

IX

THE MONGOLIAN MILITARY GOVERNMENT MAY 1936 - OCTOBER 1937

Establishment of the Mongolian Military Government

After the congress elected the chairman and vice chairmen of the Mongolian Military Government, Prince De went to Bat-khaalag and the residence of Prince Yon, together with several delegates of the congress, to present a certificate of election to Prince Yon and ask for his instructions. Prince Yon explained that he was well along in years and in bad health, and therefore unable to assume so heavy a responsibility. He did say, however, that he was gratified by the support of the delegates and hoped that the people at the congress would join together and work for common goals. Prince Yon especially hoped that Prince De would assume more responsibility for these tasks. Since Prince De and his group received the support of Prince Yon and Prince So, and had no way to establish contact with Prince Shagdurjab in Yekejuu, Prince De was made the general director of the military government in the names of Chairman Yondonwangchug and Deputy Chairman Sodnamrabdan and authorized to carry out the tasks of the new government.

After the congress in Ujumuchin approved the organization of the government and the election of its chairman and deputy chairmen and received promise of Japanese support for Mongolian independence and national construction, Prince De was able to carry on with the preliminary tasks of establishing the Mongolian Military Government. He first moved the personnel and facilities of the headquarters of the Mongolian Army from Sunid to Jabsar. On May 12, 1936, the Mongolian Military Government was formally established in Dehua, and it began to use the number of years since Temujin became Chinggis Khan (1206) for its official calendar; thus 1936 was year 731 under the new calendar.

The government also created a new national flag with a canton of three stripes—red, yellow, and white—against a field of blue. The blue represented the color of heaven, a symbol of traditional Mongolian veneration for *Mongke Tenggeri*, or the everlasting heaven. Blue is also the national color of the Mongol people, who sometimes call themselves the *Koke Monggol*, or Blue Mongols. Red represented fire, a symbol of holiness and prosperity. Yellow represented the Mongolian religious faith in *Shira-yin Shashin*, or the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Yellow is also a symbol of the fullness of Buddhism. White, according to Mongolian tradition, symbolizes holiness and abundance. Thus this flag symbolized the unification of the Mongol people under the light of Buddhism to enjoy holiness, abundance, and prosperity forever and ever. Prince De designed this flag himself, aided by Prince Khorjurjab, a learned Mongolian elder. No Japanese were involved. Later, some Japanese claimed that the red stripe represented Japanese leadership, but this was baseless.

Attending the ceremony of the formation of the Mongolian Military Government along with Prince De were the Mongolian dignitaries Wu Heling, Li Shouxin, Jodbajab,

Buyandalai, and others. Japanese participants were the deputy chief of staff of the Guangdong Army, Imamura Toyojiro; Lieutenant Colonel Tanaka Ryukichi; head of the Dehua Special Service Office, Tanaka Hisashi; chief Japanese advisor to the Mongolian military government, Muratani Hikojiro; and other Japanese advisors; and the representative of Manchukuo, Yuchun. In his address, Prince De emphasized that the goal of the Military Government was to enlarge the military forces in preparation for construction of a Mongolian nation. He continued by affirming that all Mongols were unified under the assistance of the friendly nation, Japan, and were marching together toward their common goal. In his address, Imamura emphasized Japanese-Mongolian friendship and congratulated the Mongols on their success in establishing the Mongolian Military Government. Yuchun first read the congratulatory telegram from the Manchukuo Emperor Puyi and then emphasized the friendly relations existing between Japan, Manchukuo, and Mongolia.

At this point, a short introduction to Muratani and Yuchun would be helpful. Muratani Hikojiro was born in Iwate-ken and graduated from the Tokyo Imperial University. After the Manchurian Incident in 1931, he was assigned as an official to Manchukuo, where he became acquainted with Itagaki Seishiro. At the time of the foundation of the Mongolian Military Government, Itagaki introduced Muratani as the chief advisor to the Mongolian Military Government. Muratani was faithful and elegant, and never as arrogant and overbearing as other Japanese "advisors." While dealing with the Mongols, he was always sincere and ingenuous. Because he was also quite sympathetic to the Mongol demand for independence, he was able to win the confidence of Prince De and later of Prince Sung. Some Mongols even called him *Yeke bagshi*, or "Great Teacher." In times of conflict between the Japanese and Mongols, he usually tried to mediate and iron things out. Nevertheless, because he was trusted by the Mongols, the Japanese military regarded him as unzealous in carrying out Japanese objectives. As a consequence he later lost his position as chief advisor. He remained part of the entourage of Prince De until the end of World War II.

Yuchun was a Mongol whose ancestors had lived in the Zhenjiang district south of the Yangzi River. Yuchun and the other Zhenjiang Mongols had been sinicized early on but retained Mongolian nationalistic aspirations. In 1928, when the Mongolian Delegation first arrived in Nanjing, the Zhenjiang Mongols invited members of the delegation to Zhenjiang and showed them their genealogies. The earlier portions of these documents had been written in Mongolian, but the later portions in Chinese. After his attendance at the ceremony marking the establishment of the Mongolian Military Government as the Manchukuo delegate, Yuchun had been permanently assigned as the Manchukuo delegate to Mongolia. In spite of this, he always thought of himself as a Mongol, sometimes deliberately leaking information from the Japanese to Prince De and other trusted Mongol friends. Probably for this reason he was transferred to another post in Manchukuo when the Mongolian Allied Autonomous Government was founded in Kalgan in 1939. He resigned, however, rather than take this new position, remaining instead in Mongolia.

The establishment of the General Headquarters of the Mongolian Army and the Mongolian Military Government did not satisfy the Mongolian desire for real independence. This issue had earlier caused a split in the Mongolian Political Council, and prompted some of the council's earlier supporters to leave. The Military Government's establishment was nonetheless a very exciting and heartening event for the Mongolian intellectuals and military personnel in Manchukuo. These Mongols saw it as a step toward Mongolian independence. Under the slogan of "Japanese-Mongolian-Manchukuo

friendship and cooperation," many of them went to Mongolia and openly worked toward that goal. Many Mongols left Manchukuo for Jabsar so as to work with Prince De. Among them were Jirgalang, Kogjintei, and others who later became quite active and influential in western Inner Mongolia.

Jirgalang (De Gulai), a Dahur Mongol of the eastern Budkha area, had originally studied at Beiping Normal University. He later went to Japan, where he graduated from the Nagasaki Commercial College. In 1931, at the outbreak of the "Manchurian Incident," Jirgalang and other Mongolian youth organized a Mongolian military force and carried out various activities for Mongolian national construction. Soon, because of the Guandong Army's decision to establish Manchukuo and not allow the Mongols within Manchukuo to be active in any separatist movement, this military force was disbanded under Japanese pressure. After the establishment of Manchukuo and the formation of the Kinggan General Bureau (for Mongolian administration), Jirgalang was assigned as an official in this bureau. He was soon transferred to his native land, to the newly established office in Kinggan Eastern Province. After the Mongolian Military Government was established, Jirgalang quit his job and went to Jabsar. He was careful and prudent, very well versed in Japanese language and literature, and deeply appreciated by Prince De. Out of jealousy, Togtakhu fabricated some unfounded charges of "errors of thought" against Jirgalang and reported him to the Japanese. Kogjintei was also a Budkha man who knew some Japanese. After Kogjintei's arrival, Prince De appointed him as his secretary. Because of this, Togtakhu no longer needed to do all the translation and interpretation, much to the relief of those who disliked him.

Another man, Ihengge, was a rich conservative of the Tumed Left Banner of the Josotu League. In his early days, he joined the Loyalist Party (*Zongshedang*) of the Manchu Prince Su and worked for the restoration of the Manchu monarchy. Later, he cooperated with the well-known "Mongol bandit" Babujab and struggled for the restoration of the Manchus. He always felt unhappy about the establishment of the Republic of China. Later, when Manchukuo was established, he viewed Puyi as nothing more than a puppet, and was greatly disappointed. Naturally, he responded to Prince De's call and mobilized the militant youth of his Josotu League area on the side of Prince De.

