[page 1] **The Chientao Incident (1920) and Britain\***

by Daeyeol Ku

This is a study of the military expedition which the Japanese sent to Chientao in October 1920 in order to clear the area of the Korean independence movement, and of the attitude of the British government towards the Japanese encroachment in that part of Chinese territory. Chientao, or Kando in Korean and Japanese, lies to the north of the Tumen river which forms the eastern part of the border between China and Korea, and is a stretch of territory about 300 miles long by 60 wide, encompassing the four districts of Holung, Yenchi, Wangshing and Hunchun. At the time of this study, it constituted a kind of oasis of exceptionally fertile valleys in the wild mountains and forests of northern Korea and Manchuria, and had, therefore, attracted a large number of Koreans since the 1860s, in spite of the prohibition by the Korean government against crossing the frontier. The Korean population there had increased steadily, being 71,000 in 1907, 109,500 in 1910, 253,916 in 1918 and 307,806 in 1921,while the number of the Chinese was less than one third, being 21,983 in 1907 and 73,746 in 1921. The area west of Chientao was called Sokando, or west Chientao, and was also inhabited by a number of Koreans.1

A border dispute between the two countries flared up in 1882 as the Chinese government took note of the rapid increase of the Koreans in the area. This was eventually settled under the Chientao Agreement concludcd between China and Japan on September 4, 1909 at a time when the latter maintained her residency-general in Seoul.

\* This paper was first published in 1980 as part ot the International Study series of the London School of Economics and Political Science. The author was a research assistant at the International Centre for Economics and Related Disciplines at the London School of Economics, working for the project on expansion in Asia and the response of Asian countries between October 1978 and January 1980. This paper is a report on research which was carried out in London during that period. It is linked to the author’s more detailed study entitled ‘Korean Resistance to Japanese Colonialism: The March First Movement of 1919 and Britain’s Role in its Outcome’ which was accepted for the degree of Ph. D by the University of London. The author is grateful to the ICERD for support and thanks Dr. Ian H. Nish for his guidance during this study.

[page 2] The agreement covered only the three districts of Holung, Yenchi and Wangshing, a fact which led to Hunchun and Sokando being generally excluded from the Chientao area since then. By the agreement, China obtained Japan’s recognition of her sovereignty over the region and her jurisdiction over its Korean inhabitants, whilst making several concessions to Japan, including the right to extend the Changchun-Kirin railway to the Korean frontier; opening of four trade-marts in Chientao; and the right to establish consulates or branch offices in the area.2

The Japanese authorities in Seoul did not stop the emigration of the Koreans to Chientao either after they promulgated the emigration protection law in July 1906 (by which no Koreans were allowed to go abroad) or even after the annexation of Korea in 1910. An official document noted that Korean emigration to Chientao had increased yearly, because ‘the emigrants were beguiled by the misleading information given by Korean political refugees who had made Chientao their base.’3 In 1919, a report of the British Foreign Office stated that a large crowd of such people, numbering about 1,000 a week, had been noticed at Seoul railway station.4 Since the Japanese knew that Korean exiles tended to be strongly nationalistic, it is hard to see any other reason for the Japanese to licence this emigration except to make room for Japanese emigrants in the peninsula and to scatter Koreans outside the border region so that Japan could have an excuse for intervention there under the pretext of ‘protecting’ her Korean subjects.5 On the other hand, the suffering and hardship of these Korean emigrants explain their hostility towards the Japanese. Thus Chientao became one of the main arenas for the anti-Japanese movement on the part of Korean exiles, when the control of their country passed to Japan. One aspect of their activities was military adventurism over the border, whereas their colleagues in the United States and Shanghai were more inclined to undertake diplomatic maneuvres.

In March 1919, mass anti-Japanese demonstration, called the March First Movement, took place throughout Korea. The movement had first been conceived by Korean exiles in the United States and then supported by their colleagues in other parts of the world in order to take the case of their country on appeal to the forthcoming Paris peace conference. In the peninsula, a similar venture was undertaken by some religious leaders; and this was eventually transformed into the most spectacular mass movement during the Japanese colonial period in the wake of the death of the ex-Korean emperor. Although the Korean movement [page 3] failed because of high-handed suppression by the Japanese authorities, it expanded over the border into Korean communities in Chientao and Siberia and resulted in the establishment of the Korean provisional government in Shanghai.

In Chientao, it took the form of military attacks by the Korean independence army, called Tongnipkun, on the Japanese garrison units along the border from the latter part of 1919. Some big Tongnip-kun units numbered, according to the Japanese military authorities, as many as 1,000 men. They established military training grounds in various parts of Chientao; issued orders calling up Korean youths for the Tongnipkun; levied contributions from all Koreans in the region; and stored war material for future military action. The Japanese authorities in Seoul met the threat from the Koreans over the Tumen by increasing the number of border guards at the end of September, and ordering that Japanese troops should cross the Tumen to pursue and annihilate the Koreans. This resulted in a number of skirmishes over the border area, in which the Koreans claimed victory in some cases.6

THE JAPANESE EXPEDITION TO CHIENTAO

The Seoul authorities were of the opinion that the armed challenges of the Koreans in the Chientao area were made possible by the acquiescence of the Chinese authorities in Manchuria. Local Chinese officials, the Japanese maintained, openly sympathized with the Koreans’ movement and had assisted them in their anti-Japanese agitations.7 The deterioration of the situation in Chientao was further aided by the presence of Chinese mounted bandits called *Hunghutzu* in the neighboring area. The Japanese military authorities believed that the Chinese local government in Mukden was unable to put an end to such a situation. The Chinese army in Chientao was chronically under strength, with battalions consisting nominally of 500 men actually numbering less than 300. Further, its officers had no knowledge and experience of military matters, some of them even being former leaders of the *Hunghutzu*. A Japanese military report summed up the Chinese army in Chientao as just coolies in military uniform.8

In these circumstances, the Japanese residents in Lungching on April 25, 1920 requested the Japanese authorities, including the army commander in Korea, ‘to consider some measures’ to stop the violence of [page 4] the Koreans in the area.9 They said that the Koreans, who had been accumulating arms with the help of the Russian Bolsheviks since March of the previous year, were threatening the lives and properties of the Japanese in Chientao, while Chinese promises of ‘rigorous suppression’ habitually ended in compromise with the Koreans, because the Chinese government ‘spoke with their mouths and not with their hearts.’10 The Japanese claimed that it was ‘absolutely impossible’ to rely on the Chinese authorities for the suppression of the Koreans and as a result trading activities by the Japanese residents had been seriously affected.11

The Japanese army in Korea replied to Japanese citizens in Chientao that it was difficult to comply with their request because of international law and because of bilateral considerations.12 But the Tokyo government took immediate action to persuade the regional authorities in Mukden to cooperate. From May to August of 1920,Japanese consular officials in Manchuria, army officers and police officers in Korea met three times in Mukden to discuss their proposals with the Chinese authorities. At the first conference, held early in May, the Japanese side proposed that joint parties of suppression, composed of Japanese police and gendarmes from their consulates in Chientao, Chinese police and some Korean informants, should investigate and arrest anti-Japanese Koreans in Chientao and Funtien Province. Although the Chinese authorities in Mukden agreed to the Japanese proposal, Hsii Ting-lin, the governor of Kirin Province, objected to it as he regarded the Koreans as political refugees and claimed that there had been no disturbances in Chientao. The Kirin government, however, promised to assume responsibility for the maintenance of order in the area.13

But the Japanese soon found that the results of the single-handed operation by the Chinese authorities were quite unsatisfactory. On the contrary, the situation in Chientao had worsened and the police alone could not suppress or eradicate the Korean movement without the aid of Japanese troops. On July 17, the Japanese consul-general in Mukden put it to Chang Tso-lin, the leader of the local government there, that a joint inspection should be carried out by Japanese and Chinese authorities and that for this purpose Japanese troops should be allowed to participate in the suppression operation. According to the Japanese suggestion, the operations could be completed in two months by one regiment of Japanese troops. But the Chinese did not commit themselves to the Japanese proposal, and only conceded to the extent that Japanese advisors could be attached to Chinese operational parties.14 These were [page 5] the terms which Hayashi Gonsuke, the Japanese ambassador in London, passed on to the British Foreign Office, saying that the Japanese government had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Chinese authorities in Peking as well as in Mukden to the situation but the Chinese had ignored these approaches on various pretexts.15

From then until the end of September operations continued to be carried out by Chinese troops. In the eyes of the Japanese government, however, the Chinese campaign against the Koreans was entirely fruitless.16 The Chinese were bribed by the Koreans, seizing money from them but returning any arms they captured to them; even anti-Japanese Korean elements were included in Chinese suppression parties, informing the Koreans in advance so that they could make good their escape.17 From the Korean point of view, however, the Chinese operation cut down their anti-Japanese activities. The Chinese destroyed eleven military camps maintained by the Koreans, including a military cadet school, which had produced young leaders of the Korean army in Manchuria.18

