Chapter V

THE JAPANESE PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR AND ITS IMPACT ON ANGLO-JAPANESE RELATIONS
NATURE OF JAPANESE SUPPORT

Japan's support to the Entente Powers had been brought about by virtue of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which had indeed been negotiated and twice renewed by Katsura Governments, supported by the military factions. Even on 10 December 1914, the Japanese Foreign Minister reiterated in the Imperial Diet that "the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is as necessary to Japan today as ever, and will continue to be so...." (1) But the military faction had no enthusiasm for the war, except in so far as it offered an opportunity for revenge upon Germany for the part she played immediately after the China War (1894-95). On the contrary, Japan respected the military might of Germany, whose officers had trained the Japanese Army, and nursed a fear especially within the Japanese Army, that the strength of Germany would gain the victory. Thus, notwithstanding Japan's aspirations and intentions, the initiative for the entry into the war came from the British Foreign Office, which had the concurrence of the Admiralty. (2)

Even while keeping her warships ready for assistance, Tokyo did not immediately order their move against German war vessels, until the move for such an action had been discussed by the Cabinet and permission and approval obtained from the Mikado,

This procedure was no mere formality, although the Japanese Foreign Minister assured the British ambassador "that he would use his influence with his cabinet colleagues to meet the wishes of His Britannic Majesty's Government". (3)

The impact of Japanese entry in the war was dependent on the nature and the extent of her participation. The Japanese participation in the war was an independent act to the extent it satiated Japanese aspirations. There is no denying the fact that Japan had prompted her entry, in order to shield her real motives. Yet, her entry in the war was in pursuance of the provisions of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, to the extent she played a role subsidiary to Britain's, that is, in the nature of support to the latter. Britain had sought Japan's assistance and co-operation, for it was the only course open at that time to limit the extent of German operations. In any case, Japan's participation in the war was bound to confer a new moral status upon that country.

The nature of the Japanese support depended on the extent of action desired and undertaken by Japan, and proposed and approved by the British Government. Even after Edward Grey's personal approach (which had the support of Conyngham Greene, the British Ambassador at Tokyo) to Japan for the latter's participation in the war, there were pulls in the London Foreign Office working at variance with the wishes of the Foreign Secretary. On his part Grey, long before actually approaching Japan for assistance, had made up his mind

3. Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey, 7 August 1914. Ibid., no. 36830,
should a case arrive in which we needed her help, we would gladly ask for it and be grateful for it. (4)

There were a number of officials in the Foreign Office who were opposed to Grey's stand, for one reason or the other. There were quite a few who were in line with the thinking of Sir J. Jordan, British ambassador at Peking. They wanted that before Japan's participation in the war, her role be determined with regard to her future position in Kiaochow vis-a-vis China. Sir J. Jordan never missed an opportunity to highlight the Chinese view. In fact, the question of the future of the Shantung province had so much attracted the attention of the British Foreign Office that ultimately even Edward Grey could not completely resist the pressure of the permanent officials. Till Japan had issued the ultimatum, attempts continued to be made by British officials to prevail upon Sir Edward Grey to object to the words contained in the proposed Japan's ultimatum to Germany saying:

Germany to give up Kiaochow to Japan without condition or compensation; China eventually to have the place restored to her.

The objection was:

(a) the Japanese demand of unconditional surrender of Kiaochow to herself alone;

(b) after all Japan had entered war against Germany on the basis of Britain's conflict with Germany. (5)

Grey was hesitant to point out the above objections to his counterpart in Tokyo. He could have discussed the issue with the Japanese


ambassador, but did not. In any case, before any new proposal could emerge from the Foreign Office in London, Tokyo had issued the ultimatum and Grey thought it useless to criticize the terms of the ultimatum at that stage. (6) Nevertheless, the permanent officials firmly held that by inviting Japanese assistance, Japan must not take Kiaochow, because they feared that she would retain Kiaochow even after the war. They thought that either Britain should possess that territory or allow France to have it after the war. Consequently, the role of Japan was intended to be the protection of British and French trade by attacking German armed merchant cruisers and warships "outside Chinese territorial waters and to block ships which take refuge in territorial waters". That is, the Japanese help was to be confined to naval assistance. This assistance was of great value in meeting the menace to the English trade in Eastern waters. The Japanese ships, in addition, were to be deployed to patrol near Kiaochow to prevent escape of any German warship. In any case, Japanese assistance was regarded necessary "immediately" as the heaviest losses to "British" trade were feared upon the opening of hostilities. If the assistance was deferred, British losses were expected "to be great".

Thereupon, Grey telegraphed to the British ambassador at Tokyo on 8 August 1914 to urge Japanese assistance. He also added:

Such action on the part of Japan would of course amount to an act of war against Germany, but His /British/] Majesty's Government see no way of avoiding this.

In a separate communication to K. Inōye, the Japanese ambassador in London, Grey repeated the contents of the above cable the next day, saying

such action on the part of Japan will constitute a declaration of war with Germany, but it is difficult to see how such a step is to be avoided. (7)

At that time, the question of compensation to Japan was also discussed. Grey did not expect that Japan will spend blood and treasure in capturing Kiaochow and get nothing for it - not even the remains of the German base. (8)

In any case, Britain was to dissuade Japan from achieving any territorial gain. The Permanent officials in the Foreign Office were firm that the Yangtze (valley) either must benefit the European nations (meaning the French or the English at that time) or "its strict neutrality should be maintained". Besides, the Japanese ought not to infringe Chinese neutrality. The Japanese had been, it was observed, for some time past, making strenuous efforts to obtain a commanding influence over the trade of the Yangtze rivers. (9)

B.P. Alston, an Assistant in the Foreign Office, pointed out in a note to the Foreign Secretary on 5 August 1914 that even if it was desirable to seek Japanese assistance for protecting British warships and merchantmen stationed in the Far East, it was not possible [under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese 1911 Agreement].


to do so until the Germans took the offensive. However, the Foreign Secretary was unwilling to wait that long, and that is why he had "warned" Tokyo of Britain's needs, besides conveying the same to the Japanese ambassador in London. (10)

Objection was also raised in the British Foreign Office as to why Japan's ultimatum to Germany contained a gap of a week between the date of the despatch of the ultimatum and the action to be taken by Japan against Germany. Sir Connyngham Greene did not think it of significance as to affect the Anglo-Japanese flow of communications or the decision of his Foreign Office. (11)

But Japan, once she entered war, was not prepared to limit her freedom of action. In an aide-memoire on 9 August 1914, Japan pointed out to her ally:

Once a belligerent Power, Japan cannot restrict her action only to the destruction of hostile armed merchant cruisers, but it will become necessary for her to resort to all and every possible means for the attainment of the object common to the two allied Powers as far as the Chinese waters are concerned, namely, the destruction of the power of Germany to inflict damage upon the interests of Japan and Britain in Eastern Asia. (12)

Once Britain had brought in Japan, she wanted to leave no stone unturned in defeating Germany. The task was by no means a small one. In view of the presence of Austrian and German warships and gunboats in the Far East, British shipping and communication between Asian and European waters was not considered safe.


11. Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey, 16 August. Ibid., no. 39316.

Dislocation of trade in the Far East would have adversely affected Britain's war efforts. Thus, there was no alternative but to ask Japan to destroy the hostile ships or to blockade them at Kiaochow, which meant Japan entering the Chinese seas.

Besides, there was the need to protect British residents in China and the vast economic interests. In view of these, the Government in London was constrained to accord a "completely free hand" to Japan even if the latter exacted greater advantages from the situation than those Britain was willing to allow. Sir Edward Grey was even prepared to give it effect without consulting the Cabinet. (13)

Grey was quite justified in this stand. For, to limit Japanese operations in Eastern Asia was one thing, and Britain's incapacity to limit the German movements another. Britain's own force at Wei-hai weI consisted only of a marine guard of about fifty men and about hundred native (Chinese) employed on police duties. (14) Russia had already intimated London of her incapacity to limit Germany's economic and political influences in China and the Pacific. (15) Therefore, if Japan was to contain successfully (and eliminate) Germany from the East, it was essential to give her a free hand to deal with the situation, regardless of the fact that a free hand to Japan may enable her to check the ambitions of Russia in Asia by land and domination of England by sea. (16)

13. Ibid., 1914/2016, no. 36648.
14. Ibid., no. 38242.
15. Ibid., no. 38491. Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, 12 August 1914.
Above all, the naval situation was more complicated than judged by Grey's officers. As Sir Conyngham Greene had pointed out, the difficulty in the Far East and the Pacific lay in locating the whereabouts of the enemy ships to come out and fight. (17) In the political field, America's refusal to renew the arbitration treaty was regarded as an unfriendly act, although Britain did not wish to antagonize the United States. (18) Hence, there was a good case for giving Japan a free hand in dealing with German power in the Far East.