Bayanoljei, a Tumed Right Banner man from the Josotu League, was the fourth son of Prince Gungbujab. As a young man, he was recognized as a *khubilgan* (reincarnation) and designated as an abbot of the great lamasery in the city of Gurban-Subraga (Chaoyang). He was commonly known as "the fourth living Buddha." After his father's death, because all his elder brothers had passed away during their youth, his younger brother Chinbudorji succeeded to the position of *jasag* of his banner. So when he received news that Prince De was establishing a military force, he shed his religious robe, took up a gun, and recruited those young Mongols in his neighborhood who did not want to serve Manchukuo to come and give military service to Prince De.

The career and activities of Wu Guting have been discussed in earlier chapters and will not be covered in detail here. At the time of the founding of the Mongolian Military Government, he was already assigned as commander of the Western Kinggan Garrison forces. When he heard the news of the military government's founding, he gathered his old followers in the Western Kinggan Garrison Forces and joined in Prince De's activities.

Once the core personnel had arrived, Prince De was able to make key appointments for the Mongolian Military Government. Acting as chairman of that government, he made Buyandalai head of the Department of Administration, Wu Heling the head of the Consultative Board, Li Shouxin head of the Military Staff Board, Sodnamnorbu head

of the Internal Affairs Bureau, Altanochir (Jin Yongchang) head of the Bureau of Education, Tegshibuyan head of the Military Affairs Bureau, Jirgalang head of the Bureau of Finance, Bayantai head of the Bureau of Communication and Transportation, Wang Chingsan head of the Bureau of Industry, Temurbolod head of the Judiciary Bureau, and Togtakhu head of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs. Soon, Altanochir was designated as the delegate to the newly established Mongolian Delegates Office in Manchukuo and Khorjurjab was assigned as head of the Bureau of Education.

Although these appointments were made at the behest of Prince De, they nonetheless deferred to Japanese desires. For example, Wu Heling made great contributions at the First Mongolian Conference in Ujumuchin, and even authored the organization document of the Military Government. Although the Japanese military recognized Wu Heling's prestige and capability, they still did not dare to trust him, and of course would not assent to his being the head of the Department of Administration. Prince De, taking advantage of this situation, made Buyandalai, his most trusted confidant, the head of the Department of Administration to administer all the affairs of the Military Government. Altanochir, Bayantai, and Togtakhu, who had special relationships with the Guandong Army and possessed the titles of "consultant," were made heads of the bureaus. This move suggests that the Guandong Army had considerable influence in selecting these appointees. Togtakhu's assignment as head of the Foreign Affairs Bureau was especially pushed by Tanaka Ryukichi.

Sodnamnorbu was the *jasag* of the Abkhanar Right Banner of the Shilingol League, and Temurbolod the *amban* of the Shangdu Banner and vice head of the Chahar League; both men were regional representatives. Li Shouxin's assignment as head of the Military Staff Board was merely to satisfy Li's personal ambitions for political position. At any rate, both the Consultative and Military Staff Boards were organizations with no real power. Of the above-mentioned persons, most were from eastern Inner Mongolia: five from the Josotu League; three from the Kharachin Right Banner. The Mongols of Eastern Inner Mongolia had greatly supported Prince De's activities in establishing the military government.

These appointments had advantages and drawbacks. They attracted the people of eastern Inner Mongolia, who were more zealous for Mongolian independence and more dissatisfied with the Japanese administration of Manchukuo, to come and fight alongside Prince De for true Mongolian independence. On the other hand, because an unqualified person such as Togtakhu was appointed to a high position, several more competent and qualified persons in eastern Inner Mongolia refused to join with Prince De. For instance, Wang Chingsan, a man from the Surug Banner and a graduate of the Civil Engineering School of the Imperial Hokkaido University, even resigned his post as head of the Bureau of Industry and returned to Manchukuo.

In order to accelerate the work of his newly established government, Prince De appointed Li Shouxin, Buyandalai, Wu Heling, and Togtakhu as assistants of the general director; Chogbagatur as assistant to the head of the Internal Affairs Bureau; and Jirgalang (from Jerim League) as assistant to the head of the Bureau of Education. These last two appointments helped Sodnamnorbu and Khorjurjab, who had no knowledge of the Chinese language. The prince also appointed Wu Guting as the chief of staff of the new army. Wu retained this position until 1944. An office for personal secretaries and aides-de-camp was also established, and Prince De appointed Saijirakhu as head of this office.

Once the military government was established, more Japanese advisors, such as Muratani Hikojiro, Yamamoto Nobunaga, Nakajima Manzo, Seikizawa Okichi, and others appeared. This was the first time that Japanese "advisors" were formally involved in a

Mongolian government that symbolized central authority.

Organization of the Mongolian Army

After establishing the Mongolian Military Government, Prince De actively worked to achieve a stronger military force. He organized Li Shouxin's former troops, the newly recruited volunteers from eastern Inner Mongolia, and conscripts from the Chahar and Shilingol Leagues into two armies, nine divisions, and two artillery companies. Following the establishment of the General Headquarters of the Mongolian Army, Li Shouxin was appointed as commander of the First Army, and Prince De made himself commander of the Second Army. The First Army was composed of four divisions and one artillery company: the First Division, led by Liu Jiguang; the Second Division, by Yin Baoshan; the Third Division, by Wang Zhenhua; the Fourth Division, by Buyandelger; and the artillery company, by Ding Qichang. The Second Army was also made up of four divisions and one artillery company, together with a garrison division. Ihengge was appointed as the head of the Fifth Division, Buyanoljei as head of the sixth, Mugdenbuu as head of the seventh, Sayanbayar as head of the eighth, Wang Yunwu as head of the artillery company, and Shonodondub as commander of the garrison division. In addition, a military police unit was formed, with Namur as its head. Wu Guting was appointed as chief of staff over both armies; Liu Xinghan (a Chinese) was appointed as deputy chief of staff.

The First, Second, and Third divisions of the First Army were all old followers of Li Shouxin; some were his old bandit comrades-in-arms, and some were followers of his former superior, Cui Xingwu. The backgrounds of these troops were diverse and complex, and they were all Chinese. Only the Fourth Division recruited Mongols, mainly from the Josotu and Juu-uda Leagues. The Second Army, under Prince De's command, was composed only of Mongolian troops. Recruited mostly from eastern Inner Mongolia, these troops were really the core of Prince De's military efforts to achieve independence for Inner Mongolia. The Seventh Division soldiers were conscripted from the Chahar League, and all garrison soldiers were conscripts from the Shilingol League.

Sainbayar recruited the Eighth Division; most of these soldiers had been "Mongolian bandits" and were very undisciplined, although they were accustomed to fighting. Their morale and nationalistic aspirations were high. One brigade of the Eighth Division was associated with one division head named Hei He, or Black River, the notorious "Mongolian Bandit," the "Bearded Bandit," or the "Bandit on Horseback." This brigade soon gained a reputation for being formidable and fond of battle, but the attitudes of its men tended to create ethnic hatred and tensions between Mongol soldiers and Chinese.

The head of the military police unit, Liu Jianhua, was a Heilongjiang Chinese disguised as a Mongol named Namur. Because of his capabilities and loyalty to Prince De, he was able to win the confidence of De and become head of the military police unit. It was during this period that Liu Jianhua joined the secret intelligence organization of the Blue Shirt Brigade of the KMT, which later developed into the core of the Chinese government's intelligence network. This was told to me later by Liu himself after the government had withdrawn to Taiwan.

At that time, the highest rank in the army was lieutenant general, a rank held only by Li Shouxin, Sainbayar, and Shonodondub. All division heads were major generals. When Saijirakhu was made a major general because he was the head of the office of *aides-de-camp*, many military men became angry.