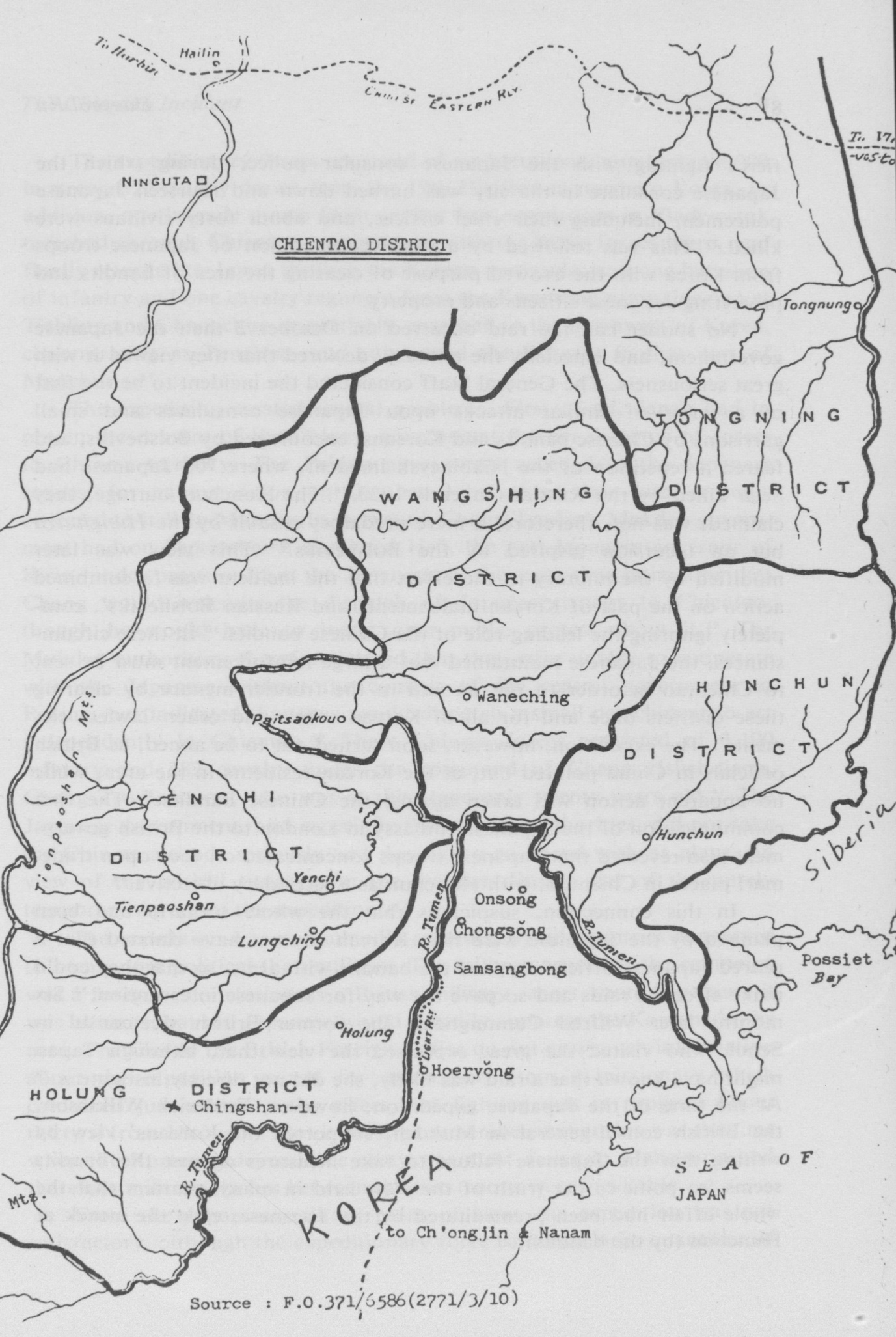
Japan’s expedition to Chientao, which was in a sense the culmination of her punitive actions against the Korean challenge in the border area, was precipitated against this background. In August 1920, the Japanese consul in Hunchun requested his Foreign Ministry in Tokyo to augment the size of the Japanese police force ‘to meet emergencies’, which had taken place in the past and would most certainly happen in the future. The Foreign Ministry was afraid that the anti-Japanese feeling, which had flared up in China over Shantung, would work to the advantage of the Koreans if the Japanese government reinforced the police, and sought the opinion of Governor-General Saito Makoto in Seoul. The governor-general of Korea asserted that it was difficult to curb the Koreans in Chientao as they were even armed with machine guns, and recommended to the Tokyo government that a quick joint operation be undertaken by the Japanese and Chinese authorities.19

The reply of the Seoul authorities was in fact a recommendation for quick military action. As a military document of the period put it, the military authorities in Korea determined this time to take resolute action, not simply ‘chasing away flies over the dinner table’.20 According to Sir Charles Eliot, the British ambassador in Tokyo, this idea was warmly supported and encouraged by nationalist groups in Japan. In July, Uchida Ryohei, the leader of *Kokuryukai* (The Black Dragon Society), had circulated a memorandum on the danger from the Koreans in Siberia [page 6] and Manchuria. This memorandum, the British ambassador observed, expressed the views of the aggressive school of Japanese politicians, including many members of the General Staff and the Seoul authorities, and eventually resulted in a military expedition to Chientao. The gist of the memorandum was that the cause of the internal disturbances in Korea lay outside the peninsula. Uchida claimed exaggeratedly that about 130,000 Koreans in Siberia and 1,200,000 or 1,500,000 in Manchuria were full of the spirit of independence and were doing their best for their national cause. They were eagerly watching for an opportunity to invade Korea or to instigate their countrymen to insurrection. Now that internal peace had been restored after the suppression of the March First uprising, the next step to be taken for the lasting pacification of the Korean situation was to tackle the root-cause of the disturbances.21

A report of the British embassy in Tokyo shows that the expedition had been planned as early as May 1920.22 Considering the sequence of events, this might be true, but the final decision for preparations seems to have been a hurried one as hopes of cooperation from the Chinese authorities dwindled only at the end of July.23 Early in September definite plans were drawn up. The military authorities felt that the expedition would need two months: one month for the destruction of Korean bases and the annihilation of the exiles’ main forces, while a further month would be required to mop up remnants. It would come under the overall charge of the commander of the 19th Division in Nanam, North Ham-gyong Province, near the Russian border. Expeditionary forces were to be divided into four groups, one group each for Hunchun, Wangshing, Lunching and the rest of the Chinese side of the Tumen river.24 The preparations seem to have been completed in the middle of September; and Foreign Minister Uchida Yasuya informed Sir Charles Eliot on the 16th during their discussions on other matters that Japanese troops would be used to disperse bands of Korean revolutionaries in Chientao.25

An extra impetus for the expedition was provided by Chinese bandits. On September 12 about 300 *Hunghutzu* raided Hunchun, about 100 miles southwest of Vladivostok. The Chinese garrison army in the city made no attempt to repulse the bandits; on the contrary, it forbade Japanese citizens to fire on the bandits. This caused the Chinese army to be described in one Japanese report as a group dangerous to Japanese residents in the city next to the *Hunghutzu*.26 Three weeks later, ‘a mixed body of bandits consisting of Chinese, Koreans and Russian Bolsheviks, and even including some men in the uniform of Chinese regular’ made another attack on the city on October 2. They were finally driven off after

[page 7]



[page 8] fierce fighting with the Japanese consular police, during which the Japanese consulate in the city was burned down and fourteen Japanese policemen, including their chief officer, and about forty civilians were killed.27 This was followed by a massive expedition of Japanese troops from Korea with the avowed purpose of clearing the area of bandits and protecting Japanese citizens and property.

No sooner had the raid occurred on October 2 than the Japanese government, and especially the military, declared that they viewed it with great seriousness. The General Staff considered the incident to be the first of a series of similar attacks upon Japanese consulates and small garrisons by Chinese bandits and Koreans, encouraged by Bolsheviks, and feared a repetition of the Nikolaevsk incident,where 700 Japanese had been killed by the Russians in early 1920.28 The Hunchun outrage, they claimed, was not, therefore, a mere predatory assault by the *Hunghutzu* but an incursion inspired by the Bolsheviks.29 This view was later modified by the military to the effect that the incident was ‘a combined action on the part of Korean malcontents and Russian Bolsheviks,’ completely ignoring the leading role of the Chinese bandits.30 In these circumstances, the Japanese maintained that a large reinforcement must be sent to Chientao in order to put an end to the frontier menace by clearing these districts once and for all of Korean rebels and other ‘lawless elements’. The expedition, however, soon turned out to be aimed, as British officials in China pointed out, at the Korean residents in the area, while no apparent action was taken against the Chinese bandits.31 The first communication of the Japanese embassy in London to the British government also revealed that Japanese troops concentrated on four open trade-mart places in Chientao, with Hunchun as a secondary objective.32

In this connection, suspicions that the whole scenario had been planned by the Japanese were rife. Korean sources have claimed that a retired Japanese officer supplied the bandits with arms, so that they could make effective raids and so pave the way for Japanese intervention.33 Six months later Wilfred Cunningham, the former British vice-consul in Seoul, who visited the area, expressed the view that, although Japan might have known that a raid was likely, she did not directly instigate it.34 At the time of the Japanese expedition, however, Frederick Wilkinson, the British consul-general in Mukden, supported the Koreans’ view by writing that the Japanese failure to take measures against the bandits seems ‘to point to the truth of the view held in many quarters that the whole affair had been premeditated by the Japanese, even the attack at Hunchun (by the bandits)’.35

