



Women, the State, and National Mobilization
in Prewar Japan

Jane Mitchell

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愛国婦人会



国防婦人会

Source: Nakano,
(see bibliography)

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Introduction

This thesis has a two-fold purpose. Firstly, to elucidate the history of the two largest women's groups in Japan in the 1930s - Aikoku Fujinkai¹ (Patriotic Women's Association) and Kokubō Fujinkai² (National Defense Women's Association). Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, to illustrate the process of national mobilization and what it meant to women's organizations in Japanese society in that period. Although there were three major national women's organizations at this time, I have chosen Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai to illustrate this process because they provide an interesting contrast. The inclusion of Aikoku Fujinkai also demonstrates the historical links of the process of national mobilization with the Taishō period and the changes which this process underwent during the 1930s.

Although the main focal period of the thesis is the 1930s, the long history of Aikoku Fujinkai, which was founded in 1901, has necessitated the inclusion of an introductory chapter on the formation and history of the group until 1931. This chapter will deal with the organization's foundation, structure, and activities during periods of war and peace, and its role in stemming the spread of "dangerous" ideologies. Aikoku Fujinkai worked in close association with the state by performing social welfare duties, and by providing "proper" ideological guidance for women. Again, this chapter also highlights the historical links of women's groups and national mobilization.

The 1930s is the focal period of the thesis for a variety of reasons. Firstly, from the establishment of Kokubō Fujinkai in 1932, the decade was marked by the rapid expansion of membership of conservative women's organizations. This movement was also paralleled by increasing state control of these groups. State control of women's groups was not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a larger trend within Japanese society. This trend toward mass mobilization of people and resources for war culminated in the formation of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association³ in 1940. The IRAA absorbed the political parties and other groups, acting as an umbrella organization; inevitably, Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai cooperated with the new system and finally amalgamated in 1942 to form Dainihon Fujinkai⁴ (The Greater Japan Women's Association).

By exploring the organizational structure and expansion of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai up until their merger, a clear picture emerges of how the mass mobilization of women was instituted through these organizations. The Japanese use an appropriate adjective for this organizational structure - mōrateki⁵ - which describes a network which is all-inclusive and exhaustive. In other words, an organizational structure which includes all women. In both the case of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai, this organizational structure was instituted from above by men from the military and the civilian government. This of course raises questions about the degree of autonomy of these organizations, and whether there were any changes in their autonomy over time.

The identification of mass mobilization as a definitive characteristic of fascism by the Japanese historian, Furuya Tetsuo (see bibliography), provides an important analytical framework for this thesis. Within this framework, the pattern of organizational change of Aikoku Fujinkai to a structure similar to Kokubō Fujinkai is part of the process labelled "fascistization"⁶ of women's organizations by the Japanese women's historian, Chino Yōichi. The all-inclusive nature of this "fascistization" is made apparent when we bring the smaller civilian women's groups and leaders into consideration. These were similarly absorbed into the state system by the creation of umbrella organizations controlling the activities of groups, and the use of civilian women's leaders on government committees.

Before embarking on the major body of the thesis, a short explanation about my sources is in order. Because of the lack of materials available in English, much of the information contained in the thesis comes from Japanese sources. Some of these were collected while in Japan; others have come from collections held by various Australian universities. Information from those Japanese sources lacking footnotes (most notably Fujii Tadatoshi's Kokubō Fujinkai) has been cross-referenced wherever possible. Of the few English sources available, none give a complete picture of the events which shape the direction of national mobilization in relation to national women's groups. This in itself makes my attempt to clarify the relationship between the state and women by exploring and analysing the organization and function of Aikoku Fujinkai

and Kokubō Fujinkai all the more challenging.



Girls sewing sennin-bari (thousand-stitch belts) to give
to departing soldiers.

Source: Dainihon teikoku rikukai-gun (see bibliography)
p.219.

Chapter I: Aikoku Fujinkai 1901 - 1931

Okumura Ioko, the founder of Aikoku Fujinkai, was born in 1845, the daughter of a monk from Hizen (present day Nagasaki prefecture). Both her father and brother were active in the sonnō jōi¹ (revere the emperor, expel the barbarian) movement before the Meiji Restoration, and she shared their concern with Japan's military position on the Asian continent. After the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895), Okumura travelled to Korea and worked toward establishing a technical school to encourage industrial production.² In 1900 she joined an expedition sent by the Higashi Honganji temple in Kyōto to the site of the Boxer Rebellion near Peking, intending to extend condolences to the Japanese troops. It was Okumura's experiences in China which convinced her of the need to establish a women's organization aimed at providing aid to the bereaved families of soldiers killed in action.³

When Okumura returned to Japan, she approached the leader of the House of Peers, Prince Konoe Atsumaro⁴, who gave his positive support to the plan. On the 6th February 1901, a meeting was held at Konoe's official residence, attended by his wife Sadako, various other members of the nobility, one representative from the army, two leaders in women's education, Shimoda Utako and Yamawaki Fusako, and, of course, Okumura Ioko. Shimoda Utako was called upon to write a draft of the association's aims and regulations, and this draft was presented to the next meeting held on the 24th February, and was officially adopted as Aikoku Fujinkai's prospectus and regulations.⁵ In April Okumura

departed on a nationwide speaking tour to publicize the organization and recruit members. She eventually spent 2 1/2 years travelling throughout Japan.⁶

Aikoku Fujinkai's regulations and prospectus which were published on March 2nd 1901 announced the aims of the organization to be the assistance of bereaved families of war dead and aid for wounded or invalided soldiers. The association's head office was to remain in Tōkyō, and sub-branches were to be established in each prefecture. Membership was divided into three classes - honorary membership, which was restricted to members of the nobility; special membership, which was restricted to donors of ¥2 per year for 10 years, or a single sum of ¥15 or above; and ordinary membership, with dues of ¥1 per year for 10 years, or a single donation of ¥7 or above. One could also become a supporter of the association by donating 20 sen or more. These membership divisions were distinguished visually by the use of different coloured badges.⁷ These membership dues were considered quite expensive for the time, and this fact lends weight to the view that Aikoku Fujinkai was an elitist organization of upper-class wives.

The presidency of the association was granted to Princess Chieko, and Okumura was made director. The majority of the officials of the Tōkyō head branch were from the nobility, upper-class wives or leading women's educationalists. There were also eight non-member advisors including Prince Konoe Atsumaro and Major Horiuchi Bunjirō from the army.⁸ Aikoku Fujinkai's direct links with the imperial family legitimized the association as a patriotic

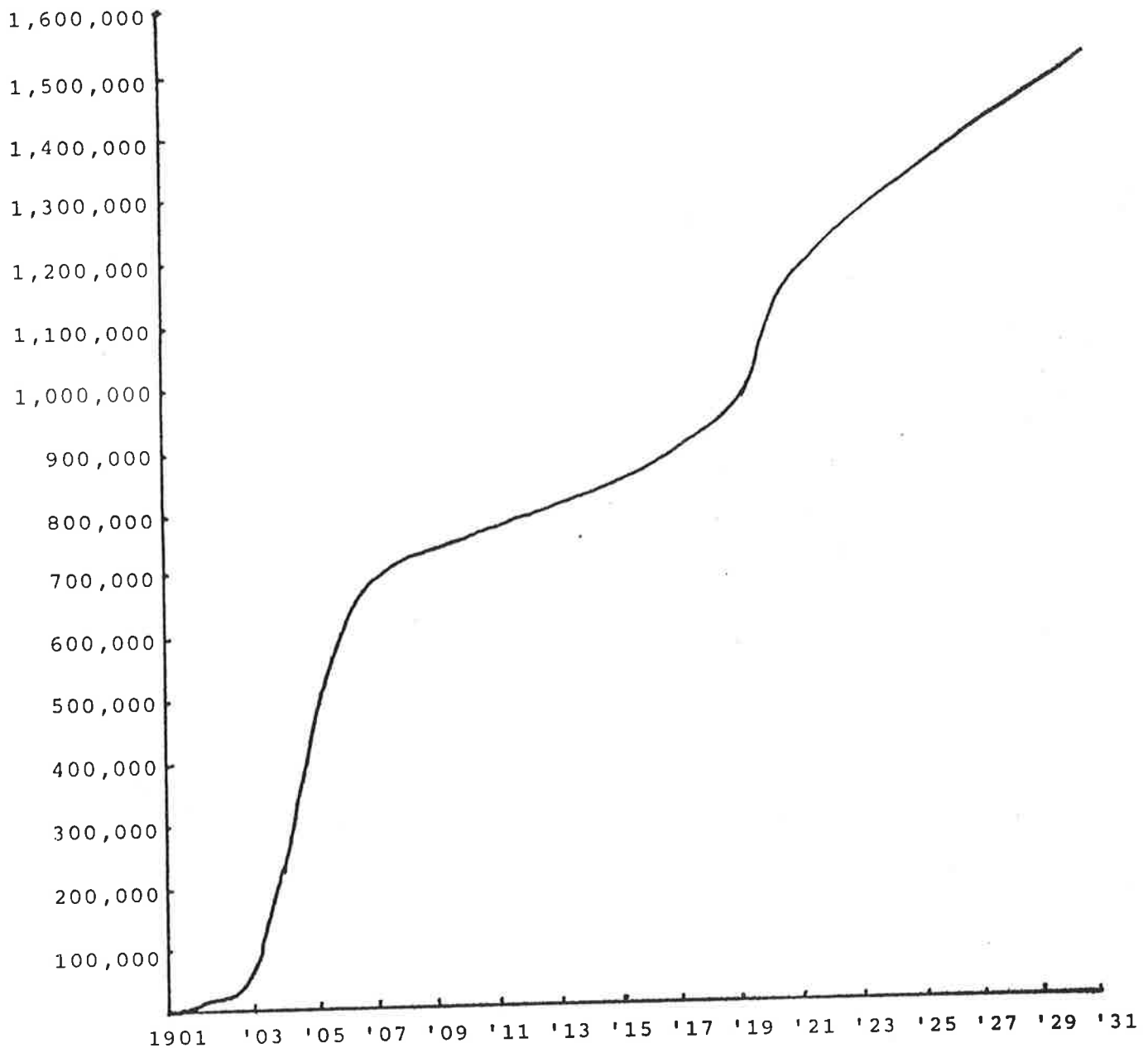
organization devoted to the welfare of imperial soldiers and their families, and aided the group's expansion.

The first major expansion in membership came with the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-5. From Figure I on p.8, we can see Aikoku Fujinkai's membership increased phenomenally during this period. This national growth was no doubt aided by the extremely generous donations from members of the imperial family and the nobility. The emperor, empress, and crown prince alone donated the sum of ¥14,500 to Aikoku Fujinkai as imperial grants in early 1905.⁹

The war not only expanded membership and aided the establishment of sub-branches in the prefectures, but also drew Aikoku Fujinkai into a closer relationship with the military. Because Aikoku Fujinkai's activities centred around military support duties, they required close liaison with military figures both on a national and a regional level. These activities concentrated on the welfare of bereaved families of the war dead, but also included such duties as sending off and welcoming back soldiers, and preparing relief packages¹⁰ to be sent to soldiers at the front.

Aikoku Fujinkai's original administrative structure was modelled on geo-political divisions with sub-branches at the prefectural level, county secretariats at the county (gun) level, and ward committees at the local town or village level. The sub-branch head was usually the prefectural governor's wife, and this custom followed through the organizational structure, with the wives of county city, town, or village heads also the head of Aikoku

Figure I: Membership of Aikoku Fujinkai 1901-1931



Sources: Membership numbers have come from a variety of sources including Fujii Tadatoshi, Kokubō Fujinkai, p.92; Murakami Nobuhiko, Nihon no fujin mondai, p.166; Nagara Kazuko, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," pp.117,121 and "Taishō Shōwa-ki ni okeru fujin dantai no shakaiteki kinō," pp.18.23.24; and Sotozaki Mitsuhiro, Kōchi-ken fujin kaihō undō-shi, p.77. I have excluded figures from Yoshimi Chikako, Nihon fuashizumu to josei, because they are wildly divergent from the other sources.

