

War, was reprinted thereafter by men who held that Kita's gloomy forebodings about the need for a thorough reformation of Japanese society as a prerequisite to leadership of a revolutionary Asia had been amply borne out by the events which followed his death.

KITA IKKI

Plan for the Reorganization of Japan

An Outline Plan for the Reorganization of Japan (Nihon kaizō hōan taikō) contained Kita's suggestions for changes necessary in Japanese society. Written in 1919 while Kita was still in Shanghai, the book was printed secretly and passed from hand to hand by Kita's associates. In 1920 its distribution was forbidden by the police. In 1923, after major excisions, the book was published, only to be banned again shortly afterward. A third edition came in 1926, but it too was later banned.

The *Outline Plan*, of which the opening section is given below, consists of cryptic announcements of steps to be taken followed by notes which justify the steps and anticipate probable objections.

[From *Nihon kaizō hōan*, pp. 6-14]

At present the Japanese empire is faced with a national crisis unparalleled in its history; it faces dilemmas at home and abroad. The vast majority of the people feel insecure in their livelihood and they are on the point of taking a lesson from the collapse of European societies, while those who monopolize political, military, and economic power simply hide themselves and, quaking with fear, try to maintain their unjust position. Abroad, neither England, America, Germany, nor Russia has kept its word, and even our neighbor China, which long benefited from the protection we provided through the Russo-Japanese War, not only has failed to repay us but instead despises us. Truly we are a small island, completely isolated in the Eastern Sea. One false step and our nation will again fall into the desperate state of crisis—dilemmas at home and abroad—that marked the period before and after the Meiji Restoration.

The only thing that brightens the picture is the sixty million fellow countrymen with whom we are blessed. The Japanese people must develop a profound awareness of the great cause of national existence and of the people's equal rights, and they need an unerring, discriminating grasp of the complexities of domestic and foreign thought. The Great War in Europe was, like Noah's flood, Heaven's punishment on them for

arrogant and rebellious ways. It is of course natural that we cannot look to the Europeans, who are out of their minds because of the great destruction, for a completely detailed set of plans. But in contrast Japan, during those five years of destruction, was blessed with five years of fulfillment. Europe needs to talk about reconstruction, while Japan must move on to reorganization. The entire Japanese people, thinking calmly from this perspective which is the result of Heaven's rewards and punishments, should, in planning how the great Japanese empire should be reorganized, petition for a manifestation of the imperial prerogative establishing "a national opinion in which no dissenting voice is heard, by the organization of a great union of the Japanese people." Thus, by homage to the emperor, a basis for national reorganization can be set up.

Truly, our seven hundred million brothers in China and India have no path to independence other than that offered by our guidance and protection. And for our Japan, whose population has doubled within the past fifty years, great areas adequate to support a population of at least two hundred and forty or fifty millions will be absolutely necessary a hundred years from now. For a nation, one hundred years are like a hundred days for an individual. How can those who are anxious about these inevitable developments, or who grieve over the desperate conditions of neighboring countries, find their solace in the effeminate pacifism of doctrinaire socialism? I do not necessarily rule out social progress by means of the class struggle. But still, just what kind of so-called science is it that can close its eyes to the competition between peoples and nations which has taken place throughout the entire history of mankind? At a time when the authorities in the European and American revolutionary creeds have found it completely impossible to arrive at an understanding of the "gospel of the sword" because of their superficial philosophy, the noble Greece of Asian culture must complete her national reorganization on the basis of her own national polity. At the same time, let her lift the virtuous banner of an Asian league and take the leadership in a world federation which must come. In so doing let her proclaim to the world the Way of Heaven in which all are children of Buddha, and let her set the example which the world must follow. So the ideas of people like those who oppose arming the nation are after all simply childish.

SECTION ONE: THE PEOPLE'S EMPEROR

Suspension of the Constitution. In order for the emperor and the entire Japanese people to establish a secure base for the national reorganization, the emperor will, by a show of his imperial prerogative, suspend the Constitution for a period of three years, dissolve both houses of the Diet, and place the entire nation under martial law.

(Note 1: In extraordinary times the authorities should of course ignore harmful opinions and votes. To regard any sort of constitution or parliament as an absolute authority is to act in direct imitation of the English and American semisacred "democracy." Those who do so are the obstinate conservatives who hide the real meaning of "democracy"; they are as ridiculous as those who try to argue national polity on the basis of the [Shintō mythological] High Plain of Heaven. It cannot be held that in the discussion of plans for naval expansion Admiral Tōgō's vote was not worth more than the three cast by miserable members of the Diet, or that in voting on social programs a vote by Karl Marx is less just than seven cast by Ōkura Kihachirō. The effect of government by votes which has prevailed hitherto is really nothing more than a maintenance of the traditional order; its puts absolute emphasis on numbers and ignores those who would put a premium on quality.)

