

In Commemoration of China's 15-Year Resistance War

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The Communist-Instigated Marco Polo Bridge Incident

Ah Xiang

Japan, with its army stationed in Tientsin and along the Peiping-Shanhaiguan Railway line on basis of the 1901 boxer protocol (The Final Protocol Relating to the North China Incident), had tripled its troops allowed under the protocol to the size of 5,774 to be under a RyoBrig commander. The pretext was that the strengthening of Japan's Tientsin-stationed Army could help to stop Japan's Kwantung Army from unnecessary border-crossings to intervene in Sino-Japanese incidents inside of the Great Wall.¹ After occupying Jehol in 1933 and forcing the Chinese Central Army out of Hebei Province, Japan's intention was to encircle Peiping [Peking] from the south and southwest and make the domain of Peking-Tientsin, to the east of Yongdinghe River, a self-enclosed, neutralized and demilitarized area.

On the Japanese side, two Rentai from the China Stationed Infantry RyoBrig, which were named the Peiping-stationed Army and the Tientsin-stationed Army, scattered around Peiping, Fengtai, Tongxian, Tientsin, Tangshan, Luanxian, Shanhaiguan, Tanggu, Changli and Qinhuangdao. While the 1st Rentai stationed in the Peiping area with the 3rd Daitai at Fengtai, the Japanese 2nd Infantry Rentai and the Artillery Rentai stationed in the Tientsin area. As a precaution, the 110th Brigade of the 37th Division under Song Zheyuan's 29th Corps made extra preparations by allocating the reinforced 3rd Battalion of the 219th Regiment, i.e., four infantry companies, two mortar companies and one heavy machinegun company or about 1400 soldiers, to the area inside and outside of Wanping and at the east and west ends of Lugouqiao stony and iron bridges.

Having been encroaching on Chinese towns and counties since the 1935 Ho-Umezu Agreement,² the Japanese, on the pretext of utilizing the former British barracks, further moved in to take control of the Fengtai city, i.e., a nexus for the Peking-Hankow, Peking-Suiyuan and Peking-Liaoning railways. Song Zheyuan, to avoid frictions, had authorized a rerouting by paving separate tracks around Fengtai. The Japanese army, having assigned an infantry Daitai at Fengtai, frequently conducted exercises near the Lugouqiao Bridge and the Wanping Town. On September 18th, 1936, the anniversary date of Japan's invasion of Manchuria, the Japanese provoked the Second Fengtai Incident, with two sides walking head-on on a road, refusing to

¹ Imai Kaeo, p. 15.

² Under the restriction of Ho-Umezu Agreement, Chinese troops were forbidden from constructing defense positions. In Changxindian area, 29th Corps stealthily constructed some concrete machinegun pillboxes and then covered them with mud and sand – see page 121 Liu Ruming.

back off and shooting at each other in a confrontation that lasted a whole day. Beginning from October 1936, for months, the Japanese had been surveying the area of Fengtai for construction of an airfield as well as army barracks. Japan's demands also included the right to construct Cangxian-Shijiazhuang Railway and to develop [Long-yan] Iron Mine.³ After failing to get county magistrate Wang Lengzhai to sell the land or to coerce the landlords into selling the land direct, Japan put the matter to the attention of Song Zheyuan.⁴ In May, Jiro Hattori [服部兵次郎], visiting North China at the invitation of Chen Juesheng, had a private meeting with Song Zheyuan, during which Song assured the Japanese party that he had no intention to resort to force against Japan, asked the Japanese general, a former adversary at the 1933 Battle of the Great Walls, to mediate over the [Dezhou-Shijiazhuang] Railway, and conveyed an opinion about the arrogance of Japanese generals from the China Stationed Army. Song Zheyuan, however, first procrastinated with a delay till late May for a decision in late Feb of 1937 and then requested for a leave of absence for his Leling hometown in Shandong Province.