[page 9]

The expeditionary forces consisted of six battalions, numbering 6,000 in strength,36 mainly drawn from the 19th Division in northern Korea. In addition, one brigade drawn from among Japanese troops in Vladivostok marched through Chientao, cooperating with the main forces there, and finally returned to Japan through the Korean peninsula; and one battalion of infantry and one cavalry regiment from the Kwantung army, located at Tiehling and Changchun respectively, marched to the northwest of Korea, concentrating at Tunghua, and suppressed the Koreans in that part of Manchuria.37

The expedition created several problems. First of all, Japan had to obtain the consent of the Chinese government for her dispatch of forces to Chinese territory. The Peking government acceded to the Japanese request for an expedition on October 9 but three days later strongly objected to it.38 In Manchuria, however, Chang Tso-lin’s Mukden government had on September 2 dismissed Hsu, the anti-Japanese governor of Kirin, under pressure from the Japanese, at the same time intimating that Chang would welcome the dispatch of Japanese troops to Chientao, though he would have to issue some public protest about it.39 The Mukden authorities, therefore, stated that they were unable to cooperate with the Japanese without the consent of the central government at Peking, but indicated that they would dispatch a small detachment to act independently in Chientao.40 These Chinese forces consisted of 3,100 infantry and 282 cavalry under the command of Chang Hsiieh-liang, Chang Tso-lin’s son, who was at this stage only twenty years old.41 The Japanese government, and especially the military authorities, did not take the Chinese attitude seriously and decided to go ahead with its plans, ‘in view of the critical situation in the frontier district and of the purely temporary nature of the expedition’.42

The expedition was undoubtedly regarded by all countries concerned to be as more political than military. The military aspect of the campaign was a foregone conclusion as a British military report wrote,43 because it was obvious that the Japanese would speedily suppress the Koreans in the area. The files of the British Foreign Office do not give much information about the expedition except for one report from a missionary which contained just a line to the effect that fighting was in progress about thirty *li* from Ultogao.44 But it must be remembered that this was the time when the Korean independence army was most active in Manchuria and therefore military clashes between the two troops were inevitable.

From the Japanese military point of view, the expedition was not satisfactory, although the expeditionary force captured large quantities of [page 10] arms and ammunition in addition to many rebels.45 According to Junius B. Wood, an American journalist who was sent by the Kokusai News Agency to Manchuria to report on the expedition, and who obtained his information largely from official sources, most of the Korean rebels disappeared northward in the densely forested hills and would live to fight another day.46 Japanese military reports on the progress of the expedition fully supported this view. The Japanese tried to annihilate the Koreans but gained little; they tried to pursue the Koreans but the latter avoided clashes. Every move of the Japanese army and officials was quickly reported to the Korean leaders by spies, but it was very difficult to detect these spies as they were usually disguised as farmers or woodcutters. If skirmishes took place, therefore, they were largely initiated by the Koreans who employed guerrilla tactics and usually fought during the night. As a result, the losses of the Koreans could not be calculated.47

The Koreans, however, claimed a big victory by the Tongnipkun at Chingshan-li near Lungching, where they inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese in about ten engagements from October 20 to 23. The ‘fight near Ultogoa’ in the previous missionary report actually referred to one of these skirmishes. According to the version given by the Korean provisional government in Shanghai, the Korean Tongnipkun under Kim Chwajin was searching for a new base near the Changpei mountains in accordance with the advice of General Meng Te-pu, the Chinese army commander in the area, who had asked Kim and other Korean leaders to move their bases away from the Korean frontier, because the Chinese authorities were so pressed by the Japanese over the presence of armed Koreans in Chientao.

The move of Kim’s army was the background to the Japanese complaint that General Meng’s expedition only resulted in the further spreading of the Korean malcontents to the whole Chientao district.48 A British military report also wrote of this move that the Koreans together with Chinese bandits and several Bolsheviks were moving westward along the Korean boundary in the middle of October.49 Kim’s Tongnipkun, called Kunjongso, was properly armed by the Russian Bolsheviks, and was therefore dominant among the Korean independence armies in Chientao to the extent that other Korean armies resented the arbitrary actions of the Kunjdngsd.50

According to Korean writings, Kim Chwajin’s army, numbering about 2,800 including non-combatants, trapped and surprised one of the Japanese expeditionary forces in a deep and long valley in Chingshan-li and killed about 1,200 of them, including a regimental commander, [page 11] during a four-day battle. After the fighting, they retreated to the Siberian border.51

Of course, Japanese military reports do not support the Korean version. According to Japanese records of the fight, a platoon of a Japanese pursuit party, numbering ninety men, was operating on October 21 when it found two places where about six hundred Korean Tongnipkun had stayed during the past few days. Continuing their pursuit, the Japanese suddenly came under fire from the Koreans who were hidden in the forest. The Japanese party immediately countered, and after an exchange of bullets lasting thirty minutes, the Koreans retreated. The casualties on the Japanese side were four dead and three wounded, while the Koreans left sixteen dead. On October 22 about two hundred Korean guerrillas attacked a Japanese advance base, killing one and wounding one. In the continuous fighting the Koreans attacked from higher ground, while the Japanese party had to counter-attack from a disadvantageous direction. After four hours of fighting, the Koreans retreated to the forest. The Japanese suffered three dead and thirteen wounded, while the Koreans suffered fifty casualties in addition to five arrested, and lost two rifles, one gun, one light machine gun and 2,200 rounds of ammunition.52

It was certain that the Korean Tongnipkun in Chientao took advantage of the terrain and fought guerrilla warfare against superior odds. The skirmishes were largely initiated by the Koreans, and inflicted heavy casualties—by Japanese standards—on the expeaitionary forces. In this sense, the claim by the Koreans to have gained some ‘victories’ is accurate to some extent, although the number of the Japanese casualties is likely to have been exaggerated.

The expedition officially came to an end on December 10 with the results of the campaign being made public, although the last unit of Japanese troops did not withdraw until May 5, 1921.53 According to a statement from army headquarters in Seoul, the number of Koreans killed was 375, and those captured 177, in addition to 1,558 who surrendered. The Japanese had suffered eleven killed and twenty-five wounded. Buildings burned included 193 Korean houses, thirteen Korean barracks, two churches and five schools.54

The Chientao expedition attracted greater attention for its political and humanitarian implications than for its military significance. During the campaign Japan repeatedly hinted that historically, racially, and strategically Chientao was a potential source of dispute between Japan and China, a fact which did not hide her designs on that part of Chinese territory. An officer from the General Staff in Tokyo said that, although everything [page 12] north of the Tumen river was looked upon as Chinese territory, former records and a monument in the area showed it once to have been a part of Korea.55 The expedition was, therefore, to show that for political, economic and racial reasons, as well as for the sake of law and order and the safety of life and property, that portion of Manchuria between the Tumen river and the Changpei mountains ought to be annexed to Korea.56 This view was further explained to Major J.W. Marsden, the acting British military attache in Tokyo, by officers at the Japanese army headquarters in Vladivostok, including Major-General Doi Masuhiko, an expert on China. The general, who was on his way to the Chientao area to assist with the main body of the expeditionary forces, told Junius Wood that the district had in ancient times formed part of Korea and should have passed into Japanese hands at the time of the annexation—in other words, the acquisition of Chientao, whether under the terms of a lease or by direct annexation, would be only a matter of time.57

The last, and probably most prominent, aspect of the expedition was the severity of the Japanese soldiers towards the Korean residents in the district. According to Junius Wood, the expedition had three objects: the punishment of the Korean Tongnipkun and the Chinese bandits; the demonstration of political ambitions; and the chastisement of the Koreans in Manchuria. Among these, the last point was, the American journalist observed, ‘undoubtedly accomplishcd.’58 The Japanese chastisement of the Koreans resulted naturally in atrocities, which, a contemporary Korean claimed, equalled in severity and horror some of the worst cases in Korea during the early part of the uprising in the previous year. The soldiers not only killed people, but systematically burned villages, devastated fields and destroyed grain supplies. Korean sources wrote that during the two months of the expedition from October to November, 3,128 Koreans were murdered, while 2,404 homes, 31 schools, ten churches and 818,620 bushels of grain were burned.59 As far as the casualties were concerned, this figure was eight times higher than that of the Japanese official statistics. This propaganda-like claim by Korean exiles in the United States and China was substantially supported and further amplified by the reports of Canadian missionaries on the scene during the expedition.

