REBELLION AND DEMOCRACY:
A Study of Commoners in the Popular Rights Movement
of the Early Meiji Period

by

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The thesis is concerned with three so-called "incidents of intense violence" (gekka jiken) that occurred between late 1882 and late 1884: the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu incidents. All three revolts occurred simultaneous to, and were connected with, the rise and fall of the "freedom and popular rights movement" (jiyu minen undo), especially with its principal institutional expression, the Jiyuto or "Liberal Party."

One of the most important of the connections between the revolts and the Jiyuto is that of their overlapping leadership. For the most part, local Jiyuto leaders served as the leaders of these three revolts. Due to this fact, and the other equally important one of the critical extent to which the local Jiyuto leaders embraced the ideological principles of the national Jiyuto—as opposed to the pragmatic, perhaps cynical, approach toward these principles taken by the national leadership—the "natural right" basis of the Liberal's ideology and its corresponding endorsement of the "right of revolution" filtered down to the farmers, hunters, day-labourers and others who participated in these incidents. Notions of "natural right" were used as guiding principles to govern the aims of their revolutionary organisations and as explanations to justify their attempts to overthrow the government. Popular songs, poems, the courtroom testimony of those participants arrested, the content of their revolutionary manifestos, their statements of aims as presented in their organisational charters, the content of lectures given in peasant villages by local Jiyuto organisers, and the like attest to the beginnings of a strong liberal-democratic undercurrent existing in the early 1880's.
among Japan's common people (heimin).

These findings call into question the conclusions regarding the early failure of democracy in Japan reached by such noted Western scholars as E. H. Norman, Robert Scalapino, and Nobutaka Ike. This is due partly to the fact that each of these scholars analysed Japan's politics of this period almost exclusively at the level of national, elite figures and thereby ignored the impact that the popular rights movement had upon local politics and rural folk. By neglecting local politics, the above-mentioned scholars prematurely drew the conclusion that Japan's common people acted as a collective Atlas who patiently bore the burdens of modernisation upon their peasant backs in obedient silence.
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Finally, to Mrs. Agnes Lambe of Galiano Island I dedicate this thesis. She gave her home, her mind, and considerable typing abilities to me and my work during the final stages of preparing the thesis. She is an inspiring person, and one who causes young sceptics of the "modern era" to understand that they do not have a monopoly on wisdom.

R.W.B.

Vancouver, British Columbia

October 1976
REBELLION AND DEMOCRACY:
A Study of Commoners in the Popular Rights Movement
of the Early Meiji Period
INTRODUCTION

An alliance for freedom,
taken with the idea of freedom:
it all becomes clear
in the small mirror of sincerity.
Yet while we lament, asking
why our insignificant selves
were oppressed,
the rain still falls
heavily on the people.

The poem quoted above was written by Ohashi Genzaburo in October 1892, shortly before he died in his prison cell. He was a commoner (heimin) and a farmer, and by his own admittance "barely literate." He was also a member of the old Jiyuto party (Freedom, or Liberal party) that dissolved itself in late October 1884, barely a month after an attempt to overthrow the government had taken place. This attempt is known to later historians as the Kabasan Incident (Kabasan jiken), and Ohashi Genzaburo had participated in that attempt at revolution.

This study is concerned with men such as Ohashi and with the political party and movements in which they were involved. It is a study concerned not with the great statesmen or the institutions they built, but instead is concerned with the common people of Japan who were compelled to suffer those great statesmen and their institutions. It is a study of the popular opposition known as the jiyu minken undo (Movement for Liberty and Popular Rights), a movement that began shortly after the Meiji Restoration (1868), coalesced in 1881 to form the Jiyuto, and nearly collapsed in 1884 when the Jiyuto dissolved. Our special concern is with the movement as it manifested itself in popular rights' societies.
in the late seventies and early eighties and how these societies and similar groups influenced the ideas of an entire generation of rural folk.

Only those rural folk who were involved in the so-called *gekka jiken*, or "incidents of intensified [violence]" are the subjects of our study. Between 1881 and 1886 about ten of these occurred in different parts of the nation—Akita, Fukushima, Niigata, Gifu, Gumma, Kanagawa, Ibaraki, Saitama, Nagano, Aichi, and Shizuoka prefectures. Although the goals, the class composition of the leaders and followers, and the tactics employed by the membership in each differed, they all had in common at least two elements: they all had connections with the popular rights movement, and they all tried using violent methods to effect the kinds of political reform that were advocated by the popular rights movement. In general, the reforms could be regarded as democratic, for example, a national assembly elected by the citizenry on the basis of a constitution that would guarantee the basic rights of free expression, free association, and other civil liberties then being denied most of Japan's population. In many instances, the demands for political reform revolved around basic economic issues such as excessive taxation; in this case the theme of "no taxation without representation" was voiced repeatedly by the popular rights advocates. And the loudest voicing demands for reform were the participants of the *gekka jiken*.

This is one reason why we have chosen to study the *gekka jiken*. Because they were "loud" and violent, they captured the attention of not only the authorities, but also the newspapers, the village historians, and the politicians of the time. All of these observed and wrote about
the participants and the incidents of which they were part. Hence, we have today records and observations on how the popular rights movement affected the lives and ideas of the members of the lower classes who rebelled.

Of course the question then arises, how representative are the rebels of the social classes from which they came? Is it fair to assume that the farmers involved in the gekka jiken accurately reflected the opinions of the farming class as a whole toward the political reforms being advocated by popular rights' activists? For as we know, "More often, historians have been inclined to treat the rebellious or revolutionary crowd as a militant minority to be sharply marked off from the far larger number of citizens of similar class and occupation who, . . . played no active part in the event." To test the truth of this statement one need only consult any of the large number of volumes dealing with Japan of this period. Robert Scalapino's *Democracy and the Party Movement in Pre-war Japan* devotes a bare four pages out of nearly 500 to the gekka jiken; Nobutaka Ike allows nine pages; and E. H. Norman, whose sympathies for the Meiji peasants were clearly strong, discusses these incidents in less than four pages. Clearly, none of these scholars places much importance on the topic we have chosen to study. Partly this is due to the nature of their studies and the time when they were written: all three of these works were sweeping in scope, covering decades of political development in Japan, and when they were written there existed very little work in English that could be regarded as general histories of this period. There clearly existed a need for the types of work they produced.
Yet there appears to have been another reason for their having ignored the *gekka jiken*, one which has to do more with the focus of historical analysis than with the absence of suitable material or with the period in which they were writing, although, contradictorily, all three reasons are related. What I mean is simply this: all were aware of the two attempts to establish a democratic form of government in modern Japanese history—the popular rights movement in the eighties and the so-called Taisho democracy of the 1920's. Yet at the time they were writing, Japan was entering a stage of ultranationalistic political development, or was just leaving it, having lost the war and having been occupied by Western military forces whose purpose was to impose a democratic form of government on Japan. Each believed that democracy had failed in Japan, and Scalapino even went as far as to say that its failure was predetermined by the logic of Japan's past political development. The absence of liberal traditions, the predominance of Confucian notions of hierarchy, the anti-democratic bias of the elite power structure, the close ties between "free enterprise" and the government, the imperialistic power structure of the World at the time Japan began her modernization, a tradition of glorifying the military and of despising the agricultural population—all these past elements of Japan's politics determined that the democratic experiment in Japan would fail. Likewise, they were less than sanguine about the future of democracy once the Allied Occupation had left Japan.

The "failure thesis" is, then, a convincing one. It is attractive because of its ability to weave together all the various threads of Japanese history, society, and politics into one neat explanatory piece
of political fabric. However, the fabric is not without its loose threads and its gaps in the stitching. Probably the most unsightly of these gaps is the failure of the "failure thesis" to explain adequately the success of democracy in those two periods when it was a political fact. Although they acknowledge the fact, they attribute its origins primarily to exogenous factors or necessary external preconditions, and therefore fail to consider seriously the possibility of indigenous political developments that may have prepared the way for the rise of democracy. But an explanation of the necessary preconditions for the rise of democracy is one thing; to explain why those conditions enabled democracy to burgeon is entirely another. For example, to discuss the expansion of industry after the First World War, the growth of international labour standards, the spread of democratic and socialist ideas within Japan, and so on, does not in itself tell us how or why industrial labourers and tenants organized themselves into unions, apparently democratic in both principle and practice, and made them effective means for getting demands met. Nor, for another example, does a mere recitation on the democratic programmes imposed by the Occupation after the Second World War explain why the Japanese were able to embrace democratic ideas and practices so quickly after such a long period of fascist rule.

I think that the failure of the "failure thesis" lies in its failing to account for the practice of politics at different levels of society. The level at which their historical analyses have been aimed primarily is the elite level of politics, the level occupied by national politicians, business leaders, and government officials. There is a reason for this
emphasis on the elite level: Japan's modern history is replete with examples of great leaders in all fields of social life. The imagery is one of a squadron of captains, each ruling and directing the course of his own particular ship, yet in co-ordination with one another, toward a "rich country and a strong military" (fukoku kyohei). But in focusing upon the "captains" of the ship of state, the lives and work of the many individual seamen collectively serving as a "crew," upon whom the real fate of the ship rests, have been ignored. More often than not, they have been treated as an unthinking body of men whose identity is a mere extension of the captains', and their duty only what the captain orders.

To date, treatments of Japan's political history have been confined to the study of "captains" and therefore it has been assumed that the many seamen existed, as in any disciplined military situation, only to do as their commanders ordered; the seamen constituted a "subject political culture." But to carry this imagery one step further, what if the seamen decided to mutiny? What then? Since mutinies are studied by historians, political scientists, and sociologists, we find out what conditions produced rebellion; we discover who the leaders were; whether they in fact represented all the crewmen or just a militant minority; we learn what their demands were and which officers were the subject of their attack; and we find out whether there was sufficient provocation and whether the captain had been unjust.

This study will focus on the seamen, as individuals and as members of a crew, and will do so by examining three "incidents of intense violence": the Fukushima Incident of 1882 and the Kabasan and Chichibu
incidents of 1884. We examine them for all the reasons social scientists study mutinies: to learn why they happened, what they tell about general social, economic and political conditions, and what consequences they had for society and politics as a whole. We also wish to discover whether the democratic ideals the participants espoused were shared by others within their class, and whether they had some impact upon later political developments in Japan. A word of caution: as there was no Gallup poll at the time these incidents occurred, in the final analysis it will not be possible to demonstrate with any degree of precision to what extent these early democrats represented others within their class; we can only present the best case possible, and then suggest the likelihood of representativeness.

The thesis begins with case studies of each of the incidents. The second chapter tries to pinpoint the conditions—historical, social, economic, and political—that helped to produce the three incidents. In the third chapter, we perform an in-depth analysis of the participants of the three incidents. Many of the rebels we will be examining may be regarded as local elites, i.e., the political, economic and social leaders of local society. In terms of the earlier-used metaphor, these local elites might be thought of as "chief petty officers." Although in some respects their "rank" sets them apart from the many non-elites whom they led in the local popular rights movement and the related rebellions, in other respects they differed very little. But despite whatever differences that may have separated local leaders from followers, in the pages that follow it should become clear that both groups shared similar
political goals, and that these shared goals set them far apart from the national liberal leaders and governmental rulers.

The nature of these goals is set forth in the fourth chapter where we further identify the participants by examining their political beliefs and the political societies and parties to which they belonged. In the final chapter, we discuss the consequences the individual participants suffered because of their involvement in the popular rights movement and the effects their rebellion had upon the Jiyuto. We conclude by making some suggestions about the democratic experience in modern Japanese history.

One final word of introduction: the ultimate purpose of this thesis is to address itself to three types of critics, those whom Sir Isaiah Berlin cited in his introduction to Franco Venturi's *Roots of Revolution*, deleting where necessary the reference to Russia and inserting a reference to Japan:

Those who look on all history through the eyes of the victors, and for whom accounts of movements that failed, of martyrs and minorities, seem without interest as such; those who think that ideas play little or no part in determining historical events; and finally those who are convinced that [democracy in Japan] was simply the result of the [Allied Occupation], and possessed no significant roots in the [Japanese] past.
Notes


Map 1. The Kanto Region, and Fukushima and Nagano Prefectures
CHAPTER I

THE INCIDENTS

The purpose of this chapter is a simple one: to provide a detailed sketch of the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu incidents. Care will be taken to introduce the main characters involved in each of the jiken, to explain how and when they got involved, and what part they played in the development of the incidents. The question of why they involved themselves will be discussed in Chapters III and IV, where we will look at the background of the participants in the first instance, and their ideas as translated into action and organisation in the second.

THE FUKUSHIMA INCIDENT

One of the few scholars specializing on the Fukushima Incident, Shimoyama Saburo, tells us that "The incident begins with the appointment of Mishima [Michitsune or Tsuyo] as Governor [of Fukushima prefecture] in early 1882, and ends with the mass arrests of Jiyuto members in late November and early December." Most of the other specialists—Shoji Kichinosuke, Takahashi Tetsuo, Oishi Kaichiro, and Goto Yasushi—agree with Shimoyama's dates for the most part, although Takahashi, for instance, believes that the incident did not really end until well after the "treason trial" of April 1883, until, that is, several of those acquitted of treason became participants in the abortive Kabasan revolt of September 1884. But since in Chapter V we will deal explicitly with the government's reaction to the Fukushima jiken, and with its
Map 2. Fukushima Prefecture
consequences, here we will accept Shimoyama's dates as representing the incident proper.

Although the dates for the beginning and the end of the incident are debatable, there exists almost no disagreement among the specialists with regard to the more important events of 1882 which collectively comprise the Fukushima jiken. After having compared their treatment of the important events with those cited by the newspapers of that period, we can, after noting one caveat, conclude that their accounts appear to be historically accurate. The caveat is this: while all these scholars are careful to distinguish between the incident as it developed in eastern Fukushima from its development in western Fukushima, the fact that the leadership of the incident in both areas was largely drawn from the Jiyuto of each area often causes obfuscation in their work with regard to the important differences in the nature of each regional Jiyuto party branch. This is due in part, I believe, to an ideologically-based tendency of these scholars to see anti-government solidarity among the party faithful as a more important point to stress than the geographical, local self-interest that in fact motivated the actions of each branch, independently of one another. Minimizing the extent to which regional self-interest separated the eastern from the western branches of the Jiyuto in Fukushima, and conversely, maximizing the party tie, leads, for instance, to the commission of an error in interpretation by Shimoyama: that is, to transform an admittedly highly political event into a revolutionary one. As we shall see in Chapter IV, even though there is certainly reason enough to regard several of the eastern Fukushima Jiyuto members as being motivated
by revolutionary aims, and even though both eastern and western members had adopted a potentially revolutionary ideology prior to the incident, there is at the same time little evidence to support the argument that most of the Jiyuto followers in western Fukushima were intent upon bringing down the government by force. Force, as we shall see, did indeed play an important role in this incident, but it was applied one-sidedly. If measured upon the scales of coercion, the authorities' use of force tips the scales heavily to their side. This said, it is now necessary to examine the incident itself.

The appointment of Mishima Michitsune (1835-88), an ex-samurai from Satsuma who began his government service in 1871 with the Tokyo municipal government, was the catalyst that set into motion the subsequent clash between prefectural authorities on the one side, and the prefectural assembly and, especially, its Jiyuto membership on the other. Already serving as governor of Yamagata prefecture, a post he continued to hold until July, in February 1882 the "Devil Governor" (oni kenri) was assigned the Fukushima governorship. Upon this occasion Mishima reportedly confided to a friend, Sata Jiro (District Chief of Yama), what his orders were from the central government: "I was given three secret orders along with my appointment. The first is to destroy the Jiyuto, the second is to build up the Teiseito [the government's 'political party'], and the third is to construct several important roads." Events subsequent to his appointment prove that Mishima acted faithfully to obey these three orders, even though, in terms of the sequence of events, the execution of the orders was reversed, and for good reason.
Governor Mishima and the Aizu Jiyuto

The destruction of the Fukushima Jiyuto was not an easy task. Two branches, one in Aizu and the other in the east, had been established in December 1881, just two months after the founding of the national party. Of all the party branches later established across the nation, the Fukushima branches were popularly regarded as among the strongest.\(^5\) At the time of Mishima's appointment, prefectural assembly members affiliated to the Jiyuto outnumbered those of the other parties. The breakdown in the sixty-two-member assembly (with one seat vacant) was: Jiyuto, twenty-four; Teiseito, fifteen; Kaishinto, twelve; unattached, ten.\(^6\) Besides holding a numerical superiority, the Fukushima Jiyuto assembly members also shared a history of political activity in the jiyu minken movement that began in the mid-seventies (see Chapter IV). More than the members of the other parties, they were a readily identifiable and cohesive group. Moreover, outside the prefectural assembly, both in the Aizu and eastern Fukushima regions, Jiyuto members held many positions of authority at the local level of government, e.g., village head (kocho), sub-district head (kucho), or as elected members of the village or ku assemblies.\(^7\) A number of Jiyuto members had also held positions of responsibility during the tenure of the previous administration, but once Mishima took office they were summarily dismissed and replaced by officials personally loyal to him. In all, more than ninety known Jiyuto officials or school teachers (who were employees of the government at this time) were said to have been sacked by Mishima.\(^8\) These dismissals can be regarded as the first instance of Mishima acting upon his objective to "destroy
the Jiyuto." This instance, however, is of minor importance compared to subsequent attacks upon the Jiyuto, and with regard to the development of the Fukushima Incident. This becomes clear when we look at two other actions taken by Mishima during his first few months in office.

The first was the action the governor took in order to implement the central government's order to build new roads in the Aizu region, which consists of the six districts located in the western part of the prefecture: Yama, Kawanuma, Onuma, Minami-Aizu, Kita-Aizu, and Higashi-Kabahara. The project, one he had already begun during his tenure as governor of Yamagata prefecture, was known as the "Three Roads" (sampo doro) project, so called because it was to link Wakamatsu, the former castle town of Aizu han, with Yamagata prefecture to the north, Tokyo to the south via Tochigi and Ibaraki prefectures, and Niigata prefecture to the west. The total cost of construction in Aizu, 620,000 yen, was to be shared by the central government and the six districts of Aizu. The Aizu share, however, at 360,000 yen was substantially larger, and further represented a considerable extra economic burden for the 129,000 residents of the region.

Mishima realized that this extra, unsought financial burden, announced within weeks of his taking office succeeding a popular governor, would not be enthusiastically received by Aizu residents, and that it would be necessary to gain the co-operation of the area's residents. To this end, on 28 February, Mishima sent from the far-off capital (Fukushima Town): his construction chief Nakayama and his personal deputy Ebina, a former samurai of Aizu han, to Aizu for the purpose of assembling the six
district chiefs (*guncho*). They were ordered by Mishima to hold an election among village and town councilmen, with only councilmen serving as electors, to choose one man from each district to serve as members of a committee that would be responsible for establishing the rules to govern the election of residents who would compose a standing committee called the *Aizu rokugun rengokai* ("Six Aizu districts' joint committee," hereafter cited as Rengokai). The Rengokai, representing the "people," in turn was intended to serve to legitimize and rubber-stamp Mishima's policy, as yet unannounced, of carrying out the road construction. Mishima's own notion of the composition of the Rengokai was a thirty-man committee, consisting of five people from each district and elected by village and town councilmen. Moreover, as communicated to Ebina, Mishima made it clear that all this business—the election of the rule-making committee, the determination of the rules for electing the Rengokai members, and the election itself—should be concluded in several days time!11

The election of the rules committee went as quickly as Mishima had wanted, and the six members first met on 5 March.12 In one day the rules for electing Rengokai members were settled. But despite the alacrity, and because four of the six were Jiyuto members, the rules finally settled upon for the Rengokai election were much more democratic than Mishima had wanted. Instead of an indirect election by village and town councilmen serving as electors, the rules committee endorsed proportional representation, i.e., the number of Rengokai members from each district would depend upon the district's population, and a direct election of members by all male taxpayers twenty years or older. This scheme was
accepted by Mishima for the sake of expediency, and two days later, on
7 and 8 March, the election of thirty-four Rengokai members was held.
(This number was later increased to forty-six once Onuma and Minami-Aizu
districts, whose chiefs favoured indirect elections initially, complied
with the rules committee election criteria.)

Although the procedure, the speed of selection and even the idea
of the existence of such a committee as the Rengokai was questioned, or
rather, protested against by Jiyuto members of the prefectural assembly
who regarded this as a violation of their right to advise the administra-
tion on important issues, their protests were muted by the aggressiveness
and quick initiative that Mishima had taken on this matter. The only
really serious protest was lodged by the administrative head of Yama dis-
trict, Igarashi Chikarasuke, a left-over from the previous administration,
whom Mishima quickly replaced with his own appointee, Sato Jiro, who, in
disposition and attitude toward the Jiyuto, remarkably resembled his boss.

On 14 to 16 March, just two weeks after Mishima initiated this
entire process, the Rengokai met for the first time at Wakamatsu to
"deliberate" on the government's road construction plans. Most present
were "large landlords or local notables (meiboka),"14 and several were
members of the prefectural assembly, such as Jiyuto members Nakajima
Yuhachi and Watanabe Ichiro. Nakajima, a thirty-one-year-old small land-
lord of Kawanuma prefecture, was elected chairman of the Rengokai.

Their deliberations essentially revolved around a proposal
earlier outlined by the six district heads in collaboration with Mishima's
deputies. Pressured to "deliberate" quickly, debate over the government's
proposals was sharply curtailed, and on 16 March the Rengokai approved two resolutions. The first required (a) one day of corvée labour each month for a period of two years from all Aizu residents between the ages of fifteen and sixty, excluding the disabled and widowed; and (b) a substitute labour tax to be paid by those disinclined to work, at the rate of fifteen sen per day for male labour, and ten sen per day for female labour. The second resolution provided for village and town councils to take appropriate measures to ensure participation, or for the collection of taxes for substitute labour based upon land value and the population of the village. The acceptance of both resolutions, however, was conditional on (1) the grant of supplementary funding from the central government and on (2) all work done by corvée labourers being restricted to level ground, only professionals doing the mountain and bridge construction. It is important to note that nothing was mentioned about what course the road should take, who would oversee the workers, the precise amount of supplementary funds to come from the central government, or about the details of tax assessment. In this regard, almost all students of the incident agree that these mistakes or oversights by the Rengokai were important factors in the growth of the incident.

Since actual construction work on the roads was not due to begin until August, during the intervening months Aizu residents in general and Rengokai members in particular had time to consider the details of the Rengokai resolutions and to discover the oversights or omissions not covered by them. By June, in fact, several events had transpired that caused many Aizu residents to question the road plan seriously. First,
in June it was learned that instead of the 260,000 yen in government funds initially promised, only 98,000 yen was granted. This, of course, meant a correspondingly heavier financial burden for Aizu residents. Second, Mishima effectively suspended the Rengokai, taking complete charge of the planning and supervision of road construction. As Takahashi evaluated this development, "The Rengokai was nothing but a tool whose resolutions merely served to round up people to work on the roads. Its actual work was three days of debate, and then it had to close up shop. Or rather, from the standpoint of the governor and the district head, it had outlived its usefulness." And thirdly, the governor ordered corvée labour dues to be made retroactive to March, when the resolutions were passed, and further ordered through the six district heads the speedy collection of these dues.

In reaction to these developments, a good number of Aizu residents adopted defensive measures. Some, such as Rengokai member Igarashi Takehiko of Yama district, began calling on other members to fight the government, specifically by demanding that a special session of the Rengokai be called in order to oppose these recent developments. By 28 July, the efforts of Igarashi and other Jiyuto-Rengokai members had succeeded in gaining a majority (by one) of Rengokai members to sign a petition calling for the special session. But on 14 August the petition was rejected, as were two other such petitions presented to the government before the end of the month. Other local Jiyuto members were preaching civil disobedience against the levies saying, as Saji Kobei of Takada village in Onuma district did, "It is not the duty of our citizens to obey
this resolution" because of "the illegal and unfair election of the
[Rengokai] members." (He was referring to his district's failure to
comply early on with the rules committee election criteria.)

Such attempts at initiating civil disobedience, moreover, spread
throughout the region, although they were mainly concentrated in Yama,
Kawanuma, and Onuma districts. Reports sent to Mishima by Yama district
head Sato further attest to such activity. "The Jiyuto is agitating,"
wrote Sato, "by lecturing at village assemblies, involving often more
than a hundred people, throughout the entire region." Uda Seiichi, for
example, told the farmers of Atsushio village in Yama, "We ought to ex-
pand this [movement] into an extraordinary incident." Proof that their
"agitating" had some effect is seen in the growing numbers of village
councilmen who were refusing to levy road construction taxes on their
fellow villagers. Further evidence is the government's initiation of
intimidation and bribery as means to dissuade Rengokai members from
organising an opposition movement. The most blatant example of intimida-
tion occurred on 18 August, the day after the government surreptitiously
held a ceremony to mark the official beginning of road construction, when
Jiyuto members Uda Seiichi, Kojima Yuhachi, and Tamano Hideaki were
brutally attacked while sleeping at the Shimizu ryokan (hotel) in Kita-
kata by seven or eight Teiseito party members. Kojima was able to flee
and escape injury, but the other two suffered a bad beating.

This attack, known to later historians as the "Shimizuya jiken,"
is politically significant not only for showing the extent to which the
government would go in order to suppress the Jiyuto, but also for
demonstrating how successful Mishima had been in accomplishing the second of his secret goals as governor, that of building a loyal and unquestioning Teiseito. In going about this Mishima had concentrated his efforts in Wakamatsu, the centre of han (feudal domain) resistance during the Tohoku region's primarily samurai-led counter-revolutionary movement after the Restoration in 1868 and 1869 (known as the Boshin War). After their defeat by the new government, and the loss of their status as samurai and the stipends that went with that status, many ex-samurai of this region suffered unemployment and poverty. Many depended upon the goodwill of the new government in finding them employment, such as in the Asaka land reclamation project or in the local constabulary, but in any event, there existed a large free-floating population of ex-samurai in the Aizu region ready and able to be mobilized for one cause or another. Some joined the Jiyuto, and others joined the Teiseito.

On 30 June 1882, the Fukushima branch of the Teiseito was organised, and under Mishima's direction founded itself on the principles of "love of Emperor and country, the defense of the righteous road of the fatherland, and the measured reform of society based upon the above two ideas." In September it received through Mishima an interest-free loan of 196,000 yen from the central government, which served to finance the expenses of the party and its largely ex-samurai (shizoku) membership, and to establish a party headquarters and academy at Wakamatsu, called the Nisshinkan ("New Day Academy"). Shortly after its founding, it claimed the support of more than 4,500 members, although the real figure was probably only one-half that number. It received additional support
from local businessmen and merchants who were eager to have a new road for the expansion of commerce. The chief, self-defined duty of the Fuku-shima Teiseito, and that which had the greatest impact on the Jiyuto, was "to protect and enforce the Law Regulating Public Meetings (shukai jorei)."

During the day of the evening when the "Shimizuya jiken" took place, Jiyuto members of the Rengokai secretly gathered in Wakamatsu where they resolved that henceforth the Aizu Jiyuto would take full responsibility for organising a more wide-scale and structured protest against the government. Lawsuits and a tax boycott (of the substitute corvée labour fee), they decided, would constitute the core of their protest movement.