From May 1937 onward, the Japanese hastened their efforts of provocation by conducting frequent military exercises near Wanping, every two or three days and often nightly. On June 25th, inside of Peiping, the Chinese police detected hundreds of plain coats who came from Tongzhou and disguised themselves as 'communists'. After arresting a part of the group, the Chinese side thwarted a planned sabotage. On July 6th, for ten hours, Japanese army failed to get permission to pass through the two-gate Wanping town [through which the road passed on to the ancient stony lion bridge which was alternatively called the Marco Polo Bridge] for a purported military exercise in Changxingdian, across the Yongdinghe River.⁵

Knowing that Chiang Kai-shek was convening a "state affairs" talk symposium on Mt Lushan, Chinese communists had beforehand dispatched a large embassy of emissaries to Shanxi, Hebei, Suiyuan, Gansu, Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Shanghai, Nanking and Peiping for liaison with politico-military leaders and elites of various social walks. The mission was to propagate the 'united front' policies, take out the concerns of regional leaders, and influence the pending Mt Lushan meeting by tilting it towards a national policy to wage a resistance war against Japan.⁶

The Communist Conspiracy

Some communist veteran, called Liu Zhao, had stirred up a debate about the new revised publication by the Chinese Political Consultative Congress, which was a revision history to

³ Liu Ruming, p 113

⁴ Wu Xiangxiang, *op. cit.*, 1:361

⁵ Shi Yu & Xu Hong, *Patriotic Generals During Resistance War*, P 112; Guo Rugui, p 1:305

⁶ Xu Xiangqian, p. 455.

modify some Zhang Zizhong-related writing done by communist mole Heh Jifeng in 1960, entitled "The Documentary Writing on the July 7 Incident". See <http://www.xfgjls.com/?action-viewcomment-itemid-2800>

What Liu Zhao was saying was that there was an ongoing internal struggle within the 29th Army (Corps), namely, a fight between the undercover communist Zhang Kexia and pro-Japan 38th Division commander (and concurrent Tientsin mayor) Zhang Zizhong in regards to the dealings with the Japanese. Liu Zhao was unhappy that the daughter of Zhang Zizhong had managed to whitewash her father's deeds in 1937 to make him a dupe instead of a traitor.

In 1960, Heh Jifeng et al. wrote an article about how the Marco Polo Incident erupted. Heh recalled that Zhang Kexia, i.e., Feng Yuxiang's communist brother-in-law, had received in April-May 1937 special instructions from Liu Shaoqi's North China communist bureau to devise a strategic plan for the 29th Corps to proactively attack the Japanese at the Mountain and Sea Pass, termed the "Plan for Marching Out of the Mountain and Sea Pass". Additionally, Zhang Kexia, who was deputy chief of staff for the 29th Corps, had hired top communists, including Zhang Youyu et al, for launching an indoctrination course among officers within the 29th Corps. This was against chief of staff 张懋亭 Zhang Yueting's draft plan to withdraw the 29th Corps to the Baoding-Shijiazhuang area so as to avoid friction with the Japanese. Note at that time, commander-in-chief Song Zheyuan was taking a hike for vacation in Shandong for evading the Japanese. Among lecturers of the teaching corps of the 29th Corps would be Feng Hongguo, i.e., a Moscow-returned Soviet agent and Feng Yuxiang's elder son. (Do note that Feng Yuxiang's wife and all her brothers were communists.) At Zhang Kexia's suggestion, an army intelligence division was set up within the 29th Corps, with communist Ren Jingqiu as director. --How incredible it is to see a full house of communists controlling the operations of the 29th Corps!

In Zeng Zhi memoirs, you had Zeng Zhi, Tao Zhu's communist wife, recalling a talk with Moscow-returnee Xiao Ming about when Zhang Kexia enrolled in the party. (Xiao Ming, like Yang Xiefeng, was on the same boat as the rest of Europe-returned or Moscow-returned Soviet agents.) It was confirmed during the conversation that it was in 1929 that Zhang joined the party, termed the order of "Mi-zi-hao" (i.e., rice? numbering) who reported direct to Zhou Enlai et al. In communist Yang Xianzhen's Biography, you would see that the communist head in North China was instructed to go to Peking-Tientsin to liaison with a few communists on a five-men list, including both Zhang Kexia and Heh Jifeng. That was in year 1931. This meant that Heh Jifeng was not what I figured to be someone who had enrolled in the communist party before 1933, but in at least 1931 or earlier. Both Heh and Zhang were classmates of the brigade commanders who conducted the Ningdu Mutiny in Jiangxi to join the Red Army in late 1931. Zhang Kexia was a Moscow-returnee, and his brother, who was recruited by Yang Shande for the GRU training in the Soviet Far East and took up the GRU tasks in the Amur Province, was later purged by the Soviets in late 1930s, during Stalin's Great Purge.