Moreover, the Japanese feeling had been so much aroused against Germany that the British ambassador at Tokyo thought it was impossible — in fact, undesirable — to limit the operations by Japan. He reported:

Japan wishes to do more and to do it with us, but if we refuse she will do it by herself. Public opinion will compel the Government to follow this course. Japan would welcome the assistance of our armed forces by sea or land, but she can dispense with such assistance. What we have to decide is whether it would be more advantageous to us to allow Japan to act alone, after having asked her aid, or to give in to her now, and by doing so put her under an obligation which we can bring up when, after operations are ended, the process of cleaning up in China is begun. (19)

Sir C. Greene reiterated the above the next day and was willing to place Japan in sole occupation of Kiaochow, a course deprecated by Sir J. Jordan, the British ambassador at Peking. In any case, it was inadvisable to

18. PRO, 1914, Cab. 37/112, no. 7. Observation on the subject by Sir Edward Grey, 13 January 1914.
impair the value of the [Anglo-Japanese] alliance by forfeiting the warm sympathy which at present exists in Japan on our behalf. (20)

Sir C. Greene's repeated telegrams had convinced Sir Edward Grey, more than ever, of the Japanese standpoint. In a communication to the British ambassador at Washington, the latter forthrightly said:

It is impossible to think of excluding China seas from area of conflict; and I agree with Japan that action must be taken there.

But this did not mean unlimited action by Japan in the Pacific. (21) That is, the operations were to be confined to Eastern Asia. (22) And whatever the terms of the agreement about the maintenance of the integrity of China, "neutrality of [Chinese] territory in German occupation could of course not be maintained during the war". (23) In fact, Grey, too, wanted that Germany should be so battered as to make her unable "to resume Kiaochow and their ships afterwards". (24)

But Sir J. Jordan, the British Minister at Peking, stuck to his views. (25) He was only put at ease when Sir Edward Grey instructed him to act in concert with his colleague in Japan (Sir Conyngham Greene). The Dominions of Canada, Australia, South

21. Ibid., no. 38136.
22. Ibid., no. 38188.
25. Sir J. Jordan to Foreign Office, 11 August 1914, Ibid., no. 38128. Also no. 38136.
Africa, and New Zealand were informed of the scope of possible hostile action by Japan against Germany. (26)

Grey decided to give a free hand to Japan in regard to her operations against Germans in Eastern Asia, which did not include the Pacific. That is, there were no limits to Japanese action, except the geographical limits. And subject to the situation, Japan could seek British, French, and Russian naval co-operation. (27)

The geographical limits were of a general nature, because Grey would not like to be too precise in view of the unpredictable nature of the war. It was, however, intended that

Japan is not going to seize German islands in the Pacific, which the self-governing dominions desire to deal with themselves, and also that she is not going to take advantage of the situation to seize Dutch East India colonies or interfere with Pacific.

Thus, Grey thought the apprehension especially in the United States about Japan was "absurd". He personally was satisfied that Japanese action was confined to territory covered by the Anglo-Japanese alliance. He agreed that it was essential to the success of the operations to cross a small tract of Chinese territory in order to take Tsingtau in the rear, since the place could not be reduced by an attack from the sea alone. (28)

However, it was on the question of Japan's attitude to China that Sir Edward Grey found hard to convince the men of the ministry

26. The Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor General of Canada and Australia, the Officer Administering the Government of the Union of South Africa, and the Governor of New Zealand, 11 August 1914. Ibid., no. 33188.

27. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 12 August 1914. Ibid., no. 33354.

he headed, although everyone was aware that Japan's hand of friendship had infused confidence in Britain in her dealing with the Central Powers in Europe. Therefore, to boost up the Anglo-Japanese friendship and continued co-operation, mutual messages of greetings were frequently exchanged. (29)

The Foreign Office correspondence reveals that, but for the Foreign Secretary and Conyngham Greene, Japan would not have either whole-heartedly supported the Entente cause in the Far East or some of the officials in the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, together with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, would have created so much mistrust as to make the German propaganda of weaning Japan away very successful. This would have had repercussion on the British war efforts in general and in Asia in particular. (30)

Either due to the emotional attachment to Japan or that he did not want to take a chance in strategic arrangement, Edward Grey had gone to the farthest extent to reconcile himself to the ambitions of Japan. He held that the particular question of the disposal of territory of Kiaochow be left to the future. (31) Thus, again he refrained from injuring Japanese susceptibilities. Sir C. Greene had been successful in arguing the case favouring the Japanese line of action. Grey consistently supported Greene with Jordan. (32)

32. Ibid., no. 38634. Minute by B.A. dated 13 August 1914.
similarly, in regard to the disposal of the Pacific islands, he avoided a definite commitment till the war was over, while not allowing Japan to assume that the islands were hers. (33)

Naturally, therefore, after Japan's ultimatum to Germany, Britain interpreted that Japan would attack (and evict) Germany from Kiaochow in co-operation with her. But in regard to Kiaochow's ultimate disposal and in settlement of the numerous questions connected with German expulsion from Shantung, Japan preferred to act alone.

In fact, even before the actual war, the Japanese took advantage of the crisis in the Far East to strengthen their foothold in China. As early as 15 August, it was reported that the Japanese were increasing barrack accommodation at Hankow to accommodate an additional 1,500 men. (34) A day earlier, it had been reported that the Japanese intended to reach Kiaochow by landing troops at Laichow which necessitated the crossing of over 50 miles of Chinese territory before reaching the German-Chinese 50 kilometre zone. (35) This was regarded by the British Foreign Office as an act of impetuosity. Edward Grey, too, was annoyed. (36)

Was Britain to agree with Japan to cross Chinese territory in order successfully to reach Kiaochow? If she did, it meant agreeing to the violation of Chinese neutrality which had been too dear to the Western Powers, ostensibly to circumvent Japan vis-à-vis China, the course Sir J. Jordan had been ardently and consistently...

33. PRO, F.O. 371, 2386/1915, no. 95932.
advocating. Besides, Britain had waged war against Germany apparently on the question of the violation of neutrality in case of Belgium. But while both Britain and Germany had promised neutrality in case of Belgium, there was no treaty between Britain and China promising the latter's neutrality. The former had only verbally assured China to protect her from the Japanese onslaught. Her other intention had been to limit activities of other European Powers.

On the other hand, Article I of the Treaty of 1878 between China and Germany entitled the latter to send troops at any time through a 50 kilometre zone of Chinese territory round Kiaochow Bay. Since the present war was against Germany, Grey saw no objection to the utilizing of their territory without asking the consent of the Chinese, if the Japanese desired to use it on the ground

the troops of Powers at war with Germany are entitled to the same right of passage as is enjoyed by German troops.

It actually meant that Japan would act on her own in the Far East. (37) Britain's concurrence to the Japanese interpretation, under pressure of war, however, indicates that the British Foreign Secretary could not determine Japan's status and wanted to postpone the difficult question till the Peace Conference at the conclusion of the war. This explains the reason which led him to issue a public statement laying geographical limits to the Japanese operations in the Far East, which also served to allay American

37. Ibid., no. 39125. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 15 August 1914.
apprehension and, to some extent, meet Jordan's opposition. (38) Britain was aware of the complex situation. A great deal of correspondence was exchanged between London and Tokyo before the role of Japan was determined especially vis-a-vis China (including the disposal of Kiaochow). While agreeing to maintain, as far as possible, the promised neutrality of China during the operations against German stronghold at Kiaochow by not violating Chinese territory, Japan was not prepared to consult Peking before her action. The restoration of Kiaochow to China depended on whether place is surrendered to the Japanese (as also required in Japan's ultimatum to Germany) without bloodshed, or whether they have to take it after heavy expenditure of life and money.

Japan's Foreign Minister also pointed out

(a) that Russia and Japan had already fought (in 1905) on Chinese territory (without apparent protest from Peking);

(b) that China \[\sim\text{so far has}\] made no effort to defend her neutrality like Belgium;

(c) that \[\sim\text{China}\] herself compromised the neutrality by allowing Germany to set up a fortified place at Tsingtau. (39)

How could Britain dictate to Japan whether to consult China or not, except in general terms under the provisions of the Alliance of 1911. Obviously, Japan could not expect Britain to speak on behalf of China to Japan in the Far East. Grey, more than anybody else in the Foreign Office, seemed to take a realistic view when he observed:

38. Ibid., no. 39317, 39.

There are many things going on in many place that I don't at all like; it is an inevitable consequence of being engaged in a huge war - everyone in it will like to take advantage of the situation. (40)

After all, once Japan had been invited to take part, could London impose too much, and Tokyo accept, in so far as the Far Eastern situation was concerned? The British troops were engaged (in the war in the Far East) merely to show that England did not refuse to join Japan in the enterprise. (41)

The British Foreign Office appreciated that Japan acted with the best of intentions and restraint, in so far as Chinese territory was concerned, and sometime Chinese protests were repeated to Japan during the Kiaochow operations more to save face than anything else. (42) Yet, before Japan undertook war operations in the Far East, due largely to the pressure of the China lobby in the Foreign Office, Grey was compelled to issue a public statement as to the geographical limits of Japan's action. This was a unilateral statement saying:

His [Britannic] Majesty's Government have received a statement from the Japanese Government that their intention is to operate in the China Seas and Asiatic waters west thereof and against German territory or occupied territory on the eastern continent of Asia but not to extend these operations. (43)

The statement, which met half way Sir J. Jordan's earlier objection, was repeated in a telegram to Peking. But London killed two birds with one stone. Since the United States had been worried, once Japan commenced operations, about Samoa and Ladrones in the

40. Minute of Sir Edward Grey, 19 August 1914. Ibid.
41. PRO, F.O. 371, 1914/2017, no. 56320.
42. Ibid., no. 56248.
Pacific, Grey's statement served to allay fears in Washington also. (44)

But more than the statement of the British Foreign Secretary, the Japanese Government expressed surprise and disagreement on the note sent by the American Government on 19 August 1914. It said:

... should disturbances in the interior of China seem to the Japanese Government to require measures to be taken by Japan or other Powers to restore order, the Imperial Japanese Government will no doubt desire to consult with the American Government before deciding upon a course of action. This would be in accordance with the Root-Takahira Agreement made in the exchange of notes on November 30, 1908. (45)

Notwithstanding the above, the Anglo-Japanese relations were on most cordial terms, especially between Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, and Baron Takaaki Kato, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs; and the two ambassadors, Sir Conyngham Greene in Tokyo, and K. Inouye in London, very well served their respective chiefs in maintaining deep understanding during the war. However, as to the question of freedom of action to Japan upon her entry into the war, Britain was prepared to allow her the same in the Far East, provided it did not violate Chinese territory even if the action of Japan was basically in pursuance of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. (46) But Japan would not give any assurance as to the geographical limits (in the Far East) of her war operations beyond which her Prime Minister was already committed. For, she had to protect her large traffic

44. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 40350. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey, 17 August 1914 and enclosures.


passing through the Pacific to Honolulu and San Francisco. However, she had no designs to seize territory outside the Chinese seas, such as the German islands in the Pacific, which might cause apprehension in Australia and New Zealand. Sir C. Greene advised the Foreign Office to accept this assurance as satisfactory. Any further insistence on the matter, Greene warned London, might cause resentment in Japan. (47) Since Britain could not afford any weakening of Anglo-Japanese ties, she agreed with her ambassador as a matter of war expediency. (48)

Upon her entry into the war under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, Japan was determined to accept no dictation from London as to the limits of her war activities, particularly in the Far East. During the interpellation in the Diet after making the ultimatum (to Germany) known to the public, Baron Kato said to the effect that assurances had been given that Japan sought no territorial aggrandisement. The Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs had also personally conveyed the assurance to the representatives of America and Holland and a limited assurance to the Chinese Minister in Tokyo. (49) Ooka, a member of the Diet, had complained of Japan's limitation of action to Kiaochow, while England had already carried her operations into Africa and the South Seas. He also wished to know why Kiaochow was to be restored to China. (50) Upon the fall of Tsingtau after two months

47. Ibid., no. 41192. Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey, 19 August 1914.


49. Ibid., no. 40207. Harcourt to G.G. of Australia, 17 August 1914.

50. Ibid., 1914/2018, no. 63324.
of operation, (51) the future of Kiaochow was again commented upon in the Anglo-Japanese correspondence and debated in the Press. It was reported that Japan had made no pledge as to the "eventual restoration of Kiaochow" to China, although it had been referred to in the ultimatum to Germany. Thus, was Baron Kato now wriggling out? Grey preferred to wait (till after the war was over). In any case, along with the settlement of Kiaochow, Britain was to keep in mind the part played by Japan in the eviction of Germany from Kiaochow. In case of a tie, London might also have to give up Wei-hai-wei. (52)

Even if Japan, before the war, had assured that she would not occupy any territory outside the China Seas, the British Foreign Office permitted (for military purpose and till the war lasted and a settlement about the ultimate disposal of islands arrived at) Japan to occupy Angam island, though it was in the same proximity to Australia as the Yap. (53) Although Australia had no objection to it, this by no means meant a final settlement. (54)

IMPACT OF JAPAN'S ENTRY INTO THE WAR

In the Far East

The impact of Japan's entry into the war was naturally determined by the nature and the extent of her participation. Once Japan had entered the war, the taking over of Tsing-tau and

51. Ibid., no. 83412.

52. Ibid., no. 81193.

53. Ibid., no. 74103. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 23 November 1914.

54. Ibid., no. 74500. G.G. of the Commonwealth of Australia to Harcourt, 21 November 1914.
hence the elimination of German "power" from the Far East, was a foregone conclusion. The question merely was how to effect the reduction of the German power with as little loss of life as possible to the Allies.

Britain had been keen to make Japan an influential factor in the war against Germany. (55) Her strategy was to place the United Kingdom and her empire beyond the reach "of purely naval pressure" from Germany. The Estimates for 1914-15 for the British Army's principal services totalled £1,258,000 of the total expenditure of £28,985,000 on Army, about 30 per cent more than the German estimates. (56) Owing to the exigencies at home, Britain planned to keep only one battalion of British infantry in the Far East. The rest of the land forces were to return to England or go to India. (57) On the other hand, one Indian battalion and one Indian mountain battery from Hong Kong, to be known as North China brigade, were to be positioned for services in the Far East, in co-operation with Japan. (58) This was later supplemented by an additional half

56. It was apprehended in Holland that Japan's involvement in war might endanger the Netherland East Indies inasmuch as Japan might seize them. London ignored this message. PRO, F.O. 371, 1914/2015, no. 36028: H.O, Chilton to Sir Edward Grey, 1 August 1914. Later, the British Minister at Tokyo also confirmed that there was no justification in the rumoured Japanese attack on the Netherland East Indies. The British Minister had first hand knowledge of the working of the Japanese mind. Japan's attention was at that time rivetted upon China. Secondly, he pointed out, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was the best safeguard for the Netherlands' interests. Ibid., 1915/2591, no. 31446: Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey, 7 January 1916.

56. PRO, 1914, 37/113, no. 16.


battalion of Indian infantry - thus the total Indian land forces in the Far East being 2,500 men. (59) The entire force under the command of a British Brigadier (later Major-General) Barnardiston consisted of one brigade of infantry of four battalions (two British and two Indian) under the overall command of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief. (60)

This was the maximum force Britain could raise for co-operation with Japan in the Far East. The purpose was not to strengthen Japan, but to indicate that the Japanese were not left alone to deal with the situation. (61) The naval command consisted almost entirely of Japan, except for the nominal presence of a few British ships. (62) In other words, the onus of destroying the following German warships in the Far East was on Japan: (63)

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<th>Cruiser</th>
<th>Gunboats</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Gneisenau)</td>
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<td>Light Cruisers</td>
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**Austro-Hungarian Warships**

- Light-Cruiser — Kaiserin Elizabeth

59. Of the Indian land forces, Sikhs were preferred. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 40613. Also ibid., no. 56545 and 1914/2018, no. 64368.


61. Ibid., enclosure dated 20 August 1914.


63. Ibid., 1914/2016, no. 36648 (Minute).
Italian Ships (in 1914 Italy was member of the Triple Alliance)

Cruiser - Marco Polo
River Gunboat - Sebastians Caboto

The task before Japan was immense. She was to protect British trade north of Hongkong, (64) and destroy the German fleet under the command of Admiral Meyer Waldeck. The job was complicated because of China's pro-German attitude, even if China's preference for Germans was more on account of fear of Japan than due to any liking for Germany. In the Shantung province, the Chinese preferred the Germans, because it was a small and relatively harmless community of foreigners, compared to the Japanese who were regarded as aggressive neighbours. (65)

The British Foreign Office, however, was confident that the entire business of clearing the Germans from the Far East would be over in a couple of weeks, once Japan had assumed control of operations. (66) Moreover, London feared lest Germany strike a deal with Japan direct by handing over Kiaochow to the latter, thus enabling German ships to be sent out of the Chinese waters to scatter in pursuit of British commerce. The Foreign Office hoped and expected that the Japanese were prepared to deal with these contingencies. (67) Thus, not only was Japan brought into the

64. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 42760. Sir C. Greene to Foreign Office, 22 August 1914.


66. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 62457.

otherwise-European conflagration and enabled to indulge in military operations of a selfish nature, but, equally, Britain later wanted to avoid the calamity of Japanese withdrawal from the war and make terms with Germany. She further encouraged Japan to take Siberia and urged the Japanese to send troops along the Trans-Siberian railway, until they eventually came into hostile contact with German troops. (68)

As late as March 1916, Germany had been noticed dissuading Japan from continuing the war and making her agree to a separate peace. She also promised her "a free hand in China", although "China was not German property". Germany seemed to carry on a double propaganda: on the one hand, making overtures to Japan to wean her away from the Entente Powers; on the other hand, giving currency to rumours about the Japanese intentions of expansion on the east and west of Japan, with which the United States readily believed in. In the last eventuality, the Germans thought of inciting the United States against Japan (and her partner, Britain) saying that their action in the Far East would jeopardise American commerce in the area. (69) From this attempt of humouring America, Germany tried to benefit when her Charge d'Affaires at Peking sought the good offices of the United States Ambassador at Tokyo to the following effect:

In view of the fall of Kiaochow, the Shantung Railway Company, a private limited company, without German Government participation in its capital, requests that railway and mines seized


by the Japanese military expedition be now restored to the Company, so far as is inconsistent with the present military necessity, so that traffic and mining may be resumed under control, and for the benefit of the Company, and so that claim for damage by and during the seizure and detention may be minimized. (70)

The British Foreign Office regarded this attempt as "the height of German impertinence". However, London continued to repose faith in Japan's adherence to the Entente Powers. (71) In agreement with Japan, Great Britain had already restrained China not to negotiate directly in regard to the future of Kiaochow with Germany. (72) By bringing in Japan, Britain wanted to leave no stone unturned in defeating Germany. Grey and Greene continued to encourage Tokyo by "expressing indebtedness to Japan for her ready and valuable assistance in policing the trade routes in the China seas, and in helping Britain in her endeavours to seek out and destroy the enemy's cruisers. (73)

After the initial successes in the Far East, the feeling of anxiety in Tokyo also passed and Count Okuma was convinced that the efforts of the allied armies would eventually be crowned with success.

Japan in fact was so much confident of her strength that there was an undercurrent of feeling that Japan's hands were tied by the limitations of the area of operations. The total war budget

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72. Ibid., 1914/2016, no. 35445.

73. Ibid., 1914/2018, no. 63328. Sir C. Greene to Sir Edward Grey, 10 September 1914.
of Japan till the end of December 1914 alone, as approved by the Diet, was £5,266,250. (74) Japan even preferred that France and Russia, the other partners in the system of British alliances, took no part in the operations in the Far East, because she feared that these Powers might put forward, during the final settlement, claims for compensation for loss of life, expenditure, etc. incurred during the war. Moreover, Japan feared that the Russian troops might commit excesses when Tsingtau was attacked and taken by Japan. These considerations equally weighed with the British Foreign Office and she thought, since the Anglo-Japanese alliance was working well, the addition of Russia to the alliance was unnecessary. (75)

For some time, however, misunderstandings between the Foreign Offices in Tokyo and London persisted. The former was not convinced, and was even suspicious, as to why Britain asked her to allow France and Russia to participate in the operations against Germany in the Far East. The Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs felt that the whole matter was entirely one between Japan and Britain, in so far as the operations in the Far East were concerned. (76) Grey agreed with this interpretation and consequently dropped the idea of Franco-Russian participation in a predominantly-Japanese operations against Germany in Eastern Asia. (77)

76. Ibid., no. 42400. Sir C. Greene to Foreign Office, 22 August 1914.
77. Ibid. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 24 August 1914.
Japan desired an exclusive hand in the operations in the Far East in order to have "more material satisfaction as an outcome of the war" which led Sir C. Greene to remark that the Japanese were "an acquisitive race". The Japanese ambitions were put forward by various organs. The extra-parliamentary association of the Seiyukai published an indictment of the Government in which it was stated that "their Japan's freedom of action and its scope were fettered and circumscribed, and obstruction invited in the way of the realization of the fruits of the war". The Chuo, the organ of the Opposition party declared that Baron Kato's foreign policy "has been in every instance dictated by British Foreign Policy" and that his Kato's "cult of England has about reached the limit...". The British ambassador in Tokyo, too, regarded Baron Kato as "too English". The Kokumin, a Nationalist Party published a statement on 16 September 1914 asking "who is to be the master of the archipelagoes of the South seas, and remarking that these adjoin the southern extremity of Japan, whose mission it is to maintain the peace and assure the general situation of the Southern seas in the Far East". (78)

In the Japanese view, the quickest way of settling the business was by attacking the German stronghold at Tsingtau. While the actual plan or the strategy evolved was left to Japan, (79) Britain concerned herself in an endeavour to avoid breaking


China's neutrality during war operations. (80) However, Japan did not line up with Britain as a "gesture". The war had provided for her an opportunity to step up consolidation of her political and economic gains acquired through the years. She entered the war with all seriousness, having an eye on the Shantung Province in China. And although she insisted that the protection of Britain's maritime communications, and not territorial conquest, was the primary aim, her command of the Far Eastern waters made the German colonies a natural target. The German cables and coaling stations in the Pacific, the Cruisers that roved the Indian Ocean and frequented the coast of East Africa, in fact the entire system of German colonial communications and naval forces, became an easy target.

Immediately on the declaration of war, Japan began the siege of Kiaochow. Official blockade of German-leased territory of Kiaochow began at 9 a.m. (local time) on 22 August 1914. (81) Berlin had anticipated a Japanese attack on Tsingtau. It warned the Governor to send out women and children and asked him to hold to the last. (82) The operations were completed by November 1914. Japan officially proclaimed the termination of blockade of the coast of Kiaochow on 10 November 1914. (83) Tsingtau surrendered on 7 November 1914. (84) On 7 October, the Japanese, despite

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81. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 43927.
82. Ibid., no. 40592. Intercepted telegram, 19 August 1914.
83. Ibid., 1914/2018, no. 70037.
84. Ibid., no. 70059.
declarations that their manoeuvres would be confined to the Chinese and Japanese waters occupied, for "strategic" reasons, the Marshall and Caroline Islands in the Pacific. During the same month, they took the remaining German islands north of the Equator. (85) Japan had to send warships in the Pacific to hunt down the German squadron which was there, lest the same preyed on the British and Japanese shipping in the Pacific.

The defeat of the Central Powers in 1918 was regarded by those opposed to militarism and bureaucracy in Japan as a victory for democracy and internationalism. The defeat of Germany especially had a salutary impact upon Japanese politics. It had shaken the Germanophile and the militarists, and for some time gave impetus to liberalism in Japan. The first sign of it was the assumption of Takashi Hara as the civilian Prime Minister on 29 September 1918. Eight of the ten members of the cabinet were closely identified with Sei-ya-Kai, the liberal party.

In the early years of the world war, the part played by Japan as Britain's ally in the destruction of German power in the Pacific, and the provision of convoys of the Japanese navy for the protection of Australian troop-ships was much appreciated in Australia and tended to strengthen friendly feelings towards Japan. But almost immediately, this feeling was offset by concern over the Japanese occupation of the former German islands in the Pacific. (86) The Australian Government was originally asked by

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85. Two British Documents in the Public Record Office trace the evolution of Japanese aims in the Pacific. Both are an important account. F.0. 371, 1915/239; Memorandum on the Japanese Occupation of Pacific Islands by C. Wing, 22 December 1915, and F.0. 371, 1915/329; Memorandum by Lord Robert Cecil, 15 October 1918.

Britain to seize and occupy German outposts north as well as south of the Equator, but this request was hastily countermanded after a Japanese garrison had been established in Yap. German islands north of the Equator were, therefore, left for the Japanese to handle, although it was understood that until the final disposition of these territories was decided at the end of the war, their occupation was to be of a temporary character. However, the Japanese had no intention to vacate except Yap. In 1917, Britain was committed to support Japan's claim to permanent control of those islands, in consideration of an understanding that Japan would support British claims to the islands south of the Equator. (87)

In any case, Japan's entry into the war freed Australia from Germany's grip. W.M. Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia, compared it to "cutting the tentacles of an octopus with blows from an axe". Before the war, Queensland was especially a hunting ground for German spies. Economically, Australia became free to develop her own economy and mineral resources. She also became free to take a share in the Pacific. This brought Australia closer to America, although not without an element of danger due to the sudden explosion in America's naval power. On the other hand, Australia's experience in the administration of some of the islands in the Pacific, although for a temporary period, showed that she expected greater autonomy from Britain after the war.

