**Manchuria**

Japan

* Manchuria had lots of resources including oil (90% of China's total), cotton, forests and farms, coal, iron (70% of China's total), aluminium, magnesite (a bit like lime but which was be used in industrial furnaces), gold (55% of China's total), and lead. It was

China's industrial centre.

* Manchuria is over four times the size of Japan
* Japan had a lot of economic interest in Manchuria already. They had been given the **South Manchurian Railway** as War booty after the Russo-Japanese War and its profits had increased 50% since then (1907-30).
* By January 1933 Japanese soldiers were posing for pictures on the **Great Wall** and on 31st May 1933 China signed the **Tanggu Agreement** promising not to fight.
* The Japanese government themselves had tried to act to a certain extent but had little control over the militaristic forces at play. When the perpetrators of the **Mukden incident** were to be arrested the Kwangtung army simply refused. And when the **Prime Minister** who had already survived two assassination attempts tried to talk to Chiang Kai Shek he was killed in the **15th May Incident**. It was to reveal that government policy now had to align with military policy. Japan then invaded the rest of China in 1937, although in reality the fighting had never stopped.

China

* Manchuria should only be used in quotation marks
* Just as they had done previously (i.e. 1928) the **Kwangtung Army** then was about to act on its own. On 18th September a bomb exploded on the South Manchurian Railway outside **Mukden**, (now **Shenyang**) Manchuria's leading city - conveniently near a **garrison** of Japanese troops. It was so minor (about 1.5 metres of damage caused) trains continued to use the service the same day. Historians generally believe it was a Japanese ploy (or a **cassus belli**) to cause a war by blaming the explosion on Chinese troops. **Suemori Kawamoto** detonated it at around 10.20pm. (The incident featured in a Tin Tin comic strip called The Blue Lotus – check it out if you have time!)
* The leader of China, **Chiang Kai Shek**, knew that the Japanese were better trained and better equipped. In 1932 he stated "China lacks real military power." For this reason he ordered his troops not to resist the invasion.
* Chiang Kai Shek also worried that if he defended Manchuria northern **warlords** like **Zhang Xueliang** might seize the moment to strike against him.
* The **Nationalists** regarded the Communists as the bigger threat. Chiang Kai Shek described the Japanese as a disease of the skin. He described the **Communists** as a disease of the heart.
* Chiang Kai Shek suspected China was simply too big (4 million square miles) to be defeated in the long term. Japan would simply run out of resources.

Russia

* Manchuria shared a 2,000 mile border with the Communist Soviet Union
* Russia was in the grip of famine, caused by Stalin's disastrous **collectivisation** programme. Rather than intervene they stepped out - selling their **Chinese Eastern Railway** to Manchukuo.

Manchuria

* Although China had over 100,000 soldiers in the area compared to Japan's 25,000 Japanese successes were rapid and there was little actual fighting. Manchuria was turned into a puppet state of the Japanese and called **Manchukuo**. The ex-Emperor of China, a Manchu called **Puyi**, was installed as its **Kangde Emperor.**
* It soon had its own imperial army, school system, postal network (with some very pretty stamps!), and even a national football league! (They lost 4 of their 7 games and drew 1-1 with the Philippines. For two of their games the score was unrecorded!).
* It also unsuccessfully applied to be in both the Olympics and the **League of Nations**.

Italy

* Most countries responded to Japanese aggression negatively but little was done to reverse the result. China appealed to the League of Nations for help and this was the first major battle between two League members. But the League was Eurocentric and a gentleman’s club.
* The result was the **Lytton Commission**, a slow and toothless reply which branded Japan the aggressor but which did not invoke the League's founding principle of **collective security.** The Commission formed in December 1931, didn't even get to Manchuria until February, and wasn't submitted to the League until October 1932, a full year after the invasion began. The League voted **42:1** to condemn Japan's actions, Japan being the single vote against. Its response was simply to leave the League in 1933 with no consequences. A famous **David Low** cartoon described the punishment as "a good talking to."
* Moreover, as historian Stephen Goode points out **Mussolini** "noted the failure"

USA

* The world was suffering from the **Great Depression**. Nobody wanted an expensive war over China.
* By invading Manchuria Japan had created another border against the Soviet Union, who were perceived as the real threat.
* Many simply thought of China as corrupt and backwards. International financial aid often never made it past Chiang's **blue shirts**.
* The **League of Nations** had been established as the final of **President Wilson's 14** **Points** and sought to promote **collective security** to ensure that the **First World War** was "the war to end all wars." The USA was not a member of the League, however, and wanted to protect its **Open Door Policy** - i.e. ensure all nations have equal trade with China. It did implement the **Stimson Doctrine** (named after **Secretary of State Henry Stimson**) which stated the US would not recognise changes in borders resulting from the war.

**Second Sino Japanese War**

Japan

* Japan formed the **China Garrison Army** to operate outside Manchurian borders. When two newspaper editors were killed for being pro-Japanese the Japanese then used this as pretence for going beyond the borders agreed at the **Tanggu Agreement**. The **Umezu-He Agreement** of 10th June 1935 made this official and created another puppet government, the **East Hebei Autonomous Council**. Japan also withdrew from the naval agreement made in London in 1935. A further puppet government was later set up in 1936 in **Mengjiang** or **Mongolland**.
* All of Japan's previous successes (first Sino-Japanese war, Russo-Japanese war, its actions in the First World War) had been short, sharp affairs. George E Taylor sees Japan's military Objectives as clumsy, calling them "third rate political generals." Put simply Japan had bitten off more than it could chew.