Liu Shaoqi, after giving instructions to the undercover agents in the 29th Corps, left for Yanan for a meeting with Mao in May-June 1937, where they devised the "Defend North China and Defend Peking-Tientsin" strategy and political slogans. Back in Peking, in June, the Soviet GRU sent Su Ziyuan, top agent from the Mukden YMCA gang and a cohort of Yan Baoyang, to North China, where he entered the 29th Corps for military agitation. Su Ziyuan was said to have followed Zhang Kexia and Heh Jifeng in attending a Sino-Japanese officers' dinner party in the Forbidden City on June 6.

You won't know exactly what the communist directives were until you read a recollection done by a Japanese called 葛西纯一 (?Kasai Junichi) who was retained by the communist army in Manchuria from 1945-1950. In 1974, he wrote a book called "New Information: the Marco Polo Bridge Incident," and published it in Japan, claiming that while he was in Manchuria, at the PLA Fourth Field Army's logistics division of the Ordnance Department, he had seen soldiers studying the political textbooks that were printed in 1947 by the PLA General Political Department, which carried contents to the effect that the CCP Northern Bureau had instructed college students to sneak into the middle of the two armies to fire shots, so as to stir up th'e Sino-Japanese conflicts. Specifically, Hu Fu (Comrade Liu Shaoqi) instructed the patriotic' students at the Peking Universities to use the campus as base for organization and guidance of the anti-Japanese national salvation. Communists and the students entered the 29th Corps as the so-called student corps, i.e., part of Zhang Kexia's scheme to launch a teaching corps, an intelligence division etc.⁷

Now, from Imai Memoirs. On June 29th, 1937, mysterious shots were fired at the Wanping town while the Japanese military were conducting night-time exercises. Feng Zhi'an, chairman of Hebei Province and commander for the 37th Division of the 29th Corps, immediately ordered a curfew for the Peiping city as a precaution. On July 1st, Imai Takeo inquired with police chief Chen Ji'an's secretary about the curfew. After return from the Baoding visit, Imai convened a news conference to brief reporters about the purpose of Japanese military exercises – the second phase inspection of the annual exercises scheduled for July 9-16th. On July 3rd, Feng Zhi'an invited Imai Takeo for a trip to Baoding the provincial capital, during which an informal protest was raised in regards to the shooting. Upon return to Peiping, Imai secretly ordered a lieutenant at the North China Stationed Ryodan to conduct an investigation. Imai checked out bullet holes to have determined that they were not from Japanese guns. On July 6, Imai, while having a party to see Chen Zigeng off for the Mt Lushan meeting, was interrupted by Shi Yousan who asked the Japanese to intervene to stop the war between China and Japan, that was purportedly scheduled

⁷ Three batches of communist students could be subdivided: those from before 1927, like the batch of students who went to the United States to become members of the Chinese language bureau of the CPUSA; those from the 1931 era, who went to Manchuria to launch the Soviet Red Army and the guerrilla forces or later entered various puppet governments from Manchuria to North China to Nanking; and those from the 1935-1937 time period, who regrouped under the Long-marcher communists by taking advantage of the North China vacuum in the consequence of the 1935 Ho-Umezu Agreement.

to be ignited near the Lugouqiao Bridge at around 3 pm of that day. When Imai denied the knowledge of such a conflict, Shi Yousan advised the Japanese not to attack his Northern Hebei Constabulary Forces stationed at Huangshi (yellow monastery), north of Peiping.

Heh Jifeng the secret communist, in charge of the 37th Division at the bridge, made arrangement for live ammunition to be distributed in the immediate days ahead of the July 7th incident; and further ordered the buildup of barricades and embrasures, with target set against Dawayao (big tile furnace) to the east. More, one week ahead of 7-7-1937, the Peking police arrested a team of plain coats who disguised themselves as communists. The Japanese spy agency was recorded to have wide collaboration with Chinese communists agents and student activists, as was to be detailed subsequently.

After the eruption of war, Imai Takeo learnt that rumors were in wide circulation in Tokyo that “on the night of double seventh day, there would be a replay of an incident similar to Liutiaogou in North China”, over which Okamoto Kiyotomi was sent to Peiping from Tokyo by Ishihara, head of the First Section of the Japanese Imperial Staff Headquarters. (Back in late June, Ootani, a brother of the Japanese colonial minister, descended upon Peiping without advance notice, and inquired with Imai as to the urgency in diffusing any possible flare-up of Sino-Japanese incidents. Count Otani Kozui was the 22nd Abbot of the West Honganji Monastery.)

