

Manchuria

Japan had control over much of Manchuria, which was part of northern China. The Chinese regarded the area as theirs.

LONG TERM CAUSES

People were cross with the government:

- Washington Naval Agreement not allowing Japan as many ships as Britain and the USA- politicians had agreed to that.
- Annoyed that the Allies refused to state racial equality with the Japanese.

Economic Reasons

- Population had grown leading to a rise in need for food imports- limited by the Great Depression encouraging countries to be isolated.
- Silk trade affected by the Depression.
- Employment fell 30%.

Militarism

There was already tension between the military and the government. The military thought that aggressive expansion into Asia would solve the problems. As conditions got worse, the people agreed with the military.

SHORT TERM CAUSES

- China was weak but getting stronger and more Chinese people were moving into Manchuria. If Japan wanted Manchuria, they needed to take it sooner rather than later.
- China had been run by a national government, but warlords really had control. The national government was beginning to stand up to the warlords and it seemed that the Chinese might then chuck the Japanese out of Manchuria if the Japanese didn't move soon.

EVENTS

THE MUKDEN INCIDENT: The Japanese Kwangtung Army were stationed by the South Manchurian Railway (owned by Japan) which experienced an explosion. The Japanese blamed it on the Chinese but it was probably set by the Japanese so that they would have an excuse to invade Manchuria- "to protect their interests".

- **THE JAPANESE TOOK OVER MANCHURIA:** Much to the upset of the government who were against the action taken by the Japanese army, but the wave of nationalism that swept Japan forced them to accept the event.
- **MANCHURIA WAS RENAMED MANCHUKUO** and the Japanese installed a puppet ruler (a ruler under their control).

THE LEAGUE'S RESPONSE

- Britain and France did not really care about Manchuria, seeing it as Japan's sphere of influence.
- The Japanese had convinced people that the Mukden Incident was the Chinese's fault.
- HOWEVER when China appealed for help, the League had to intervene- they told Japanese forces to withdraw.
- The Japanese did not.
- They sent the Lytton Inquiry off to investigate. Their report said that the Japanese were wrong.
- The Japanese ignored the report and left the League.

HOW THIS CAUSED THE FAILURE OF THE LEAGUE

- It became apparent that Britain and France were not interested in doing anything that wasn't in their own interests.
- Equally, it became apparent that the League were powerless to stop an invasion, or to help a country that was within its jurisdiction.
- This caused dictators like Mussolini and Hitler to think they could also get away with invading other countries- the League clearly couldn't stop them.