Fujinkai at the appropriate level. The structure of Aikoku Fujinkai at this stage incorporated the middle and upper classes of women in the towns and villages, but made no attempt to include ordinary women as members. It was not until 1931 that the association addressed this problem after it had come under heavy criticism for its elitist character.

The organizational structure of Aikoku Fujinkai also closely paralleled the administration of the Japanese Red Cross, whose officials were usually heads of local government. These same male officials acted as consultants to Aikoku Fujinkai at all levels of the organization. The close interrelationship between these two organizations is also indicated by the fact that the annual general meeting of Aikoku Fujinkai was held the day after the annual general meeting of the Red Cross in Tōkyō.¹¹

After the end of the Russo-Japanese war, Aikoku Fujinkai gradually lost its raison d'être as a military support organization. Despite numerous military intrigues in China and Manchuria, and various attempted army coups at home, Japan remained at peace until the Manchurian Incident in 1931. In this prolonged period of relative peace, Aikoku Fujinkai was criticized for its pro-war orientation. This criticism was directed both from within the organization and without. Criticism from the socialist women's movement came as early as 1907 in the magazine Sekai fujin (Women of the World), which pointed out the irony of women working for a state under which they had no political rights.¹² Article 5 of the Police Security Regulations¹³ effectively barred women from even attending

political meetings. This law was not amended until 1922, making it legal for women to hold and attend political meetings, but they still could not join or form political parties.¹⁴ Perhaps because women were excluded from the political process, charitable activities were the one area in which women could participate freely, and feel as if they were playing a worthwhile role in society.

Criticism from within the organization stemmed from completely different causes and seriously threatened the financial base of the organization. To explain, the Rice Riots of 1918 signified a deep malaise in Japan's national economy. The rising price of rice and the plummeting price of silk, one of Japan's major exports, had serious repercussions for both the urban and rural population of Japan. The situation was most acute in the rural areas where a fall in the price of rice in 1921 threatened the economic base of tenant farmers.¹⁵ The distressing economic conditions had a serious impact on the ability of Aikoku Fujinkai members to pay their membership dues, especially in those rural areas worst hit by the agricultural depression. Secession from the association was also a problem, and there was a growing call to disperse the funds of the association to the local chapters and members in need of financial aid.¹⁶

In the face of this mounting criticism, Aikoku Fujinkai decided to amend its four original articles of incorporation at its annual national conference on May 16th 1917. These regulations had limited the organization's aims and activities to direct military support duties.¹⁷ Although the association decided to take on a wider social

role, at the same time it strengthened its military support duties. The following extract from the "Aid and Relief Regulations"¹⁸ of the Ibaraki prefectural sub-branch of Aikoku Fujinkai demonstrates the change in emphasis:

Those who became the object of this economic relief were -

1. The families of non-commissioned officers, draftees or enlisted personnel on active service;
2. Disabled soldiers, the bereaved families of soldiers, the injured, sick and senile;
3. Victims of disasters;
4. Pregnant and nursing mothers in economic difficulties.

The contents of the aid were -

1. Support for village industries;
2. Support of the injured, sick and senile;
3. Aid in the case of catastrophes;
4. Free examination and treatment of expectant and nursing mothers and their children. Medical expenses, ¹⁹ and the cost of bedding and clothing supplies.

The first activity along these new guidelines occurred in 1917 when heavy storms struck the area between Ōsaka and Kyōto from September 30th to October 1st. Ten prefectures were affected and Aikoku Fujinkai was very active in granting aid to the victims of the disaster.²⁰ However, for the most part, the revision of Aikoku Fujinkai's regulations did not have much effect until the appointment of Shimoda Utako as head of the organization in 1920. From this period on, there was both an increase in social welfare activities at the central and sub-branch level, and an expansion in membership numbers. Unfortunately, because of the high rate of default on the

payment of membership dues during this period, it is difficult to calculate membership numbers with any degree of accuracy. Most members belonged to the category of ordinary annual membership and paid dues of ¥1 yearly. Because of this, during periods of economic hardship, the rate of default on payment of membership dues was quite high. One critic of the association writing in the Nihon rōdō nenkan (Japan Labour Yearbook) in 1920 put the figure of paying members at approximately 200,000, while the association claimed a membership of 995,674.²¹

Despite this criticism, Shimoda's appointment and subsequent campaign tour certainly bolstered membership numbers. Shimoda's tour of over one full year took her from Hokkaidō and Sakhalin in the north, to Manchuria and Korea on the continent.²² Under her presidency until 1927, Aikoku Fujinkai initiated 11 social welfare projects at the central level in Tōkyō, and 220 at the prefectural sub-branch level. At the central level in Tōkyō, these new activities included a career advisory office, employment office, night school, women's dormitory and a settlement house.²³ At the sub-branch level, the most important social welfare duties were the establishment of midwifery and nursing training centres, infant health advisory centres, village crèches, and lecture meetings to disseminate information on health and hygiene.²⁴

Although the number of projects undertaken was relatively low, Aikoku Fujinkai was filling a gap in the social welfare structure of the state. In 1917, the Home Ministry stated that economic aid to the poor and victims of disasters was the responsibility of towns and villages.

The government thus avoided financial responsibility for social welfare programs. The Education Ministry took a more active role and organized the League for the Improvement of Living Standards²⁵ under the leadership of educationalists such as Shimoda, Yamawaki, and Kaetsu Takako. The league advocated a simplified lifestyle and encouraged savings.²⁶ But here also, it was the activity of community groups and leaders which ensured the success or failure of these movements. Government activity in this period was, for example, restricted mainly to conducting surveys on the state of health of agricultural villagers. On the whole, these government campaigns were little more than rhetorical exercises and had little effect on the standard of living in agricultural areas.

The real progress was made by groups like Aikoku Fujinkai which operated crèches in the villages during the busy harvest season, and conducted health and hygiene lectures. The crèches were joint community activities and relied on the cooperation of the local elite, such as the school principal, teachers, the village head and local religious leaders, to ensure their success.²⁷ The establishment of these crèches was not a uniform process. The village of Suye in Kumamoto Prefecture, for example, did not establish a crèche until about 1935.²⁸

The cooperation of Aikoku Fujinkai with state campaigns intensified in the late 1920s. In 1926 under the Wakatsuki Cabinet, the government initiated a campaign to encourage consumer thrift and savings. In compliance with this campaign, Aikoku Fujinkai's Ibaraki sub-branch issued the following circular:

Advice to all members concerning the women's campaign to encourage thrift and diligence:

It has been decided at present by the government to conduct a week-long campaign for diligence and thrift for girls from the 1st of September, in the 15th year of Taishō [1926]. Diligence and thrift, it is hardly necessary to say, are very important for women today. Although we have made considerable effort in the past, faced with this special campaign, shouldn't we renew our spirits, exert our ingenuity further, and try to accomplish this special campaign, as it is called? Following are some clauses which we should study as is appropriate to our circumstances and, even if in normal times they might be impossible, shouldn't we try to carry them out through an extra-special effort?

1. Carry out one's own work oneself. If you are a household which uses servants, reduce their number considerably.
2. Make all clothing (including hair ornaments, footwear, and accessories) modest, taking especial care when attending meetings and visiting.
3. Establish weekly household budgets, be precise with the accounts, and strive to bring about a simple budgeted lifestyle in the future.
4. In relation to a weekly cooking schedule, plan especially to economize and rationalize.
5. Administer special care so that we can anticipate the establishment of households based on the principles of diligence and thrift.

August 25th, 15th year of Taishō
Aikoku Fujinkai

Suematsu Chiyoko, President of Ibaraki 29
sub-branch of Aikoku Fujinkai.

The style of this pronouncement is a blend of bureaucratic rhetoric and "feminine" exhortation (let us..., shouldn't we...?) that is typical of the circulars and reports of women's organizations such as Aikoku Fujinkai. Given the wide use of kanji (Chinese characters) throughout the text, it is debatable how comprehensible this type of document was to women in the villages. Although by 1904 90% of

women were attending at least four years of primary education,³⁰ many could only read the kana (phonetic) syllabary. In fact, literacy was considered a necessary skill for the position of local branch head of the women's association: "'It's a hard job,' said one [village woman], 'because you have to know how to write.'"³¹

In September 1929, the Hamaguchi Cabinet requested the cooperation of women's groups in its austerity policy, and invited representatives from these groups to participate in a "National Women's Conference on the Economy".³² This was immediately followed by a "National Conference on the Mass Mobilization and Education of Girls and Youths"³³ during which a participant made a speech indicating the active role Aikoku Fujinkai was expected to play in the government's campaign for thrift. The participant felt that the provincial sub-branches of Aikoku Fujinkai should especially support the campaign, and that because the provincial sub-branch heads of the association were usually provincial governors' wives, s/he could envisage no problems with its implementation.³⁴

Besides cooperating with government campaigns, Aikoku Fujinkai played another important role during the Taishō period (1912-1926). Shimoda's national campaign tour in 1920 had a dual purpose: firstly, to recruit new members, and, secondly, to indoctrinate women in rural areas with state-sponsored concepts of womanhood and the family. Shimoda aimed to "defend women from the danger of new ideologies which went against the national polity of unity between the emperor and his people."³⁵ In this respect, Aikoku Fujinkai supplemented the aims of the state

education system. The organization filled a gap in the education of women who usually only completed elementary school.

Shimoda aimed to counteract the "threat" which socialist and other left-wing women's movements posed to women especially in rural areas. Various left-wing women's groups emerged during the Taishō period. These were mainly based in urban areas and included such groups as Shinfujin Kyōkai³⁶ (New Women's Society) established by Hiratsuka Raichō and Ichikawa Fusae in 1920, and Sekirankai³⁷ (Red Wave Society) founded in 1921 and whose membership included Yamakawa Kikue and Itō Noe. Various left-wing political groups also formed women's departments, such as the Yūaikai³⁸ (Friendly Society) in 1916.³⁹ Although these groups were urban-based, Shimoda feared their encroaching influence in rural areas. These same fears were reflected by the state, and in this respect Shimoda's campaign tour in 1920 was carrying out the political work of the state by trying to prevent the emergence of "dangerous" modern ideologies which stressed such concepts as liberalism and individualism. This fact is not at all surprising if we consider Shimoda's background as a leader in women's education and also as head of the Peeress' School.⁴⁰

When we look at Aikoku Fujinkai's progress from 1901 until 1931, the group's activities fall into two distinct periods. From the association's inception in 1901, until the revision of its articles of incorporation in 1917, the organization concentrated on military support duties as its main function. However, with the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, and Okumura's death in 1907,⁴¹

the association came under growing criticism for emphasising military support duties, while ignoring social welfare issues. The revision of Aikoku Fujinkai's regulations in 1917 marked the beginning of the next phase, when the group tried to redress this imbalance and took on a wider role by tackling social welfare problems. During this period, the association moved into closer contact with the Education and Home Ministries by cooperating with successive government campaigns. Besides supplementing the state's education and welfare systems in this manner, Aikoku Fujinkai acted as a breakwater against the emergence of "dangerous" modern ideologies in rural areas. The major theme throughout the whole period is the progressively closer relationship between Aikoku Fujinkai and the state bureaucracies.

Some important questions should be raised concerning the function of the association during this period. For example, why was the group initially so successful in organizing women? The answer to this question lies in its patriotic orientation and imperial links which were attributes which appealed to nationalistic sentiment during the Russo-Japanese War. During the following period, it was the association's stance as the "defender" of women and the institution of the family against "dangerous" ideologies which, together with its social welfare activities, ensured its viability. However, these same characteristics served to shackle the development of the association in the 1930s. Because of the popular conception of Aikoku Fujinkai as an upper-class charitable organization, there were limits to its

popularization; it was not until 1931 that this issue was addressed.



Members of the Kansai branch of Kokubō Fujinkai serving tea to troops billeted in the area.

Source: Fujii. p.65.

Chapter II: The Formation of Kokubō Fujinkai

The Manchurian Incident of September 1931 marked what became a new era for women's groups in Japan. It acted as a catalyst for both the reform of Aikoku Fujinkai and the creation of Kokubō Fujinkai.¹ In this chapter we will be looking at the formation of Kokubō Fujinkai, which was born around the port area of Ichioka in Ōsaka. As a major port for the transfer of troops to the front, Ōsaka was directly affected by the Manchurian Incident.

