime Minister Konoe's proclamation of a "Fundamental Policy Outline" (Kihon Kokusaku Yoko) for the New Order on 1 August 1940 fueled ambitions within the cabinet information bureaucracy. The policy outline had been drafted originally by military and bureaucratic renovationist officials.¹⁸ Accordingly, it declared the world to be at a great historical crossroads that would witness the creation of a new politics, economics, and culture, and called for Japan to enter the new epoch by means of a "national defense state system." Among other things, it advocated a Great East Asian New Order (the "Great" was a novelty), an educational renewal infused with the principles of the national polity, and bureaucratic reform to unify

and expedite state operations.¹⁹ Renovationist administrators were understandably elated by the tone and contents of the Prime Minister's declaration. This was especially true of cabinet information officials, for whom the statement so clearly coincided with a real accretion of power. Their expansion into a bureau followed closely upon their takeover of paper rationing in May 1940, and they were already busy planning new press controls. As one bureaucrat wrote of Konoe's proclamation, ". . . it corresponded perfectly with the 'Main Points of a New Order for the Press' that we had undertaken concretely just one step ahead."²⁰ Despite their impatience for bold initiatives, however, the political situation was not as favorable to renovationist designs as it had first appeared. To place the establishment of the early press control organs in proper perspective, it is necessary to review the policy planning of CIB officials in the latter part of 1940 and the political obstacles they confronted.

As consolidations continued to move forward, official attention focused on two issues: (1) how to expand control over the business operations of the press, and (2) the optimal structure of the newspaper industry once consolidation had run its course.²¹ The first was an extension of the concerns underlying paper control, and the CIB's paper control committee was a center of New Order planning in this period. Its strategy was to emasculate the capitalistic foundation of press enterprises by checking competition for profit, thereby excluding selfish interests in favor of the public good. The pursuit of profit was an unhealthy inducement to disregard state policy and adopt the interest standard. Moreover, the money squandered to promote competitive sales was a waste of valuable resources. The top five newspapers of

Tokyo and Osaka were said to spend six million yen yearly for market expansion.²²

Several structural changes were contemplated to root out profit incentives. One was to concentrate the marketing and distribution of all press organs into two monopolistic companies supervised by the state, one for newspapers and one for magazines and books.²³

Advertising fees would also be regulated. These powers as well as paper rationing would be integrated into industry control associations over which the state would have ultimate authority.²⁴ Newspapers would belong to one such organization, magazine and book publishers to another. Already in the fall of 1940, newspaper policy was charged to a different group of cabinet information officials than magazine and book policy.

Planning for magazine and book controls took concrete form very early. In August 1940, officials projected a general industry control body by October, and an integrated distribution company by February of 1941.²⁵ Concrete proposals developed more slowly for newspapers. The view that newspaper management had to be insulated from the sway of owners pressing for more income was discussed,²⁶ but prescriptions for change were as yet vague in late 1940, at least according to the available evidence.

Since newspaper consolidations were already far advanced, officials pondered an optimal configuration for the industry. The key issue was the eventual status of the larger local and metropolitan papers as yet unaffected by "adjustment and integration." CIB opinion papers in August and December 1940 posited a target average of two general daily newspapers per prefecture.²⁷ A slightly greater

number would be permitted in metropolitan areas than in the less populated prefectures. There were no plans to eliminate newspaper giants like the Asahi, Mainichi/Nichi Nichi, or Yomiuri, but the figures indicate that other large dailies in Tokyo and Osaka were earmarked for consolidation.

To attain its objectives, the CIB hoped for immediate activation of State Total Mobilization Law powers (both mobilization censorship and press business controls), and a cabinet decision to ratify a final structure for the newspaper industry.²⁸ Mobilization censorship was granted on 10 January 1941, but prospects were so bleak for business controls that the issue was apparently never brought before the cabinet. When guidelines for a final newspaper structure were presented for cabinet approval in January 1941, they encountered steadfast opposition from Welfare Minister Kaneko Tsuneo and Colonial Affairs Minister Akita Kiyoshi, both ex-party men, who rejected the coercive imposition of such a scheme from above. Without a cabinet consensus, mobilization business controls and this survival chart for newspapers were dropped as too controversial at a time when the government was struggling to launch the Imperial Rule Assistance Association and its economic mobilization programs.

In sum, CIB renovationists were denied the legal license they needed to force industry control associations, cooperative distribution, and a final newspaper structure. Since control associations could not be compelled under the mobilization law, the only option was to use available powers to organize them on a formally voluntary basis. The CIB soon adopted the Home Ministry's tactics vis-a-vis the cabinet. True to the habits of command it had acquired in the 1870's, the Home

Ministry had never requested cabinet approval for consolidations--it merely implemented them on its own authority. In a period of many controversial policy innovations, it was politically more opportune to count on the passive acquiescence of the cabinet (many of whose members certainly knew about the policy), than to push for a formal decision in its favor. As long as the question never surfaced in formal debate, potential dissenters among the state elite, distracted by so many other issues requiring attention, were unlikely to mount a serious challenge. The cabinet information organ was initially slow to accept this approach. Renovationist civilian bureaucrats in particular tended to be political extroverts, their dynamic enthusiasm constantly seeking public outlets and approbation. Constrained by circumstances, however, they now endeavored to overstep their legal mandate and fashion "voluntary" control organs to inaugurate a New Order for the press. The operations of these voluntary control organs and their subsequent conversion into formal control associations according to the mobilization law will be described in successive sections. Since newspapers and magazines were corraled into two separate systems, they are disaggregated for analysis.

A "Voluntary" Control Organ for Newspapers: May-December 1941

The initial leaders of the project to found a newspaper control organ were Colonel Matsumura Shuitsu, the CIB's newspaper section chief and head of the army's information organs, and Furuno Inosuke, president of the United News Agency. Furuno was a perfect middleman for dealing with the press. The news agency was financed by both the state and the industry, it was supervised by the CIB, and Furuno was a fervent

collaborator in renovationist designs who had worked closely with newspaper people for five years. It was he who organized consultation meetings with the large central newspapers in December 1940 and local/regional papers in January 1941 to broach the idea of a voluntary control organ. CIB and Home Ministry officials were in attendance on both occasions. Thus the first outstanding trait of this "voluntary" control organ is that it was entirely the state's idea.

Antagonism between central and local newspapers retarded creation of an integrated control body until May 1941. The local papers were represented in negotiations by just a few of the more prominent tabloids likely to survive consolidation. Nonetheless, those participating had suffered the competition of the national dailies long enough to embitter the relationship. The possibility of dividing the rivals into two distinct control organs was entertained, but the CIB insisted upon a unified endeavor.³⁰ With Mori Ippei of the Nagoya Shinbun speaking for the local/regional papers, the difficulties were ironed out in time to inaugurate the Newspaper League (Shinbun Renmei) on 28 May 1941. The directors (riji) included six representatives of local/regional newspapers, five from the largest Tokyo and Osaka papers, and Furuno Inosuke of the United News Agency. Two supervisors (kanji) were drawn from medium-size Tokyo newspapers, so in all only 13 newspaper companies had delegates on the league's decision-making council. In addition, there were three participating directors (sanyo riji), the CIB's Vice-Governor and Second Division Chief, and the Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief of the Home Ministry.³¹

The avowed purpose of the Newspaper League was "as a self-governing

control group of the newspaper business, to plan the progress and development of this business, and thereby to fulfill its state mission."³² Specifically, it was to cooperate with state control over expression, reform newspaper editing and management, and assist in planning state paper rationing. In short, the league was founded at the state's initiative to facilitate official control. This technically self-inflicted control had been sold to the newspapers as a preferable alternative to the state's otherwise inevitable unilateral controls. All of the league's subsequent activities were directly related to the agenda for change discussed within the CIB in late 1940.

Participation in the league was formally voluntary, but since paper rationing was partly predicated on its advice, there was little choice but to join. Its founding did not halt the consolidation of member newspapers. Its decision-making rested entirely with the board of directors, and the real issue it faced was how the firms on the board and other prominent local/regional newspapers would ultimately be affected by Japan's New Order.

On 17 September 1941, the state's participating directors placed the key questions regarding a final newspaper control system before the Newspaper League's board of directors. One set of questions concerned the structure of the industry: How should the character of newspapers and their locus of publication be fixed? Should trade or other specialized newspapers be allowed, and if so, how many and what type? Should local editions of national or regional newspapers be permitted? Should local newspapers be limited to one per prefecture? Should all newspapers be amalgamated into a single company which would then publish at various locations? Simultaneously, a second set of inquiries

was put forth regarding the mode of state control: Should newspaper control be integrated into a self-governing mechanism or administered by state orders? Should the capital required for newspaper integration be provided by the newspapers, the state, or both? Should a national newspaper control company be established and with what organizational principles?

The core of contention on the board was the prospect of consolidation into a single national newspaper company. The Asahi, Mainichi/Nichi Nichi, and Yomiuri delegates were opposed to a grand merger, since they clearly had the most to lose in financial and material assets. The representatives of local and regional papers favored the one-company plan. It would stabilize their operations financially, end the competitive incursions of the national papers, and though their commercial autonomy would be swallowed up, they would be guaranteed survival as outlets for the new company, not a trifling matter given the background of consolidations. The middleweight newspapers in Tokyo also supported amalgamation. Miki Bukichi of the Hochi Shinbun, who had long pleaded for the local papers against consolidation, was now a leading spokesman for the single company concept. If it were defeated, the one paper per prefecture standard would probably doom middle-size Tokyo papers like the Hochi. Even if the capital city were accorded two or three dailies, the newspaper giants would claim those slots. In short, positions taken on the one-company plan accorded perfectly with the organizational interests of each firm.

The league's directors debated for almost a month without agreement. The three big newspapers held out against amalgamation, and

on occasion the discussion turned acrid. The representative of the Mainichi/Nichi Nichi chain, Yamada Junzo, is said to have told Miki Bukichi: "With only the advantage of your own company in mind, to as much as sell away the freedom of newspapers to bureaucrats is truly the height of shame for a newspaper man."³⁴ Miki, who had bravely spoken out against consolidation while the newspaper giants were cashing in on the disappearance of countless local papers, was understandably livid. At this stage, it is difficult to construe any of the newspapers as overly preoccupied with the ideal of a free press. The deadlock on the board led to the chairman's designation of a subcommittee on 4 October 1941 to address the structural question. Its members were Furuno Inosuke of the United News Agency, the three state participating directors, and the chairman himself, Tanaka Tokichi, who represented a middle-size Tokyo paper and was the only newspaper man of the five.

The subcommittee reported its will to the full board on 5 November 1941. It advocated that the tangible assets and publishing rights of all Japanese newspapers be transferred to a single newspaper company. Until this company was chartered by means of a special law, it would be a private corporation, and the pre-existing newspapers would be awarded stock according to their circulation, transferred assets, and business records. Furthermore, each stockholding newspaper would be internally reorganized into a juridical person comprising only the directors and staff actively engaged in running the enterprise. The umbrella company would then entrust publication and management to these juridical persons, and they would keep their previous titles (Asahi Shinbun, Yomiuri Shinbun, etc.). In exchange, the various

publishers would pay fees to the joint company at a fixed rate. The number of newspapers allowed to continue operating would be five or less in Tokyo and four or less in Osaka, one or two in Aichi prefecture, and one per prefecture elsewhere.³⁵ This proposal would have stripped the newspapers of their economic autonomy immediately, and ultimately compromised their managerial autonomy as well, since the state would dominate the joint company once its status was determined by special legislation. Essentially, the plan would settle the final structure of the industry, thoroughly isolate management from ownership by restricting the latter to one vast holding company, and win for officials the powers promised to them by the State Total Mobilization Law but politically unattainable at the time. The newspapers' only consolation would be to retain their titles and operational staffs, at least temporarily.

The local/regional and mid-size Tokyo newspapers consented to this blueprint, while the Asahi, Mainichi/Nichi Nichi, and Yomiuri were dead opposed. CIB Vice-Governor Okumura Kiwao, recently appointed by Prime Minister Tojo personally, reportedly defended the scheme before the board as follows:

Since I believe the subcommittee's plan is absolutely necessary for the state, it is not an occasion [merely] to wager my position. Even if I stake my death, I will compel its realization.

To this Yomiuri President Shoriki Matsutaro responded:

Your earnestness to compel the realization [of this plan] shows honor. However, if I am to be told you will risk your death to force its realization, then even if I risk my life I will oppose this plan to defend the freedom of newspapers.³⁶

The matter thus boiled down to a struggle between a handful of Japan's most influential civil associations and CIB officials joined by a bevy

of medium-size newspapers.

The Asahi and Mainichi/Nichi Nichi representatives each presented counterproposals to the board of the Newspaper League on 10 November 1941. Both aimed at minimizing the capitalistic, profit orientation of newspapers without entirely sacrificing their financial autonomy. The Asahi plan, for example, called for newspaper stock to be wholly owned by each paper's operational staff (including directors), and prohibited editors and executives from maintaining ties with any other profit-making business. Newspaper profits were not to exceed the prevailing rate of interest. To contribute to the "public character" of the newspaper industry, rescindable state licenses would be required to found a paper. A self-governing control body would be organized and financed by the papers, and cooperative sales and advertising would be instituted with the "objective of insuring a non-profit orientation."³⁷ This proposal would presumably eliminate gain as a factor in editorial policy without the transfer of assets or ownership to a joint company. On this last item, the big newspapers were adamant. Furuno even promised the Yomiuri president executive leadership of the new national company if he would break ranks with his partners and endorse the state's proposal, but to no avail.³⁸

When new subcommittees failed to resolve the dispute, the board mandated its chairman, Tanaka Tokichi, to devise an arrangement that might satisfy both parties. The Yomiuri, Asahi, and Mainichi/Nichi Nichi delegates met with him and pledged to abide by his settlement of all other issues if only the one-company plan were abandoned.³⁹ The outline Tanaka laid before the directors on November 24 closely resembled the Asahi's proposal of two weeks before. Each newspaper's stock

would be entirely owned by its operational staff. Permits would be required to found a paper. Staff members would have to sever all links with other profit-making enterprises. The profit margin would be restricted. Finally, a joint newspaper company would be formed under the league's auspices to oversee all stock transactions involved in establishing or reorganizing newspapers; the "company" form was probably window dressing to appease the state directors, whose single national company plan had been rejected.⁴⁰

The board of the Newspaper League unanimously approved Tanaka's plan, which betokened a partial defeat for CIB officials. Why hadn't they used the paper supply and their solid majority support on the board to realize their original aims? Some proposed doing just that. When Furuno Inosuke got wind of Tanaka's report, he immediately advised Col. Matsumura of the CIB that if the army stood firm they could sabotage Tanaka's design and force through the one-company plan. But Matsumura retreated, pleading that there was no government consensus behind that course of action. The navy was moving cautiously on the matter, and the cabinet was especially apprehensive on the subject of newspapers. The army was not prepared to press the issue alone, so if the newspapers were divided on the project, it would have to be forsaken.⁴¹ Consequently, Tanaka's plan encountered no resistance on the board.

The approved plan was presented to Prime Minister Tojo, reworked into formal language, and sanctioned by the cabinet on 28 November 1941. Beyond the tenets mentioned above, it specified that membership in the new control organ would be compulsory, and that it would register and review the hiring of reporters. A transitional period was allowed

for the transfer of stock, though the three national papers had already moved to concentrate stock within their firms.⁴² This cabinet decision was the foremost product of the league. It was followed within a month by activation of State Total Mobilization Law powers over newspapers. In effect, the national dailies had consented to the exercise of mobilization law authority over the entire industry on the one condition that they retain civil ownership. Simultaneously, they sacrificed their sales and distribution networks to a single cooperative enterprise handling distribution, shipment, and the collection of revenues-- it began operating in December 1941.⁴³

Completion of the New Order for Newspapers: 1941-1945

The Newspaper Business Decree of 13 December 1941 granted the Prime Minister (in practice, the CIB) and Home Minister joint mobilization law powers over all bonded newspapers appearing ten or more times monthly.⁴⁴ The decision to issue this decree was implicit in cabinet approval of the Newspaper League's New Order plan in late November, and not a result of the declaration of war against the United States on December 8. The Newspaper League was replaced in February 1942 by the Newspaper Association (Shinbunkai), which was chartered under the same provisions of the State Total Mobilization Law as the "control associations" (toseikai) organized in most sectors of industrial production. The word "control" was simply excluded from the title in deference to the sensibilities of newspaper people.⁴⁵ The state appointed the association's members and specified its jurisdiction, which included controls over newspaper management and editing, consolidations, cooperative sales, the registration of reporters, and the

distribution of newsprint and other raw materials. The control association would exercise legal authority over its members (the newspapers), while the CIB and the Home Minister exercised legal authority over the association. In addition to the full panoply of mobilization business controls (see pp. 403-404 above), the imperial decree empowered officials to ban or suspend publication of any journal feared to impede the execution of state policy.

All imperial decrees pursuant to the mobilization law had to be reviewed by the special commission (including Diet members) established for that purpose. When the Newspaper Business Decree was placed before it on December 10, one member, Nakajima Yadaji, rose to deliver an impassioned speech for press freedom urging its rejection. In the middle of his discourse came the announcement that the British warships Repulse and Prince of Wales had been sunk by the Japanese navy. All present rose to their feet, Nakajima broke off his speech, and the decree was approved unanimously.⁴⁶ This scene epitomizes some of the dominant currents of the era. It captures the patriotic support for imperialism among even convinced liberals, and shows how the war provided such an abundant source of legitimacy for renovationist policies--at least as long as Japan was winning it.

The decree gave officials full legal authority to order consolidations for the first time. However, local officials were still advised that "consultations" were the preferred method of effecting mergers and transfers and that detailed reasons should be reported if a formal order were required. It appears that the inability to handle such matters unofficially would be counted as a failure on the part of local police. In fact, no such order was ever needed to

complete the restructuring of the industry.

A cabinet decision of 15 June 1942 set guidelines for the last round of consolidations.⁴⁷ It ordered the merger of several medium-size metropolitan newspapers, deprived the Asahi and Nichi Nichi of their Aichi regional editions, and called for the fusion of all trade newspapers into one daily each in Tokyo and Osaka. The major trade newspapers were integrated accordingly, but a later decision permitted a small number of industry newsletters to replace the hundreds of disappearing company publications.⁴⁸ The cabinet resolution was communicated to newspapers by CIB officials through the Newspaper Association, demonstrating how the control organ was used to convey orders from above. This action marked the first time any Japanese government had explicitly adopted a general policy of newspaper consolidations or a target structure for the industry.⁴⁹ The commitment came some four years after the Home Ministry had begun its project of "adjustment and integration" and after the great majority of daily newspapers had already been merged or destroyed.

The structure of the New Order for newspapers was fairly complete by the end of 1942. The Newspaper Association had been launched with 104 members in February, but by November only 64 general daily newspapers remained to serve the country.⁵⁰ A handful of these were in the process of consolidation. At least 41 prefectures had been reduced to one daily newspaper apiece--in 21 of them, pre-existing journals had absorbed their rivals, while in the other 20 new companies had been formed from the integration of two or more firms.⁵¹ The larger metropolitan centers made out slightly better; Osaka retained four dailies, Tokyo five plus the English-language Japan Times. In addition,

about 40 periodical trade newsletters were allowed to remain. These were published by the economic control associations or public interest companies commissioned by the ministries. Thus a total of about 100 newspapers emerged from the final phase of consolidations.⁵²

The general dailies were classified as national, regional, or local according to their range of circulation. The Tokyo Asahi, Tokyo Nichi Nichi, and Yomiuri were distributed nationwide, four regional block newspapers published in Tokyo, Nagoya, Fukuoka, and Osaka were disseminated as far as contiguous prefectures, and all others were limited to home prefectures by their paper rations.⁵³ The arrangement was also held together by the cooperative sales and distribution company, which was reorganized into the public interest Japan Newspaper Distribution Association in November 1942--membership was compulsory for all newspapers.

There was no major tampering with the structure of the industry after 1942. The final count showed that nearly 700 general daily newspapers had been eradicated through state action. To the end of the war, however, the state stood by its agreement with the national dailies and left most remaining newspapers under civil ownership.

A "Voluntary" Control Organ for Magazines: December 1940-March 1943

The creation of a voluntary control association for magazine and book publishers was more easily accomplished than in the newspaper field. There were no three or four companies powerful enough to impose conditions on the project. However, the task of mobilization was complicated by the presence in August 1940 of over 5,000 magazines regulated under the Newspaper Law and over 15,000 more under the

Publications Law as yet undiminished by massive consolidations.

Another difficulty was that while newspapers concentrated most business functions in-house, the printing, publication, distribution, and retail sale of most magazines were handled by distinct companies, calling for a more intricate network of state controls. Thus if the New Order for magazines was easier to inaugurate, it was in some ways more difficult to complete. This section will address briefly the character of state-society interaction surrounding creation of the first control organ, and then examine the way officials restructured the various businesses related to publishing to place the magazines themselves in an economic vise.

Some major magazine editors greeted the New Order with genuine enthusiasm in the fall of 1940, but their expectations differed from those of cabinet bureaucrats. Konoe appeared as the light at the end of a tunnel to many intellectuals early in his second cabinet--he led an entourage of first-rate scholars and was much more of an intellectual himself than other recent premiers. Just as his new political movement could be seen as an alternative to militarism, so a self-governing control organ that might conjoin with that movement could be viewed as a shield against bureaucratic coercion. Since some form of organization to coordinate magazines appeared inevitable, one strategy was to seize the initiative and build a truly autonomous body. This thinking inspired the founding of a Japan Editors Association (Nihon Henshushakai) in September 1940, organized by editors of the integrated magazines (Chuo Koron, Kaizo, Bungei Shunju, and Nippon Hyoron).⁵⁴ They quickly presented cabinet information officials with their own concept of a New Order for magazines. As one bureaucrat recalled the occasion:

From various quarters in the industry they bring in petitions without intermission. They are plans of various hues, but one may appreciate their enthusiasm. As far as possible, we decided to listen to petitions no matter how worthless.⁵⁵

There was little enthusiasm, however, for what bureaucrats were contemplating. Their New Order plans for book and magazine publishers had been approved by the CIB's paper control committee in August 1940, but when officials sought suitable industry representatives to assist them, ". . . we couldn't easily find renovationist individuals."⁵⁶ They finally had to choose their collaborators from among people nominated by the publishers.