(Note 2: Those who look upon a *coup d'état* as an abuse of power on behalf of a conservative autocracy ignore history. Napoleon's *coup d'état* in refusing to cooperate with reactionary elements offered the only out for the Revolution at a time when the parliament and the press were alive with royalist elements. And even though one sees in the Russian Revolution an incident in which Lenin dissolved with machine guns a parliament filled with obstructionists, the popular view is still that a *coup d'état* is a reactionary act.)

(Note 3: A *coup d'état* should be looked upon as a direct manifestation of the authority of the nation; that is, of the will of society. The progressive leaders have all arisen from popular groups. They arise because of political leaders like Napoleon and Lenin. In the reorganization of Japan there must be a manifestation of the power inherent in a coalition of the people and sovereign.)

(Note 4: The reason why the Diet must be dissolved is that the nobility and the wealthy upon whom it depends are incapable of standing with

the emperor and the people in the cause of reorganization. The necessity for suspension of the Constitution is that these people seek protection in the law codes enacted under it. The reason martial law must be proclaimed is that it is essential for the freedom of the nation that there be no restraint in suppressing the opposition which will come from the above groups.

However, it will also be necessary to suppress those who propagate a senseless and half-understood translation of outside revolutionary creeds as the agents of reorganization.)

The True Significance of the Emperor. The fundamental doctrine of the emperor as representative of the people and as pillar of the nation must be made clear.

In order to clarify this a sweeping reform of the imperial court in the spirit of the Emperor Jimmu in founding the state and in the spirit of the great Meiji emperor will be carried out. The present Privy Councillors and other officials will be dismissed from their posts, and in their place will come talent, sought throughout the realm, capable of assisting the emperor.

A Consultative Council (*Kōmonin*) will be established to assist the emperor. Its members, fifty in number, will be appointed by the emperor.

A member of the Consultative Council must tender his resignation to the emperor whenever the cabinet takes action against him or whenever the Diet passes a vote of nonconfidence against him. However, the Council members are by no means responsible to either the cabinet or to the Diet.

(Note 1: Japan's national polity has evolved through three stages, and the meaning of "emperor" has also evolved through three stages. The first stage, from the Fujiwara to the Taira, was one of absolute monarchy. During this stage the emperor possessed all land and people as his private property in theory, and he had the power of life and death over the people. The second stage, from the Minamoto to the Tokugawa, was one of aristocracy. During this period military leaders and nobility in each area brought land and people of their locality under their personal control; they fought wars and made alliances among themselves as rulers of small nations. Consequently the emperor's significance was different from what it had been. He now, like the Roman pope, conferred honor upon the *Bakufu*, the leader of the petty princes, and showed him-

self the traditional center of the national faith. Such a development can be compared with the role of the Roman pope in crowning the Holy Roman Emperor, leader of the various lords in the Middle Ages in Europe. The third stage, one of a democratic state, began with the Meiji Revolution, which emancipated the samurai and commoners, newly awakened, from their status as private property of their shōgun and feudal lords. Since then the emperor has a new significance as the true center of government and politics. Ever since, as the commanding figure in the national movement and as complete representative of the modern democratic country, he has become representative of the nation. In other words, since the Meiji Revolution Japan has become a modern democratic state with the emperor as political nucleus. Is there any need whatever for us to import a direct translation of the "democracy" of others as though we lacked something? The struggle between those who stubbornly talk about national polity and those who are infatuated with Europe and America, both without a grasp of the background of the present, is a very ominous portent which may cause an explosion between the emperor and the people. Both sides must be warned of their folly.)

(Note 2: There is no scientific basis whatever for the belief of the democracies that a state which is governed by representatives voted in by the electorate is superior to a state which has a system of government by a particular person. Every nation has its own national spirit and history. It cannot be maintained, as advocates of this theory would have it, that China during the first eight years of the republic was more rational than Belgium, which retained rule by a single person. The "democracy" of the Americans derives from the very unsophisticated theory of the time which held that society came into being through a voluntary contract based upon the free will of individuals; these people, emigrating from each European country as individuals, established communities and built a country. But their theory of the divine right of voters is a half-witted philosophy which arose in opposition to the theory of the divine right of kings at that time. Now Japan certainly was not founded in this way, and there has never been a period in which Japan was dominated by a half-witted philosophy. Suffice it to say that the system whereby the head of state has to struggle for election by a long-winded self-advertisement and by exposing himself to ridicule like a low-class actor seems a very strange custom to the Japanese people, who

have been brought up in the belief that silence is golden and that modesty is a virtue.)