For the residents of the Aizu region, this Jiyuto meeting, and the Teiseito attack of the same day, marks the end of one phase in the jiken and the beginning of the next.

Governor Mishima and the Fukushima Jiyuto

While these events were happening in Aizu, on the other side of the prefecture, in the east, around Fukushima machi (town), equally significant developments had also been taking place. For different but nonetheless related reasons, the Fukushima branch of the Jiyuto was assuming a posture of opposition to Mishima. During April when the prefectural assembly was in session, Governor Mishima, contrary to custom, failed to attend even one sitting, even though the assembly had requested his attendance on three separate occasions. On 1 May, the assembly chairman, Kono Hironaka, a long-time Jiyuto and minken leader, sent a personal messenger to ask the governor one last time to appear before the assembly, but
again Mishima did not respond. Infuriated at Mishima's open contempt, on 4 May, during a debate on a bill relating to annual government expenditures, Kono accepted a motion from the floor, made by Jiyuto member and vice-chairman of the assembly Yamaguchi Chiyosaku, to suspend all business until the governor consented to appear. The motion was not approved, but the idea behind the motion began to gain currency nevertheless. From 5 to 7 May, the Jiyuto caucus met and put together nineteen articles accusing Mishima of misgovernment, and further resolved to try again to garner sufficient support to suspend business in the assembly. The author of this measure was Uda Seiichi of Aizu's Yama district.\(^29\) Uda's resolution was subsequently presented in the assembly three different times, on 7, 8, and 10 May. Each time it was approved by a bare majority, and the final vote was twenty-three to twenty-one (eighteen members were absent, and in mid-May, fearing Mishima's temper, they resigned).\(^30\) Supporting Uda were nineteen other Jiyuto members and three Kaishinto members. The final resolution, dated 12 May 1882, read in part:

For acting contrary to public opinion, for not responding to the wishes of the public of this jurisdiction in regard to deliberating on policy, and in settling the matter of this year's taxes, this assembly withholds the disbursements of those funds. Also, we will vote down all such bills in the future.\(^31\)

This action was without precedent in the few years since the July 1878 law permitting the establishment of prefectural assemblies had come into effect throughout Japan.\(^32\) But because that law really accorded very little power to the assemblies—-they had the "right to deliberate on bills" (gian shingi ken)—vis-à-vis the governor, who had the exclusive right to initiate legislation, the power to request the Home Minister to
dissolve the assembly, and the further right to ignore the assembly's deliberation, the Fukushima prefectural assembly's action to refuse to accept all future bills from the administration in effect merely amounted to a strong vote of censure against Mishima. It also provided Mishima with sufficient reason, under the law, to seek the aid of the Home Ministry, i.e., to involve the central government directly in prefectural affairs, which is exactly what he did on 22 May. Upon doing this, he received permission from the Home and Finance ministries to enforce the annual appropriations bill and to invoke Article 34 of the Fu-ken-kai Kisoku (Rules governing Prefectural Assemblies), empowering him to suspend the right of election for a fixed period of time, and to dissolve the assembly.33

Although this was not the least significant of Mishima's responses to the contentious assembly, it still represented only his pro forma reaction.34 Equally as significant was his campaign to suppress the Jiyuto, which, as the following excerpt from a letter written by Uda to Miura Nobuyuki on 13 May shows, was intensive even before the vote of censure:

Since this assembly convened, daily the risk of speaking freely in the assembly hall grows greater. . . . Ever since the present governor assumed office, the policy of government toward free speech in the assembly has changed for the worse. His actions are manifestly authoritarian, restraining the freedoms of the people . . . and he shows no regard for the opinions of the assembly.35

Earlier still, on 4 May, during the morning session, assembly chairman Kono Hironaka took the floor and addressed its members:

This assembly is founded on the premise that we ought to represent public opinion, that we ought to consider this and then enact public
policy. . . . Since his arrival, Governor Mishima has removed himself many ri and has neglected the assembly and has acted without regard to public opinion. . . . Without regard for the wishes of the people of today for freedom of speech, he has for one thing employed the police against assemblymen involved in politics, and for another, against those who publicly gather, using the Law Governing Assembly (shukai jorei) with the utmost severity . . . .' 36

The proof of the pudding, moreover, that Mishima reacted oppressively against the assemblymen who voted to censure him, came later with the arrest of all twenty-three men for the crime of "slandering a public official" (kanri bujoku zai); conviction of this crime carried a prison term of seven months to a year, and a fine of ten to twenty yen. 37 The topping to the pudding (to be examined more fully in Chapter V) was first his personal involvement in obtaining financing from the central government for the establishment of a Fukushima branch of the Teiseito, created, as we have seen, to "protect and enforce the Law Governing Assemblies against the Jiyuto"; 38 and secondly, Mishima's order in December for the arrest of most of the twenty-three assemblymen for the crime of treason.

After the motion of censure was passed, Mishima enjoyed no respite from the Jiyuto attack. During the next several months Jiyuto members in eastern Fukushima relentlessly continued to contest the legality of Mishima's administration. Shortly after Mishima dissolved the assembly, Jiyuto members sent memorial after memorial to the central government accusing Mishima of misgovernment. These memorials cited his summary dismissal of former officials, his contempt for the assembly, his handling of the Aizu road project, his suppression of freedom of speech, and so on. 39 On 5 July, another such memorial was sent, this time concerning alleged illegal practices in his taxation policy. 40
The effects of their failure to elicit a satisfactory response from the central government to these memorials, and the more general problem of the repression they were suffering, are reflected in the growing tribute paid to more radical ideas by Jiyuto leaders attached to the Mumeikan ("Hall of No Name"), the meeting place of the Fukushima branch of the Jiyuto in the eastern part of the prefecture. Within this branch a faction calling itself the Kyushinto or "Radical Party" under Hanaka, and later under Kono Hironaka as well, was daily gaining influence in the party.\(^41\) Hanaka, its chief promoter, characterized it in this way: "Our ideology concerns how to obtain freedom quickly and to give vent to a radical philosophy, under the aegis of the Jiyuto. . . .\(^42\)" (See Chapter IV for a fuller treatment.) After his arrest in late November, Hanaka made clear in his courtroom testimony why a more radical orientation was necessary for the Jiyuto:

> The governor took on the dual job of firing [former] officials and crushing the Jiyuto. On the one hand, he replaced [the former officials] with his own; on the other, he worked to organise the Teiseito in order to suppress the Jiyuto. . . .\(^43\)

Clearly, Hanaka at least believed that radicalism was necessary at this juncture in order to preserve the life of the Jiyuto. In any event, this development coincides with the emergence within the national party of others holding similar radical beliefs, such as Oi Kentaro and Miyabe Noboru who were elected to leadership positions in June 1882.

In Fukushima this growing tendency toward radicalism did not go unobserved by the authorities. The police chief of Miharu reported as early as late May, "People in the area are saying that by July of this year a new Jiyuto government will be established and will rule the entire country. . . .\(^44\)"
Having observed the important developments in eastern Fushima that took place before September, the narrative now returns to examine what was happening in Aizu after the important 18 August meeting of Jiyuto members there, in preparation for showing how these two different anti-Mishima movements coalesced.

Mobilizing the People of Aizu

During late August and early September a number of secret meetings between Aizu Jiyuto leaders were held, concerning the problem of how to involve large numbers of Aizu residents in the anti-road campaign. Up to this point, the local Jiyuto leaders realized that the movement was what present-day scholars would call joryu minken or an "upper-class peoples' rights movement," consisting mainly of landlords, ex-samurai (shizoku), intellectuals and village officials. Though locally powerful, such men alone, they reasoned, would not be able to carry out a tax boycott nor a litigation campaign. To be effective, such action required mass participation in the first instance, and in the second instance, at least the written endorsement (power of attorney) of a substantial number of citizens in order to receive recognition by the courts. But in either case, their intent was to involve as many as possible in a campaign of popular protest, and thereby to create a climate for the government that some of them termed "cloudy and foggy" (unmu), that they alone, upon government capitulation to their demands, would have the power to dissipate. As one of the Aizu Jiyuto leaders, Nakajima, put it, "Through litigation on the road affair, we believe that we can realise our [immediate] objective of causing the government to be upset." Pressure politics, employed through
legal means on the one hand, coupled with a massive civil disobedience campaign on the other (i.e., the tax boycott), could drive the government to recognize the right of Aizu residents to hold greater authority over local affairs.

Of the two-pronged attack against Mishima's actions concerning the road construction project, however, at this point litigation was most heavily relied upon. Since none of the Aizu Jiyuto leaders were lawyers by profession, they naturally looked outside for aid. Interestingly enough, instead of turning to the Fukushima branch in the east, which was staffed by many competent lawyers, they sought aid from the Tokyo headquarters of the Party, mainly because even by this time the Fukushima branch had shown only nominal interest in, and concern for, the road issue.

Some time in September, Hara Heizo, a moderately wealthy farmer and minken activist since 1880 when he was twenty-one, and "the biggest hope of the Aizu Jiyuto," went to Tokyo to seek the legal counsel of two of the national party's more radical lawyers, Oi Kentaro and Hoshi Toru. While Hara was in Tokyo, Jiyuto activists in Aizu had begun organizing an effective litigation movement. Five men--Uda Seiichi, Akajiro Heiroku, Igarashi Takehiko, Yamaguchi and Nakajima--were present at the first such meeting in early September. A second organisational meeting was held soon after in Yamaguchi's village of Onomoto, but this time thirty Jiyuto members were in attendance, including the important additions of Miura Bunji, Saji Kobei, and Kaneko Tsunejiro. At the third organisational meeting, held at Komeoka village in Yama district on 28
September, over seventy were present, holding the power of attorney of 3,400 to 4,000 supporters. At this meeting the "Declaration of the Restoration of Rights" was formulated and approved (see Appendix I), and the movement was given added structure by selecting a three-man litigation committee (Uda, Nakajima, and Yamaguchi), a President (Akajiro), and a vice-President (Miura Bunji). Also at this gathering, Hara Heizo, back from Tokyo, reported on the legal advice given by Oi and Hoshi. Briefly, they advised that success in the litigation movement could only be assured by acquiring the formal support of at least one-half of the region's 40,000 voting citizens. The activists in attendance resolved to try to get the extra support of the 16,000 needed.

By the fourth organisational meeting, held on 8 October, again at Onomoto village in Kawanuma district, over 100 leaders were present, representing and holding the power of attorney of 5,792 Aizu voting residents, a gain of almost 1,800 in a little more than a week's time. Again it was resolved to continue the drive to recruit others to the movement, but in the meantime they decided that immediate action was necessary. First, Miura Bunji and Yamaguchi were to leave on 12 October for Tokyo to get further legal advice from Oi Kentaro. Secondly, using what support they had already mustered, they would initiate a special type of lawsuit, a gankai, which would request of the Wakamatsu magistrate a ruling of arbitration on four points: (1) that the rule-making body for the Rengokai and the election of its members was unfair; (2) that the course of the road was arbitrarily surveyed in disregard of centres of population; (3) that Mishima's refusal to reconvene the Rengokai was improper; and (4) that
action thus far taken by the authorities contravened the original resolutions adopted by the Rengokai. 49

This suit, soon after rejected on the grounds that the court was not competent to rule on the matter, was prompted by the increasingly repressive action taken by the authorities to break up the opposition movement--threats of expropriation of homes and property, public auctions of the protesters' household artifacts, summons to appear before the local authorities for questioning, etc. 50--and was therefore intended to serve as a "stop-gap" measure against the government, and to demonstrate to the movement's supporters that action was being taken on their behalf. It was also hoped that this suit would serve to lessen the chances of capitulation by harassed farmers while the litigation committee continued to try to recruit the necessary number of signatures.

While this was the purpose of the suit for arbitration, the substance of the suit consisted of the central points made earlier in the third organisational meeting, and incorporated in their "Declaration of the Restoration of Rights." Besides the above-mentioned four points, the suit called for investing the Rengokai with the necessary authority to oversee the road construction. It was, therefore, not against the road as such, but only opposed to "outside" control over it, i.e., against the prefectural government's handling of it. For this reason the Fukushima Incident is commonly regarded as one of the more dramatic episodes of the early rural peoples' fight for "the right of self-government" (chiji kenri). 51 Seen in this way, the "restoration of rights movement that developed in this region was connected with the fight for an autonomous
those villages where the more active of the regional Jiyuto leaders resided.

Those villages where strong Jiyuto leaders resided and often served as village heads (kimoiri or kocho), e.g., Shinai and Atsushio, were the same villages which sustained the tax boycott, despite threats and intimidation by the authorities, until the very end of the affair, until, that is, the mass arrests of late November and early December. Most such villages, it is important to add, were located in Yama district, which by October had become the centre of opposition within the six districts of Aizu. By 20 October, in Yama district alone forty-two villages and 2,662 of their residents had handed over their power of attorney to the litigation movement. One week later an additional 1,287 people of sixteen other villages in Yama had also signed up. By mid-November when many Yama residents were losing their property to government-enforced public auctions, only 132 of the several thousand involved had given in to governmental oppression. In some villages, such as Miura Bunji's Atsushio, where 273 people were summoned to appear at government offices for "questioning," and where numerous others were losing their property to forced sales, none at all capitulated.

Many others did, however. In mid-November, when property confiscation and police repression against boycotters was stepped up, many broke from the movement and either promised to comply to corvée labour duty or to pay the substitute labour tax. Among those who quit the movement were local Jiyuto leaders Endo Naoyuki, Miura Shinroku, and Endo Shozo, but only after they unsuccessfully tried to reach a compromise with Mishima. Moreover, since many of the defectors were local village heads
governing body led by the Aizu branch of the Jiyuto.\textsuperscript{52} Local autonomy versus central control—it was a battle classic to most developing nations. The import of the conflict as regards the Japanese experience is neatly summarized by Kurt Steiner:

A local government system that has grown up from below may emphasize the idea that the citizens of a community should be given the opportunity to realise their own interests within that community and that the state should exercise self-restraint for this purpose. A local government system imposed from above will put the interests of the state first, and will stress the duties, not the rights, of citizenship.\textsuperscript{53}

This, certainly, is the fundamental issue raised by the "Declaration of the Restoration of Rights," seen equally as clearly in the preface to the rules governing the litigation movement: "We who say we want to guarantee happiness and to regain rights for our members seek to achieve this goal, based on legal activities, of reforming government by simply moving to stop the road construction."\textsuperscript{54} On a more practical level, in order to achieve their goals they implemented resolutions that would fund the movement. Members were asked to contribute ten sen apiece (Resolution 5) to cover the costs of travel expenses for the litigation committee members (Resolution 6), and their lodging expenses (Resolution 6a). The organisational structure was also enlarged and made more efficient. Local village organs composed of one person per household and apportioned into ten-to twenty-man units, who in turn selected a leader, were established as more efficient means to communicate information, to assign responsibilities, and to pressure collectively the local official in charge of road construction.\textsuperscript{55} Through such organs they were also able to organise their tax boycott, which until then was largely limited to
and therefore local men of influence, they were able to withdraw entire 
villages from the movement.

Such defections did not dampen the spirit of most activists. 
Several lawsuits against Mishima, and even against the Home Ministry, 
were carried on, meetings were called and speeches given in many villages, 
and most, as a result, remained loyal to the Restoration of Rights move- 
ment. Also, an outside force entered the fight to give added staying 
power to the movement: belatedly, Jiyuto members from the Fukushima 
branch of the Jiyuto were coming to the rescue of Aizu people.

East-West Alliance

Despite the common party tie between the east and west branches, 
it is not surprising that the Fukushima branch stayed out of the Aizu con- 
flict for so long. In the mid-to-late seventies the predominant eastern 
popular right societies served as patrons to the slower-organising western 
society (the Aishinsha; see Chapter IV), but when in late 1881 the subject 
of consolidating into one prefectural branch party came up, Aizu residents 
opted to remain separate from their eastern brethren. Thereafter, each 
branch was regional in scope and in interest. This is easily seen in the 
fact that for the eastern branch the Aizu road struggle was only one 
among several of the charges cited against Mishima for misgovernment dur- 
ing the censure vote in May. In fact, that it was cited at all was largely 
due to the influence and insistence of Westerners in the largely eastern- 
dominated prefectural assembly, and to their friendship with Kono Hironaka, 
rather than to the interest Easterners had in the affairs and problems of 
the Aizu party and the residents of the area. Most western assemblymen
were not Jiyuto members; only Uda, Nakajima, and Yamaguchi and a few others stood as the proverbial lone voices of protest to represent their region's interest in a political wilderness dominated by eastern and prefecture-wide interests.

The estrangement of the west from the east stemmed in part from the earlier administrative division of the two regions. Less than a decade before, Aizu had been a separate prefecture with separate interests, and fought against amalgamation. Moreover, the Aizu Jiyuto branch was organisationally autonomous from the Fukushima one, and its members differed substantially from the eastern members in terms of socio-economic background. (See Chapter III.)

In any event, with regard to the separate nature of the two branches vis-à-vis one another, the important points to make are these: first, "The disobedience campaign in Aizu was organised under the aegis of the Aizu Jiyuto itself." Secondly, the Fukushima branch did not lend a hand until less than a month before the Aizu movement was suppressed, and even during that last month, very few party men from Fukushima actually set foot in Aizu to lend aid. Thirdly, the separate quality of the relationship between the two branches is further attested by the earlier-mentioned instance of Aizu members going to Tokyo, and not to Fukushima, for legal counsel. Finally, of all the well-known eastern Jiyuto leaders, only one, Tamano Hideaki, involved himself in the Aizu struggle before November, and then only by happenstance. Prior to November, the eastern branch mainly directed its energies and attention toward Tokyo: it was too embroiled in the controversy surrounding Jiyuto President
Itagaki Taisuke's planned trip abroad to give the Aizu road problem much attention. In large part, this stemmed from the fact that Kono Hironaka qua national party leader involved his branch in the junket controversy, and himself spent most of October in Tokyo at the national party headquarters. When the Aizu problem was broached, Kono was quoted as having responded on more than one occasion, it "ought not to be the main business of our party." He gave as further reason not to involve himself, or his branch, the 1874 precedent of how Eto Shimpei, an early minenationalist activist, and his followers in Saga were manipulated by similar circumstances into leading the ill-fated Saga Rebellion. Not until late October did Kono and the Mumeikan of eastern Fukushima succumb to chance involvement.

On 17 October, Yamaguchi and Miura, who had been sent to Tokyo to seek additional legal advice from Oi Kentaro, met there with Kono. The two Aizu men requested of Kono that he send eastern party activists to Aizu to lend a hand in the anti-road campaign. On 23 October, Kono dispatched two of the more radical Mumeikan members, Sato Sumasu and Kamada Naozo, not because of the earlier request for help, but instead to investigate a rumour of Jiyuto-provoked violence that supposedly took place on the twenty-first in Kitakata. Kono's two envoys reported back: "At this time, the people [of Aizu] have not yet reached the boiling point." It was this seemingly insignificant non-event that served to open the doors for future involvement by the Fukushima branch into the Aizu conflict, for from this moment until the Kitakata incident on 28 November, the eastern branch became increasingly committed and receptive
to pleas made by Aizu Jiyuto leaders to assist them in the fight against
the hastened tempo of governmental repression against the party. More­
over, the eastern commitment was strengthened once its own members fell
prey to repression.

On 25 October, a meeting in Aizu between eastern and western
Jiyuto members was violently broken up by fifty or so Teiseito members.
On the evening of the same day, in Shinai village, Akajiro's village and
the headquarters of the Restoration of Rights Movement, several tens of
policemen under Ebina's command threatened eastern members Sato and Monna
Mojiro (Shigejiro), who were acting as representatives for the villagers
in a petition campaign. The same sort of incident occurred the next day
as well, this time with another eastern Jiyuto member, Kamada, also pre­
sent. These confrontations, says Shimoyama Saburo, mark "the first time
Mumeikan leaders directly participated in the litigation movement."66
In terms of consequences, Kamada was arrested, and Sato barely escaped,
only to return to the Mumeikan to report what had happened, and to request
that aid be given, prophetically remarking, "For our party, victory or
defeat [in Aizu] will have great consequences."67 Kono's response to
Sato's recommendation, however, cabled from Tokyo where he remained until
11 November, said the Aizu affair was not the business of the Fukushima
branch, adding, "It might destroy our party."68 In contrast, the Fuku­
shima Jiyu Shimbun editorialized on 5 November, "The troubles in the Aizu
region are not unimportant with regard to our Party's future growth."69

The Kitakata Incident

In Kono's absence, opinion among Mumeikan members seemed to be
siding with the "help Aizu" proponents. On 9 November, Sugiyama Masagi, lawyer and later a Waseda University professor, and radical Sawada Kiyonosuke, signatory to a manifesto calling for the overthrow of the government, were dispatched by Mumeikan leaders to Aizu. They were present when during the next few weeks the police began confiscating the property of the tax boycotters. They were also there when Jiyuto activists Hara Heizo and Miura Bunji were arrested for "slander" on 19 November for having denounced the Yama district chief as a "criminal" for ordering the confiscation ("robbery") of the protesters' property. Reportedly, Sugiyama and Sawada were at least partly responsible for inciting a crowd of two thousand farmers, coming from villages recently raided by the police, to assemble on 23 November at the police station in Kitakata where Miura and Hara were being held. The reason for this illegal assembly was a rumour that the two Jiyuto captives were going to be sent outside the district to Wakamatsu to be tried; only after the crowd received assurances from the Kitakata police that Miura and Hara would be tried in local court did it disperse.

The arrest of these two men, and especially of Hara, became a cause célèbre among local activists and supporters. Leaders of the movement since the beginning and "defenders of the faith," their arrest aroused the anger of thousands of Aizu residents. It became even more intense the next day when it was learned that yet another Aizu Jiyuto leader, Uda Seiichi, was arrested. One of the early organisers of the anti-road movement, Uda was seized by twenty policemen while on a recruitment drive in nearby Toyama prefecture.
Uda's recruitment drive was not limited merely to Toyama. Before arriving there, Uda had toured much of the nation, giving speeches and meeting with Jiyuto leaders in an effort to secure outside aid. It appears that his efforts were fruitful. In Gumma and Sendai he received assurances that Jiyuto members from those areas would send delegations to Aizu (several of whom were arrested; see Appendix II: Fukushima Activists). Around 18 November, after Kono had returned to Fukushima from Tokyo, he and Uda engaged in several days of conversation, and as a result, Uda received a promise from Kono that the eastern branch would commit itself to the Aizu struggle.\textsuperscript{74}

Before any of these outside Jiyuto groups could mobilize, however, certain events overtook them, as well as the Aizu protesters. The police took pre-emptory action, believing a rebellion of sorts was in the offing, and began arresting other Jiyuto leaders. Between Uda's arrest and the Kitakata incident on 28 November, another eleven Aizu Jiyuto "ringleaders" were arrested for "assembling crowds for the purpose of rioting" \textit{(kyoto shushukyosa)},\textsuperscript{75} presumably for their alleged participation in the 23 November disturbance in Kitakata. Ten other local Jiyuto leaders, fearing arrest, fled. The situation, for both sides, was one of confusion and fear.

Against this backdrop of a largely leaderless Jiyuto and a very apprehensive government, the Kitakata incident occurred. The incident began to take shape on 26 November, two days before the event itself, at a meeting of Jiyuto leaders and supporters held at the famous Chuzenji temple,\textsuperscript{76} which is located in Tanaka hamlet of Shibage village, residence
of Uda Seiichi. The purpose of the meeting was to consider what action should be taken in response to the arrest of Uda and the other Jiyuto leaders. The principal speakers at the meeting were Uda's father, Sugiyama Masagi and Sato Samasu of eastern Fukushima, and Uryu Naoshi, a twenty-two-year-old Jiyuto speech-maker and son of a headman of a Yama district village. The upshot of the opinion expressed by these men was that Uda was unjustly victimized for his efforts to contest the road project legally and was arrested on trumped-up charges. As most present shared this opinion, it was enthusiastically decided to gather as many supporters as possible and to march to the Kitakata police station where Uda was being held. According to an eye-witness account of the Chuzenji meeting, nothing was said or proposed about making the march a violent one; the purpose was reportedly to inquire about Uda's condition, to make sure that he would not be transferred to another jail outside the district, and, if possible, to demonstrate peacefully for his immediate release, and that of Hara and Miura who were also being held there.

Independently, another group, this one from Onuma district, had arrived at a similar plan, and on 28 November, the two bodies of farmers met on the fields of Danseigehara, located about five kilometres south of Kitakata. Estimates of the crowd's size vary from just over a thousand to 10,000, but the actual figure, the experts maintain, was probably closer to the former than to the latter.

By the time all were assembled at Danseigehara, it had been learnt that Uda had already been transferred to Wakamatsu; the knowledge of this undoubtedly served to kindle the anger of the crowd. Sugiyama
and Uryu addressed the crowd and, according to a police report, used inflammatory language: "Mishima's despotism is trampling over the rights of man." The police also reported that Uryu urged the crowd to attack the police station in Kitakata and to free the Jiyuto leaders being held.

From all accounts (other than police reports, although even these differ), it is unlikely that even if Uryu said such things, he really intended that the crowd attack the police station. For one thing, the crowd was not armed with weaponry of any sort; it was unlikely that they could or would risk their lives against well-armed policemen. For another, even when the crowd did assemble in front of the police station, no one made any move to incite the crowd to storm the station. Even though they were unarmed, however, they probably could have overcome the fifteen or so police occupying and defending the station, but as mentioned, only at the risk of suffering many casualties. The most offensive action the crowd took during the twenty minutes they were assembled there was to shout words of abuse at the police, until, that is, someone threw several stones and broke several stationhouse windows, although even here it has been alleged by several that a police spy (agent provocateur) was responsible. When this happened, three sword-swinging policemen charged the crowd, killing one, seriously injuring three, and arresting four. No police were injured. The crowd then immediately dispersed in flight and the "revolutionary riot and attack" (kakumeiteki na kyoto shugeki), as the Kitakata incident was later termed by the police, came abruptly to an end.

If the Kitakata incident can properly be regarded as the denouement
of the movement, then the wholesale arrests which followed in its wake can be regarded as the climax of the Fukushima Incident. Until late December, the police embarked upon a massive arrest campaign against Jiyuto members, supporters, and leaders, and many innocent farmers whose only crime was to give support to the litigation movement. Throughout the entire prefecture, close to two thousand were arrested; many were later victims of torture while awaiting trial; and fifty-seven were sent to Tokyo to stand trial for the crime of sedition.

Since these post-Kitakata events were clearly an instance of government using a minor disturbance as a pretext for major repression, they will be discussed in detail in the last chapter where the consequences of the gekka jiken and the government's reactions to them are treated.