Cynicism outweighed eagerness from the first among executives working the purely business side of publishing. A revealing story is told by a cabinet bureaucrat himself. He and another official set out to visit Tokyo's four largest distribution companies to smooth the way for their integration into a single firm. On route, they met an industry man by chance and he offered to escort them. At one company, an executive took them into an office he had had specially furnished to his taste, and asked: ". . . it won't be stolen from me even now, will it?"⁵⁷ At another firm, a director told them: "Being already an old man of the old order, I am prepared to take the seat of death at any time if the government so commands, but in exchange, if I die, please have me die for a goal I can believe in."⁵⁸ Soon after that day, a forged industry newsletter was circulated reporting that the bureaucrats' guide on their rounds was due for a high post in the coming control organ.⁵⁹ After relating a similar encounter with retailers in Hokkaido, the same bureaucrat admitted that such experiences were frequent:

It isn't only in Hokkaido that they refer to me as a "devil information official" but somehow all over the country. I think that is just fine. Until the Publishing New Order is completed in name and reality, it will have to continue being "devil information official."⁶⁰

The bureaucrat in question, Tashiro Kanenobu, had been a newspaper reporter for 15 years before recruitment to the Cabinet Information Division in 1938.

The Japan Publishing Culture Association was launched on 19 December 1940 as an "autonomous" control organ for magazine and book publishers. It was a public interest company with about 4,000 members-- the CIB decided which firms could join.⁶¹ Among its functions were to administer paper rationing, to oversee distribution and sales control organs, and to suppress worthless publications while promoting the beneficial.⁶² The CIB appointed the chairman and had to approve all major managerial decisions before they took effect. The association's charter spoke of the publishers' mission to help establish a "national defense state." We will now examine the manner in which the paper industry and distribution companies were restructured and integrated into the association's activities.

In the new paper control structure established in 1941, the acquisition of paper involved the following steps: (1) Publishers requested paper quarterly from the Japan Publishing Culture Association, which had to approve all purchases. (2) The Japan Publishing Culture Association processed the requests and relayed its proposed responses to state offices. (3) The Commerce and Industry Ministry and Cabinet Information Bureau made final decisions on paper allocation.

Each publisher's ration was divided into fixed and conditional portions. The former was given automatically, while the latter depended upon

political subservience and was often denied.⁶³ Special allotments were made for works directly serving state policy. The will of the two agencies was reported back to the culture association, which issued vouchers to publishers for their rations, and forwarded the state's rationing instructions to the paper sales cooperative.

(4) The Western Paper Cooperative Sales Company, which all paper manufacturers surviving consolidation were compelled to join, dictated the distribution of the entire output of its members. It was set up by the Commerce and Industry Ministry in late 1940. It informed manufacturers how much paper they should sell to which wholesale outlets around the country. (5) The Wholesalers' Union and the Western Paper Commercial Union were two more companies organized by the Commerce and Industry Ministry encompassing all paper wholesale and retail outlets, respectively. They monopolized the transfer of paper from manufacturers to publishers. Publishers would present their vouchers at the local retail outlet and purchase their paper.⁶⁴

Officials thus controlled every link in the chain from paper factory to publisher. The fixed share of the paper ration was initially 90% of the total for magazines and 80% for books, so relatively little was open to political tampering, but the fixed share steadily decreased. After April 1942, it was eliminated altogether for books-- each volume had to be approved individually to earn a paper voucher.⁶⁵ Similar authority was used against magazines as well. The paper allotments to Chuo Koron and Fujin Koron, which took a more independent line than most, show that less cooperative journals saw their rations reduced.⁶⁶ The July 1943 Chuo Koron did not appear at all because paper was denied as a token of official displeasure.⁶⁷

In June 1941, the monopolistic Japan Publications Distribution Company took over the distribution of all magazines and books. Its establishment followed a familiar pattern. A state proposal for the body was presented at a consultation with 21 publishing industry figures in October 1940.⁶⁸ Fifteen state officials were in attendance. The participants resolved to unify distribution by means of "adjustment and integration" in order to build a new Japanese culture and a national defense state. A subcommittee of eight subjects and five officials then prepared a plan whereby existing firms would transfer their assets to a single company and receive stock in return (very similar to the CIB's original design for newspapers). The smaller distribution companies were not represented on the preparatory bodies, and when the plan was leaked in late October it generated a flurry of protests. Small businessmen would be reduced to salaried employees of a monopolistic company in which they held but a nominal share of stock. As one petitioner argued, they would be stripped of their only real asset--the right to manage an independent business.⁶⁹ Petitions related to the New Order for the press were averaging 18 per day in this period, and distributors were the most numerous group of dissidents.⁷⁰ State officials calculated that 3,000 wholesale companies would give way before the new monopoly, one estimate being that 400-500 would simply be dissolved, the rest absorbed.⁷¹ Publishers and retailers, however, were generally anxious to be rid of these costly and time-consuming middlemen and supported the state project.⁷² Due to contrasting material interests, then, officials had the cooperation of two sectors of the business in victimizing a third. The project came to fruition in May according to plan as a "state policy company"

(kokusaku kaisha) requiring official approval for all senior staff appointments and major business decisions. Stock dividends were limited to six per cent annually.⁷³ The distribution monopoly was tied to the Japan Publishing Culture Association by the proviso that three of its ten directors (torishimariyaku) had to be culture association executives.

Having described the control structures for paper and distribution companies, it is unnecessary to detail the similar control bodies established over book and magazine retailers, printing companies, and ink manufacturers. Suffice it to say that publishers themselves were caught in a web of business controls allowing the state to regulate everything from their access to raw materials to the dissemination and sale of their final product. Despite the Commerce and Industry Ministry's formal authority over the purely business control organs, the core of the system was the Japan Publishing Culture Association, and the CIB was the principal architect of its network of related control companies.

Completion of the New Order for Magazines: 1943-1945

The Publishing Business Decree was handed down on 17 February 1943, activating State Total Mobilization Law controls over book and magazine publishers. This was somewhat of an anticlimax, since the basic components of the New Order had already been assembled under the "voluntary" Japan Publishing Culture Association. In March that body was renamed the Japan Publishing Association and became a formal control organ according to the mobilization law.

The only apparent motive behind the Publishing Business Decree

was the state's desire to effect a new round of extensive consolidations. This is evidenced not only by the subsequent course of events, but also by the detailed treatment of mergers in the decree and its attendant enforcement regulations.⁷⁴ Most magazines to be affected were those administered under the Publications Law, which hadn't received much attention during the early years of consolidation. The number of these magazines active at the end of 1942 was only 38% lower than the number active at the end of 1937. By contrast, the total number of Newspaper Law publications (newspapers and magazines) had dropped 76% over the same years. However, the consolidation of Newspaper Law magazines had now reached the point where further dissolutions would involve some of the largest, most prestigious periodicals, and this was another reason legal authority was invoked. Officials clearly expected difficulties in pushing consolidations any further without formal powers. In October 1943, responding to a notification from the CIB and Home Ministry, the Japan Publishing Association established a Headquarters for Enterprise Consolidation. A cabinet decision in November approved its consolidation plans, and a special council was then organized under CIB auspices to chart the advance of mergers and dissolutions.

The data in Table 30 show that Publications Law magazines were cut by 70% in 1943 and by 70% again in 1944, the number of active journals reduced by 9,478. The decrease in Newspaper Law publications (the great majority being magazines) was somewhat less (1600), since previous consolidations had cut much deeper. Even the figures in the table exaggerate the number of major magazines remaining. The more significant journals all belonged to the Japan Publishing Association.

TABLE 30

THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE PERIODICALS REGISTERED
 UNDER THE NEWSPAPER AND PUBLICATIONS
 LAWS: 1937-1944

Year	Publications Law Magazines	Newspaper Law Periodicals
1937	16,788	13,286
1938	15,057	12,043
1939	15,953	8,676
1940	15,369	5,871
1941	13,556	4,466
1942	10,420	3,206
1943	3,081	2,621
1944	942	1,606

Source: Ohara Shakai Mondai Kenkyujo,
 ed., Rodo Undo, p. 186.

Note: The figures comprise the number
 of journals active at the end of each year.

Its member magazines numbered 2,017 before the 1943-1944 consolidations began, but only 996 in May 1944. Furthermore, 716 of the 996 were devoted to occupational instruction, and only 88 were classified as being for general popular consumption.⁷⁵ Magazines treating current events would be a fraction of the 88. From December 1943 to May 1944, "situation magazines" (i.e., those covering the war) were cut from 26 to seven, cultural magazines from 200 to 62, and children's magazines from 41 to six.⁷⁶ The influential integrated magazines (i.e., those including social commentary, neutral reporting, and artistic contributions) were trimmed from six to three. Kaizo became a situation magazine, Bungei Shunju a purely cultural journal, and Nippon Hyoron an economic magazine. Chuo Koron remained an integrated magazine with Gendai and Koron, both renowned for their religious obedience to the state line. Companies publishing books exclusively were also targets of consolidation and were slashed from over 2,000 to just 203 by May 1944.⁷⁷ A similar program of reducing the number of bookstores also got under way in late 1943.⁷⁸

Other than this sweeping wave of consolidations, the Publishing Business Decree seems to have had no novel impact upon the industry.

State Sanctions and the Scope of Criticism

Table 31 records the administrative sanctions imposed under the Newspaper Law over 1937-1944. Despite the intensity of state control efforts after the China Incident, the controversies surrounding economic mobilization and the New Order inflated violations during 1940-1941. The resolution of many domestic policy issues, the onset of the Pacific War, and the advance of consolidations led to the first sharp decline

TABLE 31

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS ENFORCED AGAINST DOMESTIC
PERIODICALS UNDER THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1937-1944

Year	Months Data Available	Press Organs	Banned Editions	Post- Publication Warnings	Deletions
1937	12	13,286	595	5,498	94
1938	10	12,043	776	2,514	104
1939	10	8,676	600	3,561	207
1940	8	5,871	655	2,917	211
1941	12	4,466	798	^a	337
1942	12	3,206	380		170
1943	12	2,621	174		88
1944	3	1,606	29		7

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, nos. 101-149. Nos. 116, 122, 123, 126, 127, and 129 are not extant.

Note: The numbers of press organs listed are those active at the end of each year.

^aPost-publication warnings are not listed in official records after July 1941. In the first seven months of that year, 2,421 such warnings were given.

in press offenses in 1942.

A comparison of Tables 32 and 31 shows that manners and morals infringements practically disappeared after 1941. It is also noteworthy that violations of pre-publication warnings were very few after 1939. These warnings were given only to general daily newspapers and a few major magazines, and the paucity of violations reflects the fact that transgressions by important journals were infrequent. This was due not only to the thoroughness of newspaper consolidations but also the concentration of "positive guidance" on the more influential press organs.

Which journals, then, were violating the press code, and what criticism did they offer of state policy? Perhaps the most striking aspect of political criticism was the prominent role of right wing publishers. They were undoubtedly the most numerous and virulent group of state critics during formation of the New Order. Looking at banned editions and deletions related to the founding of the IRAA, rightist violations accounted for 21 of the 35 in September 1940, nine of the 15 in October, and 11 of the 22 in November.⁷⁹ Rightists accused Konoe and his renovationist supporters of communist inspiration, of discrediting the national polity by adopting German and Italian models, and of violating the constitution. These attacks came primarily from the "idealist right" that opposed radical structural change, but "renovationist rightists" also joined the chorus when the IRAA did not meet their expectations. After war began with America, civil rightist leaders were among the very few voices of forthright criticism still to be heard. Nakano Seigo, for example, severely censured Prime Minister Tojo in January 1943 and berated the government's

TABLE 32

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC
PERIODICALS FOR PUBLIC ORDER VIOLATIONS
UNDER THE NEWSPAPER LAW: 1937-1944

Year	Months Data Available	Banned Editions			Deletions
		Total	For Violating Regular Public Order Standards	For Violating Pre- Publication Warnings	
1937	12	498	258	240	78
1938	10	520	398	122	62
1939	10	487	338	149	181
1940	8	619	551	68	203
1941	12	781	680	101	324
1942	12	376	282	94	160
1943	12	172	150	22	83
1944	3	29	29	0	7

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, nos. 101-149. Nos. 116, 122, 123, 126, 127, and 129 are not extant.

controlled economy as an alliance of bureaucrats and evil capitalists instituting a Jewish-like monopoly of special rights.⁸⁰ Retired Colonel Hashimoto Kingoro, a veteran rightist plotter, was another critic of the cabinet.⁸¹ These men were committed political activists outside the establishment who therefore had more at stake and less to lose with such criticism than most Diet politicians and journalists. Their opposition did not go unpunished. Nakano was driven to suicide in October 1943 when he was blacklisted from publishing and put under house arrest.

The central focus of criticism from the mainstream press was the state's economic control program and the shortage of goods. The economic situation was especially controversial in late 1939 and early 1940. Surveying available data for all publications, banned editions and deletions related to economic policy and commodity shortages numbered 19 in December 1939, 25 in January 1940, 28 in May 1940, 45 in June, and 21 in August.⁸² In June 1941, there were only 11 violations, and officials noted a moderating trend, but economic hardship remained perhaps the most common object of public reproach throughout the war.⁸³ In a rare case of prosecution against a major newspaper, the Asahi Shinbun was fined for reporting the consolidation of sake dealers in Tokyo in January 1942--pre-publication warnings were used to keep such information out of the largest journals.⁸⁴

Table 33 records the available data on judicial sanctions under the Newspaper Law. In this period, press law penalties were the least a potential violator had to worry about. In early 1941, mass arrests and blacklisting extended even to haiku poets and stand-up comedians.⁸⁵ Elements in the navy, less swayed by ideological statism than leading

TABLE 33

JUDICIAL VERDICTS IN TRIALS OF INDIVIDUALS PROSECUTED
FOR VIOLATING THE NEWSPAPER LAW OVER 1937-1940,
AND THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS PROSECUTED
OVER 1941-1943

Year	Sentenced to Prison	Fined	Acquitted	Prosecuted
1937	0	102	1	
1938	2	133	1	
1939	3	58	1	
1940	0	25	0	
1941				19
1942				15
1943				2

Source: Nihon Teikoku Shihosho, Keiji Tokei Nenpo, nos. 63-66; Homu Daijin Kanbo Chosaka Tokei Shitsu, Dai 70 Keiji Tokei Nenpo Furoku [Supplement to Criminal Statistics Annual Report, no. 70], 1952.

army bureaucrats, tried to recruit freedomist writers to promote the navy's more moderate views,⁸⁶ but it became dangerous to play upon army-navy rivalries after war began with the United States. A famous case was recorded in February 1944. Truk Island was attacked by American troops on February 21, and two days later journalist Niina Masuo contributed an article to the Mainichi Shinbun in which he called for stronger naval air forces to deal with such situations. Naval officers had put him up to writing the story. He went on to warn against an unscientific approach to warfare, a slap at Prime Minister Tojo, who was associated with an emphasis on spiritual martial qualities. Tojo personally ordered CIB Vice Governor Murata Goro to take strong measures against those behind the article. Both the newspaper's chief editor and his second in command accepted suspensions from their jobs to take responsibility, but the newspaper did not punish the reporter. Tojo then had the journalist drafted into the army and scheduled his unit for duty in a combat zone. Niina had been exempt from military service for faulty eyesight, and he was also the first man in his age group to be drafted. When the navy pointed this out, the army proceeded to conscript another 250 men of the same age into the same regiment. It was only when the Tojo government fell in July 1944 that the navy was able to retrieve Niina from the army-- he was subsequently stationed with naval forces in the Philippines.⁸⁷ All journalists had to apply to the Japan Publishing Association for their draft exemptions, and it would deny releases to the uncooperative, or delay the processing of their requests.⁸⁸

Chuo Koron and Kaizo had always been at the forefront of critical journalism, and their record during the Pacific War is perhaps the most

fitting conclusion to this review of the New Order for the press. Though their editorial staffs saw little turnover through 1942, most of their regular social commentators had been arrested or blacklisted over the previous four years. Galley censorship and positive guidance left little room for critical expression. By 1941, patently rightist authors began to appear in the pages of Kaizo.⁸⁹ In 1942, the principal vestiges of autonomy were occasional literary contributions unrelated to the war, articles by some of Konoe's old brain trusters now excluded from the military-bureaucratic establishment (members of the Showa Research Society)--Konoe himself was kept under constant surveillance by the Military Police--and work by a group of pro-imperialist thinkers known as the Kyoto School (Kyoto Gakuha). The Kyoto School idealized Japan's mission of conquest, but in terms other than those prominent in official propaganda.⁹⁰ Though these magazines differed little in content from those self-consciously serving government purposes,⁹¹ these faint signs of independence and the antecedents of the editors sufficed to single them out for attention.

During the war, army information officials conducted a consultation for major magazines on the sixth of every month (the Roku Nichi Kai). In the meeting of September 1942, Kaizo representatives were sharply rebuked for a two-part article carried in the August and September editions.⁹² The author, Hosokawa Karoku, who was linked with the Showa Research Society, had suggested that Japan adopt some of the Soviet Union's colonial policies in the South Seas. The articles had passed the CIB's galley censorship (conducted mainly by Home Ministry officials), but that was immaterial to the army--the two editions were banned ex post facto. A week after the consultation, Hosokawa was

arrested by the Special Higher Police of Yokohama, and Kaizo was informed that it could not continue without a change in editorial direction. Thus began the Yokohama Incident. The chief editor and the staff member who had handled Hosokawa's manuscript resigned immediately, and a number of co-workers followed close behind. Chuo Koron had a similar experience in June 1943, earning the ire of army officers for carrying a novel unconnected to the war in its April and May issues. Though it had been approved in advance by state censors, this too led to a wholesale turnover on the editorial board to avoid "adjustment and integration." The departing staff had already prepared the July edition, however, so the army prohibited its publication and it never appeared.

Unrelated to these events, an employee of the Manchurian Railroad was arrested in Tokyo in May 1943. Among his belongings was found a photograph of Hosokawa Karoku with three friends: one worked for Chuo Koron, another had been employed by Kaizo. They were pictured enjoying an outing in the country, which the police quickly construed as a plot to revive the communist party. The three in the photograph were then arrested and their interrogation led to a roundup of still others. In January 1944, five Chuo Koron staff people and four from Kaizo were caught in the dragnet, and later Nippon Hyoron editors were also picked up.⁹³ Before the series of arrests had ended, over 30 intellectuals were being held by the Yokohama thought police. The police had no solid case against them. The evidence was so flimsy that they even accused Chuo Koron of abetting communism because the lyrics of the company song made mention of a rose.⁹⁴ In lieu of hard evidence, the police set out to extract confessions. In the process,

two Chuo Koron employees perished from brutal treatment, a third dying shortly after his release. Thirty-two of the accused claim to have suffered serious injuries; 12 report that they were beaten unconscious.⁹⁵ They did not appear in court until several days after Japan's surrender, when they were quickly declared guilty of the charges against them. In July 1944, CIB Second Division Chief Hashimoto Masami called in the publishers of Chuo Koron and Kaizo and demanded the "voluntary" dissolution of their journals for hindering thought control. They complied with this order later the same month, and so disappeared the "matchless twin stars" of the Japanese periodical press.

The Yokohama Incident was not typical of New Order press policy. It is rather the softer image of the consultation meeting that symbolizes the dominant pattern of state-society interaction. But in many ways the incident was a logical offshoot of the administrative despotism that reached its zenith in Japan's military-bureaucratic regime.

Notes

¹The slogans "New Order" and "National Defense State" (Kokubo Kokka) had also been used by the earlier Abe cabinet--Ide, Nihon Kanryosei, p. 124.

²Senzen no Joho Kiko Yoran, pp. 88, 187. There was one shinnin rank official (personal imperial appointment), six chokunin (imperial appointments), 38 sonin (appointments approved by the Emperor), and 74 hannin (junior officials).

³See "Seinen Kanshi Shain wa Nani o Kangaete Iru Ka: Zadankai" [What are the Young Bureaucrats Thinking? A Symposium], Bungei Shunju, July 1936, pp. 219-221; Hashikawa, "Kakushin Kanryo," pp. 251-254; Ide, Nihon Kanryosei, p. 72.

⁴On his role in drafting the electric power legislation, see Hashikawa, "Kakushin Kanryo," pp. 257-262; Okumura Kiwao, "Denryoku Kokkan Mondai" [The Problem of State Management of Electric Power], in Ando Yoshio, ed., Showa Seiji Keizai Shi e no Shogen Chu [Testimony on Political and Economic Showa History, vol. 2] (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1966), pp. 198-209; Okumura Kiwao, Henkaku-ki Nihon no Seiji Keizai [Japan's Politics and Economics in a Period of Transformation] (Tokyo: Sasaki Shobo, 1940), pp. 1-41.

⁵Hashikawa, "Kakushin Kanryo," pp. 264-265.

⁶"Seinen Kanshi Shain," pp. 234-235.

⁷Okumura had authored his original electric power control proposal in December 1935. Kawamo criticized U.S. radio policy as too free and praised both Nazi and Soviet control systems in a journal circulated within the Communications Ministry in 1936--Kawamo Ryuzo, "Hoso Jigyo no Kantoku Hoshin ni Tsuite" [Regarding the Principles of Supervising the Broadcasting Business], Denmu Kenkyu Shiryo, no. 7 (April 1936). For Miyamoto's early statist views, see Miyamoto Yoshio, "Tsushin Kikan no Koyo" [The Utility of Communications Organs], Denmu Kenkyu Shiryo, no. 3 (August 1935).

⁸E.g., see Okumura, "Denryoku Kokkan Mondai," p. 209.

⁹The following discussion relies primarily upon Miyamoto Yoshio, Hoso to Kokubo Kokka [Broadcasting and the National Defense State] (Tokyo: Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1942), especially pp. 1-59; Okumura Kiwao, Nihon Seiji no Kakushin [The Renovation of Japanese Politics] (Tokyo: Ikuseisha, 1938).

- ¹⁰ Hashikawa, "Kakushin Kanryo," p. 264.
- ¹¹ Okumura, Nihon Seiji no Kakushin, p. 3.
- ¹² Miyamoto, Hoso to Kokubo Kokka, p. 1.
- ¹³ Ibid., pp. 12-13; Okumura, Nihon Seiji no Kakushin, pp. 34-43.
- ¹⁴ Miyamoto, Hoso to Kokubo Kokka, pp. 18-24; Okumura, Nihon Seiji no Kakushin, pp. 10, 99, 113-114, 133, 252.
- ¹⁵ Miyamoto, Hoso to Kokubo Kokka, p. 21; Okumura, Nihon Seiji no Kakushin, pp. 51-52; Okumura, Henkaku-ki Nihon, pp. 90-93.
- ¹⁶ Miyamoto, Hoso to Kokubo Kokka, p. 35.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 25-27; Okumura, Henkaku-ki Nihon, pp. 154-155.
- ¹⁸ The source has been variously identified as the Military Section (Gunjika) of the Military Affairs Bureau (Gunmukyoku) of the Army Ministry (Oka, Konoe, p. 121), and the Cabinet Planning Board (Berger, Parties, p. 273). The interpretation would be the same in either case. The Military Affairs Bureau Chief, Major General Muto Akira, is said to have been the patron of renovationist plans to reduce Japan's newspapers to a single national company--Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 126.
- ¹⁹ The policy outline is quoted in Yabe, Konoe, 2:129-130.
- ²⁰ Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 9.
- ²¹ See Miyamoto Yoshio, "Senjika no Shinbun Saihensei (2)" [The Wartime Reorganization of Newspapers, part 2], Shinbun Kenkyu, no. 290 (September 1975), p. 74. This was one of a five-part series of articles run under this title in the August-December editions of the journal.
- ²² Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 53, p. 322. This document, "Shinbun Tosei Shian Dampen" (A Partial Personal Plan for Newspaper Controls), is a good source for policy planning in this period. It was prepared at the behest of Colonel Matsumura Shuitsu, the head of both the Army Ministry and Imperial Headquarters army information organs and a newspaper section chief in the CIB. The author is listed as a staff member by the name of Okuma.
- ²³ On newspapers, see *ibid.*, pp. 322-323; on magazines and books, see Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 11.