Even before the establishment of Kokubō Fujinkai in 1932, the Manchurian Incident had instigated various national campaigns waged by newspapers and patriotic groups. These campaigns began as collections for relief packages but gradually degenerated into the more general category of "donations for national defense,"² covering the purchase of airplanes and other military hardware. Because of Ōsaka's strategic importance as a port, the emphasis was slightly different. Here, patriotic Japanese were urged to support the "campaign to promote air defense"³, and the donations were used to buy anti-aircraft artillery. The military obviously supported such campaigns as an effective way in which to augment the military budget. When the campaigns started to lose their impetus, the army continued the movement through the regimental headquarters in the prefectures by involving the local Reservists' Association, local branches of youth groups, and women's groups such as Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai⁴ (Greater Japan Federation of Women's Associations) and Aikoku Fujinkai.⁵ It was against this background of "national defense" campaigns that the

Ōsaka Kokubo Fujinkai was formed.

The establishment of the Ōsaka Kokubō Fujinkai in March 1932 began at the instigation of Yasuda Sei and Mitani Eiko, two relatively unknown housewives from the port district. It required consultation with local officials such as the police chief of Ichioka, an officer from the 8th Regiment stationed in Ōsaka, and a sergeant from the local kempeitai (military police) forces. Another military figure, Ōmori Tadashige, a long-time friend of Yasuda's husband Ryūkichi, was also involved and soon became a close advisor to the organization. Yasuda and Mitani also enlisted the support of Ōe Sōten, the section chief of Ōsaka Asahi Shimbun in charge of fund-raising campaigns, and Onda Kazuko, a reporter with the newspaper. Ōe was chosen because of his expertise in the newspaper appeals for donations for relief packages. He was also involved in the Ōsaka air defense campaign mentioned above. Onda Kazuko had participated in the establishment of a general conference of women's groups in the Kansai district in 1919; later she headed the Kansai Fujin Rengōkai (Kansai Women's Federation). Her experience with women's groups explains her early involvement with the formation of Kokubō Fujinkai.⁶

A particularly interesting aspect of the involvement of these people lies in the fact that their initial participation was on the local level: their organization was limited to Ōsaka. The most substantial source in English on Kokubō Fujinkai fails to highlight the distinction between the establishment of the Ōsaka Kokubō Fujinkai and the later national organization, Dainihon

Kokubō Fujinkai. Richard Smethurst's description of Kokubō Fujinkai as an army creation, and of the original founders as "Osaka women, most of whom were army wives, and military police officers,"⁷ effectively avoids crediting any spontaneous action on the part of the original founders of the Ōsaka organization. Perhaps the key to understanding Smethurst's interpretation lies in his approach to the problem; that is, Smethurst stresses the rural origins of Japanese militarism. By not fully addressing the urban origins of Kokubō Fujinkai, Smethurst does little to explain the actions of Yasuda and Mitani in June 1932, when, on their own initiative, they travelled to Tōkyō to request aid from the Ministry of the Army in setting up a national organization.⁷

Through the introduction and assistance of the military official, Ōmori Tadashige, Yasuda and Mitani embarked on a dual course of action to set up a branch office in Tōkyō and to work towards establishing the association as a national organization. The first aim was achieved in August 1932 when the Tōkyō branch of Kokubō Fujinkai held its inaugural ceremony and issued its aims and regulations. This manifesto was written by Yasuda Sei and reflected her aspirations for the organization as a military support group. The following extract expresses her expectations of the role women were to play:

As women, we must share [with men] the responsibility for loyalty and patriotism. Through the united power of women, we must actively carry out public service for the sake of the Japanese Empire. With this urgent necessity in mind,⁹ we have established Nihon Kokubō Fujinkai.

Two military figures who were instrumental in achieving the

second of Yasuda's aims, that of establishing a national organization, were Major Ishii Yoshiho and Colonel Nakai Ryōtarō, head of the Awards' Department¹⁰ in the Ministry of the Army. The first step in this process was the establishment of the Kantō head branch on October 27th 1932, when General Araki¹¹ Sadao's wife was made president.¹² Colonel Nakai was responsible for refining the draft of the association's aims; the resulting manifesto was markedly different from August version written by Yasuda:

In this grave situation facing the Empire, the mission of Japanese women is to sacrifice themselves for the prosperity of the Empire by demonstrating the womanly virtues of traditional Japan, overcoming national difficulties, and securing our national defense.¹³

The discrepancy between the August and October versions of Kokubō Fujinkai's aims demonstrates the difference between the army's perception of the organization, and that of the women who initiated it. In the August version, Yasuda describes the role of women as "sharing with men] the responsibility for loyalty and patriotism." Her emphasis is on "active public service...through the united power of women."¹⁴ Nakai's version, on the other hand, stresses the "womanly virtues of traditional Japan."¹⁵ The discrepancy between these two versions did not signify any major discord between Yasuda and Nakai, rather the army's version became the official stance of the association at the expense of Yasuda's original manifesto. From this time on, the army came to dominate the association; the founding Ōsaka branch was reestablished as the Kansai head office on December 13th 1932, adopting the army version of the organization's aims

in the process.¹⁶

Until the formation of the Kansai head branch, the membership of the organization was quite small. The establishment of the Kantō branch had boosted membership numbers to about 1,000 in October, but the Ōsaka membership remained almost constant with only the original forty members.¹⁷ Obviously, the membership of Kokubō Fujinkai did not rival Aikoku Fujinkai at this stage. However, by 1936 this situation had been reversed with Kokubō Fujinkai holding the dominant position.¹⁸ One reason for this success was Kokubō Fujinkai's image of active public service which dates from the association's inception as a military support group in 1932. This image is aptly described in the official history of Kokubō Fujinkai:

...day and night, in the morning with the cold wind blowing on the wharf, in the dead of night at Ōsaka station, the mere 30 or 40 members boiled up hot water in kettles brought from their own homes, presented gifts to the departing soldiers from their own wallets, gave carrots to the army horses, shouted banzai banzai, and offered ¹⁹condolences and prayers for the soldiers.

The members of the Ōsaka Kokubō Fujinkai were affectionately called heitai baasan (army grannies) by the departing soldiers, and were held in high esteem for their activities. In contrast to Kokubō Fujinkai's very active role in serving tea to the departing soldiers, Aikoku Fujinkai merely sent representatives of the organization to extend formal condolences to the men.²⁰

The use of white aprons²¹ as a type of uniform also ensured Kokubō Fujinkai maintained a high profile in their public activities, such as holding tea receptions and the solicitation of donations for relief packages. Besides

being suitable attire for Kokubō Fujinkai's service work, the apron in theory symbolized the egalitarian nature of the association. Again, this was in direct contrast to Aikoku Fujinkai where members wore kimono, the style of which would indicate a member's class background.²² While the apron reinforced Kokubō Fujinkai's feminine role, it also camouflaged any "threatening" aspects of women's outdoor activities. Thus, although these women had "come out of the kitchen," in a literal sense, they were still symbolically tied to the kitchen by wearing aprons.

While the apron may have symbolically represented an egalitarian principle, in practice it didn't. Because the aprons were a type of uniform the women had to buy them. In the village of Suye in 1935, the cost of the aprons varied according to quality, the highest price at sixty sen. The cloth sashes were also an extra seven sen. The women of the village considered the aprons a foolish extravagance. Wearing them amused the women because they didn't "consider it a dress-up costume at all. Indeed, if they [werel] wearing an apron when a caller [camel], they usually [lowered] the top." "All in all [the women] thought it stupid."²³ Considering these remarks, the cost of the apron seems to have outweighed any principles behind it.

The single most important aspect which guaranteed the new organization's popularity was the low cost of membership. This was a deliberate policy of Kokubō Fujinkai, which held that:

...if we keep the membership dues low, in order to maintain spiritual unity, then anybody can join the association,²⁴ regardless of whether they are rich or poor...

This egalitarian philosophy was in direct contrast to

Aikoku Fujinkai, whose membership dues were, as noted in Chapter I, relatively high and graded according to social rank and wealth. The actual cost of membership was up to the discretion of the head branches, and in special cases could be waived.²⁵ Kokubō Fujinkai also instituted a system whereby campaign funds could be used to pay for membership costs. This proved so successful that other groups, including Aikoku Fujinkai, adopted the method.²⁶

The use of aprons, low membership dues, and the image of Kokubō Fujinkai as an active service organization gave the group a wider appeal than Aikoku Fujinkai. But these characteristics alone do not explain why the army chose to develop and expand Kokubō Fujinkai rather than, for example, reorganizing a well-established organization such as Aikoku Fujinkai. It seems mainly a question of bureaucratic jurisdiction. Although the army had an advisory role in directing Aikoku Fujinkai's affairs through the Awards Department of the Ministry of the Army, Aikoku Fujinkai really lay within the jurisdiction of the Ministry for Home Affairs. With the formation of Kokubō Fujinkai, the army had the opportunity to control its own civilian organization with the potential to expand nationally to embrace all women. So, despite the reorganization of Aikoku Fujinkai in 1931-1932 (to be discussed in the next chapter) the army chose to develop its own organization in Kokubō Fujinkai, promoting the view that it was "an association which arose from the power of women below as an irrepressible manifestation of the spirit of Japan."²⁷

The potential of Kokubō Fujinkai to expand

nationally to embrace all women also explains why the army chose not to develop the Wives' Auxiliary Club of the Reservists' Association. The Momozono district of the Reservists' Association in Ōsaka established a Wives' Auxiliary Club on the 20th April 1932, only one month after the Ōsaka Kokubo Fujinkai was formed. Numerically, the Wives' Auxiliary Club was far superior to Kokubō Fujinkai. It was also more active in preparing relief packages for soldiers. However, after the crisis atmosphere generated by the Manchurian Incident had abated, this group never developed into anything more than a social club for soldiers' wives.²⁸ Because Kokubō Fujinkai was not restricted to soldiers' wives, the potential was far greater for its use as a vehicle of national mobilization. The army actually encouraged the trend for the local leadership of Kokubō Fujinkai to be chosen from the local elite, rather than the wives of the Reservists' Association's branch chiefs. This trend "ensured [Kokubō Fujinkai] close connections with the community's power structure in which local reservists provided important leadership."²⁹

From 1933 to 1934, the main emphasis of Kokubō Fujinkai was the expansion of membership. Initially, this expansion occurred on an ad hoc basis, with no overall plan. Later, a scheme for the structure of Kokubō Fujinkai was formulated at the request of Major Ishii Yoshiho, and followed the composition of the Reservists' Association: national head office in Tōkyō, divisional head branches, regimental head branches at the prefectural level, sub-branches at county city level, local chapters at town,

village factory or school level, community corps and neighbourhood groups.³⁰ The plan to expand the membership of Kokubō Fujinkai was devised by Ishii, who had since been promoted to Lieutenant-General and transferred to Ōsaka's 4th Division as head of external affairs, and Ōmori Tadashige, long-time friend of Yasuda Sei's husband Ryūkichi.³¹ Their plan was to utilize existing women's groups, and to establish local chapters through the Reservists' Association, in factories or based on employee groups such as waitresses or even geisha.³²

Kokubō Fujinkai was the first national women's group to succeed in the systematic organization of female workers. While certain socialist groups had attempted to do this by establishing women's departments in the 1920s, their efforts were largely unsuccessful. Initially, Kokubō Fujinkai appealed to occupational associations such as geisha or waitresses, but by the end of 1933 the association had established 259 local chapters in factories and other companies. These companies included such well-known names as Dunlop, and Mitsukoshi, Matsuya, and Matsuzakaya department stores.³³ Kokubō Fujinkai's organization of female workers was not only consistent with the aim of incorporating all classes of women into its organizational structure, it also coincided with the group's secondary aim of "overcoming the national ideological crisis through the power of women managing the kitchen."³⁴ This aspect of Kokubō Fujinkai's organizational strategy has historical links with Aikoku Fujinkai's campaign to prevent the emergence of "dangerous" ideologies in the 1920s.

