

League of Nations

September 28, 1937

University of Colorado High School Model United Nations Conference

2-3 December 2016

Committee Chair: Justice Mack

Committee Overview

Introduction

The League of Nations was an intergovernmental organization whose principle mission was to maintain world peace. It was founded on January 10, 1920 as a result of the Paris Peace Conference at the end of World War I. The goals of the League included but weren't limited to: preventing wars through collective security and disarmament; settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration; the just treatment of native inhabitants; the prevention of human and drug trafficking; and the protection of minorities in Europe. At its peak, the League had 58 members.

The League of Nations was largely ineffective at reaching its goals. Since the League didn't have an armed force, it relied on the Great Powers to enforce its resolutions. The Great Powers were reluctant to carry out the League's resolutions and sanctions for fear of hurting other member states and compromising their international relations. Ultimately, the League proved incapable of maintaining world peace with the onset of World War II. The League of Nations was succeeded by the United Nations on April 20, 1946.

Structure

There were three principle organs of the League: the Assembly, the Council, and the Permanent Secretariat. There were two essential wings of the league: the Permanent Court

of International Justice and the International Labour Organisation. The principle organs are described below in more detail.

The Permanent Secretariat

The Permanent Secretariat was composed of a body of experts in various fields under the direction of the Secretary General. The principal Sections of the Secretariat were Political; Financial and Economics; Communications and Transit; Minorities and Administration; Mandates; Disarmament; Health; Social (Opium and Traffic in Women and Children); Intellectual Cooperation and International Bureaux; Legal; and Information. They were also responsible for preparing the agenda of the Council and Assembly, publishing reports of the meetings, as well as other administrative duties.

The Assembly

The Assembly was composed of all of the members in the League. They typically met on the first Monday of September, but an emergency meeting could be called by a member state with the consent of the majority of the other member states. The Assembly had the power to admit new members, elect non-permanent members to the Council, elect (in conjunction with the Council) judges to the Permanent Court, and control the budget. It should be noted that there was no distinction between the types of issues that the Assembly and the Council addressed.

The Council

The Council functioned as an executive body that directed the business of the Assembly. The Council began with four permanent members and four non-permanent members elected by the Assembly for a three-year period. The Council, unlike the Assembly, met four times a year and in times of crisis. Substantive issues in the Assembly and the Council required unanimous vote to pass.

The Covenant

The Covenant of the League of Nations was the League's charter. It consisted of twenty-six articles. The first seven articles defined the structure of the League, Articles VIII and IX recognized the need for disarmament and set up military commissions, Article X sought to protect nations' sovereignty against aggression, and Articles XI through XVII established the Permanent Court of International Justice. The remaining articles dealt with treaties, colonial mandates, international cooperation in humanitarian enterprises, and amendments to the Covenant.

Article X

Article X of the Covenant was the most contentious section of the document, and the reason why the United States Senate refused to ratify it. It was the section of the Covenant that called for assistance to be given to member states that experience external aggression.

Article X states,

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

This article, along with Articles 11 and 17, was used by The Republic of China to justify its appeal to the League after the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

Rules and Procedures

This simulation will follow standard Colorado Model United Nations high school procedure with some notable exceptions. A detailed list of rules is itemized below:

1. This will be a simulation the League of Nations **Assembly**.
2. The simulation will take place on Tuesday, September 28, 1937. You may not discuss events after this date and time.

3. Position papers will be written in standard Colorado MUN format.
4. Procedural matters will be voted on per Colorado MUN rules.
5. Substantive matters will require **unanimous** consent to pass per Article 13 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.
6. Parliamentary procedure will be implemented per Colorado MUN rules.

The Second Sino-Japanese War

Background

First Sino-Japanese War

The First Sino-Japanese War took place between August 1, 1894 and April 17, 1895 and was fought between the Qing Empire of China and the Empire of Japan over control of the Korean Peninsula. Japan defeated China, and China sued for peace in February 1895. China's loss demonstrated the failure of the Qing Empire's attempts to modernize its military. Regional dominance shifted from China to Japan, which further delegitimized the Qing Dynasty. The loss of Korea resulted in public outcry. The discontent among the Chinese populace resulted in the Xinhai Revolution, which ended imperialism in China and established the Republic of China.