One more corroboration is from Owen Lattimore. There are 100 books citing Lattimore's claim that there was a rumor in Peking that on July 7th, 1937, something similar to 9-18-1931 would happen. (You know Lattimore was a top Russian agent recruited in China by the Comintern. In fact, over half of top American Comintern agents had their root in China, possibly including George Marshall as well. Also note that Lattimore-related writings talked extensively about a rumor that circulated in Tokyo and then Peking that some incident similar to the 9-31-1931 Manchuria invasion could happen in North China on July 7, 1937.)

The conspiracy against China was immense, and beyond your ken. Only after you read books about the 1926-1927 Northern Expedition would you find all major Comintern agents swamping onto China at Moscow's instructions, and later dispersed back to their countries or back to Moscow before a return to China for the continuous sabotage against the Republic of China. Think twice before you think that's all Comintern work in China. It is not the end of the story.

Tanaka, a former staff officer of the Japanese Kwantung Army, in the trials and interrogations of June 1946, disclosed in testimony to the Tokyo International Military Tribunal that on July 8, he flew to Tientsin from Inner Mongolia, meeting Mokawa Hidekazu and was told that Mokawa had ordered the communist students to fire the first shot of the Sino-Japanese War. Additionally, Sakurai Tokutaro testified that on July 13, 1937, communist students from Qinghua University were caught by the Sino-Japanese joint patrol to be lighting the fireworks in the middle ground

of the Japanese Army and the Chinese Army. This recollection was fully corroborated by Imai Takeo in his memoirs.

There is no slight doubt that the Chinese Communists were behind lighting the fuse of the 1937 Sino-Japanese War. In the past, I had talked about the assassinations of Japanese soldiers, sailors, navy and merchants from Chengdu to Wuhan to Shanghai to Beihai (Guangxi) to Amoy (Fujian) from 1935 to 1937. The Soviet conspiracy against China could not be denied.

The First Shot

On the night of July 7th, 1937, around 10:00 pm, Shimizu Setsuro's 8th Chutai under the 3rd Daitai of the 1st Rentai held a military exercise near Longwangmiao (dragon king temple), north of Wanping and the Lugouqiao Bridge. Some shots were fired at the Japanese from the Longwangmiao direction around 10:30 pm.⁸ A soldier by the name of Shimura Kikujirou disappeared. Mutaguchi Ren'ya, 1st Rentai commander who assumed the duty of RyoBrig commander Kawabe Masakasu, approved the relief of a Chutai to Wulidian (five li shop) from Fengtai, and ordered that Matsui Takuro, director of the Japanese Special Services Board, to contact the foreign liaison sub-committee of the Hebei-Chahar Political Administrative Council with a demand to enter Wanping for a search. Ichiki Kiyonao the 3rd Daitai commander was ordered to go to Wanping with reinforcements. Matsui, in turn, relayed the request through Sakurai Takutaro, adviser to the Political Administrative Council. Sakurai called Feng Zhi'an who refuted the claim that Chinese troops ever stationed outside of Wanping town. Japanese claimed that they were being shot at by Chinese from inside of Wanping, that one soldier went missing and that the missing soldier could have been abducted.⁹ Sakurai, together with Teradaira

Acting committee chairman Qin Dechun, also the mayor of Peiping as well as 29th Corps deputy chief, relayed the opinion that Japanese army had violated China's sovereignty in conducting exercises without Chinese consent but that local police could assist in locating the Japanese soldier after daybreak. Two hours later, Qin Dechun was awoken by a second call from Matsui Takuro who demanded to enter Wanping or the Japanese would lay a siege. Qin Dechun

⁸ Shimizu Setsuro claimed that they had mistakenly fired some blank shots from a machine gun. Imai, p. 49.