On the 6th May 1933, the first national conference of Kokubō Fujinkai was held in Tōkyō at General Araki's invitation. At this stage, the membership of the association was only 41,772, organized into 71 local chapters. However, with the implementation of Ōmori and Ishii's plan for expansion, membership increased rapidly over the next few months. By the end of 1933, membership had more than trebled to approximately 150,000.³⁵ This expansion seems to have occurred mostly in urban areas, with half the membership still coming from the Kansai district where the association was originally established. By April 1934, the membership had increased to over 500,000, with eight regimental head branches, forty sub-branches and 1,136 local chapters established throughout the country. The association was officially proclaimed a national organization, Dainihon Kokubō Fujinkai,³⁶ on the 10th April 1934 at Hibiya Public Hall in Tokyo. Mutō Nobuko, the wife of General Mutō Nobuyoshi, was appointed head at the inaugural ceremony.³⁷

By this stage, the association's structure, function and aims had been formulated, mainly by the military. The army's October 1932 version of Kokubō Fujinkai's aims and regulations were amended to include an addendum. This addendum gave the Ministers for the Army and Navy "supervisory leadership"³⁸ over the organization, while granting only "leadership"³⁹ to the Minister for Home Affairs.⁴⁰ Because most of the top positions were held by top-ranking military wives, in effect the army controlled the association at the central level.⁴¹



Scene from the movie Nijūyon no hitomi 二十四の瞳 by Kinoshita (1954) depicting a village send off by Kokubō Fujinkai members.

Source: Fujii, p.149.

Chapter III: The Reorganization of Aikoku Fujinkai and the Race for Supremacy

As we saw in the previous chapter, the Manchurian Incident acted as a catalyst in the formation of Kokubō Fujinkai. However, the "incident" also acted as a catalyst in the reorganization of Aikoku Fujinkai and the reaffirmation of its role as a military support group. During the Taishō period, Aikoku Fujinkai had widened its role in society by taking on social welfare projects in response to criticism of its pro-war stance. At the same time, however, it reaffirmed its role in aiding the bereaved families of war dead and the families of sick or wounded soldiers. With the outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria, its role as a military support group again became the focus of the association.

The reaffirmation of Aikoku Fujinkai as a military support group was paralleled by an internal reorganization of the association from 1931 to 1932. The impetus for this reorganization came from the newly appointed director, Obara Shinzō. Obara was the former governor of Niigata prefecture; his appointment on the 1st October 1931 brought invaluable organizational expertise to the association. In his inaugural speech Obara questioned why Aikoku Fujinkai should remain restricted to the middle and upper classes; he envisaged that

Both in peace and in war, our association, Aikoku Fujinkai, will become, through the united power of all classes of women, a willing collaborator with men, a consoler, a supporter. We will become an organization of mutual aid between brothers and sisters, an organization of their conciliation, cooperation, and of spiritual cultivation.¹

Acting on criticism from within the association, Obara set about expanding Aikoku Fujinkai to include "all women of Japan, old and young, rich and poor."² Accordingly, the association underwent two major structural changes: on the 1st April 1932 and the 15th March 1933. These changes involved the revision of regulations at the head office in Tōkyō and every sub-branch throughout the country. The original four-stage organizational structure was revised: the county secretariats and ward committees were abolished, and in their place a local chapter system was instituted which placed local chapters directly under the jurisdiction of the prefectural sub-branches. The result was a five-stage structure: head office (Tōkyō), prefectural sub-branches, local chapters at city, town and village level, sub-districts and local corps.³ The structural change was also in line with the abolition of counties as a sub-division in local government which occurred in 1921.⁴

The most important change in Aikoku Fujinkai's regulations, however, concerned the redistribution of the association's funds. Until 1932 activities were instigated at head branch level and organized at the prefectural level. Although these activities may have been carried out at town or village level, the local branches of the association had no say in their execution. The function of the local branches was merely to enrol members and collect membership dues. These funds were subsequently handed over to the prefectural sub-branch and then to the head branch. The aim of the revision of Aikoku Fujinkai's regulations was to grant a degree of autonomy over funds to the local

branches and to encourage local activities under the direction of the head office in Tōkyō.⁵ The head branch hoped that these changes would stem criticism from the members of the local branches who complained that the association had no real aim, all it did was simply hold meetings and collect money.⁶

The revision of regulations and reorganization of Aikoku Fujinkai occurred almost at the same time as the appearance of Kokubō Fujinkai. Because these changes were aimed at a transformation of the image of Aikoku Fujinkai, the appearance of Kokubō Fujinkai could not have occurred at a more inopportune time. The new organization possessed the very characteristics to which Aikoku Fujinkai was aspiring; an egalitarian organization which encompassed all classes of women. The negative image which Aikoku Fujinkai was attempting to overcome is succinctly expressed in the following excerpt from Aikoku Fujin tokuhon (The Aikoku Fujin Reader) published by the Tōkyō head office of Aikoku Fujinkai:

Aikoku Fujinkai is an association of female members of the upper and propertied classes. An association where members will not attend unless attired in formal kimono. An association which only collects money from ordinary members and does nothing else.

The establishment of Kokubō Fujinkai in 1932 brought an immediate response from Aikoku Fujinkai; it perceived the new organization as a threat, and complained of the needless duplication of duties. Given the more active role played by Kokubō Fujinkai in sending off and welcoming back soldiers, this criticism was probably unwarranted. Nevertheless, Aikoku Fujinkai persisted with

its criticism of Kokubō Fujinkai and attempted to block the establishment of new branches by appealing to prefectural governors. The following declaration issued by the Ibaraki sub-branch of Aikoku Fujinkai clearly expresses this hostile attitude:

Recently in the military there has been a plan to form the organization Kokubō Fujinkai. However, Aikoku Fujinkai is of the opinion that, since, due to our institutional reform, there works out to be no great difference between the duties performed by our great women's league with its past history, approval should not be expressed toward the formation of the new group by the provincial sub-branch advisor of this association (ie. the prefectural governor).⁸

At times, Aikoku Fujinkai's criticism was even more caustic, deriding Kokubō Fujinkai for "collecting the leftovers of Aikoku Fujinkai."⁹ This antagonism between Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai probably stemmed from the class difference between the leaders of the organizations; it would remain a constant theme in the relations of the two groups until their merger in 1941.

Despite this antagonism, Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai participated together in many national campaigns instigated by the government following the outbreak of the Manchurian Incident. The proliferation of government campaigns during this period coincided with the end of party government after the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi in 1932. From this point on there was a concerted bureaucratic and military effort to mobilize the civilian population of Japan by enlisting the aid of national groups. Women's groups played a pivotal role in the execution of these government campaigns because most of them were aimed at domestic functions performed by women, such as savings, thrift in the home, and family

education.

After Inukai's assassination, the succeeding Saitō Makoto Cabinet launched a campaign to "regenerate the nation"¹⁰, the main aim of which was to organize rural inhabitants at the buraku (hamlet) level.¹¹ In November 1932, the government issued a policy statement in conjunction with the campaign:

If we aim to fulfil our plans for economic regeneration, farmers, mountain villagers and fishermen will have to unite in cooperation, based on the spirit of self-invigoration and the mutual help of neighbours...For this purpose, the vehicles of educational enlightenment such as schools, youth groups, women's groups, educational groups, and the Reservists' Association should combine effectively with every vehicle of the industrial economy, and undertake responsibility for spiritual promotion.¹²

This policy statement highlights the government's attitude towards the utilization of civilian groups, including women's groups, for the execution of government policy. Of course, as we saw with Aikoku Fujinkai in Chapter I, this process had been ongoing since the Taishō period, with civilian groups filling the gaps in the government's inadequate educational and social welfare systems.

In response to this campaign, Aikoku Fujinkai started its own "women's patriotic movement" which aimed to:

...overcome Japan's economic difficulties at a time of crisis, to correct anti-kokutai ideology, to increasingly make the union of women a reality through the national mobilization of all women of Japan and, through the arousal of their true awareness as women on the homefront, thereby put the homeland of Japan on a secure foundation.¹³

If we look at this declaration in the light of the policy statement of the campaign to "regenerate the nation", it is obvious that Aikoku Fujinkai was actively participating in

a government strategy for national mobilization.

For the most part this national mobilization was spiritual rather than material. The emphasis of many of these campaigns during the 1930s was on the inculcation of traditional values stressing the emperor and the family. Even campaigns which centred on the economic "regeneration" of the nation placed strong emphasis on traditional spiritual values. In this sense, the focus is not so much women themselves, but on their position within the family. For Kokubō Fujinkai, as a service-oriented organization, this meant activities and campaigns which were connected with women's domestic functions, such as collecting waste products for recycling or serving refreshments at air raid drills.¹⁴ Because the organization was dominated by the military, there was also strong emphasis placed on traditional "womanly virtues" such as chastity and obedience.

In the army's October 1932 declaration of Kokubō Fujinkai's aims and regulations which were discussed in Chapter II, the military support duties ran secondary to the "advocation of the traditional womanly virtues of Japan" and "the eradication of the evil habit of irresponsible materialistic Western civilization." Further, the avenue for the implementation of national defense was through "proper management of the kitchen." Throughout the declaration, all functions and activities of the organization were overlaid with the exhortation to promote "traditional Japanese womanly virtues."¹⁵

However, it is debatable how important or accessible this type of ideology concerning "womanly

virtues" was to the members of the organization, especially at the village level. This assumption is supported by a 1935 study of village women in Japan, which found that such women had little understanding of the ideological concepts expressed at the meetings of their women's association. Because very few of the women could read kanji (Chinese characters) proclamations had to be explained in very simple terms and using the kana (phonetic) syllabary. This is apparent in the following description of a meeting of the local fujinkai in the village of Suye:

The principal then introduced the next speaker ...[whol discussed the economic reconstruction program in terms understandable to the women. It was inaugurated in 1932. He wrote out the characters for keizai kōsei on the blackboard and analyzed them by writing each one out in the kana syllabary as well [a form of writing the village women could read]...He then told a story about a man who was ready to die, but whose life was spared. This is just like kōsei, for the country will be saved through the work and strength of its farmers. So all men and women of Suye must unite to work for the program. The character was further explained by reference to the characters meaning one's own strength (jibun-no chikara or jiriki).¹⁶

While the military was emphasising the importance of "womanly virtues" and "national defense state"¹⁷ ideology, from 1935 the government was conducting a parallel campaign under the slogan of "clean elections." The Central League for the Campaign for Clean Elections¹⁸ was established in May 1935, and a companion women's league was formed the following month. Although this league was centred around the Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei¹⁹ (Women's Suffrage League), all major women's groups participated except Kokubō Fujinkai.²⁰ Aikoku Fujinkai issued a code of ethics in conjunction with the campaign which clearly expressed the organization's

involvement with the movement:

Code of Ethics

The policy of the campaign in the prefectures is to adopt the following items as appropriate to the circumstances of a given area:

1. At the same time as sponsoring lectures, films and discussion groups for women concerning clean elections, urge women to attend general meetings about these things.
2. To encourage women in general to raise the problem of clean elections at family discussions, and to invoke such a [vigilant] atmosphere within the home.
3. To encourage, of course, that violators not arise from the home, and to strive to prevent abstention from voting.
4. To encourage ordinary women to visit shrines together to pray for clean elections.
5. To encourage ordinary women to prepare food, and display the national flag on election days.²¹

Of particular interest in this campaign was the involvement of the Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei which was actively campaigning for the vote for women. It seems the criticism which was aimed at Aikoku Fujinkai by socialist women in the pages of Sekai Fujin in 1907, could be equally applicable to the very women who were fighting for women's political rights in 1935; it seems ironic to find progressive women eagerly collaborating with a state under which they had extremely limited political rights.²² However, the founder of Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei, Ichikawa Fusae, does state that she participated in the campaign in order to further the cause of women's suffrage.²³ Despite the sincerity of her motives, the decision to cooperate with the campaign brought Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei into closer contact with the state, and set the precedent for further collaboration in the future.