²⁴Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 11; Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 44, pp. 272-273. The latter document, "Shinbun Tosei Gutai An" (Concrete Plan for Newspaper Controls), was prepared in August 1940 by CIB official Onoue Hironobu.

²⁵Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 11.

²⁶Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 44, p. 272.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 272-273, and document 53, pp. 317-324.

²⁸Ibid., document 53, pp. 317-318.

²⁹Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 119.

³⁰Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (2)," September 1975, p. 72.

³¹Miyamoto notes that the Home Ministry had retained predominant control over day-to-day censorship when the CIB was set up in December 1940, and that is why the Criminal Affairs Bureau Chief participated instead of the CIB's Fourth Division Chief, whose responsibility was also censorship. See *ibid.*

³²Quoted in *ibid.*

³³These questions are outlined in Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 121-122, and Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (2)," September 1975, p. 74.

³⁴Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 123.

³⁵This proposal is outlined in *ibid.*, p. 124.

³⁶Quotations from *ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

³⁷This plan is reprinted in Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (2)," September 1975, pp. 75-76.

³⁸Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 128.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Tanaka's plan is reprinted in Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (2)," September 1975, p. 77.

⁴¹This exchange is recorded in Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 129.

⁴²Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (4)," November 1975, p. 72.

⁴³The local/regional firms had favored cooperative distribution because it would control the regional marketing campaigns of the national newspapers--see *ibid.*, p. 76. The national dailies had finally surrendered the point as a concession to stave off the one-company proposal. It would decrease competition, one of the CIB's principal goals, and free workers for military conscription.

⁴⁴The conditions for the exercise of mobilization law powers to be described below refer not only to the imperial decree itself, but also to its enforcement regulations (shikko kisoku) decreed by the cabinet and Home Ministry on December 20, and the notification on enforcement sent from the CIB and Home Ministry to local officials on 5 January 1942. These documents are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, documents 73, 80, and 81, respectively.

⁴⁵Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (2)," September 1975, p. 73.

⁴⁶Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 130.

⁴⁷Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (3)," October 1975, p. 85.

⁴⁸The major trade newspapers were combined into the Nihon Sangyo Keizai Shinbun in Tokyo, and the Sangyo Keizai Shinbun in Osaka. These were reorganized after the war into today's Nihon Keizai Shinbun and Sankei Shinbun.

⁴⁹The one paper per prefecture standard had been presented to the Newspaper League for discussion but never confirmed in that forum. The principle had probably been implicitly accepted by the league's board of directors, otherwise they would have demanded its abandonment as part of their final draft of terms for the New Order. The member firms of the Newspaper Association reportedly consented to the one prefecture/one paper concept sometime in 1942, but solid documentation is lacking. No formal affirmation of the policy had been made by any government prior to 1942. See Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (3)," October 1975, pp. 84-85.

⁵⁰There is a list of 64 dailies operating as of November 1 in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 97, pp. 495-496. Consolidations effected after that time are described in Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (3)," October 1975, pp. 80-85.

⁵¹Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 97, pp. 496-497. The terms of important mergers were often left to the companies themselves to work out and in a few cases this led to extended, acrimonious negotiations--e.g., see *ibid.*, documents 101 and 110.

⁵²Miyamoto, "Senjika no Shinbun (3)," October 1975, p. 85.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴Mimasaka, Fujita, and Watanabe, Yokohama Jiken, p. 50.

⁵⁵Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 13. It is difficult to render the arrogance of this statement in such a literal translation. The writer's tone is one of a teacher referring to the work of pupils. On the other hand, one cannot blame Tashiro for thinking the Japan Editors Association plan to be self-serving, since it called for the little group to take the lead in editorial guidance administered through the new control organ--see *ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁶²These are described in the articles of incorporation, which are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 50, pp. 290-293. Information in the rest of the paragraph is from the same source.

⁶³The second portion was granted to only 67 of 103 book publishers and 25 of 29 magazine publishers in a batch of requests handled on 14 August 1941--Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, pp. 94-95. This meant that four magazine publishers would have to skip regular editions or sharply reduce the length of their journals.

⁶⁴The paper allocation system is described in *ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁵Ohara Shakai Mondai Kenkyujo, ed., Rodo Undo, p. 184.

⁶⁶The figures for the Japan Publishing Culture Association's allocations of paper were as follows:

Year	Quarter	Total Allocation	<u>Chuo</u> <u>Koron</u> Ration	<u>Fujin</u> <u>Koron</u> Ration
1941	2	1.00	1.00	1.00
	3	.80	.70	.70
	4	.70	.63	.69
1942	1	.73	.57	.56
	2	.62	.57	.56
	3	.67	.60	.56
	4	.45	.39	.36
1943	1	.47	.26	.28
	2	.54	.21	.23
	3	.29	.13	.05
	4	.21	.10	.03

Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 44.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 94-95. Kuroda, Chishikijin, p. 120. Officials also threatened magazines with a loss of paper if they refused to carry articles by certain writers who were suggested to them--Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 79, where a number of such writers are listed by name.

⁶⁸Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 37. The officials included six from the CIB, four from the Commerce and Industry Ministry, and one each from the Cabinet Planning Board, Home Ministry, Education Ministry, and Army and Navy Ministries.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 196.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 153, 193.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 164, 42.

⁷²For example, the president of Iwanami Shoten, a book company known for publishing leftist works, was a big backer of consolidating the wholesalers--ibid., p. 38. On the retailers, see the petition reprinted in ibid., pp. 160-162.

⁷³The articles of incorporation are reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 50, pp. 293-294.

⁷⁴The decree and regulations are reprinted in ibid., documents 98 and 99.

- ⁷⁵ Ohara Shakai Mondai Kenkyujo, ed., Rodo Undo, p. 186.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 186-187.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 187.
- ⁷⁹ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 131, pp. 32, 36, 39, no. 132, pp. 33, 39, 42, and no. 133, pp. 45, 51-52.
- ⁸⁰ E.g., see Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 146, pp. 8-10, 24-29.
- ⁸¹ Ibid., p. 13.
- ⁸² Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 124, p. 6, no. 128, pp. 2, 183, and no. 130, p. 33.
- ⁸³ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Shuppan Keisatsu Ho, no. 137, p. 45.
- ⁸⁴ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 87, pp. 458-459.
- ⁸⁵ Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 146, 148.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 143-144.
- ⁸⁷ Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 98-99.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 98.
- ⁸⁹ Kobayashi, et.al., Zasshi "Kaizo", p. 180.
- ⁹⁰ Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 61-62.
- ⁹¹ Mimasaka, Fujita, and Watanabe, Yokohama Jiken, pp. 73, 80.
- ⁹² Information in this paragraph is from Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 88-95.
- ⁹³ Ibid., pp. 128-129.
- ⁹⁴ Kuroda, Chishikijin, pp. 146-147.

⁹⁵Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, pp. 128-129.

CHAPTER XX

FILM

By the time of the China Incident in July 1937, film had become a vital factor in the formation of public opinion on current events. In the last half of 1937 alone, state censors inspected 14,833 pieces of film related to the war.¹ This accounted for much of the increase in the total number of films inspected from 25,008 in 1936 to 41,560 in 1937. Films attracted 440.5 million paying customers in 1940, signifying that each Japanese went to the movies an average of six to seven times during the year.

State policy toward film is of particular interest because film was the only communications medium subjected to a comprehensive control law in this period, the Film Law of 1939. Sponsored by the cabinet and passed by the Diet, this bill is the nearest one can come to a formal statewide consensus on media controls over 1937-1945, and it therefore requires careful scrutiny.

Early Wartime Mobilization

The novel state controls imposed upon film between 1937 and passage of the Film Law two years later were very similar to those instituted against the press and therefore will receive only brief treatment here. The very same mobilization directives issued by the Army and Navy Ministries under the Newspaper Law and communicated to

periodicals were also systematically relayed to film makers--the directives themselves contained specific instructions to that effect. Furthermore, they were generally conveyed through the same forum of the consultation meeting. The first consultation on China policy with news film personnel was held just one week after the incident on 14 July 1937. Consultations with the drama film studios to encourage "popular spiritual renovation" began the next month.² If there was any difference between film and press guidance it was that the former concentrated more heavily on manners and morals subject matter. For example, at a five-hour consultation between film writers and Home Ministry censors on 30 July 1938, the conferees agreed to the following set of principles: the permeating trend toward individualism due to the influence of European and American movies shall be eradicated; to elevate the Japanese spirit, the beauty of our country's typical family system will be exalted, and the public spirit of sacrifice promoted all the more; considering the trend of youth, especially modern girls, to become westernized and lose characteristically Japanese sentiments, the public masses shall be re-educated through the medium of film; a policy of erasing frivolous language and behavior from the silver screen is adopted; efforts will be made to deepen the sense of respect for fathers, elder brothers, and other superiors.³ Here one can sense the increasingly xenophobic outlook that accompanied escalation of the war in China. The distinction between politics and manners and morals, fuzzy at best in earlier years, all but disappeared after 1937 because of the growing aversion to foreign social customs. Film makers were urged to attune their art to the objectives of the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement, launched by the state in October 1937

with an initial membership of 74 nationwide organizations. Producers were required to include official patriotic slogans in the film credits preceding their movies.

Parallel to the drive for greater political regimentation, war also necessitated the conservation of key resources, and measures of economic stringency initially affected film more than the other mass media. In December 1937, the new construction of theatres seating over 750 people was outlawed under the Emergency Building Limits Decree, and nine months later new theatre construction was banned altogether. Also in December 1937, the Home Ministry lowered the time limit on film entertainment programs to three hours, and cut back the maximum length of movies. Its declared reasons were to minimize expenditures on imported negative film, to reduce the number of low-quality productions, to preserve health and morals within theatres, and to avoid lengthy entertainment programs unsuitable in a state of war.⁴

Balance of payments pressures had more pronounced political effects in curtailing the importation of foreign movies. On 9 July 1937, just two days after the China Incident, the Finance Ministry advised local representatives of American film companies to limit imports on the authority of the Foreign Exchange Management Law. On September 4, Finance officials announced a licensing system for planned imports during the rest of the year, and on the 20th they declared that no licenses would be tendered for the rest of the year, news film excepted. In 1938 a dollar ceiling was imposed on film imports from the U.S. The number of incoming movies from the big American studios decreased sharply as a result, testimony to the effectiveness of Finance Ministry measures and the Home Ministry decision to increase inspection fees on

foreign films the year before:⁵

	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>
Paramount	46	10
Columbia	39	20
Metro	31	16
Warner	31	7
RKO	21	18
Universal	20	6
Fox	17	9
United	17	8
Total	222	94

In January 1938, foreign film company representatives began to evacuate Tokyo for Shanghai.

The Film Law

The Film Law offers the best overview of state thinking on media controls in this period. Though the State Total Mobilization Law had a devastating impact on the press, it was not designed primarily for media controls, and therefore one cannot discern in it a general strategy for media policy. The Film Law, however, was aimed directly at an important mass medium. Furthermore, unlike the many bureaucratic and legislative measures that affected only this or that aspect of a particular medium, this law restructured the entire relationship between the state and the film industry. It also represents a broader state consensus than any other media policy. The bill was neither the unilateral enactment of a single ministry nor a project imposed upon the regular bureaucracy by renovationist administrators in the cabinet. It had solid support from the Home and Education Ministries, the military, and the Cabinet Information Division, and it easily passed the Diet, where there had been calls for comprehensive film legislation for many

years. This degree of support was owed to the persistent lobbying of the Film Control Committee within the state and the Great Japan Film Association in civil society, as described in Chapter XIII. A final noteworthy aspect of the Film Law is that it was one of the few bills presented in this period without a war-related justification.⁶

Government spokesmen touted it as Japan's first "cultural law," and Article 1 declared its purpose to be the "healthy development of the film industry and the elevation of film quality."⁷ Thus, although the war was very much in the background, the law was not conceived or discussed as an emergency measure. Most stipulations and effects of the Film Law and the ministerial decree that accompanied it will be treated in this section, leaving only the consolidations and related steps taken in conjunction with the New Order for the next.

Personnel controls The Film Law required all persons working in the industry to obtain a state license, including producers, distributors, directors, cameramen and other technical personnel, actors, and theatre projectionists. Unlicensed workers could not be hired. Producers and distributors who violated the law or harmed the "public interest" might have their work stopped or limited, or their license to do business revoked altogether. This was a more serious penalty than the six months in prison that might be imposed upon violators of the law in court.

Actors and technical personnel had to pass competency tests administered by the Great Japan Film Association, whose efforts on behalf of the Film Law were thus rewarded with an official task. This was just one example among so many in this period of civil associations undertaking official duties and thereby transforming themselves into partial state organs. The control associations represented the same

phenomenon. Some sample questions from the general knowledge part of the competency tests:

1941--What is the purpose of the Imperial Rule Assistance Movement? Why was it necessary to launch the "New Order" movement?

1942--Our country has an exalted national polity unmatched throughout the world. Why?

Since the eruption of the Great East Asia War, the imperial armed forces have won consecutive victories, and now America and Britain are absolutely incapable of laying a hand on the Far East. However, it is said that "the real battle remains for the future." Why?⁸

Censorship The Film Law instituted pre-production censorship of all dramatic movie scripts. Drama producers had to request permission to begin work at least ten days before the start of shooting. Applications, including two copies of the proposed script, went to the Home Ministry, whose censors were empowered to alter the script for reasons of public safety or manners and morals. Changes made later during filming had to be reported and approved by officials before they were put on camera. Inspection of the finished product before public showing was still required for dramatic and all other films, but administrative sanctions tailed off markedly once script inspection got underway--see Table 34. Unfortunately, there are no official records describing the number or content of script changes imposed by the state; after 1939, information on film cuts is obviously not very revealing. In practice, those pieces of film that were cut continued to be classified under the same categories as before--see Table 35.⁹

Another new twist to censorship was that in "special circumstances" the state was authorized to restrict or ban the showing of a film even if it had already passed inspection. Hypothetically, then, the state could rewrite the script of a dramatic movie prior to filming, cut the

TABLE 34

ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTIONS IMPOSED UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM
INSPECTION REGULATIONS AND THE FILM LAW: 1937-1942

Year	Total Films Inspected ^a	Bans ^b	Required to Reshoot ^c	Films Cut	Limited by Time/ Location	Withdrawn
1937	41,560	5	21	395	63	40
1938	46,690	8	15	221	85	65
1939	53,323	5	40	205		60 (18) ^d
1940	51,872	18	29	35	112	107 (50)
1941	39,705	4	23	11	89	122 (40)
1942	34,247	0	0	11	338	115 (29)

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1938-1939; Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1940-1943.

^aThe figures include Japanese and imported films, films submitted for the first time, resubmissions, and prints of previously submitted films.

^bThe figures include films withdrawn from inspection because sponsors were informed they would be banned. These films are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column.

^cThese films were formally listed as having been withdrawn from inspection; they are not counted in the "Withdrawn" column.

^dA number of films were withdrawn from inspection at the convenience of their sponsors, and not due to any action by officials. Those in parentheses, however, were withdrawn for the following reasons: military-related reasons (1939--10, 1940--1, 1941--0, 1942--0); unsuitable in the wartime "situation" (1939--8, 1940--44, 1941--39, 1942--25); foreign policy reasons (1939--0, 1940--5, 1941--1, 1942--4). The numbers within parentheses are added into the total "Withdrawn" figures.

TABLE 35

PIECES OF FILM CUT UNDER THE MOTION PICTURE FILM INSPECTION REGULATIONS
AND THE FILM LAW, BY CENSORSHIP STANDARDS AND AREA OF
PRODUCTION (J--JAPANESE, F--FOREIGN): 1937-1942

	1937		1938		1939		1940		1941		1942	
	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F	J	F
<u>Public Safety</u>												
1. Imperial family	3	2	0	2	1	7	0	0	0	1	1	0
2. Nation	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Constitution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. Social organs	4	16	4	0	1	2	0	0	2	1	1	0
5. National ethos	1	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	2	0
6. Foreign affairs	1	8	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Class conflict	1	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Group conflict	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Crime	14	14	8	2	3	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
10. Public business	9	22	3	2	8	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11. Other	70	65	29	33	26	47	7	2	2	0	8	4
Area Total	105	136	46	40	41	77	8	2	4	3	12	4
Annual Total	241		86		118		10		7		16	
<u>Manners and Morals</u>												
1. Religion	3	0	4	0	12	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
2. Cruelty/Ugliness	37	31	36	16	21	7	4	17	0	1	0	0
3. Sex-related	190	372	168	140	99	256	26	43	0	26	0	4
4. Work ethic	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Education	32	17	25	2	25	7	8	0	0	0	1	0
6. Family	7	7	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Other	66	55	52	38	40	2	16	1	1	4	3	2
Area Total	337	482	287	196	203	272	55	61	1	31	6	6
Annual Total	819		483		475		116		32		12	
Grand Area Total	442	618	333	236	244	349	63	63	5	34	18	10
Grand Annual Total	1060		569		593		126		39		28	

Source: Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1938-1943.

film before approving it for public showing, and then ban it completely from circulation due to "special circumstances." It was entirely up to officials to decide what constituted "special circumstances."

Mobilization The Film Law enabled the Education Minister to compel theatre owners to show non-fiction films serving public education. This power was initially used to promote "culture films" supportive of state policy. In the last three months of 1939, 985 films received the ministry's blessing as culture films, in 1940, 4,460.¹⁰ The ministerial decree accompanying the Film Law demanded that every film entertainment program include a minimum of 250 meters of culture film sanctioned by the Education Ministry. This command was in force nationwide by July 1940.¹¹ In October 1940, news film was added to the compulsory showing system.

The Education Minister was also given the power to recommend films. Each year several films would be awarded an "Education Minister's Prize," and some would receive a monetary subsidy. This codified in law a recommendation system that had been run more informally by the ministry from early in the decade. The first awards ceremony was held 30 March 1940.

The Film Law also empowered any administrative state office to order the showing of films necessary for "enlightenment or propaganda." The Home Ministry apparently anticipated that its local government offices would take advantage of this provision, though they were admonished not to burden any one theatre with forced showings for more than six weeks per year. The Home Ministry continued to exempt certain films from inspection fees; with the advent of the forced showing policy, all culture and current events films were so exempted. Twenty-

six dramatic movies were also relieved of payment in 1940.¹²

Foreign films The law allowed the Home Minister to dictate the kind and number of imported films circulated by distributors and shown in theatres. Initial enforcement required distributors to petition the ministry each October for the next year's quota of foreign films, and theatres were prohibited from showing more than 50 foreign films per year.

In addition to the above-mentioned powers, the law contained two open-ended enabling clauses. Article 18 permitted the Home and Education Ministers to control film production, regulate distribution, order the improvement of facilities, and eliminate unfair competition when necessary for the public good. Article 8 also empowered administrative officials to impose controls on production and on the employment of film workers, again for the public good. The Home Ministry used this authority in 1941 to limit the annual production of drama film studios to so many feature-length and short subject movies.¹³

Along with the personnel controls already listed, these provisions gave the state unconditional authority over every person and organization in the film industry. If officials were out to destroy a film studio, they could halt production, rescind its permit to do business, and revoke the licenses of all its employees. The End. The Film Law did not define bureaucratic powers so as to render film administration predictable; rather, it removed the last fetter on bureaucratic rule and placed the film industry at the mercy of whatever state policy might ensue. The concept of law as a restraint upon state action was turned on its head--this was law in the form of a blank check.

The Film Law was not only applauded in the Diet, but also well

received by the film industry. Film people had once been considered less than respectable in polite society, and to many the law was long overdue recognition for their achievements. Others expressed satisfaction at phrases such as "planning the healthy development of the film industry" and "pressing for greater film quality," which sugar-coated the less benign provisions of the bill. Apparently only one individual, the critic Iwasaki Akira, dared to write openly in opposition to the law--for this he was blacklisted from publishing and spent part of 1940 in prison as a violator of the Peace Preservation Law.¹⁴ The danger of such repression makes it difficult to gauge the genuineness of public reactions, but Iwasaki himself reports that most of the support was freely given. Foreign models were one factor helping to legitimize the new system. The Film Law had been partly inspired by Nazi film legislation, and in 1939 German prestige was at its peak. During the few days in which the Diet deliberated on the law, Hitler had annexed a large part of Czechoslovakia, and his ally Franco had defeated the Spanish republican forces at Madrid. Another reason for support was the partial character of the law as an enabling act. It granted the state broad powers without fully specifying how they would be used. Since the Home Ministry was the chief beneficiary of those powers, and the film industry had lived under that ministry's hegemony for several decades, there was little fear that the state was preparing to dispossess film companies simply because it now had a legal right to do so. The State Total Mobilization Law had claimed similar powers over many civil associations, but it had not yet been used to effect radical structural changes. If giant combines such as Mitsui and Sumitomo were subject to such authority, how were film companies to

object? The Home Ministry did not in fact force extensive changes upon the film industry while it supervised implementation of the law. When the Cabinet Information Bureau took the lead in film policy at the end of 1940, however, the full ramifications of the state's new authority became painfully clear.

The Film Law reveals just how far the tide had turned toward statism by the spring of 1939. There was no institutional opposition to a law potentially depriving an important media sector of all meaningful autonomy from state control. Of course, the stakes were not as high as those involved in the State Total Mobilization Law enacted one year earlier, but one cannot help but wonder if the defeat of liberal forces on that occasion did not demoralize those who might have spoken out against the film legislation. Whereas the mobilization law had been forced through by a skillful Prime Minister over the protests of many Diet members, the Film Law, sponsored by the decidedly weak cabinet of Hiranuma, met with no similar opposition.

Film and the New Order

Consolidations in the film sector were even more drastic than those effected against the press. They began in April 1940 when Japan's four news film companies were merged into a single firm under state direction. This company then absorbed many of the larger cultural/educational film producers in May 1941. There followed in August 1941 a more sweeping consolidation plan directed at dramatic film makers, the remaining cultural/educational film companies, and film distributors. The final tally showed ten drama producers reduced to three, over 200 cultural/educational film producers amalgamated into four main companies

and a few stragglers, and the fusion of almost 300 film distributors into a new monopolistic firm. In early 1942, film importers were similarly merged into a single unit. The consolidation process and the workings of the mature control system will now be described.