New Zealand was also grateful for Japan's part in assisting the convoy of New Zealand troops across the Pacific. But this was somewhat offset by anxiety as to the ultimate ambitions of the Japanese Navy in the energetic campaigns of occupation of the German islands north of Equator. However, at the Imperial Conference

87. Ibid., p. 766.
of 1921 in London, both New Zealand and Australia supported the
continuation of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, "in some form accept-
able to Britain and Japan and if possible to America". (88)

However, the British watched the expansion of the Japanese
into the Pacific with misgivings. The islands occupied by them
consisted of the Carolines, Ladrones (Marianas), Marshall, and
Pelew (Palau) groups. The occupation could not but arouse anxiety
in Australia and New Zealand. "We would feel safer", commented
a New Zealand journal, Southland Times on 18 August 1914, "with
the Pacific islands under the flag of a White Power than under
the emblem of Rising Sun". (89)

New Zealanders and the Australians were not the only ones
alarmed at Japanese occupation of the Pacific islands. "The
Americans are as suspicious as our own colonies" commented a
British Foreign Office official. (90)

In October 1914, the British Minister at Tokyo had informed
London how the Japanese mind was working in regard to the Pacific
islands. He pointed out that Japanese public opinion was eager to
know what their country would get in return for help to Britain.
One view, the Minister added, contended that Japan would receive
all the islands north of the Equator which included the Caroline
and the Marshall islands. The Japanese at least wished to remain
in occupation of the islands for the time being, although they were

88. Ian F.G. Milner, New Zealand's Interest and Policies with
89. Quoted in Wm. Roger Louis, Great Britain and Germany's
90. F.O. 371, 1914/2017, no. 57114. Minute by W. Langley,
8 October 1914.
aware of the American objections and the Australian sentiments. In any case, there was no question ever of restoring the Pacific islands to Germany. (91) Japan was in complete occupation of the islands, viz., Mariana, Marshall and East and West Caroline groups by 22 October 1914. (92)

Sir Edward Grey recognized that the Japanese eventually would get a share of the spoils. "It cannot be expected", he wrote much before the occupation of the Pacific Islands by Japan, "that Japan will spend blood and treasure in Kiaochau and get nothing for it, and not even the remains of the German lease". (93) But he resisted Japanese efforts to obtain an explicit understanding that they should retain the territories taken by them. In deference to him, the Japanese were willing to make public pronouncements that their occupation "will be without prejudice to final arrangements". They however, informed the British Minister at Tokyo that they would "naturally insist on retaining permanently all the German islands lying north of the equator" and would rely on British support. (94) But one of the Japanese experts of the British Foreign Office pointed out:

It is clear that the Japanese must have compensation somewhere in the Pacific - and there seems no very grave objection from our point of view - though there may be grave objection from the American point of view - to their keeping some, if not all


these Islands north of the Equator - but in view of our engagement with France and Russia we must decline to be drawn into any engagement of support to any definite Japanese claim when terms of peace are discussed. (95)

Sir Edward Grey replied:

... Japan must have compensation after the war proportionate to her efforts, but ... with regard to all territory conquered and newly occupied during the war, the only acceptable basis is that it should be without prejudice to final arrangements to be made in time of peace and we propose to apply this to all territory not previously occupied by ourselves before the war. (96)

Thus, the British Foreign Office was able to avoid any definite commitment for some time. London took this course not so much to disregard the Japanese claim as not to offend the United States, Australia and New Zealand. For example, Lewis Harcourt, the Colonial Secretary at the time, repeatedly assured Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, Governor-General of Australia, that "we have no arrangement or an understanding, secret or otherwise, with the Japanese Government about Islands in the Pacific except that the occupation of all territory conquered during the war by the Allies is to be without prejudice to final arrangement to be made in terms of peace at the end of the war." (97) It was on 16 February 1917 that Britain and Japan concluded a secret agreement wherein the former promised the latter her support at the Peace Conference Japan's claim to retention of German rights in Shantung and the German islands north of the Equator, in return for Japan's

95. Ibid., 1914/2012, no. 83612. Minute by B. Alston, 17 December 1914.
96. Ibid., Minute by Sir Edward Grey, 17 December 1914.
97. Quoted in Louis, n. 89, p. 401.
support for British claims to German islands south of the Equator. (98)

The British Foreign Office could not also disregard the feelings of the United States. As it pointed out, the islands "may be a little far off from Australia but would be near the Philippines and to the south of Hawaii, and the United States would object". (99) The seizure of Marshall islands, the United States objected, "would endanger American communication with the Philippines". It was, however, ridiculous for the Americans to object to the Japanese occupation. The Marshall islands had been the chief naval base and coaling station for the German ships such as, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, and Emden. Their seizure by Japan was an imperative necessity. (100) And then the seizure was done for military purposes only. (101) Besides, due to their strategic importance, the islands could not be left unoccupied. (102) In fact, Japan did a service in the cause of the Allies by her occupation of the German islands in the Pacific (without prejudice to the final settlement made at a future date). (103)

But (it must be asked) how could Britain resent the occupation of the islands by Japan, an ally of her, if Britain before the war had reconciled to the occupation of the same islands

100. Ibid., 1914/2017, no. 56653.
101. The Times, 7 October 1914.
by Germany, Britain’s rival? Although Australia and New Zealand had been vocal that they would prefer the island to be under the White race, Britain could not say so. Nor, on this ground, could she ask Japan to give up the Pacific islands in favour of Australia. (104) It was therefore natural for the British Foreign Office to agree to the Japanese occupation of the islands. (105)

In Europe

The terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance did not cover the employment of Japanese troops in the theatres of war outside the Far East. In the normal course, therefore, no further involvement of Japan was expected after the capture of Tsingtao and eliminating the German influence from the Far East. About the middle of November 1915, Tokyo firmly held against the employment of Japanese troops in Europe, because it involved considerable difficulty in transporting a major military expedition 10,000 miles away and in justifying its necessity to the Japanese nation. (106)

However, as the war progressed, there was a good deal of discussion at various levels among the Entente Powers on the question of securing more substantial aid from Japan. The British Foreign Office had been pressed from the beginning for an extension of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance which would not only include France and Russia but also involve Japan in Europe. The opinions differed in the beginning, both in Britain and Japan, regarding the latter’s

105. Ibid., no. 76100. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 26 November 1914.
correct role in the war. Should she limit her activities to the Far East, or extend them to Europe? The British Government was equivocal on this question all through the war. Britain's condition at the outset of the war, that Japan should confine her operations to the west and south of the China sea, the Pacific and the German leased territory, although agreed upon by Japan, yet was regarded by her as absurd. "Such condition was incompatible with the technique of modern warfare". (107)

Even the British military officers who knew the capacity of the Japanese army and their loyalty to British friendship were not happy. They had been critical of their own Government's discouragement to Japan for her more active part in the war. (108) Sir Edward Grey was not prepared to extend the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, so as to include France and Russia, although he was willing to allow French co-operation in the Far East. (109)

Sir Edward Grey's attitude had so conditioned the Japanese mind that for some time Tokyo refused to be involved in the war in a big way. For instance, Japan refused to sign the Declaration of London of 4 September 1914 - signed by Britain, France, and Russia agreeing not to make a separate peace during the present war - even when Viscount Ishii, the Japanese ambassador in France, urged his Government that an immediate participation in the London Declaration would give them "a strong voice in future peace discussions". (110)

Russia and France were also keen that Japan should adhere to the Declaration and thus conclude an all-inclusive four-powers alliance. (111)

But Foreign Minister Kato opposed both the French and the Russian proposals. As a staunch supporter of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as the cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy, he believed that the proposed treaty would lessen the effect of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Secondly, since under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan and Britain were already firmly bound one to the other not to institute peace parleys separately or without previously exchanging frank views regarding the conditions of peace, he held that the negotiations for the proposed all-inclusive treaty be postponed until after the close of the war. (112)

Thus, when the British Foreign Secretary approached Tokyo if the latter was "disposed to send a division of the Japanese Navy to co-operate with the British and French Fleets primarily in the Mediterranean (which would lessen Britain's burden in the North Sea) and ultimately in the decisive theatre of the naval war", Japan was unwilling to go beyond the stipulated terms of the 1911 treaty. Britain's willingness to provide facilities for supplies and repairs to the Japanese vessels and her promise of financial help found no favour in Japan. (113)

This is corroborated in the British Records. Although, Japan was not too willing to send troops to Europe, she had already

111. Seiji Hishida, Japan among the Great Powers (New York, 1940), p. 213.
112. PRO, 1914, 37/121, no. 114.
113. Ibid.
been helping Russia. But to further help Russia, a quadruple alliance was necessary, at first suggested by Russia in 1914. Somehow, the alliance did not come off. Either Edward Grey did not favour or a section in Japanese Foreign Office thought a quadruple alliance would weaken the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. (114)

In 1915, however, Grey was not averse to the idea of a quadruple alliance, necessarily because Japan felt that without a clear agreement with the Entente Powers, Japan did not feel obliged to render help in Europe. (115)

The Russo-Japanese Convention of 3 July 1916 rescued the situation. The Convention was to run parallel, in fact supplementary, to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. (116) The British Foreign Office did not object to the open treaty. (117)

How far was the Convention to be supplementary to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance? The Convention aimed at protecting each other against a third party, and the third party at that time was Germany. (118) The Japan Advertiser concluded thus: the Anglo-Japanese Alliance brought Japan into the war in 1914. Japan's association with the Entente Powers helped improvement in Russo-Japanese relations which resulted in the Russo-Japanese Convention of 3 July 1916. Count Okuma thought that the Russo-Japanese Convention, together with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, "will

114. PRO, F.O. 371, 1915/2388, no. 62568.
115. Ibid.
117. Ibid., no. 12513. Grey to Greene, 28 June 1916. Also no. 12573, Grey to George Buchanan, 29 June 1916.
118. The Japan Advertiser (Tokyo), 11 July 1916.
advance Japan's position in the Orient". (119)

The United States thought that the Russo-Japanese Convention "will affect American interests and the American doing will hereafter have to cater to the pleasure both of Japan and Russia". (120) The American allegation was refuted, (121) and the British Foreign Office also disagreed with American apprehension. (122)