⁹ For first shot, see Zhang Xianwen & Cao Dachen, p. 68. Also see Xin Haonian, Which Is New China 第章

Note 2

据闻中国大陆已经有资料证明中共北方局曾令中共武装人员在芦沟桥两岸打枪，策动“芦沟桥事变”，以诱发日本的进一步侵略行动，目的仍然是在趁乱“图存”。因作者并未亲自看该资料，故仍按原历史定论予以阐述。可供参考者，是曾任日本关东军参谋的田中隆吉在东京国际军事法庭上的一段证词称：七月八日，我由内蒙化德乘飞机到天津。晚间在芙蓉馆辟室茂川秀和（天津特务机关长）对酌，他说：“放枪的事是共产党干的……。”我和茂川曾在参谋部共过事，了解他一向和北平共产党方面学生交往密切，所以追问他一句：“那末，教唆他们干的元凶就是你吗？”他满脸通红地点头承认。后来因茂川害怕承担“第一枪”挑起战争、作为祸首的责任，又否认过隆吉的证词，所以，仅在注中予以说明。

immediately called Division Chief Feng Zhi'an and Regiment commander Ji Xingwen as a precautionary measure. County magistrate Wang Lengzhai, who was also the district commissioner of Hebei Province, was asked to go to Japanese camp for a liaison together with Wei Zonghan the chair for the foreign liaison sub-committee.

At 3:30 am, Ji Xingwen received a report that Ichiki's 3rd Daitai, with four mountain guns and a machinegun company, was on the way to Wanping from Fengtai. Before the arrival of Wang Lengzhai and Lin Gengyu, relief troops already arrived at the spot from Changxindian. Ichiki Kiyonao, calling Mutaguchi Ren'ya at the Rentai headquarters in Peiping at about 4:23 am with claim of further shootings from the Chinese side, received clearance to engage Chinese troops in a battle. At 4:50 am, on July 8th, Wang Lengzhai and Lin Gengyu, with two Japanese investigators, were allowed through the Japanese cordon for entry into Wanping. By 5:00 am, however, Ichiki Kiyonao, with authorization from Mutaguchi Ren'ya, fired the first shot of siege into the town after surrounding Wanping from eastern, northeastern and southwestern directions.¹⁰ Chinese troops beat off the first Japanese wave of attacks at a short distance by letting in Japanese to the city wall. Throughout the day, two sides exchanged fire intermittently.

On behalf of sickened Tashiro Kanichiro, Hashimoto Koori, chief of staff for Japan's China Stationed Infantry RyoBrig, immediately ordered reinforcements, including the 2nd Daitai of the 1st Rentai that was originally in Tientsin area, 1st armoured Chutai, 2nd cannons Daitai, and one engineering Shyoutai.¹¹ In Peiping, at the Japanese embassy, Imai Takeo assembled Japanese reporters from Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri, and etc, for a brief on the Japanese side of the stories regarding conflicts at Lugouqiao. On this day, Japanese chief tactician for the battles' section devised a 'propaganda outline', including a plan to have the Japanese garrison command center in Peiping abduct Qin Dechun, force Song Zheyuan into a return to Tientsin through Jinan's Special Services Board, and reinforce Japanese troops in Tientsin area for occupying Wanping no later than noon of July 9th. Japanese internal notes had instructions as to avoiding phrases like "no expansion" or "local resolution" so as to leave room for expanded operations against China for realizing the grand ideal of 'managing the mainland'.¹²

Other than laying siege of Wanping, the Japanese, with armored vehicles, mounted a fierce attack at Longwangmiao and the railway iron bridge which was situated between Longwangmiao and Wanping. Fighting ensued for three hours. The Japanese took over Longwangmiao, eastern

¹⁰ Guo Rugui p 1:307-308 - **Imai Takeo memoirs, translation 1987 by china literature and history press, p. 14; Imai recorded a conversation between Ichiki Kiyonao and Mutaguchi Ren'ya.** Separately, Mutaguchi Ren'ya, as commander of 15th Army in Burma, recollected that he had triggered the Great East Asian Holy War. See "Pacific War", Tokyo, 1975, p. 119

¹¹ Guo 1:310. Japan Defense Agency, National Institute for Defense Studies, battle history editorial group, "field army's battles during china incident", Tokyo, News Press, 1983, 1:150

¹² Guo Rugui p 1:309 translation of Japanese document by Peng Ming "Selected Materials of Modern Chinese History 1937-1945, China People's University Press, 1989, 1:5-12

bank of Yongdinghe River, and temporarily intruded to the west end of the railway bridge. About two platoons of Chinese soldiers sacrificed their lives defending the eastern bridgehead. In late afternoon, Mutaguchi Ren'ya, who had ordered a pullback of Japanese troops from western bank by 6 pm, sent over an ultimatum, demanding that Chinese troops withdraw to the western bank of Yongdinghe River and that two Japanese representatives exit the town. At 3:50 pm, Kawabe returned to Fengtai from Qinhuangdao, concurred with Mutaguchi's plan, and ordered a siege of Wanping the next dawn. Past 6 pm, the Japanese cannon fire destroyed the commissioner's office minutes after Wang Lengzhai vacated the building.