The first step towards a New Order for film was the merger of Japan's four news film producers into the Japan News Film Company on 9 April 1940. The firms integrated were those of the Asahi, Yomiuri, and Mainichi/Nichi Nichi newspapers, and the film operations of the United News Agency. Thus the state succeeded in accomplishing with news film companies what it had failed to achieve with daily newspapers. The Cabinet Information Division and the UNA were the prime movers behind the news film amalgamation. The new monopoly became a public interest adjunct of the UNA, with the same man, Furuno Inosuke, serving as president of both. The Cabinet Information Division channeled all state monies to the companies, 3.9 million yen to the UNA in 1940, and 100,000 to the Japan News Film Company in the same year.¹⁵ With production now in the hands of a state-organized monopoly, newsreels were made compulsory in all film entertainment programs just as culture films had been before them.¹⁶

After its upgrading in December 1940, the Cabinet Information Bureau clearly seized the initiative in film policy. The bureau received censorship authority paralleling that of the Home Ministry, it took charge of negative film rationing, and it immediately pressed forward with plans for amalgamation.¹⁷ Its first success was to merge the culture film departments of several newspapers and movie studios into the state's news film enterprise, which was then renamed the Japan Film Company in May 1941.¹⁸ For some time thereafter, this one

firm produced all the newsreels and culture films legally required as part of each film entertainment program.

The big push for consolidation, however, began on 16 August 1940, when the CIB's Fifth Division Chief, Kawamo Ryuzo, called into his office the three drama film business representatives in the Great Japan Film Association. Their companies partially financed the film association, which had helped to promote the Film Law and was now administering state tests for film industry workers. With this legal authority, these three men were already part-time state officials themselves. It was not in their capacity as officials, however, but as industry spokesmen that they were to be addressed. They were informed by the functionary Kawamo that "not one foot" more of negative film could be spared for the dramatic film companies--all film was needed for military purposes.¹⁹ He suggested they offer a plan for conversion of the drama film sector to wartime footing. The three stunned listeners surmised correctly that the film embargo, tantamount to extinction for their studios, might prove negotiable if steps toward conversion were satisfactory, but the state's opening salvo shows the pervasive atmosphere of coercion surrounding state-society interaction in the formative period of Japan's New Order.

Japan's drama producers quickly established a crisis committee to prepare a response. Seeing the futility of unyielding resistance, they determined to present a minimal reform proposal to save their firms. What they offered, one week after Kawamo's would-be death sentence, was this:²⁰ A state-managed "control association" would be set up for the drama film business according to the Vital Industry Control Decree, which governed the founding of such organs in other

economic sectors. The chairman would be an individual with the confidence of both the state and the industry, and film makers would submit to his decisions on every facet of the association's work. The agenda for the new unit comprised control over film production and the structure of film distribution, and the rationing of resources used by the industry. They recommended Goto Fumio, an ex-Home Minister and a director of the Great Japan Film Association, as the first chairman. In effect, the drama producers were ready to swallow any medicine the state might prescribe, on one condition--that their businesses be left intact. This was the same position taken by the large newspapers when they were confronted by the proposal for a single national newspaper. The drama producers held out the carrot of state control over the "structure" of distribution, a painful gambit since the drama companies themselves ran Japan's largest film distribution concerns. But the control association, though it could issue orders related to production, was not authorized to interfere with the structure of production, i.e., their businesses would stay afloat.

This proposal was read to an audience of CIB, Army, Navy, Home, and Education Ministry personnel on 23 August 1941. They found the industry's attitude to be "extremely irresolute."²¹ With the Film Law, there was no reason for officials to rejoice at concessions they could legally exact at their pleasure. It is obvious in retrospect that the bureaucrats had their own scheme in mind from the very beginning, since they placed a comprehensive counterproposal on the table just two days later. This was the cornerstone of the August 1941 blitzkrieg, and it contained four points: (1) the ten dramatic film companies would be merged into two new firms, each producing

two movies monthly in accord with state purposes; (2) the remaining cultural/educational film companies would be combined into one firm; (3) one integrated distribution organ would control the circulation of all films; and (4) film administration, heretofore divided among several state institutions, would be integrated.²² The purpose of these steps was to eliminate commercialism by segregating production from marketing, and to amplify the public character of the film industry. The whole package was justified in the name of the "High Degree National Defense State" (Kodo Kokubo Kokka), which demanded an end to the old "freedomist" structure.²³

The state's program caused consternation among the drama film studios. The two largest film makers, Shochiku and Toho, saw the two-company policy as an opportunity for their firms to survive the cut, even though the original design was for two new enterprises. They broke ranks with the other producers and refused to take an uncompromising stance against the state draft.²⁴ The next three largest companies, Nikkatsu, Shinko, and Daito, were dead set against the two-firm plan and argued for three studios, the last presumably involving a cooperative venture between their companies. Their spokesman was Eida Masaichi of Shinko. Despite several conferences, the producers were unable to reconcile their differences.

Consultation meetings were held with state officials on September 4, 6, 8, and 10, but if the industry negotiators were disunited, discord was also evident on the state's side of the table. Though hard information is lacking, it seems that the Cabinet Information Bureau wanted to hold out for two new drama companies, expecting that firms without an established identity or tradition would be easier to govern,

whereas Home Ministry officials were more inclined to accept Shochiku and Toho as nuclei of the two remaining firms, perhaps due to their longer association with the film industry and clientelistic ties to those studios. Industry people strove to exploit this breach. Word got out that some had secretly tried to contact Prime Minister Konoe to plead for support, and Eida Masaichi is said to have worked on the CIB group, hinting that if the three-company plan were approved, at least the third company might satisfy their desire for a perfectly obeisant organ.²⁵ Whether Eida's ploy was a tactic or a sell-out is unclear, but his efforts paid off. On 19 September 1941, the CIB's Kawamo made his final offer to the producers. There would be three drama studios, once consolidated around Shochiku, one around Toho, and the third composed of Nikkatsu, Shinko, and Daito; each of the three surviving firms would produce two movies per month. Distribution would be handled by a single public interest company, which would absorb technical personnel from existing distribution operations.²⁶ Film industry representatives agreed to the plan, and committees were assembled to work out the details. The biggest hurdle was calculating stock percentages in the third drama company, but this had been resolved by the end of the year. The smaller movie studios were absorbed by the large as part of the arrangement.²⁷

Consolidation of the remaining cultural/educational film companies was more time-consuming. There were over 200 such firms operating in August 1941, and the CIB initially proposed that they all be combined into a single company. The bureau conveyed this design to 40 of the larger firms on August 27. Negotiations were long and stock transfers complex, but finally in January 1943 the principal companies were fused

into three units: the Science Film Stock Corporation (14 firms), the Asahi Film Company (eight firms), and the Dentsu Film Stock Corporation (four firms). This result was but a belated and partial success for the CIB. What of the many firms excluded from the new state-sponsored triumvirate? Most either sold out to larger companies or went bankrupt, since they were denied access to negative film and the official distribution system (see below). A few, however, may have pulled through with business from other state agencies. Though the CIB dispensed all negative film, allotments had to be made to various ministries which could then use the film as they saw fit. Some may have continued to contract for films with companies other than those formed by the CIB.²⁸

Film importers were combined into the Foreign Film Stock Company at the beginning of 1942.²⁹ The eight companies involved in the merger had little business left to perform. In 1940, the state had answered 482 petitions for import licenses with only 120 approvals; import control was now enforced under the Film Law, not as a purely economic measure. In 1941, when there were 16 importers, only 71 licenses had been granted.³⁰ After Pearl Harbor, the showing of American and other enemy films was banned altogether, and those already in Japan were seized as enemy property. Even many Nazi films could not clear censorship. Scenes of scantily dressed Aryan maidens posing gracefully in the Bavarian Alps were thought too risqué for proper manners and morals, though by special permission the German Embassy in Tokyo was able to screen them for its staff. During the war, theatres with foreign names (e.g., Palace, Odeon) were forced to change them.

As the new structures began to take shape, the Cabinet Information

Bureau took complete control of the public showing of films. The country's theatres were divided into two groups, and every week CIB officials composed an entertainment program for each, including a dramatic movie, a public policy culture film, and a newsreel.³¹ The state-organized Japan Film Company produced all news films (but for those made by other state institutions or imported) and half of the culture films, the other half coming from the three cultural/educational film companies created in January 1943, or directly from other state organs. The dramas were all produced by the three conglomerate companies authorized by the state, Shochiku, Toho, and Daiei. The essential traits of this control system endured to the end of the war.³²

The CIB also arranged the financing of the new structure. Small theatres paid the Film Distribution Company a flat rate for film rental, while the larger were charged on a percentage basis. Each theatre had to pay 40% of its gross earnings to the Film Distribution Company, and was allowed to keep the other 60% for operating expenses (35%), salaries (15%), and profits (10%).³³ All theatre income kept by the distribution company was divided as follows: 64% to the drama producers, 20% to cover distribution costs, 8% for culture film makers, and 8% for news film production. Supposing the gross income of all Japan's theatres to be 100 yen in a given month, it would be allocated as follows:³⁴

Theatres	60.0 yen
Drama producers	25.6
Distribution costs	8.0
Culture film producers	3.2
News film producer	3.2

This method of financing did not entirely do away with market forces, since film producers were paid according to theatre earnings from the

showing of their own pictures, and not from a general pool.

It is noteworthy that the Cabinet Information Bureau, and not the Home Ministry, engineered the New Order for film. After December 1940, it was the CIB's renovationist bureaucrats and military officers who planned the consolidations and acted as the state's spokesmen in dealing with the industry, and their views were more radical than those of the regular bureaucracy. Though the Home Ministry reportedly supported the survival of Shochiku and Toho, however, it and other state agencies must be described more as collaborators than foot draggers in the New Order project. Their objections rarely exceeded a defense of bureaucratic turf. The Home Ministry retained its grip on the execution of regular film censorship, and so the unity of film administration became the one goal of the August 1940 New Order blueprint not to be fulfilled.

Beyond the consolidation projects, the state was also increasingly active as a partner in film production. Though the military had contributed to the production of culture films as early as 1933, it was after the China Incident that state-civil ventures became most visible. The first big war hit produced with military help was Shanghai Rikusentai (Shanghai Marines), made by Toho with cooperation from the Navy Ministry in 1939. In 1940, 14 dramatic movies for entertainment were produced with the assistance of state institutions, eight involving the military.³⁵ Toho invested 920,000 yen (a huge amount of money at the time) in another cooperative endeavor with the navy in 1942, Hawai-Mare Okikaisen (Hawaii-Malay Sea Battle), which attracted an audience of over ten million.³⁶ In addition to direct involvement, consultation meetings and prize competitions were also used to encourage films on favored topics.

To summarize, state control over film included the following measures: official monopolies over news film production and film distribution; total control over film industry personnel; pre-production censorship of dramatic movie scripts and censorship of all finished films before public showing; the management of film financing; the rationing of negative film; the selection of all film programs to be shown in theatres; a licensing system for imported films; a sweeping consolidation of film production companies; direct collaboration in film production; and awards and various financial incentives for the production of films serving policy objectives. The only noteworthy civil autonomy to filter through this control structure was the production of a few movies without a direct connection to the war-- Shochiku in particular persisted in making some films purely for entertainment.³⁷ Occasional resort to non-political artistic expression becomes the only form of protest possible in such an advanced mobilization system, where the great majority of works lend positive support to state interests.

Notes

- ¹Naimusho Keihokyoku, Firumu Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1938, pp. 40-41.
- ²Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, p. 165.
- ³Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:234.
- ⁴Ibid., p. 233.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 284.
- ⁶Uchikawa, "Shiryō Kaisetsu," Masu Medea Tosei, 2:xxii-xxiii.
- ⁷The Film Law is reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 28, pp. 234-236; the ministerial decree regarding its implementation is reprinted in *ibid.*, document 32, pp. 251-259.
- ⁸Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, pp. 211-212.
- ⁹Though in practice the same classification was used, a new set of standards was formally inscribed in the decree accompanying the Film Law, which prohibited the following: (1) Items feared to desecrate the sanctity of the imperial family, or to harm the dignity of the empire, (2) Items feared to advocate thought which undermines the constitution, (3) Items feared to be a hindrance to the public interest in the spheres of politics, the military, foreign relations, economics, or any other area, (4) Items feared to disturb virtuous manners and morals or corrupt public morality, (5) Items feared to damage the purity of the Japanese language in a striking way, (6) Items notably inferior in production techniques, and (7) Any other item feared to be an obstacle to the progress of national culture. Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 32, p. 255.
- ¹⁰Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1941, p. 103.
- ¹¹Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:236.
- ¹²Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1941, pp. 6-8.
- ¹³This policy was presented to the movie studios at the first "Film New Order Consultation Meetings" held in August and September 1940. At the same time, entertainment programs were further shortened to a maximum of two and one-half hours, eliminating double features, and culture films were ordered to stay within 300 meters. See Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:238.

¹⁴On the reaction of the film industry and Iwasaki's opposition, see Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, p. 172, and Okada, Nihon Eiga no Rekishi, pp. 191-193. Iwasaki had been a founding member of the Japan Proletarian Film League in 1929, and after his release in 1940 he worked for the Manchurian Film Association.

¹⁵Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 35, p. 264, and document 50, p. 306.

¹⁶Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:239. News film was incorporated into the compulsory showing system in Japan's six largest cities by 1 October 1940, and throughout the country several months later. Not a single piece of current events film was cut by censors over 1939-1942--Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1940-1943.

¹⁷Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1941, p. 3; Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 50, pp. 299, 306-308. The rationing of negative film, which consumes materials used in the manufacture of gunpowder, had begun in October 1940, when production was cut 36% as a measure of economic belt-tightening under the Public Livelihood Retrenchment Decree (Kokumin Seikatsu Kinshuku Rei). See Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:302.

¹⁸To guard against confusion, "news" film refers to reporterial coverage of the latest events, whereas "culture films," though they might take up current topics, were a step removed from the immediate; General Araki's movie described in Chapter XIII is an example of what came to be called a culture film. The newspaper companies had ceded their news film operations to the Japan News Film Company, but had continued to produce culture and educational films until that part of their film departments was absorbed later by the renamed Japan Film Company. The term "culture film" signified service to the state by definition, but this is not to imply that news films were any less supportive of state purposes in 1941.

¹⁹For accounts of this meeting, see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 68, pp. 356-357; Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:241; Okada, Nihon Eiga no Rekishi, p. 198.

²⁰Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 68, p. 357.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., p. 358.

²³Ibid., pp. 358, 356.

²⁴Okada, Nihon Eiga no Rekishi, p. 203.

²⁵ Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 68, p. 362; Okada, Nihon Eiga no Rekishi, pp. 202-204.

²⁶ Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:245.

²⁷ For a detailed account of the plight of the smaller firms, see *ibid.*, pp. 271-284.

²⁸ Tsumura Hideo, Eiga Seisaku Ron [Discourse on Film Policy] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1943), p. 221.

²⁹ Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:297.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 236, 239-240.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

³² In September 1943, the Cabinet Information Bureau succeeded in unifying most of the rural entertainment system with the founding of the Japan Mobile Projection League--see *ibid.*, pp. 382-383. In January 1944, all production and distribution organs were enlisted in a re-organized Great Japan Film Association--Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 104, pp. 508-509. This association and the Film Distribution were then formally merged in June 1945 into the Film Public Corporation (Eiga Kosha), but by this stage of the war such structural shifts had little significance.

³³ However, the state initially collected half of the operating expenses (17.5%) each month along with a report of each theatre's expenditures. If a theatre's financial breakdown indicated exorbitant outlays, the appropriate amount would be taken out of the 17.5%; what was left would be returned to the theatre operator after three months. This was to insure against wasteful expenses and excess profits. In May 1943, the Home Ministry launched a campaign which brought many theatres under direct state management--this was apparently done not on the basis of the Film Law but according to the traditional jurisdiction of the local police over entertainment. See Tanaka, Nihon Eiga Hattatsu Shi, 2:387-388.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 308-309.

³⁵ Naimusho Keihokyoku, Eiga Ken'etsu Nenpo, 1941, pp. 7-8.

³⁶ Iwasaki, Eiga Shi, p. 183.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

CHAPTER XXI

RADIO

In the late 1930's, radio became the principal means of communication between the Japanese state and its subjects. In just three weeks after the China Incident of July 1937, there were 1,844 news items broadcast over radio, and 68% of these were related to the incident.¹ Shortly thereafter NHK and state officials adopted the Nazi slogan of "one house/one radio" and it became national policy over 1938-1941 to provide every Japanese with access to a receiver.² Several ministries cooperated in poster campaigns boasting slogans such as "National Defense and Radio," and patriotic organizations like the Great Japan Youth League joined in the effort. In small farm villages, where receivers were a luxury item, they were installed free of charge in markets, stations, parks, shrines, and other public areas.³ The Communications Ministry, radio's bureaucratic shepherd, had the commodity tax removed from listening sets, pushed for longer hours of electric power supply in the countryside, and scavenged for scarce raw materials to maintain production in a period of wartime rationing.⁴ Due to the profusion of small rural communities, the project to bring radio into the life of every Japanese was not entirely successful, but by 1941 the results were impressive. The number of radio receivers in the country had grown from 2.9 million in 1936 to 6.6 million, giving Japan the fourth highest number in the world after the U.S., Germany, and the U.K.⁵ Nationwide,

over 45% of all households owned a radio.⁶ It is probable that newspapers and especially magazines were more influential among political elites, and one may argue that films make a deeper impression on most people than audio alone, but in terms of sheer magnitude of public exposure, radio had no competitor in Japan in this period. It was indisputably the most forceful mass medium shaping public opinion on current events. In recognition of this fact, the Cabinet Information Bureau had by February 1942 adopted a policy "to make all broadcast programs conform to state purposes."⁷ State mobilization of radio was to be not only more thorough than that of the other media, but also more easily accomplished, since the existing control structure required only slight changes to make official dominance complete.

The Structure of Program Control

The Broadcast Programming Council remained the state's principal vehicle for program interference until 1939. After the China Incident, it was complemented by a slew of specialized program advisory committees which also included state officials. There were separate committees for music, lectures, and entertainment, as well as for programs directed overseas or into the school system. Their influence, however, depended upon the council's responsiveness.

This changed with establishment of the Situation Broadcast Planning Conference within NHK in July 1939. "Situation" was the official euphemism for the wartime crisis. This body quickly displaced the programming council as the last court of judgment on the monthly broadcast schedule, and its mastery over program policy was such that the many program advisory committees had ceased to meet or matter very much within about one year. The state's power over programming was

codified in November 1939 when the Communications Ministry revised its 1923 ministerial decree on broadcasting to read: "In times of war or incident or when otherwise necessary, the Communications Minister may order broadcast operators to transmit items for the public interest and may order any necessary measures related to these broadcasts."⁸ It was the Situation Broadcast Planning Conference which actually made use of this authority. The conference recruited members from NHK, the Communications Ministry, and the Cabinet Information Division, but it was the information division staff which exercised the greatest influence.⁹ Its personnel included active duty officers on loan from the military ministries.

In December 1940, the information division was upgraded into the Cabinet Information Bureau, and the Communications Ministry transferred much of its substantive program authority to this new organ. The CIB was given control over broadcast contents, while the ministry continued its jurisdiction over transmission facilities. The Communications Ministry thus ceded more of its authority to the CIB than any of the other regular ministries.¹⁰ This was probably due to the presence of several ex-Communications bureaucrats in the highest CIB posts, and to the cabinet information staff's considerable input into radio policy in earlier years. At this time, the CIB's radio section chief was an ex-Communications Ministry official, Miyamoto Yoshio. Other officials also made the switch or served simultaneously in the ministry and the cabinet organ. The actual mechanics of censorship were still performed mainly by NHK and Communications Ministry officials, but the CIB made most decisions on censorship standards and program

selection. NHK's personnel policy, bylaws, office organization, business plans, and finances were made subject to the joint authority of the ministry and the bureau.

The Situation Broadcast Planning Conference continued to operate until war began with America in December 1941, when it gave way to daily meetings of CIB, Communications Ministry, and NHK personnel. The CIB participants included military men. One early decision was to suspend NHK's second channel for the duration of the conflict. Program policies underwent constant revision, but a running file of orders was kept in the Record of Instructions on Broadcast Management. An Implementation Study Meeting (Sochi Kento Kai) was held once a week to discuss changes in the file, and to refine execution of the various injunctions.

If cooperation between the CIB and the Communications Ministry was occasionally strained,¹¹ friction between the CIB and the military was a constant problem. It was the hydra-like nature of military involvement that complicated matters. The first channel of military input was through the officers employed directly by the CIB. For example, as of January 1942, an army major and a navy lieutenant commander both served in the CIB office supervising radio--they simultaneously held positions in their respective military ministries. Reportedly they pushed a hard statist line within the CIB.¹² Despite this influence, however, the information offices of the two military ministries continued to function independently. Their operations were not absorbed by the cabinet until April 1945, even though the CIB had been meant to coordinate the state's entire information output from its inception. Beyond the ministries were the army and navy information offices serving Imperial Headquarters (Daihon'ei). Headquarters was responsible for

combat strategy, and it was the only state organ with propaganda authority equal to that of the cabinet. It had an unconditional right to make pronouncements on the war, and this power was unassailable for being rooted in the constitutional right of supreme command. There was an overlapping of membership between the information offices of the military ministries and Imperial Headquarters, but they nonetheless functioned as distinct entities. As the war advanced, headquarters increasingly issued direct instructions to NHK and the other media companies without routing them through the CIB filter. This created agonizing predicaments because such statements might duplicate or conflict with those emanating from the ministries and the cabinet, which were cleared through the CIB. The CIB and Imperial Headquarters concluded several formal agreements during the war to dispel the confusion, but disharmony in war-related pronouncements was never entirely overcome.¹³

Program Control: Principles and Content

Having outlined the state control structure, we now examine what it held in store for concrete program policy. Since mobilizational directives on specific issues have been described in the chapter on the press, radio programming will be treated in a series of vignettes illustrating the transformation of content.

Entertainment The China Incident in mid-1937 marked a turning point in the politicization of radio entertainment; the Manchurian Incident had had less of a backlash here than in news/lecture programs. The initial reaction to the China war was less to mobilize entertainment than to moderate it, since mirthful enjoyment seemed out of step

with the "situation." Even the traditional dancing at the yearly Lantern Festival (Obon) was forbidden and did not reappear until 1942.¹⁴ This anti-entertainment policy was reflected in radio programming. A poll published by the journal Bungei Shunju in early 1941 reported that 89% (607) of the respondents found radio "unentertaining."¹⁵ The journal ascribed this result to the excessive number of serious war-related programs, though it responded patriotically by calling for a "new culture" to promote morale on the home front. Policy changed markedly after October 1940, when Army Minister Tojo called for "healthy entertainment" in a cabinet resolution.¹⁶ The proportion of entertainment programs on NHK's first channel in Tokyo subsequently rose from 23% in 1940 to 33% in 1941,¹⁷ and shortly thereafter the Imperial Rule Assistance Association even promoted a "New Rice Dance" around the country. But although the mobilization of entertainment gained steam in the early 1940's, it was well in evidence from late 1937.