Sino-Japanese Relations: 1912 - 1928

The end of the Qing Dynasty resulted in a decentralized government that allowed regional warlords to take control. Furthermore, in 1915, Japan issued the Twenty-One Demands to extort political and economic power from China. In order to unite China and eradicate regional warlords, the Kuomintang (KMT), also known as the Nationalist Party of China, initiated the Northern Expedition of 1926-1928 with the help of the Soviet Union. The KMT National Revolutionary Army made significant progress until it reached Jinan (Figure 1), where Japanese forces had moved in. The situation remained peaceful until a skirmish broke out near a Japanese home, which escalated into a conflict that resulted in more than 6,000

casualties. This conflict became known as the Jinan Incident, and it resulted in further deterioration of Sino-Japanese relations.

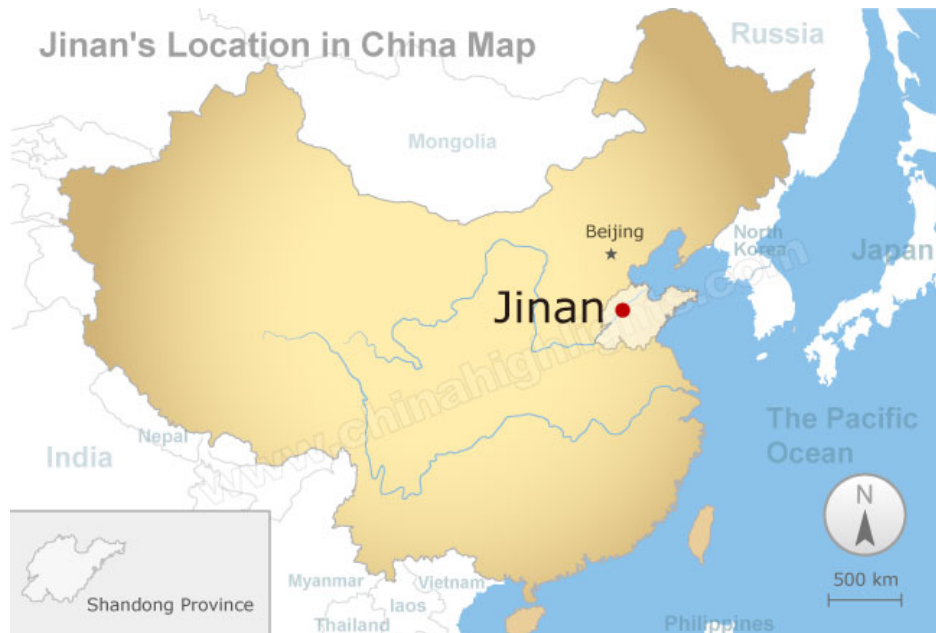


Figure 1. Jinan, 2016.

On June 4, 1928, Zhang Zuolin, the regional warlord of Manchuria, was assassinated because he became less willing to cooperate with Japan. However, his son, Zhang Xueliang, took control over Manchuria and declared his allegiance to the KMT government. This resulted in the nominal unification of China.

Civil War

Large scale civil war broke out between the Chinese central government and the remaining warlords in 1930. In addition, the Communist Party of China (CPC) revolted against the central government following the Shanghai Massacre of 1927, where the KMT purged the government of CPC members. The central government diverted its attention to the suppression of these civil wars.

Invasion of Manchuria

Japan took advantage of the deteriorating situation in China and launched an invasion of Manchuria on September 18, 1931 (Figure 2). The Japanese saw the province as a limitless

supply of natural resources and as a potential buffer state between them and the Soviet Union.