From July 8th to 11th, Japanese army and Song Zheyuan's army had intermittent fighting and truce.

On the afternoon of July 8th, at 6:42 pm, Japan's General Staff Headquarters wired over restraint instruction.¹³ At dusk, a special train was allowed to take the Japanese wounded to Tongren Hospital (St Luke's Hospital) in Peiping. At night, Imai Takeo and Matsui Takuro went to Qin Dechun's residency for talks, consecutively; and in Tientsin, Hashimoto Koori and Zhang Zizhong held talks. Matsui Takuro orally reached three truce terms with Qin Dechun on the morning of July 9th, at about 3 a.m., with a demand that the Chinese constabulary force of about 300 men take control of Wanping in lieu of 219th Regiment. Japanese cancelled an attack scheduled for the dawn of July 9th.¹⁴

However, the Japanese, claiming that Chinese troops did not pull back at 5 a.m but attacked Japanese troops which were amassing to the east and north of Wanping, suddenly blasted 70 shells at Wanping at 6 am on July 9th. Chinese side returned fire at Japanese to the east and north of Wanping. Chinese constabulary force, en route to Wanping for taking custody of Wanping, was attacked by Japanese near Wulidian. Past noon, truce monitoring teams, consisting of Sakurai Tokutaro and Teradaira Tadasuke, discussed the issue of allowing the constabulary force into Wanping, with a prohibition as to bringing in heavy equipment. 110th Brigade commander Heh Jifeng, in charge of the truce, claimed that the truce order was not relayed to subordinate officers on time and requested for a new issuance of withdrawal order. Past mid-day, the bulk of Chinese troops pulled to the south of Yongdinghe River. [Imai – p. 27.] At 7 pm, one regiment equivalent of the Chinese constabulary force entered Wanping. When Japanese accused Chinese of not pulling troops back to the original garrison, Qin Dechun countered by pointing out that Chinese troops' original garrison was in Wanping and that troops coming down the city wall was a de facto pullback. Qin Dechun's opinion was that the Japanese had halted attacks for propaganda's sake both in Japan and over the world. Fighting broke out three more times in the next twenty-four hours.

¹³ Imai claimed that he received the non-expansion and localized solution instructions on July 10th. Imai, p. 28.

¹⁴ Guo Rugui p 1:312

On the night of July 9th, Imai Kiyoshi, the Japanese undersecretary at General Staff Headquarters passed on four demands set by Japan's four-minister cabinet meeting, including the withdrawal of Chinese troops from the east of Yongdinghe River at Lugouqiao Bridge area. On 10th, Imai claimed that he received the non-expansion and localized solution instructions on July 10th. [Imai, p. 28.] Japan China Stationed Infantry RyoBrig officially raised the four demands. Imai claimed to have worked out three demands with Matsui Takuro, namely, i). The 29th Corps to apologize to Japanese army and punish culprits; ii). Chinese troops were to pull out of the east bank of Yongdinghe River; and iii). Completely ban anti-Japanese organizations such as the Blueshirts, the Communists and others since the incident was provoked under their agitations, and stated that they would withdraw troops after the Chinese side acknowledged the demands. Qin Dechun designated Zhang Zizhong, Tientsin mayor and 38th Division commander, as the representative for talking to Matsui Takuro. Zhang Zizhong's representative, Zhang Yunrong, declined to punish battalion commander Jin Zhenzhong or withdraw troops from the Lugouqiao area. At 6 pm, on 10th, Mutaguchi Renya retook Longwangmiao area, and at 9:50 pm, launched a night time assault. Imai claimed that at about 7:30 pm, Chinese troops on the west bank of Yongdinghe River shelled Japanese across the river. Japanese, after spotting Chinese troops near Longwangmiao, Dongxinhuang and northeast of Wanping, launched a raid at 9:15 pm, and took over Longwangmiao and Dongxinhuang at heavy casualties. [P. 29].