In the two years after the China Incident, jazz was stricken from radio for being un-Japanese, and as a rule music sung in foreign languages was banned as well; German and Italian songs later became exceptions. Even Japanese music composed in foreign styles was targeted for elimination. In January 1943, the CIB compiled a list of 1,000 songs, both foreign and Japanese, to be banished from Japanese entertainment, and after April 1944 music played on the banjo, ukelele, and steel guitar was outlawed altogether, and use of the saxophone narrowly restricted.¹⁸

Meanwhile, radio authorities discovered patriotic virtues in the more native shakuhachi (a bamboo flute), which was lauded as follows:

The shakuhachi, in the tune of just a single flute, reproduces the universe. It is truly a typical oriental symbol. Those who play

it must devote their entire character to it, which leads not only to the perfection of a really severe art, but also contributes to the spiritual culture of bushido [the way of the samurai] and is an act of religious purification. In order to overcome our present difficulties in this dangerous time which cries out for renovation of the nation's livelihood and for self-discipline from the people, the shakuhachi especially is the simple art form appropriate for the country's way of life in the situation.¹⁹

State officials were fortunate that their desire to revive traditional instruments like the shakuhachi, the koto, and the shamisen was boosted by some independent developments in the Japanese arts. The most notable was the "New Japanese Music" movement started in the early 1930's.

This was a response by traditional artists to the invasion of Western popular music. Arrangements were written for a full orchestra, a concession to current Western tastes, but most of the instruments used were the traditional ones listed above. The new form was very well received. By 1940, the entire New Japanese Music movement was adopted as "one important element in 'National Music' [Kokumin Ongaku]," the state's term for patriotic songs it set out to foster on radio.²⁰

The National Music campaign was in full swing by 1940. In spring and autumn audiences were blitzed nightly with military marches, focusing on China Incident songs in the spring, and music related to the Manchurian Incident and earlier wars in the autumn--new contributions were strongly promoted at year's end to climax radio's celebration of Japan's mythical 2600th birthday.²¹ Officials sponsored contests to encourage the composition of "healthy" music. For example, between August 1942 and March 1943, a cash prize competition was held for a form of musical storytelling which typically addressed traditional moral themes (rokyoku):

The Information Bureau has planned to select and reward national musical storytelling of a healthy, cheerful kind that will contribute

to a wide understanding and propagation of state policy by recently establishing a National Musical Storytelling Prize.²²

The better entries to such contests were recorded and played on the radio.

To summarize, in the field of radio music the state eliminated most foreign music and Japanese music duplicating foreign styles, encouraged existing musical trends growing out of native styles and using traditional instruments, often infusing them with nationalistic tone or content, and actively promoted the writing of new music explicitly supportive of state policy.

Developments in dramatic radio entertainment paralleled those in music. War-related plays, precursors of a state-generated National Theatre movement, were broadcast over radio even before the end of 1937.²³ In 1938, so-called "situation dramas" began to appear regularly; these were ten-minute performances focusing on some aspect of the wartime crisis or related state policy. Similarly, "culture plays" were broadcast taking up themes in the service of state objectives--this art form took its cue from the "culture films" being produced in Japan at the time, the terms derived from Nazi Germany. In February 1938, during the second radio "Emphasis Week" for the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement, there were nightly 30-minute dramatic performances in which "the Japanese spirit was concretely interwoven," and these were continued thereafter at least twice each week. Most comprised various kinds of storytelling, some accompanied by music. By March 1939, there had been 317 such performances carried over the radio.²⁴ A great deal of radio programming thematically focused on the patriotic commemoration of Japan's founding throughout 1940, and this included the broadcast of a new full-length play from the genre of National Theatre every month

of the year.²⁵

By 1942, state programmers were working to eliminate the remnants of non-political performances--there was not much by way of patently objectionable material being produced. As it was expressed in one state document:

. . . in our experience, though one cannot say that we never find absolutely impermissible entertainment beyond the reach of discretion, the most common cases are neither passable nor damnable but right in the middle. In reality, our duty and the greater part of our work lies in adding political considerations to such pieces and guiding them so that they advance along the course upon which they must advance in wartime.²⁶

Contests were held under state auspices for drama as well. For example, in late 1942 prizes were offered for the best fairy tales, stories, and dramatic scripts submitted for the "Little Subjects' Hour," the new title for what had previously been "The Children's Hour."²⁷ The purpose was "to contribute to the rise of little subjects' culture, to the promotion of their education, and to little subjects' sentiments during the Great East Asian War."²⁸ Such contests were also held for full-length plays.

The attitude of many state officials is epitomized in the words of the Broadcasting Division Chief of the Tokyo Communications Bureau in 1942: "Broadcasting is a political organ . . . apart from its political nature, culture does not exist."²⁹ The more radical CIB officials wished to stop the performance and broadcast of all classical music by composers from Axis enemy countries or of Jewish origin. The work of some composers, like Felix Mendelssohn, disappeared completely, but a few music lovers apparently managed to squeeze in some pieces by Debussy (France) and Chopin (Poland) without announcing the composers' names.³⁰ The hard-nosed CIB officials, some of whom reportedly took

Dostoevsky to be the name of a new drug, failed to notice.³¹

In the realm of sports and health programs, the regular "Radio Gymnastics" show was incorporated into the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement in 1938. This program had originally been modeled on an American radio show sponsored by an insurance company in the 1920's. Though young naval officers had always announced the drills, the program had not initially served any political purpose. For three weeks every August, special assemblies were organized around the country to perform the exercises; school children on summer vacation received cards from their teachers to be stamped when they arrived at the park to participate. In the summer of 1938, these assemblies were arranged under the banner of spiritual mobilization, more than 30,000 gatherings with a total draw of 147 million people.³² During the war, the drills turned from simple gymnastics to martial exercises, and from 1941 the program was directed at the "neighborhood associations" (tonari gumi) at the base of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association.

Broadcasts of the alien sport of baseball, already a growing Japanese passion in the 1930's, were restricted to holidays after the China Incident, and limited even on holidays from 1940. Native Japanese sumo wrestling, however, was a military favorite and received extra air time.³³

Religious programs Religious radio shows in the 1930's reflected the growing degree of state program control. In the very popular series "Discourse on the Sacred Books" (Seiten Kogi), running from March 1934 to January 1935, there had been 15 programs on Buddhism, five on Christianity, three on Confucianism, and four others. In February 1935, the show was renamed "Morning Cultural Lesson" (Asa no Shuyo)

and over the next year it carried 11 talks on Buddhism, eight on the Japanese spirit and national history, three on Confucianism, and three others, already a significant shift in content. Before the program's termination in April 1941, it had degenerated into a patriotic pep rally, expounding upon themes such as the practice of loyalty in the "situation." Meanwhile, a number of more limited religious programs mirrored the same trend. Starting in January 1937, a series of ten monthly religious programs was devoted to such topics as the promotion of bushido and the "Japanese view of life and death." Monthly religious lectures in 1938 carried such titles as "Commentary on Sacred Teachings to be Heard in the Situation," and "The Great Achievement of Emperor Jinmu" (Japan's mythical first monarch).³⁴ This transition from purely religious to highly nationalistic spiritual content was paralleled by the growing persecution of Buddhist, Christian, and even splinter Shinto groups from about 1934-1935, when the state had virtually run out of communists to arrest. The same thought police and prosecutors who had worked over the leftists then turned on the clerics.

The ease with which the state could control religious groups and use spiritual exhortations to its own advantage reflects the absence of a powerful independent religious institution in civil society. There was no religious group with the weight of the Catholic Church of interwar Italy or postwar Poland, where religion has been safeguarded as a vital sphere of autonomy from state control. Without religion as a comparable source of resistance, the Japanese state was more easily able to penetrate the inner life of its subjects with its own spiritual doctrines.

News By 1937 news reports occupied three hours and 58 minutes of radio time every day,³⁵ and polls unfailingly identified the news as NHK's most popular program. In November 1937, survey research gave the 7:00 p.m. news the highest audience rating on the schedule, and listening rates for the 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. news never wavered during the war, staying within the 80%-85% range.³⁶ In 1939, people recently purchasing radio receivers were polled for their reasons: the most common response was a desire to hear the news faster (given by 18%), the second was to deepen awareness of the China Incident (12%).³⁷ This desire for information was answered with an unmitigated flow of state propaganda.

A document outlining basic state policy on radio news was prepared by the Communications Bureau in Tokyo in September 1942 and printed for intrastate consumption by the CIB. On the overall purpose of radio mobilization:

Throughout all broadcasts, the basis of our approach to [program] inspection is the determination to "complete the Great East Asian War" and for "every broadcast to conform to the purposes of the state." In other words, it is "to perceive all broadcasts from an intensely political standpoint."³⁸

The document enumerated four criteria by which officials would evaluate radio news. These are especially illuminating because they establish that conscious lying was the essence of state information output in general, and news broadcasts in particular, in this period.

1. Is the broadcast suitable for the nation at the present time? . . . Needless to say, in the news there are items suitable to relate to the people, and others not so. The choice must be made first and foremost judging from the state's vantage.
2. Is the perspective that of Japan and the Axis powers? . . . [On the topic of broadcasting news from the point of view of neutral countries:] One certainly cannot say that to take the standpoint of third countries purely is fair news from the perspective

of our allies, because allies and enemies would be given an equal appraisal.

Rather, the effect of reporting news to the nation from a third country viewpoint is the opposite. Which is to say, this so-called fair standpoint is called fair because it doesn't discriminate between causes and doesn't resolve the issues, but leaves judgment to the decision of the listener's mind. This tendency concedes a freedomist viewpoint to the minds of the people. It is premised upon the restoration of so-called freedomism. This is because various factors are presented uncritically and it is left for the one who hears them to compare and examine them in his own head and arrive at his own conclusions. If one were continually to present this kind of uncritical news, and the public were to interpret events as it pleases, the result would be to open a crack in the public opinion which has finally been led at great pains to a union of belief.

Consequently, how should we treat this news from the position of a third country? We must make it beneficial for the guidance of our national opinion by adding our own subjective comments but dressing it up to the utmost just like objective news on the surface.

3. Is it cooperative with the government? . . . [Under this item, the document warns that even facts favorable to the state can sometimes have the wrong effect if reported too objectively. For example, 1942 election coverage had noted that electoral law violations had declined, but then went on to list the numbers and types of various violations, leaving a contrary impression on the listener.]

4. Is there a danger of it being used against us by the enemy?³⁹

The question--Is the story true to fact?--never arises. The disastrous naval defeat at Midway in June 1942 was judged unsuitable news for the people to hear.⁴⁰ The rendering of consciously fabricated commentary as objective reporting was official policy. It had begun at least as early as 25 December 1941, when an Imperial Headquarters news piece on the attack against Hong Kong was followed (still within the newscast) with an official explanation of its importance.⁴¹ By 1943 news and analysis were systematically mixed without any distinction.⁴²

How much, then, did the Japanese people know of the real causes of a war in which millions of them were to die? In April 1943, Murata Goro, a senior Home Ministry bureaucrat, was personally asked by Prime

Minister Tojo to become the new vice-director of the Cabinet Information Bureau. This was the highest working post in the bureau. When he took up the assignment, Murata reports that one of the first things he did was to look into the origins of the war:

As for me personally, I thought that Konoe's third cabinet had been wrecked mainly because the Japanese army absolutely refused to agree to America's demand for a troop withdrawal, and therefore I figured that the war had probably begun likewise as a result of the exacerbation of this troop withdrawal problem. However, there were not a few civil intellectuals who said that mere complications over the troop withdrawal issue were not sufficient reason for Japan and America to go to war.

Because so many made this claim, even I was thinking that I would like just once to ascertain clearly the real reason this war actually started.

Therefore, after my transfer to the Information Bureau, starting with the army and navy officers who worked there, I took aside the bureau's leading officials and asked them various questions to make sure of the real reason for the outbreak of war. However, there was not one among them who clearly understood the true cause.⁴³

And indeed, the truth had so little to do with state propaganda that they could function perfectly well without comprehending the full magnitude of their distortions.

After war began with America, news announcers were ordered by the Cabinet Information Bureau to switch from the "disinterested tone" (tan tan cho) to the "war cry tone" (otakebi cho) of speaking, and news broadcasts were punctuated with martial music to embellish their impact.⁴⁴

The broadcast day: 8 December 1941 What follows is a slightly abbreviated transcription of NHK's broadcasting schedule for the day the Japanese armed forces attacked the United States. Entries marked simply "music" were recordings, most often the patriotic numbers played around the news during the war. All other musical pieces were performed live for radio.

6:20 News/Music
 6:40 Discourse on Bushido [the way of the samurai]
 7:00 Special News
 7:04 Radio Gymnastics
 7:18 Special News
 7:20 Morning Words: "Date Masamune and the Pacific Ocean"
 7:41 News/Music
 7:50 Accompaniment for Work--four marching songs: "Brilliance of the Imperial Army," "Night of the Air Force," "March of the Great Fleet," "Military March at Dawn"
 8:30 Special News
 8:50 Radio Gymnastics
 9:00 National School Broadcast (Education Vice-Minister)
 9:12 Music
 9:20 Economic Market Report
 9:30 Special News/Music
 10:20 Women's Household Hour: "Post Office Annuities for Country and Home" (Communications Ministry bureau chief)
 10:40 Instrumental Music: a medley of marching songs
 11:00 Special News/Music
 11:40 Economic Market Report
 12:00 noon Announcement
 National Anthem
 Reading of an Imperial Rescript [declaring war]
 "To Revere the Imperial Rescript" (Prime Minister Tojo Hideki)
 "Patriotic March" (music)
 12:16 Imperial Headquarters announcement
 12:17 Instrumental Music: "Spirit of the Imperial Army," "The Strength of Asia," "Patriotic March"
 12:30 Reading of a government announcement
 12:37 News/Music
 1:45 Economic Market Report
 2:00 Special News/Music
 3:08 Broadcast to the Workplace: Music/Radio Gymnastics
 3:30 News/Music
 4:40 Economic Communication
 5:00 Special News
 5:14 Choral Music: "Annihilation of the Enemy's Character"/Music
 5:50 Program Preview
 6:00 Call to assemble before the radio (Miyamoto Yoshio, CIB)
 6:04 Little Subjects' Newspaper
 6:30 Choral and Orchestral Music: "March of the Warships," "If One Goes to Sea," "Annihilation of the Enemy's Character," "Let Us Carry Out the Holy War," "Protect Our Skies," "Pacific March," "I Pledge to the Country," "The Strength of Asia," "Patriotic March," "Parade March"
 7:00 National Anthem
 Reading of an Imperial Rescript
 "To Revere the Imperial Rescript" (Prime Minister Tojo Hideki)
 7:13 News
 7:30 "A Pledge to the Nation Regarding the Declaration of War" (Okumura Kiwao, CIB vice-director)

8:01 Musical Recital: "We the People of the Emperor," "From Now
On" (song of the ancient military guards)
8:04 "Emergency Financial Policies" (Finance Vice-Minister)
8:15 Instrumental Music: "The Combined Fleet," "Warship"
8:24 Musical News Ballad: "The Declaration of War"
8:30 Proclamation to the Entire Nation (army general)
8:40 Instrumental Music: "If One Goes to Sea"/others
9:00 News
Instrumental and Choral Music: "Military March of the Century,"
"The Song of Oceanic Aerial Flight," "Military March of the
Sea," "Protect the Oceans," "Pacific March"
10:00 Today's War Situation and News
11:00 News⁴⁵

Notes

¹NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:389.

²Ibid., p. 306.

³Ibid., p. 481. Some 25,000 radio receivers were supplied to the quarters of the Great Japan Youth League (Dai Nihon Rengo Seinendan) nationwide--NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1938, p. 244. By 1941, there were 346 radio towers placed in public parks in the larger cities--NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1942, pp. 317-323.

⁴NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:482.

⁵Ibid., p. 306, and the table titled Rajio no Nendo Betsu Kanyu Haishi Zoka Genzaisu on an unnumbered page at the end of the volume.

⁶Ibid., the table titled Rajio no Nendo Betsu To-Do-Fu-Ken Fukyu Ritsu on an unnumbered page at the end of the volume.

⁷Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 83, p. 451.

⁸NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:322.

⁹One illustration of the Cabinet Information Division's strength in the conference was that it pushed through a major decision designating NHK's national channel for programs suited to the average subject, while the second channel (operative only in Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya) was to focus on a more intellectual, urban audience--ibid., p. 347.

Japanese broadcasting to the colonies and foreign countries is not treated in this research. However, note that an East Asian Broadcast Conference was organized in September 1939 with the participation of officials from many ministries, army officers from Imperial Headquarters being added from 1940. This conference played a role similar to that of the Situation Broadcast Planning Conference only in the realm of overseas programs. Just before the attack on Pearl Harbor, NHK was broadcasting to overseas areas in 16 languages almost 24 hours a day--ibid., p. 305.

¹⁰The accord between the CIB and Communications Ministry is reprinted in Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 49, p. 279. See also ibid., document 45, pp. 273-274, for an earlier understanding on their division of authority.

¹¹NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:519. For examples of attempts to expedite ministry-bureau cooperation, see Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, documents 94 and 95.

¹²This point should not be misconstrued--there were civilian bureaucrats serving in the CIB whose statist predilections were every bit as radical as those of their military co-workers.

¹³A program aired on Asahi Television in 1981 recounted an incident late in the war when the Asahi Shinbun was forced to carry conflicting state announcements on the same page of the same issue.

Note that there were a number of structural innovations late in the war in response to defeats and enemy bombing which are not treated in the text. The most significant was a merger of the Communications Ministry with the Railroad Ministry into a new Transportation and Communications Ministry in November 1943, after which a Transmission Agency (Tsushin-in) was detached as an external ministry office to handle radio's technical side; this office was placed under cabinet authority in May 1945. These late changes were largely desperate improvisations which did not affect the general level or method of state control

¹⁴NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:635.

¹⁵Cited in *ibid.*, p. 490.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 635.

¹⁷NHK, ed., Hoso 50-Nen Shi, p. 610.

¹⁸NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:544-545.

¹⁹NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1942, pp. 162-163.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 162-165.

²²Dai Toa Senso Hoso Shirube [Broadcasting Guidelines for the Great East Asian War], no. 16, September 1942, p. 15. This document was printed by the Cabinet Information Bureau's Second Division, Third Section for intrastate consumption.

²³NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:374.

²⁴Quotation and data from NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1940, p. 169.

²⁵NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:374.

²⁶Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 91, p. 483.

²⁷The new Japanese title was Shokokumin no Jikan. There were many such language changes during the war. The English-derived "nyusu" reverted to the Japanese "hodo," "anaunsa" to "hosoin," etc. Foreign language lessons were stricken from radio completely.

²⁸Dai Toa Senso Hoso Shirube, no. 16, September 1942, p. 95.

²⁹Dai Toa Senso Hoso Shirube, no. 18, November 1942, p. 79.

³⁰NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:555-556.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 297.

³²NHK, ed., Rajio Nenkan 1940, p. 10.

³³NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:395.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 353.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 349.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 633.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 486.

³⁸Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 90, p. 478. Parts within quotation marks are apparently citations from an earlier state document or common slogans.

³⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 479-480.

⁴⁰NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:565.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 564.

⁴²*Ibid.*; Dai Toa Senso Hoso Shirube, no. 20, January 1943, p. 6.

⁴³Naisei Shi Kenkyukai, ed., Murata Goro-Shi Danwa Sokkiroku [Record of a Conversation with Murata Goro], 4 vols. (Naisei Shi Kenkyukai, n.d.), 3:245.

⁴⁴NHK, ed., Nihon Hoso Shi, 1:495.

⁴⁵Masu Medea Tosei, vol. 2, document 72, pp. 371-374.

CHAPTER XXII

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This concluding section addresses four topics: civil resistance to state control, the state and civil structures through which mobilization was effected, the historical process by which the state became a revolutionary force, and a comparison of the regime structure and control system to those of totalitarian single party regimes and military regimes.

The Lessons of Civil Resistance

Civil opposition to state control was evident throughout 1868-1945, but the onslaught of New Order policies offers the best opportunity to make a general assessment. Resistance in the late nineteenth century was from only one, relatively undeveloped medium against a state yet to institutionalize its authority. From the turn of the century to the early 1930's, mainstream press organs and film producers generally acquiesced in the controls of the état-gendarme; only a radical minority saw its existence threatened in these years, and that minority was ill-equipped to defend its interests. Mainstream media people certainly resented state interference, as witnessed by the 1925-1926 press movement to revise the Newspaper Law, but state meddling was normally endured as but an occasional irritant. Only in regard to radio did civil forces for autonomy play their last card before the 1930's. Despite steadfast opposition from radio investors in Osaka, however, the state had every advantage in that confrontation, since controls were imposed before civil organizations could estab-

lish a pattern of broadcasting autonomy. The acid test of civil resistance, then, came in 1937-1945, when the state attempted a radical mobilization of the country's film and press industries, by this time among the most advanced in the world. Their efforts to retain their autonomy lead to the following conclusions: (1) large, dominant media organs are best able to resist state power, (2) logistical difficulties, competitive antagonisms, and the uneven impact of control policies are great barriers to civil solidarity against the state, and (3) the public interest structure of NHK was no match for privately-owned, profit-making companies in resisting mobilization.

The record of Japan's newspapers, magazines, and film makers indicates that the less pluralistic the civil sector, i.e., the more it is dominated by a few powerful associations, the better it is able to defend its autonomy from radical mobilization.¹ Certainly no media organ could resist the full coercive power of the state, but if officials are not prepared to employ extreme coercion and civil associations have some room for maneuver, it is the large ones that are likely to put up the best fight.

While the landscape of Japan's small local and trade newspapers was flattened illegally without much of a struggle, the three renowned national dailies were able to reserve a modicum of operational autonomy. They had great credibility and prestige, they were functionally irreplaceable, they had official supporters in the navy and among ex-party men in the cabinet (a by-product of their political influence), and they found it much easier to form a common front than the horde of small newspapers spread around the country. Likewise, the two dominant dramatic film producers were able to maintain civil ownership against the designs of the Cabinet Information

Bureau. In the magazine sector, however, there were no two or three firms in a superior class by themselves. No magazine had the prestige, resources, or circulation of a national newspaper. The state was able to enter the magazine business itself with its weekly Shuho and unofficial sponsorship of monthly magazines like Gendai and Koron, and it finally eradicated even Chuo Koron and Kaizo, two of the most influential civilly-owned periodicals. The absence of a few clearly preeminent firms emasculated the sector's capacity to resist.

