

First World War & China - Japan's Twenty-one Demands

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Tang Degang pointed out that Russia and Japan signed three secret treaties, with such clauses as dividing Manchuria & Mongolia should China's revolution lead to national instability. Fortunately, 1911 Xin Hai Revolution ended in a matter of less than 3 months, while Second Revolution was even shorter in duration.

WWI broke out on July 28th 1914. On Aug 15th 1914, Japan issued an ultimatum to Germany as to ceding Jiaozhou-wan Bay to Japan management and Chinese sovereignty by Sept 15th 1914. Jiaozhou-wan Bay was first leased to Germany for 99 years on March 6th 1898 in the aftermath of death of two German missionaries. Before one month ultimatum was to expire, Japan, on Aug 23rd 1914, attacked the German interests in China. Twenty thousand Japanese soldiers landed in Longkou, and then attacked Qingdao. Yuan Shikai, to maintain neutrality, had to carve out an area for the two parties to fight. Though China designated the area to the east of Weixian county train station, Japanese, having declined German request for handover of leased territory to China, would go west to occupy the Jiao-Ji [Qingdao-Jinan] Railway on the pretext that the railway was a Sino-German venture. On Oct 6th, Japanese took over Jinan train station, arrested German staff, and expelled Chinese staff. Reinsch, i.e., American legation envoy who arrived in China in the wake of President Yuan Shi-kai's expulsion of KMT from the Parliament in 1913, "warned Washington of Japan's menacing ambitions when the Japanese army seized the German areas of influence in China, in Shandong Province" per Mike Billington. (Reinsch, supportive of Yuan's government in Peking and intent on implementing Dr Sun Yat-sen's plan laid out in "*The International Development of China*", had tried to circumvent pro-British and pro-Japan Morgan consortium by soliciting help from Frank Vanderlip [head of National City Bank] of the American International Corporation (AIC) in 1915 and John Abbott of the Continental and Commercial Trust and Savings Bank in Chicago.)

On Jan 8th 1915, Japan first raised 21 demands which were to force China into an equivalent semi-vassal status by taking advantage of European countries' entanglement in WWI. Japan intended to force China into signing a "national defense treaty", with stipulations that Japan could migrate millions of its citizens into their spheres of influence in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, that Japan hold exclusive control over coastal China [especially Fujian Province], that Japan could lease Port Arthur for 99 years, that Japan inherit German interest in Shandong, that Japanese be appointed important posts in various levels of Chinese government, that Japan and China co-host the police bureaus in

all Chinese provinces, and that Japan and China co-build the weapons manufacturing plants in cities along the Yangtze River line... Gu Weijun was ordered to appeal to US and Britain [British ambassador John Newell Jordan] for assistance; however, Japanese spies followed Gu Weijun's move, and demanded that Gu Weijun be dismissed from the negotiation team. Tang Degang claimed that Gu Weijun still managed to disclose Japan's 21 demands to Britain & US in a delicate way though he was excluded from diplomatic meetings: Gu disguised himself and slipped into the embassies in Feb of 1915 per TDG. Tang further stated that Japan's 21 demands were in same spirits as the memorandum of Japan's "black dragon society" dated Oct 29th 1914 or the later "Secret Tanaka Memorial". Taking advantage of Sun Yat-sen's rebellion, Japan threatened Yuan Shikai with possible support for the KMT rebels. (Tang Degang pointed out that there were two 'treacherous' letters by Sun Yat-sen, i.e., May 11 1914 letter to Japanese prime minister and March 14th 1915 letter to foreign ministry.) Yuan Shikai claimed that he would not accept clause 5, i.e., having Japanese advisers serve in Chinese government, army, police, hospitals and schools. <http://www.cctv.com/lm/176/71/71822.html> pointed out that Henry Donald & George Morrison, i.e., two Australians, had been responsible for breaking the news of Japan's demands to the international media [like American newspaper The Herald] after contacts with Finance Minister Zhou Ziqi & American legation minister Paul Reinsch. Chinese across the world were in indignation. At Cornell U, Hu Shi naively called for "calm down" and proposed continuous studies against student protests.