In seeking Japanese naval assistance in Europe, Britain was prompted by her desire to overcome Germany in Europe quickly and thus end the war. Secondly, she desired to divert Japan's attention away from the Pacific in order to lessen the anxiety of the United States vis-a-vis Japan, and thereby please her. (123) It should be noted that although the American Press was not very vocal in expressing the fear of Japanese encroachment in the Pacific, to the United States, Anglo-Japanese co-operation, and the Western ideals for which at least as understood in America Britain and France waged war against Germany, were incompatible. (124) The British minister at Tokyo favoured a prior arrangement between London and Tokyo for military action before making similar arrangement with France and Russia. (125) The British Foreign Secretary

119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., 13 July 1916.
121. Ibid., 14 July 1916.
123. PRO, 1914, Cab. 37/121, no. 114. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, nos 1 and 2, 2 September 1914.
124. PRO, 1914, Cab. 37/121, no. 117.
ruled against the extension of the Anglo-Japanese alliance till the Japanese agreed or till after the war. (126) In one respect at least, he was more realistic. He thought if Germany was defeated, France, Russia, and Britain would get something somewhere, and in that case, the Japanese could not be told that there was nothing for them anywhere. (127) Therefore, he preferred at that time to confine the Japanese participation in the war to the Far East where she could be allowed to master the advantages. (128)

But in 1917 Germany was in a very powerful military position and it was a fatal error on the part of the Entente Powers to think of defeating Germany and achieving their aims. David Lloyd George records in his War Memoirs:

The hard fact is that in spite of the efforts of the Allies to raise and equip armies and to manufacture munitions, in spite of their superiority in men and material and the perfection to which they have brought their offensive arrangements, the Germans at the end of 1917, as at the end of the previous years' campaigns, find themselves in possession of more, and not less, Allied territory. (129)

There were two other grave dangers which were consuming the British energies and putting to nought their war efforts. Firstly, the Russian armies were broken and were quite unable to offer any effective resistance to the German attacks, "and although their

127. Ibid., no. 41015.
128. Ibid., no. 43715. Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 22 August 1914.
position in respect of ammunition and rifles was supposed to have improved during the year, it was quite clear that their equipment would not enable them to stand up much longer to the formidable artillery at the disposal of Hindenburg's armies. Ten thousand tons of ammunition stacked at Archangel had, either through carelessness or treachery, been blown up." (130)

Secondly, there was the impending peril which had threatened the very life of Britain—the sinking of her merchant ships by German submarines. The German Admiralty had set itself the task of increasing its submarine fleet fourfold in numbers. David Lloyd George admitted that the increase in size and power "of these elusive vessels of destruction was more menacing than the augmentation in their numbers". (131) It was at this time when the German submarine campaign was very formidable (and there was a shortage of torpedo-boat destroyers in the Mediterranean) that the need of the Japanese help was acutely felt by the Government in London. The help was asked, and agreed to, by Japan. (132)

It is not out of place to point out here that once the civil authorities in London realized the need of further military assistance from Japan, the military authorities clinched the matter and through the good offices of Lord Milner, Minister without portfolio, and Lord Reading, they convinced the Cabinet of the desirability of Japanese co-operation in winning the war in Europe. (133)

131. Ibid., p. 507.
Discussions soon began as regards the possibility of Japan sending troops to France, and memoranda were prepared, dealing with such matters as accommodation of Japanese wounded in England, special rations required, liaison duties, and the like. By about the autumn of 1917, there was a recrudescence of interest as regards Japan, due to her willingness to help Britain in coping with the German submarine menace in the Mediterranean. The handicaps of distance and of any direct Japanese concern in what was going on in Europe were overcome.

The persistent efforts of the military authorities in getting further co-operation from Japan had turned the tide. The Press also made increasing references to the utility of Japanese co-operation. The Observer on 17 March 1917 remarked:

Suspicion about Japan must be put away, for there is no cause for it. Japan has won the equal status of one of the world's Great Powers. She has been circumspect and restrained, a mirror of fidelity to her engagements. In all that pertains to harsh diplomacy, Japan can set an example to the whole world.

A Cartoon in Punch on 14 August 1917 showed Japan barring the way to the east: it depicted a typical Bolshevik, clutching a bag marked "German Gold", turning away from the rays of the Rising Sun of Japan. A similar one had appeared on 6 March; a Samurai drawing his sword and guarding the road "To Vladivostok", towards which a German rider (the Kaiser) is spurring his horse.

Japan provided warship escorts for the military transports sailing from Australia or around the Cape of Good Hope. The Japanese navy was also assigned to police the vast Pacific, so that the American Pacific fleet could concentrate in Atlantic,
In 1917, she sent Rear Admiral Sato with the Cruiser Akastu and three destroyers divisions to the Mediterranean to be charged with the duty of convoying the allied transports or of combating German-U-boats until the end of the war. (134)

Japan’s services for transporting passenger and material to Britain under the protection of the British Naval Force in the Mediterranean war was also significant. (135) Japan accommodated Britain in commercial matters also. By passing special legislation, she exempted British goods imported into Japan from the increased rate of duty, leviable under the Japanese statutory tariff. (136)

Besides, Japan was the only country in the Entente capable of supplying, within a comparatively short time, a large number of rifles, artillery and ammunition desperately needed in Russia to safeguard Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Britain recognized the pressing need of Russia, (137) and supported her demand. She herself asked for 200,000 Japanese rifles. (138) Japan had already supplied rifles 25 to 50 million made-up rounds to Britain. (139) Now she recommended the Russian demand of 300,000 rifles and heavy

134. Hishida, n. 111, p. 221.


136. Ibid., 1914/2019, no. 44551. Board of Trade to Foreign Office, 28 August 1914. Also Ibid., no. 48291, Greene to Grey, 10 September 1914.

137. Ibid., 1915/2389, no. 71740.

138. Ibid., no. 63125.

139. Ibid., no. 73685, Lord Kitchner to Lord Crewe, 7 June 1915.
guns (140) "apart from other munitions of war, etc." (141)

Why did Britain support the Russian demand of rifles? There were various reasons. Firstly, she was unable to meet the demand. (142) Secondly, she was not in favour of a new quadruple alliance while war was in progress. (143) Thirdly, she feared that if the rifles were not supplied, Russia would be beaten in Europe, and the German success would drive Russia back into the East, which Britain did not like in spite of being allies. (144) It was for these reasons that Britain exercised extreme pressure on Japan through a personal message from the British King to the Japanese Emperor. (145)

Japan was unwilling to continue military assistance to the Entente Powers without compensation or a clear promise to that effect. She had provided a Red Cross contingent to England, (146) and had provided medical facilities to the British contingent in the Far East. (147) She had been assisting Russia since the beginning of the war in 1914. (148) She wanted from Russia, in compensation, a portion of the Russian-Manchurian Railway to be in

141. Ibid., no. 62568.
142. Ibid.
143. Ibid., no. 116575.
144. Ibid., no. 11945. Grey to Greene, 13 August 1915.
145. Ibid., Grey to Greene, 14 August 1915.
146. Ibid., no. 63950.
Japanese sphere of influence. Russia actually was prepared to meet Japan's wish for compensation in the portion of Manchurian Railway, but she was afraid that if the demand was conceded, Japan might increase her demands. (149)

However, before Japan granted naval assistance to Britain in 1917 against the ravages of the German and Austrian submarines in the Mediterranean, she extorted secret agreements with Britain and France in February 1917. Under the agreements, Britain and France agreed to support Japan's claims in regard to the disposal of Germany's rights in Shantung. They also agreed that Japan would have all the former German islands north of the Equator, and Britain all of those south of the Equator. (150) The agreements had made the position of Japan in the Far East and the Pacific almost impregnable.