While the government was campaigning for clean elections, the military was also involving itself in the political arena. The controversy surrounding the political theories of Minobe Tatsukichi, a professor specializing in constitutional law, was largely generated by the Reservists' Association. The military claimed Minobe's Organ Theory attacked the sanctified position of the emperor, and used this criticism to force Minobe's expulsion from the House of Peers.²⁴ In the furore surrounding the Minobe controversy, there was a growing call for the government to "clarify the national polity", that is, to issue a statement which clearly expressed the political organization of Japan. Accordingly, the Okada cabinet issued two policy statements. Both these declarations were supported by the political parties, which sought to protect their own endangered position by supporting the movement. The second declaration was made to appease the Reservists' Association which was the most strident in demanding Minobe's resignation.²⁵

The Minobe controversy and the call to "clarify the national polity" were important phases in the trend toward closer collaboration between the military and the state bureaucracy, and the gradual exclusion of parties from the political process. This fact is highlighted by a cabinet decision to set up an Investigatory Department which was to investigate and draft national policy. This department was dominated by the military and the state bureaucracies, and effectively removed state planning from party influence. The importance of this change in policy-making power only gradually became apparent, but by 1937

the future direction of government was already determined. In the aftermath of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, the Investigatory Department was merged with the Resources Department and became the Planning Department, which concentrated on national mobilization.²⁶

These trends in the political arena toward the gradual exclusion of parties and the closer ties between the military and the civilian bureaucracy, had important implications for women's groups. Although Japan was not at war between 1931 and 1937, the actions of its forces on the Chinese mainland were pulling the country closer and closer to the brink of a major conflict. This general atmosphere of "crisis" was fuelled by the Minobe controversy at home. As the main protagonists in this controversy, the Reservists' Association was in a unique position to spread the debate through to the village level. Kokubō Fujinkai's links with the Reservists' Association at the local level ensured that it, too, would be involved in the call to "clarify the national polity." Aikoku Fujinkai also responded to the "crisis" atmosphere by continuing to reinforce its campaign to "overcome dangerous ideologies" which had been an on-going objective since the Taishō period.



Imon bukuro
(Relief packages)

Source: Dainihon teikoku rikukai-gun, p.218.

Chapter IV: National Mobilization and the Road to Amalgamation

The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937 marked the beginning of a new phase in the government's plans for national mobilization. Although the material aspects of mobilization were clearly important as Japan prepared for full-scale war with China, the spiritual and social thrust of mobilization was assigned special priority by the government to ensure maximum popular support in wartime. Accordingly, on September 9th 1937, Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro announced the National Spiritual Mobilization Campaign (NSMC)¹.

The purpose of this campaign was to integrate the population of Japan more fully into the state, and "heavy emphasis was placed on ideological propaganda to strengthen popular identification with the state and foster a sense of nationalism."² The NSMC was jointly administered by the Cabinet Information Division, Home Ministry and Education Ministry. A NSMC Central League comprised of 74 member organizations was established on October 12th. Despite numerous campaigns to encourage savings, war bonds and thrift, public response to the NSMC was lukewarm.³ No doubt, the poor public response was partly caused by the lack of relevance to the current domestic situation. Food and manufactured goods were still in good supply, making it difficult to convince the public of the need for thrift and frugality.

Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai responded simultaneously to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese conflict, calling upon their members to begin performing

military support duties in earnest. On the 15th July, immediately after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Aikoku Fujinkai held a meeting of its top officials and decided to reduce current social welfare activities and concentrate on direct military support duties. A survey was conducted detailing the conditions of recuperating sick and injured soldiers, and the families of departed soldiers or war dead. On the basis of this report, a circular was sent to every provincial head and sub-branch office demanding immediate action in the area of military support duties. Later in July, a national conference was held in Tōkyō to "raise women's awareness of the war situation, and, at the same time as stimulating the spirit of public service on the home front, mobilize both spiritually and materially...in order to plan the development of resources needed on the home front."⁴ This conference was followed by local meetings held throughout the country. These local lecture meetings stressed four key goals:

- to raise the awareness of the situation, consolidate the union of members, and give sincere public service.
- to anticipate the spread of military relief duties as prescribed by the conference.
- to strive for untiring perseverance, thrift, and diligence, and to prepare for the difficult problems of the times.
- to carry out one's duties with an attitude of calmness, without neglecting the raising of children, and without losing the beautiful virtues⁵ characteristic of the women of our country.

Aikoku Fujinkai also called for donations from members to fund the extra military support duties, and each member was requested to pay a ten sen donation. By the end of 1938, these donations had totalled ¥300,000.⁶

Kokubō Fujinkai's response to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War was also swift. On the 15th July, a meeting of the leaders of the prefectural head branches was held in Tōkyō. The association decided to expand its national defense activities centred on the family, and issued a declaration which proclaimed:

The association stresses the cultivation of Japanese womanly virtues as the greatest duty of women in the protection of the country, a duty based on the spirit of the nation's soldiers, because there is really no other way of dealing with the situation.

On the surface, this declaration seems to be at odds with the active image of Kokubō Fujinkai participating in air raid drills held in every major city throughout Japan during this period. But if we examine the issue in greater depth, even Kokubō Fujinkai's participation in these air raid drills was usually limited to serving food or leading rationing parties, at least at the beginning of the war. As the Sino-Japanese conflict expanded and the number of men drafted into military service increased, Kokubō Fujinkai members were required to fill the manpower gap in the air raid drills. For example, in the Central Japan Air Raid Drills in November 1937, the Ōsaka branch of Kokubō Fujinkai mobilized 5,000 members in the Nishinari-ku district alone. Because of the increased activity of women in air raid drills, the issue of appropriate dress became important. In December, the Kansai head office issued a circular to all local branches urging compliance with the Army Ministry regarding uniform. It stated that "the use of male attire or [sexually] non-distinctive clothing is not good from the standpoint of public morals."⁸ Because

of the impracticality of the apron for use in these air raid drills, monpe⁹ came to be the standard uniform.

In conjunction with the NSMC, both Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai carried out a variety of joint campaigns. The most important of these were recycling rubbish, donating blankets, encouraging savings and thrift, and donating scrap metal. In addition, week-long NSMC campaigns were held annually from 1938, such as "Strengthen the Home Front Week"¹⁰. During this campaign, members carried out a variety of patriotic activities including the presentation of awards to model citizens and families, presentation of Emperor Meiji's poetry anthology Mikuni no oshie (Teachings of My Country) to bereaved families of the war dead, and lecture meetings. At the central level of Aikoku Fujinkai in Tōkyō, these lecture meetings were conducted solely by male representatives of the various government ministries, the Cabinet Information Division the army and the Imperial Household.¹¹ Another NSMC campaign started in September 1939, the "Public Service Day for Asia"¹², was held once a month. On this day, citizens were meant to display the national flag, visit shrines and temples, and provide volunteer labour service, all intended to remind the people at home of the hardships endured by imperial soldiers at the front. Even children had to participate and took along hinomaru bentō¹³ to school. All bars and restaurants were closed for the day. Despite the government's intentions, most people treated the public service days as a holiday, and so, in June 1940, the government banned pleasure trips and required people to stay at home to carry out "patriotic" duties such as

preparing relief packages.¹⁴

The associated women's league of the NSMC also conducted a variety of campaigns solely in urban areas. While both Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai participated in these urban campaigns, so too did members and leaders from independent women's groups. Some conspicuous participants were Ichikawa Fusae, Yamada Waka, and Yoshioka Yayoi, to name but a few important figures in the women's movement in Japan at the time.¹⁵ As we saw in the previous chapter, the precedent had already been set for the cooperation of independent women's groups with the government when the Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei joined the Clean Election Campaign. With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, leaders of the women's movement cooperated even more closely with the government. Ichikawa Fusae even publicly announced a statement of her intention to cooperate with the war effort in Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei's bulletin, Josei tenbō.¹⁶

In September 1937, a group of eight independent women's organizations established the Nihon Fujin Dantai Renmei¹⁷ (League of Japanese Women's Groups). This new women's group proposed to concentrate on areas such as encouraging thrift, the reform of life styles, banning white rice, the prevention of venereal disease, and other social welfare activities involving health and education.¹⁸ Despite the participation of groups like Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei, the overall emphasis was on responding to the crisis posed by the Sino-Japanese War; thus the issues of women's suffrage and civil rights were ignored. The amalgamation of independent women's groups was also a vital stage in

their eventual control by the state. By cooperating with the government in the war effort, these groups were willingly coopted into the state's plans for national mobilization.¹⁹

Because this national mobilization involved drafting almost 600,000 soldiers during 1937, the most important activities of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai were sending off soldiers and making relief packages. If we look at the records of the Kōbe head office of Kokubō Fujinkai, there was a significant increase in military support duties from 1937.²⁰ (See Figure II on page 45) This increase in activity was also reflected by Aikoku Fujinkai. According to Matsuura Tama at the time assistant director of the Yuki sub-branch of Aikoku Fujinkai, the most important duties during this period were seeing off and welcoming back soldiers, and the surveillance of their wives, which were all daily events.²¹

The mass conscription of soldiers posed another potential problem for the military - the moral conduct of soldiers' wives. In response to the need to ensure "proper" moral behaviour, Aikoku Fujinkai carried out spiritual and moral instruction. One typical admonition held that:

So that members of bereaved families and the families of conscripted soldiers, people who serve as model citizens, not cause any shame, we shall make them value chastity, persevere with hardship, support their families through their own efforts, and thereby paying tribute to the spirits of the war dead, see to it that they create no anxiety for the officers and men at the front. The members must strive to realize the strengthening of the family home front by meeting and chatting intimately with the wives of bereaved families, and through mutual encouragement and cooperation.²²

Figure II: Activities of the Kōbe head office of Kokubō Fujinkai 1936-1941

		国防婦人会神戸地方本部管下の事業回数, 参加人員							1936-41年
		軍隊送迎 ^a	軍隊接待 ^b	入退營者送迎 ^c	戦没者慰霊 ^d	遺家族慰問 ^e	慰問袋献納 ^f	祈願祭行 ^g	総計 ^h
i	'36 回数	48	21	—	25	—	18,000	—	18,680
j	人員	7,410	5,310	—	37,260	—	45,521	—	122,757
	'37 回数	1,156	846	16,040	2,545	22,804	2,770	169	48,034
	人員	142,250	22,900	401,000	42,318	54,361	104,526	9,900	839,482
	'38 回数	626	556	7,680	11,882	21,412	4,067	372	77,773
	人員	76,510	9,150	192,000	66,800	68,284	126,600	187,000	1,091,710
	'39 回数	458	320	696	11,613	12,170	1,772	1,111	30,640
	人員	108,920	8,750	17,400	64,426	67,161	143,439	55,403	914,710
	'40 回数	120	92	518	11,705	9,861	4,361	2,150	30,756
	人員	17,430	1,740	12,950	73,265	47,905	165,104	117,150	859,214
	'41 回数	43	172	245	3,524	16,794	10,337	3,042	36,891
	人員	26,580	6,730	6,120	44,780	94,060	216,098	166,270	1,038,336

注) このほか軍隊慰問, 病院慰問, 軍事作業援助; 傷痍軍人数籍, 兵曹被服献納, 講演会, 映画会, 見学などの業務があり, 総計はこれを含む。神戸地方本部の総会員数は1937年7月現在58,822人, 1941年9月現在209,694人である(『神戸国婦十年歴史』『神戸婦人国防』による)。1933-35年は88頁参照。

- a. Seeing off and welcoming back soldiers.
- b. Regimental tea receptions.
- c. Seeing off and welcoming back new recruits.
- d. Memorial services for the war dead.
- e. Condolences to bereaved families.
- f. Contributions for imon bukuro.
- g. Prayers for the soldiers' welfare.
- h. Total.
- i. Number of times.
- j. Members.

Source: Fujii Tadatoshi, Kokubō Fujinkai, p.152.