This finding points to the weakness of an ideal democratic social structure in opposing radical mobilization. The democratic ideal calls for many associations to compete in the marketplace of ideas so that all views are aired and all social groups participate in public discourse. Dominance by just a few firms, constituting something of a civil tyranny, is inconsistent with this ideal. However, given the frailty of all but the largest media businesses before state power, one is led to the paradox that the more democratically a civil sector is organized, the more easily the state can usurp its autonomy and thereby undermine democracy. While democracy is served by many media organs of equal weight, liberal resistance to state encroachment is better served by the civil tyranny of a few large firms (assuming, of course, that the publishers' desire to remain autonomous is equal). The more oligopolistic the sector, the stronger its defenses.² The validity of this statement is likely to increase with the level of political development, for as the state's absolute power grows, so must the minimal resources of any organization able to oppose it.

One may try to circumvent this logic by arguing that the ideal civil sector would comprise many small-medium size associations ready to join forces against state intervention; would this not maximize both liberal

and democratic values? Unfortunately, there are practical obstacles to this scenario. Given the huge size of contemporary countries, coordinating the activities of numerous small organizations in different regions would require ongoing, strenuous efforts by all concerned. Their ability to act quickly and decisively in unison is highly doubtful. Their combined resources would not be as effective as the same resources concentrated in a few firms. The experience of the German newspaper business, which was highly decentralized into small and medium size firms in the 1920's, also speaks against the hypothesis. Oron Hale has cited "the lack of unity among the segments of the publishing industry" as one reason the Nazis were easily able to control the sector.³

The Japanese newspaper and film industries, in which there were several dominant firms to check the state and many smaller ones impeding a civil tyranny of the large, would seem perfect if only they had closed ranks when their survival was threatened. Autonomy from the state would appear to be a common interest of all media organs. But their solidarity was impeded by the very competition that is the hallmark of a free society. The battle for circulation among newspapers had created such bad blood between them that papers generally declined to protest the liquidation of their rivals—with few exceptions, none discovered the sanctity of an autonomous press until its own coals were in the fire. The national and local newspapers had been at odds for so long that they acted as two antagonistic blocks during formation of the New Order. Thus a second paradox is that the greater the intensity of competition in the marketplace, the less likely the sector will unite to defend its autonomy from the state and thereby protect competitive conditions.⁴ If the three largest newspapers had not overcome their rivalry and joined forces in November 1941,

there would not have remained a single newspaper in Japan that owned its own printing presses or the land and buildings that housed them.

The tendency for media organs to parry the state's challenge individually instead of handling it as a sectoral problem was reinforced by the disparate effects of control measures. In the dramatic film industry, the two largest companies (Shochiku and Toho) saw chances for survival in the state's consolidation scheme, while it meant certain dissolution for the others. If paper rationing hurt critical magazines like Chuo Koron and Kaizo, it favored periodicals run by strong backers of state policy. The state's elimination of middle men in the distribution of books and magazines was a boon to publishers and retailers. The one-company newspaper design would have benefitted local papers to the detriment of the national dailies. In every case, some firms sought to gain from the state's despoliation of others. This is not to say that most media people were pleased by New Order consolidations, but that when some comprehensive restructuring appeared inevitable, each firm was inclined to maximize its own advantages rather than rally to a common cause. Competitive enmity and the uneven impact of control policies had a lot to do with this.

A final point is that Japan's public interest broadcasting company offered none of the resistance to state control witnessed in the privately-owned press and film sectors. It is difficult to generalize about the public interest format, since it may be organized in many different ways. Regarding NHK, state personnel controls and the absence of private ownership and profit left no one to resist the wartime system for ideological or material reasons. It was still possible for Shochiku to produce a few non-political films, and for the journals to publish some short stories unrelated to policy, or occasionally even exploit conflicts

within the state to air somewhat different points of view. These were humble signs of autonomy, to be sure, but even these faint vestiges of independence were denied to radio.

This underscores the fact that the principal motive for civil resistance was to protect private ownership. It was only the state's program of consolidation that moved influential media organs to pronounced opposition. Typical was the posture of the national dailies on the Newspaper League and the major dramatic film studios in 1940-1941--they would agree to anything, as long as private ownership were retained.⁵ The factor of ownership should not be confused with that of profit. Profit restrictions were not a major bone of contention. There was rather a sense that private ownership was the bare minimum required if a company were to maintain a separate existence with its organizational integrity and traditions at all intact. This desire to save the enterprise as a distinct entity was probably bolstered by the well-known Japanese tendency to project family-like loyalties and sentiment onto non-familial social organizations. Radio had never enjoyed the independence that comes with the full prerogatives of private ownership, so no similar threshold of resistance was there to be crossed.

Given the penetration of mobilization policies, media resistance was feeble on the whole, and the fundamental reason was patriotic support for the country at war. War reinforces the myth that the state alone represents the public good, while "private" associations stand for selfish concerns that must properly yield to this public good and its alleged spokesmen. It was this misconception more than anything else that disarmed so many Japanese from defending even their life's work from bureaucratic ambitions. How is a businessman to contend against a battery of

officials who tell him his homeland is engaged in a life-and-death struggle obliging him to sacrifice his little film company or magazine, especially when he is as anxious for victory as they? It was rarely necessary for the state to unsheathe its brute power to win compliance from its subjects. Its moral authority in wartime was the biggest reason that so much destruction could be wrecked upon private individuals in the quiet of the consultation meeting.

What of those few media people who found militarism and mobilization abhorrent and longed for the critical freedom of the past (i.e., those who were not in prison)? Were all the editors of the Asahi Shinbun and Chuo Koron nothing but naive patriots themselves? Patriots they were, naive they were not. Even among those most opposed to militarism, it is difficult to identify even one mainstream media figure who was firmly opposed to Japan's war aims.⁶ Their commitment to the nation at war ultimately transcended their contempt for the regime. So they helped to persuade millions of people to sacrifice their lives for imperialism by propagating the state's one-sided views and consciously spreading deceit-- there were many reporters present at the rape of Nanking, but what they saw was not reported or published. What were their options? Martyrdom would accomplish nothing but to assuage one's conscience, and perhaps not even that, since to denounce the regime meant abandoning one's countrymen on the field of battle. To hold one's ground invariably meant far more active complicity in the state's designs than opportunities for meaningful opposition. To retreat from public life would be to sacrifice what little influence one had and probably invite replacement by a true believer in the regime. It might also mean poverty, conscription, or other compulsory war-related work. Most chose to stay with their jobs

in the media, even at the cost of serving a government they detested. The state had placed them in a dilemma with no satisfactory route of escape.⁷

If coercion (i.e., punitive sanctions—expropriation, imprisonment, execution) was not the main cause of submission, it was still a very important factor. The police worked to intimidate those struggling to protect small businesses, and they possessed virtually unlimited powers, including preventive arrest. The coercive authority of the State Total Mobilization Law and the Film Law also cast a deep shadow over the founding of the New Order. Furthermore, one should not forget that although executions were very rare and arrests relatively few given the extent of mobilization, there were some conspicuous resisters serving time in prison. Many arrested after the China Incident were not extremists but the ex-professors and colleagues of intellectuals active in the media; some had been regular contributors to various journals and were on intimate terms with editors and reporters. The collaring of these men came as a shock to those who knew them.⁸ Moreover, while punishments may appear to have been rather lenient by some standards, they must be interpreted in light of cultural and geographic factors. What may seem a light sentence could have dire consequences in Japan due to the social ostracism that frequently struck not only the defendant but his family as well. It is not uncommon even today for sons to lose their jobs and daughters to have difficulty marrying if their fathers commit serious crimes. Furthermore, unlike the situation in Europe, the option of a relatively smooth transition into exile in a neighboring country was not available. The surrounding countries were of distinctly lower standards of living and most do not share common cultural roots with Japan the way

one might think of Italy, France, and Switzerland as members of one Western culture. In the interwar period, nearby countries were controlled by the Japanese state, the Western imperial powers, or the antagonistic Chinese Nationalist government. The road to America was barred by racial prejudice and laws directed specifically against Japanese immigrants. In these circumstances, the prospect of punishments that may seem mild by some lights was a strong incentive for complying with state controls.

Thus the history of late imperial Japan, like that of Fascist Italy, demonstrates that a high level of mobilization may be achieved without a correspondingly high level of coercion. In fact, the overall relationship between coercion and state control is tenuous. Recent military regimes in Uganda and Argentina have engaged in brutal coercion, killing thousands of opponents, but their positive control over society (i.e., the imposition of desired patterns of behavior, the restructuring of social sectors) was slight relative to that in Italy or Japan, where state murders were few. Severe coercion may even be dysfunctional to state control by provoking resistance where more subtle measures might win compliance. Certainly the mass murder carried out in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union was not necessary for the success of mobilization in those countries--what Hitler wrought by violence against the leftist press he accomplished equally well against the centrist press with tactics similar to those employed in Japan.⁹ The savagery was largely gratuitous, reflecting the moral depravity of the state elite more than the demands of control. Although coercion is an essential aspect of all state authority and would almost certainly increase to some extent with an ambitious mobilization program, there is no necessary relationship between the absolute levels of state coercion and control over society.¹⁰

The Structure of State Control

This section analyzes the state and civil structures through which mobilization was administered.

The essential structural innovation within the state was establishment of supra-ministerial policy planning organs such as the Cabinet Information Bureau. These evolved gradually from ad hoc or purely advisory committees in the late 1920's and early 1930's into the principal generators of state policy by late 1940. Their mission transcended the more parochial responsibilities of the ministries, allowing for comprehensive policy designs, and unlike the older ministries, they were free of clientelistic ties with powerful civil associations that might have inhibited radical control policies. These new cabinet bodies assembled ideological statistes from all arms of the administration, thereby turning what otherwise might have remained isolated radical elements into an organized, coherent political block within the state.¹¹ They also incorporated military officers in regular staff positions, another novelty outside the Army and Navy Ministries. This greatly diminished the isolation of the military bureaucracy and allowed for a partial replication of the hybrid military-bureaucratic policy organs operating in Manchuria. The military thus acquired a direct input into domestic policy formulation beyond its usual veto power at formal cabinet meetings. In addition, a few employees were recruited from civil society, and these included some ex-leftists ready to promote radical statism in a new guise.¹² Finally, the new cabinet bodies sharply increased the power of the Prime Minister. He now had a sizable staff of experts to work on comprehensive programs unhindered by the tunnel vision of the various ministries and the tedious process of reaching a consensus within and between them before concrete

proposals took shape. Given the statist proclivities of Konoe and his influence over the course of events, this was a factor of great importance.

The founding of supra-ministerial agencies to conduct policy planning on a grand scale and bolster the power of the chief executive is a widespread phenomenon in modern polities. Even in democratic regimes, one can cite the examples of the American Office of Management and Budget and National Security Council, Canada's Treasury Board Secretariate and Privy Council Office, the French Planning Commission, the Belgian Bureau of Economic Planning, the Dutch Central Plan Bureau, and Italy's Institute for Industrial Reconstruction.¹³ The prevalence of such institutions has also been documented in African military regimes, examples being the Administrative Committee and Economic Committee set up by the military in Ghana in the late 1960's.¹⁴

The broad authority of Japan's new planning organs and the radical policies they undertook inevitably produced conflicts with the established ministries. There were frequent skirmishes between the CIB and the Home Ministry, which had traditionally dominated media policy. In at least one instance, there was a major row over the substance of policy, when the navy and several cabinet ministers obstructed the CIB's one-company newspaper scheme. Ideological statist unquestionably controlled the policy agenda and largely succeeded in realizing their aims, but they did not monopolize policy input. If other state elites unflinchingly demurred from a radical proposal, some form of compromise was likely. Regarding media policy, however, such stalwart opposition was rare. Wartime conditions, and especially Japan's success in the early going, largely quieted substantive opposition from those who might not have consented for ideological reasons.

More salient than conflicts over substance were battles over the organizational assets at stake in new control policies. If the Home Ministry lost the initiative in policymaking over 1940-1942, it was more successful at defending its grip on implementation. Just as its governors became prefectural heads of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, so its censors doubled as CIB officials conducting the actual inspection of most films and publications. Some jurisdictional disputes were never resolved, resulting in an awkward duplication of functions, e.g., in the management of consultation meetings. Intra-state conflicts were especially severe in the last two years of the war, when the bombing of transportation and communications networks and the unpredictable shortages of materials stymied planning and coordination.

If internal friction is common to all large contemporary states, it tends to be inordinately harsh in highly mobilizational regimes due to the controversial nature of policy and the vast new powers to be meted out among state offices. Struggles within those single party regimes usually called "totalitarian" have been even more severe than those in Japan's military-bureaucratic system. Dietrich Orlow has chronicled the interminable struggles over policy and power between the Nazi Party's political cadres (the Gauleiters), divisions such as the Hitler Youth and the SS, and affiliated organizations like the German Labor Front.¹⁵ These were complemented by equally acrimonious confrontations between various party and non-party state institutions, such as the SS and the army. The recent "interest group" analyses of Soviet politics also underline the abrasive interaction between official organizations.¹⁶ The founding of totalitarian single party regimes invites greater discord because the very existence of non-party state offices is threatened by

the appearance of parallel party organs with similar responsibilities. In Japan, the cabinet policy organs were but an appendage to the bureaucracy, they recruited almost all their permanent and temporary personnel from the regular ministries, and they hadn't the resources to take over most chores of implementation, let alone to replace existing agencies. In short, there was much more continuity in the state administration and consequently less friction than occurs when a mass mobilization party takes power.

Intra-state conflicts do not necessarily bring a relaxation of state control over society. In fact, the opposite may be true. Civil autonomy may benefit from an official battle over statist programs, but it will suffer from jurisdictional struggles that leave a multitude of state offices with overlapping control functions. A single consultation on content would have been less oppressive than the many uncoordinated consultations with the CIB, Home Ministry, army, navy, IRAA, and other state offices. One should not confuse a pluralism of competing associations in civil society with a plurality of feuding state institutions--the first is a sign of autonomy, while the latter is often just a squabble over who will crack the whip.¹⁷ Controls are no less onerous for lack of integration.

In civil society, the restructuring of the press and film industries followed two basic patterns. In the first, companies were left under civil ownership but compelled to join control associations. These control organs eventually became state institutions with formal legal powers over their members, and some industry people were transformed into part-time bureaucrats to manage them jointly with career officials. In the second pattern, the operations of existing firms were forcibly merged into a

monopolistic company; the absorbed businesses became branches of the monopoly, their former owners usually receiving stock in it according to the capital and facilities they had surrendered. In both cases, creation of the new structures was preceded and accompanied by the dissolution of most small-medium size firms active in each sector. Established state offices were granted direct managerial prerogatives in the charters of both the multi-member control associations and the monopolies. In the media sector, the Cabinet Information Bureau led the major restructuring drive of the New Order in 1940-1941, but once the new control structures were launched, the CIB generally shared supervisory authority with the Home Ministry (media organs) or the Commerce and Industry Ministry (related economic businesses).

The oligopolistic pattern of civil ownership and compulsory control organs was typical of producers. Newspapers, magazines, dramatic and cultural/educational film companies, and book publishers were all pressed into this mold, which was standard in many other areas of industrial production. The monopolistic pattern was typical of distributors. The distribution of all films and publications as well as newsprint was lodged in new monopolistic companies. Only in the all-important news field did the CIB try to force producers into the monopolistic format. It succeeded in the news film field, but failed with newspapers due to opposition from the largest companies.

The state's command over the distribution of raw materials and media products was a key to its overall control strategy. Each firm was isolated and had to pass through a state filter to do business with the others. The state controlled access to newsprint and negative film as well as the distribution of publications and films to retailers and theatres. Its

ability to regulate the market lifelines leading to and from media companies was its most immediate material source of power over them. It was a conscious decision by officials to focus controls on the business side of media organs—they did not believe control over content would be perfected until controls over raw materials and distribution were firmly established.¹⁸ The success of their approach teaches that secure autonomy for the mass media is unattainable unless the purely economic sectors on which the media depend and the market connections between companies are clear of state interference.

The two restructuring patterns for production and distribution were consistent with the state's capabilities and objectives. Production processes are generally more complex than those of distribution. The state did not have sufficient personnel with the requisite expertise to replace the staffs of most leading media organs. In this respect, military-bureaucratic systems are inferior to many single party regimes. Parties may have a large membership and recruit extensively from the civil professions (they may even possess some fairly distinguished intellectuals with an original cultural contribution to make through the media), but a military-bureaucratic regime is unlikely to have such reserves.¹⁹ Its mobilization ambitions are more contingent upon active cooperation from the employees of existing production companies. Distribution enterprises, whose operations are simpler and more easily integrated, represent more vulnerable prey. Of course, the state's capabilities can only be assessed in relation to its goals. In Japan, the state sought to harness the full resources of some of the world's most highly advanced media industries. This implied the exploitation of not only their technical capabilities but also their credibility. To substitute bureaucrats and military

officers for the reporters of the Asahi Shinbun would have meant losing it as an effective tool of propaganda, since its credibility (not to mention journalistic quality) would have been irreparably damaged. CIB officials, while declaring the press to have a state mission and public character, nonetheless insisted they were not out to transform it into the official gazette (at least not ostensibly). Free of ideological principles akin to participation and unequipped to pursue a comparable strategy on a large scale anyway, officials turned to the control association system as a logical way to expand mobilization powers. They coopted industry people to perform bureaucratic tasks and succeeded in bringing the prestige and technical excellence of the country's most influential media organs into the service of state policy.

The Process of Change: War, Ideology, and Administrative Revolution

The immense impact of war upon the development of state control over society is one of the most striking lessons to be learned from the history of late imperial Japan. War-related considerations colored almost every media policy adopted from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to the end of World War II. Imperial ambition in some quarters and the fear of war in others strongly swayed policy deliberations even in years of peace. The reality of prolonged conflict after July 1937 was essential in securing widespread tolerance (if not outright support) for radical statist measures among the general public and many Diet members, businessmen, and bureaucrats. Imperialism was so popular that it is often difficult to determine whether compliance with this or that mobilization policy was voluntary or coerced.

War has been used to vindicate state control policies in many countries. Rugh has written of the Middle East:

Arab governments since World War II have increased their influence and control over the mass media in part with the justification that their newly independent nations face overwhelming external and internal problems requiring unity and purposefulness and a minimum of dissent in the public debate. . . . This argument is used in connection with economic development and other domestic problems, but the most common focus of such reasoning has been the Arab-Israeli conflict.²⁰

A state of war with Israel has endured from 1948 to the present in most Arab countries. When there is no ready prospect of external conflict, war may be declared against real or imagined imperialists, capitalists, communists, fascists, or other devious exploiters and revolutionaries, legitimizing controls in the same way.²¹ Tanzanian President Julius Nyrere has sanctioned severe media controls by asserting that all new nations fighting underdevelopment are like countries at war.²² An influential collection of articles on the building of modern state institutions in Western Europe is prefaced by these remarks:

Possibly most striking and disturbing is the finding of the authors of this volume that wars and the threats of war played such a critical part in building the strong states of Europe. The ominous phenomenon of war gave telling reality and unquestionable legitimacy to the reasons of state. What was established and learned in the mobilizing of resources for national security persisted to provide funds for peacetime allocations, . . .²³

As indicated in this passage, it would be a great blunder to regard war-related policies as aberrations unreflective of state interaction with society generally because they are not the products of "normal" times. Tashiro Kanenobu of Japan's Cabinet Information Bureau warned in 1942 that completion of the Great East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere would require more than 20 years.²⁴ In the thinking of many, it is war that constitutes normal times. The notion that politics floats into limbo during wars and other crises and is restored to some underlying normality afterwards is especially bankrupt in the twentieth century, when war often changes the life of every human being and social institution in a combatant country.

The state's wartime measures to extract greater resources and restructure civil society, even when packaged as emergency steps, often have a permanent character from their very inception. The thousands of Japanese businessmen who saw their newspapers, magazines, and film companies closed or transferred to larger corporations could hardly regard their plight as a temporary inconvenience due to the war. Win or lose, their businesses were gone, and no one had them scheduled for resurrection once the war was over. It is remarkable that despite vigorous attempts to undo New Order policies during the American occupation, the decisions made over 1937-1945 have left a lasting imprint on the Japanese newspaper industry. To this day, there is one preeminent newspaper in most Japanese prefectures, a legacy of the one prefecture/one newspaper policy. Only two new national dailies have arisen to compete with the Asahi, Yomiuri, and Mainichi--these are the Nihon Keizai and Sankei. Both were originally created by the state when it compelled the merger of all economic newspapers in Tokyo and Osaka, respectively, during formation of the New Order.

War may necessitate domestic changes otherwise unwanted by the top state elite, but this was not generally true in late imperial Japan. War was not so much an unexpected imposition from without as a policy actively pursued by military-bureaucratic leaders. Their war aims were not simply to win material advantages within the existing domestic and international orders, as had been true of earlier Japanese imperialism, but to construct a new international order based upon a sweeping transformation of domestic political, economic, and cultural life. It was this goal that prompted most of the domestic structural changes accompanying the war. On this basis, one could argue the primacy of ideological concerns over wartime

expediency in the motivations of New Order policymakers, but it is truer to say that the ideological dimension of their thinking was inseparably linked to the concrete requirements of total war--this linkage is highlighted in the central concept of the "National Defense State," which fused ideological principles and an interpretation of history to the immediate demands of war-related mobilization. The important point is that ideology graced mobilization with a transcendent legitimacy in the eyes of these elites and very much determined the content of mobilization policies. Indeed, given the widespread support for imperialism, many of the new media control policies were unnecessary to sustain the war effort--without their ideological underpinnings, they become inexplicable.

It is hardly surprising to find strains of ideological statism entering Japan in this period, given concurrent events in Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, and even the United States. What is extraordinary is that this ideological trend found such enthusiastic and coherent expression among established administrative elites. These were not disgruntled civil intellectuals or a Lumpenproletariat without any stake in the status quo, but rather men who had climbed the traditional ladders to success. The majority would have held important posts even if there had been no depression, no breakdown of democracy, no war, and no New Order. That they could embrace a novel ideology calling for systemic change contradicts many stereotypes of high state administrators. One view has it that the military turns decision-making into an apolitical problem solving exercise, shunning radical objectives because they tend to breed disorder.²⁵ Bureaucrats have been said to exert political influence only in proportion to the routine character of policy decisions, their

role diminishing in periods of crisis.²⁶ Even those who see military regimes as potential instruments of modernizing reform have generally scored them for a lack of ideological sophistication.²⁷ The Japanese experience demonstrates that entrenched administrative elites apparently socialized into the establishment may be just as sensitive to revolutionary ideas in challenging times as anyone else in the political system. Their behavior invalidates almost every hypothesis of occupational determinism that has been put forth in regard to the military or bureaucracy. As comparisons with other military regimes below will demonstrate, this pattern of administrative behavior has not been unique to Japan.