During the war, British, French, and Russian bonds were raised in Japan to pay for munition supplies furnished by the Japanese Government. Japan also directly purchased the bonds of the Allied and Associated Powers through retirement of her Government and municipal loans raised in previous years on the London and Paris markets. Such direct and indirect financial aid

149. Ibid., no. 113157. Sir G. Buchanan to Grey, 14 August 1915.

aggregated to 860,000,000 yen. (151)

When German submarines concentrating their attack on allied shipping were most effective in January 1918, Japan furnished the United States shipping Board the charters of 150,000 tons of transport ships. Upon American Ambassador Morris' suggestion, it was disclosed in February that the shipping board had entered into a contract with Japanese shipbuilders to purchase 500,000 tons of ships and to release to Japan 250,000 tons of steel. (152) The result of this agreement was that Japan furnished the board with forty-five transports aggregating 378,700 tons, in return for 250,950 tons of steel materials. (153)

In appreciation of the Japanese willingness to further help Britain in Europe, King George V made the Emperor of Japan a Field-Marshall of the British Army. Marquis Inouye, the Japanese Ambassador in London, described this "unprecedented event"


(1) Three bond issues raised for the British Government (December 1916-February 1918) 280,000,000 Yen

(2) Three bond issues raised for the French Government (July 1917-October 1918) 126,000,000

(3) Four bond issues raised for the Russian Government (October 1916-September 1917) 225,500,000

(4) Bond of Allied and Associated Powers purchased by the Japanese 129,500,000

(5) Retirement of Japanese Government and municipal bonds raised in London and Paris. Total: 98,000,000 350,000,000 Yen


as opening a new page in Anglo-Japanese relations, because the appointment of the Emperor of Japan to be a Field Marshal in the British Army appeals perhaps more strongly to the chivalry of the people of this nation than any other recognition. (154)

This was further borne out by what was said by Takashi Hara, the Japanese Prime Minister (September 1918-November 1921) when the Baton Mission under Prince Arthur of Connaught went to Tokyo in the early summer of 1918. The Times correspondent reported on 19 June:

Mr Hara's utterances on international affairs are rare, and he is almost the first public man to recognize in the Press the British spirit of endurance. His words go far. In the past so much has been taken for granted regarding the British, not only by the Japanese, that the announcement of what they have done in the Great War never seems necessary. Mr Hara says that the phrase 'Anglo-Japanese Alliance' has passed into traditional use, but it has really become the backbone of universal peace and the leading factor of Japan's diplomacy and thought.

Another report in The Times dated 25 June 1918, contains the following sentence from an account of an interview accorded to the correspondent by Prince Arthur:

Our Allies (Japan) came into the war because they are our Allies.... I have taken every opportunity of expressing appreciation of what the Imperial Navy is doing in the Mediterranean, and not only in the Mediterranean but in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, which have been kept open to the world's trade by Japanese vigilance.

The situation on the Western front in Europe turned in favour of the allies after 1917. But the situation in Russia following the abdication of the Tsar in March 1917 and the Russo-German peace at Brest-Litovsk on 3 March 1918 caused concern to

Britain and Japan. There was a fear that the German-Soviet combination might arm the German and the Austrian prisoners kept in Siberia and penetrate to the Far East by the Trans-Siberian and the Chinese Eastern Railways. The vast accumulation of munitions and supplies at Vladivostok, furnished mostly by Japanese and Americans, might then fall into enemy hands.

Vladivostok was Britain's one channel of communication with the anti-German forces operating in Russia. (155) In January 1918, all resistance of the Russians against the Soviet regime "seemed definitely extinguished". (156)

England and France urged Japan to go in and restore order in Siberia; (157) the United States insisted that it should "be undertaken by international co-operation and not by any one Power acting as the mandatory of the others". (158)

David Lloyd George in his War Memoirs (159) mentions that Japan was anxious to intervene in Russia. Tatsuji Takeuchi, on the other hand, categorically denies (on the strength of the speech made by Foreign Minister Viscount Motono in the Diet on 26 March 1918) that Japan made any proposal to the Allied Powers for a Siberian expedition. (160) Seiji Hishida also

156. Quoted in Thomas Edward La Fargue, China and the World War (California, 1937), p. 163.
158. U.S. Foreign Relations, 1918, Russia, vol. 2, pp. 41-42.
maintains that Japan refrained from taking any initiative. (161)

The fact seems to be that both Britain and Japan saw in the German control of Russia's resources and territory, stretching from the North Sea to the Pacific, a grave menace. But Japan could not take military measures to meet the situation unless she had the consent and support of China, her neighbour on the mainland, for which a military agreement was signed on 16 March 1918; the naval agreement on 19 May and the public announcement to the effect was made in Tokyo on 30 May. (162) In pursuance of the American desire, a joint expedition under the Japanese General K. Otani was sent to strengthen the Czecho-Slovaks in their revolt against the Bolsheviks and the Germans in Russia. The Allied Force numbered about 24,000. Of this number, half were Japanese and the balance was composed of British, French, Italian, Chinese, and American soldiers. (163) Japan's participation in the Siberian intervention cost her more than 400,000,000 yen. (164) To Japan, the measures taken in Siberia were in self-defence. (165)

In England, A.J. Balfour expressed faith in the readiness of "our Allies [Japan] to make new efforts — different efforts" in the common cause, meaning Japanese assistance through Siberia to the scattered elements of Russian stability. The origin of this project "the reconstitution of the Eastern front was to

assist a Czecho-Slovak contingent in Siberia, which was upholding the Allied cause against Bolshevism". (166)

There were critics in the House of Commons of the Government policy of asking Japan to "intervene in Siberia to an undefined extent". A. MacCallum Scott thought that the Japanese intervention would lead Britain "into dangers". Even though the Germans' presence on "the North-West Frontiers of India and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Persia were a real menace, in the view of Scott, "a Japanese occupation of Siberia would not help" Britain in the slightest. (167) In any case, the extent of the action taken by Japan in Siberia was on her own. (168)

The British War Cabinet agreed to support the Japanese expedition in Siberia because, according to Lord Reading's biographer, Japan was ready to land an expedition at Vladivostok with the object of rallying the Cossacks and other anti-German elements (and incidentally anti-Bolshevik) to the Allied cause. For this, the British Government was prepared to take the risk of annoying the newly-established Soviet Government in Moscow. (169)

However, the American President was not convinced of the long-term utility of the Japanese expedition in Siberia (170) because in his view, any action in Vladivostok "would undoubtedly result in the unifying of the Russians under the Bolsheviks.

166. Piggot, n. 106, p. 98.
170. Ibid., Sir William Wiseman to Foreign Office, 30 May 1918.
against foreign interference". (171) There were others who also supported President Wilson's cautious policy in respect of the Japanese expedition in Siberia. (172) It seems when American participation in the Siberian expedition was agreed upon, President Wilson waived his objection to the Japanese mission in Siberia. (173)

Apart from Siberia, Japanese guns and gunners had been present at Warsaw when Von Hindenburg attacked that city for the first time in November 1915. Japanese sailors also took part in the suppression of the abortive mutiny at Singapore. (174)

It is necessary to point out that the assistance rendered to Britain by Japan during the war was continuous. There was no interval or break after the extensive operations undertaken in the extermination of the German naval forces in the Pacific. The special detachment of several cruisers and destroyers which was despatched to the Coast of the Straits Settlement early in 1916 continued to guard the Indian Ocean east of Colombo, while in the northern Pacific, detachments of Japanese cruisers carried out on several occasions "at the instance of the British Government, extended cruises, which were of great importance to the Allied cause". (175)

175. Ibid.
Again, in view of the development of the naval situation, the two allied Governments - Britain and Japan - deemed it necessary that the operations of the Japanese Navy be further extended. Accordingly, the Imperial Government despatched a force to the Mediterranean. In addition to this, general new detachments were despatched to assist the British Navy in the protection of shipping in the Indian and South Pacific Oceans.

Lord Robert Cecil, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, stated in the House of Commons on 24 May 1917 that the above services rendered by Japan to the Allied cause "gratifying and importance as they are in themselves, gain additional value as showing the spirit of everyone of our Allies, and as indicating the greatness which we may expect from them in future". (176)

It seems that Japan's entry in the war had an impact on the British domestic policies also. The Liberals, claiming to be the party of peace, had welcomed any relaxation of tension and hence had supported the Alliance with Japan in 1902 and its revised version in 1905. (177) The party was in power when the third Alliance with Japan was concluded in 1911. But the Liberals' vacillating attitude towards Japan (as was their uncertain response to the world war) killed the Liberal Party. After the war, the party gradually ceased to be a contender for office to the extent it exhausted all avenues of revival. Thus the Liberal Party met

with "the strange death". (178)

HOW FAR DID THE JAPANESE SUPPORT HELP GREAT BRITAIN IN THE WAR?

It is not merely by what the Japanese did, but by what they had not done, that their services to Britain in the war have to be estimated. Japan in April 1916 had a total number of 65 warships of various sizes. Notwithstanding the earlier suggestion from the British Foreign Office for circumscribing Japan's action to the Far East, the end of the war found her destroyers with those of Britain hunting down German submarines in the Mediterranean; and her envoys sat at the Versailles Conference that dictated the terms of peace to the Central Powers.

At first, blockading Tsing-tao, and convoying the troops and guns detailed for the reduction of that fortress, the Japanese naval authorities detailed a squadron to protect the shipping of the Allies in the Chinese Seas. This squadron, cruising as far a field as Singapore and the east of the Philippines, turned the Chinese seas into a mare clausum for Germans. In February 1915, some Japanese marines helped the British to put down the mutiny of the Indian troops stationed there. (179)

Meanwhile, a part of another Japanese squadron hunted for the Emden and any other German war-vessels in the Bay of Bengal in September 1915; another part helped to convoy the transports carrying Australian and New Zealand troops. In October the


combined naval forces of Vice-Admiral Tochinai and Captain Kwanji Kato accompanied the troops from Wellington and Perth to Aden.