THE KABASAN INCIDENT

Around eleven o'clock on the rainy Tuesday morning of 23 September 1884, a solitary mountain priest of Mount Kaba, Makabe district, Ibaraki prefecture, discovered that he was no longer alone, that his mountain had been occupied by an armed force. He sent this message to the police substation at Machiya, situated at the northern base of Mount Kaba:

Fifteen or sixteen men calling themselves Jiyuto members, armed with various weapons, and bombs too, I believe, have assembled atop Mount Kaba, near Nagoaka village, Makabe district.82

Of all reports, newspaper and government, subsequently issued about the Kabasan rebels, this one by the priest, despite its brevity, was most accurate. The rebels in fact numbered sixteen; they were heavily
Map 3. The Kabasan Area of Ibaraki and Tochigi Prefectures

To Nikko

↑

Utsunomiya

TOCHIGI PREF.

→

• Inaba

• Mibu

• Tochigi Town

Kokuri

Ota

IBARAKI PREF.

→

To Sendai

↑

To Takasaki (Gumma)

Shimodate

Δ Mt. Kaba

Nagaoka

• Makabe Town

Δ Mt. Tsukuba

Nakada

Lake
armed with swords, a few guns and about 150 home-made bombs; and if the several banners they raised atop Mount Kaba were a fair indication, then indeed they were Jiyuto members. The banners read: "Charge Ahead for Freedom," "Overthrow the Oppressive Government," "Die for Patriotism," and "Friends of Freedom and Liberalism."83 The next day, as if to make their intentions and identity of their group clearly known, the rebels hoisted yet another banner reading "Headquarters of the Kabasan Revolutionary Party." They could also be heard singing the "Song of American Independence" (Beikoku dokuritsu no uta).84

The plan of the rebels was to remain at Mount Kaba until they received word about when an already twice-postponed official ceremony to celebrate the opening of new government buildings at nearby Utsunomiya (Tochigi prefecture) was to be held. On the day of the ceremony they intended to assassinate the many highly-placed Ministers of State who were scheduled to be in attendance, to attack the prison there and release its inmates, and to lead these men and other local residents on a march against the central government in Tokyo. However, as they realized that the authorities were already aware of their existence and possibly of their plans as well, after reaching the summit of Mount Kaba they decided to alter their original plans and to take immediate action. They decided to raise an army from the residents of the area. To this end, on 23 September, they raised their several banners calling for revolution, wrote and distributed revolutionary manifestos to Kabasan area residents, and launched an attack upon the nearby Machiya police sub-station, all done in order to demonstrate to the local populace the seriousness of
their intentions. The rebels also attacked and robbed the wealthier residents of the area (to whom "receipts" were given for the money and merchandise taken) in order to secure arms, food and money to meet their own needs, and the needs of the embryo army of locals they expected to attract.

But since several scores of policemen had thwarted the attempt of some local residents, perhaps 100 to 200, to join the rebels, the Kabasan men were effectively isolated atop the mountain, and were further plagued with a rapidly diminishing water supply. Hence, early on 24 September, they decided to try to go ahead and attack Utsunomiya, despite there being no ceremony scheduled for that day. En route to Utsunomiya, by nightfall they had reached the ricefields of Nagaoka village. There they were forced to engage in a battle with about twenty police. Using their bombs, they killed one, injured four, and lost one of their own men. Also, during the confusion of the fight they had to abandon almost 100 bombs. Confronted with death and the loss of much of their weaponry, and fearing more police ahead, they backtracked towards Kabasan.

On 25 September, as they headed northwest from Kabasan toward Ota village, they were being pursued not only by the combined police units from four villages in the Makabe district, but also by a squad of Imperial troops and ten metropolitan police earlier sent from Tokyo. Despite their fear of being overtaken by the authorities, on the twenty-sixth, around 1:00 a.m., they attacked two homes of wealthy citizens of Kokuri village (Makabe district). From there the rebels crossed into the mountainous district of Haga in Tochigi, where after dividing their money and
weapons equally, they made camp at Kobayashi village and discussed their uncertain future. Finally, after protestations by several, and suggestions of mass suicide by others, they agreed to disband, but also to regroup in one month's time in Tokyo. However, before the month was over, all but two of them had been captured and placed under arrest. By February 1885, the other two had also been caught.

Thus ended the Kabasan Incident, the first instance in the Meiji period in which bombs had been used, and for revolutionary purposes.

Interpretations

It will be remembered that several specialists on the Fukushima Incident believe that the Kabasan Incident of September 1884 marks the true ending of the Fukushima Incident. Their reasons for adopting such a view are not difficult to understand. First, of the principal Kabasan rebels (including several who did not climb the mountain, but who joined in the planning), eight of the twenty or so had been arrested for their participation in the Fukushima Incident, and another four Kabasan rebels were residents of Fukushima. Secondly, one of their principal targets of assassination was none other than the "Devil Governor" himself, Mishima Michitsune, who since 30 October 1883, had been serving simultaneously as Governor of Fukushima and of Tochigi, and therefore was to serve as host to the gathering of Tokyo officials at Utsunomiya. As several have pointed out, "... had there been no Mishima, there probably would never have been a Kabasan Incident." In other words, for the Fukushima participants in the Kabasan Incident at least, the attack on Utsunomiya was a means to avenge the earlier repression they and the Fukushima
Jiyuto had suffered under Mishima during 1882. In this view, Mishima was a catalytic agent personified. Finally, during their trials several of the Kabasan rebels coming from Fukushima stated unequivocally that their involvement stemmed from a hatred of Mishima.

Although there is good reason to accord credence to this view, at the same time there also exists reason enough not to accept this interpretation of revenge in its entirety. This view by itself does not, for instance, explain why those rebels coming from Ibaraki, Ishikawa, Aichi and perhaps even Tochigi decided to join. Nor does it explain why several of the Fukushima participants during their court trials failed to cite revenge against Mishima as an important reason for participating. The revenge thesis also fails to take into account ideological beliefs as motivating forces which, as we shall see in Chapter IV, were much too strongly felt to ignore. Finally, the single-factor interpretation of revenge does not even begin to explain the substantially different nature of the Kabasan rebellion in terms of the tactics, targets and goals of participants. The Fukushima Incident may, then, be regarded as a starting point in the development of the Kabasan, but nonetheless must not obscure the fact that the Kabasan Incident was historically an event in itself. One final observation: revenge against Mishima might have very well provoked the Kabasan rebels to act initially, but in the process of planning the assassination of Mishima they broadened their objective to include high-ranking government officials of the central government. Planning lasted over a year, and in the process the initial reason for involvement came to be less important to the conspirators than their
ultimate goal, revolution. In the process, the Kabasan rebels appear to have experienced some change in political consciousness; this generalization applies to those coming from Fukushima prefecture as well as other areas.

Before looking at the development of the incident, it is necessary to first explain what is meant by development. In a small scale, conspiratorial plot such as the Kabasan Incident, development refers to recruitment, the process by which individuals and small groups come to know one another sufficiently to exchange confidences about ideas and plans that would conventionally be regarded as treasonable. As we shall see, from early 1883 until 23 September 1884, almost all of the twenty or so rebels lived isolated and lonely lives of intrigue, plotting, and conspiracy. Each, it seems, determined for himself that revolution was essential. But each of them also knew that alone he was unable to effect revolution. Hence, each realized the importance of finding others who shared this belief, and more importantly, who were willing to act upon it. This process whereby each found "like-minded" men (doshi) constitutes the development of the incident. More than in either of the other two incidents, men rather than events form the core of the Kabasan Incident. The Kabasan rebels sought to make events, rather than to react to them.

Recruitment was of a particular kind. First, since most of the rebels were committed to assassination, recruitment was necessarily highly exclusive, as this type of adventure appealed only to very few. Status or social standing was not a criteria in choosing comrades. As one of the rebels phrased it, "From the outset, we did not place any
importance on recruiting important personages (*meiboka*) to join our illegal rebellion. Second, the nature of recruitment was very informal and secretive. A constant fear of police spies infiltrating their group, which as we shall see probably did happen, caused the rebels to exercise extreme caution in discussing their plans. Only those people known to hold strong anti-government views, and who attended illegal party meetings, were privy to the conspiracy. Monna Shigejiro, for example, testified on 10 November to the question:

Q: What methods were used to bring the comrades together?
A: Mine and other's was to speak only with those [interested in] this topic, and also to keep our ears open to bits and pieces [of information] coming from a wide variety of people at meetings of comrades. But as far as special methods, I say there were none.

Finally, if we can believe the rebels' testimony in court and police interrogations, then for each rebel there is a somewhat different version of how they became involved. Moreover, in reconstructing the chain of events, the few secondary sources—contemporary to the incident as well as present-day—are of little help in sorting things out. In these works, too much emphasis is placed on personalities, ideology or "terrorist" tactics, and too little on the intricacies of involvement. However, after careful readings of each of the rebels' stories as told to the police and prosecutors, I think that this problem can be handled because the stories told by each of the participants, except for one, are characterized by forthrightness and apparent honesty, even to the extent that it earned seven of them the death penalty. This will be discussed further in the last chapter.

This said, we now move on to look at the development of the incident.
Strategy and Recruitment

It will be remembered that during October 1882, as the leaders of the Fukushima Incident were turning greater attention to litigation as a means to fight Mishima, Monna Shigejiro, ex-policeman, Wakamatsu shizoku, and member of the litigation committee, was sent to Tokyo to seek further legal counsel from Oi Kentaro. After the Kitakata incident of 28 November, Monna was arrested and in April 1883 was sent to Tokyo to stand trial for the crime of sedition. Acquitted of this crime, he sought to make Mishima pay for his arrest and imprisonment (and probably torture; see Chapter V). Hence, in July, along with Jiyuto activists Hara Heizo and Saji Kyomatsu, Monna went to Sendai, obtained a lawyer named Maezawa, and "called on a member of the appeals court (koso sai-banjo) in order to bring legal action against the unfair treatment suffered because of the Fukushima governor." Unsuccessful there, he and his companions went to the Wakamatsu courts for the same purpose, but this time not only did he not have a chance to pursue his lawsuit, but as a result of trying was sought for the crime of "slandering a public official" (namely, Mishima). To escape arrest, Monna fled to Tokyo and went into hiding for three months. While there he met a number of Jiyuto radicals, two of whom, Kono Hiromi (or Hiroshi), nephew of Kono Hironaka and also recently acquitted of treason, and Yokoyama Nobuyuki, ex-policeman and son of a low-ranking samurai of old Aizu han, were to join him later in the Kabasan Incident.

The content of the discussions held in Tokyo between Monna, Kono, and Yokoyama during the winter of 1883 to 1884 are of great importance in
understanding subsequent events. By this time all three of these young
Fukushima men, aged twenty-three, nineteen, and twenty-one respectively,
had abandoned any notion of bringing about political reform by peaceful
means and had concluded that only violence offered any hope of effecting
democratic changes in the Japanese government. This common understanding
gave them, and the others who were to join them later, the necessary basis
to arrive at a plan for revolution. But at the same time, they disagreed
on what type of violent strategy to employ. This disagreement proved to
be an ongoing one, lasting until shortly before the rebellion itself, and
determined to some extent exactly who would be among the sixteen men who
climbed Mount Kaba on 23 September.

The disagreement revolved around the distinction made by the
rebels between ko-undo or "small movement" and dai-undo or "large move-
ment." "Small movement," otherwise called "assassination-ism" (ansatsu-
shugi) by the rebels, and supported by Kono and Yokoyama, implied that
"five men, perhaps ten men, having the same beliefs and aiding one
another, could carry out assassination, in other words, a small movement."
By "large movement," again quoting Kono Hiromi's courtroom testimony, its
advocate Monna meant "getting a large number of like-thinking men from
all over the country to meet in Tokyo and overthrow the government; in
other words, a large movement."93 To the rebels, this was also known as
"raising-an-army-ism" (kyoheishugi). How many men were needed to comprise
a large movement was suggested by one of the early plotters who withdrew
from the rebellion because of disagreement over this issue of strategy.

Ohashi Genzaburo said during police questioning:
To carry out the revolution (kakumei), 300 comrades would be sufficient to go to Tokyo and effect the overthrow. Using dynamite, probably 100 men would be enough to assassinate officials. But the proper time to carry this out has not yet arrived. (Emphasis mine.)

According to Kono, those advocating a "large movement" wanted "to wait three years to start the revolution." Kono, Yokoyama and most of the others argued that it was not necessary to wait for the "proper time," that it was in their power to create the "proper time" by large-scale assassination of high-ranking government officials:

To discuss [this issue of tactics] is senseless. To establish a constitutional system based on the rights of the people, it is necessary to overthrow the despotic government. To overthrow a despotic government, we cannot count on the remote possibility of such things as raising a prefecture-wide army. It is a far-fetched idea because we lack sufficient funds. Hence, instead we strike one blow aimed at the genro ["senior statesmen"] of the government. This done, having lost its leaders ["head"], the government ["body"] will naturally fall.

This problem of the best strategy to employ to overthrow the government resurfaced continually, even up until the day of the rebellion itself. Although more about the implications of this debate will be discussed in Chapter IV, for the present let it suffice to make three points: (1) a strong majority of the Kabasan rebels favoured "assassination-ism" more or less consistently; (2) "more than half of the assassination faction had been connected with the Fukushima incident"; and (3) even those against a "small movement" usually believed that once the assassinations were accomplished, either by design or by chance, an anti-government army would rise up. In any event, the important point to make is that regardless of which strategy a Kabasan conspirator advocated, he shared with the others the goal of overthrowing the government, and it was this
fact that allowed him to co-operate with the others.

Through Yokoyama, Kono and Monna became better acquainted with Yokoyama's patron, Koinuma Kuhachiro (Tadayaro), the "fatherly master of the assassination faction," 98 or as another contemporary called him, "friend to the commoners (heimin)." 99 Although less famous politically than the man whom the government mistakenly assumed was the real leader of the Kabasan rebels, Tomatsu Shoan (Masao), Koinuma was in fact the prime mover and organiser of the rebels until less than two weeks before the incident, when an accidental explosion of a bomb he was making cost him his left arm. Koinuma was thirty-two years old in 1884, was himself a commoner from Tochigi prefecture, and was the unsuccessful third son of a wealthy merchant/farmer family who allowed Koinuma freedom enough to pursue his child-like fascination for mechanical devices. 100 In fact, Koinuma's ability to make bombs, an art that he later taught to several of the other rebels, made him the likely leader of those who had opted for assassination-ism.

Koinuma's radical tendencies are first known to have been expressed in January 1883, during a meeting of around 300 Kanto Jiyuto members held in Tochigi Town. During the meeting, the purpose of which was to discuss what consequences the Fukushima Incident had on the growth and solidarity of the Party, Koinuma met privately with five other members who were well known for their radical ideas: Arai Shogo, village head, secretary of the Tochigi party branch, and magazine publisher cum intellectual; 101 Shiota Okuzo, a Jiyuto prefectural assemblyman; Sakagihara Keibu, lawyer and brother-in-law to Monna; Koinuma's "client" (kobun),
Yokoyama; and Fukao Junnosei, party member who was later accused of being a police spy. All except Fukao were later arrested for complicity in the Kabasan Incident.

What these men discussed with Koinuma remains unknown today, but at another such secret meeting, held this time in Tokyo on 23 November 1883 at an Asuka-yama ryokan (hotel), it is known that about 100 young Jiyuto members met "to discuss what shishi ['patriots'] should be doing." One source claims that it was here that Koinuma met Ibaraki Jiyuto leader Tomatsu Masao, Kono Hiromi and others later involved in the incident. Another source claims that at this meeting Koinuma first discussed with these men his intention to assassinate high government officials. Koinuma himself said that at this meeting he met Kono and Miura Bunji through Kotoda Iwamatsu, another Kabasan rebel, and that they then began plotting the assassination. But whatever the specific content of the discussion, it is likely that some talk of assassination did take place for immediately after this meeting Koinuma began making bombs at his home in Inaba village.

Also at this meeting in Tokyo, Koinuma probably was introduced to Amano Ichitaro, nineteen-year-old shizoku who participated in the Fukushima Incident, and Yamaguchi Moritaro (Sanetaro), eighteen years old and also a shizoku from Fukushima. Less than a month after the Tokyo meeting these two youth went with Koinuma to Tochigi Town to spy upon, and to investigate the routine of, the newly-appointed governor Mishima Michitsune, whom they had chosen as a target for assassination. One source states that their journey was more than a mere scouting patrol,
that they actually intended to assassinate Mishima then, but that they deferred because of respect for the Emperor who was visiting Tochigi at the time.  

Probably independently of this attempt, around January 1884, Kono and Fukushima allies Kotoda Iwamatsu and Kusano Sakuma pledged to kill Mishima. Kono himself claimed during his courtroom testimony that "it was late last year [1883] or early this year that we first discussed [using bombs to assassinate government officials]." But the "we" in Kono's testimony refers not to Kusano and Kotoda, as the authors of the Jiyuto-shi claim, but to "Yokoyama, Sugiura and Saeki." Quite possibly both sources are correct to the extent that each refers to a different episode involving Kono, for clearly several plots were in the making by this time. For instance, Kusano had already been recruited by fellow Fukushima activist Miura Bunji in mid-1883 for involvement in a plan to assassinate Mishima, along with Amano, Yamaguchi, and Kokugi. And, as we have already seen, Yamaguchi and Amano by this time were assisting Koinuma in his own plot to kill Mishima. Hence, besides Kono's scheming, at least two separate plots to assassinate Mishima, one by Koinuma and another by Miura, with overlapping membership, had been hatched in late 1883. The similarities in timing and in membership of the two plots leads us to believe that the two groups were probably in contact with each other by then. Moreover, Tomatsu Masao, who was to assume leadership of the incident after Koinuma's accident, had by 23 November 1883 been alerted at least to Koinuma's plot, and probably was therefore not at all surprised when he was approached in mid-September for assistance.
The intricacies of recruitment thus far mentioned can be simplified. On the one hand there was Koinuma's group: Amano, Yamaguchi, Kono, and Yokoyama by late 1883; by late 1884 Saeki Shomon (Masakado), Sugiura Kippuku, Kobayashi Tokutaro, and Isokawa Motoyoshi had learned through Kusano of Koinuma's intentions and had joined him. All nine of these men, like their leader, Koinuma, were committed to "assassinationism." They stand in contrast to another group of Jiyuto members, mainly from Tochigi, with whom Koinuma entered into discussions after May 1884: Ohashi Genzaburo, Iwamoto Shinkichi, Tateno Yoshinosuke and several others, some of whom Koinuma had spoken with in the January 1883 Tochigi Town meeting (e.g., Arai Shogo, Shida Okuzo, and Sakagihara Keibu). This latter group of Koinuma's associates generally supported the "large movement" strategy, and although later implicated, remained for the most part on the periphery of the conspiracy, and were not among those who raised the flag of revolution atop Mount Kaba.

More or less simultaneously to Koinuma's recruitment of this group, Miura Bunji, one of the principal activists in the Fukushima Incident, was assembling his own group, also committed to "assassinationism." Kokugi, Kusano, and Hara Rihachi, farmer and commoner from Fukushima, were its main "members"; Yamaguchi and Amano, whom Miura shared with Koinuma, made up the rest of Miura's group.

Besides the twelve thus far mentioned, four others eventually climbed Mount Kaba on 23 September. From Ibaraki came Tomatsu Masao, former school teacher and head of an Academy for young Jiyuto radicals located in Shimodate; his bodyguard and fencing instructor at the academy,
Tamamatsu Kaichi; and one of the academy's students, Hota Komakichi. The fourth was Koinuma's fellow Tochigi resident and Jiyuto ideologue, Hirao Yasokichi, the only one of all sixteen to be killed in battle. The involvement of these men stemmed from either their personal contact with Tomatsu, or from the contact they made with members of Koinuma's or Miuras's group at a Tokyo Jiyuto youth academy. (See Chapter IV.) As we shall soon see, the beginnings of their participation in the planning of the incident are dated around mid- to late-August.

Planning the Revolution

Not until about that time did the Kabasan rebels settle upon a concrete plan of action. It could hardly have been otherwise. Until then "recruitment" consisted mainly of individuals and small groups discovering the identity of others who shared a more-or-less vaguely expressed intent to reform the government and a more-or-less precisely expressed belief in eliminating the more obtrusive of the government's leaders as the most efficient means to effect reform. But as Koinuma became the hub of this underground movement, the focus of the rebels' enmity became, contradictorily, both sharper and duller. From the initial plans to assassinate only Mishima, they changed to include all high government officials. And since it was the capital where all the important officials resided, the rebels moved from Koinuma's home in Tochigi, where most of the bomb-making and discussions between his group and Miura's had taken place since January, to Tokyo. From early summer until shortly before the jiken itself most of the action takes place in Tokyo.

The centre of activity in Tokyo was Kono Hiromi's apartment
located on the third floor of a boarding house (geshuku) in the Nihonbashi
district, and owned by Jiyuto sympathizer Iizuka Denjiro. According
to Koinuma, at Kono's apartment in early July, he, Kono, Yokoyama, Saeki,
and Sugiura planned their first attempt to assassinate government
officials. The occasion was to be the 19 July ceremony welcoming the
new nobility into the Peers (Kazoku), to be held at the Enryokan, and to
be attended, according to a newspaper report from which the five rebels
took their information, by over 100 high government officials, including
such notables as Ito Hirobumi and the recently appointed (12 December
1883) Home Minister, Yamagata Aritomo. As Koinuma lectured his co-
conspirators, this was their chance to emulate the Russian nihilists, to
"bring about the revolution by assassinating ministers of state." But as in the September incident, bad planning and bad luck prevented
them from carrying out their plan. In the matter of bad planning,
although Koinuma had been making bombs at least since January, he had not
yet tested any, nor perhaps had he yet obtained all the necessary ingredi-
ents to make them effective. This is indicated by a number of large
purchases made just before the day the ceremony was scheduled--2,500
pieces of iron shot bought in Tokyo on 19 July, and 120 tin tea containers
(chazutsu) on 18 July, also in Tokyo--and by the bomb-testing sessions
carried out by Koinuma and Kono in Ishikawa district (Fukushima) on 29
July, and in Kamitsuga district (Tochigi) as late as 21 August. In the
second instance, "bad luck" apparently hurt their plans since the govern-
ment postponed indefinitely (as they did with the Utsunomiya ceremony in
September) the Enryokan ceremony.
The decision to carry out the Enryokan assassination attempt was not made until 13 July, a bare three days after a meeting of Jiyuto radicals--including Koinuma, Sugiura, Kono and a number of Tomatsu Masao followers as well--was held at an inn on Mount Tsukuba, Ibaraki prefecture, from 9 to 11 July. The meeting was supposed to be attended by radicals from Ibaraki, Tochigi, Fukushima, Saitama, and Gumma in order to, according to one account contemporary to this period, "together select the vanguard of the revolution." 118 How many attended is not known, but it is known that Saitama and Gumma Jiyuto branches failed to send delegates. 119 The meeting discussed the implications the Gumma Incident (May 1884) had for the possibility of starting the revolution. Koinuma and his supporters argued that the failure of the Gumma Jiyuto radicals to transform the incident's participants into an "army" proved the practical emptiness of the "large movement" strategy, and that accordingly "assassinationism" must be tried. The other faction, 120 however, primarily followers of Oi Kentaro (who was lecturing in the Kansai region at the time), proposed organising an advance guard composed of Tohoku (Northeastern) patriots so that "when the moment of imminence comes, we will be ready to rally groups of Tohoku shishi, who will come [to Kanto] as the pioneers of the revolutionary army (kakumei gun no semben)." 121 This faction also argued that their immediate concern, as a preparatory step to raising the army, should be party reform, centred around the creation of a new radical leadership. They maintained, "Reform of the Jiyuto headquarters [leadership] and political revolution are complementary." 122 This group's position, though hurt because of Oi's absence, appears to
have carried the meeting, because Koinuma and his followers left it complaining that the meeting had failed to arrive at any concrete plan of action. Given this, it seems fair to assume that Koinuma's plans to assassinate government officials at the 19 July Enryokan meeting stemmed from the frustration and impatience he suffered because of the Tsukuba meeting.

Despite the Enryokan disappointment, Koinuma's hopes rose momentarily when in mid-August he learned of a wide-scale disturbance at Hachioji, beginning on 10 August and organised by Jiyuto and Komminto (Poor Peoples' Party) leaders. Perhaps this indicates that Koinuma was coming around to the "large movement" strategy, or perhaps he was just looking to recruit other comrades for a "small movement," but in any event he sent Hirao, Isokawa, and Kobayashi to speak with the leaders of the Hachioji rising. Several days later Koinuma's emmisaries returned to report, "They are unable to understand our purposes at all. They are lacking in principles, in spirit, and in will, and were unwilling to discuss the matter seriously." Again disappointed, he bided his time by testing his bombs.

Finally, good news arrived. On 20 August, the newspapers reported that on 15 September, a ceremony to inaugurate the relocation of the Tochigi capital to Utsunomiya would be attended by many high-ranking government officials from Tokyo; the host of the event, the papers also noted, would be Mishima Michitsune. The Kabasan rebels regarded this as "one chance in a thousand."
The Beginning of the End

Koinuma immediately arranged for all the bomb materials they had been buying, collecting, and hiding in Tokyo to be sent to his home in Tochigi. He also sent Sugiura, traveling under a false identity, to Utsunomiya to verify whether the newspaper reports were accurate, and further called for his comrades to meet at Kono’s Tokyo apartment on 1 September. Assembling there to plan the attack on Utsunomiya were Koinuma, Kono, Sugiura, Kotoda, Yamaguchi, Amano, Hirao, and Isokawa. As the official Party history has it, "There they united in a revolutionary alliance (kakumei domei)." But, as it will be noticed, only one-half of the sixteen men who ascended Mount Kaba were at this time part of the "revolutionary alliance." In fact, as Kobayashi later points out in his court testimony, "The assembling of all seventeen [sic] and the mutual decision on our plan by all seventeen [sic] was not completed until 21 or 22 September. Before then the plan had only been discussed in small groups of five or ten." At any rate, after the eight men vowed in Tokyo to begin preparing for the 15 September assassination plot, Koinuma left for his home in Tochigi to begin his own planning.

Now confronted with what almost certainly was the perfect opportunity to overthrow the government, Koinuma began to come around to the idea of raising an army. When he returned to Tochigi he entered into discussions with a number of Jiyuto radicals known for their support of the "large movement" strategy. In his own words, on 3 or 4 September he spoke with Ohashi Genzaburo about "how the Jiyuto could aid the ordinary people (ippan jimmin), . . . and together concluded that we must summon
our energies for a revolution decided only by our deaths (*kesshi kakumei*). . . . I told him of the plot to assassinate government Ministers. . . . We subsequently made a compact to seek death together." As a result of this compact, Ohashi opened his home to bomb-makers Kusano and Isokawa. Secondly, Koinuma approached the local "strong man" (*kyokaku* or "Robin Hood") Kumakutsu Torashi about gaining help from him and his many followers who were miners at the Ashio copper mine, hoping to raise an army once the assassination was carried out. Finally, Koinuma chose four men—Kono, Yokoyama, Sugiura, and Miura—to draw up a plan of attack that included freeing the inmates from Tochigi prisons and jails as a prelude to inducting them into the revolutionary army. Similarly, he also hoped to recruit the local poor into the army. Koinuma's plan, then, was "if the attack on Utsunomiya is successful, then we will raise an army" that would in turn march on Tokyo where an appeal would be made to the Emperor to change the government. Given this plan, it is not surprising that during his trial Koinuma expressed admiration for Oliver Cromwell, who in the beginning of the English Revolution did not want to dispose of the monarchy.