Accordingly, Aikoku Fujinkai members would ferret out any rumours in the neighbourhood concerning the sexual relations of the wives or widows of soldiers. If there was any question of immoral behaviour, they would visit the house very early in the morning to check the story's authenticity.²³

The Justice Ministry was also concerned with the issue of the "proper" moral conduct of the wives and widows of soldiers, and conducted a survey on the matter in January 1939. Besides the issue of moral conduct, the survey also highlighted problems concerning inheritance and war pensions, where women were at a serious legal disadvantage. Women had no right over their husbands' property, including war pensions; all property went to the eldest son.²⁴ Besides the Justice Ministry, the bureaucracy most concerned about the moral conduct of soldiers' wives was the army. As the organization closest to the army, Kokubō Fujinkai was entrusted with the "proper" guidance of soldiers' wives and widows. The following report of the Kōbe provincial head office of Kokubō Fujinkai amply demonstrates the role the organization played in the "proper" moral guidance of these women, and details the exact method for setting up a surveillance network for this purpose:

There were many local chapters which instituted an extremely effective structure, which secretly used this organizational framework in setting up a complete network of friendly surveillance within the local chapters. They did this by holding meetings under the name of "society for brave soldiers' wives" or "society for mothers of the home front." They gathered together the young wives of departed soldiers, held social gatherings and meetings on the cultivation of morals, and strove tirelessly to make them

enhance their honour and dignity. Furthermore, they assigned officials to each family with conscripted soldiers, struck up a very friendly relationship with them and, without [the family] being aware of it, carried out proper moral guidance in the attempt to ensure they made no mistakes...This network progressed in complete secrecy and was achieved following an extremely natural, smooth progress; without revealing in the least, either an over-zealous or over-vigilant attitude, which might wound the targeted family's self-respect. Our achievement, which has been able to forestall wearisome moral problems, long our concern, without causing any backlash, is considerable indeed.²⁵

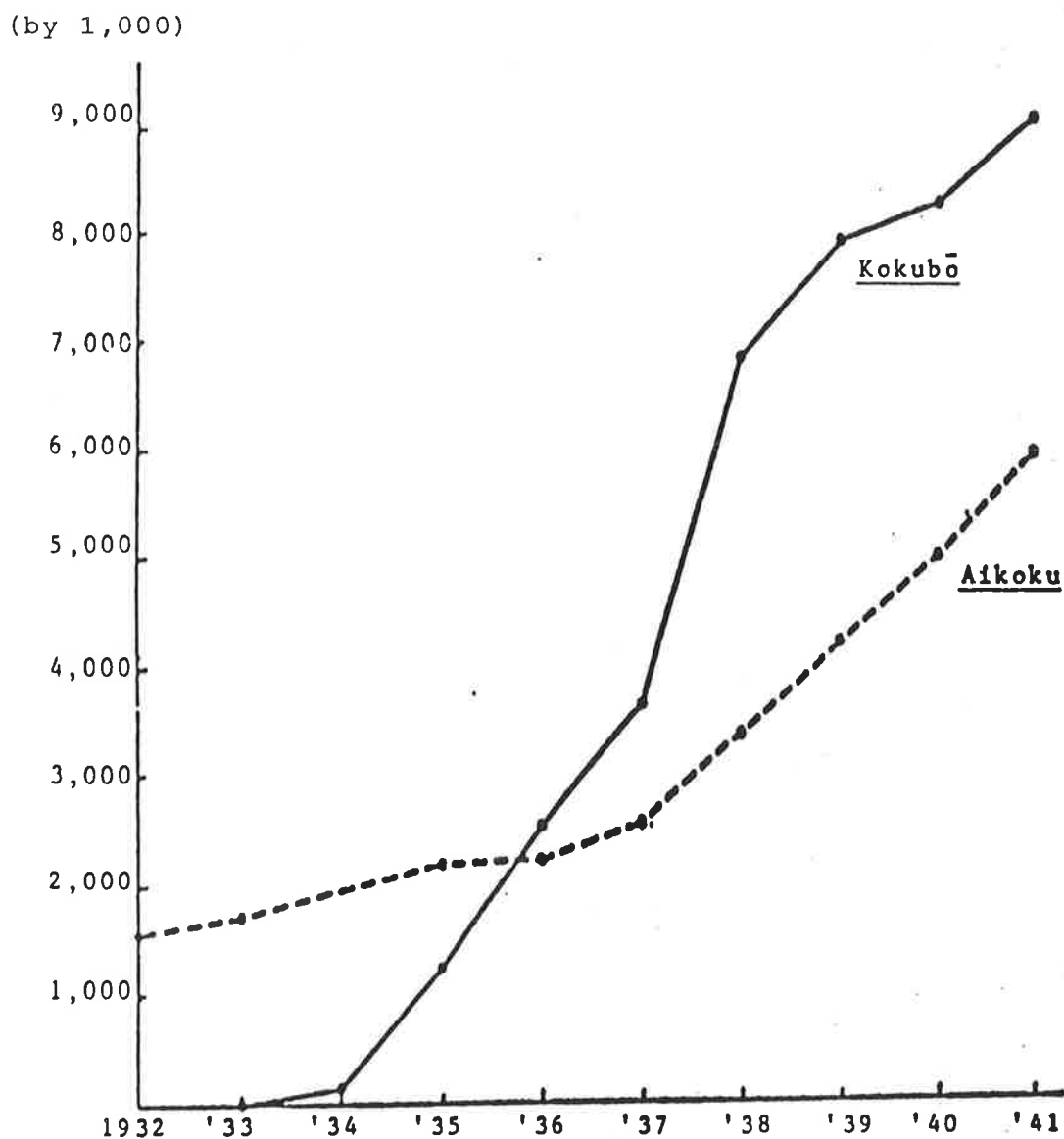
The issue of surveillance is very important for understanding the degree of autonomy of action in the villages. In A Social Basis for Prewar Japanese Militarism, Smethurst stresses that "rural society was little or no more authoritarian during the Pacific War in 1943 than it had been in the era of Taishō democracy fifteen years earlier."²⁶ He cites "hamlet pressure for social and political conformity" for this continuity.²⁷ I feel the issue is a little more complicated than Smethurst represents. Firstly, the study of the village of Suye states that, although the "village women enjoyed only a severely restricted degree of personal autonomy" "they led extremely active lives, both social and economic." "Divorce was extremely common," with many women marrying several times. Further, "women divorced their husbands," "adulterous affairs [were] carried on by both wives and husbands," "there were an extraordinary number of illegitimate children in the village," and "pre-marital pregnancy was also very common."²⁸ It seems, at least in the area of sexual relations, that women displayed some degree of autonomy in their actions. This village study makes the issue of surveillance all the more significant,

because it indicates that the military's view of the "proper moral conduct" of women by displaying the "womanly virtues of traditional Japan" was a policy instituted from above through the womens' associations.

While the Sino-Japanese War posed the problem of ensuring the "proper moral conduct" of women in the villages, it also acted as an impetus for the expansion of membership of both Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai. From Figure III below, we can see the year from mid-1937 to mid-1938 was one of phenomenal growth in the membership numbers of Kokubō Fujinkai. The rate of increase for Aikoku Fujinkai was less dramatic, but still involved significant numbers. Between them, the two organizations enrolled close to four million new members during this period.²⁹ For Kokubō Fujinkai, this signified a 50% increase in membership by the end of 1937. This increase was achieved chiefly through the establishment of new local chapters in the villages via the utilization of existing women's organizations.³⁰

This rapid expansion created a certain amount of conflict between Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai because of the overlap of membership. This conflict did not arise at the local level; the women's associations co-existed quite peacefully at that level. If we look at Natsuka village in Hiroshima prefecture as an example, there was no antagonism between the four major women's associations. No doubt, the fact that the head of the village served as the director of, or advisor to, each of these associations aided this peaceful co-existence. Also, the affairs of all the women's associations were

Figure III: Membership of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai 1932-1941




Source: Fujii Tadatoshi, Kokubō Fujinkai, p.95.

administered through the local government office, although the records show that the majority of events and transactions were generated by Kokubō Fujinkai.³¹ Harmony seems also to have been maintained through the demarcation of the duties of the various women's groups. For example, in the city of Kōfu, the local branch of Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai concentrated on cultural activities such as etiquette, flower arrangement, and calligraphy, while public service activities were the domain of Kokubō Fujinkai.³²

Most of the conflict between Kokubō Fujinkai and Aikoku Fujinkai arose at the central level. No doubt, this conflict was aggravated by interbureaucratic rivalry between the Army, and the Home and Education Ministries.³³ However, I feel Aikoku Fujinkai's initial antagonism to the formation of Kokubō Fujinkai in 1932 could be to blame for any subsequent conflict between the two groups. In any case, by 1938 the leaders of both organizations had progressed to the stage of publicly declaring their mutual cooperation. These declarations were subsequently issued in a circular to all local sub-branches of Aikoku Fujinkai, and to every prefectural head branch of Kokubō Fujinkai.³⁴

Because of the overlap in membership, there were eventually many calls for the amalgamation of the two organizations. At the National Conference for Educational Representatives in November 1938, a delegate from Kyōto made a speech calling for the reconciliation of the two groups. He stressed the overlap of membership as his primary concern, and cited the incongruous situation of



women wearing Kokubō Fujinkai sashes in the morning and Aikoku Fujinkai sashes in the afternoon, or even wearing them both at the same time.³⁵ This debate continued until September 1940, when the three major women's organizations - Aikoku Fujinkai, Kokubō Fujinkai and Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai - issued a joint statement of their compliance with the "new order."³⁶

The "new order" was the brainchild of Prince Konoe Fumimaro who wanted to create a mass party structure. However, by the time he came to formally announce the "new order" on the 27th September, circumstances had changed. Opposition from the political parties, which had already dissolved in anticipation of the new system, and circumstances in the war with China, forced Konoe to alter his original plan for political mobilization. In the following month, when the Imperial Rule Assistance Association was established as the administrative machinery which would institute the "new order," the emphasis had changed to spiritual and economic mobilization.³⁷

In late 1940, the women's representative to the central committee of the IRAA, Kōra Tomiko, advocated a merger of the three main groups and the formation of a women's department within the IRAA. This proposal was echoed in the Diet in January 1941, and a bill calling for a merger was introduced on the 13th February.³⁸ The Association for Research on the Situation of Women's Groups³⁹ was established with representatives of the Army, Education and Welfare Ministries. This association issued a declaration on March 17th detailing the aims and function of the new women's organization,⁴⁰ and the government

finally passed the bill in June.⁴¹

The inaugural ceremony for the new organization, Dainihon Fujinkai (Greater Japan Women's Association)⁴² was held in Tōkyō on February 2nd 1942. All women over 20 years old were supposed to join, making the potential membership of the organization in the order of 20 million women.⁴³ However, Dainihon Fujinkai never achieved a 100% participation rate, despite the fact that membership was compulsory. In Ibaraki prefecture, the participation rate was only 52.2% by 1944, although this rate was relatively much higher at village level.⁴⁴ The leaders of Dainihon Fujinkai included many women from the imperial family, the nobility, wives of high-ranking officers, leading women's educationalists and other figures, such as Hani Motoko, Kawasaki Natsu, Kaneko Shigeri and Yoshioka Yayoi.⁴⁵ However, the central executive positions were all held by men, with two exceptions.⁴⁶ The new organization came under the jurisdiction of the IRAA; local chapters were to be established in every neighbourhood association district throughout the country. (The establishment of neighbourhood associations was started by the Central League of the NSMC. By 1940, they had been formed in most areas.) Bylaws were also established so that membership fees could be waived in cases of economic hardship. Thus, social or economic status did not determine membership of the organization.⁴⁷ Despite the all-inclusive nature of the organization, Dainihon Fujinkai came under heavy criticism from the IRAA and was dismissed as "ineffectual because it duplicated the work of other groups, was too centralized, and lacked enough female

leaders."⁴⁸

The formation of Dainihon Fujinkai was the culmination in a long process of bringing women and women's organizations into a closer relationship with the state. The precedent for this process was set as early as 1901 when Aikoku Fujinkai was established through the aid of Prince Konoe Atsumaro.⁴⁹ It continued through the Taishō and early Shōwa periods with groups such as Aikoku Fujinkai and later Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai filling the gaps in the government's inadequate social welfare and education systems. The formation of Kokubō Fujinkai in 1932 marked the beginning of another important phase in this process of integration. By 1934, the army had gained a national women's organization of its own. As we have seen in this chapter, the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 marked the final phase of the integration of women's groups with the state. In this stage, not only quasi-governmental women's groups such as Aikoku Fujinkai, Kokubō Fujinkai and Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai, but also small independent women's groups were included in the network of national mobilization. The culmination of this process of total integration with the state was Dainihon Fujinkai - "a bureaucratic monster with little proclivity or aptitude for marshaling women for modern war."⁵⁰



Mainichi sandei (Mainichi Sunday), Jan. 1938, depicting a Kokubō Fujinkai member on the cover. Source: Dainihon teikoku rikukai-gun, p.256.