The far-reaching transformation of the state-society relationship in the late imperial period is best described as an administrative revolution. Without the seizure of power by an external elite (without even a coup d'etat), new value orientations and reorganization within the state administration itself produced policies radically altering the structure of key social sectors and subjecting them to penetrating positive control. The following were important factors contributing to the success of this revolution:

1. The bureaucracy's powerful independent role in policymaking and implementation, especially after its liberation from party control in 1933--this was indispensable to the effectiveness of such extra-legal mechanisms of power as the consultation meeting and the first control associations (the Newspaper League, the Japan Publishing Culture Association).

2. The military's formal political prerogatives, especially the right of supreme command, which heightened the civil-military conflict over the London Naval Treaty in 1930 and the Manchurian Incident in 1931,

and the restoration of the military's right to active-duty service ministers in 1936, which enabled it to veto the formation of new cabinets and to terminate the government in office. These powers permitted a level of political intervention which the military in most countries could achieve only by means of a coup.

3. The army's control over Manchurian administration--Manchuria provided a perfect incubator for the army and its bureaucratic allies to experiment with statist policies free from the interference of other elites.

4. Prior military and bureaucratic experience with popular mobilization in Japan itself--the bureaucracy's Local Improvement Movement of 1900-1918 and the activities of the Military Reservist Associations compare favorably with party organization and manipulation of the general public.²⁸ Military and bureaucratic administrators were thus fairly well prepared to direct the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement and Imperial Rule Assistance Association in the late imperial period.

5. The inability of the political parties, Saionji, and Konoe to reestablish a sound civilian regime. The parties' scandalous corruption, their disinterest in organizing a broader mass base, their inability to respond quickly to a grave depression, and their failure to join forces to restore party government after 1932 were all critical. Later, Konoe's indecisiveness and reluctance to found an autonomous mass party, and his partly unwitting fortification of military-bureaucratic dominance over policy also smoothed the way for a full-fledged military regime. Note, however, that the inadequacy of civil political forces was not merely a fortuitous circumstance for the militarists--in great measure it was their own doing. Military obstructionism was the only insuperable barrier to a

return to democracy in the mid-1930's, Military sway over policy after 1932 did not ameliorate the agrarian crisis (if anything, inflation of the defense budget impeded solutions), so neither that issue nor imperialism, which soon won overwhelming Diet support, could legitimately be used against the parties. Yet the military refused to sanction a new party cabinet, even though this would have been quite popular after the 2/26 Incident. The military also played a crucial role in undermining democratic principles in public discourse. Konoe's options too were narrowly constricted by the military and bureaucracy. Both of his premierships were partly owed to military support, and if the military wanted a skillful puppet to do its bidding, the ministries were determined to protect their bailiwicks from any novel political force. What, then, were the realistic prospects of subordinating these elites to a new civil party? Weak civil political institutions are frequently diagnosed as the cause of military intervention in politics, but their weakness is often the effect of such intervention.

6. The ability of military-bureaucratic elites to modify certain basic elements of the Meiji constitution while capitalizing on others and retaining it as a source of legitimacy for the regime. The Meiji constitutional system did not impose absolute limits on state power, but it did give paramount legislative authority to the Diet (quite explicitly so in the realm of media policy). Parliamentary sway was compromised by bureaucratic prerogatives from the very beginning, but bills like the Film Law and State Total Mobilization Law virtually abrogated the constitutional legislative process. They eliminated the separation of powers between legislature and administration, which, despite the crisis statism prevailing in the Diet, had prevented the adoption of a systematic,

revolutionary statist program. Furthermore, the Meiji system had been conceived to institute rule-by-law, which prevails "wherever there exists an orderly system of standards which are made known in advance to the subjects, and which are applied equally by courts or officials to all who come within their purview, however illiberal or discriminating they may be."²⁹ Legislative measures and bureaucratic decrees, duly enacted and publicized, were to supplant arbitrary official action. Bureaucratic license had corrupted this principle somewhat in the past, but the legislation of the late 1930's voided rule-by-law altogether by delegating absolute discretionary powers to administrative officials; these were laws intended to free the administrator from prescribed rules of governance. As such, they contravened perhaps the most fundamental principal of constitutional government. Yet, while constitutional-legal limits on executive action were thus jettisoned, the formal deference shown to the constitution by military-bureaucratic elites allowed them to borrow the legitimizing formula of the imperial reign. As in Thailand, the exploitation of a relatively powerless monarch relieved a military-dominated regime from having to invent and propagate a legitimizing rationale of its own.³⁰ Since military regimes are generally hard pressed to defend their rule in terms of morality or principle, this was no small advantage. There was one other aspect of the constitution essential to Japan's administrative revolution, and that was its failure to fix the pool from which chief executives were to be drawn or their method of determination. Without this feature and the Diet's act of self-destruction in passing the mobilization laws, the ideological statist in the military and bureaucracy would have had to effect a coup d'etat or forge a permanent coalition with civil politicians to realize their policy objectives. Thus

some aspects of the constitution strongly favored military-bureaucratic elites, while the legislative provisions and the separation of powers were obstacles they had to overcome.

To list all these ingredients is not yet to explain how it was that they coincided to shape the course of Japanese politics in the late imperial era. Many events and underlying conditions were obviously important, but I have been most impressed by the way the Manchurian Incident served as a trigger mechanism setting so many pieces of the puzzle into place. The initial reluctance of a party government to press the Manchurian hostilities to Japan's advantage was a vital element in the hardening of military opposition and consequent breakdown of the democratic regime, (which in turn freed the bureaucracy from party control). The incident was also a chief catalyst for political radicalism among junior officers and their acts of violence, and for the growth of civil rightist groups propagating anti-democratic, anti-liberal, and anti-internationalist ideas, which contributed mightily to the crisis of party rule. The success of the Manchurian venture convinced many army officers that they knew what was best for the country, and their experience governing Manchukuo made them confident they could also govern Japan. The process of building a new Manchurian state inflamed the idealism and dreams that eventually changed the nature of Japanese imperialism from a calculated pursuit of material advantage into an ideological crusade. The incident also isolated Japan from the international community, especially from the democratic powers whose Asian interests it threatened, dislodging them as models for domestic Japanese politics. It led to a natural sense of oneness with the other major powers to abandon the League of Nations, Germany and Italy, and to the sympathetic study of their policies and radically statist

ideologies. The Manchurian Incident also created the atmosphere of war that permeated Japan throughout the 1930's and was so pivotal in winning broad acceptance for mobilization policies. Historian Ito Takashi has characterized the entire 1931-1945 period as a "15-year war" that began with Japanese aggression in Manchuria. Certainly there was nothing inevitable about the course of events traceable to the Manchurian affair. But it seems impossible that the constellation of elements that finally produced Japan's administrative revolution could have crystallized without this central variable that links so many of them together.

The Regime and Control System in Comparative Perspective

A comparative framework for the politics of late imperial Japan will be explored along two dimensions, one the regime type (who governed?), and the other the structure and degree of state control over society. The two dimensions are closely related, but not identical, since different regimes may implement similar control policies, and similar regimes adopt different policies. We will first examine the feasibility of comparisons with single party regimes, then with military regimes.

A Comparison to Single Party Regimes

It has already been established that the structure of power within the Japanese state was not that of a single party regime, but the point deserves some further elaboration. The Imperial Rule Assistance Association cannot be described as a ruling party—it was not a source of recruits to the top state elite or a significant policymaking body. It is questionable whether the literature on militarism is correct in referring to such organizations as parties at all. They certainly do not fit a strict definition of a political party highlighting its uniqueness as

a modern political institution; for example, Joseph LaPalombara defines a party as "a formal organization whose self-conscious, primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office persons who will control, alone or in coalition, the machinery of government."³¹ The mobilization structures erected by military regimes are often judged to be failures because they do not accomplish this purpose, or even because they do not perform as democratic parties (i.e., by winning popular support, or serving as meaningful conduits for mass participation). Since the application of party criteria is usually misplaced, however, these judgments are often beside the point. The elites who set up these structures have almost invariably rejected government by popular mandate and despise professional politicians and political parties--their goal is to create a different type of organization. Administrative mass mobilization organs are not intended to supply the state with leaders or subject the military and civilian bureaucracies to the popular will. Their purposes are to propagandize for the regime and its programs, to enforce obedience to control policies, and to preempt organized opposition by replacing spontaneous participation with highly structured involvement. In Edward Feit's terms, they offer people a substitute for autonomous politics.³² In these respects, the IRAA was similar to Pakistan's Basic Democracies, the Burmese Socialist Program Party, Peru's SINAMOS, the Sudan Socialist Union, and Egypt's Arab Socialist Union. In light of the number and impact of these administrative structures, they deserve to be evaluated as significant political phenomena in their own right and should not be misconstrued as abortive parties (in the strict sense of that term).³³ The Imperial Rule Assistance Association, as it finally emerged from a complex interplay of contrary expectations in early 1941, was not a

ruling party either in conception or in fact, but a tool of administrative mass mobilization, performing a function similar to that of the media control associations.

The absence of a ruling party means that Japan was not a totalitarian system like Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. Totalitarianism, by virtually all empirical definitions, refers to a subset of single party regimes. The widely cited statement by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, calls for "a single mass party . . . typically either superior to, or completely intertwined with the bureaucratic government organization."³⁴ The definition of Juan Linz demands a party "superior or equal to the government," one of whose central functions is "the recruitment, testing, selection, and training of the new political elite."³⁵ It is quite obvious that single party regimes in general, and the totalitarian subtype in particular, are not the correct comparative framework for the Japanese regime during the 1937-1945 period.

The question remains: to what extent were the structure and penetration of Japanese media controls analogous to those of totalitarian single party regimes? The totalitarian pattern has been for the ruling party and other official organizations to undertake direct ownership and operation of all media organs. This has generally been accomplished in communist totalitarian systems, and although the Nazi structure initially showed greater tolerance for private ownership, it was clearly moving in the same direction. The Nazis inherited a state monopoly over radio and nationalized all film production. Hitler ultimately envisioned a party monopoly over the press as well,³⁶ and the regime progressed steadily toward that goal--the communist and socialist press was seized in 1933, new ordinances in 1935 allowed the party to close or absorb most period-

icals of sizable circulation or previously linked to other parties or to the Catholic Church, and thereafter wartime shortages were made to work against remaining private companies. In 1944, there were still 625 privately-owned newspapers, but only 25 of these had a circulation exceeding 25,000; the 350 party-run newspapers accounted for 80% of total circulation.³⁷ Oron Hale's assessment: "What marks the newspaper development in the Third Reich as unique was the displacement of the free press by the party press of the NSDAP and the establishment of a near monopoly in the publishing field."³⁸

A comparison of Nazi Germany with Japan reveals much similarity in the treatment of radio and the wire services. Neither regime ever confronted truly autonomous broadcasting companies, and both had an easy time effecting literally total mobilization of radio. Their radio policies were functional equivalents, bureaucrats supervising all programming in Japan, Goebbels' propaganda ministry in Germany. The founding of official wire service monopolies in the two countries reads like the same script with the proper names changed. In Germany, there were initially two dominant wire services, the semi-official Wolff Telegraph Bureau and the Hugenberg Telegraph Union. In December 1933, these were merged into the monopolistic Deutsches Nachrichten Büro, owned and managed by the Ministry of Propaganda.³⁹ In Japan, the public interest Rengo and privately-owned Dentsu were forcibly merged some two years later into the United News Agency, which was controlled and partially funded by the Cabinet Information Committee. Further research would be necessary for a precise comparison, but the evidence suggests considerable structural as well as functional resemblance.

There were fundamental differences, however, between the Japanese

control structures for newspapers, magazines, and dramatic and cultural/educational film producers and those in Germany and the USSR. In the totalitarian systems, there was direct absorption by a ruling party bent on swallowing up all civil media organs, while in Japan intermediate bureaucratic control associations regulated an authorized oligopoly of privately-owned businesses. As mentioned above, the limited personnel and expertise available to Japan's military-bureaucratic regime was a serious obstacle to a policy of total assimilation. Thus the differences in control structure were closely related to the differences in regime.

Were these structural differences merely a matter of form, or did they significantly affect the impact of state control? Orin Hale's research enables us to offer three tentative conclusions comparing Nazi and Japanese newspaper control: (1) the degree of positive state control over content was similar, but slightly higher in Germany, (2) the effectiveness of state control policies in molding public opinion was much greater in Japan, and (3) the persistence of civil ownership over major media organs in Japan provided a more solid basis for the reintroduction of a liberal system once the regime had collapsed.

As for the degree of control, Germany reached a peak level of mobilization of content with the consolidations of 1935-1937, Japan with the New Order consolidations of 1940-1941. Beyond these points, the daily press of both countries was on all important matters an active champion of state policy. In both cases, one can point to the rare exception. There was the survival of the Frankfurter Zeitung until 1943, when this newspaper that had once been under Jewish ownership and opposed Nazism (and was now formally owned by the party!) was finally closed for infuriating Hitler with a reference to the alcoholism and drug addiction of

the Nazi poet Dietrich Eckart.⁴⁰ In Japan, a similar exception was the Mainichi article in early 1944 supporting the navy's more rationalistic approach against the "spiritualism" associated with Premier Tojo's handling of the war, for which the physically unfit reporter was drafted into the army. For each of these cases there were 999 articles enthusiastically endorsing the official line--one must characterize the control systems by their dominant patterns, not rare occurrences. Even in the Soviet Union, a more finished totalitarian system than Nazi Germany, one can point to dissidents (e.g., Alexander Solzenitsyn) who have been active at various times within the official writers' guild.

The prevalence of the party press imposed a somewhat higher degree of uniformity on reporting in Germany, but it also rendered controls less effective in swaying public opinion. Party newspapers lacked credibility as obvious mouthpieces of the state. Combined with the low journalistic quality of newspapers partly or wholly run by party hacks rather than professionals, it was enough to make many Germans stop reading. Over 1933-1935, before the era of wartime shortages, the circulation of daily newspapers declined by one million annually.⁴¹ High party leaders were aware of this problem and sought to correct it--some traveled the country lecturing on the need for more creative renditions of the party line--but to little avail.⁴² The ideological imperative of direct party control undermined the effectiveness of propaganda in convincing the reader. Japan's propaganda machine did not labor under this ideological handicap. Since those actually writing the articles and moving the presses were the same old employees of the venerable Asahi Shinbun, journalistic quality was as good as ever, and outside the intellectual class there is no evidence of widespread skepticism about what was being written.⁴³

Administrative mobilization outperformed the totalitarian model in accomplishing the state's objectives precisely because it allowed the printed media a greater degree of residual autonomy.

The persistence of private ownership in Japan was even more significant after the war. When the Nazi Party was eradicated, the German press largely disappeared with it. Had the party endured to complete its ingestion of the media, as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has done, no foundation would have remained upon which to rebuild an autonomous civil sector. In Japan, the control structure was built around companies that did not owe their origins to the state and were not directly operated by officials. Their proprietors were both able and anxious to reassert full autonomy after the war. This illustrates the frequently noted distinction between totalitarian and other non-democratic regimes, namely, that the totalitarian regime is out to consume civil society altogether, whereas the others control it in varying degrees without entirely voiding the boundary between the state and civil associations.

What is unexpected is that Japan's bureaucratic mobilization could drastically restructure media industries as sophisticated as those in Germany, control content almost as rigidly as the Nazi Party, and finally produce a propaganda network more effective than that of Goebbels in shaping public opinion. As we have seen, radio and wire service controls were virtually identical in the two countries. Regimes outside the single party category are generally thought incapable of such feats.

A Comparison to Military Regimes

Military dominance over the state is a commonplace in the modern world--over half the countries of Asia, Latin America, the Middle East,

and Africa have experienced military coups and/or regimes since 1945⁴⁴--but military rule has taken many forms. Officers do not govern alone in a military regime, any more than elected officials govern alone in a democracy. There is always a sharing of power with the bureaucracy and sometimes with politicians as well, so that the appellation "military regime" has to be qualified in every instance. The varieties traverse a long gamut. At one end are some 15% of military regimes in which officers occupy a large majority of top state offices.⁴⁵ At the other are regimes launching a military man into power which systematically exclude the armed forces from a meaningful policymaking role and at some point must be considered civilian regimes--such was the rule of Ataturk in interwar Turkey.⁴⁶ In between are the many more balanced civilian-military hybrids, in which military politicians may doff their uniforms, organize civil constituencies, invite numerous civilians into the cabinet to serve with active or retired officers, propagate legitimizing ideologies sometimes unrelated to the military as such, or even seek to institutionalize their rule through relatively free elections.⁴⁷ Given this substantial diversity, it seems appropriate for comparative purposes to offer a more precise description of the extent and form of military rule in late imperial Japan.

General Tojo's premiership, lasting from October 1941 to July 1944, can be portrayed straightforwardly as rule by a military-bureaucratic regime. Civil politicians played a negligible policymaking role in his cabinet, which employed not a single minister from the old mainstream parties. Tojo, who was always in uniform, at first served concurrently as Prime Minister, Army Minister, and Home Minister, but he appears to have been more a representative of the army as an institution than an

individual dictator pursuing his own course. Those officers holding high positions in the regular military chain of command (e.g., in the Army and Navy Ministries) were very much in the thick of state decision-making. Among other key cabinet appointments, General Suzuki Teichi headed the Cabinet Planning Board, career bureaucrat Kaya Okinori served as Finance Minister and Colonial Affairs Minister, career bureaucrat Kishi Nobusuke became Commerce and Industry Minister, and career bureaucrat Hoshino Naoki became Chief Cabinet Secretary. Kaya and Hoshino had earlier served in the Konoe governments, and Kishi and Hoshino had completed assignments in Manchukuo. The balance of military and bureaucratic policy input varied by area. The army and navy directly supervised foreign policy and the conduct of war, the military and bureaucracy were both big contributors to economic policy, and bureaucrats seem to have dominated policy toward the media, education, religion, and the arts. Domestic policy implementation was generally managed by bureaucrats, though the military did administer certain arms industries directly and the Military Reservist Associations were very involved in educational activities and the IRAA. Considering that the chief executive was an active duty officer, that military men served jointly with bureaucrats on the key cabinet policy organs, and that the top civilian ministers owed their positions to their association with the military and agreement with military objectives, this was indisputably a military or, to be more specific, a military-bureaucratic regime.

The structural features of the Tojo government were not unusual. A mixed military and civilian cabinet has characterized 40% of all military regimes.⁴⁸ The symbiotic relationship between the military and the civilian bureaucracy is typical of virtually all governments in which the

military holds paramount power,⁴⁹ and it is usually attributed both to necessity and a natural communion of interests. Robert Dowse has written:

On the one hand, the army does not have the expertise or the numbers to run a country and if they did run it, it might cease to be an army. On the other hand, the bureaucracy cannot bring down a government: that is the army's task. But when the government has been displaced, the bureaucracy is still necessary and hence by no means powerless. There must be a coalition of sorts, and hence an accommodation between the partners; whatever the conditions of the coalition, the fact of its existence is a certainty.⁵⁰

The military and civilian bureaucracies are said to share many traits in common, e.g., hierarchical organization, formal responsibility for the nation as a whole, specialized training, a high estimation of technocratic and organizational solutions for social problems, and a disdain for politicians who impede such solutions.⁵¹ Military reliance upon the bureaucracy in Japan was exacerbated by the extent of the regime's mobilizational ambitions and the size and relatively developed and complex structure of the society to be governed, which stretched the tasks of the state far beyond military capabilities.

Our depiction of the regime under Tojo ignores complications worthy of research in their own right (e.g., the extent to Tojo's personal role, the friction between the army and the more conservative navy), but there seems little point in pursuing them for present purposes in light of an even more limiting factor: the Tojo government did not instigate the revolutionary media policies associated with the New Order. Rather, the domestic policy revolution occurred mainly under the earlier Konoe governments, and it fell to the regime just described to complete them. The tortuous path that led from Konoe's programs to the Tojo premiership has already been outlined, but the question of how to characterize the Konoe governments themselves in terms of regime type has no simple answer. The principal distinction to be made is that before the Tojo

cabinet the military shared power not only with bureaucrats but also with politicians. This arrangement has been less common than the simple military-bureaucratic combination, but not unknown. In Nigeria politicians played an active role in a military regime even though most were opposed to militarism in principle, and the record of the Baath Party in Iraq and Syria shows that a civil political group may even coexist with the military as a second center of power.⁵² The evidence in Japanese media policy is that Konoe generally adopted the recommendations of the military-bureaucratic planning organs serving the cabinet--to this extent, media policy can be viewed as the work of administrative elites and compared to the policies of other forms of military regime--but Konoe was no mere puppet of the military. Though it was active military support that made and sustained his cabinets, he was not a militarist, he did not back all the programs desired by the military, and it was his personal influence that was largely responsible for passage of the State Total Mobilization Law and the sweeping changes of the New Order. In short, this was a coalition between military-bureaucratic elites and a civil politician in which both halves played an assertive role, and this point must be kept in mind as we compare its policy output to that of other military regimes.

Aggregate data studies indicate that military regimes are not distinguished by a common set of policy programs or a particular level of social intervention. R.D. McKinlay and A.S. Cohan found that the only consistently outstanding difference between military and civilian regimes to rule in the same countries was the military's greater suppression of civil political activity. Beyond this, military regimes did not form a distinct type in terms of performance and could not be differentiated

from non-military regimes on that basis.⁵³ The data gathered by Robert Jackman also led him to conclude that "military governments have no unique effects on social change, regardless of level of economic development."⁵⁴

It is also established, however, that a sizable majority of military regimes do not adopt mass mobilization policies or effect revolutionary structural changes in society. Juan Linz writes of "bureaucratic-military" regimes:

Authoritarian regimes in which a coalition predominated by but not exclusively controlled by army officers and bureaucrats establishes control of government and excludes or includes other groups without commitment to specific ideology, acts pragmatically within the limits of their bureaucratic mentality, and neither creates nor allows a mass single party to play a dominant role are the most frequent subtype. They may operate without the existence of any parties, but more frequent is the creation of an official government-sponsored single party, which, rather than aiming at a controlled mobilization of the population, tends to reduce its participation in political life even in a manipulated form . . .⁵⁵

Eric Nordlinger has estimated that of all cases of direct or indirect military intervention in politics, those in which the military consolidates a regime of indefinite tenure and transcends the role of conservative guardian of the social order to mobilize society through new structures constitute only about ten per cent.⁵⁶ It is among this minority that we find the best comparative parallels for the Japanese regime and state control system forged over 1937-1945.