Equally significant were the services rendered by the Japanese navy in the Pacific. The moment war was declared, the Mikado dispatched four battle-cruisers towards North-America, with a view to safeguarding the international trade routes from the German Pacific squadron and from the German and Austrian warships which had escaped from Tsingtao before Japan declared war. Another squadron departed for the South Seas. (180)

At the outbreak of war, Captain Moriyama with the Canadian warship Rainbow and the British warship New Castle under him safeguarded the Allied shipping along the western coast of North America. (181)

Besides, however, an independent British squadron under Rear-Admiral Cradock, had on 1 November 1914 been badly defeated off the coast of Chile by von Spee, who skilfully succeeded in uniting most of the German men-of-war in the Pacific, including the Gneisenau, Scharnhorst, Dresden, Leipzig and Nurnberg. In the battle off Coronel the Good Hope and Monmouth were sunk. The combined efforts of Japanese Captain Moriyama and British Rear-Admiral Sturdee destroyed von Spee's squadron, with the exception the Dresden, on 8 December 1914. (182)

On 10 March 1915 the Prinz Eitel Friedrich, which had escaped to a port of the United States was disarmed by the Japanese Vice-Admiral Tochinai, enabling British men-of-war off Juan

180. Ibid., p. 253.
181. Ibid.
182. Ibid., p. 254.
Fernandez to destroy *Dresden*, the last hope of the Germans. (183) With this, ended the Kaiser's dream of dominating the Pacific. With the fall of Tsingtao, already the German ambition east of Suez had been doomed. This was certainly a commendable accomplishment.

Thus, the Japanese fulfilled the spirit and the letter of the Rescript issued on the declaration of war against Germany. With the British, French, and Russian squadrons in the Pacific, the Japanese navy materially assisted in the destruction of the German men-of-war roving between the east coast of Africa and the Western shores of America. It helped to convoy troops on the way to Egypt and the Gallipoli Peninsula; and in 1916, the Russian contingents to Toulon. The presence of the Anglo-Japanese squadron off the coast of South America was one of the causes why von Spee left the Pacific for the Atlantic, where off the Falkland Isles he was to meet his doom.

On land, the Japanese assistance, though small, was equally significant. On land, particularly the British army was hopelessly unprepared for the world-wide struggle. A Japanese army, apart from uprooting the German settlement in the Shantung Peninsula, prevented Germans from organizing risings in China and Manchuria, which might have resulted in the destruction of the Trans-Siberian railway, over which Russia was drawing arms and munitions of war purchased in Japan and the United States, and by which Russia in 1916 sent powerful reinforcements to France.

As early as 14 December 1914, Japan's co-operation was duly recognized for (a) constant assistance in the general protection of

183. Ibid., p. 256.
trade; (b) the search for enemy's ships; (c) the convoy of troops and (d) Japan had placed her military resources in the shape of stores and equipment at the disposal of all the Allied Powers "with a liberality which is especially valuable in a war". The Times compared the value of Japan's co-operation to Britain to what Cavour's intervention in the Crimea did for Italy. (184)

In East Asia, Britain came out without much loss. This was largely due to the help rendered by Japan. The total loss of life of Britons was: 12 NCOs and men killed; 7 men died of disease; and 5 officers, and 56 rank and file wounded. (185) Between 6 August 1914 and 18 September 1914, a total of 12 British ships (over 59,000 tonnage) were sunk on High Seas by German cruisers, of them, six British ships were sunk in the Bay of Bengal by the German vessel Emden. (186)

It is relevant to ask what would have happened if Japan's tremendous naval machine for destruction, together with the army which was even admitted by The Times (187) to be twice as powerful as when it fought with the Russians in Manchuria, had been lent to the Kaiser or even remained neutral. Germany had already offered inducements to Japan to remain neutral, if not to join her. By warning Europe and America of the "Yellow Peril" (188) the Kaiser had indirectly admitted the Japanese strength. Even Lord Kitchener had remarked after his visit to Japan in 1909: "I only

184. The Times, 14 December 1914.
186. PRO, 1914, Cab. 37/121, no. 111.
188. Porter, n. 179, p. 262.
wish the spirit of our people ... was more like that of the
Japanese". (189)

The conspicuous services rendered by Japan need to be
appreciated, especially in view of the pro-German sympathies of a
section of the Japanese public. There was a tendency among the
army officers to believe in the invincibility of German Power. (190)

To what extent Japan had facilitated Britain's success may
be estimated from the fact that even if the Washington Conference
(1921) gave Britain a 40 per cent naval superiority over Japan,
this superiority would exist only when the entire British fleet
was sent to the Far East, without leaving any force in the European
seas. (191) The two-hemisphere British Empire did not have the two-
hemisphere navy. The British possessions in the Far East were
practically dependent on sea power. But for the Japanese help, it
was never possible for the British fleet to operate at a great
distance to protect the British interests in the Far East and
eastern Asia. Therefore, seeking Japanese assistance was a
confirmation of the fact that Britain, in facing German power,
could not distribute her naval forces over two hemispheres and
maintain the two-power standard.

Britain's estimate of the Far Eastern situation (depended
as it was on the deliberations in the Defence Conference of the
year 1909) was far below the actual realities. Had it not been
for Japan, and to an extent for the help of the Colonies, Britain

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p. 282.
191. Herbert Richmond, Statesmen and Sea Power (Oxford, 1947),
p. 290.
would have suffered far greater losses at the hands of even a small German naval detachment, leaving apart the disadvantages the British power would have faced by the divided attention in European and in Asian waters. Britain's margin of superiority in the North-Sea and the Mediterranean was already razor-thin. Even Churchill admitted that "the inconvenience in other parts of the globe had to be faced. It was serious". (192) The dimensions of Pax Britannica were shrinking. Thus the Japanese assistance was much more valuable than some of the contemporary British politicians thought.

Even though Anglo-German rivalry was, in so far as Britain was concerned, one of the important causes of war in Europe in 1914, yet, both Britain and Germany failed to realize that the British naval superiority was as much becoming irrelevant as the German idea of leadership in Europe. Japan had already been recognized as a Great Power and the United States was steadily unfolding her potentialities. In this situation, help from Japan was a morale booster for Britain.

It was only with the Japanese support that the British managed to retain control of the seas. The military operations in the Pacific demonstrated the extent to which the security of the British Empire itself, as well as that of Australia and New Zealand, depended on Japanese sea power. In their war against Germany, the British thus reaped the benefits of the alliance concluded over a decade earlier with Japan. Even Australia, with her traditional hostility towards the Japanese, saw the value of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The *West Australian* wrote on 10 October 1914:

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It is no secret that the Alliance has not in the past been viewed with whole-hearted enthusiasm by every section of the Australian people; today, it is highly important, for the sake of our national future, that one should venture upon some clear and cool thinking on this matter, and that we should look at the facts, not through a veil of sentiment and prejudice, but face to face, ... Britain has paralysed German overseas commerce, and has kept her own trade routes clear, because she was able in good time, to call her ships home to guard her own gateways, and it was the Japanese Alliance which enabled her to do this.

The Adelaide Register on 23 September 1914 remarked that Japan had "extinguished all hopes of German aggression in the Pacific, and materially added to the safety of British colonies and trade in Eastern waters." The Times (London) on 14 December 1914 referred to the Japanese as "a chivalrous and an honourable people upholding the principles of civilization in the Far East".

Moreover, so much was the shaken feeling in Britain in spite of superiority of the Entente Powers that A.J. Balfour stated as late as 1917 before the Imperial War Council:

The Central Powers, as we all know, have an enormous military advantage over us in their central position. They have a corresponding advantage from the point of view of their aims. Germany dominate the aims of the whole of the coalition (193) against us.... (194)

A.J. Balfour was convinced that Japan was even with an eye to her own interest "is quite genuinely helping the Allies, and helping the Allies to the best of her ability ... I do not think we ought to under-rate the services she is giving...." (195)

193. By this time, Italy was out of the Triple Alliance.


195. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
Whatever the internal feelings that Japan, being an Asian partner, was inferior, there was a continuous flow of good words from British officials and statesmen for the valuable assistance rendered by Japan to Britain. Langley of the British Foreign Office recorded a minute on 2 December 1914 saying: "The Japanese have done, and are doing a great deal more than was even contemplated...." (196) Sir Edward Grey had appreciatively added:

...And larger participation in the war by Japan than originally consented to at Britain's request must be taken into account when respective claims of allies are being arranged in final terms of peace. (197)

Even as early as 1914, the British Foreign Office seems to have had no hesitation in allowing Japan, in return for her services, a free hand in the occupation of the islands in the Pacific, except the Yap which the Japanese had agreed to hand over to Australia. Before Edward Grey laid down the office of Foreign Secretary, he had not only agreed to the Japanese occupation of the islands in the Pacific but also confirmed that Japan undertook operations (in 1914) "not only with our consent but at our request". He repeated that "Britain fully realizes that Japan must have compensation after the war proportionate to the efforts...." (198) A.J. Balfour had confirmed this policy.

197. Ibid., Sir Edward Grey to Sir C. Greene, 3 December 1914.
198. Ibid. Also no. 79178.