China

* Alarmed at Japan's rapid successes Zhang Xueliang, the former warlord of Manchuria, kidnapped Chiang and forced him to set up a **second united front** with the Communists. In July 1937 China resisted in the **Marco Polo Bridge Incident** where they fought at **Lugou Bridge**. Chiang tried to retaliate by bombing a Japanese ruled area of Shanghai on 13th August. Two days later Japan formed the **Shanghai Expeditionary Army** and used bomber aircraft on Nanjing. Shanghai was overwhelmed and Chiang withdrew to a capital safely in the west, Wuhan.
* Nanjing then suffered a terrible war crime known as the **'rape of Nanjing'** where somewhere in the region of 340,000 Chinese were killed. **Prince Asaka's Central China Area Army** looted, raped women and children, tortured, mutilated, burned and decapitated en masse.
* By mid-1939 Japan controlled most of eastern China and China's government moved to Chongqing in the far west.
* At the same time Chiang continued to micromanage and make mistakes. In June 1938 he ordered the **Yellow River** be flooded to stop the enemy, causing the deaths of nearly 1,000,000 Chinese over a 27,000 square mile area. He also adopted a **scorched earth policy** at a time of starvation for many.
* China did appeal to the League on 13th September 1937. It then referred it to a **Nine-Power Treaty** which met in **Belgium** and which issued only moral outrage.

USA

* The USA was keen to maintain its open door policy. The USA, the world's largest supplier of oil, continued supplying Japan until 1940 - even when a small US navy ship (the **USS Panay**) was sunk by the Japanese in December 1937. It wanted to trade with China and Japan. As long as Japan did not threaten US interests (like the **Philippines**) it would surely stay out.

Russia

* Russia was pleased Japan had invaded. It meant Chiang had to end his persecution of the **CCP** and meant Japan were unlikely to attack them. Russia loaned a China $50 million on 1st March 1938 of which 4/5 went to the purchase of aeroplanes. Between this and 13th June 1939 Russia made three loans totalling $250 million. This paid for 1235 planes, 1600 artillery pieces, 14,000 machine guns, 50,000 rifles, 300 advisers, 2000 pilots and 3000 engineers. Russia would promote Communism without committing troops against Japan. The second united front officially came to an end in 1941 when the **KMT** turned on the **New Fourth Army**.

Germany

* China supplied Germany with **tungsten**, a crucial metal in weapon making. In 1936 however Germany and Japan signed the **anti Comintern Pact** which was a joint agreement against Communism. Japan was surprised therefore by the August 1939 **Nazi Soviet Pact** although in April 1941 Japan and the Soviet Union also signed a **neutrality pact.**

**The route to Pearl Harbor**

Japan

* Japan had 18 months of oil left and the largest nearby source was Indonesia, owned by the Netherlands. An attack here would threaten the Philippines and if that were the case the USA would surely intervene to protect its main strategic location in Asia.
* Two weeks later Japan attacked. Japan's **Admiral Yamamoto** developed a plan to surprise attack the US fleet at Pearl Harbor to ensure they would not or could not fight. The loss of their fleet would leave them incapacitated for at least a year it was believed. On 7th December (8th December in Asia) at 7.48am Japan attacked many places, including **Pearl Harbor**, the main US naval base in Honolulu, Hawaii under Commander **Mitsuo Fuchida** – who launched the attack with the words “**Tora tora tora**” meaning “Tiger tiger tiger”. The **Imperial Japanese Navy** fleet had moved undetected across the Pacific and 6 aircraft carriers launched 353 aircraft in two waves using torpedoes, bombs and machine guns. The attack:
* Damaged 4 battleships and sank 4 others
* Severely damaged or sank 3 cruisers, 3 destroyers, and 2 other naval vessels
* Destroyed 188 aircraft
* Killed over 2400 and injured 1200 others

Japan's losses were minimal:

* 20 aircraft destroyed
* 5 small submarines sunk
* 65 killed
* A little known fact is that **Kazuo Sakamaki** became the first Japanese Prisoner of War in World War II. He was washed ashore having collapsed whilst swimming underneath his midget submarine to try and repair it!

China

* Civil War continues to rage. Chiang has his hands tied with internal and foreign threats.

USA

* The USA's response was almost immediate. After just three days the USA prohibited the sale of scrap iron and steel to Japan. The USA also increased aid to China. By July 1941 Japan had full control of Indochina. The USA again responded by freezing all Japanese bank accounts in the USA, banning the sale of **oil** to Japan (an **embargo**), and granted $240 million to China for military purchases. Britain and the Netherlands followed suit. This was a terrible blow for Japan who needed oil for ships, aircraft, and tanks.
* The USA had a plan in the event of war with Japan known as **Operation Orange** and a **Gallup Poll** one year earlier showed that 53% of Americans expected war with Japan.
* This pressure was increased with **The Hull Note** of 26th November 1941, named after the US **Secretary of State Cordell Hull**. It requested Japan remove its troops from Indochina and China/Manchuria and leave the **Tripartite Alliance**.

France

* **Vichy France** allowed Japan to land troops at **Haiphong** in French **Indochina** in September 1940 and they soon began building airbases.