All the Mongolian military forces were cavalry; each division comprised roughly twelve hundred men, although not all divisions were at full strength. Support and supplies for these armies were provided by the Japanese Guandong Army, which gave the Japanese considerable influence over the Mongolian military, especially over the First Army under Li Shouxin's command. The Second Army, under Prince De's own direction, retained a degree of autonomy, but this was taken away by the Japanese in 1938, when a new general headquarters of the Mongolian Army was established and Li Shouxin was named the commander in chief.

Prince De had a great interest in military affairs. Before the Inner Mongolian autonomy movement, he had already formed a garrison drawn from Ude and Pangjiang and a student brigade in Sunid. He had also negotiated with the Military Committee of the Chinese government to establish a branch of the Chinese government's Military Officers Academy in Mongolia. These negotiations ended in failure, however. In 1936, when the Mongolian Army was founded, he established the Mongolian Military Officers Academy and made himself director of the academy. He selected youth from each of the divisions to be trained at the academy as cadres of the military forces. It was modeled after Chiang Kai-shek's Whampoa Military Academy.

The Mongolian Military Government, because its relations with the Chinese government and Fu Zuoyi were tense, and also because its internal affairs had to be attended to, was unable to administer the banners. The *xians* in the Chahar League also did not attract any attention from the Mongolian leaders. The Japanese advisors in these *xians* consequently assumed the positions of *xian* magistrates, and the Chinese *xian* magistrates became nothing more than advisors to their Japanese leaders.

The new government was placed in the town of Jabsar. Because of Jabsar's importance, Li Shouxin was appointed mayor of this city; Li's close friend Burinbiligtu (Zhang Zirong) was appointed vice mayor and assumed the duties of the mayoralty.

Japan's Westward Advance

The heavy snows of the winter of 1935 were disastrous to Shilingol, parts of Chahar and Ulanbair, part of Hulunbuir in Manchukuo, and parts of Outer Mongolian territory. In Shilingol, about eighty percent of the animals froze to death, and almost all transportation was cut off. The establishment of the General Headquarters of the Mongolian Army provided the Suiyuan authorities with a good excuse to declare a boycott on grain sales to areas under Japanese influence. The flow of provisions from Khongortu and Ulaankhua was severed. This threatened the people of the western Shilingol banners with starvation and also provided the Japanese with good political propaganda. In addition to economic support from Japan and Manchukuo, the Japanese encouraged grain exports to Mongolia from the areas of Tuquan, Kailu, Lindong, Linxi, and Jingpeng. These actions ensured popularity for the Japanese among the Mongol people.

The formation of the Mongolian Military Government and Prince De's new openness in establishing closer ties with the Japanese opened the door for the Japanese to carry out their westward expansion. In the summer of 1936, the Guandong Army established a Special Service office in Beile-yin sume and appointed Morishima Kadofusa as the head of this office, with Nakajima Manzo as his assistant. The Japanese sent two agents disguised as students of Mongolian literature and Buddhism to be stationed at the temple of Mergen-juu in the Urad Front Banner. This temple had been the focal point of conflict between Prince De and Fu Zuoyi ever since the outbreak of the Prince Shi Inci-

dent.

The appearance of these two agents aroused intense feelings in Mergen-juu. Shirabdorji (Prince Shi) used their appearance as a pretext to ask Wang Jingguo (a general under Yan Xishan's domination) to dispatch troops. These Chinese soldiers arrived disguised as Peace Preservation troops from the Urad Front Banner. They attacked the temple and slaughtered the families of Shirabdorji's Mongolian political opponents. However, *Mergen Gegeen* escaped death. The two Japanese agents were captured and forwarded to Baotou, where they were immediately released by the Chinese authorities. The Mongols murdered by Wang Jingguo's forces were not even mentioned by the Chinese. This indicates that (1) the Suiyuan authorities had no way to stop the Japanese from moving westward; (2) the Chinese were still powerful and brutal enough to deal with the Mongols; and (3) because Prince De had no real power to protect those who were on his side, his prestige was damaged. Some short-sighted Mongol leaders turned toward Fu Zuoyi for protection.

Diplomatic Activities of the Mongolian Military Government

After settling at least some of his internal problems, Prince De started his diplomatic activities. His first step was to visit Manchukuo under arrangements made by the Guandong Army. In June, Prince De and Li Shouxin, Wu Heling, Jodbajab, Altanochir, and Togtakhu went to Xinjing, the capital of Manchukuo. They first visited the headquarters of the Guandong Army and talked with its chief of staff, Itagaki Seishiro, regarding the Guandong Army's continued assistance to the Mongolian Military Government in carrying out its task of national construction. Following this, they visited the Manchukuo government and had talks with Prime Minister Zhang Jinghui, Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Yanqing, Minister of Military Affairs Yu Shenzheng, and Minister of Mongolian Administration Chimedampil. In order to arrange a meeting with Puyi, they visited with the minister of the Imperial Household, Xiqia.

These ceremonial visits were followed by talks on the subject of the Manchu-Mongol Agreement. The Mongol participants were the general director of the Mongolian Military Government, Prince De and Togtakhu. Manchukuo was represented by the minister of Foreign Affairs, Zhang Yanqing, and the vice minister of Foreign Affairs, Ohashi Chuichi. Tanaka Ryukichi and Senda represented the Guandong Army. This agreement concerned the establishment of a military alliance, the fostering of economic cooperation, making a common cause against communism, and the exchange of diplomats. Although the two sides had some divergent views, the army encouraged them to reach an agreement. Ohashi Chuichi, an ambitious Japanese diplomat, argued with Prince De over the amount of military assistance to be given by Manchukuo's army to Mongolia. Yet this argument did not damage their mutual respect and friendship.

During this visit, Prince De had an audience with "Emperor" Puyi. Because he met with Puyi alone, rumors about the protocol of this audience began to circulate. Toward the end of the Manchu dynasty, Puyi's relationship with Prince De was basically that of lord to vassal. After the Republic of China was established, this feudalistic relationship should have been abolished, but within the conservative Mongolian society of the Mongolian princes, this kind of time-honored relationship still existed. At this time, Prince De was representing Mongolia as an independent country, one on an equal footing with Manchukuo. Nevertheless, when Prince De met with his old lord, he submitted to him and then told Puyi what was in his heart. In his book *The First Half of My Life* (Wode

qianbansheng), Puyi had the following to say about Prince De.

After the Lingsheng Incident, my interview with Prince De created another greater anxiety for me. Prince De is Demchugdongrob of the Mongolian Military Government established under Japanese manipulation. Originally, Demchugdongrob was one of the Mongolian ruling princes. While I was in Tianjin, he presented me with a lot of money and gave excellent horses to [my younger brother] Pujie. In many ways he was sincerely loyal to me. This time, he had some business with the Guandong Army. Taking advantage of this opportunity to gain the permission of the commander in chief of the Guandong Army, he came to visit me. He talked to me about his experiences during the past few years culminating with the establishment of the military government, but implied that the Japanese were exercising too much control and that the Guandong Army made many promises to him which it did not fulfill. Demchugdongrob felt most uncomfortable about his inability to make his own decisions. His words brought forth my own complaints, because persons with common plights have similar abilities to pity each other. I comforted him.

This suggests that during the four months between the founding of the General Headquarters of the Mongolian Army and Prince De's visit with Puyi, Prince De had already grown suspicious of Japanese promises.

During this visit, Puyi, conferred upon Prince De the honorary rank of *Wude Qinwang*, or "Prince of Military Virtue," an honor afterward greatly mocked by Wu Heling. Wu pointed out that Prince De's subservience to Puyi was a disgrace to all Mongols. "You claim to devote yourself to Mongolian independence and national construction. Then how could you have kowtowed to a foreign sovereign? In what position does this put Mongolia? Conferring of a title from him to you was nothing but an attempt to make Mongolia subordinate to him." These words made Prince De realize that Wu Heling was correct, and as a result, he never used the title conferred by Puyi.