Tokyo Kokubō Fujin magazine, June 1941.
Source: Fujii, p.173.

Conclusion

The central concern of this thesis has been the interaction between national women's organizations and the state; more specifically, the state's use of women's organizations in national mobilization. This process of mobilization is crucial for historical interpretation of the period. As Gavan McCormack points out, Japanese historians, almost without exception, refer to the 1930s as the "fascist" period in Japanese history.¹ For one such Japanese historian, Furuya Tetsuo, it is the organizational process of national mobilization itself which distinguishes fascism from other reactionary movements, regardless of whether or not such a process is initiated by a fascist party. The end result of this process of national mobilization is the establishment of a uniform system of control over people's lives on the level of daily life.² The Japanese women's historian, Chino Yōichi, traces the development of this organizational process using women's groups. In conjunction with Furuya, Chino's analysis of women's groups during the 1930s and early 1940s has been particularly helpful in providing an analytical framework for this thesis.

While certain historians have addressed the problem of women and war, no one has yet analysed the role that women's groups played in the process of national mobilization in Japan. Richard Smethurst has told part of the story by briefly describing the establishment and development of Kokubō Fujinkai, but his analysis of the

organization explains little about the function of the group at the central level. Because Smethurst is using Kokubō Fujinkai to support his theory on the rural origins of militarism in Japan, he has stressed the rural activities of the group, and its relationship to the military, especially the Reservists' Association, at the local level; but this is only half the story. As we have seen, there was active cooperation between Kokubō Fujinkai and the state at the central level in implementing government policies on popular mobilization.

Another historian, Thomas Havens, has addressed the problem of women and war in different terms. Havens analyses the relationship between women and the state from 1937 until 1945 in terms of the government's failure to mobilize women's labour during wartime. He amply demonstrates that "...the Japanese cabinet to the very end avoided forcibly [my emphasis] mobilizing the labor of women."³ Given the reluctance of the government to institute compulsory mobilization for war production for women, the description of Dainihon Fujinkai as "...a bureaucratic monster with little proclivity or aptitude for marshaling women for modern war"⁴ is misleading. The purpose of Dainihon Fujinkai was to integrate women more fully into the state and to further ideological and economic mobilization through the family. In this sense, the organization reinforced the traditional view of women in Japanese society. Because of this traditional patriarchal view of women, whether of the government itself or society at large, the cabinet was unwilling to mobilize married women for labour in essential war industries. The

government did, however, institute a compulsory labour draft for unmarried women, although this system was never fully implemented.⁵ Overall, the emphasis of the government's plans to mobilize women effectively remained ideological in nature.

As we have seen, precedent had already been set for the interaction between women and the state at the central level by late Meiji, with the establishment of Aikoku Fujinkai. On the one hand, the positive support of state and military officials, the nobility, and leading women's educationalists ensured Aikoku Fujinkai's success as a national women's organization; on the other hand, it guaranteed state control over the direction of the association and gave the government a civilian organization which actively supplemented and executed state policies on social welfare and education.

During the latter half of the Taishō period, the emphasis of the relationship between Aikoku Fujinkai and the state lay in the defense of women from the ideological "danger" posed by left-wing and socialist women's groups. In this respect, Aikoku Fujinkai was performing an important function in spreading state propaganda which attacked the "invasion of foreign enemies," such as urban civilization, individualism and liberalism, as the "hotbed" of communism.⁶ Aikoku Fujinkai attacked these "dangerous" foreign ideologies because they supposedly undermined the traditional institution of the family and "went against the national policy of unity between the emperor and the people."⁷ The emphasis, however, was not yet on "total" mobilization. At this stage, Aikoku Fujinkai was an elite

organization of upper-class women who carried out social welfare work on behalf of "ordinary" women.

During the early 1930s, national mobilization became a central theme of government and military policy-making, although it was not until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 that popular mobilization became a critical issue. From 1932, the government carried out a national campaign centred on the economic regeneration of rural areas. However, this campaign was basically ideological in nature, exhorting economic regeneration through self-help and community support, rather than concrete state aid. Accordingly, the campaign stressed frugality and thrift within the home as the solution to the economic woes of the country. As the main contributors to domestic labour, women were targeted to contribute to this campaign. National women's organizations were entrusted with the task of "educating" these women by encouraging thrift and frugality.

From 1935, there was a growing call from the military and right-wing groups for a clarification of the national polity. This movement was a direct consequence of the backlash generated against the more liberal period of Taishō "democracy." The Minobe crisis in 1935 served as a catalyst in this process, and Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai played a central role in supporting the military, particularly the Reservists' Association, and the state in their campaign. The state also began the Clean Election Campaign in May 1935 under the Home Ministry. (It is interesting to note that the Minister for Home Affairs at the time, Gotō Fumio, was the Minister for Agriculture in

charge of the Economic Regeneration Campaign in 1932, providing a link of continuity with past attempts to organize the people on a national scale.) The main purpose of the Clean Election Campaign was to organize the nation at the daily level of people's lives by establishing units at the buraku (hamlet) level. Again, the focus was on ideological mobilization, and the role of women's organizations was to "educate" family members by spreading state propaganda.

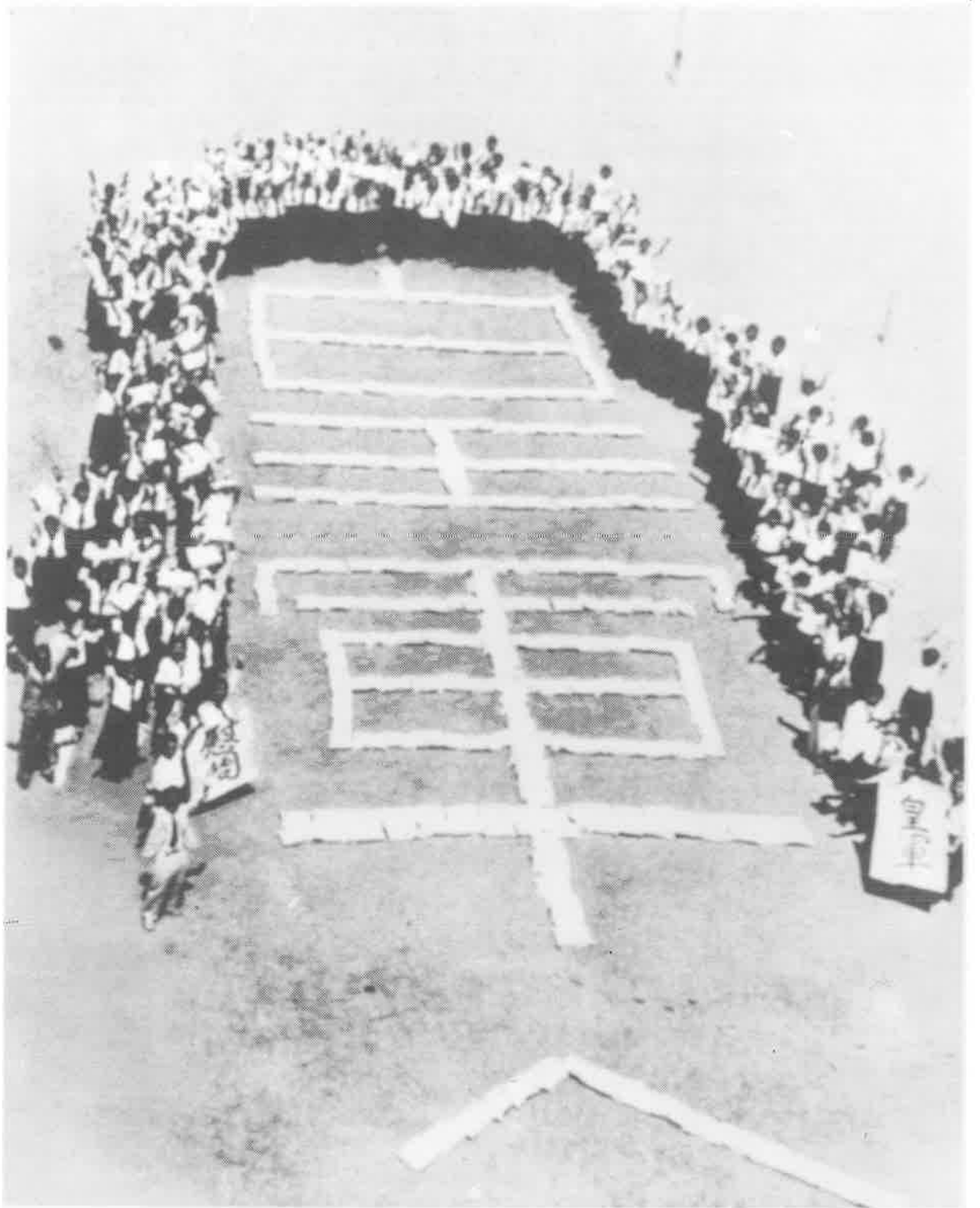
With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the issue of national mobilization became critical. Besides the material aspects of mobilization, such as munitions and conscription, the government was faced with the task of raising people's awareness of the crisis. Accordingly, the NSMC was started by Konoe two months later. Between 1937 and 1940, when Konoe announced the establishment of the "New Order" and the IRAA, the emphasis of the government's campaigns was on encouraging savings, the purchase of war bonds, and the observance of patriotic celebrations and duties. Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai worked in close association with the central league of the NSMC and participated in all major campaigns. The women's league also included smaller independent women's groups and leaders; from this point on, the government made a concerted effort to coopt these independent organizations and individuals into the state system and, thereby, to neutralize any opposition against the war.

With the establishment of Konoe's New Order and its executive body the IRAA in 1940, the final phase of

total integration began. From 1940 moves were made to merge the three major national women's associations and form a new organization, Dainihon Fujinkai. This was finally achieved in 1942. In this final phase, women came to be organized throughout Japan at the buraku level through units of Dainihon Fujinkai established in each neighbourhood association area. At the central level, the government continued to coopt leaders of independent women's groups by including them in committees attached to various ministries, such as Education, Finance, and Welfare. These women may have hoped to ameliorate the direction of government policy, but they were only appointed as women's advisors and, even if they had voting rights on these committees, their small number could not hope to effect any changes in the direction of national mobilization.

As we have seen, national mobilization was a central theme of Japanese political, economic and social life throughout the "fascist" period. This national mobilization was instituted from above, but its success depended on cooperation at the grass-roots level. It is difficult to gauge exactly how successful, if at all, national spiritual and economic mobilization was at this level. The 1935 study of the village of Suze indicates the feelings of some women toward the government's austerity policy: "They said they could do little about it because they spend as little as they can as it is."⁸ Obviously, the austerity campaign had little relevance to these women's lives. Evidence from Smethurst's study also supports the claim that national spiritual and economic

mobilization had little effect on village life. However, there still remain certain activities of the women's groups which do not fit in with this theory: secret surveillance networks and the enforcement of the "proper" moral conduct of soldiers' wives. These were policies instituted from above by the military and the civilian bureaucracy using the structure of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai at the village level. From Nagahara's study of Aikoku Fujinkai, we know that surveillance and enforcement of "proper" moral conduct in the villages were two of the most common activities of the association during the late 1930s. This aspect of the activities of Aikoku Fujinkai and Kokubō Fujinkai definitely requires further study.



Relief packages to be sent to the front. The packages are arranged to read "To the Imperial Forces." (1937)

Source: A Century of Japanese Photography, p.327.