Around the same time, and most probably with Koinuma's approval, Kono, Yokoyama and Kobayashi, who had remained in Tokyo after Koinuma and the others departed for Tochigi, met with Monna Shigejiro at the Jiyuto youth centre where they unsuccessfully tried to solicit party funds for the revolution. They needed the money in order to buy additional bomb materials, e.g., fifty pounds of potassium chlorate and 200 pounds of red phosphorous. In lieu of a party contribution, they proposed
to Monna that the four of them should rob a Kanda area pawnshop, whose owner was known not only to have 300 to 400 yen on hand usually,\textsuperscript{135} but also to be a generous money-lender to the nobility (\textit{kazoku}). As a pure "raise-an-army-ism" proponent, Monna was reluctant to join these three "assassinationism" advocates, but did so on the understanding that his portion of the money stolen would be used "to raise funds for the army."\textsuperscript{136}

Thus it came about that around 7:30 p.m. on 10 September, these four men, each armed with a bomb, broke into the Kanda pawnshop, surprising its owner who screamed and brought a nearby policeman running to the scene, simultaneously whistling for other policemen to respond. Kono alone, said Yokoyama later,\textsuperscript{137} threw his bomb, causing serious injury to one passer-by and slight injury to another passer-by as well as to one policeman. Monna too was slightly injured by the blast, and was captured. The other three—although the pawnshop owner said he saw only two others—escaped and hid that night in Tokyo. The next morning they left for Koinuma's.

The "costs" of the robbery far exceeded the "benefits" the rebels derived. First, they managed to steal only four yen. Secondly, although Monna managed to conceal his identity from the police for several days after the robbery, once it was discovered they further learned who his comrades were that night (except for Kobayashi) and began a Kanto-wide manhunt. Finally, as the "Kogawa jiken" (Kogawa is a section of the Kanda district) was the first time in Japan's history that anyone had been injured by a bomb, the authorities were all the more persevering in their attempt to capture the rebels. Also, it is likely that the apprehension
the robbery provoked in the authorities was responsible for the post-
ponement of the Utsunomiya ceremony, scheduled for a mere five days
after the robbery.

The rebels did not hear of the postponement until four days later,
on 14 September. By that time they had suffered yet another, perhaps
more serious reverse to their cause. On 12 September, with eight other
rebels present, Koinuma seriously injured himself at his home in Inaba
when a bomb he was making exploded. Koinuma lost his left arm, suffered
a serious concussion, and had to be hospitalized at Mibu Town: The next
day he was visited by the local police. Despite his serious condition,
Koinuma did not break under Police questioning and refused to say anything.
Not until October did Koinuma confess his role in the incident. 138

For the rebels, the immediate consequence of the loss of their
leader was, of course, fear of being discovered and arrested. They there-
fore fled to Ibaraki, to the Literary and Martial Arts Hall (Bunbukan) of
Nakada village, where they stayed one night. The next day (fourteenth)
they went to Tomatsu Masao's Yuikan in Shimodate. There they remained
until the Kabasan jiken on 23 September. By 18 September, Kono, Yokoyama,
and Kobayashi had arrived there as well, after first stopping at Koinuma's
on 13 September, only to hear of his accident. (Incredibly, though not
yet known to the police as a "Kogawa jiken" participant, Kono visited
Koinuma in the hospital on the thirteenth.) By 18 September, then, all
sixteen rebels who were to climb Mount Kaba were assembled for the first
time since the 1883 beginning of the recruitment process.

Having lost their former leader, by going to Tomatsu they gained,
albeit reluctantly, a new one. I say "reluctantly" because Tomatsu was
dedicated to Oi Kentaro's faction of Jiyuto radicals who believed in
waiting and quietly preparing for some future revolution. How Tomatsu
got involved in what he called "this risky revolutionary undertaking" he
explained during his trial on 19 January 1885:

On September 14, 1884, Hirao Yasokichi and Kotoda Iwamatsu came to
see me. They expressed their approval of my work [at the Yuikan] and
said that they agreed with it. . . . They then informed me repeatedly
that they were making bombs and that they planned to use them against
important people at the Utsunomiya ceremony in the hope of reforming
the government. After that they asked if five or six others could
come and talk with me, to which I said, "certainly." That afternoon
I spoke with Hara and four or five other Jiyuto members who had come
and who agreed with the plot. . . . On September 18, Kono and several
others arrived, bringing our company to sixteen.140

On the same day that Tomatsu invited the rebels to his school,
the rebels learned that the Utsunomiya ceremony had been postponed. This
in part explains why Tomatsu, who in the past had consistently opposed
the "small movement" strategy of revolution, agreed to involve himself,
i.e., since there was no immediate danger that the rebels would take any
action, he may have seen this as an opportunity to convert fifteen very
dedicated and politicized men to his way of thinking. Certainly, it was
not simply because his ego was flattered by their praise of his work that
he joined them, because he realized, "I was made their leader (shukai)
. . . because I am well known in this region and could therefore persuade
people to give us men and provisions. . . ." 141 Still, the most likely
reason for Tomatsu's participation was, as the author of the contemporary
work Tosui minken shi argued, that Tomatsu believed, as Koinuma had come
to believe, "assassinationism" could serve as the first step to raising
an army of revolution.142 Hence, he had convinced the others by 22
September that, "Our aim is defined: to go to Kabasan until the ceremony at Uysunomiya is held; then to go there and raise an army; then [to overthrow the government] and effect reform (kairyo) of the central government."\footnote{143}

The events that forced the sixteen rebels to leave the Yuikan and go to Kabasan were several. First, on 21 September, several of the rebels attracted the attention of neighbours by stupidly testing some bombs near the Yuikan. Secondly, a warrant had been issued for the arrest of Kono and Yokoyama on the eighteenth; they learned of the warrant on the twenty-first. Thirdly, Hota had been sent to Utsunomiya to learn when the ceremony would be scheduled; he found out that it had been moved from the twenty-fourth (the second scheduling) to the twenty-seventh. (It finally took place on 22 October.) Finally, on the evening of the twenty-second, a "friend," or a police spy according to one contemporary source,\footnote{144} visited the Yuikan to report and warn that, "Tonight policemen are coming here. I tell you this for your past kindnesses."\footnote{145} Supposedly surprised at this news, Tomatsu ordered the fifteen to collect their bombs, gather provisions, and head for Mount Kaba.

What happened there, as we saw at the beginning of this narrative, constitutes the climax of the Kabasan Incident. If the rebels ever had a chance to realize their plan, it was lost the next day when the governor of Ibaraki cabled the Home Ministry: "3,000 rioters on Mt. Kaba. Send aid immediately."\footnote{146}
THE CHICHIBU INCIDENT

At 5:00 p.m. on 1 November 1884, as the last of the government troops were arriving in Tokyo from Ibaraki, where they had been sent five weeks earlier to suppress the Kabasan rebels, about 3,000 farmers, hunters, small tradesmen, Jiyuto party members, and local school teachers were meeting at the Muku temple, situated on a high tree-covered hill in the village of Shimo-yoshida, Chichibu District, Saitama Prefecture. The people present were armed with rifles, swords and bamboo spears. Most were wearing white head bands (shiro-hachimaki), straw sandals (waraji), short coats (hanten) with their sleeves girded up and held by white cords, and tight-fitting trousers that were pulled up at the groin. Before them stood Tashiro Eisuke, sericulturist, once-convicted gambler, self-proclaimed lawyer (daigennin), the son of a low-ranking samurai, and a man of patronage who was able to count several hundred people as "clients" (kobun). But at this moment, he faced the crowd that was assembled within the outer compound of the temple as their "supreme commander" (soshireikan), as leader of the Poor Peoples' Army (Komminto).

To one side of Tashiro stood his "chief of staff" (sambocho), Kikuchi Kanbei, another "lawyer," who had come from Saku district of neighbouring Nagano prefecture to join the Komminto only four days earlier. The other officers of the Komminto, standing on the temple steps with Tashiro and Kikuchi, were individually introduced. "Vice-commander" of the Army was Kato Orihei, a gambler and philanthropic pawnshop owner of Isama village. The two "treasurers" were Shinto priest and long-time friend of Tashiro, Miyakawa Tsuari, and Jiyuto member and farmer of
Shimo-yoshida village, Inoue Denzo. Those introduced as "battalion commanders" were Shibaoka Kumakichi, Arai Shuzaburo, and Iizuka Seizo, also residents of the Chichibu region. Under them were several assistant commanders of the three battalions; below them squadron leaders, provisions officers, and so on. In all, over sixty men were introduced to the crowd as officers of their army.

When the crowd was silent, Kikuchi read the "army code," or "articles of war," that would henceforth serve to guide the behaviour of the army. It prohibited drinking, the violation of women, arson without permission, and the withholding of appropriated goods and money from the army command. When this was done, one of the leaders, perhaps Kikuchi again, read the "Rules of Conduct" (kodo mokuhyo) that would serve to give definition to the aims of the army. Its first rule was to "aid the poor people"; the others served to pinpoint the targets of the rebels: creditors' homes, police stations, government buildings, and the official documents found in these places.

With these formalities disposed of, the last order of business was to assign all those present who were not already members of one of the village squads to units of their own. By 8:00 p.m. this work was done and two battalions were assembled. The "First Battalion" (ko-tai), numbering 2,000 men, was led by Kato Orihei, Arai Shuzaburo, and Ono Naekichi. It began marching southwest toward the market town of Ogano. The "Second Battalion" (otsu-tai), under the leadership of Tashiro, Iizuka, and Ochiai Toishi, took a different route to Ogano, enabling the Komminto army to surround the town eventually. Earlier, before the two
battalions began marching, Takagishi Zenkichi had taken a squad of men to Shimo-ogano in order to scout ahead of the main force. By eleven o'clock that evening the Komminto army had begun invading Ogano and before the day was over had placed the town under Komminto rule.

These events of 1 November mark the formal beginning of the Chichibu Incident. The "formal" end of the rebellion was ten days later, when the government announced that the last remnants of the Komminto army had been routed. In fact, however, these dates represent only the beginning and end of open, large-scale hostilities between the government and the rebels. Here we will examine the actual origins of the conflict, and in Chapter V will show that the incident produced effects that manifested themselves politically well after 10 November.

Towards Rebellion

The first known instance in which individuals, later to become instrumental in organising the Komminto and the rebellion, took concerted action to aid the poor people of Chichibu was in December 1883. At that time Takagishi Zenkichi, Sakamoto Sosaku, and Ochiai Toishi presented a "petition admonishing usurers" (koriga setsuya seigan) to the administrative head of Chichibu district (guncho), requesting that the government intervene on behalf of the indebted, order creditors to permit interest payments on loans to be deferred, and also to initiate a scheme whereby repayment of all outstanding debts could be made annually over a forty-year period. The district head, however, argued that he did not have the authority to accept such a petition and sent the three men away.

The next instance of importance with regard to the later rebellion
took place in the spring of 1884. In March, following a February speaking tour throughout Chichibu by the well-known Jiyuto radical, Oi Kentaro, the same three men, who in December had petitioned the government, joined the Jiyuto and then attended its national conference in Tokyo. With Oi Kentaro, who by then was Jiyuto director of the Kanto region (Kanto chiho jobi-in), they secretly pledged to overthrow the government. They also agreed to serve as the Chichibu representatives for the Jiyuto headquarters.\textsuperscript{151} Also during March, and on into April, these same three, along with other later Komminto leaders, Inoue Denzo (Jiyuto member), Inoue Zensaku, Miyada Seitaro, and Arai Shigejiro, again petitioned the district head with the same demands that were made in December. Again, however, they were refused, this time on the grounds that a recent edict governing the presentation of petitions did not allow the petitioning of district or prefectural officers without first receiving formal permission from the village heads (kocho) of the petitioners concerned. Ignoring this, they subsequently once again petitioned, but failed.\textsuperscript{152}

For most of these early activists, who were farmers, the next two months was the "busy season" (nohanki) when sericulturists were forced to give the utmost care and attention to their spring silkworms. Not until July did organisational activity resume in Chichibu. To the north, however, in Gumma prefecture, which borders Chichibu, several thousand impoverished farmers followed local Jiyuto members and others into a rebellion that May; this was known as the Gumma Incident and was one of the several gekka jiken of 1884.\textsuperscript{153} It is noteworthy because in
October and November several prominent Jiyuto members from the region in Gumma where the incident took place came to Chichibu to offer their services to the Chichibu rebels.

In July, according to the Meiji government, organisational activity that later led to the building of the Komminto began anew. When the government tried Arai Shigejiro, a forty-four-year-old impoverished sericulturist from Isama village in Chichibu, for his participation in the rebellion, he was accused and found guilty of "helping to organise the Komminto between July 12 and September 1, 1884, along with Ochiai Toishi and Takagishi Zenkichi. . . ."¹⁵⁴ The government's contention that organisational activity was taking place since July is supported not only by Arai's testimony itself, but also by records that show farmers gathering during July to protest against high interest loans. On 16 July, for example, farmers from the villages of Minano, Shimo-yoshida, and Ogano met near Ogano for this purpose.¹⁵⁵

Although some organisational activity occurred during July, it is the month of August that really marks the beginnings of serious and consequential organisational activity by the farmers of Chichibu. The mechanism that brought farmers together in August and that allowed them the opportunity to begin organising was the silk market. In early August sericulturalists took their worms, cocoons, and silk to market for sale. And the market, as Inoue observes, "was where local farmers communicated to one another their thoughts about local conditions."¹⁵⁶ In early August, their thoughts centred around the fact that the value of their products was only about one-half their 1882 value.¹⁵⁷
Such was the case on 10 August, when at least a dozen farmers who were doing business at the Ogano market decided, on whose suggestion it is not known, to meet secretly in the forests of nearby Mount Azawada in order to organise some kind of response to the deteriorating economic conditions. On that day the Poor Peoples' Party was born. According to the later courtroom testimony of Takagishi, the nucleus of the Komminto was formed and the origins of a platform were established:

Iisuka Morizo, Ochiai Toishi, Inoue Zensaku and eleven or twelve others, including myself, discussed how we ought to obtain an eight-year, annual debt repayment scheme.158

Although no explicit reference is made to the term Komminto in this passage, there is nonetheless reason to think that by this time (10 August) the term was being used frequently by Chichibu farmers.

For one reason, since April the Komminto of Hachioji, located about forty kilometres southeast of Omiya, had been actively—sometimes peacefully, sometimes violently—engaged in a fight against the usurers of their region for the reduction of interest on loans. In fact, on 10 August itself, the very day the Chichibu organisers were meeting on Mount Azawada, the Hachioji Komminto led a rebellion of several thousand farmers from several villages against local loan companies and government officials.159 It is also important to note that their rebellion met with partial success, especially in regard to the rescheduling of loan repayments.160

Elsewhere in the country, organisations of indebted farmers, bearing different names but making the same type of demands, had been springing up since 1882. In August of that year farmers of Shimane
prefecture had formed the Yohaka shakuchito, or "Yohaka Leased Land Party." "Debtors' Party" or Shakkinto, was another title that indebted farmers took for their organisations in Shiga and Fukuoka prefectures during 1883, and in Shizuoka and Iwaki prefectures in early 1884.  

In Chichibu itself, there is evidence that the title "Komminto" was already gaining currency by early August. A farmer from Akuma village, from which many later joined the November rebellion, was quoted as saying, "In mid-August I went to a meeting of the Komminto." In another instance, a young carpenter of Tochiya village (near Omiya) said, "On August 18, we gathered at a temple in our mountain village. It was said that a large crowd from Ogano was coming to wreck the house (uchikowashi) of a local usurer. We decided that we ought to join them."  

While this was going on, the initial organisers of Mount Azawada were also busy. Several of the Jiyuto members among them, such as Ochiai and Takagishi, had begun making lists of the names of indebted farmers, then approached their creditors requesting relief, and traveled throughout the many mountain communities giving lectures, holding meetings, and organising local Komminto organs. Arai Eitaro of Isama village and Takeuchi Kishigoro of Kamihinozawa were two such village leaders who were prompted by the early Komminto organisers to build village parties. In some cases, it appears that joining the local Komminto was a preliminary move to joining the Jiyuto itself. Moreover, during August and early September, organisational activities by Komminto leaders reached beyond the boundaries of Chichibu district and spread into neighbouring...
Kodama, Hanzawa, and Ofusama districts. Even the neighbourhood prefectures of Gumma and Nagano were not immune to the organisational activities of the early Komminto organisers. Hence, "Around this time the name 'Komminto' came to be widely used."

By late August and early September the organisational process was proceeding well in the eyes of its initiators, but they also had reached the conclusion that the leadership of the Komminto was as yet diffuse, that it needed a well-known and strong figure to unite and cement the bonds of membership. The one whom they were able to agree upon, the person who was later to become "Supreme Commander of the Army of the Poor Peoples' Party," was Tashiro Eisuke. According to the posthumous letters of Ochiai, it was Kato Orihei who first suggested Tashiro Eisuke as the ideal candidate. Tashiro was known to be sympathetic to the Jiyuto, if not actually a member himself; he was a local meiboka ("famous personage"), a patron (oyabun) who had several hundred clients (kobun) under obligation to him; a known gambler, once convicted, who was obviously not averse to opposing authority; and finally Tashiro was a self-declared Kyokaku, or "Robin Hood," who believed he should "help the weak and crush the strong." In all, Tashiro seemed to be the ideal person to head the Komminto. Thus, beginning 21 August, Tashiro was approached at least three times by the early Komminto organisers (Inoue Denzo, Horiguchi Kosuke of Gumma and one of Tashiro's kobun, Iizuka Seizo, Jiyuto member Kokashiwa Tsunejiro, also of Gumma, and Takagishi Zenkichi). Not until 8 September, however, did Tashiro consent to serve as leader. It appears that Tashiro's reluctance to join was due to a fear that the Komminto
would ultimately resort to rebellion and that in the process lives would be lost. However, with the addition of Tashiro, the settling of the leadership problem was accomplished, and the Komminto leaders henceforth proceeded to devote all their energies to further organisational efforts.

For the next month organisational activities took the form of Komminto aid to indebted farmers who were having difficulty with creditors. Komminto members would either confront creditors directly on the question of deferring repayment of loans, or they would encourage local farmers to organise themselves into local Komminto branches for the same purpose. They were aided in their attempts to capture new Komminto members by both the recalcitrance of creditors to comply with such demands, and by the effects that suppression of village meetings by the police had in alienating poor farmers from the authorities. Nearly all the efforts by the Komminto during this month met without success in reducing or deferring debt repayment. This fact prompted the Komminto leadership to call a meeting at the home of Inoue Denzo on 12 October, to discuss how the Komminto was going to respond to its lack of success in helping the indebted farmers.

According to the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* account, nine leaders were present at this meeting: Tashiro, Kato, Inoue Denzo, Arai Shusaburo, a school teacher; Takagishi, Sakamoto Sosaku, Kokashiwa of Gumma, and Kikuchi Kanbei of Nagano. They discussed the failures thus far of Komminto members to make any gains with creditors over the terms of loans, and the district government's refusal to intervene on behalf of Chichibu's poor farmers. To date, they noted, the Komminto had worked within
the confines of the law, relying upon the means of organisation, persuasion and negotiation to try to get demands met. This, they decided, had proved ineffective. Unanimously, they decided that rebellion was the only alternative.

Having reached this conclusion on 12 October, they closed the meeting until the next day when they decided they would meet at the home of Kato Orihei. There they would tackle the problem of how to implement the decision to rebel. Two immediate problems arose: first, the problem of how to communicate this decision to Komminto supporters throughout Chichibu and, likewise, how to convince them of the wisdom of this decision; and secondly, the problem of how a group of indebted farmers could acquire sufficient money and provisions to effect a rebellion successfully.

The solution to the latter problem, it was decided, perhaps on Tashiro's suggestion, was to "liberate" funds from the wealthy residents of the region. On 14 October, the next day, Miyakawa, Sosaku, Horiguchi and several others broke into the home of a wealthy merchant of Yokose village and stole four swords, a spear, and 100 yen. Arai Shusaburo followed suit on the fifteenth, but was only able to steal fifty sen from a reputedly wealthy farmer. But once the actual fighting began in November, the Komminto increasingly turned, with greater success, to robbery, confiscation of goods, weapons and food, and to impressment in order to meet their needs of money, supplies and men for the rebellion.

In response to the first problem of how to mobilize their
sympathizers throughout the district, the Komminto leaders apportioned Chichibu district into a number of ten-village units and assigned to each of themselves the responsibility for mobilizing one of these units. Tashiro, for instance, who was responsible for the villages encircling his own home town of Omiya, began on 15 October to visit each of these villages on a rekiho ("round of calls"), advocating to the villagers that they should be prepared to rise in "house-wreckings" against their creditors. (Ultimately, once the rebellion began, only three of his villages responded.) Not all of the Komminto leaders, however, employed this method of "round of calls" to mobilize followers, usually because it was not necessary. Since many villages had begun organising themselves since late August, mobilization in these cases amounted merely to the conveyance of a message from Tashiro, or one of the other leaders, to a village Komminto leader. Such, for instance, was the case with Fuppu village. But whatever the means employed to mobilize the villagers, police reports on the condition of the region clearly show that Chichibu residents were busily engaged in organising after mid-October. Yet even though the police were aware of this, they maintained as late as 21 October, that, "The situation is not such that [we expect] a rebellion soon." They argued this on the basis of knowledge of traditional agricultural patterns, saying that early November was an unlikely time for rebellion because this was when the Chichibu farmers began planting wheat (mugimaki).

Just five days later, however, on 26 October, at Shimo-yoshida's Mount Ano, near where the Yoshida and Isama rivers converge and where
160 Komminto members had met for an organisational meeting on 6 September, the Komminto leadership gathered to decide upon the date to begin the rebellion. Kokashiwa, who two months earlier had come from his native Gumma to help the Chichibu farmers organise the Komminto, argued on this occasion for a 28 October rising. Tashiro, supported by Inoue Denzo, recommended a later November beginning, mainly on the grounds that it would take at least a month to mobilize and co-ordinate other groups and areas in the Kanto region. Only by involving the poor people of Gumma, Nagano, Yamanashi, and Kanagawa prefectures, Tashiro maintained, would the Chichibu rebellion have a chance of success. Kokashiwa, like most of the others present at this 26 October meeting, believed that the peoples of these other prefectures would rise spontaneously once the Chichibu Komminto led the way. Kokashiwa's views won the day, and as the meeting ended all present agreed upon 1 November as the date the rebellion was to begin.

"Headquarters of the Revolution"

Kokashiwa and his supporters at the Mount Ano meeting were not the only ones in Chichibu impatient to begin fighting. On 31 October, while most Komminto leaders were meeting at Kami-hinozawa in the morning, and at Kato's home in Isama in the afternoon, in order to make final preparations for the rebellion, the Komminto branch of Fuppu village located in the far northeast of Chichibu district, numbering 130 to 140 men, began marching southeasterly in order to meet up with the main body of the Komminto then beginning to collect at Shimo-yoshida. En route, the advance squad of the Fuppu organ met and fought with forty-five
policemen who had been sent from Yorii (Hanzawa district) to investigate
rumours of rebellion. According to newspaper reports, which told of a
"poor peoples' rebellion in Fuppu," twelve of the rebels were captured
before they managed to rout the police and continue their march, attack-
ing the homes of usurers along the way.

The same evening, before the rebellion was scheduled to begin,
Arai Shusaburo, Shibaoka Kumakichi, and Kadodaira Sohei led forty men
against a loan company in Kami-hinozawa and destroyed 10,000 yen worth of
mortgaged land deeds. They also reportedly set fire to the homes of
the president of the loan company, of the village head (kocho), and of
a local pawnbroker, and took the latter's brother as hostage.

The next day, prior to the large gathering of the Komminto army
(mentioned at the beginning of this section), yet another battle took
place, this time at Shimo-yoshida. Though reinforced by police sent from
Ogano, local police were nonetheless outnumbered by the rebels and were
forced to flee after two of their members and one Komminto member were
killed, the first of the very few recorded deaths in the Chichibu rebel-
lion. While this fight was going one, other Komminto men were storming
the office of the kocho. After capturing it, they proceeded to burn all
official records stored there—land registries, tax assessments, family
registries, etc. This practice of the destruction of official records
was repeated throughout the remaining days of the rebellion.

Another instance of this practice, again occurring on 1 November,
is exemplified by the activities of Sakamoto Sosaku and his "guerrilla"
unit of 150 men, one of three such units active during the rebellion.
On the first day of open rebellion his unit was active in and around Shimo-yoshida. They entered the different hamlets, attacked the homes of usurers and the offices of officials, burnt documents, stole weapons and money, and invited or enjoined villagers to serve in their unit. In some villages the people willingly joined, but in others where the population was generally apathetic or unsympathetic to the rebellion, men were impressed into service. One person per household was the customary demand made by the rebels. In this way, by 2 November, Sosaku had increased his force to 300, doubling its original number. This practice of recruiting or of impressing Chichibu residents also occurred throughout the remainder of the rebellion.

By the end of 1 November, as earlier seen, the Komminto army had captured the market town of Ogano. There the local government office was set afire, destroying all public documents; the police station was attacked and its defenders sent running; the homes of six usurers were destroyed, and food and arms were appropriated from the residents of the town. From Omiya, the district capital (present-day Chichibu City), the fires in Ogano could easily be seen. Reacting quickly, the merchants and the wealthy of Omiya began to scurry into hiding, or to send off their families and their valuables in anticipation of the impending attack upon the town by the rebels.

In Ogano on 2 November at 6:00 a.m., over 3,000 men and women divided into squads of riflemen, takeyori ("bamboo spears") and battotali ("drawn-sword squad") formed into two long columns, boasting squad and battalion flags, and departed from Ogano to head southeast toward Omiya.
As they encountered no resistance along the way, they reached Omiya by noon and easily overpowered a squad of policemen who were defending the town. They then proceeded to the district government office (gunyakusho)—earlier vacated by the district head, known locally as "Daruma" because of his corpulence—where they placed a sign on the building that read "Headquarters of the Revolution" (kakumei hombu). The Komminto army also immediately captured the town jail, which they partly destroyed, and the courthouse from which official documents were seized and burnt.

Between the evening of 2 November and the morning of 3 November, the Komminto leadership issued three orders to its army. First, the homes and contents of Omiya's more notorious usurers were to be wrecked. Secondly, Ide Tamekichi, "the collector of funds for the army" (gunyokin-shukata), Nagano resident and Jiyuto member, was to take charge of collecting money from the town's wealthiest citizens. Official records show that almost 3,000 yen was acquired from the wealthy, and over 250 yen from the district government office. To at least five of the ten who "donated" money to the Komminto, "official" receipts were given, showing the amount donated, the purpose for which the money would be used ("military expenses"), the date, and a stamp reading "Headquarters of the Revolution" addressed, Omiya. Tashiro personally signed four of them.