Later, when people asked De to write his name in calligraphy, he usually wrote *De Qinwang*, or "First-Ranking Prince De." Again, Wu Heling mocked him by saying, "The Chinese character *qin* in *qinwang* means that a person with this title has especially close relations with the emperor. It means 'intimate' and 'trusted.' If in your signature you use the character *qin*, you express that you are a subordinate of a lord with superior power. That is, you recognize that above you there is an emperor! Do you feel that this is respectable?" Prince De, realizing his mistake, later eliminated the character *qin* from his signature and merely used *De Wang*, or "Prince De," instead. This is one example of how accommodating Prince De was, even when he was being mocked. These things were told me by Wu Heling.

Through these negotiations, both the Mongols and the Manchukuo government agreed to establish delegations in the government center of each country. Manchukuo dispatched Yuchun as its delegate to be stationed at Dehua, and the Mongols sent Altanochir as their delegate to be stationed at Xinjing. Inside sources said that Altanochir was assigned because Prince De and Wu Heling suspected him of pro-Japanese leanings; they therefore wanted to isolate him in Xinjing. On the other hand, Altanochir was a man with great political experience. He was fluent in Japanese, and also enjoyed cordial relations with the Japanese military. All these attributes made Togtakhu jealous of Altanochir and eager to see him depart from the center of Mongolian politics.

The second diplomatic accomplishment of the Mongolian Military Government was an agreement with the Eastern Hebei (*Jidong*) regime. This agreement was signed by Togtakhu, head of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs, and Yin Rugeng, head of the Eastern Hebei Autonomous Government. This pro-Japanese political regime was the result of the

withdrawal of the Chinese troops from eastern Hebei province, according to the agreement signed by Generals He Yingqin and Umeizu Yoshijiro on June 10, 1935. Because of this, local Peace Preservation troops were assigned to this buffer zone, and Yin Rugeng was sent by the Chinese government to administer this special area. By the end of 1935, the Japanese military took advantage of the changing situation in North China and the establishment of the Hebei-Chahar Political Affairs Council. With the approval of Yin Rugeng, the Japanese made this "special zone" even more "special." The Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government was established in Tongzhou (fifteen kilometers east of Beiping), and Yin Rugeng was made the head of this government. Through this Mongol-Eastern Hebei Agreement, Yin Rugeng provided one million *yuan* in support of the Mongolian Military Government.

The Death of Prince So and Prince De's Subsequent Ties with Nanjing

After his visit to Manchukuo, Prince De devoted himself to establishing a military force. Although recruitment in eastern Inner Mongolia was easy, conscription in the ten banners of Shilingol proved difficult. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Mongolian military institutions were merely for show. Now, conscription was abruptly instituted, evoking great opposition, especially in the Ujumuchin Banner, where the population was large and conscription was disproportionately burdensome.

Moreover, Prince So and his colleagues in the Ujumuchin Banner were hostile to the Japanese and were very unhappy at the idea of conscription. Some of the banner leaders directed their anger toward the retired *tusalagchi*, Togtakhu, who was ill in bed at his home and who had supported Prince De ever since the beginning of the autonomy movement. Duchingge, the officer of the banner forces, led an assassination attempt against Togtakhu at his house. Because Togtakhu was informed of this plot beforehand, he escaped. The group headed by Duchingge then went to the princely residence to demand that Prince So arrest Togtakhu and punish him. At this time, Prince So's health had deteriorated because of worry about the Japanese invasion. Nevertheless, he was able to calm the rebels and prevent bloodshed. He died soon afterward. Later, even after Prince De became the most powerful figure in western Inner Mongolia, he did not attempt to punish Duchingge—further evidence of his magnanimity.

The death of Prince So made Prince De the head of the Shilingol League. In all of western Inner Mongolia, now that Prince So was gone, nobody dared to openly refuse to cooperate with the Japanese. After Prince So's death, the Nanjing government's influence in the Shilingol League was almost completely eliminated. After news of Prince So's death arrived in Nanjing, the Chairman of the Chinese government, Lin Sen; the Head of the Executive Yuan, Chiang Kai-shek; and the heads of the other yuans issued a formal order to praise Prince So:

The Head of the Shilingol League and the Chairman of the Mongolian Local Autonomous Political Affairs Council, Sodnamrabdan, directed the administration of leagues and banners for years. He was brilliant and competent, and his reputation was great. In recent years, he protected the Mongolian territory with an unbending will and the utmost loyalty. These [attributes] should be lauded. Now, with his passing, we must express our deepest condolences. . . . It is necessary to discuss his merit in order to glorify him for his loyalty and effort as an example for future emulation.

These words make apparent the Chinese government's admiration of Prince So. Prince So's resolute anti-Japanese stance was also praised by the Chinese government.

Prince De's succession to the headship of the Shilingol League was according to precedent. Although the Mongolian Military Government had been established, relations between the Nanjing government and this group of Inner Mongolian leaders still had not been completely severed. On July 17, 1936, the Chinese government appointed Prince De as chairman of the new Chahar Mongolian Political Council, and Rinchinwangdud and Jodbajab as vice chairmen. However, in reality, this Chahar Provincial Mongolian Political Council was never established. These appointments indicate that the Chinese government knew something about Prince De's activities. Even though the Chinese government was aware of his activities, it still appointed him to these posts, to emphasize that until Prince De formally severed relations with the central government, Nanjing would still like to continue its nominal and tension-reducing ties with Inner Mongolia. For the same reasons, Prince De also did not reject these appointments.

During August of 1936, while the universities in Beiping were on vacation, I went to Dehua. Before leaving, I visited with Professor Tao Xisheng of Beiping University and told him that I was going back to Inner Mongolia to visit with Prince De. My reason for the visit was that at the time of the autonomy movement, I had accompanied the professor to visit Huang Shaohong and explained to Huang the desires of the Mongolian students concerning Mongolian autonomy. By 1936, the college students in Beiping were generally very antigovernment because Nanjing was not resisting Japanese aggression. However, Professor Tao, because of his personal connections with the Nanjing government, was able to calm the students. This is why I told him that I was going to Inner Mongolia. Professor Tao said to me, "You might as well ask Prince De whether he still has any hopes of collaboration with the central government."

After I arrived in Dehua and visited Prince De, I asked Professor Tao's question. Prince De did not give a direct answer but said, "I will let Wu Heling tell you." Before I returned to Beiping, Wu Heling told me, "After discussing the matter, both Prince De and I agree that we hope that the central government will take a stronger stance against the Japanese. If so, it will still be possible for us to check the Japanese aggression and act as a buffer. If the central government remains soft on Japanese aggression, then there will be no way for us to delay the Japanese westward advances."

When I returned to Beiping, I related all this to Professor Tao and asked him to tell the KMT authorities. However, the government did not respond to these words. The situation in Prince De's camp was clear: Prince De wanted Mongolia to maintain a distance from the Sino-Japanese confrontation and use the breathing space thereby created to help the cause of Mongolian independence.

Japan's Further Westward Movement and Conflict with Suiyuan

Once the army organization began to become efficient, Prince De carried out the first military review since the establishment of the Mongolian Army. He also invited General Itagaki Seishiro to come and observe. After the review, Itagaki flew to the Yekejuu League to meet with Prince Shagdurbaj, and then went to Alashan to visit with Prince Damzana. However, Itagaki was unable to forge any agreement with these leaders. Nevertheless, the Japanese military established Special Service Offices in Dingyuaning, Alashan, and the princely residence of Ejine. This evoked great concern among the local people. Damzana, the *jasag* of Alashan, originally had great hopes for the Mongolian

Political Council and felt benevolent toward Prince De, but after his delegate returned from the Mongolian Congress at Ujumuchin and Damzana heard of the Japanese interference in Mongolian affairs, he became very anti-Japanese. Not only did this make it impossible for Itagaki to persuade Damzana to cooperate, but it also caused him to isolate the Japanese Special Service offices from his people. Soon the Ejine Banner followed the pattern of Alashan. The Special Service office in Ejine was burned down, and the Japanese withdrew.