A comparison between the Japanese and two other mobilizational military regimes, Egypt under Nasser (1952-1970, especially from 1960) and Peru under Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975), will illustrate the point. Like the Japanese military, these regimes formulated rather sophisticated ideologies transcending narrow military matters to encompass a wide-ranging evaluation of society. Egypt adopted its own brand of

socialism with proclamation of the National Charter in 1961. In Peru, the experience of leftist guerrilla warfare in the mid-1960's led the army to formulate a broad social program to eliminate the root causes of civil rebellion--it was based upon an organic statist conception of the state and society and capped by the Peronist slogan "neither capitalist nor communist."⁵⁷ These ideologies were not mere window dressing--they were intimately linked to radical new policies. In Egypt, the embrace of socialism coincided with an extensive nationalization of businesses and a moderate land reform, while in Peru there was a more extensive land reform and a significant expropriation of domestic and especially foreign-owned companies. Both regimes established administrative mobilization structures to control the population and to impede the revival of civil associations they had neutralized. In Egypt, inclusive mass organizations were created from above--the Liberation Rally, the National Union, and finally the Arab Socialist Union. The last resembled the IRAA somewhat in form, but was perhaps less active in channeling positive controls than in providing a programmed outlet for political involvement.⁵⁸ In Peru, several distinct mobilization networks were launched to organize urban squatters, workers, peasants, and other groups, all falling under the administrative umbrella of the new SINAMOS bureaucracy. Though the Peruvian military took the goal of meaningful popular participation more seriously than the Japanese or Egyptian regimes, military-bureaucratic elites were invariably in command at the upper echelons of the new structures and policy input from below was strictly limited.⁵⁹

Although many military regimes do no more than censor the media to eliminate overt opposition, and some have even permitted rather blunt criticism (e.g., Ecuador 1972-1979, Brazil since 1975), the Egyptian and

Peruvian regimes followed the Japanese in undertaking radical policies to restructure and mobilize mass communications. Before Nasser came to power, the Egyptian monarchy had consigned radio to "a semi-autonomous board of governors whose supervision was relatively loose."⁶⁰ The military regime transferred control of the medium to its Ministry of National Guidance, which greatly expanded broadcasting facilities to exploit radio's mobilizational potential, just as had been done in Japan in the 1930's. The state exercised firm positive control over programming-- "Regular listeners understood quite clearly from news and commentaries and from features, drama, and music programs what direction his [Nasser's] policy was taking and who his friends and enemies were."⁶¹ The regime then set up a state news agency in 1956 to convey the official line through press releases and briefings. The immediate stimulus was the perception of an anti-Egyptian bias in Western wire service reports during the Suez crisis, a close parallel to the Japanese view of foreign wire service reporting of the Manchurian Incident, which also inspired the founding of an official news agency. The Egyptian press was one of the oldest and most venerable in the Middle East prior to the military takeover--there were several daily newspapers dating back to the nineteenth century, and the civil press offered a wide variety of opinion, representing both party and non-partisan views.⁶² The Nasser government first set up its own publishing house and used censorship to tame the opposition. Journals persisting in criticism, such as al-Misri, the world's largest Arab language newspaper, were ordered to close.⁶³ Thorough-going mobilization came in 1960 when the regime seized the country's four large publishing companies and made them the property of the National Union.⁶⁴ Many ex-military officers were injected into key media positions,

to the extent that one source asserts they comprised a majority of all newspaper editors.⁶⁵ As in Japan, this assault upon the press was closely linked to the mobilization of other social sectors. One apparent motive was to preempt opposition to the massive nationalization of the economy planned for the following year.⁶⁶ Egypt was the first Arab country to mobilize the press to this degree. Rugh now lists six others in the same category, and five of them (Libya, Syria, Iraq, the Sudan, and Algeria) are military regimes.

The Peruvian regime also executed a radical mobilization of the mass media. In 1970, the dailies Expreso and Extra were expropriated by decree in the "social interest,"⁶⁷ and in 1971 the collapse of a business group led to the government takeover of two more journals.⁶⁸ Official appointees took over management, while a number of former staff members were forced into exile--they were followed by other journalistic critics of the state.⁶⁹ The closing of a few opposition journals and banishment of antagonistic reporters do not constitute extraordinary repression from Latin American military regimes, even those of the temporary, caretaker variety, but the Peruvian regime clearly broke with the norm in 1972 when a new law required majority state ownership of all television stations and 25% state ownership of all radio stations. A new bureaucratic authority (ENTEL-PERU) was created to oversee the electronic media. A similar threshold was crossed when the regime expropriated the country's six major daily newspapers by decree in July 1974. Most had been tied to business interests already prejudiced by economic control policies.⁷⁰ The journals were handed over to the administrative mobilization structures organized by the state (peasant, labor, service, educational, professional, and cultural organizations),⁷¹ and the govern-

ment directly appointed their first directors. Most practicing journalists lost their jobs as a result of the transformation. A new bureaucratic agency, the National System of Information (SINADI), was created to supervise the flow of information throughout the country. The final media control structure thus had three tiers: (1) direct state participation in all radio and television stations and two overtly official newspapers, (2) state control over the other eight national newspapers through officially sponsored and regulated corporate groups--these journals were formally referred to as "social property," and (3) private publication of local newspapers circulating less than 20,000 copies, and magazines.⁷² Many journals in the last category suffered lengthy suspensions.⁷³

In sum, the essential traits of the Japanese regime and control system can all be found in these two countries: the military and bureaucracy inaugurated a revolutionary ideology, administrative mobilization structures, and radical control policies aimed at many social sectors, including the mass media. The Peruvian case was more like the Japanese as an administrative revolution in the full sense, since its policies were more the work of the army as an institution. In Egypt, the revolution of the early 1960's was instigated primarily by one man, and the administration was more limited to executing his program. However, the three cases share the important attribute that the impetus for revolution came from within the state.

In this brand of revolution conceived and executed by permanent state institutions limited to relatively less-developed societies, where civil associations are extraordinarily weak and malleable before state authority, or does it reflect more universal features of the modern polity? It is true that in some countries military and bureaucratic

institutions have been able to lord over the state and recast parts of the social structure due to the inherent weakness of civil associations. In many new nations, lengthy colonial rule stifled civil political activity while training an indigenous elite to staff military and bureaucratic institutions, which then had few rivals for power upon independence. But the potential for an inbred state revolution is not limited to these countries alone. In Japan, military and bureaucratic elites were able to displace what had been a fairly stable, institutionalized system of democratic government. Civil associational life in general was highly developed. And even in Egypt and Peru, the debility of civil political groups was as much the artificial result of military tampering as it was an historical legacy. Peru's APRA, long the most popular political force in the country, was prevented from assuming power by the military in the early 1960's, resulting in an unstable democratic regime which the military then proceeded to overthrow. In Egypt, Nasser's repression of the Wafd barred the way to what might have been an effective civilian regime in the 1950's. The military has enervated civil politics in a number of countries where party frailty has then been used by generals to legitimize (and by scholars to explain) the success of a mobilizational military regime. The two essential prerequisites for a revolution from within are present in even the world's most highly developed political systems. The first is the absolute mastery of the state security forces over any armed opposition that might originate in civil society. This mastery is a fact of life in all but perhaps the world's least developed polities. The second is the technological and administrative capacity of the bureaucracy to plan and implement mobilization policies. At present, the perception that bureaucratic power is

increasing at the expense of parties and other civil associations is as prominent in studies of Western Europe as it is in research on the less-developed world. The preconditions for a revolution from within officialdom, then, are not confined to underdeveloped areas. Permanent state institutions now possess the means to exclude outsiders from power, to restructure and control formidable civil organizations, and to redirect the course of social development in many countries--is it not reasonable to assume that sooner or later they may make use of these means? It is where those who possess the tools of power do not make use of them that we are confronting an unnatural situation, one which will constantly be strained by the internal and external crises that regularly challenge every contemporary political system. Japan's administrative revolution and the similar revolutions that germinated within the state in Peru and Egypt were not archaic offshoots of underdeveloped polities. Rather, they were extreme manifestations of the very modern trend towards an enormous concentration of power in the complex of permanent state institutions, which is widely observed in countries at all levels of political development.

The concept of administrative revolution belies the usual portrayal of revolutions as dramatic upheavals of mass violence, but it is revolution by the masses that has become an anachronism in the modern world. The immense power wielded by contemporary states has made it extraordinary for any regime to be overthrown by civil forces unless it is divided from within or another state aids the opposition. Juan Linz concludes from his study of the breakdown of democratic regimes:

. . . disloyal oppositions have tended increasingly to avoid direct confrontation with governments and their agents and have aimed instead at combining their illegal actions with a formally legal process of transfer of power. In that process the neutrality, if

not the cooperation, of the armed forces or a sector of them has become decisive. The twentieth century has seen fewer revolutions started by the populace than the nineteenth, and their fate in modern states has generally been defeat. . . . Only the direct intervention of the military seems to be able to topple regimes in modern stabilized states.⁷⁴

And Eric Nordlinger in his research on militarism:

There has not been a single instance in which civilians alone demonstrated the strength to overthrow a military regime backed by a unified officer corps intent upon retaining power. They simply do not have sufficient numbers, organization, and weapons to defeat the military.⁷⁵

An attachment to the conventional view of revolution has led some to exaggerate the impact of political violence, the civil right wing, and rural social conditions on the course of Japanese politics in the 1930's. Eyes overexposed to the light of turbulent insurrections and class analysis are not easily sensitized to the darker regions where new committees are formed and decrees prepared. Neither violence nor mass activity or conditions were essential causes of Japan's statist revolution. It was rather imperial ambition fomenting within the state itself that was the prime mover. The evidence here is that state institutions behaved as fairly autonomous actors, not as the pawns of external forces or conditions. To rephrase an aphorism of the Belgian socialist Henri de Man: it is no longer by revolution that one can attain power, it is the holders of power who can realize the revolution.

Notes

¹These comments are valid only in regard to resistance against the extreme form of state mobilization attempted in the late imperial period. A simple censorship policy out to stop radical criticism might face greater obstacles in a civil sector of thousands of small media organs.

²This is not contradicted by the state's preference for an oligopolistic structure of civil associations within the control scheme it envisioned, for example, in regard to the press. The point is that an autonomous oligopoly was best able to counter state efforts to create a completely controlled oligopoly of media organs.

³Hale, Captive Press, p. 2.

⁴One can read "political party" for "media organ" in this discussion and see many obvious parallels with the struggle to uphold political autonomy in Japan and elsewhere.

⁵Similar evidence for surviving private publishers in Nazi Germany led Oron Hale to ask: "But even in conserving and defending their property rights were they not also defending freedom?" Hale, Captive Press, p. 269.

⁶This judgment is based primarily on the memoirs written by editors of the integrated magazines after the war, men such as Kuroda Hidetoshi, Hatanaka Shigeo, and Mimasaka Taro. See Hatanaka, Showa Shuppan, p. 126.

⁷Mimasaka, Fujita, and Watanabe carried out a related analysis of how intellectuals reacted to the political situation, outlining three types: (1) those who rationalized active collaboration by adopting a progressive interpretation of events (the New Order was Japan's New Deal); (2) those who opposed but felt helpless as individuals incapable of swaying the course of events--these remained involved to earn a living, and did what they could to ameliorate the system within the existing limits, but basically they kept their protests to themselves and perhaps a small circle of trusted friends; (3) those who allowed themselves to be carried away by the trend of the times, cooperating actively to secure as comfortable a place for themselves as possible, though without a sincere belief in the rightness of what they were doing. See Yokohama Jiken, pp. 28-34.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. Mr. Mimasaka also discussed his own reactions in an interview.

⁹Hale, Captive Press, pp. 194-195.

¹⁰Relevant here is the discussion of terror in totalitarian systems in Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," pp. 217-228.

¹¹This is not to overlook the role of renovationists remaining in the regular bureaucracy, who were especially potent in ministries with the most to gain from mobilization, e.g., the Commerce and Industry Ministry, with such well-known renovationists as Minobe Yoji and Kishi Nobusuke. But their concentration in the cabinet bureaus offered a unique opportunity to exert influence.

¹²When ex-leftists hired in this way into the Cabinet Planning Board became targets of attack by the big companies trying to stave off state controls (the accusation being that the administration was infiltrated with communists), some were placed under arrest to blunt the criticism (the so-called Cabinet Planning Board Incident, or Kikakuin Jiken, of 1941). For the account of one of those arrested, see Katsumata Seichi, "Kikakuin Jiken o Megutte" [Regarding the Cabinet Planning Board Incident], in Kataritsugu Showa Shi: Gekido no Hanseiki 3 [Retelling Showa History: A Half Century of Tumult, vol. 3] (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1976). Tashiro Kanenobu, whose Shuppan Shintaisei no Hanashi is frequently cited in these pages, was an ex-reporter recruited by the CIB in the mid-1930's who played an important role in shaping the New Order for the press.

¹³On Canada's supra-ministerial policy organs, see Colin Campbell and George J. Szablowski, The Superbureaucrats: Structure and Behavior in Central Agencies (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979); others are listed in Dogan, "Political Power," p. 18.

¹⁴Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), p. 122.

¹⁵Dietrich Orlow, The History of the Nazi Party: 1933-1945 (Pittsburgh: U. of Pittsburgh Press, 1973).

¹⁶E.g., see H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths, eds., Interest Groups in Soviet Politics (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1971).

¹⁷This point is elaborated in Joseph LaPalombara, "Monoliths or Plural Systems: Through Conceptual Lenses Darkly," Studies in Comparative Communism, vol. 8 (Autumn 1975).

¹⁸See Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 32.

¹⁹Alfred Stepan has written
 . . . it is crucially important whether the state elite is a military bureaucracy or a political party. A revolutionary party may monopolize all elite functions yet be able to recruit into its top echelons members from all important career roles. In the case of Peru, regardless of the loyalty, brilliance, or technical skill of civilians, they cannot be recruited into the strategic state elite as long as that elite is a military bureaucracy, because the military carry with them their own institutional recruitment patterns.

In Peru for example, recruitment to the military career occurs before 20 years of age; . . .
The State and Society, p. 313. In Japan, the career bureaucracy was also recruited almost exclusively from among recent university graduates.

²⁰ Rugh, The Arab Press, p. 7.

²¹ "Speaking of the Middle East, Miles Copeland points out that most Arab leaders rose to power by making promises that they knew they could not keep. Once in power their skill in retaining it depended on their skill at blaming others for their failure to deliver. Thus the economies of the Arab countries remain poor because 'imperialists' wish to keep them poor and are holding them back. Censorship, police control, and extraordinary disciplines on the population are justified by the threat of 'Israeli aggression' and 'foreign agents.' Difficulties of governments with their subjects are presented as the work of the CIA. Arab unity remains a myth not because of territorial nationalisms but because 'Zionist and imperialist schemes' keep the Arab states divided." Edward Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats: Military-Administrative Regimes and Political Development (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973), p. 15. The Moreland article cited here is "The Middle East in Revolution," New York Times Book Review, January 31, 1971.

²² Wilcox, Mass Media in Black Africa, p. 21.

²³ Lucian W. Pye, "Forward," in Tilly, ed., The Formation of National States in Western Europe, p. x.

²⁴ Tashiro, Shuppan Shintaisei, p. 96.

²⁵ Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, pp. 199, 55-56.

²⁶ Dogan, "Political Power," p. 19; Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman, Bureaucrats and Politicians, pp. 12-13, 15.

²⁷ For example, see Edward Shils, "The Military in the Political Development of the New States," in John J. Johnson, ed., The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1962), pp. 54, 58-59.

²⁸ See Kenneth B. Pyle, "The Technology of Japanese Nationalism: The Local Improvement Movement 1900-1918," Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 33, no. 1 (November 1973); Richard J. Smethurst, A Social Basis for Prewar Japanese Militarism: The Army and the Rural Community (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1974).

²⁹ Dan Fenno Henderson, "Law and Political Modernization in Japan," in Robert E. Ward, ed., Political Development in Modern Japan, p. 415.

³⁰ Ferrel Heady, Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective, 2nd ed., revised and expanded (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1979), pp. 308-309, for a description of the Thai situation.

³¹ LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations, p. 509.

³² Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats, p. 19.

³³ This is not to say that military regimes never try to establish genuine political parties--the Partido Peronista in Argentina would seem to be one. However, for administrative mobilization structures, my instinct would be to abandon the party nomenclature altogether. Another approach that makes some of the important distinctions is that of Samuel Finer, who works with a broader understanding of what constitutes a party and subdivides parties into different categories based upon their organizational strength and autonomy from the military--see Finer, "The Morphology of Military Regimes," in Roman Kolkowicz and Andrzej Korbonski, eds., Soldiers, Peasants and Bureaucrats: Civil-Military Relations in Communist and Modernizing Societies (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 287-288.

³⁴ Friedrich and Brzezinski, Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), p. 9.

³⁵ Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," pp. 212, 210.

³⁶ Hale, Captive Press, p. 95.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 307.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 314. The Nazi experience has been unique among highly developed societies, but of course many countries at lower levels of political development have witnessed similar ruling party dominance.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 137-138.

⁴⁰ Hitler had to order the closing three times before it was finally accomplished against the express opposition and bureaucratic footdragging of all his subordinates, including Goebbels, who had a low opinion of the utility of the party press for propoganda activities. See *ibid.*, pp. 289-295.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 230.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 147, 227, 230-233, 241-242, 321-323.

⁴³ I have not been able to locate circulation figures for the late imperial period, but the paper rationing in effect from 1938 would in any

case make it impossible to judge public credence with reference to such data.

⁴⁴ Heady, Public Administration, p. 254; Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, p. 6; Gabriel Ben-Dor, "Civilianization of Military Regimes in the Arab World," in Henry Bienen and David Morell, eds., Political Participation Under Military Regimes (Beverly Hills, Ca.: Sage, 1976), p. 39.

⁴⁵ Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, p. 109.

⁴⁶ See Daniel Lerner and Richard D. Robinson, "Swords and Ploughshares: The Turkish Army as a Modernizing Force," in Henry Bienen, ed., The Military and Modernization (Chicago: Aldine Atherton, 1971).

⁴⁷ Relatively free presidential and congressional elections were held by Peron in Argentina--Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats, pp. 53-54. Judging from the results, the Park regime in South Korea also seems to have held relatively free elections in the 1960's--C.I. Eugene Kim, "Transition from Military Rule: The Case of South Korea," in Bienen and Morell, eds., Political Participation Under Military Regimes, p. 32.

⁴⁸ Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, p. 109.

⁴⁹ Some examples are Egypt and Syria--see Ben-Dor, "Civilianization of Military Regimes," p. 45, and Claude E. Welch, Jr. and Arthur K. Smith, Military Role and Rule: Perspectives on Civil Military Relations (North Scituate, Ma.: Duxbury Press, 1974), p. 194; Korea, where there were more ex-bureaucrats than ex-officers in the cabinets over 1963-1971--see Kim, "Transition from Military Rule," p. 29; Peru, despite the predominance of military men in the top offices--Stepan, The State and Society, pp. 303-304; and Pakistan--Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats, pp. 70-73.

⁵⁰ Robert E. Dowse, "The Military and Political Development," in Colin Leys, ed., Politics and Change in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1969), pp. 231-232; see also Heady, Public Administration, p. 264.

⁵¹ Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats, pp. 8-11; Dowse, "The Military and Political Development," p. 230; Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, pp. 43, 121-122.

⁵² See Henry Bienen, "Transition from Military Rule: The Case of Western State Nigeria," in Bienen and Morell, eds., Political Participation Under Military Regimes, and Ben-Dor, "Civilianization of Military Regimes," pp. 44-45.

⁵³ R.D. Mckinlay and A.S. Cohan, "A Comparative Analysis of the Political and Economic Performance of Military and Civilian Regimes: A

Cross-National Aggregate Study," Comparative Politics, vol. 8, no. 1 (October 1975), pp. 8, 23.

⁵⁴Robert W. Jackman, "Politicians in Uniform," The American Political Science Review, vol. 70, no. 4 (December 1976), p. 1096.

⁵⁵Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," p. 285.

⁵⁶Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, pp. 21-22, 26-27.

⁵⁷Internal revolt has been a more common motivation than external threats for mobilizational military regimes. Some scholars have even argued that the more the military is preoccupied with external security, the less likely it is to intervene in politics, but this position is easily disproven in the century of total war. Given contemporary military technology and tactics, neither internal nor external warfare is limited in the minds of strategists to armed warriors and a field of battle. The Japanese and to a significant degree the Egyptian experience as well demonstrate that foreign enemies may propel the military into a sweeping program of social change just as easily as the domestic kind.

⁵⁸See Welch and Smith, Military Role and Rule, pp. 196-202.

⁵⁹This is a central theme in Stepan, The State and Society, see especially chaps. 6, 8.

⁶⁰Rugh, The Arab Press, p. 116.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 121.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 32, 57.

⁶³Ibid., p. 62. Al-Misri, associated with the Wafd party, Egypt's leading civil political group at the time, was closed in 1954. It was the last newspaper to hazard serious criticism of the regime.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 37-38.

⁶⁵Welch and Smith, Military Role and Rule, p. 193; also Feit, The Armed Bureaucrats, p. 149.

⁶⁶Rugh, The Arab Press, pp. 66-67.

⁶⁷Augusto Chavez-Costa, El Peru: Un Pueblo Olvidado y sin Voz (Lima: Programa Editorial, srl., 1978), pp. 184-185; "Diarios y Libertad de Expresión: El Caso Peruano," América Latina Boletín, no. 6-7 (January-

February 1975), p. 21--this is a publication of the Centro de Documentación MIEC-JECI in Lima. The owner of the two newspapers had helped to negotiate an unpopular petroleum agreement for the previous regime.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 192-193. These were La Crónica and La Tercera. General Juan Velasco Alvarado, the head of state, personally chose new managerial personnel for these journals.

⁶⁹One was Luis Rey de Castro of La Prensa, arrested while celebrating the National Prize of Journalism he had just received from the Ministry of Education. Also exiled were two leading leftist intellectuals, Anibal Quijano and Julio Cotler, who published the magazine Sociedad y Política--Chavez-Costa, El Peru: Pueblo Olvidado y sin Voz, pp. 202-203.

⁷⁰Another example of the linkage between economic and media controls, which in this case was explicitly pointed out by defenders of the action; see Ibid., p. 187, and "Diarios y Libertad de Expresión," pp. 35-36.

⁷¹See "Diarios y Libertad de Expresión," p. 36.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 34-35.

⁷³The well-known weekly Caretas was suspended in 1974, and many leftist magazines later suffered a similar fate--the latter are listed in Manual de Prensa Obrera y Popular (Lima: Fenix Impresores, 1981), pp. 43-45. When the regime veered to the right in the face of impending economic collapse following Valasco's ouster in 1975, many editors of the "socialized" newspapers were replaced by the state for being out of touch with the new direction in policy.

⁷⁴Linz, The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, & Reequilibration (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1978), p. 15.

⁷⁵Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, p. 139.

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