The third order issued by the command concerned an appeal for aid and manpower from the nearby villages. To this end, small forces of Komminto were dispatched to the nearby villages of the Buko Mountain area. Appeals for aid were usually made directly to the village head, who was asked to send to Omiya one person from each household. As a
consequence of these appeals, during the next two days people from the region poured into Omiya, bringing the total force to at least seven or eight thousand by 3 November. Some newspapers and the Komminto itself, and later the authorities, said that by this date the total Komminto force had reached 10,000. But in any event, as several newspapers expressed it, the Chichibu rebellion had become "the largest and most violent movement since the peasant uprisings (ikki) of 1876 in Gifu, Mie, and Aichi prefectures."182

From Victory to Defeat

An equally important fact pointed out by the newspapers at the time was that up until this point "all of the Chichibu region had been a clear battle-field for the Komminto."183 It had thus far only experienced victories, albeit minor ones, in its battles against the authorities. Communications being what they were, the very remoteness of Chichibu, the very mountainous and therefore largely inaccessible terrain, as well as the impressive size of the Komminto army, not to forget the unpreparedness on the authorities' part, were all factors ensuring these early victories. There were, however, attempts made by local authorities early on to nip the rebellion in the bud. As early as 1 November, the prefec­tural governor had requested the Home Ministry, headed by the notorious Meiji oligarch Yamagata Aritomo, to dispatch Imperial troops to quell the rebellion. But no response was made by the Home Minister until the following day. On 2 November, the secretary to Yamagata relayed to him the cables that had been arriving from the Chichibu authorities. He also probably reported to Yamagata that the nation's major newspapers were
beginning to send special correspondents to Chichibu, indicating that the rebellion was coming to be regarded publicly as an event of some importance. At 6:00 a.m. November 3, an assistant to Yamagata telegraphed Urawa, the capital of Saitama:

The Home Minister has become very anxious about conditions there. But [it seems] there is little danger at this time and he urges caution. He says that by now the [Tokyo garrison] troops should have been dispatched.184

By 9:30 a.m. a company of the Imperial Army, led by Major Harada and Second Lieutenant Kummamoto, arrived in Urawa, and their arrival was soon followed by that of two other companies in the late afternoon. All of these troops proceeded to head for Kumagaya, and then on to Yorii (by rail) where a base of operations was set up. On 4 November, the next day, the Third Company of the Third Battalion of the Tokyo garrison had arrived at Kodama Town. Chichibu was sealed off at the north and at the northeast.

Perhaps because they had not anticipated that the Imperial army would be mobilized so quickly, or perhaps because of rumours circulating around Omiya, on 3 November, the Komminto leadership panicked. The panic was accentuated by their own "intelligence reports"—never very reliable throughout the entire time of rebellion—which mistakenly reported the Imperial army was marching on Omiya that very morning.

To minimize the disorder arising among the rank-and-file because of these reports, the Komminto leadership devised a strategy to replace their earlier one of shutsugeki ("sortie") into surrounding hamlets for men, weapons, and provisions. Since by then it was obvious that a show of strength alone would not compel the authorities to consider their
demands, they concluded that they must utilize and test the strength of their army for the first time. Accordingly, they decided to employ their three battalions. Kato Orihei and Arai Shusaburo were to take the First Battalion and head toward the Ogano-yoshida district and repulse the advance supposedly being made by the Imperial troops toward that area. The Second Battalion, under the command of Kikuchi and Iizuka, was to head north to defend Onohara. The Third Battalion, commanded by Tashiro and Ochiai, was to remain in Omiya and prepare to defend the city.

Almost nothing went as planned. The Second Battalion disobeyed its orders and went beyond Onohara as far as Yorii where they were routed and forced to retreat back to Onohara. The First Battalion, numbering only 1,000 men, found no Imperial troops at Yoshida; they remained there, rather than searching out government troops, and carried out sorties in the region. Tashiro, too, was guilty of disobeying (his own) orders. Fearing that an attack on Omiya was inevitable, he took most of the Third Battalion and went to Minano, which, he figured, was a less likely object of government attack. While there Tashiro suffered severe chest pains (he was fifty-one-years old), and, for all practical purposes, by the morning of 4 November had withdrawn from the revolt. His abandonment of his responsibility to the rebels, it appears, was precipitated by the arrival of his son Yasa, with whom he subsequently disappeared into the mountains, only to be found and arrested two weeks later. On the same day, Komminto leader Inoue Denzo also disappeared. Nothing more was heard about him until thirty-five years later when on his deathbed in a small village in Hokkaido he revealed his true identity as a "leader of the Chichibu Incident."
Following the disappearance of Tashiro and Inoue on 4 November, the leadership of the Komminto deteriorated quickly. In quick succession other leaders also fled: Kato Orihei, Arai Shusaburo (who had earlier been seriously wounded by a traitor in his battalion), Arai Eitaro, Takagishi Zenkichi, Kokashiwa Tsunejiro, Ide Tamekichi, and Akihara Shojiro all dispersed in different directions. Kato Orihei, second in command under Tashiro, probably typified the sentiments of the other leaders who fled when, upon hearing of the disappearance of Tashiro and Inoue, he said, "I thought to myself, there is nothing to do but flee." 187

Regardless of their reason for breaking ranks, they did so none too soon. Even more troops had been mobilized on the afternoon of 4 November, and had begun to augment their force by recruiting (conscripting, in some cases) local hunters and ex-samurai, and making them the core of "self-defense" forces. By late in the day an estimated 1,000 police, army and local recruits had formed a semi-circle from the northeast to the southeast around Chichibu, and were slowly closing in, constricting the movements of the Komminto. By the early morning of 5 November, the authorities had retaken Omiya, "Headquarters of the Revolutionary Army."

At this point, the only effective resistance by the rebels that remained was centred at Minano. From there Ochiai ordered a unit of eighty to a hundred men to hold the Kainida pass, the most likely point of entry for the government's troops coming over the mountains that separated Minano from Sakamoto village. Near Sakamoto late on 4 November, the two sides clashed in armed combat, and although the Komminto troops were successful in repulsing the government's advance that evening, they
were forced to retreat the next morning after a squad of garrison troops, armed with the new Murata rifles, arrived as reinforcements. During the retreat Ochiai vanished, only to re-emerge two years later as a participant in the Osaka Incident led by Oi Kentaro.

Defeat followed defeat. At almost the same time that the Komminto leaders remaining in Minano were learning of Ochiai's retreat, they also learned that one of its best organised units, the Fuppu village Komminto, had met disaster late on 3 November. Led by Ono Naekichi, the 300-man Fuppu unit had headed northward into neighbouring Kodama district the day before in order to provoke rebellion in that region. Although they had managed to recruit or conscript about 300 villagers during their march, they were nonetheless decisively defeated by a smaller force of army troops a short distance to the south of Kodama Town.

Learning this news, the Komminto leaders remaining at Minano--Kikuchi Kanbei, Sakamoto Sosaku, and Kadohira Sohei--concluded that Minano too would soon be lost. They therefore assembled about 100 men, left Minano, and went to Yoshida where they joined the fifty-man force of Arai Torakichi of Gumma prefecture. After discussing the desperation of their situation, they elected Kikuchi to serve as their commander, and resolved to take the Chichibu rebellion to Nagano prefecture, Kikuchi's home, by way of a western march through Gumma, Minami-kanra district, along the Sanchuyatsu Kannagawa basin. They selected this route for its easy access from Chichibu and because it was known to be a highly politicized region, dominated by Jiyuto activists who since 1881 had been busy organising the local farmers. Their choice of routes proved to
Indeed, before Kikuchi had even crossed the border into Gumma, a large group of villagers from the Hominoyama region were already on the march to join the Chichibu rebellion and soon the two groups united. But not only for this reason was their choice of routes a good one. Since most of the government's troops and the local police were concentrated around Omiya, the Sanchuyatsu road was relatively open to Kikuchi's company.

Along the way toward Nagano, Kikuchi was able to recruit or impress about 125 men and was able to steal arms and food enough to insure that the march continued. Not until the morning of 7 November, just before they were beginning to cross the mountains that separated Gumma from Nagano, were they attacked from the rear by government troops. They lost as a result twelve men captured and an unknown number of others through desertion, mainly Gumma residents who did not want to leave their own prefecture. Despite these reverses, before they departed from the border town of Shirai they had managed to build up their number to 250 to 300 men, this time with residents from the Minami-saku district of Nagano, a strong centre of Jiyuto activity, who had crossed the border into Gumma to join them. Despite this welcome aid, Kikuchi's company was thereafter forced to divert their attention and manpower to keep a close watch on the Sanchuyatsu farmers who made repeated attempts to escape once in Nagano.

By the evening of 7 November, the Komminto force had reached the village of Ohinata where they camped for the night. That evening they
were joined by a number of farmers from the area who had heard of their arrival, and who hoped that by joining they would free themselves from indebtedness. Perhaps in response to their hopes, the next morning (8 November) witnessed uchikowashi campaigns against local creditors by the Komminto. More than 1,000 yen worth of weapons, artifacts, and money were taken and then distributed to local residents. Through such philanthropic action the Komminto attracted a large number of new recruits, bringing their total force to about 430. With this new-found strength they marched toward Kaize, attacking usurers, a bank, and a dry-goods store along the way. By then one squad of their army had been designated to serve as the "house-wrecking corps" (uchikowashi-so), which in turn called itself the "Freedom Corps" (Jiyu-tai). A special "swordsmen squad" of twenty men was also organised; it was led by a haiku poet from Omiya. It was separated from the main body and ordered to go north to Usuda; along the way it was to attack government offices, to recruit (or impress) villagers, and to learn whatever possible about the movements of the authorities. This squad only got as far as Takanomachi where it was met and routed by local police.

Meanwhile, the main force under Kikuchi advanced as far as Higashi-managashi where they camped the evening of 8 November. From there squads were sent out to the surrounding villages to attack banks and usurers, and also to secure recruits.

Unknown to the rebels at this time, however, was the fact that more than 100 troops of the Takasaki garrison (from Gumma) were encamped near Usuda, where another 100 local police were mobilized in order to
march south to battle the rebels. As these troops moved south, near
Kaize they were spotted by a Komminto recruitment patrol. Four or five
of the rebels, riflemen, remained there to fire upon the government
troops and delay their advance while their comrades hastened to inform
Kikuchi of the bad news. At first Kikuchi hesitated to withdraw,
remaining to meet the government troops. A short battle cost the Kom­
minto the lives of thirteen men (only one policeman was killed) and the
aid of many more as a good number turned and fled. At this Kikuchi
assembled his remaining force of about 200 and retreated south from Mana­
gashi. By 2:00 p.m. on 10 November, the Komminto force had gone as far
as the foothills of the Hachigaoka mountain range near the village of
Noheyamabara, when unexpectedly they were attacked again, this time by a
squad of soldiers who had come to meet them from Azusayama. The rebel
force was thoroughly routed. Its members fled in all directions, and in
a short time the Komminto army no longer existed. Only isolated indi­
viduals and small groups, most of whom went into hiding, remained to
await capture by the authorities. The Chichibu rebellion was over.
Notes


2 Takahashi Tetsuo, Fukushima jiken (Tokyo, 1970), p. 68.

3 Ibid.; the appointment was made on 25 January, but Mishima did not take up the post until 17 February.

4 Quoted in ibid., p. 70; and Shimoyama, "Koron," p. 162.

5 Ibid.

6 Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 67. The breakdown by status was nine shizoku and fifty-two heimin. Economically, however, it was a fairly homogeneous group as most were wealthy farmers, merchants, or village headmen.

7 A ku was an intermediate level of local government, located between the village or town and the district (gun). This level of government was eliminated in the late eighties.

8 Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, pp. 70-71.

9 In 1886, Higashi-Kabahara became part of Niigata prefecture. The other five districts still comprise the Aizu region yet today.


11 Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 108.

12 The names of the six members were: Nakajima Yuhachi (Kawanuma), Maeda Sosaku (Yama), Chiba Toya (Onuma), Watanabe Yuhachi (Minami-Aizu), Shinya Shuji (Kita-Aizu), and Yamaguchi Uramatsu (Higashi-Kabahara). Ibid., p. 109.


14 Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 110.

15 The resolution is quoted in ibid., p. 163, and in Shoji Kichinosuke's collection of documents, Nihon seisha, pp. 305-6.

16 Ibid., p. 306; Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 110; Shimoyama, "Koron," p. 163.

17 Ibid., p. 165. In 1880 the central government began scaling
down its grants to the prefectures for regional construction projects; thereafter, funds for such projects came from local taxes for the most part.


19 Theoretically, the rate of assessment was left to the villages to determine in accordance with that part of the Rengokai resolution that read, "ought to be suitable for each village." In fact, the Onuma guncho initially assembled all village heads and instructed them to levy taxes at the rate of 60 per cent by population and 40 per cent by land value. Rich peasants in many villages protested against this scheme, and in many cases were able to alter the tax rate to 10 to 20 per cent by land value and 80 to 90 per cent by population, thereby shifting the tax burden onto the poorer peasants. Some villages, moreover, rejected at the outset any levy at all. See Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 115-17.

20 Ibid., pp. 123, 125.
21 Ibid., p. 116.
23 Ibid.
25 Quoted in ibid., p. 132.
27 See Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 133, for an evaluation of the different estimates made by historians on Teiseito membership.
28 Ibid., p. 132.
31 Quoted in ibid., p. 73. Also see Kurt Steiner, *Local Government in Japan* (Stanford, 1965), pp. 30-37, esp. p. 31.
Barely a week in office, on 6 March 1882, Mishima signed Order No. 43; it required prior approval from the police before groups be allowed to "discuss political matters" or be allowed to assemble. Quoted in Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 94.

This letter appears in Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, pp. 409-10.

Quoted in Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 76-77; a ri is a measurement of distance equalling 2.44 miles.

Ibid., p. 81.

Ibid., pp. 132-36.


Ibid., p. 169.

Ibid., p. 171.

Ibid.

Quoted in ibid., pp. 171-72.

Quoted in ibid., p. 165.


Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, p. 312. The organisers themselves claimed the figure was 4,083. Takahashi says it was about 3,400. *Fukushima jiken*, p. 126.


Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 126. Nakajima's village, for instance, which was until then among the most active in opposing the road construction, capitulated to government threats, and broke from the boycott.

The strongest proponent of this view is Shoji; see his commentary in *Nihon seisha*, pp. 306-9.

Ibid., p. 309.
Steiner, *Local Government*, p. 35.


See Appendix II.


Ibid.

Takahashi, *Fukushima jiyu minken*, p. 109; and his *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 143-45. The first instance of the confiscation of the boycotter's property was recorded on 12 November. Akajiro Heiroku of Shinai village (Yama district) had his household belongings seized and sold at public auction. Ninety-five others from the same village suffered a similar fate. The total number of households so affected was 578 in Yama district alone. Moreover, the prices these household effects brought at public auctions was abysmally low. For example, a tatami mat sold for only three or four sen; a rain shutter for the same; a cupboard for five to six sen. The total sale price of all goods sold for all ninety-five households of Shinai was 799 sen, less than eight yen! In some cases, however, rich sympathizers were known to have purchased these confiscated goods and to have returned them to their former owners at sale price.

Tamano had gone to Aizu in August in order to solicit funds for the recently established *Fukushima Jiyu Shim bun*, the prefectural party organ. Ibid., p. 172; in his 1954 work, *Fukushima jiyu minken*, Takahashi cites a slightly different reason (p. 101).


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 183; Monna was from Wakamatsu.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 184.

Ibid.

71 See Chapter IV.


73 Uda was accused of "fraud and extortion" (*sagi shuzai*), supposedly committed in the process of collecting contributions from supporters of the Restoration of Rights movement. He was later tried for sedition. Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 164-65, 197-98.


76 Chuzenji is a designated national treasure, dating from the Kamakura period of the thirteenth century, and visited by the author in 1971.

77 Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 166-70, 177.

78 The official Party history says "a thousand several hundred"; police figures varied from a thousand to 10,000. See Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 177.

79 Quoted in ibid., p. 178.

80 Ibid., pp. 179-83.

81 Ibid., p. 180.

82 Quoted in Endo Shizuo, *Kabasan jiken* (Tokyo, 1970), p. 200. Another account has the priest sending this message at 5:00 p.m. See Inaba Seitaro, comp., *Kabasan jiken kankei shiryo shu*, with an introd. by Toyama Shigeki and an afterword by Endo Shizuo (Tokyo, 1970), p. 766. (Hereafter cited as KJKS.)


84 Itagaki Taisuke, *Jiyuto shi* (Tokyo, 1973; originally published in 1913), III:54.

85 For example, Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*. Also see KJKS, p.
773, for a review by Endo on how various specialists treat the dates for the beginning and end of the incident.

86 His dual appointment was intended to ensure that the Three Roads project, begun earlier in Fukushima and Yamagata, would be successfully extended into Tochigi prefecture. For the adverse reaction of the Tochigi prefectural assembly to Mishima's high-handed tactics in that prefecture, see Kenneth Strong, "Tanaka Shozo: Meiji Hero and Pioneer against Pollution," Japan Society of London Bulletin II, No. 14 (June 1972):6-11, esp. p. 8; and a more detailed report, Akagi Etsuko, "Tochigi no jiyuminken undo: chiho jiji no yoso wo megutte," Tochigi shi ron, 2 (1969):1-15.

87 For example, see Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 15.

88 Testimony given on 8 November 1884; KJKS, p. 25. (Hereafter, unless stated otherwise in the text or in the footnote, all references to KJKS should be understood as official police interrogation, court testimony, or official documents of one sort or the other.)

89 KJKS, p. 19.

90 Endo is one who has attached the term "terrorist" and "terrorism" to the rebels and their activities. For an ideological treatment of the rebels' ideology, see Hayashi Motoi, "Kabasan jiken nanaju shunen," Rekishi Hyoron 59 (Anniversary vol., 1954):54-61.

91 At the end of each defendant's testimony, he was given a chance to amend earlier statements. Most took advantage of this, possibly to avoid perjury; Tomatsu rarely did. But besides this, he lied about knowing several close acquaintances.

92 KJKS, p. 15.

93 Ibid., p. 244.

94 Ibid., p. 120.

95 Ibid., p. 345.

96 Quoted in Taoka, Hanshin den, p. 59. The last sentence of this quote also appears in Hirano Yoshitaro, Oi Kenataro (Tokyo, 1965), p. 84.

97 Taoka, Hanshin den, p. 60.

98 Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 29, referring to Taoka's characterization.

99 Nojima Kitaro, Kabasan jiken (Tokyo, 1890), p. 23.
97


101 Arai's wife was the daughter of Eto Shimpei, the leader of the Saga Rebellion of February 1874, who was beheaded for his crime. See Wayne C. McWilliams, "Eto Shimpei and the Saga Rebellion, 1874," paper delivered at the Association for Asian Studies Conference, Toronto, 21 March 1976.

102 Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 36; Nojima, *Kabasan jiken*, pp. 42-46 for a discussion about the contents of this meeting.

103 Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 54.

104 Wagatsuma et al., *Meiji saiban shi* II:45.

105 KJKS, p. 764 (Afterword by Endo Shizuo).

106 KJKS, p. 102.

107 Taoka, *Hanshin den*, p. 45.

108 Itagaki, *Jiyuto shi* III:44.

109 KJKS, p. 235.

110 Miura's testimony, KJKS, p. 29; Miura, you will recall, was a leader of the Restoration of Rights movement in Fukushima and later tried for treason.

111 KJKS, p. 46.

112 Actually thirteen names have been mentioned, but Saeki, who was involved from the beginning, withdrew several days before the incident.

113 KJKS, p. 102; during a later testimony, Koinuma stressed that Iizuka was not involved in the planning sessions: KJKS, p. 108. Also see the 2 October 1884 interrogation of Sugiura, KJKS, p. 191, where he implicates Iizuka as "an intimate friend of Koinuma."

114 KJKS, p. 112.

115 The peerage system had just been settled by law on 7 July 1884. See Nojima, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 158.

116 KJKS, pp. 112 (Koinuma), 191 (Sugiura), 235-36, 243 (Kono), 22 (Yokoyama), 258 (Saeki).

117 Further details can be found in Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, pp.


119 Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 149.

120 This faction has been called the "cautious faction" (shinchōha) as opposed to Koinuma's "decisive action faction" (kekko-ha); Wagatsuma et al., *Meiji saiban shi*, pp. 46-47.

121 Quoted in Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 151.

122 Ibid.


126 Itagaki, *Jiyuto shi III*: 45; the *Meiji saiban shi* claims they met at Koinuma's home on 1 September; the compilers of the KJKS say Tokyo.

127 KJKS, p. 455.

128 Ibid., p. 103.


130 Ibid., p. 172; also see Aoki Keiichiro, *Nihon nomin undo shi II* (Tokyo, 1958): 359.


132 Ibid., pp. 173-74.

133 KJKS, p. 107. It is not surprising that Koinuma should be acquainted with the English Revolution and Cromwell. See a reference to this experience in English history in a *Jiyu Shim bun* editorial of 19 October 1884 that also includes a reference to the Kabasan rebels. Besides the newspaper itself, the article can be found in Shimoyana Saburo, ed., *Jiyu minken shiso II* (Tokyo, 1961): 181-84, esp. p. 182.


135 The amount is mentioned by Kono in his testimony of 29 September 1884: KJKS, p. 234.

Almost simultaneous to this accident, Tateno Yoshinosuke, Jiyuto member and friend of Koinuma, lost his right arm when a bomb he was making for Koinuma exploded accidentally. *Endo, Kabasan jiken*, p. 176.

Quoted in *KJKS*, p. 15.

Quoted in *Endo, Kabasan jiken*, p. 188.

Quoted in *Endo, Kabasan jiken*, p. 192; *Itagaki, Jiyuto shi* III:50.

Quoted in *Endo, Kabasan jiken*, p. 191; also Taoka, *Hanshin den*, p. 69.


*Japan Weekly Mail*, 1 November 1884. Other primary sources of aid in relating the details of this first day include Tanaka Senya's 1884 eyewitness account entitled "Chichibu bodo zatsuroku," found in vol. II, *Chichibu jiken shiryo*, ed. the Saitama Shimbun sha (Urawa, 1970):555-77 (hereafter abbreviated *CJSR* I or II); an account written by a shop owner of Omiya at the time of the rebellion entitled "Chichibu bodo jiken gairyaku," *CJSR* II:589-607; and contemporary newspaper accounts by the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, *Choya Shimbun*, *Yubin Hochi Shimbun*, *Jiji Shimpo*, and the *Japan Weekly Mail* and its translations of articles appearing in the vernacular newspapers. All dates were checked against the details of the incidents as related by Ebukuro Fumio, *Chichibu bodo* (Tokyo, 1952); and Inoue Koji, *Chichibu jiken* (Tokyo, 1968).

Testimony of Tashiro Eisuke, 16 November 1884; *CJSR* I:106-7. (Hereafter, all references made to official documents appearing in either volume of *CJSR* will simply be cited with page number unless the date of the testimony or document is relevant to the text.)

Tanaka Senya papers, *CJSR* II:555.

Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 38; Wagatsuma et al., *Nihon saiban*
shi, p. 72; Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 49; and Tanaka Soka, ed., Saitama Kenshi, last vol. (Tokyo, 1926):584. According to the verdict passed on Kato Orihei, he too was supposed to have taken part; CJSR I:359.

151 Ide Magoroku, Chichibu Komminto gunzo (Tokyo, 1973), p. 43; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 30-31; Gakushuin jojinkai, shigakubu, comp., Chichibu jiken no ikkosatsu (Tokyo, 1968), p. 43.

152 Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 50; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 38.

153 For a short sketch of the Gumma jiken, see Maeda Hasuyama, Jiyu minken jidai (Tokyo, 1961), p. 270. The only book-length treatment of the disturbance is Fukuda Kaoru, Temmin sojo roku: Meiji jushichinen Gumma jiken (Tokyo, 1974). Discussion of how the Gumma jiken connects with the Chichibu can be found in Ide, Komminto, pp. 160-67; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 34-36, 43-44; also see Gumma ken hyakunen shi I (Mabashi, 1971):582-96.

154 CJSR II:202; also Ide, Komminto, p. 17; and Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 86.

155 Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 51.

156 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 39.

157 Wagatsuma et al., Nihon saiban shi II:68; Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 51; and Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 39.

158 CJSR I:47; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 39.


161 Hayashi, "Kabasan jiken," pp. 58-59; also see Ide, Komminto, and Irokawa, "Komminto," for a development of the debtors' and poor peoples' parties of the 1880's.

162 Quoted in Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 40.

163 Wagatsuma et al., Meiji saiban shi II:73; Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 51.

164 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 40.

165 Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 52.

166 Ibid., pp. 53-54; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 40-41; and Wakasa
Kuranosuke, "Chichibu jiken ni okeru Jiyuto Komminto no soshiki katei," *Rekishi Hyoron* 260 (1972):30-50. The latter article stresses how important family ties that crossed prefectural boundaries (i.e., between Chichibu and Gumma) were in aiding organisation of the Komminto.


168 CJSR II; also see the 14 November 1884 editorial in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* entitled "The Origins of the Riot."

169 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 51-52; Ebukuro, *Bodo*, p. 53. Ebukuro claims that Tashiro joined a day earlier, on 7 September, after meeting with Shibaoka Kumakichi.

170 November 24, 1884. It is doubtful if Kikuchi was present since he was not supposed to have arrived in Chichibu until 28 October. Ide, *Komminto*, p. 21, claims that Inoue Zensaku and Kadodaira Sohei were also present.

171 Other attempts were made during August and September. See ibid., pp. 20-21.

172 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 54.


174 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 71; Ebukuro, *Bodo*, pp. 63-64; also see Tashiro's testimony of 15 November 1884 in *CJSR* II:101.

175 Quoted in Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 60.

176 Ebukuro, *Bodo*, p. 68.

177 *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 3 November 1884; also see its editorial of 12 November 1884: "Chichibu boto shimatsu."

178 Ibid.

179 "Guerrilla" (gerira-tai) is Inoue Koji's term, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 103-7.


181 The names of the wealthy and the amount of money they "contributed" is listed in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 14 November 1884.

182 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 8 November 1884; Yubin Hachi Shimbun, editorial, "Boto no dosei," 7 November 1884.

183 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 130.
184 Quoted in Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 120.

185 *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 17 November 1884.

186 July 18, 1918.

187 Quoted in Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 134.

188 Ibid., pp. 145-46.

189 Ibid., p. 146.
CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

In the course of relating the details of each of the three disturbances in the last chapter, what may be regarded as the precipitating causes were indicated. In the case of the Fukushima Incident, they were the road scheme, Governor Mishima's use of high-handed tactics, the onerous taxes and corvée labour dues imposed on the Aizu people, and so on. The immediate causes of the Kabasan Incident appear to have been the repression most of the participants suffered because of participation in the Fukushima Incident, the desire for revenge, and a more general wish to effect drastic changes in government. What set off the Chichibu Incident can be inferred from the nature of the demands the rebels made: debt deferment, tax reductions and an end to high interest loans; in other words, the rebels wanted relief from the economic depression.

If this adequately sums up the precipitating causes of each of the disturbances, then we must go beyond and investigate what the underlying causes were. That is the purpose of this chapter, to search for the historical, social, economic and political forces which, in providing a context for the revolts, help to explain why they occurred.