After the Mongolian Army was organized, the Guandong Army pushed its "Mongolian work" westward. The army assigned Tanaka Ryukichi as the head of the Dehua Special Service Office to replace Tanaka Hisashi. After his arrival, Tanaka Ryukichi pushed the Mongolian Military Government to take military action against Suiyuan. The Mongolian Army, especially its Second Army, having barely been trained and organized, was not ready for battle. As mentioned, Prince De did not want a military confrontation between the Chinese and Japanese to break out too quickly. When Wu Heling was leaving Nanjing, he received special instructions from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to delay the Japanese westward aggression. Wu Heling did secretly try to delay the Japanese westward advances.

To the Mongols, Tanaka Ryukichi was a barbaric, unreasonable, adventurous, and reckless man. Tanaka assumed that his personal relationship with Prince De and his efforts to drive Fu Zuoyi out of Suiyuan and establish Mongolian independence would make him welcomed and accepted by all the members of the Mongolian Military Government and that they would obey him unconditionally. However, Prince De did not express great support for Tanaka's plan. In a discussion with Prince De and others, Tanaka became greatly angered, and using derogatory language, declared that the Mongols were interested only in womanizing and eating meat and could not possibly achieve independence. The interpreter at this discussion was Togtakhu, and Tanaka's insulting words gradually became public knowledge. Those who heard about Tanaka's words realized that this was an open insult by the Japanese. The Mongol people also realized that this insult was the result of Mongol cooperation with the Japanese. This public enmity was the first negative Mongol response to Japanese involvement in Mongolian affairs since the beginning of the autonomy movement.

Seeing that Prince De and his camp were not convinced by his arguments, in order to achieve quick success, Tanaka altered his policy of sacrificing Mongol troops on the front lines and tried to organize Chinese troops to suffer that fate. He recruited three to four thousand bandits and irregular Chinese troops from Hebei and Chahar, placing them under the command of Wang Daoyi. In August, Tanaka concentrated Wang Daoyi's troops at Shangdu and rushed them to eastern Suiyuan, without any rest along the way, to attack Khonggortu (Honggeertu). These troops were, of course, thoroughly defeated. Wang Daoyi was assassinated by his own troops. Fu Zuoyi used this attack as grist for his propaganda mill, claiming that "twenty thousand bogus autonomous army troops invaded Taolin."

After the failure of this adventure, Tanaka Ryukichi again established contact with Wang Ying through the Japanese agents in Tianjin, and asked him to organize the *Da Han Yijun*, or the Great Chinese Upright Army. Wang Ying was the richest and greatest landlord in Suiyuan and also the most notorious bully.¹ After Fu Zuoyi began gov-

¹ Wang Ying's father, Wang Tongchun, was a one-eyed bandit and hence was known as "Wang the Blind." Near the end of the Manchu monarchy, Wang Tongchun arrived in the Great Bend of the Yellow River and began cultivation in Mongolian territory. Because of his natural knack for irriga-

erning Suiyuan, he pressured Wang Ying to be obedient. However, Wang would not submit to Fu and instead fled to the foreign concession in Tianjin. Secretly, however, Wang still was able to control the areas west of Baotou, the richest grain-producing area in Suiyuan, and to continue his defiance of Fu Zuoyi. While in Tianjin, the Japanese persuaded him to cooperate with Tanaka Ryukichi in an effort to topple Fu Zuoyi, to restore his own property, and to resume power over all of western Suiyuan.

Wang Ying soon gathered several thousand people, made himself the commander in chief of the Great Chinese Upright Army, and appointed Lei Zhongtian the vice commander.² To assure that the establishment of the Great Chinese Upright Army went very smoothly, Tanaka Ryukichi brought a man from Taiwan named Zhang to be a member of Wang Ying's staff. Zhang was the son-in-law of Ju Zheng, a senior official of the KMT. At the same time, Prince De was told by Tanaka that he would like to have Wang Ying's Great Chinese Upright Army fight on the front line and have the Mongolian Army fight on the second line. It was impossible for Prince De to refuse so modest a request. If Prince De had rejected this offer, Tanaka might have had Wang Ying carry out the entire war effort against Fu Zuoyi. Prince De feared that if this were allowed to happen, Wang Ying would conquer Suiyuan and become another Fu Zuoyi. Nevertheless, things did not develop as Prince De and Tanaka had planned. The troops under Prince De were eventually drawn into warfare with Fu Zuoyi, and Tanaka Ryukichi's plan proved a complete failure. Instead, Fu Zuoyi became the most admired hero in all of China for his monumental struggle against Japanese aggression.

With the end of the Rehe War, as it came to be called, it became evident that all Japanese diplomatic and military activities (the Shanhaiguan Incident, the He-Umezu Agreement, the Zhangbei Incident, the Doihara-Qin Dechun Agreement, etc.) had given Japan the upper hand, and Chinese forces had been forced to make retreat after retreat. The Hebei-Chahar Political Affairs Committee and the Eastern Hebei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government were then organized. Tanaka Ryukichi thought that if a military threat to Suiyuan materialized, Fu Zuoyi would possibly give in, thereby facilitating the Japanese occupation of Hohhot.

tion, all the land he put under cultivation had sufficient water and produced crops abundantly, and thus he became very wealthy. His wealth made it possible for him to establish close relations with corrupt Manchu and Mongol officials, especially the *jasag* and other officials of the Ordos Left Front (Jungar) Banner. Using anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiment prevalent in the area during the Boxer Rebellion, Wang Tongchun was able to get officials in the Jungar Banner area to kill those Christian Chinese settlers who were his opponents. (This information was drawn from an interview with Father Van Hecken in Schlid, Belgium, on July 18, 1980. Father Van Hecken had lived in the Ordos region for years.)

Later, because of the Treaty of 1901 between China and the Western Powers, the Mongol officials of the Jungar Banner were punished. Wang Tongchun, however, remained untouched. Soon afterward, the Manchu General Yigu arrived in Suiyuan. He used heavy-handed policies to force the Ulanhab and Yekejuu Leagues to open up their grazing fields to Chinese agricultural settlement. Wang Tongchun again established a personal relationship between Yigu and his followers to exploit Mongolian land and become wealthy. As the tyrant of the entire area, he exploited Mongol and Chinese alike. After Wang Tongchun's death, his son Wang Ying continued his hegemony over the area. After Fu Zuoyi expelled Wang Ying and confiscated most of the illegally obtained land of the Wang family, Wang Ying's sister remained in the area around the Great Bend of the Yellow River and carried on the Wang family enterprise.

² It has been said that while Wang Ying was recruiting troops, Song Zheyuan dressed a group of his Twenty-ninth Army men in civilian clothes and had them infiltrate Wang Ying's newly recruited army. Song had given orders to these men to eliminate Wang Ying at an opportune moment.

However, by this time, the situation in China had greatly changed. Both the government and the people felt that they had yielded enough to the Japanese; there was no more room for compromise. On November 10, 1936 Chiang Kai-shek telegraphed the foreign minister, Zhang Qun, saying "We must know that the integrity of our sovereignty over North China is the only key for the life or death, the existence or fall, of China. We must prepare for everything in order to readjust our nation-to-nation relations [with Japan]. No matter what the sacrifice, we will have no regrets."³ Moreover, Fu Zuoyi himself was a military man who had nowhere to retreat. He had no choice but to fight back. On the Mongolian side, Prince De and his followers had no confidence in Wang Ying and, of course, were not willing to shed Mongolian blood to help him. How could the Mongols fight alongside Wang Ying and his men?

In spite of this clash of opinions and interests, and the fact that the goals of the Mongols, Chinese, and Japanese were all different, the war against Suiyuan was inevitable because of the insistence of Tanaka Ryukichi. The final outcome was that Wang Ying and his Great Chinese Upright Army marched forward as the first-line of the attack on Honggeertu. The divisions of the First Army of the Mongolian Army under Li Shouxin's command stationed at Nanhaozhan and the divisions of the Second Army under the command of Prince De were deployed in the western part of Chahar to protect Dehua (Jabsar). Since there was no alternative to any of these actions, on November 5, Prince De had to stand up and issue an ultimatum to Fu Zuoyi in the name of the chairman of the Chahar Mongolian Political Council.