For four months, Yuan Shikai's officials, like Lu Zhengxiang & Cao Rulin, painstakingly negotiated with Japanese. Lu Zhengxiang deliberately spent dozens of minutes preparing for tea during each round of talks. Gu Weijun, in the first months of negotiation, was already kicked out of meetings. 11 Japanese warships sailed along Yangtze to exert pressure. Additional Japanese troops were sent to Shandong Peninsula. By the afternoon of May 7th, Japanese minister-envoy delivered an ultimatum to Lu Zhengxiang, claiming that Japanese navy was "pulling arrows full on the bows". On May 25th 1915, Japan forced China into signing a secret agreement which was to incorporate majority of "Twenty One Demands" raised previously. On May 25th 1915, Yuan Shi-kai accepted nine clauses among Japan's 21 demands [in exchange for Japan's acknowledgement of Yuan Shikai's coming imperial enthronement - doubted by Tang Degang] as well as mutual ratifications of document in regards to Shandong Peninsula. Tang Degang pointed out that Clause 5 was deleted from 21 demands whereas Japan's demand of massive immigration was also mitigated. (Tang Degang pointed out that Yuan Shikai faced the same scenario as Chiang Kai-shek at the time of [Sept 18th 1931 Japanese Invasion of Manchuria](#), around which time Tang Degang's whole class of students were sobbing after the teacher read aloud Chen Bulei-drafted "Chiang Kai-shek Open Letter To Chinese Nationals", i.e., "It is government's crime to have lost [the Chinese] statehood when it refuses to fight while still capable of fighting, and it is also government's crime to have lost statehood when it fights while incapable of fighting.")

After Second Revolution, Guomindang [KMT] split into two groups: fast advance faction and slow advance faction. The fast advance faction evolved into Sun Yat-sen's "*Zhonghua Geming Dang*" or Chinese Revolutionary Party in Japan in 1914, while the slow advance faction would be 'European War Research Society' headed by Lin Hu and Xiong Kewu.

When Japan proposed Twenty-one Demands to Yuan Shi-kai in 1915, KMT senior leaders, like Huang Xing, Chen Jiongming, Bai Wenwei, Niu Yongjian, Li Liejun & Zhang Shizhao, called upon KMT members to stop revolution against Yuan Shi-kai in face of Japanese attempt at enslaving China. Members of 'European War Research Society' in Japan and USA accused Sun Yat-sen of assisting Japanese government in causing troubles to Yuan Shi-kai's government, and went further to make an analogy of Sun Yat-sen's anti-Manchu activities in Japan during the course of 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War.

Per JYJ, Sun Yat-sen had always upheld the agenda of 'quelling internal enemies before expelling external invaders'. As shown in his policy difference with Huang Xing etc, Sun Yat-sen called on revolutionaries to oppose Yuan Shi-kai's treachery rather than unite behind Yuan Shi-kai for a concerted struggle against Japan's 21 Demands. Jiang Yonggjing claimed that Huang Xing and Zhang Shizhao finally realized that Sun Yat-sen possessed extraordinary foresight after Yuan Shi-kai accepted Japan's Twenty-one Demands. However, Scholar Yuan Weishi pointed out that Huang Xing etc had published Sun Yat-sen's letter to Japanese prime minister in which Sun Yat-sen, likening China's importance to Japan in the same fashion as India to Britain, had sought an alliance with Japan by accusing Yuan Shi-kai of faking friendliness with Japan. Tang Degang claimed that Yuan Shikai's warding off seven demands in Clause 5 should be considered a Chinese victory. Lu Keng, who interviewed Lu Zhengxiang [who went into a Catholic monastery in 1928 after his Belgian wife passed away] in Belgium after Germany's surrender in 1945, also pointed out that Lu Zhengxiang, having just returned from Europe and patriotically thinking it was an important matter to defend China, had volunteered to take the lead for the negotiations in regards to "21 demands" after Sun Baoqi expressed wish to be out of it. Lu Zhengxiang, knowing that he could be cursed by countrymen for the rest of life, had claimed that he had managed to defray No. 5 Clause. Tang Degang cited Japanese internal records to prove that Chinese ministers did defend the baseline persistently.

Hu Qiuyuan biographical memoirs stated that China's intellectuals had undertaken three roads to counter Japan's 21 demands, i.e., i) going to Southwestern China for "republic restoration" or to Canton for Sun Yat-sen's military government and "extraordinary session of the Parliament"; ii) launching "[New Culture Movement](#)"; and iii) devoting to populace education. Hu Kangmin, i.e., Hu Qiuyuan's father, belonged to the last category by accepting the post of president of Huangpi County Education Board.