Specifically, this chapter will examine the following. First, we will look at the Tokugawa tradition of peasant rebellion, a legacy unconsciously bequeathed by Tokugawa period (1600-1867) peasants to Meiji farmers. We study this tradition of rebellion for what it can tell us not only about rebellion as such, but also for what it reveals about the
changing socio-economic and political features of Tokugawa and early Meiji. Secondly, this chapter examines the nature of the Japanese economy as it was immediately before the disturbances of the 1880's and as it was at the time of their occasion. Here, special emphasis will be given to the Matsukata deflation policy, as it affected the nation's farmers as a whole and as it affected the farmers of Yama (Fukushima), Chichibu (Saitama) and Makabe (Ibaraki) specifically. Finally, the last section will look at the political climate of the 1870's and 1880's, and especially at the rise of the popular rights movement.

TRADITION OF REBELLION

In the experiences of most nations, it seems that some regions are more inclined toward rebellion than others. In China, for instance, the south more than other regions has been "the hearth of rebellion within the Chinese State . . . ."¹ In Mexican history, the north in general and the State of Morelos in the south stand out as rebellious areas. Likewise, one can cite Nghe An province in Viet Nam; Kabylia in Algeria; Oriente in Cuba; the Ukraine in Russia; the south (Hampshire, Sussex, and Kent) in early industrial England; and the provinces surrounding Paris in eighteenth-and nineteenth-century France.² The reasons for some regions to manifest rebelliousness and not others are both complex and varied: peripheral location vis-à-vis the centre of State control; close proximity to urban centres of commerce; linguistic or ethnic differences separating them from the majority of the population; differences with regard to patterns of agriculture, economy and kinship; and perhaps even the existence
of a folk "custom of rebellion" that relies upon the collective memory of a region's inhabitants.  

Now, the existence of such a tradition of rebellion in a particular region cannot be regarded as a cause or rebellion. It must, however, be considered in any explanation of the origins of rebellion, if only as a crucial intervening variable that helps to show a tendency or proclivity of the residents of certain areas to employ collective violence as a means to redress wrongs, or even to attempt to reform society itself. If such is the case, what, then, can be said about the case of Japan?

**Patterns of Rebellion**

Despite the emphasis in recent years by Western scholars on the importance of the passivity of Japan's peasant population as a key to her successful modernization, the truth is otherwise—Japan modernized in spite of peasant rebellion. As if to emphasize this much under-emphasized point, eminent Japanese social historian Irokawa Daikichi stressed, "Even our country has a history of armed rebellion." During the Tokugawa period no less than 6,889 peasant uprisings (ikki) were recorded; this figure translates into nearly twenty-five disturbances per annum.

An annual average, of course, cloaks the equally important fact of rises and falls within this 267 year era. For instance, during the Tempo period (1830-44), an average of over sixty-seven disturbances occurred annually. This figure was second only to the Keio period (1865-68) when the annual average was 114 incidents. The Temmei period (1781-89) was another highpoint; it had a yearly average of fifty-five
incidents. By way of contrast, the twenty-four-year Kyoho period (1716-35) experienced only nineteen risings each year; likewise, there were only nine risings a year during the Kambun period (1661-72).^6

Just as certain periods witnessed more peasant rebellions than others, so too did certain regions of Japan. If we partition Japan into geographical regions as it has traditionally been done, and look to the number of disturbances each region experienced during all of Tokugawa, then we can see the results in Table 1. The Chubu region or central portion of the main island of Honshu clearly leads with slightly over 30 per cent of all disturbances, and is followed in order by Kinki (19.6), Kanto (16.6), Tohoku (14.8), and so on. The same kind of figures are likewise indicated for the first decade of the Meiji period, only here we see that the Kinki region drops from second to sixth in rank, and the Tohoku region advances to second.

Although this breakdown is revealing in a very general way, it nonetheless obscures internal geographical distinctions within each region, as partially noted in the table by the subdivisions of the Chubu and Kanto regions. Also, we know that each region distinguishes itself from the others by consisting of different numbers of provinces (kuni), as well as varying numbers of feudal domains (han). To the extent that many uprisings were generated by distinctive provincial or domain problems--and it is impossible to say here when and how often this was the case--then it becomes necessary to go beyond the high level of generalization concerning uprisings by regions, and try at least to distinguish the uprisings by employing a lower level of geographical specificity.
# Table 1. Uprisings by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of Provinces</th>
<th>Rural Uprisings</th>
<th>City Type</th>
<th>Intra Village Rising</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOKUGAWA, 1590-1867</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tohoku</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanto</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Kanto</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(660)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Kanto</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(484)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chubu</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1,187</td>
<td>2,077</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuo</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(747)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hokuriku</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(609)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokai</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(721)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinki</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chugoku</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shikoku</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyushu</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Unclear)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>3,189</td>
<td>6,889</td>
<td>99.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **MEIJI, 1868-1877** |                   |                 |           |                      |       |            |      |
| Tohoku      |                   | 110             | --        | 10                   | 120   | 17.8       | (2)  |
| Kanto       |                   | 58              | 4         | 41                   | 103   | 15.3       | (3)  |
| E. Kanto    |                   |                 |           | (54)                 |       | 8.0        |      |
| W. Kanto    |                   |                 |           | (49)                 |       | 7.3        |      |
| Chubu       |                   | 98              | 11        | 46                   | 155   | 23.0       | (1)  |
| Chuo        |                   |                 |           | (59)                 |       | 8.7        |      |
| Hokuriku    |                   |                 |           | (47)                 |       | 6.9        |      |
| Tokai       |                   |                 |           | (49)                 |       | 7.3        |      |
| Kinki       |                   | 43              | 3         | 26                   | 72    | 10.7       | (6)  |
| Chugoku     |                   | 72              | 5         | 11                   | 88    | 13.0       | (5)  |
| Shikoku     |                   | 29              | --        | 13                   | 42    | 6.0        | (7)  |
| Kyushu      |                   | 89              | 1         | 4                    | 94    | 13.9       | (4)  |
| (Unclear)   |                   |                 |           |                      |       |            |      |
| **Total**   |                   | 499             | 24        | 151                  | 674   | 99.7       |      |

*Source: Based on figures provided in Aoki Koji, *Tokugawa hyakusho ikki no sogo nempyo* (Tokyo, 1971), Appendix.*
Since it is the tradition of rebellion within certain Meiji prefectures that we are interested in studying, then we do what the Meiji government did and amalgamate the seventy-four kuni into forty-five prefectures. The results are shown in Table 2, appearing on the next page.

For the present, the most important point to be taken from Table 2 is the rankings according to prefecture. We see that Fukushima and Saitama prefectures, where the Fukushima and Chichibu Incidents occurred, rank third and second respectively in their number of incidents for the Tokugawa period, and first and fourth for the first decade of Meiji. Ibaraki prefecture, site of the Kabasan Incident, does not rank highly in either period. It should also be pointed out that even if we look at a higher level of specificity by separating Fukushima into Iwashiro and Iwagi provinces (kuni) and look only at the figures for Iwashiro (the larger part being the Aizu region), then we see that its 259 Tokugawa incidents and its fifty-two in Meiji would still place it in the top ten in both periods, and would even rank it first for early Meiji!

Unfortunately, the same cannot be done with Saitama prefecture, since it and Tokyo have historically been lumped together as Musashi province. Nevertheless, it is known that within the Saitama portion of Musashi province the northern zone, of which Chichibu occupies the largest part, was where most of the peasant disturbances took place during the Tokugawa period. During the eight-year Temmei period (1781-89), for instance, all but two of its disturbances took place outside of Tokyo, and eighteen of them were based in the northern part of Saitama. Chichibu district as such, with four disturbances, was second only to the
Table 2. Types of Tokugawa (1590-1867) Uprisings by Meiji Prefectures* and During First Ten Years of Meiji (1868-1912)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Intra</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tohoku</td>
<td>Aomori</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Akita</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iwate</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miyagi</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yamagata</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fukushima</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanto</td>
<td>Ibaraki</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tochigi</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gunma</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saitama</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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* Excluding Hokkaido and Okinawa.

Source: Aoki, Sogo nempyo, Appendix.
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| (Unclear) |            | 3               | 3         | 3             | -     | -    |

| Total     |            | 3,212           | 488       | 3,189         | 6,889 | -    |
|           |            | 499             | 24        | 151           | 674   | -    |
Tama region (with six) which, it may be recalled, is not only contiguous to Chichibu but is topographically identical and had, since the sixth century, been regarded as an adjunct of Chichibu.  

Also from Table 2 we should notice that of the 432 Tokugawa period disturbances, most probably took place in the rural regions of Saitama since only twenty-eight of all disturbances were of the "city type."

In any case, Tables 1 and 2 show conclusively that Saitama and Fukushima ranked among the highest of the disturbance-prone regions for the Tokugawa and early Meiji periods. Still, there are a number of important features about rebellion that these two tables do not show: the frequency according to region; the intensity of the disturbances; the forms they took; the number of participants; the duration of the risings; the causes and consequences of them, and so on. For some of these questions, owing to incomplete data, only tentative answers can be offered. For others, the answers must be sought in the remaining sections of this chapter. Right now, however, we will only attempt to answer the first few.

When talking about a tradition of rebellion existing in certain regions, the question of frequency is important only insofar as it serves as an incomplete substitute for the cultural and anthropological evidence that can demonstrate the endurance among a collectivity of an oral or written tradition of rebellion. If, for example, a collectivity rises in rebellion, say, once every couple of generations, then we may provisionally assume that a collective memory passes on the information of the
facts of rebellion to younger generations. For this reason, the question of frequency is an important one. But we also know that as time elapses between rebellions, a collectivity also commits itself to an apotheosis of earlier rebels, that is, like any collectivity it creates for itself certain folk heroes. Also, since a collectivity may be defined in either very broad or narrow terms, a hero-rebel may at first only be remembered by the local community from which he came, but later may be revered by a regional or even the national community, and revered perhaps for reasons totally unrelated to the original experience that catapulted him into the ranks of heroism. In the Japanese experience, folk heroes have traditionally been rebels. Kanno Hachiro of Fukushima, Date district, Kaneharada village, who led a revolt against his domain government in 1866, is one such example. His name was invoked as a legitimizing symbol a decade later by Tama region popular rights advocates. Much earlier, Sakura Sogoro was initiated into the holy order of martyrdom after he was crucified by the feudal government for illegally petitioning for economic relief for his village. Gimin (martyr), kyokaku ("Robin Hood"), and daimyojin ("Divine Rectifier") were terms variously used by peasants to refer to their rebel heroes who had led them to fight the authorities. Itagaki Taisuke, President of the Liberal Party (Jiyuto), was oftentimes referred to as a daimyojin for the imagined help he gave to the poor and disenfranchised in their quest for economic and political autonomy.

But cultural rebel-heroes aside, there exists enough evidence on the frequency of risings to lead us to suppose that at least the peasants
of Fukushima and Chichibu possessed a collective memory of rebellion. In the Iwashiro region of Fukushima, or western Fukushima where the 1882 incident was centred, risings of various types broke out fairly regularly, beginning in 1654 and continuing until the Fukushima Incident itself. After the mid-eighteenth century, risings in the Aizu region were rarely separated from one another by more than a dozen years, and in some periods there was even some clustering, especially in 1749 to 1752, the 1780's, and the 1860's. In these years it appears that one revolt was transposing itself into another. It should also be noted that the clusterings usually coincided with periods of poor harvests and famine.

Like Fukushima, the Musashi region also experienced risings on a fairly regular basis, and demonstrated some clustering, notably in the Tempo (1830-44), Temmei (1781-89), and Keio (1865-68) periods. The 130 uprisings in these three periods alone accounted for 30 per cent of all Musashi-based Tokugawa disturbances. Nearly a quarter of the 130 were centred in the Tama region, and nineteen or about 15 per cent took place in and around the district of Chichibu.

Compared to Fukushima and Chichibu, Hitachi province (Ibaraki) did not experience any clustering until the Bakumatsu period (1853-68). In that period, Ibaraki had twenty-two of its 100 Tokugawa risings, fourteen of which took place in the Tsukuba or Makabe regions, both areas of popular rights activity in the 1880's.

Thus, in all three regions, though somewhat less in the case of Ibaraki, a tradition of rebellion seems to have been sustained throughout the Tokugawa period, and was bolstered by a frequency of occurrence that
probably made later generations of residents less hesitant to take collective action whenever an apparent need to do so arose. Equally as important, in all three regions the number of incidents of rebellion clustered during the latter years of Tokugawa, thereby increasing the chances that a tradition of protest would survive the profound changes that came with the founding of the new Meiji order.

This certainly seems to have been the case with the Aizu region. In the first ten years of Meiji that area alone accounted for twenty-four risings. In the same period ten of the thirty-four Musashi risings took place in and around Chichibu. Even Ibaraki, where only nine disturbances were counted in this period, showed continuity with its past by hosting three of them in Makabe district.\textsuperscript{20}

If quantity with special reference to frequency is one index that helps to demonstrate a tradition of rebellion for certain regions, then it is necessary to show the quality of the rebellion as well. Form, intensity, duration and participation figures are aspects of rebellion that help to differentiate the risings which have thus far only been counted and not explained.

In a large measure, the intensity and duration of, and the extent of participation in, a peasant uprising was a function of the form the rebellion took. What is meant by form here differs minimally from the typologies used by Hugh Borton, Kokusho Iwao, and Aoki Koji.\textsuperscript{21} Each of these specialists more or less subscribe to the same typology, but since Aoki's is the more recent and the more complete, it is the one related here.\textsuperscript{22}
Chosan ("running away") refers to a form of protest used by peasants since the early Muromachi period, whereby they would collectively abandon their farms and leave the area.\textsuperscript{23} It perhaps rested on the idea incorporated in the old saying, "Agreement in the village on nonparticipation is one way to coerce."\textsuperscript{24} In effect then, it was a farmers' strike and was therefore potentially harmful to the feudal rulers whose wealth and power was derived from agricultural production. For this reason, it enjoyed considerable success as a way of getting demands met. But with the gradual erosion of village solidarity, a \textit{sine qua non} for this form, the chosan soon became impossible to effect; seldom did it occur after the early eighteenth century.

The other forms, however, lasted well into the Meiji period. (1) The \textit{tonshu}, \textit{choshu}, and \textit{gunshu} referred to the legal gathering of a crowd intent upon demonstrating their discontent. When these gatherings were unruly and broken up by local officials, they were known as \textit{fuon} ("unrest"). (2) When the crowd manifested enough organisation to make a collective appeal by legally petitioning the village officials, the form was known as a \textit{shuso}. (3) Sometimes the protesters would try to bypass or leapfrog their local officials and appeal directly to the domain lord or even to the Bakufu. This form was illegal and was called an \textit{osso}. It had a variant known as the \textit{daihyo osso} and referred to an illegal appeal made by a village representative(s), usually the village headman. Sakura Sogoro and Kanno Hachiro, earlier mentioned as rebel heroes, are two examples. (4) If an \textit{osso} was backed up by threat, intimidation or violence, then it became a \textit{goso}. (5) That form easily and oftentimes was
transformed into a bodo ("violent movement"), and if it was directed against the homes, property or persons of officials, wealthy merchants and farmers, then it became an uchikowashi ("house-wrecking"). These latter largely local affairs might sometimes go beyond village or domain borders and then become a zenpan sodo ("all-domain rising"). To the extent that it was organised and had a strong goal orientation, then it was a hoki ("rebellion"). In some cases the large-scale rebellions were characterized by atavistic, religious or primitive communistic undertones; these were termed yonaoshi ikki ("world reform uprising").

As might be expected, usually the intensity heightened, the duration lengthened, and the number of participants increased as the form of rebellion progressed from the first type toward the last. Rarely, it seems, if ever, did a disturbance pass through all six "stages." Many were probably uniform, i.e., began, proceeded and ended at the same stage or in the same form, and probably just as many jumped from the legal appeal stage directly to the "house-wrecking" stage.

While most of these forms could be found occurring at any time during the Tokugawa period, at certain times one form seemed to predomi-
nate. Thus, for the first seventy years, until 1660, the predominant form of social protest was what it had been for the past several hundred years, the chosan, and secondarily, the bodo. The next fifty years witnessed the ascendancy of the osso, but particularly its variant, the daihyo osso. For the next half century, until the early 1760's, the illegal and more violent goso form was the major type of protest. During the last 100 years of Tokugawa and during early Meiji, peasant uprisings
were usually of the *bodo* and *uchikowashi* varieties, although this is when the all-domain risings and the *yonaoshi ikki* also began manifesting themselves.

Accordingly, as the more violent forms of protest became more frequent as the Tokugawa era approached the Meiji, the intensity, duration and peasant participation also heightened. Even a cursory examination of the figures shows that especially after the mid-eighteenth century, more peasants were involved more often in more violent forms of protest.  

Why this happened has to do with certain socio-economic changes that were taking place, changes which were themselves reflected by changes in the form of peasant uprisings. Before viewing these changes in this way, a brief outline of the main socio-economic changes occurring during Tokugawa would be helpful.  

**Tokugawa Uprisings: Economy, Society and Polity**

During the seventeenth century the system of landholding changed dramatically. Large landholdings which were based on the extended family and servant labour—what Professor Aoki Koji terms the "system of patriarchal slavery" (*kafucho doreisei*)—were breaking up and in their place many small landholdings appeared, some tenant operated and others owned by self-cultivators. In some regions, such as the Kinai (Osaka region) which was more urban and commercial than other parts of Japan, this phenomenon of the disintegration of large holdings was already pronounced. Even in less commercialized regions, such as the Tohoku, although the same process was already discernible as early as 1594, it did not become widespread until the eighteenth century.
Although this process was recorded and made official by government surveys which recognized the de facto operator of a landholding, it was also commonly recorded by the villagers themselves in the form of village codes. These codes recognized landownership, established regulations regarding the appropriation of common lands, and set down penalties for violations. The codes were oftentimes the product of the buraku (hamlet) association which would, after a natural disaster or a poor harvest (and the consequent loss of land for some smaller cultivators), rewrite the village code so as to reflect the new realities of landownership. Those who lost their land would quite commonly sell their labour for a term of service as a day labourer or servant; doing so, however, meant a loss of whatever socio-political rights the code granted landowners.

Still, despite having lost their property and their rights as landowners, they benefited from the close social and familial ties operative in early Tokugawa villages. Whether related by blood, marriage, or indentured servitude, the agricultural labourer was treated as a "child" by the large landowner he served. This relationship, known as oyakata-kokata ("parent-child"), reflected a condition of social and economic interdependence between the two parties.

Occasionally in early Tokugawa, this relationship took on a political aspect as well when:

... the successful farmer, having become a village official representing the interests of the small farmer, represented the village cooperative body in opposition to the domain authority.

In addition to representing his village, he oftentimes led it in rebellion.
This too was a political act: "Resorts to violence—peasant revolts and jacqueries—was the only other method of intermittent participation in the decision-making process."\(^{35}\)

Only within such a close, interdependent and co-operative village context could the predominant form of peasant protest be the *chosan*, a form which virtually disappeared after the mid-seventeenth century. Until then the village had retained much of its co-operative spirit, but thereafter began losing it as the breakup of the large landholdings left in its wake several remaining large landowners and a multiplicity of small-scale subsistence farmers. The unequal relationship resulting usually caused the large landholder to occupy a position of authority equal to his economic position. Thus he became the headman (*shoya, nanushi*, or *kimoiri*, depending on the location of the village), an office usually inherited by his descendents, but a position of leadership rather than one of overlordship. He derived his political predominance from the consent of the organic village unit and in order to keep it, and to be true to the co-operative spirit of the village, would on occasion have to represent the demands of the villagers to the domain rulers.\(^{36}\)

It was not until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century that local officials became alienated from the village unit. As Thomas Smith and others suggest, this was due to a number of factors: an inheritance system that reinforced an economic hierarchy among landholders; an expanding population that put extra pressure on fixed land resources and which helped to foster in turn the creation of socio-economic classes; the development of sharper class lines after natural
disasters, causing many to indebt themselves to the large landholders; the routinization of certain social customs such as dress, ceremonial seating arrangements and the increasing importance attached to family histories; the increasing intrusion into and the control over village government by domain government; and finally, the growth of the market economy which made land, labour and wealth into commodities, that is, "goods produced not for use, but for sale." Hence, increasingly the socio-economic context was being defined in terms of the unequal encounter between the large landholder qua village official on the one hand, and the rest of the village small holders on the other. Village solidarity was slowly eroding, giving way to a polarization of classes within the village brought on by the impersonal relationships imposed by the cash nexus.

This change was clearly mirrored by the changing form of peasant protest. Whereas during early Tokugawa, "when the solidarity of the village had not been widely disturbed by the influence of competitive farming, many peasant uprisings were led, not by outcasts and ne'er-do-wells, but by headmen," despite the fact that siding "with the village against his lord . . . meant almost certain death," during the latter half of the Tokugawa period many peasant uprisings were led by the villagers themselves and were frequently directed against the headman qua landlord. Some of these, known to later historians as murakata sodo (intra-village conflict), would go beyond the village after disposing of the headman and go directly to Bakufu officials. These types, usually expressed in the forms of the more violent goso or uchikowashi, accounted
for between 40 and 50 per cent of all uprisings of the mid-Tokugawa period.\textsuperscript{42}

Even then however, it was not uncommon in the more economically backward regions for some headmen to lead their villagers in rebellion, but this was becoming more and more rare.\textsuperscript{43} Since headmen were increasingly also the major landlords and creditors of the village, especially in the Kinai and Kanto regions, they were not very sympathetic to demands for debt deferrment, lower prices for commodities and, to the extent they were tied to the domain government, requests for tax reduction.\textsuperscript{44} Consequently, in their place as leaders of village rebellions, the middle income farmer—oftentimes a minor village official or the head of an old but financially unstable family—who was more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the market and of nature, rose to lead the poorer villagers.\textsuperscript{45}

Rebellions led by middle-income farmers in the mid-eighteenth century were as yet small-scale affairs; the large-scale ones were led by the headman. As Professor Koji observes, the scale of violence "widened considerably" whenever the poorer farmers "formed an alliance with other classes [i.e., headmen]."\textsuperscript{46}

An example of the latter case is the Tenma Sodo of 1764.\textsuperscript{47} One of the largest Tokugawa uprisings, it involved an estimated 200,000 peasants, encompassed both Bakufu and private domains, and during its more than three month existence spread throughout most of the northern Kanto region (Chichibu in Saitama, Gumma, Tochigi and Eastern Nagano).\textsuperscript{48} The uprising takes its name from the issue which set it off originally, the Bakufu's decision to increase the number of post stations (tenma) in
the sukego ("assisting village," responsible for providing men, horses and other official transportation services between post stations) on the main road between Tokyo (Edo) and Nikko, shrine of the Tokugawa family which was about to celebrate the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founder's death. For that reason, and to improve the road for commercial traffic, the Bakufu imposed an onerous tax. It was supported by the merchants who had business in the region, anticipating increased revenue in the future, but it met with violent opposition by the many farmers—including the village headmen—who would have to finance the largest proportion of the sukego system improvement plan. Most villages along the road contributed manpower to the rebellion—villages that were reluctant to join were threatened with destruction—and together they compelled the government to abandon its plans. However, the victory was not without its price. Some 600 village leaders—headmen, elders (toshi-yori), "group heads" (gumigashira) and farmers' representatives (hyakushodai)—were punished; only 113 peasants received sentences, usually much lighter than those given to the leaders. The principal leader of the rebellion, a village headman from Kodama district in Saitama, was executed, only to be resurrected 100 years later as a gimin (martyr).

This example of rebellion also points to another index of what Smith terms "the decline of the cooperative group," that is the emergence of a new pattern of mobilization for uprisings, whereby rebel leaders would compel individuals to participate. One person per household was the usual exaction, and those households which would not comply were subjected to "house-wreckings." In the mid-to-late eighteenth
century, when trans-domain uprisings took place (like the Tenma Sodo), entire villages were forced to participate. 54

During the last 100 years of Tokugawa, peasant uprisings continued to record changing socio-economic conditions. Most of the large-scale disturbances of this time reflect the increasing numbers of farmers who were turning to specialized commercial production of crops 55 but were finding the consequences of this hard to bear. They were troubled by: variability of farm income and an inelastic cost structure; increased production of cash crops hurt by the variability of the market; fixed taxes in the face of such variability; the steady concentration of landholdings in the hands of a few which made competition difficult; the rising merchant guilds that manipulated the market; time-consuming and costly government projects for improved transportation systems that depended on the farmer's corvée labour; and so on. 56

The Tenma Sodo, for instance, reflected the government's efforts to establish efficient means of transportation between production centres and commercial centres. Seventeen years after that uprising, again the same region experienced another, but this time centred in the sericulture region of later-day Gumma prefecture. This time it was over the government granting permission to merchant guilds and village headmen/wealthy farmers to establish quality controls on silk production, and to issue transport licences and levies on silk. 57 A few years after that incident, an entire series of "rice riots" (kome sodo) broke out in countryside areas which had no rice because they had to sell it all, and in cities denied rice because of a general shortage. 58 Rice shortages
again produced rice riots in the Tempo period. Two decades later, in 1865 to 1866, the demand for rice provoked more violence, especially in Edo and in the predominantly cash crop areas of Chichibu and Aizu; both areas were dependent on the importation of staples to meet basic needs; they were also troubled by a new government stamp tax on silk and other sericulture-related items. Moreover, the staples that the people of these areas required were priced almost out of reach, even if they could get them. Between 1859 and 1867, the price of rice increased 3.7 times; soy sauce 4.0 times; sugar 3.2 times; cotton 4.3 times; and tea 1.3 times. According to one of the rebels involved in the 1866 uprising:

Since the opening of the Yokohama port, commodities have become higher priced, gradually causing hardships for village peoples, especially this year when silkworm production was poor. Popular discontent was widespread, and after discussion it was decided to do some house-wrecking. In addition to grain stores, we wrecked five houses.

The Chichibu protesters "decided to destroy the homes of officials first" and especially the homes of the headmen. After disposing of them, they attacked silk and tea merchants who were selling their goods to Yokohama merchants. Finally, they attacked "rice dealers, usurers, officials, and others who have authority." From Chichibu, this uprising spread south, almost to Yokohama itself, and later north as far as Fuku-shima, but only after reaching a very violent stage in the Gumma area. The rebellion involved tens of thousands of farmers, and finally had to be put down by newly organised noheitai ("farmers' army"), armed with rifles supplied by the Tokugawa government. It was "composed mainly of the sons of middle and wealthy farmers." In contrast, the rebel forces were mainly led by middle-income farmers and consisted of "poor people--
day labourers, servants, craftsmen, tenants and the like."

This rebellion, especially as it was manifested in Fukushima, developed into a *yonaoshi ikki*, and therefore exhibited a markedly anti-feudal character. It opposed merchant guild controls over production, taxes and special levies on the production of cash crops, and called for free enterprise of commodity production and sale. Politically, it called for the democratization of village government, i.e., an end to hereditary positions in village government, and the use of open and free elections; it also demanded village autonomy from domain administration. Finally, the participants wanted tenant rents decreased and wages for day labourers increased.