Three days later he received Fu Zuoyi's stern reply, thereby sparking the war.

The Battle Of Bat-Khaalag

At this point, Chiang Kai-shek sent a telegram to Prince De, in an attempt to persuade him to recall his forces lest they be quickly destroyed. Preparations were already underway, however, and could not be altered by a mere telegram. With Tanaka Ryukichi directing the Japanese forces, the Battle of Eastern Suiyuan soon broke out. Wang Ying's and Li Shouxin's troops gathered at Khonggortu (Honggeertu) and Nanhaozhan and marched on the city of Taolin. When Fu Zuoyi led his troops in a counter attack, both sides soon bogged down. On November 19, in an effort to break the deadlock, Wang Ying led his troops southward to attack Xinghe, where they were repelled by Fu Zuoyi's forces.

Just before this confrontation, Prince De ordered Mugdenbuu and the Seventh Division to take up positions at Beile-yin sume, in order to defend the temple from occupation. Tanaka tried to use Mugdenbuu's troops to help attack Hohhot from the north. He was supported by retired Japanese Colonel Obama Ujijoshi, Mugdenbuu's advisor. All this activity did was draw the Chinese toward Beile-yin sume. There were good reasons for this. First of all, it was the center of the Mongolian autonomy movement, and it was well-known throughout China. When the Japanese used Beile-yin sume as a base from which to attack Suiyuan, their actions took on great symbolic import, stirring the nationalistic conscience of the Chinese people. Second, an attack on Beile-yin sume would be important if it was effective; attacks on the central core of power tend to be more deci-

³ Qin Xiaoyi, ed., *Zhonghua Minguo Zhongguo shiliao chubian dui Ri kangzhan shiqi* (Preliminary collection of important historical materials of the Republic of China—the anti-Japanese war period), Taipei: The Kuomintang Historical Committee, 1981, vol. 3, p. 680.

sive than attacks on the peripheries, both strategically and psychologically. A psychological defeat would be more painful for the Mongols than a military one.

Prince De had no intention of turning Beile-yin sume into a military post. Prince Yondonwangchug was especially opposed to turning this famous religious center, long held holy by his banner, into a battlefield. Unfortunately, though, with the expansion of the war into Suiyuan, Beile-yin sume was soon engulfed in the conflict, and became the very center of the confrontation.

Amidst this already tense situation, both Yan Xishan and Fu Zuoyi began to plan their attack on Beile-yin sume. In their communications with Chiang Kai-shek, they repeatedly exaggerated the importance of the site, together with the scale of Japanese military movements and the power of "the Mongols, the false puppets, and the bandits" (*Meng, wei, fei*), as they called their opponents. Accordingly, Chiang ordered them to attack Beile-yin sume. In his telegram of November 16, Chiang told Yan that "[your] telegram of the 16th has been received. It is suggested that Governor Fu be ordered to carry out the occupation of Beile-yin sume immediately. It is also necessary to find the opportunity to attack in the direction of Shangdu. Since there are no diplomatic ramifications, you need not hesitate. In my opinion, there will be no stability for Suiyuan unless Beile-yin sume and Shangdu are occupied immediately."⁴

On the next day, November 17, Chiang Kai-shek went to Taiyuan to meet with Yan Xishan and discuss strategic procedures for this new movement. Tanaka Ryukichi and his fellow Japanese militarists had not foreseen such a move by the Chinese. In addition, the military authorities in Shanxi and Suiyuan clearly understood the situation of their opponents; they had especially accurate intelligence on Wang Ying's troops. However, they did not know the exact goals of the Guandong Army, and neither could they accurately foresee exactly how the battle would unfold. Despite this, Yan and Fu were confident of victory. In order to heighten national attention and win greater support from the government, as well as to boost their own prestige, Yan and Fu undertook a policy of blatantly exaggerated propaganda so as to inflate the sense of strategic threat. By so fooling the Nanjing authorities, they painted themselves as great national heroes.

On November 23, for example, Yan sent Chiang a telegram that read as follows: "Yesterday, a secret report was received. The Japanese are using airplanes, tanks and poison gas to help the false bandit troops. If this does not achieve their goal, [Japan] will send its regular army into the war, with the intention of occupying Suiyuan and northern Shanxi. As a precaution, I would like to ask Your Excellency to arrange for 50,000 troops to be stationed at a strategic locale. Please send your instructions." Chiang soon replied, "I will gather enough troops to prepare to meet the situation. Do not be concerned."⁵ By this time, units of the Chinese central government's armies were already forward positioned in Shanxi and Suiyuan. They were under the nominal control of Yan Xishan, vice chairman of the Military Committee, though in fact they were under the actual control of Chen Cheng. As for the allusion to tanks, airplanes, and poison gas, it was a complete fabrication of Yan's, made in order to exaggerate the power of the enemies he faced.

With the Battle of Eastern Suiyuan deadlocked, Fu Zuoyi received instructions to prepare an attack on Beile-yin sume. On the evening of November 23, a brigade under the command of Sun Lanfeng of Fu Zuoyi's 35th Army, marched forward from Wuchuan, together with the Seventh Division under Wang Jingguo. The Shanxi troops under Zhao Chengshuo headed from Guyang to Beile-yin sume. The Seventh Division of the

⁴ Ibid, pp. 680-1.

⁵ Ibid, p. 683.

Mongolian Army, under the command of Mugdenbuu, was caught off guard by the Chinese advance and, outnumbered, was forced to retreat. During the resulting chaos, the monks in the temple escaped. The Japanese advisors, together with members of the Special Service Office, fled northeast with Mugdenbuu. By dawn, Fu Zuoyi's forces had occupied Beile-yin sume, the center of the Mongolian autonomy movement. This so-called "Great Victory of Bailingmiao" was greatly exaggerated in the Chinese press.

The Battle of Bailingmiao was the first real Chinese victory against Japanese or Japanese-dominated forces since the Manchurian Incident of September 18, 1931. Swept up in the national fervor, universities and colleges in Beiping sent delegations to the front to congratulate the victorious troops. Fu Zuoyi became a national hero overnight; laudatory articles and pictures adorned the front pages of China's newspapers. As one newspaper read, "The plot for the creation of the great Yuan Empire by a 'certain' side [Japan] is entirely crushed. It has been reported that during the great Battle of Bailingmiao, 300 Suiyuan troops were killed or wounded; on the enemy side, 300 were killed, 600 wounded and 600 captured."

In reality, reports such as these were all false. Contrary to what some believed, Fu's troops did not set fire to the temple at Beile-yin sume after the escape of the monks, though they did destroy its images, scriptures, instruments, doors, and windows, and also looted and destroyed the dormitories of the lamas. The real death toll on the Japanese side is not known, but we do know that only 100 Mongols were killed or wounded. I visited Beile-yin sume several times in the years following the battle and talked with the monks there about the events of that terrible night. They reported that except for Fu's occupation of the temple, the Chinese reports of the battle were fabricated. During Fu's occupation of Beile-yin sume, Prince Yondonwangchug stayed at his residence thirty-five kilometers away. The prince's refusal to meet Fu was widely applauded by fellow Mongols.

The loss of Beile-yin sume was not only a great blow to Prince De, but it also had a terrible effect on all of Inner Mongolia. The division under Mugdenbuu's command, along with its Japanese advisors, retreated eastward to the Shira-Muren monastery in the Derben Keuked Banner, where they awaited reinforcements. Prince De dispatched Tegshibuyan, the head of the Military Affairs Bureau, to observe the situation and relay orders to Mugdenbuu to maintain the strength of his division. Since they could not afford to sacrifice men and material, the Seventh Division, the one under Mugdenbuu's command, was ordered to retreat in the event of further Chinese attacks.