MISSIONARIES IN THE CHIENTAO INCIDENT

The Canadian Presbyterian mission, whose local headquarters were at Wonsan on the east coast of Korea, had fewer than twenty missionaries and [page 13] worked mainly at the St. Andrew’s Hospital in Lungching.60 This mission was originally established in June 1913 in Chientao as a number of Koreans including many Christian converts had gone into exile there before and after the annexation of Korea. The missionaries’ medical and spiritual activities were, therefore, primarily connected with the Korean residents.61 The Canadians naturally had sympathies with their Korean followers who had constantly suffered ill-treatment at the hands of the Japanese consular police.62 This sympathetic attitude on the part of the missionaries towards the Koreans was further strengthened by the anti-Japanese feeling which, according to a British intelligence report, was rife among foreign officials, merchants and missionaries in the area and was fueled by Japanese commercial behavior and especially by the trade in morphine undertaken by the Japanese.63 Since the outbreak of the uprising in the peninsula, the missionaries’ relationship with the Japanese consular officials in Chientao had seriously deteriorated, and the missionaries and their mission hospital had been suspected by the Japanese to be the source of unrest by the Koreans in the area.

Central figures in the campaign were Rev. W. R. Foote and Dr. Stanley H. Martin, the head and the superintendent of the mission respectively. In the three weeks from October 24,1920, Martin wrote three letters to Wilkinson, the British consul-general at Mukden, in which he revealed several cases where Korean villages, churches and schools had been burned and Korean residents in the district killed.64 According to his letters, a large school in a village called Myongdong, which accommodated 300 boys and was supported partly by Canadian funds, was completely burned down. In a village near Ultogao, about seventy houses were burned, most of the men having previously fled. Every house known to belong to independence fighters was burned, together with their crops. On one occasion, Dr. Martin claimed, the Japanese threw five Korean male prisoners, bound hand and foot, into a large fire. On another occasion, Koreans were beaten, dragged out of their houses, and many were brought in with halters around their necks, tied to horses. Thousands of these Koreans were forced to sign statements saying that ‘we are sorry we helped the independence movement’, which was in turn published in Tokyo as evidence that the Korean malcontents had apologized and the independence movement was over.

Apart from the human suffering caused, Dr. Martin also added his observation on the political aspects of the expedition. He repudiated the Japanese claim of Bolshevik involvement in the Hunchun raid as ‘an exaggeration.’ Instead, the Japanese had practically annexed that part of [page 14] China; the Chosen Bank, the Oriental Development Company, and many Japanese families were being rushed into Chientao and their Hinomaru flags now flew from every little house or shack; they had ordered Chinese troops in Yenchi, the capital of the district, to leave the city and to live on the other side of the river; and passports from the Chinese authorities permitting people to travel at night were not recognized by the Japanese and torn up. Japanese soldiers had also invaded the missionary compound on several occasions, but such incidents had resulted in apologies by a Japanese officer in the name of their commander.

After these preliminary communications, one of its staff, Dr. T. D. Mansfield, called at the British consulate-general in Seoul around the middle of November, and handed Consul-General Arthur H. Lay statements made by his colleagues on the situation in Chientao. These statements were also sent to missionary colleagues in Japan, so that they could find a way to the Japanese press.65 In the statements, the Canadians used phrases to denounce Japanese behavior towards the Koreans in the district which were stronger than in their previous letters. Japan, under the strongest protest from China, Dr. Martin wrote with some exaggeration, sent over 15,000 men into this part of China with the apparent intention of wiping out, if possible, the whole Christian community, especially all young men. Village after village was being methodically burned, and young men shot. This applied to the whole district of Chientao. Dr. Martin claimed that they had the accurate names of 32 villages where murder and fire had been used. One village had 148 killed in it; many had over thirty killed, and houses had been burned with women and children in them. At a village called Sonunting, fourteen had been stood up in front of a large grave and shot. The bodies had been destroyed with wood and kerosene from the village.66

One incident was singled out by the missionaries as typical of the cruel treatment of Koreans during the Japanese operation. This was a killing at a village called Norubawi on 29 October. According to a memorandum prepared by Dr. Martin, this mainly Christian village in the district, twelve miles from Lungching, was surrounded at daybreak by a group of Japanese infantrymen. Starting from the top of the valley they set fire to the immense stacks of unthreshed millet and barley and straw, then ordered the occupants of the houses outside. In each case, as the son or father stepped out of the house he was killed on the spot. Mothers, wives and even children were forced to witness this as well as the burning of their homes. Two days later, Dr. Martin and R.L. Joly, a British subject in the Chinese customs service, visited the village, and counted 34 or 35 killed and fifteen to [page 15] nineteen buildings burned, including a church and a school.67 The Canadian missionary found 31 graves, each house having its dead buried close by, and took photographs of the ruins of the buildings and charred remains of dead bodies.8 The tragedy at Norubawi did not end there. The day after Dr. Martin visited the scene seventeen soldiers and three policemen came to the village. The widows of the dead were summoned to be thoroughly examined regarding the past of those killed, and a lecture was given as to why such severe punishment had been dealt out to them. The people were then told to bring out all the dead bodies which they had previously buried and those were then burned in a mass grave. On November 12, this place was also visited by Mansfield who verified the accounts by his colleagues.69

According to Dr. Mansfield, after this incident Rev. W. R. Foote, the head of the Canadian mission, addressed a strong protest to the officer in command of the Japanese expedition, while sending letters to his colleagues in Japan to appeal to them to use their influence to halt this sort of thing. Foote claimed that the victims were all Christians and that the soldiers had committed their ‘diabolical deeds’ without prior discussion. If only offenders had suffered, the Canadian missionary wrote, the Koreans might not have seriously objected; but there were cases where the perfectly innocent and helpless had been killed without being given an opportunity to say a word on their own behalf.70

Other missionaries in Manchuria joined their Canadian colleagues in this campaign. Alex R. McKenzie of the United Free Church of Scotland mission in Manchuria and W. F. Cook, an American Presbyterian there, dealt specially with the movements of the Japanese Kwantung army, which began its operations at the end of October from Hingking, the place of their mission headquarters. A unit of about 500 infantrymen arrived there on October 29 and immediately sent invitations to Koreans around the district to come to their camp. Among those who responded were nine Korean Christian leaders, who were then arrested and imprisoned by the Japanese soldiers. Next day, a Korean church was burned down and two days later another church nearby was sacked. The Japanese soldiers had proposed to burn it, but desisted on the representation of the Chinese, who pointed out that fire would endanger the whole village. The following day, November 4, another church was burned down, and eight were arrested, six of whom were summarily shot.71 A week later, two other memoranda written by McKenzie on a massacre at Sokando, ten miles south east of Lungching, were handed to Mizuno Rentaro, the civil governor of Korea.72 One document reached the conclusion that:

[page 16] First, the church is the immediate object of attack, nearly all those who suffered were Christians, except where others suffered in the general conflagration that followed upon the burning of the church. Second, the church leaders were sought out and murdered irrespective of age or possible anti-Japanese predilections. Third, as far as is known there was in no case any semblance of an attempt or pretence of a trial of any sort, but unarmed and unwarned they were simply butchered like dogs and cast by the road side with a few shovels of dirt thrown over them.73

According to Wilkinson, McKenzie and his colleagues of the Scottish and Irish Presbyterian missions in Manchuria had passed a vote of censure on the Japanese authorities at the synod which was held at Mukden in January 1921.74

Stories of Japanese atrocities reached British official circles in Peking and Tokyo in the middle of November, and the Japan Advertiser published reports of the missionaries on December 1 practically in full.75 They were also reported on the same day by a British paper, the *Daily Express*.76 The first reaction from the Seoul authorities, however, was calm and measured. On November 28,the *Seoul Press*, an English paper issued by the Seoul authorities, admitted that mission schools had been burned down and Koreans killed by the Japanese punitive force in Chientao. The paper argued, however, that the Koreans killed in this manner were not genuine Christians, which implied, according to Lay, that Korean malcontents took refuge under the name of Christian in order to obtain the moral support of the missionaries.77 On December 3 the paper gave further reasons for the burning of the churchcs and schools: they had been used for training rebels and for hiding their ringleaders.78

In Japan, the War Ministry on December 1 made a statement on the missionaries’ allegations about Japanese atrocities in the form of a reply to an enquiry made by the Japan A dvertiser, and took the same line as the Seoul Press.19 It also stated that the War Ministry had dispatched a commission to Chientao headed by Colonel Mizumachi Takcso to investigate the allegations. According to War Minister Tanaka Giichi, the colonel was specially selected as he had previously had considerable experience abroad as the military attache at Washington. In addition, an official of the Foreign Ministry and Junius B. Wood, an American correspondent, had accompanied the mission in order to verify its proceedings.80 But the first action that this mission of mediation took the [page 17] day after it arrived at Lungching on November 26 was to present a letter to Rev. Foote before any investigation whatever had been undertaken.81 The aim of this lengthy letter, which was published in full on December 3 in the *Japan Advertiser*, was, as British Ambassador Sir Charles Eliot observed, ‘to combat some of the charges against the Japanese soldiers and at the same time to warn the missionaries against Korean malcontents’.82

The colonel admitted that a number of houses had been burned and many insurgents shot as the result of the Japanese expedition but, contrary to the statement of the War Ministry in the *Japan Advertiser* on December 1, which stated that adequate proof had been furnished prior to the burnings or executions, Mizumachi simply claimed that this was the unavoidable by-product of operations of this kind. He went on to say:

We regret that there may have been some innocent ones amongst those shot, but under the circumstances, where a majority of 300,000 Koreans in Chientao have been expressing their friendly attitude, directly or indirectly, if not openly, sharing the same ideals as the revolutionaries, it has been hardly possible to tell insurgent from innocent.83

Then the colonel warned the Canadian missionaries:

It is an undeniable fact that there are numerous different peoples in your own [British] Dominions who frequently plot rebellion against your Government, such as the recent non-co-operation movement in India. If, therefore, by any chance, you should give assistance, material or immaterial, to either the independence movement in Korea or to anti- Japanese sentiment, the Buddhists in Japan would be able to find a legal reason for giving anti-British assistance to those behind the non-co-operation movement in India. The same thing may be applied to the Irish problem.84

A few days later, another statement came from General Sato of the General Staff in Tokyo. The general denied categorically that innocent men or women had been killed or injured in the Chientao district. As to the missionaries, he charged:

Missionaries and mission schools have transcended their spheres as religionists and religious institutions. Some of these have given encouragement to the insurgent bands and their schools have been made training places for them. The missionaries who accuse the Japanese army of committing inhumanities and spread such reports abroad, and take [page 18] photographs to substantiate what they say, are themselves the cause of the tragedy which has befallen the insurrectionists. We regret that the Korean insurrectionists are not awake to . the fact that it is toward these mischief-making missionaries they should really feel grieved.85

Thus did the Japanese military place the missionaries firmly behind the Korean insurrectionists, a role that the Foreign Ministry had specifically discounted. This allegation was largely based on reports by the Japanese consular police in Chientao on the activity of the Canadian missionaries in the district since the outbreak of the Korean uprising in 1919. In March 1920, one report of the same nature had been made to the governor-general of Korea. According to Junius Wood, who quoted the report in an article, the police had set out to prove that Korean unrest was largely encouraged by the missionaries who in turn were encouraged by the United States. Thus the Canadian missionaries were alleged to be citizens of the United States and affiliated to Northern American Presbyterians. Their churches, the Japanese believed, had been turned into shelters for rebels, and Foote was singled out as the leader of these anti-Japanese activities.86 This seems to have influenced the statement of Colonel Mizumachi, who said later in an interview on his return to Japan that the Japanese authorities in Manchuria had collected ‘definite proof of the intrigues of these refractory missionaries,’ a statement for which he was reprimanded by the war minister. Another officer of his mission also said that they had definite proof that ‘the missionaries had been inciting their followers to make trouble in Chientao’.87

The story of the Canadian missionaries in Chientao made a strong impact abroad. One reason for this was that no other country apart from Japan herself stationed consular representatives in the area, and consequently the Canadians were the only foreigners who witnessed the behavior of the Japanese expeditionary forces. Apart from a few minor cases, the missionaries and their property were not molested by the expedition. The attention of the Canadians was, therefore, solely concentrated on the treatment of the Koreans, and particularly the Korean christians. In this respect, however, they seem to have reacted excessively; and this in turn evoked a strong reaction from the Japanese military.

Junius Wood wrote that the missionaries protested not merely against Christians being killed and their homes, churches and schools being burned, but against cruelty to humanity in general and the wanton destruction of property. They could not fairly say that more Christians than non- [page 19] Christians had been killed or that the campaign had an anti-Christian motive.88 But it was understandable that their attention was drawn to the fate of their Christian followers, and this inevitably created an impression abroad that the Christians were the main target of the expedition. In the next part we will see the reactions of the British government to the issues, largely raised by the activities of these Canadian missionaries.

REACTIONS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

The Foreign Office was kept fairly well informed of the progress of the expedition by the Japanese embassy in London ‘in conformity with the spirit of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance’89 In these communications, the Japanese assured the British government that the expedition was a purely temporary measure, and they would not maintain their troops permanently in Chientao. This point was repeated again and again in official and verbal communications in London and through government statements in Tokyo.90

In spite of these various and somewhat inconsistent statements of the Japanese government, the Foreign Office correctly assessed the situation as Miles W. Lampson, who had served as charge d’affaires in Peking from February to April 1920, noted that, although Manchuria as a whole was notoriously full of brigands, pervasive anti-Japanese feeling was at the root of trouble, while Bolshevism was an excuse which the Japanese were fond of quoting on such occasions. Lampson considered that Britain could not but accept Japan’s right to dispatch troops to the Chinese territory as a means of protecting those of her subjects who were in danger due to the incapacity of the Chinese government.91 But Britain could not acquiese directly in the Japanese dispatch of troops to foreign territory on a punitive mission.92 The Foreign Office also took note of the fact that the expedition was widely known to be intimately associated with Japanese ambition on the mainland.93

All these factors—Japan’s claim to protect her subjects, Chinese sovereignty, Japanese expansionism combined with their assurance of the temporary nature of the expedition—served to define the scope of the first British reaction. This came in the form of a communication by Lord Curzon, the British foreign secretary, to Ambassador Hayashi nearly three weeks after the start of the expedition in which he hoped that the Japanese expedition would not lead to the indefinite occupation of Chientao, and reminded him of the assurances of the Japanese government [page 20] on the withdrawal of these troops as soon as the present dangerous state of affairs terminated in the district.94

But the suspicions of the Foreign Office over Japanese ambitions in the area rapidly developed as the expedition progressed. It was thought that the determination of the Japanese General Staff to carry on the expedition in the face of Chinese disapproval might well mean a ‘semi-permanent occupation of the N.E. corner of Manchuria.’95 In late October Obata Torikichi, the Japanese minister in Peking, informed the Chinese government that Japanese troops would only be withdrawn when all danger of Korean bandits along the frontier had ceased.96 Lampson commented:

Even if we acquit Japan of having stirred up the trouble, the fact remains that events are playing into her hands. The occupation of Chientao fits in very appositely with her possession of Vladivostok and her aspirations (which are perfectly natural however illegitimate) to the Chinese Eastern Railway. Japan has already consolidated her position in South Manchuria with the collapse of Russia, and hopes to do the same in North Manchuria, where her interests (e.g. at Harbin) are already very large and her nationals very pressing... The Chientao district stretches from the Corean frontier (N.E. corner) right up to the Chinese Eastern Railway, and its occupation by Japanese troops may conceivably be part of a prearranged plan. We know that brigands can be created by Japan when she wishes to.97

A week later, *The Times* reported that Japanese officials were of the opinion that the situation held out little hope of permanent improvement; and Lampson expressed his inner doubts with the remark ‘is Japan preparing public opinion for “permanent” occupation, in order that the improvement of local conditions may also be “permanent”?’98

On November 10, the Japanese government elaborated its demands: the Chinese government should properly garrison the district; the Chinese should take responsibility for Japanese life and property; and the Chinese government should admit the right of the Japanese to send its troops, should further outrages occur.”99 The whole sequence of events only strengthened the suspicion of the British government that Japan would modify its original promise of complete withdrawal after the expedition.

Around this time, news of the harsh treatment by Japanese troops of the Koreans in Chientao began to reach British officials in Peking and Tokyo. On November 11, Robert Clive, the charge d’affaires of the [page 21] Peking legation, telegraphed reports that the Japanese had burned churches and schools, including a large college for 300 boys supported partly by Canadian funds, and had shot peaceable villagers throughout the district.100 A few days later, the same kind of stories came from Tokyo.101 But the Foreign Office was inclined to disregard the reports of the Canadian missionaries as probably overstated, because the Canadians shared ‘not infrequently the tendency of their fellow-continentals (American missionaries) to exaggeration’; and authoritative information was difficult to obtain due to the remoteness of the district.102

It was in these circumstances that the rather insensitive statements of Colonel Mizumachi and General Sato reached London early in December.103 Stunned by them, Lampson remarked as follows:

It is astonishing how clumsy the Japanese are in these matters. In Korea they set the whole world against them, 1) by their cruelties, 2) by their blaming the missionaries for the insurrection. Inexcusable as their conduct was, it was at least on Korean, i.e. Japanese, soil. In Chientao they are on Chinese soil which makes these extraordinary pronouncements of the Japanese military authorities all the worse. That there are grounds for suspecting that the Japanese have been guilty of great severity in their repressive measures in Chientao seems pretty clear.104

The Foreign Office was now convinced that, even making all allowances for the anti-Japanese bias inherent in every missionary in China and Korea, there seemed little doubt that the Japanese forces had been acting with great severity.105 Moreover, the Japanese attack on the missionaries made it necessary for the Foreign Office to take some sort of action. Accordingly, it instructed Sir Charles Eliot in Tokyo to seek an explanation for the statements of her military officers.106

Before receiving this instruction from London, Ambassador Eliot had been engaged in a series of discussions with Uchida, the Japanese foreign minister.107 When Mizumachi made his statement, Eliot warned Uchida in strong terms that, if the Japanese government did not correct these reports by action or by official denial, the indignation which was already felt by British communities in China would spread to Britain.108 Next day, the Japanese foreign minister issued a statement critical of the allegations of the two officers, adding that they were to be regarded as purely personal views.109 Evidently the British representation had carried some weight.