Footnotes

Introduction

1. 愛国婦人会
2. 国防婦人会
3. Taisei Yokusankai 大政翼賛会
4. 大日本婦人会
5. 網羅的
6. Fuashizumuka ファシズム化

Chapter I: Aikoku Fujinkai 1901-1931

1. 尊王攘夷
2. Takayanagi Mitsunaga, and Takeuchi Rizō, eds., Kadokawa Nihon-shi jiten, p.143.
3. Sotozaki Mitsuhiro, Kōchiken fujin kaihō undō-shi, p.74.
4. Prince Konoe Atsumaro was the father of Prince Konoe Fumimaro who was Prime Minister twice, and architect of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere and the Imperial Rule Assistance Association.
5. Sotozaki, pp.74-75.
6. Sievers, Sharon, Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan, p.115, and Sotozaki, p.106.
7. Ichikawa Fusae, ed., Nihon fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, Volume 2, Seiji [Politics], pp.562-563.
8. Sotozaki, p.77.
9. Ibid., p.77.
10. Imon bukuro 慰問袋
11. Nagahara Kazuko, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru fujin dantai no shakaiteki kinō," in Ibarakiken-shi kenkyū, No.36, 1976, pp.18-19.
12. Sekai fujin, No.2, Jan.15, 1907, p.1. A translated excerpt of the article can be found in Flowers in Salt, p.114.
13. Chian keisatsu hō 治安警察法

14. Sievers, p.155, and Pharr, Susan, "Sex and Politics," PhD Thesis, 1975, p.12.
15. Beasley, W.G., The Modern History of Japan, pp.228-230.
16. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," in Rekishi kōron, Vol.5, No.12, Dec.1979, p.119.
17. Chino Yōichi, Kindai Nihon fujin kyōiku-shi, p.279.
18. Kyūgo kyūsai kitei 救護救済規程
19. Nagahara, "Taisho * Showa-ki ni okeru," p.19. (All translations from Japanese sources are my own except where otherwise indicated.)
20. Chino, p.279.
21. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.24.
22. I have been unable to verify the existence of sub-branches in all these areas except for Korea. Morris-Suzuki, Tessa, Showa: An Inside History of Hirohito's Japan, p.55.
23. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," pp.119-120, and Chino, p.279. A settlement house (rinpōkan 隣保館) was a neighbourhood institution providing various community services.
24. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.20.
25. Seikatsu Kaizen Dōmei 生活改善同盟
26. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," pp.21-22.
27. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," pp.120-121.
28. Smith, Robert, and Wiswell, Ella, The Women of Suye Mura, p.28. Although the romanized reading of "Suye" is dated (now written Sue), I have used it consistently throughout the thesis to avoid confusion.
29. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.25.
30. Nagy, Margit, "'How Shall We Live?': Social Change, the Family Institution and Feminism in Prewar Japan," PhD Thesis, 1981, pp.88-91, and Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," p.118.
31. Smith and Wiswell, pp.28-29.
32. Zennihon Fujin Keizai Taikai 全日本婦人経済大会
33. Zenkoku Joshi Seinen Kyōka Sōdōin 全国女子青年教化総動員
34. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.25.

35. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," p.120.
36. 新婦人協会
37. 赤瀾会
38. 友愛会
39. Ibid., p.120, and Kadokawa Nihon-shi jiten, pp.485.
40. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," p.120, and Kadokawa Nihon-shi jiten, p.407.
41. Ibid., p.143.

Chapter II: The Formation of Kokubō Fujinkai

1. I will deal with the organizational reform of Aikoku Fujinkai in the next chapter.
2. Kokubō kenkin 国防献金
3. Bōkū Kenkin Undō 防空献金運動
4. 大日本連合婦人会 Dainihon Rengō Fujinkai was established in March in 1931 as a national federation of women's groups which concentrated on family education. It came under the jurisdiction of the Home Ministry. See Yoshimi Chikako, Nihon fuashizumu to josei, p.142.
5. Fujii Tadatoshi, Kokubō Fujinkai, pp.9-32.
6. Fujii, pp.42-46, and Chino, p.289.
7. Smethurst, Richard J., A Social Basis for Prewar Japanese Militarism, p.44.
8. Ibid., pp.44-45.
9. Fujii, pp.70-71, and Chino, p.290.
10. Onshō-ka 恩賞課 Aikoku Fujinkai came under the jurisdiction of this department, although it had no direct control over the association.
11. General Araki Sadao, a member of the Kōdōha (Imperial Way Faction), was Army Minister from 1931. He was retired from active service after the February 26th Incident in 1936, but served as Education Minister in Prince Konoe Fumimaro's first cabinet 1937-1939. Kadokawa Nihon-shi jiten, p.33.
12. Fujii, pp.51,53, and Chino, p.291.
13. Fujii, p.71, and Chino, p.290.
14. Fujii, pp.70-71, and Chino, p.290.

15. Fujii, p.71, and Chino, p.290.
16. Fujii, pp.55-56, and Chino, p.291.
17. Fujii, p.54.
18. Fujii, p.95.
19. Chino, pp.289-290.
20. Fujii, pp.40,47-48.
21. "These aprons [were] actually sleeved smocks with elasticized cuffs that fit[ted] over the entire front of the kimono and tie in the back, thus presenting a uniform appearance and presumably serving a sanitary function." Smith and Wiswell, p.28.
22. Fujii, pp.66-68.
23. Smith and Wiswell, pp.28-30.
24. Fujii, p.73.
25. Nihon fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, p.574.
26. Fujii, p.138.
27. Chino, p.291.
28. Fujii, pp.51-53.
29. Smethurst, pp.124,125.
30. Chino, p.296.
31. Fujii, pp.49-50,58.
32. Ibid., pp.59-60.
33. Chino, p.298.
34. Fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, p.573.
35. Fujii, p.61.
36. The Kantō head branch of Kokubō Fujinkai had been called Dainihon Kokubō Fujinkai in October 1932, but could not be considered a national organization at that stage.
37. Chino, p.291.
38. Kantoku shidō 監督指導
39. Shidō 指導
40. Nihon fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, p.574.

41. Smethurst, p.45.

Chapter III: Reorganization of Aikoku Fujinkai & the Race for Supremacy

1. Chino, p.281.
2. Ibid., p.281.
3. Ibid., pp.280,284, and Fujii. p.92.
4. Kadokawa Nihon-shi jiten, p.276.
5. Chino, pp.280,283-284, and Fujii, p.92.
6. Smith and Wiswell, p.23.
7. The translation literally reads "...[attired in] crested kimono and white collar" indicating women of substance. Fujii, p.93.
8. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.28.
9. From Tottoriken-shi, as quoted in Fujii, p.28.
10. This campaign was conducted using various names such as Kokumin Kōsei Undō (Movement to Regenerate the Nation), Nōsangyoson Keizai Kōsei Undō (Movement for Economic Regeneration of Farming, Mountain and Fishing Villages), and Jiriki Kōsei Undō (Self-help Movement).
国民更正運動 農山漁村経済更生運動 自力更生運動
11. Furuya Tetsuo, "Nihon fuashizumu ron," in Iwanami Kōza Nihon rekishi, Vol.20, Kindai (Modern History), No.7, p.109.
12. Ibid., p.110.
13. Chino, p.282.
14. Fujii, pp.61,80,112-114.
15. Fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, pp.572-573.
16. Smith and Wiswell, p.25.
17. 国防思想
18. Senkyo Shukusei Undō 選挙肅正運動 This movement was actually a series of campaigns officially sponsored by Home Ministry bureaucrats. Legislation was passed to eradicate corruption in elections and citizen committees were established to "clean up" local elections in 1935 and 1936. See Berger, Gordon M., Parties Out of Power in Japan 1931-1941, pp.72-73.
19. 婦選獲得同盟

20. Furuya, p.114; Vavich, Dee Ann, "The Japanese Woman's Movement: Ichikawa Fusae. A Pioneer in Woman's Suffrage," in Monumenta Nipponica, Vol.XXII, No.3-4, p.421; and Nagahara, "Taisho * Showa-ki ni okeru," pp.27-28.
21. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," pp.27-28.
22. Women had been granted the right to stand for political office in local government, but the law required a husband's permission for a women to do so. Vavich, p.419.
23. Ichikawa Fusae, Ichikawa Fusae Jiden: zensen-hen, pp.371-372.
24. Furuya, pp.112-113.
25. Ibid., p.113.
26. Ibid., pp.113-114.

Chapter IV: National Mobilization and the Road to Amalgamation

1. Kokumin Seishin Sōdōin Undō 国民精神総動員運動
2. Berger, pp.186-187.
3. Ibid., pp.186-187.
4. Chino, pp.306-307.
5. Ibid., p.307.
6. Ibid., p.307, and Miyasaka Kosaku, Kindai Nihon shakai kyōiku seisaku-shi, p.365.
7. Chino, p.309.
8. Fujii, p.197.
9. Monpe were a type of baggy pantaloons used by female agricultural labourers. Most women avoided wearing them except at air raid drills or later in the war when textiles became scarce. Havens, Thomas R., Valley of Darkness: The Japanese People and World War Two, p.18, and Fujii, pp.191-192.
10. Jūgo Katei Kyōka Undo 銃後家庭強化運動
11. Chino, pp.302,307-308,310; Fujii, pp.174-181; and Miyasaka, p.366.
12. Kōa Hōkōbi 興亜奉公日

13. Hinomaru bentō, literally "circle-of-the-sun box lunches," consisted of a pickled red plum set in a bed of white rice. 日の丸弁当
14. Fujii, pp.192-193, and Havens, p.17.
15. Fujii, p.178. Ichikawa Fusae was a leader of the women's suffrage movement and founded the Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei. She remained active in politics in the post-war period advocating "clean elections." Yoshioka Yayoi founded the first medical school for women in Japan and continued to be involved with women's health and education throughout her career. Yamada Waka was a prolific contributor to the feminist Taisho journal, Seitō, but later moved to a more conservative position as a news columnist advocating traditional values. For more information concerning these figures see Yamazaki Tomoko, The Story of Yamada Waka; Ichikawa, Jiden; and Robins-Mowry, Dorothy, The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan.
16. Ichikawa, Jiden, pp.433-434.
17. 日本婦人団体連盟
18. Ichikawa, Jiden, pp.436-439.
19. Chino, pp.302-303.
20. Fujii, pp.147-148.
21. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," pp.27-28.
22. Ibid., p.27.
23. Ibid., p.27, and Fujii, p.169.
24. Fujii, p.169.
25. Ibid., p.170.
26. Smethurst, p.183.
27. Ibid., p.184.
28. Smith, Robert J., "Japanese Village Women: Suye-mura, 1935-1936," in Journal of Japanese Studies, Vol.7, No.2, (Summer 1981), pp.264-270.
29. Fujii, p.154.
30. Ibid., p.152-153.
31. Ibid., pp.157-158.
32. Ibid., p.141.
33. Chino, p.312.
34. Ibid., p.310.

35. Fujii, p.160.
36. Ibid., p.203.
37. Havens, pp.55-56, and Berger, pp.231-237,315-329.
38. Fujii, p.204.
39. 婦人時局研究会
40. Nihon fujin mondai shiryō shūsei, pp.582-583.
41. Fujii, p.204.
42. 大日本婦人会
43. Murakami Nobuhiko, Nihon no fujin mondai, p.167, and Havens, p.58.
44. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," pp.29-30.
45. Sano Noriko, "Japanese Women's Movements During World War II," in Feminist International, No.2, p.78.
46. Yoshimi, p.144.
47. Nagahara, "Taishō * Shōwa-ki ni okeru," p.29.
48. Havens, "Women and War in Japan, 1937-45," in American Historical Review, Oct.1975, p.916.
49. As noted in Chapter I, Prince Konoe Atsumaro was the father of Prince Konoe Fumimaro, architect of the IRAA. The involvement of both these figures suggests a certain continuity of state power over women's groups.
50. Ibid., p.916.

Conclusion

1. McCormack, Gavan, "Nineteen-Thirties Japan: Fascism?" in Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Vol.14, No.2, April-June 1982, p.32.
2. Furuya, p.84.
3. Havens, "Women and War in Japan , 1937-1945," p.916.
4. Ibid., p.916.
5. Ibid., pp.919-922.
6. Furuya, p.85.
7. Nagahara, "Aikoku Fujinkai no katsudō," p.120.
8. Smith and Wiswell, p.31.



The women of Suye village wearing their "patriotic" aprons (1935).

Source: Smith & Wiswell.

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