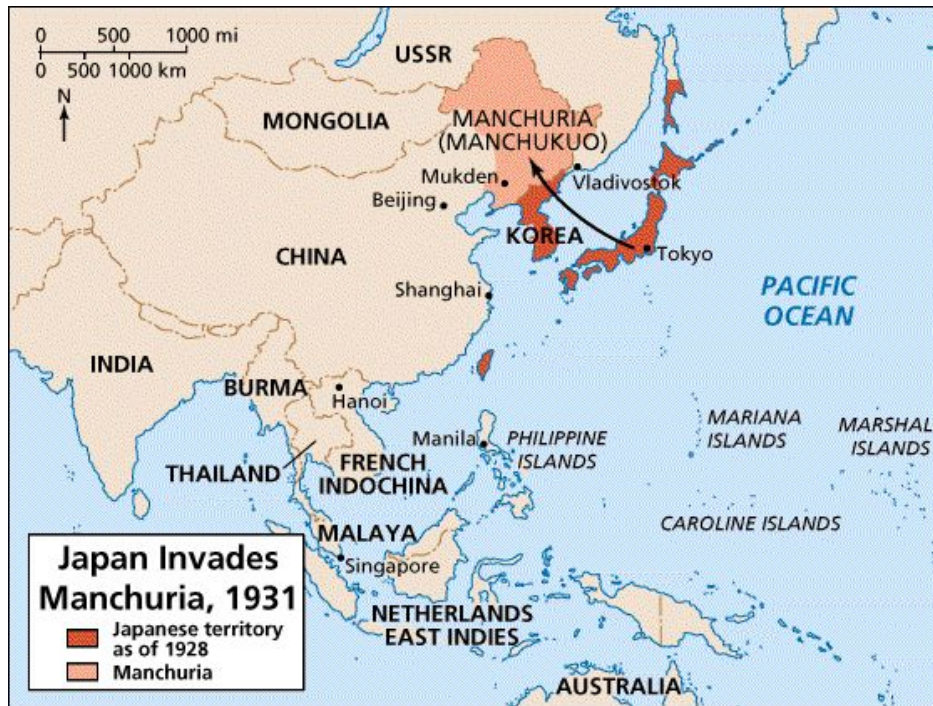


Figure 2. Manchuria, 1931.

Five months later, the puppet state of Manchukuo was established and the last emperor of China was installed as its puppet ruler. Since China was too weak to face Japan directly, they appealed to the League of Nations for assistance. The League established the Lytton Commission to investigate the situation in Manchuria. Their investigation led to the publication of the Lytton Report, which condemned Japan's invasion of Manchuria. Subsequently, Japan withdrew from the League.

Recent Events

Full-scale Invasion of China

After several incidences between China and Japan from 1932 to 1937, troops on both sides exchanged fire near the Lugou bridge in Beijing on July 7, 1937. The skirmish escalated into full-scale battle which resulted in the fall of the port city Tianjin to Japanese forces. Shortly after, around 200 Japanese civilians living in Tongzhou were killed when Chinese forces

torched much of the city. The incident at the bridge, known as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, was the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

Battle of Shanghai

Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of the Republic of China, mobilized Chinese forces and laid siege to the Japanese district of the Shanghai International Settlement on August 13, 1937.



Figure 3. Shanghai, 2016.

On August 14, KMT planes bombed the area and killed over 3,000 civilians. Between August 14 and 16, Japanese and Chinese forces engaged in aerial combat. The Japanese forces had superior aeronautical technology, but the Chinese proved to be formidable opponents. On August 23, Japanese reinforcements arrived in northern Shanghai. On September 12, China appealed to the League of Nations for international intervention.

Key Actors

While the League of Nations had 52 members on of September 28, 1937, there will only be 20 member states for this simulation, which are listed below. Please note that this list is tentative, and countries may be added or subtracted based on interest.

Australia*	Finland	Siam
Austria	France	Spain
Belgium	Hungary (Kingdom of)	Switzerland
Bulgaria	Iraq (Kingdom of)	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Canada*	Italy (Kingdom of)	United Kingdom*
China (Republic of)	Poland	Yugoslavia (Kingdom of)
Denmark	Romania	

*part of the British Empire

Goals and Challenges

The goal of this simulation is to develop comprehensive resolutions that address the ongoing war between China and Japan. One of the biggest challenges you will face will be to earn the support of the entire committee, since all resolutions must be passed by a unanimous vote (see Rules and Procedures). Another challenge you will face will be to stay in-character as an ambassador from 1937 and to neglect your knowledge of world history after that point.

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