Apart from the missionary complications, however, the attitude of [page 22] Eliot towards the Japanese expedition was one of disinterest. He does not seem to have been aware of any political implications of the expedition. On December 16, when he wrote a lengthy review of the expedition, he restricted his comments to the activities of the Canadian missionaries and the nature of the Japanese suppression in broad terms, accepting the expedition *per se* as quite reasonable with the remark that the Japanese authorities were sincerely alarmed by the prospect of a general rising along the Korean frontier. He was also inclined to dismiss the allegations of Japanese atrocities by the missionaries. Although the Japanese measures had been ‘unnecessarily severe’ and in particular the language used by Colonel Mizumachi had been ‘provocative and insolent’, Britain should refrain from making any detailed criticism because she had only scanty materials for forming any judgement as to the previous condition of the country and the real magnitude of the disorders which, in the opinion of the Japanese government, justified such stringent methods. He felt that the Japanese government was not hostile to missionary work in general, but that British missionaries in Korea and Chientao had ‘unfortunately and undeniably’ attracted the suspicion of the Japanese authorities. Accordingly, he seems to have been relieved when the initial result of the expedition was made public, because no British subjects were killed or injured and no British property destroyed during the Japanese campaign, the churches and schools destroyed having been the property of Korean communities in Manchuria.110 Two days later, Eliot telegraphed the result to London, adding that he had ‘no means of forming an independent opinion respecting the conduct of the punitive expedition’.111

British officials in China, on the other hand, attached greater importance to the political implications of the incident. Charge’d’Affaires Robert Clive in Peking acknowledged that the expedition was undoubtedly the result of Chinese inaction.112 But he and Wilkinson in Mukden drew attention to the fact that the Japanese would make the Hunchun incident a pretext for strengthening their hold on a district which they had long coveted.113 After a month of the campaign, Wilkinson observed as follows:

The fact, too, that no measures are being taken against the bandits, protection from whom for their nationals was the pretext given by the Japanese for sending troops into Chientao, seemed to point to the truth of the view held in many quarters that the whole affair had been premeditated by the Japanese, even the attack at Hunchun, and that there was [page 23] little probability that any of the occupied districts would ever return to Chinese sovereignty.114

This became the central theme of the British representatives in China; and any Japanese move to delay the withdrawal of her troops from Chientao was, therefore, viewed with great suspicion.115

In addition, Clive also strongly disapproved the harsh nature of the Japanese operation. No matter how Britain accepted the justification of the Japanese expedition into that part of Chinese territory, the charge d’affaires observed, the subsequent conduct of their troops in Chientao where inoffensive Koreans had been murdered ‘wholesale in cold blood’, placed the Japanese completely in the wrong. This aroused a fresh storm of anti-Japanese feeling amongst the Chinese and the foreign communities in China.116 The activities of the Canadian missionaries were in this sense warmly received and supported by the British officials there. Wilkinson wrote several times to London that they were trustworthy and dependable. He recalled that their mission compounds had been invaded by the Japanese police and their students and teachers arrested on the most frivolous of charges. Under these circumstances, the consul-general in Mukden argued, it would be less than human on the part of the missionaries if they were not prejudiced against the Japanese. The only fault which he found with Dr. Martin and his Canadian colleagues was not their sympathy with the Koreans but their refusal to have any contact at all with the Japanese consular authorities in Lungching, and on this point Wilkinson had addressed the Canadians more than once.117

Sir Beilby Alston, who took over the legation at Peking in December 1920, agreed wholly with the views of his consul-general, commenting that the Japanese accusations against the Canadian missionaries were only justified in so far as the latter’s sympathies certainly lay with the Koreans. The two British officials were convinced, however, that, apart from this point, there was not the slightest foundation for the charge that the missionaries had ever intentionally encouraged the anti-Japanese movement by the Koreans or given the slightest active assistance to Korean agitators.118

The subsequent attitude of the British government towards the expedition was very much influenced by the assessment of its Peking legation. The Foreign Office expressed its satisfaction when Alston supported the Canadian missionaries against the allegations of the Japanese military.119

At the end of November, the Tokyo government announced the withdrawal of the Japanese troops operation there, as Chientao was [page 24] cleared of bandits. But it would leave a few small detachments behind for the protection of the consulates; and moreover it warned that, regardless of the disapproval of the Chinese government, it had a right to dispatch Japanese troops there, should further anti-Japanese disturbances occur in the region.120 This partial withdrawal which was completed by the end of 1920 except for two battalions121 did not remove the suspicion of the British government. Alston telegraphed on January 1, 1921 that no withdrawal had yet taken place, though negotiations had been proceeding for some time past both with the government at Peking and with the Mukden authorities. Quoting a report from Wilkinson, Alston claimed that the Japanese were intentionally dragging out these negotiations in order to postpone evacuation.122 Two weeks later, he sent home a similar report, stating that the Chinese government was naturally making vigorous protest, as the Japanese action could only be aimed at the indefinite stationing of their troops on Chinese territory.123

The Foreign Office shared this assessment of its Peking legation. Although it was probably premature to call Japan’s attention to the point at this stage, it believed that the Japanese action might well foreshadow another violation of the ‘integrity of China’ if these troops remained permanently. Aware that questions had already Been asked in the House of Commons, the Foreign Office instructed Eliot that he should draw Tokyo’s informal attention at a suitable opportunity to the bad effect which the permanent stationing of so many troops on Chinese soil was likely to have.124 Ambassador Eliot, however, did not do so. Instead, he telegraphed on January 7 that whether or not the Japanese had ever contemplated the annexation of the Chientao area they had no present intention of pursuing the idea, and pointed out emphatically that ‘all troops had been withdrawn except two battalions of infantry,’ which would be evacuated as soon as the Japanese were convinced that their subjects in the area were in no danger.125

But the situation in London did not develop as favorably as the British ambassador in Tokyo expected, as several parliamentary questions were raised on the missionaries’ activity, Japanese brutality and the sovereighty of China.126 Even in Canada a missionary body requested the Foreign Office to intervene on behalf of its missionaries and its work.127

Now the Foreign Office readjusted its position towards the Chientao question in two ways. First, it instructed Ambassador Eliot to draw the attention of the Japanese government to this matter, in fact a repetition of the earlier instruction that the ambassador had not acted upon. As ‘no word of defence could be said’ or the brutalities of the Japanese troops [page 25] in Chientao, the Foreign Office told Eliot to take ‘an early opportunity’ of bringing to the knowledge of the Japanese foreign minister in a friendly manner the nature of the reports, and to impress upon him the unfortunate effect which such proceedings were bound to have upon public opinion both in this country and in the dominions at a time when that opinion was particularly susceptible on such matters.128

The next move came in the middle of March. Victor Wellesley, the superintendent of the Far Eastern Department, suggested that Britain ought to have a vice-consul at Hunchun:

The known territorial ambitions of Japan in that quarter and the persistent assertions that the Hunchun affair was deliberately engineered to afford an excuse for Japanese interference makes me feel rather uneasy as regards future developments. Moreover, it looks as if some protection is needed for the missionaries. The Japanese would of course know at once the reason for such a step on our part but that would not be a bad thing. Hunchun is an open port.129

This suggestion was welcomed ‘from every point of view’ by his colleagues in the Far Eastern Department, and Lord Curzon on March 23 asked the opinion of his representatives in Tokyo and Peking on the matter. According to Curzon’s telegram to Eliot and Alston, the main function of the new vice-consul would be to watch for Japanese encroachments and to keep the government fully informed of all such tendencies, as well as to protect British nationals.130 Sir Charles Eliot approved of it on condition that the consul should come under the Japanese consular service, even though it was on Chinese territory.131

But Alston and Wilkinson did not agree to the proposal. The British officials in China argued that the proposed appointment was unnecessary and likely to be strongly resented by the Japanese government because British interests in the district were limited to the presence of a few Canadian missionaries.132 As a compromise, however, Alston suggested that a vice-consul from the Japanese service be attached to the consulate-general in Mukden, so that he could make trips to Chientao.133 The Foreign Office considered that this proposal might be enough, although it did not entirely answer to the purpose which they had in mind and might lead the Japanese to conclude that Britain regarded south Manchuria as falling under Japan from the point of view of British consular organization. This point was stressed by Sir William Tyrrell, the assistant under secretary of state.134 But the Foreign Office did not think that the criticism really held and appointed Wilfred Cunningham, the former [page 26] vice-consul in Seoul who was acting consul in Dairen, for the job on the recommendation of Eliot.135

The original intention of the Foreign Office had been to station a local vice-consul permanently in Hunchun or at least in Mukden, but because of the need for Treasury approval which seemed (in the view of the Foreign Office) to be exceedingly doubtful, Cunningham’s mission was curtailed to ‘visiting Mukden at regular intervals and touring Chientao and other districts of Manchuria as required.’136 After a twelve-days investigation trip starting on May 19, he produced two lengthy reports which the Foreign Office and its representatives in the Far East valued highly.137

When Cunningham arrived in Chientao, Japanese troops had completed their withdrawal and their place had been taken by some 350 police and ten army officers, of which the latter were acting as liaison officers at the open trade-marts.138 The restoration of peace in the district was, therefore, a dominant theme in his reports. He also dealt with the safety of the missionaries (and any steps which the British government should take for their protection) and the subsidiary problem,the persecution of native Christians and Japanese encroachments in the district. But the situation of the Korean residents or their independence activities were virtually excluded from mention.