From the outset of the battle Tanaka Ryukichi's opinions differed substantially from those of Prince De and the other Mongol leaders. Seeing that Wang Ying's troops were bogged down in eastern Suiyuan, Tanaka moved his Chinese troops from Shangdu to Shira-Muren in order to carry out reprisals against Beile-yin sume, and placed them under the control of Colonel Obama. The counter-attacks were unsuccessful; Fu repelled each successive attacking wave. After this second defeat and retreat, Obama centered his troops at Shira-Muren and ordered them to hold it to the last man. Mugdenbuu, hearing Obama's orders, told him about Prince De's instructions that the division was to be maintained mobile and ready to retreat, and about the need to preserve precious material. A great argument ensued, which Obama, because of his narrow-minded stubbornness, won. Even so, Obama distrusted the Mongolian Army under Mugdenbuu, and accordingly the Mongol sentries at Shira-Muren were replaced with Chinese troops under Wang Ying.

On the night of December 9, Shi Yushan, Jin Xianzhang, and other troops under Wang Ying, while also making contact with the Suiyuan Army, suddenly besieged the headquarters of the Japanese advisors. With the exception of the telegraph operator, all

the Japanese advisors and members of the Special Service Office, including Colonel Obama—a total of twenty-nine men in all—were killed in the attack. At the same time, the Chinese attacked the headquarters of the Mongolian Seventh Division, disarming some of the troops and forcing Mugdenbuu and his staff to flee. Fu Zuoyi then proudly proclaimed victory in the short Battle of the Shira-Muren.

On December 18, An Huating and the Chinese troops under his command defected to Fu Zuoyi's side. At the same time, Song Zheyuan and his 29th Division deserted en masse, taking their weapons with them. This, together with other desertions, brought about the complete collapse of the Great Chinese Upright Army.

When Wang Ying's troops rebelled and the Mongolian Seventh Division teetered on the brink of collapse, Tanaka Ryukichi, fearing that Prince De would ask for control of the decimated division, secretly sent the errant Wang to Tianjin. At the same time, Wang's chief political counselor, a Taiwanese named Zhang, also disappeared; it appears likely that Tanaka sent him back to his island home.

After the loss at Beile-yin sume and the rout of the anti-Chinese front, both the Japanese Guandong Army and the government of Manchukuo issued a statement in which they said they would not tolerate the war's negative repercussions on the security of Manchukuo. The KMT countered with a communiqué of its own, which reiterated the antiquity of China's claims to the territory and the animosity with which they viewed outside interference. Eventually, after Japan joined Germany and Italy in the Axis anti-Communist agreement, Italy extended diplomatic recognition to Manchukuo. This diplomatic maneuver had a great negative impact on the KMT anti-Communist policy, and provided the Chinese Communists, who remained adamantly anti-Japanese all along, with a propaganda coup which greatly increased their influence.

Following Fu's victory, Chen Cheng, a Nationalist general, arrived in Hohhot to discuss with Fu Zuoyi the possibility of bringing the army of the central government into the war on the side of Suiyuan. At this point, the Mongolian Military Government was at a real impasse: Mongol forces were weak, and the Guandong Army, despite its bold promises, remained practically impotent. Tanaka Ryukichi, feeling that he had lost face, contemplated *hara kiri*. In the midst of this political chaos, as Chen Cheng and Fu Zuoyi plotted their imminent eastern campaign, Chiang Kai-shek was kidnapped on December 12, in Xi'an, by Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, the so-called Xi'an Incident. This unforeseen development radically altered the situation in East Asia and gave the Mongol Military Government some much needed breathing space.

The Truce and Rehabilitation of the Mongolian Army

From the beginning of the war, Prince De and Wu Heling had disagreed on the nature and degree of Tanaka Ryukichi's personal adventurism. Given the problems with Wang Ying, their relations with Tanaka deteriorated even further. After the defeat, it seemed impossible to improve relations with Tanaka; seeking to capitalize on the Xi'an Incident, they sought to end the war that Tanaka had started. Moreover, Wu Heling, who had been assigned a secret mission to delay Japanese expansion, saw this as a way to halt the Japanese invasion. Tanaka, eager to cut his losses, was unable to stop this decisive move by the Mongol leadership to end the war. On December 16, the Nationalists issued a communiqué condemning Zhang Xueliang and his associates.

On the same day, Prince De called an important meeting of his supporters, saying that "though Chiang Kai-shek opposes the independence of Mongolia, he was kid-

napped by Zhang Xueliang, who was himself manipulated by the Communists. Our twin aims are autonomy for the Mongolian people and anti-communism. Facing many problems in the realm of national defense, we have to end this war so as to allow the Chinese central government to focus all its attention on the rebellious factions manipulated by the Communists."

Tanaka, like all others in attendance, immediately endorsed this recommendation. Prince De then asked Wu Heling to draft a telegram announcing a truce. The telegram stated:

Zhang Xueliang and Yang Hucheng, both of whom are pawns of the Chinese Communist Party, kidnapped Chairman Chiang, the supreme leader; disturbed national law; and damaged the roots of the state. Now, although Fu Zuoyi has sent troops to disturb the situation between the Mongols and the Chinese, at this time of Chairman Chiang's captivity, we would like to cease hostilities temporarily, so as to allow the entire nation to join together in attacking the rebels and saving our leaders. As for the problems in Suiyuan, we will wait for the decision of the central government.

Of course, this sort of truce was willingly accepted by Nanjing. Fu Zuoyi tried to take advantage of the new situation by moving his troops eastward; but because the nation was preoccupied with the Xi'an Incident, public sentiment demanded unity, and he was forced to retreat. Prince De asked Song Zheyuan and Xiao Zhengying to negotiate the truce with Suiyuan. Song accepted the role of mediator for several reasons. First of all, the Hebei-Chahar Political Affairs Committee, which he headed, was under sustained Japanese pressure, that he was eager to alleviate. Second, Song was eager to boost his personal prestige. Many had seen him as rather pro-Japanese, and he felt a great need to better his image and position in China, at the expense of Fu Zuoyi.

As for the Mongol military during this period, Li Shouxin's troops were sent to defend the second line; because they were not front-line forces, they suffered very few losses. As for the divisions under Prince De's personal control, they had no casualties except for those in the Seventh Division. Responsibility for the defeat lay with Tanaka Ryukichi, but because he was a foreigner, the Mongol leaders could not punish him for his reckless adventurism. The Mongols had retreated from Beile-yin sume for the simple reason that the Chinese outnumbered them. The loss of Shira-muren resulted from Obama's trust of Wang Ying's Chinese troops and his rejection of Mugdenbuu's Mongol forces. In addition, he had foolishly rejected Prince De's orders to not expend men and material. This led to the collapse of the Seventh Division, though fortunately, with only limited casualties.

Mugdenbuu was stripped of his command, though not formally punished. This sort of leniency was typical of Prince De's generous spirit. Nevertheless, the defeat had great impact on the morale of both the civilians and military throughout the Mongol nation. So as to maintain control over his army and boost their sagging morale, Prince De, speaking with great emotion, told the youth that followed him, "Our goal is cooperation with whoever may be of some benefit to us." When word of this reached the Japanese, they became rather angry at their opportunistic ally.

Among the officials of the Guandong Army, there was little inclination to expand the scope of the confrontation. They had felt their defeat keenly. Following the truce, Tanaka was recalled, and the Guandong Army dispatched Colonel Moto Akira, the head of its second bureau, to Jabsar (Dehua) to appease and comfort Prince De and the leaders of the Mongolian Military Government. Moto urged them not to lose their confi-

dence in the Japanese. On the other hand, he had to deal with the reality of Tanaka's defeat. He led preliminary discussions on the renovation of the Mongolian Army, but took no concrete action in that direction. Moto, a prudent and cautious man, judiciously gave support to the Mongol independence movement. The diplomatic Moto was at least able to reunite the formerly divided factions. After conditions settled down in Jabsar, Moto was recalled, and Colonel Morioka was sent to take his place. Soon after his arrival, Morioka was removed, and the Guandong Army sent Colonel Kawazaki to head the Dehua Special Service Office.

