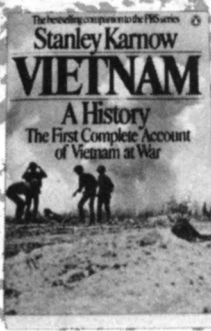


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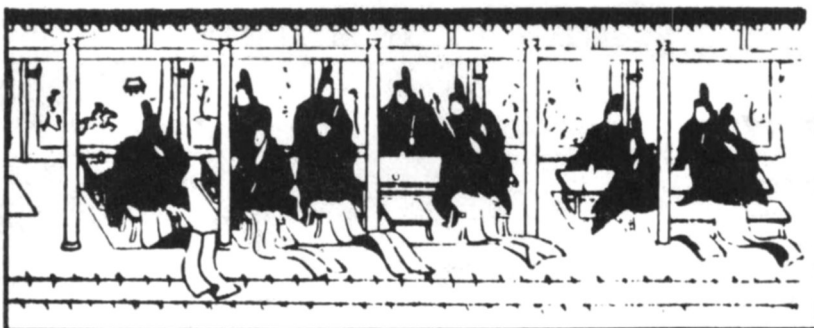
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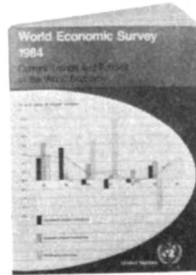
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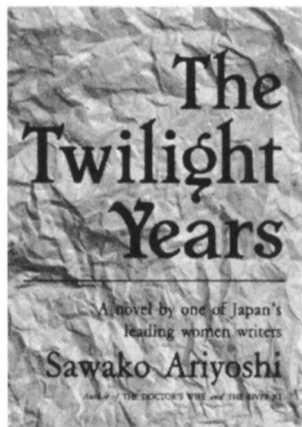
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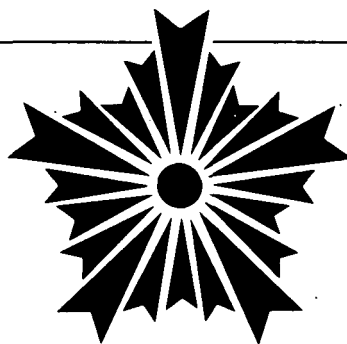
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The voluminous political files are particularly valuable in view of the critical years of Chinese history which they document. As the 1930s began, the civil war between the forces of Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung was overshadowed by Japan's invasion and occupation of Manchuria. To protest Japan's establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo, the Chinese boycotted Japanese goods. In retaliation for the boycott, 70,000 Japanese troops landed at Shanghai in January 1932. During the next few years, as Japanese forces advanced throughout North China, Chiang's Nationalist government adopted the position of self-strengthening—that is, attacking the Communists—before counterattacking the Japanese. A Communist government was set up in Kiangsi, but Chiang's military campaigns pressured Mao's Red Army into the Long March (1934-1935).

By 1936, however, the fiercely anti-Japanese Nationalist leaders of North China, led by General Chang Hsueh-liang, were in favor of a truce with the Communists so that united Chinese forces could fight against Japan. In the Sian Incident (December 1936), Chiang was kidnapped by Chang Hsueh-liang and was held until he agreed to accept Communist help against Japan. In January 1937, negotiations terminated the long anti-Communist campaign. Six months later, the Lukouchiao Incident led to Japanese seizure of Peiping and Tientsin, and the Second Sino-Japanese War began. Although Japanese troops captured Shanghai, Suchow, Nanking, Tsingtao, Canton, and Hankow, Chinese forces retained control of much of South China. Throughout 1938 and 1939, fighting continued over a large area.

These political and military developments, as well as social and economic ones, were observed and reported by American diplomatic personnel throughout China, both at the U.S. embassy and at consulates (Amoy, Canton, Chefoo, Foochow, Hankow, Harbin, Mukden, Nanking, Shanghai, Swatow, Tientsin, Tsinan, Tsingtao and Yunnanfu). These reports are the largest component of the Central Files. Additionally, there are reports from the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs, as well as reports on China from such other U.S. diplomatic posts as Tokyo, Saigon, Hanoi, Calcutta, London, Paris, Berlin, and Moscow. Now available in a convenient microfilm edition, the State Department's Central Files on Chinese internal affairs will be counted among the most useful research collections in any library. Filmed from the original documents in the National Archives, our edition contains all of the important files; only files of little or no historical value (such as those dealing with claims of U.S. citizens) have been omitted. Thousands of valuable documents have now been published for the first time and are available to researchers everywhere.

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