In general, Cunningham confirmed the views of his colleagues in China. He found that the Canadian missionaries in Chientao were in no need of personal protection.139 They had had no hand in encouraging the independence movement of the Koreans, Cunningham maintained, and in this respect, the charges by Colonel Mizurnachi were absolutely without foundation. He also confirmed that the Korean Christians had undoubtedly been suspected by the Japanese authorities and had been deliberately singled out for persecution during the expedition. As for Japanese ambitions in that part of Chinese territory, Cunningham observed that the Japanese expeditionary force had withdrawn ostensibly and there was therefore no sign of permanent occupation.

However, in addition to the four open market towns where the Japanese consulates were entitled to have a limited number of police, about ten army officers were working there independently, and a police force of some 350 was to be found scattered at fourteen police stations all over the district. In only two cases had the consent of the Chinese authorities been obtained. Considering the fact that the number of Japanese residents in Chientao was 1,200, half of whom were in Lungching, Cunningham wondered why Japan should maintain such a [page 27] large police force unless she had political purposes. These were new developments which, Cunningham considered, could lead to a permanent stationing of Japanese military personnel on Chinese soil.

Cunningham also noted that Japanese political and economic encroachment in the district had been greatly expanded due to the expedition. The Japanese had usurped authority over the Korean population, in spite of the Chientao Agreement of 1909 which gave China the right of jurisdiction over Koreans in the district. Japan claimed that Koreans became Japanese subjects by the annexation, and that the position had completely altered as the result of the Twenty-one Demands which Japan presented to the Chinese government in 1915, by which Japanese subjects were given the right to reside in Manchuria and own land there. The Japanese rejected the case of Koreans who had acquired Chinese citizenship, and many had their papers destroyed by the expeditionary troops. Commercially, Japan was dominating the area. Cunningham concluded therefore that, although Japan had withdrawn, she was intensely interested in the area and that, should a favorable opportunity present itself in the future,she would not hesitate to avail herself of it in order, if possible, to add Chientao to her possessions.140

CONCLUSION

From the Korean point of view, the Chientao incident in 1920 was a by-product of the uprising in the previous year on the Korean peninsula. Throughout the whole period of Japanese colonial rule, there never was so strong a military challenge on the part of Korean exiles in Manchuria to the Japanese regime in Korea as during the brief time immediately after the uprising. Although the Koreans claimed a victory over the expeditionary forces at Chingshan-li, which boosted the morale of Korean nationalists abroad as well as in the peninsula, the Japanese army had no serious difficulty in clearing the area of the Korean independence army. The Japanese finished their mission in two months and were withdrawn as originally planned, although they could not inflict serious damage on the main body of the Korean Tongnipkun.

On the other hand, the expedition brought criticism on Japan for her high-handed treatment of the Korean, residents in Chientao, and aroused suspicion about Japan’s long-term ambitions for that part of Chinese territory. Brutalities by the Japanese soldiers towards the Koreans there were known to the outside world through the efforts of the Canadian [page 28] missionaries and became the main factor in attracting public attention in Western countries. Japan’s political designs on Chientao, which might lead to another violation of ‘the integrity of China,’ really alarmed the British government. A diplomatic measure to counter this encroachment was once considered by the Foreign Office; but it ended in a visit by a British consular official to Chientao. This incident of 1920 has been forgotten and neglected in the light of greater events in Manchuria in later years—the death of Chang Tso-lin in 1928 and the Manchurian incident in 1931.

**NOTES**

1. Kang Toksang (ed.), Gendaishi Shiryo, Chosen (Modern Historical Material, Korea) (Tokyo, 1965-67) (Hereafter cited as Gendaishi), Vol. XXVII, vii; Government-General of Chosen, Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen (Korea) (hereafter cited as Annual Report) 1910-1911,p. 35.

2. For the Chientao Agreement, see the British and Foreign State Papers 1908-1909, Vol. CII, pp. 391-392. For the border dispute from the Korean point of view, see Hyon Kyuhwan, Han,guk Yuiminsa (History of Korean Emigrees Overseas) (Seoul, 1967), Vol. I, pp. 38-44.

3. Annual Report 1912-1913. P.18.

4. Memorandum on Japanese policy in Corea, 5 July 1919, Foreign Office records deposited in the Public Record Office, London (hereafter cited as F.O.) 371/3818 106971/7293).

5. A Japanese report assessed the pros and cons of connivance at Korean emigration to Cnientao. Among advantages, economic profit and utilization ‘in an emergency, were primarily counted. See Kuksa P’yon-ch’an Wiwonhoe (compiled), Han Tongnip Undongsa (History of the Korean Independence Movement) (Seoul, 1965-1970) (Hereafter cited as HK1M), Vol. II, pp. 542-544. See also Clive to Curzon, 22 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (325/3/10).

6. For the March First Movement and the activities of the Korean independence army in Manchuria, see Chongsik Lee, The Politics of Korean Nationalism (Berkeley, 1963), pp. 89-126,157-159. The author also discussed these subjects in his thesis, ‘Korean Resistance to Japanese Colonialism: The March First Movement of 1919 and Britain’s Role in Its Outcome, (University of London, 1979).

7. ‘The sympathy of the Chinese authorities’ towards the Koreans was recorded on several occasions in British and Japanese documents. For example, sec Jordan to Curzon, 21 April 1919, F.O, 371/3817 (62758/7293); Korea, Military Report by Captain Bennen, 20 October 1920’ F.O. 371/6680 (197/197/23); Gendaishi. Vol. XXVIII, pp. 75-94.

8. Tongnip Uridongsa P,y5ngch’an Wiwonhoe (compiled). Tonnip Undongsa Charyojip (Source Materials of the Independence Movement) (Seoul, 1970-1978) (Hereafter cited as 5A//A/), Vol. X, pp. 168-169.

[page 29] 9. Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII,pp. 61-62.

10. Korea, Military Report by Captain Bennett.

11. Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 62-64.

12. Ibid., p. 62.

13. Ibid., p. 64; SMIM, Vol. X, p. 163.

14. Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII,pp. 65-66; SMIMy Vol. X,pp. 164-166.

15. Hayashi to Curzon, 11 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2431/2358/10).

16. Ibid.

17. Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 84-88,93-94,105.

18. Ibid. p. 94; SM/M, Vol. X, p. 191.

19. Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 124-126.

20. SMIM, Vol. X, p. 176.

21. Eliot to Curzon, 15 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3299/2358/10) and its enclosure. For the view of the Japanese military on the Chientao situation, see Korea, Military RcpoFt by Captain Bennett.

22. Korea, Military Report by Captain Bennett.

23. SMIM VoL X, p, 167.

24. Ibid.,pp. 225-226; Gendaishi, Vol. XXVIII, p. 117.

25. Eliot to Curzon, 16 September 1920, F.O. 371/5353 (2153/56/23).

26. SMIM, Vol. X, pp. 169-170.

27. Eliot to Curzon, 7 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345 (2358/2358/10); Hayashi to Curzon, 13 October 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (2431/2358/10).

28. Eliot to Curzon, 7 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345 (2358/2358/10); Hayashi to Curzon, 13 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345 (2429/2358/10); 13 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2431/2358/10); For the Nikolaevsk incident, see H.B. Morse & H.F. MacNair, Far Eastern International Relations (New York, 1931), Vol. II,pp. 939-940; Report on Japanese Army for 1920,8 January 1921, F.O. 371/6681 (2326/201/23).

29. Hayashi to Curzon, 13 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2431/2358/10).

30. Memorandum on the Hunchun affairs, enclosure in Woodroffc to Eliot, 19 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3043/2358/10).

31. Clive to Curzon, 11 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2797/2358/10); Wilkinson to Clive, 1 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10); Martin to Wilkinson, (undated), F.O. 371/6585 (325/3/10).

32. Hayashi to Curzon, 9 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345 (2429/2358/10). See also enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 23 October 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (3042/2358/10).

33. HKIM, Vol. III,p. 200.

34. Cunningham to Wilkinson, 7 June 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2770/3/10).

35. Wilkinson to Clive, 1 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10).

36. Hayashi to Curzon, 9 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345 (2429/2358/10).

37. Eliot to Curzon, 15 October 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (2472/2358/10). Tiehling was on the South Manchurian Railway a little north of Mukden. For the composition of the expedition, see SMIM, Vol. X,pp. 225-226, 178-182.

38. Hayashi to Curzon, 18 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2472/2358/10).

39. Gavin McCorrriack, Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China, /9//-/928 (Stanford, 1977), p. 41.

40. Eliot to Curzon, 23 Octohcr 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3042/2358/10).

41. Wilkinson to Clive, 8 Octohcr 1920, F O. 371/5346 (3361/2358/10)

[page 30] 42. Eliot to Curzon, 15 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2472/2358/10).

43. Report on Japanese army for 1920.

44. Martin to Wilkinson, 27 October 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10). One li is 2.44 miles.

45. Japan Advertiser, December 11, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

46. Japan Advertiser, December 21, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

47. SMIM, Vol. X, pp. 184-193, 227-236.

48. Hayashi to Curzon, 13 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2431/2358/10); Statement of the Japanese government, enclosure in Hayashi to Curzon, 18 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2471/2358/10).