Reorganization of the Army and New Maneuvers

After the collapse of the Seventh Division, and at the recommendation of Colonel Kawazaki, the Mongolian Army underwent a far-reaching reorganization. Prince De remained commander in chief, Li Shouxin the vice commander, and Wu Guting chief of staff. Liu Xinghan, a longtime Chinese associate of Li Shouxin, was made deputy chief of staff. The General headquarters was divided into six administrative sectors: military supply, armaments and equipment, aides-de-camp, general staff, military law, and health and medicine. The original First and Second Armies were abolished, and all remaining divisions were put under the direct control of the General Headquarters. The Seventh Division was reorganized, and the regiment of guards previously attached to it was transferred to the Ninth Division. All the previous divisional commanders remained, with the exception of the Seventh Division, which was commanded directly by the General Headquarters. Two graduates of the Nanjing Military Academy, Khorongga and Fu Xiande, commanded the division's two battalions. Shonodondub was placed in command of the chairman's guards, but was soon replaced by Sangdugureng.

By the time that these reorganizations took place, the Mongolian Military Government had been in existence almost one year. Prince De and the other Mongol leaders had focused their attention on fighting exterior oppression, as well as on beefing up military forces and coming to terms with the influx of Japanese advisors. Despite the leaders' preoccupation with questions of external security, they were able to bring about some changes in the domestic realm.

Steps were taken to train Mongols in telecommunications. To facilitate the use of the telegraph, the Mongolian alphabet was romanized. Transportation networks were improved as well, with the formation of the Mongolian Highways Bureau under the direction of Enkeamur. Many trucks and buses were imported from abroad, and roads were built between Dehua and Kalgan, as well as between the various leagues and banners. Rather quickly, a stiff competition developed with the Mechanized Transport Company, a subsidiary of the Japanese-owned South Manchurian Railway Company, which was effectively under the control of the Japanese Special Service Office. Despite efforts by the latter to put pressure on the Mongolian Highways Bureau, the competition continued unabated. Because of the limited real gains involved, the Japanese soon backed down.

Another important event was the establishment of the Mongolian Livelihood Association, as advocated by Wu Heling.⁶ This nonprofit organization, originally formed

⁶ The Mongols traditionally had no interest in commercial activities, which until this point had remained in the hands of Chinese merchants and traders. Other foreign nations also had major investments in Inner Mongolia, especially the Soviets and Japanese. One large Japanese conglomerate, the Great Mongolian Company (*Daimo*), had been particularly active in the wool and hide

to help in disaster relief following the bitter winter of 1935, continued into the spring and used its remaining funds to plant windbreaks and organize tree nurseries in Jabsar, Sunid, and Pandita-gegeen-keid (Beizimiao). In order to fund its service wing, the organization also undertook some commercial activities, such as the export of domesticated animal stock and import of necessary goods.

The End of the Mongolian Military Government

During the first half of 1937, the Mongolian Military Government concentrated its energies on repairing the damage done by the defeats in eastern Suiyuan and Beile-yin sume. However, they soon suffered another blow, which in time led to the collapse of the Mongolian Military Government. In the summer of 1937, the Japanese issued a series of demands to Song Zheyuan, who wholeheartedly resisted these blatant attempts to manipulate him. This did not bode well for the Japanese; in fact, Song's opposition diminished Japanese leverage in North China, and fanned anti-Japanese sentiments in Song's 29th Army. In order to increase its power in the region, Japan boosted its troop strength in Tianjin, and carried out a series of provocative maneuvers in the Beiping area. On the evening of 7 July, a clash broke out between Chinese and Japanese forces at the Marco Polo Bridge, fifteen kilometers southwest of Beiping. The Second Sino-Japanese War had begun. This conflict was to have a decisive impact on the Inner Mongolia situation.

On August 7, the Japanese occupied Beiping, and six days later overran Shanghai. In a move of anti-Japanese solidarity, the Chinese Communist Party announced that it would henceforth follow the orders of the Chinese government. At this point, Chiang Kai-shek, as Chairman of the Military Committee, appointed Zhu De as commander of the Eighth Army of the National Revolutionary Army, with Peng Dehuai as vice commander. Soon after, the Soviets and Japanese signed a nonaggression pact, which was to further influence the situation in Inner Mongolia.

Following the outbreak of general war, Fu Zuoyi changed his military policy from one of defense to offense. Accordingly, he sent Dong Biwu to invade Shangdu; there he clashed with the First Division of the Mongolian Army, under the command of Yin Baoshan, an old Chinese follower of Li Shouxin. Dong's forces were stronger, though, and soon Shangdu was occupied. While in retreat, a Mongolian battalion under the command of Jing Dequan surrendered to Dong's forces. At the same time, Shi Yushan, who had formerly surrendered to Fu Zuoyi at Shira-Muren, joined forces with Dong and headed for Jabsar.

The Japanese forces quickly won a series of decisive victories along the Beiping-Tianjin Railway. Another Japanese army, headed by Itagaki Seishiro, headed west-

trade in the years following the Manchurian Incident. Another foreign firm, Wali Yanghang, was also active in the Ujumuchin region. Consequently, foreigners, especially the Chinese and Japanese, effectively controlled Mongolia's economy. In order to protect economic autonomy, the Mongolian Livelihood Association was formed. Several years later, in the winter of 1940, the organization was enlarged and expanded and its name was changed to Khorshiya (Cooperative). It became, in effect, a production, consumption, and transportation cooperative. Khorshiya, a powerful force in the Mongolian economy, won back much of the economic advantage previously lost to Chinese and Japanese interlopers. However, corruption soon ran rampant within the Khorshiya when its leader, a greedy Chinese named Luo Lipu, appointed by Wu Heling, involved the cooperative in many illegal and unsavory activities. Soon the cooperative lost its integrity, and Wu Heling's prestige suffered accordingly.

ward along the Beiping-Suiyuan Railway in an effort to attack Nankou. The war north of the Great Wall, in the area near Kalgan, proceeded differently. The Guandong Army, in an effort to protect Zhangbei, transported some Mongolian forces to the area in small airplanes, but with little success. They were still unable to confront Dong's forces west of Jabsar. Unable to resist, Prince De entered into negotiations with Colonel Kawazaki, head of the Japanese Special Service Office, and on August 16, ordered his troops to retreat to Doloonnor. With insufficient transportation available, Prince De was able to evacuate only his staff and some of his men, and a small amount of material; the rest had to be left behind in Jabsar, which was soon occupied by Dong's forces.

While the staff of the Military Government was moving toward Doloonnor, Prince De and a small group of his followers were moving northward to the prince's official residence at Sunid. There, he planned a reorganization of his loyal forces and to assume a defensive posture. However, before the reorganization could be put into place, reports arrived that the Suiyuan Army was about to attack Sunid. Prince De immediately fled to Buyandalai's residence in Chahar, losing contact with his staff back in Doloonnor. Confusion descended on the Military Government; indeed, some thought that the prince had fled to Outer Mongolia.

By this point, the Japanese Army, under the command of Tojo Hideki, arrived at Doloonnor. Tojo, realizing that Prince De's leadership was essential to the stabilization of the Mongolian situation, accordingly ordered Colonel Kawazaki and Wu Heling to find the prince and bring him to Doloonnor for consultations. By the time the prince was retrieved and brought to Doloonnor, though, Tojo had already moved on. Taking matters into his own hands, Prince De ordered his staff into the temple at Doloonnor to reorganize the Military Government and await changes in conditions.

Some time later, Wu Heling related to me the details of the situation then faced by Prince De and his advisors. Prince De's initial disappearance had caused much distress among his staff; Tojo, too, was concerned and dispatched Wu and others in a small airplane to find the missing leader. When they found him, they could see that Prince De was himself greatly distressed. Prince De told his staff that under these circumstances, "cooperation with Japan may be considered less than a blessing." The Mongols were forced into this marriage of convenience for lack of an alternative. The prince thus figured that he had no choice but to go to Doloonnor and reassume leadership of the Mongol nation. Though the Military Government nominally still existed, in reality it had ceased to function, eclipsed, as it were, by the new Mongol-Japanese alliance.