(Note 3: The imperial court today has restored corrupt customs of the Middle Ages and has moreover added others which survived in European courts; truly it has drifted far from the spirit of the founder of the nation—a supreme commander above an equal people. The revolution under the great Meiji emperor restored and modernized this spirit. Accordingly at that time a purification of the imperial court was carried out. The necessity for doing this a second time is that when the whole national structure is being reorganized fundamentally we cannot simply leave the structure of the Court in its present state of disrepair.)

(Note 4: The provision for censure of members of the Consultative Council by cabinet and Diet is required in view of the present situation in which many men do as they wish on the excuse that they are duty-bound to help the Emperor. The obstinacy and arrogance of the members of the Privy Council is not very different from that of the court officials in Russia before the revolution. The men who cause trouble for the emperor are men of this kind.)

The Abolition of the Peerage System. The peerage system will be abolished, and the spirit of the Meiji Restoration will be clarified by removal of this barrier which has come between the emperor and the people.

The House of Peers will be abolished and replaced by a Council of Deliberation (*Shing'in*), which shall consider action taken by the House of Representatives.

The Council of Deliberation will be empowered to reject decisions taken by the House of Representatives a single time. The members of the Council of Deliberation will consist of distinguished men in many fields of activity, elected by each other and appointed by the emperor.

(Note 1: The Restoration Revolution, which destroyed government by the aristocracy, was carried out determinedly, for it also confiscated the estates of the aristocracy. It went much farther than did European countries, for with the single exception of France they were unable to dispose of the medieval estates of earlier days. But with the death of men like the great Saigō, who embodied the revolutionary spirit, men like Itō Hirobumi, with no understanding of our advancement, and men who simply acted as attendants in the Revolution, imitated and transplanted

backward aristocratic and medieval privileges which had survived in Western countries. To abolish the peerage system is to abandon a system translated directly from Europe and to return to the earlier Meiji Revolution. Do not jump to the conclusion that this is a shortcoming we are seeking to correct. We have already advanced farther than some other countries as a democratic country.)

(Note 2: The reason a bicameral system is subject to fewer errors than a unicameral system is that in very many cases public opinion is emotional, uncritical and changeable. For this reason the upper house will be made up of distinguished persons in many fields of activity instead of medieval relics.)

Universal Suffrage. All men twenty-five years of age, by their rights as people of Great Japan, will have the right, freely and equally, to stand for election to and to vote for the House of Representatives. The same will hold for local self-government assemblies.

Women will not have the right to participate in politics.

(Note 1: Although a tax qualification has determined suffrage in other countries and this system was first initiated in England, where the Parliament was originally set up to supervise the use of tax money collected by the Crown, in Japan we must establish it as a fundamental principle that suffrage is the innate right of the people. This universal suffrage must not be interpreted as a lowering of the tax qualification on grounds that all men pay at least indirect taxes. Rather, suffrage is a "duty of the people" in the same sense that military service is a "duty of the people.")

(Note 2: The duty of the people to defend the country cannot be separated from their duty to participate in its government. As this is a fundamental human right of the Japanese people, there is no reason why the Japanese should be like the slaves in the Roman Empire or like the menials driven from the imperial gate during the monarchical age—simply ruled, having to live and die under orders from a ruling class. Nothing can infringe upon the right and duty of suffrage under any circumstances. Therefore officers and soldiers on active service, even if they are overseas, should elect and be elected without any restrictions.)

(Note 3: The reason for the clear statement that "Women will not have the right to participate in politics" is not that Japanese women today have not yet awakened. Whereas the code of chivalry for knights in medieval Europe called for honoring women and gaining their favor, in medieval

Japan the samurai esteemed and valued the person of woman on approximately the same level as they did themselves, while it became the accepted code for women to honor the men and gain their favor. This complete contrast in developments has penetrated into all society and livelihood, and continues into modern history—there has been agitation by women for suffrage abroad while here women have continued devoted to the task of being good wives and wise mothers. Politics is a small part of human activity. The question of the place of women in Japan will be satisfactorily solved if we make an institutional reorganization which will guarantee the protection of woman's right to be "mother of the nation and wife of the nation." To make women accustomed to verbal warfare is to do violence to their natural aptitude; it is more terrible than using them in the line of battle. Anyone who has observed the stupid talkativeness of Western women or the piercing quarrels among Chinese women will be thankful that Japanese women have continued on the right path. Those who have developed good trends should let others who have developed bad trends learn from them. For this reason, one speaks today of a time of fusion of Eastern and Western civilization. But the ugliness of direct and uncritical borrowing can be seen very well in the matter of woman suffrage.)