At midnight on July 10th, regimental commander Ji Xingwen ordered a broad sword contingent to recover the bridgehead after 110th Brigade Chief Heh Jifeng sent over a Changxingdian constabulary battalion as reinforcement. Taking advantage of rain and mist in the morning, one hundred and fifty commandos, with blades, pistols and grenades, raided the beachhead at dawn under battalion commander Jin Zhenzhong, and killed all Japanese.¹⁵ Both beachhead and Longwangmiao nearby were recovered. Chinese multiple-prong counterattack drove Japanese back to Mt Dazaoshan (Dazaoshan).

Past mid-night, Imai Takeo and Matsui Takuro visited Zhang Zizhong's residency, in vain again. At 5 am, on July 11th, Qin Dechun called Matsui Takuro with concessions on all conditions except for withdrawal from Wanping town. [[At 5 am, Qin Dechun called Matsui Takuro with concessions other than vacating Lugouqiao area.]] Imai Takeo volunteered with [[Hashimoto Koori ?? - chief of staff]] to carry on the negotiations in Peiping while Hashimoto Koori was to return to Tientsin command center for directing troops. After failing to get Jia Deyao, a member of the political council to mediate, Imai was referred to another senior member Qi Xieyuan. At 11:30 am, Imai, accompanied by Lin Gengyu, met with Qi Xieyuan at Zhang Yunrong's house. Half an hour later, Qi and Imai reached an agreement to simultaneously pull out the Chinese and Japanese troops from around Wanping. A three-point truce was signed, with a modification of the previous second condition to have constabulary force replace 29th Corps at Wanping. Chasing behind [[Hashimoto Koori ?? - chief of staff]] to Nanyuan Airport, Imai reported the news of reaching a truce.

¹⁵ Zheng Yi, Ji Xingwen, page 335, *Records of Famous KMT/CCP Generals*

Imai received an urgent call from Terada of the Tientsin command center, who issued instructions that the diet meeting in Tokyo had made important determination to mobilize three domestic divisions, the Kwantung Army and the Korean Garrison Army for taking advantage of the perfect opportunity to solve the China problems that had been hanging in the balance for years, that there was no need for a localized negotiation, and that even if an agreement was reached, it should be torn apart.¹⁶ Stunned by Terada's phonecall, Imai and Matsui, who were in disagreement with their belligerent colleagues around, called Hashimoto to ascertain the decision to sign the truce agreement that was already struck with Qi Xieyuan. After several postponements, the 3 pm signing ceremony was completed till 6 pm, and two hours later, Matsui Takuro and Zhang Zizhong ratified the truce agreement at Zhang Yunrong's residence.¹⁷ The Japanese units at Lugouqiao, against the arguments at the special service board, reshuffled the bulk of the forces back to Fengtai while leaving a small number of soldiers on the spot. Meanwhile, Chinese Communists, under the leadership of Northern Bureau chief Liu Shaoqi, continued the hit and run agitations for escalating the Sino-Japanese conflicts. Shortly past midnight of July 12th, at about 2:00 am on the early morning of July, fireworks broke out near the Yongdingmen Gate, which shocked the Peiping citizens as gunshots. During the morning editions of English and Chinese newspapers, accusations were lodged against the Japanese army for possibly lighting the fireworks for sake of making a pretext to accuse the Chinese troops of illegal shootings. On the same day, fireworks were lighted in Babaoshan and other areas where Chinese and Japanese armies were entangled.¹⁸

Situations took a turn for worse after Konoe Fumimaro convened the five-minister meeting and endorsed the General Staff Headquarters' plan of dispatching troops to China as reinforcement. In Tokyo, at 3:20 pm, on July 11th, Japanese cabinet passed the five-minister decision to dispatch the Kwantung Army and the Korean Garrison Army to northern China as well as invoke the homeland troops for deployment to the continent.¹⁹ Chief of General Staff Headquarters,

¹⁶ Imai, pp. 31-32. Chinese records claimed that in the afternoon, **Imai Takeo received the wire from Tokyo about Japanese mobilization of three homeland square-divisions in addition to troop dispatch from Manchuria and Korea but continued the deceptive truce talks with Chinese.**

¹⁷ **At 8 pm**, Zhang Zizhong signed the "Qin Dechun-Matsui Takuro Agreement", agreeing to three clauses: i) 29th Corps to express regret and apology to Japan and to punish the culprit; ii) Chinese constabulary force to take over Wanping and surrounding area; and iii) anti-Japan agencies and organizations, like Blue Shirts and Chinese Communists, to be banned.

¹⁸ Imai, pp. 43-44.