Similar types of demands were again made in October 1868 when another *yonaoshi* involving several thousands of Aizu residents broke out. In this one, and in others in different parts of the country, demands for a more equitable distribution of the land, as well as demands for the elimination of certificates of pawned land (*shichichiken*), have led later historians to regard these *yonaoshi ikki* as precursors of the democratic movement and/or the "farmers' revolution." Indeed, the "leveling" component of the *yonaoshi* were recognized by observers of their time, who referred to such uprisings as *yonarashi ikki* (literally, "equalize the world uprisings"). As one of the few specialists on the subject characterizes them:

*Yonaoshi* took as its objective the leveling of economic life and the creation of a [new] universe. Concretely, as the movement expressed its [aims] in action, most sought to recover documents pertaining to pawned land or loans; to distribute food equally in times of famine; and appeared as destroyers of the private property of the wealthy
farmers, whose economic status stemmed from holding positions of village authority, or from serving as domain functionaries. Moreover, the participants were all poor farmers, therefore making the risings totally class based.68

Since most yonaoshi ikki were centred around the sericultural regions of Chichibu, Fukushima, Gumma and eastern Nagano, where tenancy was minimal and most farmers were small landholders who produced mainly for the market, the "poor farmers" of the yonaoshi rebellions must be understood in this light. Moreover, it should also be made clear that the leaders of the yonaoshi were usually the slightly more wealthy of the community of poor farmers.69

Despite the fact that many of the yonaoshi rebellions invoked Buddhist millenial notions and occasionally neo-Confucian standards of right and wrong to justify their anti-feudal economic and political opinions,70 it is nonetheless necessary to pay heed to the leveling aspect they exhibited, especially since this aspect later re-emerged in the radical popular right thought of Oi Kentaro and others, as well as in the expressions and slogans used by Meiji farmers belonging to the Jiyuto and Komminto. Calls for political reform during the Chichibu Incident, for example, were expressed by such slogans as "Itagaki no yonaoshi" ("World reform of [Jiyuto President] Itagaki"), and "aid the poor, equally distribute the wealth."71

Meiji Uprisings

If the various types of Tokugawa peasant uprisings were not an important cause of the disintegration of the Tokugawa government and system, then they certainly may be regarded as an index of the extent to
which the feudal system was collapsing. A feudal system based theoretically upon the wealth derived from the land the peasants worked was being increasingly subjected to ever more violent attacks by the farmers themselves. Even after traditional village leaders were co-opted by the system, thereby taking from the peasants one of their more important means to plug into the decision-making structure, the farmers continued to employ the only other means left open to them—rebellion. Moreover, this system which so denigrated the merchant by placing him last in the feudal social hierarchy was being undermined by the many farmers who turned increasingly to commerce as a subsidiary or even as the main source of their income. The peasant uprisings then, and the penetration of the market economy down into the depths of peasant society, revealed clearly the socio-economic contradictions besetting the feudal system.

But even when the old system fell and a new set of feudal elites replaced the old, peasant uprisings continued to plague the new government just as much as they did the old, and to make just as apparent the contradictions inherent in the new order. It could hardly have been otherwise. For the vast majority of farmers, conditions prevailing during at least the first five years of Meiji, until the land tax reform, were no different than those of late Tokugawa. Neither should it be surprising, therefore, that the bulk of peasant violence in early Meiji occurred during the first five years.

In the first year of Meiji at least eighty-five disturbances occurred, eleven of them large yonaoshi ikki. During the first decade (see Table 1, page 107), 674 incidents took place, a yearly average of
67.4 (a mean of about fifty per annum), considerably higher than the rate for almost any decade during the Tokugawa period. Most reflected economic conditions not unlike those which existed in late Tokugawa. For example, due to a succession of poor harvests in the first three years of Meiji, nineteen "rice riots" broke out. Likewise, even as government was making appeals to merchants to stop speculating on commodities, violent "house-wreckings" and bodo were occurring in the name of cheaper food or tax relief or debt exemption. Nearly 50 per cent of all disturbances during the first ten years were of this type. 74

Some disturbances of this period, however, were different from Tokugawa ones, but only in terms of the immediate cause and not in terms of the form they assumed. For example, after the Restoration domain borders formerly closed to outside commerce were now opened; this cut into profits made on the local market, producing some rebellion. 75 Once prefectures were established (1871), differences in the tax rates between prefectures, or rather the knowledge of this, provoked some rebellion. 76 Other early reforms enacted by the new government also produced discontent. Conscription, the school system, the census, and telephone and telegraph systems were all, to quote E. H. Norman, "sparks which ignited the uprisings." 77 But probably the most resented of all the new reforms was the land tax reform of 1873. It recognized private ownership, issued land deeds, changed the form of tax payment from rice to cash, and fixed the land tax at 3 per cent of the land's assessed value.

The new land tax regulations were regarded as excessive by many farmers, especially those from regions where immediately after the
Restoration the domain rulers had reduced annual land taxes (nengu) by half in order to placate a rebellious peasantry. For most farmers, however, several years were needed in order for them to understand and to be affected by this reform. Its most immediate effect was "the establishment of the landlord system." Large numbers of small-and medium-sized landholders began losing their land because they were unable to pay the tax or the mortgage they took out the year before in order to meet that year's land tax payment. Hence, they fell into tenancy. In 1872, the amount of land under tenant cultivation was an estimated 29 per cent. By 1888, the figure was over 40 per cent. The records of subsequent protest also record the effects of the land tax reform. During the decade 1877 to 1886, 29 per cent of all disturbances were tenant-landlord conflicts, up 23.3 per cent from the decade earlier; 17 per cent of all incidents for 1877 to 1886 were fights against creditors, a type of disturbance virtually unknown in the previous decade. In contrast to these types of disturbances, between 1877 and 1886 the percentage of anti-government conflicts had dropped about 41 per cent, to a mere 9 per cent of all incidents. It seems that in a very short time, the main enemy of the farmer had changed from the government to the landlord and creditor. In the next section where the rising rate of tenancy and dispossession of land is discussed, it will become apparent why the number of anti-landlord conflicts jumped dramatically after the 1873 land tax law had a chance to effect changes in patterns of landownership. On the other hand, why the number of anti-government conflicts dramatically decreased requires explanation immediately. Briefly, it has to do with the
growing power and authority of the Meiji government. In an incredibly short period, the leaders of the Meiji Restoration embarked on a programme of "centralization of power by means of taxation and conscription [that] rendered rebellion well-nigh impossible."\(^{82}\) In the name of the Emperor, the forces of "oligarchic absolutism"\(^{83}\) organised a conscript army capable of suppressing peasant and samurai uprisings. Nowhere was this capacity better demonstrated than in 1877 when the conscript army easily and quickly put down the largely samurai army of Saigo Takamori. A year before it had done the same in the case of the huge Mie and Gifu peasant uprising.

Up against a veritable brick wall of military strength, the Meiji farmer learned quickly that he could not knock it down. Instead, he joined lawful struggles (goho toso)—"This is one characteristic that separates the Meiji period from the Tokugawa feudal period"\(^{84}\)—to oppose national policy. Chief among these lawful struggles was the jiyu minken undo. In joining it, he changed from the essentially nonpolitical being he was during the Tokugawa period, having no political rights outside the village (providing, of course, that he owned land), to a political being out to define what was meant by the 6 April 1868 Imperial Oath, especially Article One: "An assembly shall be widely convened and all issues shall be resolved by public opinion."\(^{85}\)

Strengthened by the legacy of protest bequeathed to him by his Tokugawa forefathers, and given direction by the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, the Meiji farmer sought to make government honour the Imperial Oath. To this experience we will turn shortly, but before doing
so we will look first at the economic background to the "incidents of intense violence" of the 1880's.

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE GEKKA JIKEN

The "incidents of intense violence" took place against an economic backdrop of severe depression the acceptance of which was made all the more difficult since the five preceding years (1878-82) was a period of unprecedented prosperity for most landowning farmers. What brought on the depression was Finance Minister Matsukata Masayoshi's deflationary policy. This policy was adopted in late 1881 in order to strengthen the unstable Japanese economy, beset by a weak currency at home and a too heavy reliance on imported goods. What exactly the policy entailed and even its effects on the farming population in general has been well-documented elsewhere. Here let it suffice to outline the consequences of the deflation policy on the general farming population and then, more specifically, on the farming populations of the regions where the gekka jiken occurred.

Depression in the Countryside

Following the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, Japan's farming population prospered. In that year the rate of taxation was lowered from 3 per cent to 2.5 per cent. This was done partly in response to peasant uprisings over the land tax, and partly in response to pressure applied by the popular rights movement on the government to keep its 1873 pledge of lowering the land tax. At the same time, the commodity price index rose appreciably, thereby increasing the incomes of farmers. Increased
income encouraged increased consumer spending, as well as efforts to expand production and commercial enterprise. This situation, however, helped improve only the lot of the landowner; it hurt the tenant and wage workers whose low and fixed incomes were insufficient to afford the higher-priced commodities. Still, for most farmers, the post-1877 period was one of prosperity.

We can see that this was the case by looking at the situation in more detail. One journalist who toured the Chichibu region around this time wrote an account of the growing wealth of the region's farmers; it was entitled "A Diary of Prosperity in the Countryside" (Inaka janjoki). He wrote, "... the people of Chichibu have sericulture. They will live in comfort for a hundred years." He also observed the trend of increased consumer spending, noting that even "young wives and young girls have enough money to buy fine dresses and silks." Another indication of prosperity was the growth of producer societies, in Chichibu and elsewhere, organised in order to modernize and expand production. But in order to do this, most farmers were forced to borrow from either the government or private loan dealers.

The government, however, recognized that much of the increased wealth the countryside was enjoying was in fact illusory, that it was the product of inflation, and that it was beneficial to the farming population in the short run, but detrimental in the long run for the establishment of a solid industrial, modernizing economy; for this reason the government embarked on a stringent policy of deflation. Immediately, it attacked one of the major causes of inflation, cheap money, by withdrawing
from circulation nearly 35 per cent of the depreciated paper currency that was then circulating. Consequently, the paper money left in circulation appreciated considerably, causing commodity prices to decline drastically, and causing the real value of taxes to increase substantially. "To express this increase more concretely, the peasant was obliged to sell 42 percent more of his crop to pay his land tax in 1885 than in 1881 . . . ."92 Not only did the real cost of land taxes increase the financial burden of the cultivator, but many who had converted production to cash crops during the inflationary period were now afflicted with new duties on such items as sake, lacquer, tobacco, and soy sauce. These duties, coupled with more expensive money, priced his cash crops out of the range of the buying power of most consumers. Local tax rates were also increased in many areas, mainly because as part of its retrenchment policy the central government ceased to provide in whole or in part subsidies for such local needs as hospitals, roads, schools, prisons, and government offices.93 Finally, the deflation programme called for the stopping of liberal granting of funds for local agricultural improvement and expansion schemes, thereby preventing many farmers from pursuing a positive means to break free from their financial difficulties.

Since they lacked positive means, large numbers of farmers were compelled to adopt negative ones to free themselves from indebtedness—heavy borrowing at usurious rates, mortgaging their land, and non-payment of taxes. Bankruptcy and tenancy soon followed, or, even worse, "having lost their land, many farmers would desert their families, disappear or commit suicide; others would flow toward the mines and cities, creating
a class of lumpen proletariat." Equally as socially destructive, as the February 1886 issue of the *Nihon Keizai kai hokoku* (Report of Japanese Economics and Society) tells us, "Presently there are great numbers of debt disputes and gangs of tenants and paupers whose hardships push them into our prisons." Similarly, we read in the newspapers of October 1884 of "the great increase of paupers in many districts, and in more than one instance so desperate were these people that they would resort to violence." Not all resorted to violence. Some simply escaped from it by emigrating, many of whom went to British Columbia or to Hawaii.

It is impossible to say exactly how many emigrated, were imprisoned, committed suicide or fled to the cities or mines as a consequence of poverty and the loss of their lands, but we can gain some idea of how many did in fact lose their land. Hirano Yoshitaro says that between 1883 and 1890, those who lost their land because of tax defaults numbered 367,744. Seventy-seven per cent of these, he says, lost their land because of true impoverishment (as opposed to neglect), owing a total amount of about 31 sen (.31 yen) apiece. The amount of land involved was 47,281 cho, having a total value of 4,944,393 yen!! Aoki Keiichiro further computes that the value of the land lost was twenty-seven times greater than the value of the average debt each person owed in taxes. Based on these figures, Thomas Smith calculates that "something in the order of 11 percent of all peasant proprietors were dispossessed for non-payment of taxes in a seven year period [1883-90]." And as Smith also notes, it was probable that "only in exceptional cases was land surrendered for back taxes"; that in most cases the peasants borrowed from
local usurers and consequently "it seems all but certain that more land was taken by foreclosure than was sold for taxes." Hence, we learn that on 7 August 1884, seven local creditors in the village of Togashira, Kambara district, Niigata prefecture, foreclosed on 513 villagers whose total debts amounted to 10,000 yen. Elsewhere we read, "A large number of householders in the province of Harima--900, it is said--have declared themselves insolvent, in order to escape paying the autumn taxes." Or, "During the last year--and the same condition seems likely to apply in the course of the present year--he [the farmer] has found too often that, after labouring the whole year, he is unable to pay the tax on his farm." The problem of indebtedness was further complicated by government intransigency in allowing deferred payment of taxes. Earlier regulations set by the Finance Ministry in 1874 and 1876 imposed heavy interest payments for late taxes, and a short period of grace before the farmer's land would be auctioned publicly. As if this was not tough enough, in 1880 the government abolished the earlier "Rules for deferred payment" (enno kisoku) and increased the interest charges applied to the deferred payment period to over 50 per cent of the amount owed. Tough rules like this one explain in part why the number of incidents of farmers selling their land jumped so high. In 1887, there were 680,000 incidents of land sales; in 1888, there were 1,230,000; by 1891 the figure exceeded 1,710,000. Not only was the government less than lenient with regard to payment of the land tax in depressed times, it also wrote laws which
encouraged usury. The Interest Limitation Law of 11 September 1877, for instance, set the legal maximum interest chargeable for private loans of under 100 yen—an amount applicable to the vast majority of farmers seeking credit—at 20 per cent per annum. Article Two of the same law, however, forbade litigation in cases where "people exceed these limits," thereby giving the creditor the right to exploit with impunity tight market conditions whenever he was able. Paul Mayet, the German economist employed by the Meiji government to study conditions of agriculture in Japan, commented on this law: "Hence we see the government takes no action against the creditor for overstepping the various rates of interest."\(^{109}\)

Besides the wide-scale loss of property, increasing amounts of land were falling into tenancy: "The increase of 1.42% between 1883 and 1884 was probably the greatest annual increase for the entire Meiji period."\(^{110}\) Also, since there existed restrictions on voting rights according to the amount of taxes that were paid, the number of people qualified to vote in local elections also dropped: if Meiji fourteen (1881) is taken as 100, by 1884 the voting index was ninety-three, by 1887 it was eighty-two, and by 1894 it was fifty-nine.\(^{111}\) Another common occurrence during the depression was commodity speculation by large merchants. As prices fell, they would buy up large quantities of a product in anticipation of a later rise in prices. Thus we read, "Considerable purchases of rice by Yokohama firms are reported to have been effected. It is supposed that the buyers intend to hold for a rise in the Japanese markets."\(^{112}\) The market was indeed down: in 1881 one koku (4.96 bushels) of rice was selling for 11.2 yen; in 1884 it cost less
than half its 1881 price, only 5.14 yen. Still, money was more expensive in 1884 than in 1881, and therefore commodities were more difficult to buy. Moreover, as rice and other commodities were removed from the market by speculators, people could neither find nor afford to buy basic food staples; consumption rates therefore declined drastically. This occurred despite the fact that, as one source has it, rice production rose by 27 per cent in the period 1878 to 1885.

In view of all these facts, it is difficult not to place too much importance on the catastrophic consequences produced by the Matsukata deflation policy of the early eighties. The complete account of the human suffering caused by this policy will probably never be known. What can be known, however, is the violent reaction of thousands of farmers to the suffering they endured because of a policy that sought to create a solid industrial base on the backs of the agricultural population.

Smith maintains this had to be the case:

Without an agriculture capable of producing a sizable surplus year after year, the whole Meiji programme, including industrial development, would undoubtedly have been impossible. The peasant had to be relentlessly exploited for the modernization of the non-agricultural sector of the economy. (Emphasis mine.)

Let us now look at the nature of that exploitation in the local areas of Fukushima, Saitama and Ibaraki.

Depression in the Regions

In Chapter III we will see that the patterns of landholding relations, at least among the rebellious farmers of Chichibu and Aizu, were characterized by comparatively low levels of tenancy and high degrees of landownership, especially of the general type known as "middle" farmers
who owned one to two cho (2.45-4.90 acres) of land. Details are also offered to show that a good percentage of the middle-level farmers had mortgaged their land at the time of their rebellions. Paul Mayet's figures for 1881, in fact, show that in terms of numbers of mortgages, the farmers of Saitama ranked sixth in the nation, right behind the cultivators of Ibaraki, and the farmers of Fukushima ranked thirteenth. There is, then, little question that indebtedness was widespread in these areas, but equally important as this is the reason for it, a question which we shall examine briefly here.

Fukushima was an economically segmented prefecture that demonstrated various levels of economic development existing among its different regions. (Economic development, for our purposes, is measured by the extent to which agricultural production is commercial, i.e., the amount of cash crop production relative to staple production.) The mid-northern region (Shinobu, Date, Adachi, Asaka) was clearly the most developed region of the prefecture, devoting more than 50 per cent of its agricultural production to such cash crops as cocoons, raw silk, and eggworms. In contrast, the mid-southern region (Iwase, Tamura, Ishikawa, Nishi-Ishikawa, Higashi-Ishikawa) was mainly a rice and staple-producing area and, except for Tamura and Higashi-Ishikawa, devoted more than 80 per cent of all production to such foods. The Aizu region, where the Fukushima Incident was centred, stands in contrast to both the other two regions. If the middle-northern region can be called developed, and the middle-southern region undeveloped, then the Aizu region can be termed "developing."
There cash crops accounted for roughly a quarter to a third of all agricultural production, although some variation existed within the six districts. Yama (30.9) and Onuma (29.7) districts, located near the major centres of trade and commerce, Kitakata and Wakamatsu, led in cash crop growing along with the huge district of Minami-Aizu (34.3); all three were principally involved in raw silk and cocoons. The diminutive districts of Kita-Aizu (9.3) and Kawanuma (11.9), along with Higashi-Kabahara district (21.6), made part of Niigata prefecture in 1888, concentrated agricultural production on staples. In terms of productivity as measured by average household production (1879), Yama district was far ahead of the other five districts, but still ranked far behind that of household production of the middle-northern region.

Another feature of importance is that as a developing region, Aizu was a late-comer. Yama, Kawanuma and Onuma districts dramatically expanded cash crop production after 1877 when the country was enjoying an era of prosperity. Yama district, for example, reacted to the demands of the market and more than doubled its production of cocoons and raw silk in the three-year period 1877 to 1880. Likewise, during the same period when the cheaper imported cotton was causing a drop in the public's demand for domestic cotton, Yama farmers in 1880 produced barely a third of the amount they produced in 1877. Yielding to the same kinds of market demands of these three years, Yama farmers increased tea production by 40 per cent and paper mulberry by more than 500 per cent; they decreased rice production by nearly 100 koku. Also, in order to increase production of cash crops, particularly sericultural items, they borrowed
new techniques from the more advanced districts like Shinobu and Date. 

Expanded production of, and therefore growing financial dependence on cash crops during good years, coupled with the fact of a system of landholding dominated by small-scale individual proprietorships which, because of the smallness are more vulnerable to dramatic changes in the market than large-scale landlord-dominated areas like Shinobu, Date, and Kita-Aizu and Minami-Aizu, together made the effects of the Matsukata deflation policy—and such extra financial burdens like road labour—especially hard to bear for the farmers of the regions where the Fuku-shima Incident was centred.

Farmers in many areas, such as the Aizu region, turned to silk after the Restoration because of its high market value and because it was one domestic product that was not in competition with any foreign imports. The expansionist boom after 1877 had especially favourable effects on the already thriving industry, one which accounted for as much as 42 per cent of Japan's total exports during the period of 1868 to 1893. So important was this industry, especially immediately after the Restoration when Japan was suffering from an unfavourable balance of trade, that the government intervened in an effort to establish controls over what in early Meiji was essentially a cottage industry. One of the first areas affected by the new policy was Chichibu. In 1872, when land deeds were being issued, the government established at Omiya and Ogano (Chichibu) a "raw silk improvement centre" (ki-ITO kAI kAIJO). There in an effort to standardize the quality of silk for export, government officials inspected production methods of export silk, stamped those
rolls of silk eligible for export, and kept records on the producers. Cultivators complied with this interference because they knew that export silk brought a higher market price. They also went along with the government's control over the introduction of a plan to universalize new techniques of machine production, hoping that it too would mean additional revenue, even to the extent of tolerating the building of local factories.

Of course, few small-scale producers could withstand competition from factory produced silk, the owners of which increasingly directed their attention to appropriate an even greater share of the means of production. Hence, around 1880 to 1881, a whole series of tonya ("wholesale houses," but they actually were combines that owned land, controlled production, processed it in their factories, and marketed it themselves) sprang up throughout Chichibu and other silk-growing regions. It is not just coincidence that around this time such men as Shibusawa Eiichi, "the father of Japanese capitalism," and his son Sosuke made their fortunes in the area neighbouring Chichibu by playing the silk and indigo market of the region.

In Chichibu, silk was not merely an attractive agricultural item because of its export value, but also because it could be cultivated almost anywhere; in a region where only 6 per cent of the land area was arable and where most of it was mountainous, this was an important factor. Also, since the dry land (as opposed to the paddy) was valued less, and therefore land taxes were less, Chichibu farmers found silk a very suitable product. In fact, it had been regarded as such since the middle of the Tokugawa era, so that by the early 1880's, nearly 80 per cent of
Chichibu's population was connected in some way with the sericulture industry. 129

Like the majority of Aizu farmers, again a point elaborated on in the next chapter, most of the Chichibu sericulturalists were middle-level farmers—small-scale, self-owning and cultivating proprietors of about one cho of land. 130 And they too, like their Aizu counterparts, had gone into debt during the expansionist boom of 1877 to 1881 in order to expand production to meet the growing domestic and international demand for silk. Moreover, besides having to meet traditional consumption needs that required the importing of twice the amount of rice and one-third of the amount of wheat produced prefecturally, 131 they also, as was observed earlier, had to satisfy a consumption level for luxury items that was on the upswing.

Imagine, therefore, what effect the Matsukata policy had upon them. The effects were not felt until 1883. Then the price of mulberry leaves, one of Chichibu's principal items of production, fell from 3.5 yen per horseload (ichida) to 1.25. 132 Likewise, the value of silk fell 50 per cent between 1881 and 1884, as the following table shows.

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Raw silk cloth</th>
<th>Coarse silk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2.60 yen</td>
<td>4.80 yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
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<td>1880</td>
<td>4.50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just as the Chichibu sericulturalist's income was declining—so too of course was the purchasing power of many silk buyers—simultaneously, his taxes increased to three times the 1881 amount in real terms. To make matters even worse, other government policies added to the burdens of the already overburdened farmer: regional subsidies, earlier given in order to encourage production, were withdrawn; residents were compelled to work on a new road linking Chichibu to Takasaki (Gumma); regional government increased its taxes by nearly 20 per cent; and finally, government ignored the appeals of Chichibu farmers to curtail loan dealers from recalling loans during these hard-pressed times.

Together these developments caused many to fall into a Dickensian state of poverty. It was that poverty, according to the eminent chronicler of Meiji peasant uprisings, Aoki Koji, following on the heels of beneficent prosperity, that was at the bottom of the Chichibu Incident.

Of course, impoverishment alone is not sufficient cause to rebel. Due to the deflation policy, we know, over three million people across Japan suffered bankruptcy, but far from all of these expressed their frustration (or, prior to the fact, their fear of bankruptcy) by rebelling. Certainly the farmers of Makabe district in Ibaraki prefecture, to whom the Kabasan rebels appealed for support in the rebellion, for the most part refused to acknowledge the rebels' appeal. It is necessary to ask why. To anticipate later findings somewhat, it appears that the answer lies mainly in the type of insurrection the Kabasan rebels planned, and also perhaps in the nature of the patterns of landholding and agricultural production peculiar to Makabe district. Both points will be
elaborated upon in subsequent chapters. Here we will briefly examine only the economic developments of early Meiji and those stemming from the deflation policy to see whether they affected the farmers of Makabe differently than they did the farmers of Yama and Chichibu.

At the outset it is necessary to point out that the farmers of Makabe district were neither passive toward poor economic conditions nor reluctant to rise in rebellion against the authorities whom they regarded as responsible for them. As late as 1876, for instance, the farmers of Makabe and neighbouring districts, especially Naka district, were chief among those areas violently involved in one of the larger peasant uprisings of the early Meiji period. In late November and early December, Makabe farmers joined in what constituted the tail-end of a revolt earlier begun in Gifu, Mie and Aichi over the government's land tax policy. The participation of the Makabe farmers stemmed from dissatisfaction over the local government's handling of petitions for tax relief and tax reform. A one-time wealthy farmer and village headman, Honbashi Jirosaemon, led about 2,500 farmers in rebellion against the local authorities, but the unorganised army of farmers was soon dispersed by troops called in from a nearby garrison. 139

If it was not for want of fighting spirit that Ibaraki farmers failed to respond to the call for revolution issued at Mount Kaba in 1884, neither was it because they had escaped the disastrous effects of the Matsukata deflation policy. Between 1884 and 1885, a substantial 3.5 per cent increase in the land area falling under tenancy was recorded for Ibaraki as a whole; the year before, a 2 per cent rise in the tenancy
rate was recorded for the farming population. In some villages more than a 6 per cent rise was said to have occurred. Moreover, the source for these statistics tells us that particularly hard hit were the farmers of the Makabe district. 140

A rise in the tenancy rate is a significant index of the toll the depression was taking on Ibaraki farmers. But also, as in the cases of Chichibu and Yama farmers, we must wonder whether the type of agriculture the Makabe farmers were engaged in might help to explain now vulnerable they were to the violent fluctuations in commodity prices then affecting the market.

Compared to the Yama and Chichibu farmers, and to the farmers of other Ibaraki districts, the Makabe farmers were "overwhelmingly producers of staples." 141 Secondly, the figures for 1884 show that the vast majority of Makabe farmers were either tenants or part-tenant/part-small landholder. Tenants worked usually on very large-scale rice and/or barley farms and took home an average of 32 per cent of the crop yield. Tenants composed 23.5 per cent of the Makabe farming population and part tenants/part landowners 44.7 per cent; 142 tenant-worked land, however, amounted to only 31 per cent of the total agricultural land area of the district. 143 Those figures, of course, translate into a very large landlord class having very large land holdings. In fact, in 1879 Makabe district ranked third among the prefecture's seventeen districts for the size of its landlord class. 144 Moreover, compared to the other districts in the prefecture, Makabe was relatively "undeveloped" with regard to cash crop production. Yet despite that, it was the prefecture's leading
producer of raw silk and cocoons (but an amount negligible compared to Chichibu or Yama), the second-ranked producer of cotton, the third-ranked in red beans (azuki), and the fourth-ranking tea producer. Since we know that most of Makabe's agricultural land area was in the form of large staple-producing landholdings, we can infer that probably much of the cash crop production was done by the large class of part-tenant/part-small landholder, that 45 per cent of the population which owned less than one cho of land.