The Restoration of the People's Freedom. The various laws which have restricted the freedom of the people and impaired the spirit of the constitution in the past—the Civil Service Appointment Ordinance, the Peace Preservation police law, the Press Act, the Publication Law, and similar measures—will be abolished.

(Note: This is obviously right. These laws work only to maintain all sorts of cliques.)

The National Reorganization Cabinet. A Reorganization Cabinet will be organized while martial law is in effect; in addition to the present ministries, it will have ministries for industries and several Ministers of State without Portfolio. Members of the Reorganization Cabinet will not be chosen from the present military, bureaucratic, financial, and party cliques, but this task will be given to outstanding individuals selected throughout the whole country

All the present prefectural governors will be dismissed from their offices, and National Reorganization Governors will be appointed by the same method of selection as given above.

(Note: This is necessary for the same reasons that the Meiji Revolution could not have been carried out by the Tokugawa shogun and his vassals. But a revolution cannot necessarily be evaluated according to the amount of bloodshed. It is just as impossible to say of a surgical operation that it was not thorough because of the small amount of blood that was lost. It all depends on the skill of the surgeon and the constitution of the patient undergoing the operation. Japan today is like a man in his prime and in good health. Countries like Russia and China are like old patients whose bodies are in total decay. Therefore, if there is a technician who takes a far-sighted view of the past and present, and who draws judiciously on East and West, the reorganization of Japan can be accomplished during a pleasant talk.)

The National Reorganization Diet. The National Reorganization Diet, elected in a general election and convened during the period of martial law, will deliberate on measures for reorganization.

The National Reorganization Diet will not have the right to deliberate on the basic policy of national reorganization proclaimed by the emperor.

(Note 1: Since in this way the people will become the main force and the emperor the commander, this *coup d'état* will not be an abuse of power but the expression of the national determination by the emperor and the people.)

(Note 2: This is not a problem of legal philosophy but a question of realism; it is not an academic argument as to whether or not the emperors of Russia and Germany were also empowered with such authority, but it is a divine confidence which the people place only in the Emperor of Japan.)

(Note 3: If a general election were to be held in our present society of omnipotent capital and absolutist bureaucracy the majority of the men elected to the Diet would either be opposed to the reorganization or would receive their election expenses from men opposed to the reorganization. But, since the general election will be held and the Diet convened under martial law, it will of course be possible to curb the rights of harmful candidates and representatives.)

(Note 4: It is only because there was such a divine emperor that, despite the fact that the Restoration Revolution was carried out with greater thoroughness than the French Revolution, there was no misery and disorder. And thanks to the existence of such a godlike emperor,

Japan's national reorganization will be accomplished a second time in an orderly manner, avoiding both the massacres and violence of the Russian Revolution and the snail's pace of the German revolution.)

*The Renunciation of the Imperial Estate.*¹ The emperor will personally show the way by granting the lands, forests, shares, and similar property owned by the Imperial House to the nation.

The expenses of the Imperial Household will be limited to approximately thirty million yen per year, to be supplied by the national treasury.

However, this amount can be increased with consent of the Diet if the situation warrants such action.

(Note: The present imperial estate began with holdings taken over from the Tokugawa family, and however the true meaning of the emperor might shine forth, it is inconsistent to operate such medieval finances. It is self evident that every expense of the people's emperor should be born by the nation.)

THE CONSERVATIVE REAFFIRMATION

During the years in which one branch of the ultranationalist movement turned to suggestions for radical social reforms and produced sweeping denunciations of existing Japanese society, there were many who were not prepared to follow such a headlong course. By the 1930s a sharp cleavage between social radicals and ideological conservatives was apparent.

The conservatives met the problems of social change and unrest by a reaffirmation of the unique values of "Japanism." Since they furnished a safe alternative to the radicalism of the extremists, the conservative ultranationalists were able to get the financial backing of respected segments of the business and political world. The National Purity Society (*Kokusuiikai*) was founded in 1919 to ward off foreign ideologies, reaffirm traditional values of manliness and chivalry, and reawaken loyalty to the Imperial House. It had close contacts with the leading political party, the *Seiyūkai*. In social issues like labor disputes it urged mediation or marshalled force as seemed preferable, usually to the advantage of management. The League to Prevent Bolshevization (*Seikōka bōshidan*) was

¹ This entire section was censored in pre-war editions.