¹⁹ At 9:00 am, on July 8th, Japanese Kwantung Army proposed with undersecretary Umezu Yoshihiro to launch a general attack at Chinese armies in Hebei and Chahar provinces. In late afternoon, Kwantung army issued an accusation of Song Zheyuan's 29th Corps, and sent representative to Tientsin for coordination. Koiso Kuniaki, i.e., occupation commander in Korea, advocated with Tokyo a comprehensive war against China for realizing the grand plan of ruling China. Japanese Navy ordered the return of Third Fleet to Shanghai from the Taiwan Straits. **On the night of 8th, Japanese army minister Sugiyama Hajime ordered to delay 40000 soldiers from retirement.** On 9th, Japanese General Staff Headquarters drafted a paper entitled "Guidelines for Dealing with North China Events", hinting at dispatching troops to Shandong Peninsula should war in China get out of hands. On 10th, Umezu Yoshihiro suggested a delay of shipping out three homeland square-division till after Kwantung Army and Korean Garrison Army were sent in. – Guo Rugui, p. 1:316 – citing **Japan Defense Agency, National Institute for Defense Studies, battle history editorial group, "field army's battles during china incident", Tokyo, News Press, 1983, 1:153, 154, 157, 161**

Prince Kan'in-no-miya Kotohito [閑院宮載仁親王] and Navy's Secretary of Military Operations, Prince Higashikuni Naruhiko [東久邇宮稔彦王Higashifushimi], subsequently obtained the blessing from Emperor Hirohito. In the declaration, Konoe accused China that the "recent clash, provoked by the Chinese, was a premeditated, armed attack against Japan."²⁰

On the night of July 11th, at 6:24 pm, Japan made a government statement on 'Northern China Troop Dispatch', claiming that 29th Corps had inflicted heavy casualties onto Japanese on the midnight of 10-11th. At 6:30, Prince Kan'in-no-miya Kotohito ordered the Japanese 1st and the 11th Independent Mixed RyoBrig from Kwantung Army²¹ to immediately depart Gongzuling and Gubeikou for inner side of the Great Wall; and at 7:40 pm, consecutively ordered the 20th SquDiv to China from Korea. Katsuki Kiyoshi was assigned the replacement commander-in-chief for China Stationed Infantry RyoBrig. Separately, at night, Prime Minister Konoe, at his residence, assembled both houses of the Diet - parliament members, industrialists and news media for expounding on the announced war decision. To control public opinions, Japan made a radio announcement about suspicion over the sincerity of the Hebei-Chahar regime in observing the signed truce agreement.

On July 12th, Japan's Navy coordinated with Army Ministry over the 'battle plan against China', with a call for hitting China's 29th Corps in the confinement of Peiping-Tientsin, but reserving joint actions against Qingdao and Shanghai should war expand to southern and central China.²² On July 13th, Katsuki Kiyoshi, after a brief by Hashimoto Koori and meeting with staff tacticians, proposed the number of troops for dealing with Chinese 29th Corps, zoned the battle territories for all troops assigned, and reported to Tokyo with seven demands to be raised with China as well as the objective of expelling Chinese 37th Division to the southern Hebei Province. On the 14th, Japanese General Staff Headquarters sent Nakajima Tetsuzo and Shibayama Kaneshiro to Tientsin after approving Katsuki Kiyoshi's plan the previous night. Japan allocated seven flight groups with two squadrons each, four independent squadrons, two airfield support Chutai and one repair shop as 'Interim Airforce Corps', headed by Togukawa Yoshitoshi, for reinforcing the six Kwantung Army squadrons already assigned. On the night, Katsuki Kiyoshi dispatched emissary to propose seven demands to Song Zheyuan, including the relocation of the 29th Corps away from Peiping.

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Modified on August 25, 2012 on basis of <http://republicanchina.org/MarcoPoloBridgeIncident.v01.pdf>

²⁰ Oka Yoshitake, p.62.

²¹ Sakai RyoBrig and Susuki RyoBrig 酒井鑄次-鈴木重康 - Sakai Koji, Suzuki Shigeyasu - Fang Zhiping, Blood Soaking Mountains and Rivers, p.109

²² Wu Hsiang-hsiang believed that Second Sino-Japanese War had been triggered by Japan's military dispatch order on July 11th, 1937. See Wu Hsiang-hsiang, *op. cit.*, 1:366.