49. Eliot to Curzon, 14 Octohcr 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2450/2358/10).

50. SMIM, Vol. X, pp. 185-191, Gendaishi, Vol XXVIII, p. 94.

51. For general descriptions of the fighting at Chingshan-li in Korean sources, see HKIM, Vol. Ill, pp. 204-217; Tongnip Shinmun (The Independence Newspaper by the Korean provisional government), December 25, 1920, March 1, 1920; Yi Bornsok, Udungbul (The Campfire) (Seoul, 1971), pp. 21-92. Yi Bomsok was one of the leading officers in Kim’s army. For Japanese sources about the fighting, see SMIM, Vol. X, pp. 195-196.

52. SMIM, Vol. X, pp. 231-233.

53. Eliot to Curzon, 27 May 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2013/3/10).

54. Japan Advertiser, December 11, 1920; Extract from Morning Post, December 14, 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (3315/2358/10).

55. Japan Advertiser, 25 December 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, January 7,1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

56. Japan Advertiser, December 17, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

57. Marsdcn to Fliot, 30 June 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2785/3/10).

58. Japan Advertiser, December 17, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

59. Henry Chung, The Case of Korea (New York, 1920), pp. 318-319. Pak Onsik, Han fguk 丁ongnip Uncion요Jihyolsa (Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement), originally published in Chinese in Shanghai, 1920, translated into Korea by Nam Mansong (Seoul, 1975), Vol. II, pp. 201-211.

60. Cunningham to Wilkinson, 7 June 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2770/3/10).

61. William Scott, Canadians in Korea: Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work (Toronto, 1975), pp. 73-74; Butler to Jordan, 11 April 1919, F.O. 371/3818 (90971/7293).

62. Wilkinson to Alston, 17 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (13이/3/10).

63. Enclosure in Clive to Curzon, 30 July 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2325/2325/10).

64. Martin to Wilkinson, 24 October 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10); 27 October 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10); Martin to Wilkinson, undated, F.O. 371/6585 (325/3/10).

65. Lay to Eliot, 24 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

66.Memorandum by Martin on Norubawie massacre, enclosure No. 3 in Lay to Fliot, 24 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

67. Memorandum by Martin on the Norubawie massacre.

68. Footc to Oltmans, 2 November 1920, enclosure in Lay to Eliot, 24 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

[page 31] 69. Memorandum by Mansfield, enclosure in Lay to Eliot, 24 November 1920.

70. Foote to Oltmans, 30 October 1920, enclosures in Lay to Eliot, 24 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

71. Alex R, McKenzie to Wilkinson, 22 November 1920,F.O. 371/6585 (1301/3/10).

72. Lay to Eliot, 6 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10). These stories were also published in the press in China. McKenzie to Wilkinson, 31 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1301/3/10).

73. Enclosure in Lay to Eliot, 6 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

74. Wilkinson to Alston, 4 February 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1301/3/10).

75. Japan Advertiser, December 1, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

76. Daily Express, December 1 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3053/2358/10).

77. Seoul Press, November 28, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920.

78. Seoul Press, December 3, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585(269/3/10).

79. Japan Advertiser, December 1, 1920. In addition, the official version of the Norubawi incident was given by Sakai Yosakichi, the acting Japanese consul-general in Lungching, to Junius Wood. Here the consul-general did not deny the massacre itself, but rather emphasized the year-long history of anti-Japanese activities by the Koreans in the region. See Japan Advertiser, December 22,1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

80. Enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 3 February 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (845/3/10).

81. Martin to Wilkinson, 30 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (13이/3/10).

82. Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

83. Japan Advertiser, December 3, 1920 enclosure in Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Japan Advertiser, December 8, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, December 16 1920,F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

86. Japan Advertiser, December 24, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921,F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

87. Eliot to Curzon, January 7 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10). For the Japanese version of the missionaries’ involvement, see Gendaishi, Vol. XXVI, pp. 187-190. Rev. Foote was regarded here as the leader of the anti-Japanese agitations.

88. Japan Advertiser, December 18, 1920, enclosure in Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

89. Hayashi to Curzon, 9 October 1920, FX). 371/5345 (2429/2358/10).

90. Ibid.; Eliot to Curzon, 14 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2450/2358/10); statement of the Japanese government, enclosure in Hayashi to Curzon, 18 October 1920, F.O. 371/ 5346(2471/2358/10).

91. Minute on Eliot to Curzon, 7 October 1920, F.O. 371/5345(2358/2358/10).

92. Minute on Parliamentary question, 21 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3336/ 2358/10).

93. Minute on Fliot to Curzon, 14 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2450/2358/10).

94. Curzon to Hayashi, 21 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2471/2358/10).

95. Minute on Eliot to Curzon, 15 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2472/2/2358/10).

96. Clive to Curzon, 22 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2567/2358/10).

[page 32] 97.Minute on Clive to Curzon, 22 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2567/2358/10). Italics are in original.

98. Minute on The Times, 28 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2655/2358/10).

99. Clive to Curzon, 11 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2797/2358/10).

100. Ibid.

101. Eliot to Curzon, 16 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2847/2358/10).

102.Minute on Daily Express, 1 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3053/2358/10); Parliamentary question, 14 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3253/2358/10). The Foreign Office did not leave any minute on the first report on the allegations of Japanese brutalities.

103. Eliot to Curzon, 5 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346/ (3111/2358/10); Eliot to Curzon, 11 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3180/2358/10).

104. Minute on Eliot to Curzon, 5 December 1920.

105. Minute on Eliot to Curzon, 11 December 1920.

106. Curzon to Eliot, 11 December 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (3111/2358/10).

107. Eliot to Curzon, 16 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2847/2358/10); 24 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2942/2358/10).

108. Eliot to Curzon, 11 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3180/2358/10).

109. Eliot to Curzon, 12 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3203/2358/10).

110. Eliot to Curzon, 16 December 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (269/3/10).

111. Eliot to Curzon, 18 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3315/2358/10).

112. Clive to Curzon, 22 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2567/2358/10); 22 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (325/3/10).

113. Clive to Curzon, 12 October 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3361/2358/10); Wilkinson to Clive, 7 October 1920,F.O. 371/5346 (3361/2358/10).

114. Wilkinson to Clive, 1 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10).

115. Wilkinson to Clive, 3 November 1920, F.O. 371/6585 (105/3/10).

116. Clive to Curzon, 22 November 1920,F.O. 371/6585 (325/3/10).

117. Wilkinson to Clive, 30 November 1920,F.O. 371/6585 (1301/3/10); Wilkinson to Alston, 12 December 1920,F.O. 371/6585 (1301/3/10); 1 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1182/ 3/10).

118. Alston to Curzon, 6 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (89/3/10).

119. Minute on Alston to Curzon, 6 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (89/3/10).

120. Eliot to Curzon, 25 November 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (2956/2358/10).

121. Eliot to Curzon, 23 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3395/2358/10).

122. Alston to Curzon, 1 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (3/3/10).

123. Alston to Curzon, 14 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (183/3/10).

124. Curzon to Eliot, 30 December 1920, F.O. 371/5346 (3395/2358/10).

125. Eliot to Curzon, 7 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (547/3/10).

126. F.O. 371/5346 (2968,3253, 3336,3337/2358/10); F.O. 371/6585 (789,1126/3/10).

127. Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 26 January 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (303/3/10) and its enclosure. See also Presbyterian Church Office to Foreign Office, 10 March 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (897/3/10).

128. Curzcn to Eliot, 14 February 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (303/3/10).

129. Minute on Presbyterian Church Office to Foreign Office, 10 March 1921.

130. Curzon to Alston, 23 March 1921, F.O, 371/6585 (897/3/10).

131. Eliot to Curzon, 6 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1270/3/10).

132.Alston to Curzon, 1 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1182/3/10).

[page 33] 133. Alston to Curzon, 15 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1396/3/10).

134. Minute on Alston to Curzon, 15 April 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (1396/3/10).

135. Eliot to Curzon, 24 April 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (1510/3/10); Curzon to Eliot, 28 April 1921,F.O. 371/6586 (1510/3/10).

136. Curzon to Alston, 21 July 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2358/3/10); Minute on Clive to Wellesley, 12 May 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2358/3/10).

137. Eliot to Curzon, 2 July 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2785/3/10); Wilkinson to Alston, 8 June 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2770/3/10); Curzon to Eliot, 9 August 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2785/3/10).

138. The number of the police in the district was derived from Cunningham’s conversation with Chinese officials there. Eliot, however, reported that the evacuation of the last two battalions had been completed on May 9 and the police force was increased by 300. Eliot to Curzon, 27 May 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2이3/3/10),6 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1254/3/10).

139. Alston to Curzon, 17 April 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (1396/3/10); 1 April 1921, F.O. 371/6585 (1182/3/10); Wilkinson to Alston, 12 April 1921,F.O. 371/6586 (2118/3/10).

140. Cunningham to Wilkinson. 7 June 1921, F.O. 371/6586 (2771/3/10).