For this group at least, the drastic drop in commodity prices and the more expensive taxes and money that attended the deflation policy together must have been catastrophic. Likely its effects were indicated in the rising tenancy rate mentioned above. Many part owners probably became full tenants, and although the fall into tenancy for these already part-tenants was not as far or as steep as it was for the small landowner of Chichibu and Yama, we can nonetheless imagine it to have been equally as painful.

To conclude this section, we can say that although the financial losses encumbered by many farmers of Yama, Chichibu and Makabe districts because of the Matsukata deflation policy were indeed difficult to bear passively, in themselves they were not sufficient to cause rebellion. People who suffer economic misery, without having an understanding of its basis, without having a clearly laid out programme of how to escape from it, or how to build the type of society where producers reap the full harvest of their efforts and production, will merely remain miserable. It was up to the popular rights movement to make the condition of economic misery, literally, meaningful to the sufferers.
THE MOVEMENT FOR LIBERTY AND POPULAR RIGHTS

The title of this section is the customary translation for jiyu minken undo, the term for the movement originally begun in the early- to mid-1870's by upper class anti-government forces (or more precisely, anti-government-in-power forces) but which was later transformed in the early eighties by lower class democrats, some of whom were involved in the gekka jiken. Those involved in both the early and later stages of the popular rights movement were known as minkenka ("advocates of popular rights"), but in terms of the ideology which each supported they were substantially different types. The reason for this difference stems in part from the different class backgrounds, and in part from the different extent to which each group was tied to the central and local governments. Briefly, the early minkenka were samurai who played a role in the Meiji Restoration and for a short period, prior to consolidation of the new regime, a role as leaders of the new government. The later minkenka for the most part played no part in the Restoration (Kono Hironaka is one who did), nor in the central government, but who were oftentimes active in local government. A few déclassé samurai could be found among their ranks, but most were gono ("wealthy farmers"), primary school teachers, priests, petty merchants, or even small landholding farmers.

How great the differences were between the two groups can be demonstrated by making an in-depth comparison of the two groups. Part of this will be done in the next chapter where we examine the kinds of people who comprised the three incidents, and in Chapter IV where we show how these people were tied by organisation and ideology to the popular
rights movement. Here we will look at the movement in its early years, between 1874 and 1881, and the changes it underwent to transform it into a predominantly rural and increasingly mass-based movement.

To this end, we divide the movement into three parts:

1) "the formative period," 1874 to 1878, which covers the time between the establishment of the Aikokukoto (Public Party of Patriots) and the Risshisha (The Society to establish One's Ambitions) in 1874, and the movement to re-establish the Aikokusha (Society of Patriots, founded first in 1875 after the Osaka Conference, but abandoned the same year by its leaders who joined the government);

2) "the period of promotion and organization," 1878 to 1881, beginning with the proliferation of local popular rights societies and culminating with the establishment of the Jiyuto (Liberal Party) in October 1881; and

3) the third period, herein called "the period of activism," which began with the Jiyuto and ended with its break-up in late October 1884, constitutes the core of the remainder of the thesis and will therefore be dealt with in subsequent chapters.

The Formative Period

The first five years of the movement was characterized by the formation of several political societies. Most of the founders of these societies were samurai coming from old Tosa domain, or Kochi prefecture as it was then named. Their membership as well largely consisted of samurai, so it was in name only that these early societies were called
"public parties" (koto). In fact, they did not seek popular support. As Robert Scalapino says, "The term 'people' was to be limited for the time being to these groups [ex-samurai and wealthy commoners], and was not intended even by the liberals to include the obviously unequipped lower classes." Examples of such "parties" include the Aikokukoto, the Risshisha, and the Aikokusha; all either emerged in Tosa or were established by Tosa samurai, and were led by such figures as Itagaki Taisuke, Kataoka Kenkichi, Furuzawa Uro, and Okamoto Kensaburo. Other ex-samurai activists involved in these groups but coming from different areas of the country include Kono Hironaka, Eto Shimpei, Ueki Emori, Goto Shojiro, and Komuro Nobuo.

During this early period all were active as political "outs" in calling for the government to establish a representative assembly, a demand made repeatedly in the petitions and memorials they submitted to the government. Besides calling for representative government--their "panacea" to remedy the evils of misgovernment, the concentration of power in the hands of a select few ex-samurai from the old domains of Satsuma and Choshu, conscription, heavy taxes, mismanagement of foreign affairs, etc.--the other principal features common to most of these documents was a notion of natural right that would have as its positive expression the institutions of self-government, local autonomy, and the equality of the classes. "We, the thirty millions of people in Japan," a Risshisha statement of principles read, "are all equally endowed with certain definite rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring and possessing property, and obtaining a
livelhood and pursuing happiness. These rights are by Nature bestowed upon all men, and, therefore, cannot be taken away by the power of any man." If this was an expression of the rights of the individual that natural law demanded, then a representative assembly, guaranteed by a constitution, was the least demand the popular rights advocates were duty-bound to make of the government, the writers of positive law.

The principles of most political societies of this time were not as explicit as those of the Risshisha. Most spoke more about "universal principles" than about rights and freedoms. But in either case, the men who headed these societies employed such principles in a very Machiavellian manner, preferring more to recruit people to their cause than to educate them in the principles of natural right. Itagaki Taisuke, President of the Risshisha and later head of the Jiyuto, was one such man. E. H. Norman seems to be correct when he characterizes Itagaki as having "the instinctive sensitivity of a chameleon to the colouring of his political environment." So too was Scalapino probably right in his assessment that despite a few dedicated and principled men, "the liberal movement was being used partly as a tool with which to bring personal power to certain ex-members of a warrior class who could no longer rely upon military force or social and intellectual prestige." As noted earlier, the Aikokusha folded the very year of its establishment when its leaders were co-opted by the government by being promised high government posts; Itagaki was one of those leaders.

Itagaki's colours are also clearly shown in the principles he espoused. His well-known address, "On Liberty," delivered in Kochi in
1882, shows clearly that his conception of equality and liberty, though perhaps ideals sincerely sought, was a very restrictive one. He makes a clear distinction in his speech between the value of the political opinions of "the lettered and unlettered classes," that is between the samurai and most commoners, and implies that political power should be held only by the upper and monied classes. Only this group, he believed, should have the franchise: "We would only give it in the first instance to the samurai and the richer farmers and merchants, for it is they who produced the leaders of the revolution of 1868." In his way of thinking, these people were the "public" that should be allowed to be involved in "public debate."

Itagaki can hardly be faulted for being an illiberal liberal. He was merely a politician living before the time when politicians made a living by being politicians. Instead of having other politicians as opponents in the contest for office, he had the government to contend with, and it had the Emperor on its side. Although Itagaki and other early popular rights leaders also invoked the name of the Emperor, they were at a disadvantage because the government had the advantage of administering the country in the name of the Emperor. That left the discontented samurai and the wealthy commoners as the most natural allies in the battle to capture political power; they had, after all, been the official and unofficial powers, respectively, during the old regime. However, the wealthy were too busy seeking more wealth to bother with politics (except from behind the scenes) and the discontented samurai were too busy trying to recover their former wealth to bother themselves. This situation
during the early period of the movement's development left remaining, ironically, the 80 per cent or so of the population to whom the principles of equality and liberty that Itagaki and others were preaching would naturally appeal. Itagaki was too absorbed to realize that. He wished to "broaden the popular base of the movement," but only in order to unseat the government then in power so he could embark on his own plans for "national defense and commercial and political expansion." His quandry was inescapable: how to broaden his base of support without broadening it too much? His answer was to talk equality to the dispossessed samurai and the wealthy—and the government as well; it had to understand the nature of the popular right threat in order to be responsive to Itagaki—and that meant invoking natural right, the "natural" ideology to be employed against the government's "divine right."

Of course, the inconsistencies are all too apparent. How they manifested themselves is seen through the activities and the ideas which characterized the many local popular rights societies that began springing up across the country around 1878. They were the unintended consequence of the inconsistencies of thought and practice which the early popular rights leaders exhibited. The local political societies took to heart the liberal ideas that were proclaimed during the early part of the movement and they, unlike the fathers of the movement, practiced what they preached.

The Period of Organisation and Promotion, 1878 to 1881

Despite the fairly heavy repression which the political societies suffered at the hands of the government at the outset of this period,
the movement to re-establish the Aikokusha met with a warm reception by commoners throughout the countryside. Not only was "the economic and political unrest of the old heimin classes, especially among the agrarian group... growing," but the movement's call for "revision of land taxes" brought more and more farmers into the local political societies that were beginning to be formed. Still, "It is clear that in spite of this national growth the 'civil rights movement' was still predominantly in the hands of the southwest ex-samurai, more especially the men of the Risshisha; not only did they hold the majority of high offices, but their views were the determinants of policy." The situation was quickly changing, however, as large numbers of local political societies began bringing larger numbers of commoners into the movement. Although as Nobutaka Ike says, "Exactly how many societies were formed in this period and how big a membership they boasted is not known," he also tells us that "local societies affiliated with the Risshisha sprang up in almost every city and county" and that "numerous groups were organized, particularly at the village level." One more recent study claims that there were more than 150 "well-known political societies at this time." Another shows that as of October 1881, when the Jiyuto was formed, there were 149 political societies which then became Jiyuto affiliates; as of November 1880, these same 149 societies were able to mobilize over 135,000 people for participation in a petition campaign for the establishment of a national assembly.

Another recent study, this one done by Shimoyama Saburo, provides
us with a clear picture of the extent of popular rights growth during this period. The growth of rural political societies was a result of, and concurrent with, a campaign originally spearheaded by the Aikokusha "to petition for the establishment of a national assembly (Kokkai kaisetsu kaisei)." By the fourth general convention in March of 1880 (when it changed its name to the "Association for the Petitioning of a National Assembly—Kokkai kaisei domeikai), 114 delegates present claimed to represent 96,900 members of organisations spread over twenty-eight prefectures throughout Japan. In the same year, over 246,000 people in twelve different petitions and forty-two memorials had signed their names, demanding the establishment of an assembly. Contrary to what Robert Scalapino claimed—that it was still controlled by the early popular rights leaders of Kochi at this time—Shimoyama's more recent evidence reveals otherwise, at least regarding the geographical origins of the later leadership. Even by the time of the second Aikokusha conference in December 1879, the members of local societies from Eastern Japan accounted for 60 per cent of the national membership. The fastest growing region, in fact, was the Kanto (Tokyo area prefectures); its political societies could claim 24,166 members by late-1879. Tokyo alone with twelve societies was second only to Kochi with seventeen.

As regards the class leadership of the movement, Scalapino is probably mistaken as well. Ike for one maintains that after 1878, leadership of the popular rights movement shifted to the heimin, the "rural aristocracy" in particular (by which it is assumed he means the gono or "wealthy farmer"), due mainly to the greater wealth they had—as opposed
to the declining fortunes of ex-samurai—at their disposal to fund the movement. Ike is not alone in taking this position. Goto Yasushi tells us that a substantial change in the class basis of the leadership of the minken movement occurred in the half-year separating the Aikokusha conference of March 1880 and the second meeting of the Association for the Petitioning of a National Assembly in November 1880. In the March meeting 66 per cent of the representatives were ex-samurai (shizoku), but at the November conference 53 per cent of the sixty-four delegates (representing 130,000 political society members) were heimin, most of whom came from the "wealthy farmer" class of rural society, holding such positions as prefectural assembly representative or village headman. Of course, the ascendency of the commoners in the movement meant a corresponding decline of shizoku power. An index of this decline is the fact that the predominantly shizoku-composed Kochi Risshisha was able to collect only about 48,000 signatures on one of its petitions in March 1880, and on another in November less than half that, only about 20,000.

The growing trend for commoners to take a leading role in the popular rights movement continued even after the Jiyuto was founded in October 1881. By November 1882, there were 769 known party members; 80 per cent were commoners. In some regions commoner predominence in the Party was even more pronounced. For example, again by November 1882, all seventy-six of Kanagawa's Jiyuto members were heimin; sixty-one of Saitama's sixty-two were as well; twenty-six of Ibaraki's twenty-seven, and sixty-seven of seventy-one in Gumma were commoners. In terms of geographical dominance, by this time the Kanto region accounted for 59
per cent of the Party's total membership. By the time the party dissolved in October 1884, the seven prefectures that compose the Kanto region still predominated with 46 per cent of the party's total membership. Finally, in anticipation of subsequent chapters, it might also be mentioned that certain districts (gun) within the prefectures that make up the Kanto region had especially large memberships; Chichibu and Makabe ranked first in Saitama and Ibaraki prefectures respectively.

Thus we can conclude that at least by 1880, the shifts in the class make-up and in the geographical centre of activity had transformed the popular rights movement into a Kanto-centred and commoner-led affair. But besides these two shifts, another occurred as well, an ideological shift, one more of emphasis than of content. As commoners wrested control of the movement from the early shizoku leadership, they also took the demand for a national assembly, and the principles of natural right which supported that demand, from the power-seekers and made these their own. Commoners coming especially from the Kanto region and contiguous prefectures (e.g., Nagano and Fukushima) appear to have seriously believed that a national parliament was needed in order to implement the principles of natural right. We shall see the truth of this statement in Chapter IV where we examine several local political societies and Jiyuto affiliates that were formed between 1878 and 1884. There also we will explore in depth the "period of activism" as it was manifested at the local level.
Notes


2 Ibid.; and in the cases of England and France, George Rudé, The Crowd in History, 1730-1848 (New York, 1964), Chapters I and II.


5 The average is based on figures taken from Aoki Koji, Tokugawa hyakusho ikki no sogo nempyo (Tokyo, 1971), Appendix. I say "no less than" because this is Aoki's most recent finding. In his 1966 book concerning the same topic, he cited 3,804 as the total figure. One can only suspect, therefore, that a future work by Aoki or someone else will discover even more instances of peasant uprising.

6 These figures were computed using the aggregate data supplied by Aoki, Sogo nempyo (1971). The figures do not differentiate between hyakusho ikki (peasant uprising), murakata sodo (intra-village conflict), and toshi sodo (urban or town-type conflict). Intra-village conflicts he defines as "tenant conflicts and internal struggles that are not related directly to anti-authority action." Urban type conflicts "are based mainly in the town (machi), led by town people; or conflicts that occur in urban areas." These definitions come from his Hyakusho ikki no nenjiteki kenkyu (Tokyo, 1966), Appendix, p. 2.

7 Actually, it could be done if one were willing to count through 6,889 incidents, catalogued in nearly 700 pages, and locate the origins of each Musashi disturbance.

8 Ono Fumio, Saitama ken no rekishi (Tokyo, 1971), p. 165.

9 Aoki, Sogo nempyo, pp. 146-68, 377-86, 477-84. Unless otherwise stated in the text, all figures refer to the total ikki, murakata sodo, and toshi ikki. (See supra, n.6.)

10 Ono, Saitama, p. 30. Today even the Chichibu-Tama National Park attests to the historical and geographical closeness of the two regions.

11 Although Tokyo was in fact the only major urban centre of the
Musashi region, it is possible that toshi sodo could have occurred in the market towns of Chichibu since Aoki makes the class of the participant the main distinguishing criterion of the "city type" of conflict, and not the area in which the conflict took place. See supra, n.6.

12 One need only cite Louis Riel in the case of some Canadians, Crazy Horse for American Indians, Jefferson for Americans, Saigo Takamori for later Japanese, Zapata for Mexicans, etc., etc.


15 See Irwin Scheiner, "The Mindful Peasant: Sketches for a Study of Rebellion," Journal of Asian Studies XXXII, No. 4 (August 1974):588. Scheiner, unlike me, believes the association of Itagaki with the concept of daimyojin was a proper one.


17 Rudé, Crowd, p. 22, makes the same point in the case of late eighteenth century France.

18 The figures are computed based on the data in Aoki, Sogo nempyo, pp. 222-61, 393-98, 533-57; 147-67; 380-85, 478-82; 297-311; 405-8; 600-607.

19 Figures based on compilations made from ibid., pp. 276-98; 578-603. For an account, both official and newspaper, of the large-scale disturbances occurring in Makabe district between 1876-77, see Ibaraki kenshi ryo, vol. I of the Kindai seiji shakai hen (Ibaraki, 1974), 377-420.

20 Figures taken from Aoki, Sogo nempyo, pp. 322-57; 613-18; 316-57; 611-16; 409; 355-60; 615-18.

21 Hugh Borton, Peasant Uprisings in Japan of the Tokugawa Period, vol. XVI of the Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan (1938); Kokusho Iwao, Hyakusho ikki no kenkyu zokuhen (Tokyo, 1959); and Aoki, Ikki.

22 Aoki, Ikki.
Aoki, Ikki, pp. 33-34; also see Paul Varley, The Onin War (New York, 1967), p. 213.

Quoted in Aoki, Ikki, p. 139.


See the tables in ibid., pp. 84, 92, 99, 118, 136. For a more complete explanation see his discussion on 73-74, 81, 84.


Aoki, Ikki, p. 65.

Ibid., p. 58 for landholding patterns in three Aizu villages, one in Yama district and two in Onuma district.

Smith, Origins, p. 104.

Aoki, Ikki, pp. 66-67; also see Ishikawa Naoki, Tonegawa minken kiko (Tokyo, 1972), pp. 37-41.

Aoki, Ikki, pp. 68-69; and Smith, Origins, pp. 9-10.

Ibid., Chapter III.

Ibid., p. 69.


Aoki, Ikki, p. 70.

Ibid., and Smith, Origins, pp. 43, 59.

Eric Wolf, Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (New York, 1969), p. 277; and Aoki, Ikki, p. 74. Even though a Bakufu law of 1643 forbade the selling of wet and dry land, the practice continued anyway. In Aizu, for instance, 19.3 per cent of the population was propertyless as of 1684. See Aoki's Table 16 in Ikki, p. 77.

Smith, Origins, p. 60.

Aoki, Ikki, p. 81.

Ibid., pp. 79-80.
42 Aoki, *Ikki*, pp. 73-74.

43 For example, see the cases presented in ibid., pp. 81, 83, 95, 96.

44 Ibid., pp. 82-83; and Smith, *Origins*, pp. 74, 149.


46 Ibid., pp. 90-91.


49 For more information on the sukego, see William Jones Chambliss, *Chiaraijima Village: Land Tenure, Taxation, and Local Trade, 1818-1884* (Tocson, 1965), esp. p. 145.


51 Ibid., p. 168.


54 Ibid., p. 94.


59 Ibid., p. 150.


Chichibu kimpen uchikowashi ikki, quoted in Shoji, Yonaoshi, pp. 139-40.

Ibid., pp. 141-42.

Ibid.; also see Herbert Norman, Soldier and Peasant: the Origins of Conscription (Vancouver, 1965; originally published in 1943), esp. p. 30, for additional information on the noheitai.

Shoji, Yonaoshi, pp. 141, 143.

Ibid., pp. 118-22; methods for filling the office of headman differed according to region, although the three most common means were election, rotation, and inheritance, election being the least common. Smith, Origins, p. 58, tells us that election was confined to villages "where traditional status patterns had broken down under the impact of commercial farming. . . ." Shoji, Yonaoshi, p. 122, tells us that beginning in the eighteenth century, practices of "bidding" (nyusatsu) and "nomination" (suisen) were also used in the Fukushima region as means to fill the post.

For example, Shoji, Yonaoshi, p. 121.

Tamura Eitaro, Kindai nihon nomin undo shiron, quoted in ibid., p. 348.

Aoki Koji, Meiji nomin sojo no nenjiteki kenkyu (Tokyo, 1967), pp. 21, 25; and Shoji, Yonaoshi, p. 10; also Aoki, Ikki, p. 143. For evidence relating to Gumma prefecture, with comparisons with other sericulture regions, see Nagatani Yasuo, "Gumma jiken no shakaiteki kiban nikansuru kenkyu noto," Shien XXXII (February 1972):81-90.

See Scheiner, "The Mindless Peasant."

Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 76-81. For information concerning the emphasis placed on "leveling" by the Akita Risshsha, see Masumi Junnosuke, Nihon Seito shi ron I (Tokyo, 1965):274.


Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, p. 36. I say "at least eight-five disturbances" because it is likely that as with Tokugawa ikki more Meiji conflicts are probably being discovered by scholars other than Aoki. Also, in his 1971 Ikki (see Table 1, page 107), Aoki shows a considerably higher number of disturbances occurring for early Meiji than he does in his Meiji nomin sojo. It is also necessary to note that only one other yonaoshi ikki was recorded for the entire Meiji period, that one in 1870.
74 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, p. 35.
76 Ibid., p. 717.
77 E. H. Norman, Japan's Emergence as a Modern State (New York, 1940), p. 73.
78 For example, in Aizu. Shoji, Yonaoshi, pp. 141-43; also, Kokusho, "Meiji shonen," p. 717.
79 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, p. 61.
80 Shimoyama Saburo, "Meiji junendai no tochi shoyu kankei o megutte," Rekishigaku kenkyu, pp. 176, 3.
81 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, pp. 36, 64; anti-creditor disturbances, if there were any, were not shown in the table for 1868-77 disturbances.
83 Ibid., p. 63.
84 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, p. 67.
85 Quoted in Scalapino, Democracy, p. 52.
87 An indication of the peasant's joy of victory over the government is recorded in a poem appearing in Inaoka, Nihon nomin, p. 61: "Farmers of various regions / celebrated their own victory, / When we thrust our spears / we get 2½%." On the government's pledge to lower the land tax: Paragraph Six of the original land reform law said that when taxation on commodities reached 2 per cent, then the land tax would be reduced to 1 per cent of the land's assessed value. According to Shimoyama Saburo, that point had been reached by 1883. See his "Meiji jushi-chinen ni okeru Jiyuto no doko to nomin sojo no keikyo," eds. Horie Hideichi and Toyama Shigeki, Jiyu minkenki no kenkyu, vol. 3, Minken undo no gekka to kaitai, Part II (Tokyo, 1959):12. Corroborative evidence is
an article in the *Jiji Shimpo*, rpt. in trans., *Japan Weekly Mail*, 29 March 1884: "Ten years ago it was announced that the land tax, although fixed at 2½ per cent, should gradually be reduced to one per cent." Also, in Paul Mayet, *Agricultural Insurance in Organic Connection with Savings Bonds, Land Credit, and the Commutation of Debts*, trans. Rev. Arthur Lloyd (London, 1893), p. 59: "... from the year 1873 the government has been under a promise to lower it [the land tax] to one per cent of the estimated value of agricultural land."

88 Ike, *Beginnings*, p. 139.
89 Quoted in Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 7-8.
90 Ibid., p. 8.
91 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
92 Smith, *Political Change*, p. 81. The quotation concludes, "assuming that his crop was the same in both years and calculating its money value at Tokyo prices."

94 Ibid., p. 296.
95 Quoted in ibid.
96 From the *Mainichi Shim bun*, reported in the *Japan Weekly Mail*, 25 October 1884.
97 *Japan Weekly Mail*, 20 December 1884. The same article says that those desiring to emigrate to Hawaii will be guaranteed free passage and employment once they reach the islands. The *Jiji Shimpo*, according to the *Japan Weekly Mail*, advised ex-samurai to go to America rather than Hawaii so that their talents would not be wasted on "insignificant sugar cane fields."
100 Ibid.
A Jiji Shimpo report printed in the Japan Weekly Mail, 23 August 1884.

Japan Weekly Mail, 8 November 1884.

Ibid., 25 October 1884.

Smith, Political Change, p. 83, n.33.

Aoki Keiichiro, Nomin undo II:298.

Ibid.


Namatame Yasushi, Kabasan jiken no ikkosatsu (Takahagi, 1962), p. 18. Also see Ike, Beginnings, pp. 145-46; and Aoki, Nomin undo II:300.

For figures on the number of people qualified to vote, see Aoki Keiichiro, Nomin undo II:299.

Japan Weekly Mail, 11 October 1884.

Aoki Keiichiro, Nomin undo II:302.

Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 126.


Smith, Political Change, p. 85.

Mayet, Agricultural Insurance, p. 65.

The following statistics are taken from Oishi Kaichiro, "Fukushima jiken no shakai keizaiteki kiban," eds. Horie Hideichi and Toyama Shigeki, Jiyyu minkenki no kenkyu II, Minken undo no gekka to kaitai I (Tokyo, 1959):1-119. Oishi also uses percentage of cash crop production as an index of economic development.

The percentage of household income derived from cash crops was 34 per cent for Yama, 14 per cent for Kita-Aizu, 18 per cent for Onuma, 39 per cent for Minami-Aizu, and 8 per cent for Higashi-Kabahara. Though Minami-Aizu ranks higher than Yama in this regard, it should be noted that the average household income for a Minami-Aizu family is less than half that of a Yama district family.


For commentary and figures regarding the decline of the

122 Oishi, "Shakai keizai," pp. 36-37. Yet it should also be pointed out that the farmers cultivated one more cho of land in 1880 than they did in 1877.

123 Ibid., p. 50.


125 Chambliss, *Chiaraijima*, p. 18.


127 Ibid.; the government's "... intention was to transplant the machine industry of the advanced countries into Japan with the factory as the unit, completely regardless of the actual conditions of existing industries." Niwa Kunio, "The Reform of the Land Tax and the Government Programme for the Encouragement of Industry," *Developing Economies* IV, No. 4 (December 1966):466.


129 Computed from the figures supplied by Inoue Koji, "Chichibu jiken: sono shakaiteki kiban," ed. Meiji shiryo kenkyu renrakukaiben, *Jiyu minken undo III* (Tokyo, 1956):79. Also see Chambliss, *Chiaraijima*, pp. 16-22, for an impressive account of the importance of the silk industry to the farmers of Hanzawa district, which neighbours Chichibu.

130 *Nihon seiji saiban shi* II:71.

131 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 4.

132 *Nihon seiji saiban shi* II:71.

133 An index of the declining purchasing power of the consumer is that in 1884 he could buy less rice with one yen than he could in 1877.

134 *Nihon seiji saiban shi* II:71.

135 Ibid., pp. 71-72 and Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 16-17.

137 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, pp. 83-84.
138 Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 23.
140 Namatame, Kabasan, pp. 20, 27.
141 Ibid., p. 38.
142 Ibid., pp. 27, 50, 58.
143 Ibid., p. 25.
144 Ibid., p. 23.
145 Ibid., p. 50.
146 Ibid., p. 21.
147 Scalapino, Democracy, p. 62.
148 Ibid., p. 56.
150 Scalapino, Democracy, pp. 40-60; Ike, Beginnings, pp. 60-71; Norman, Emergence, pp. 174-80.
151 Some of which can be found in McLaren (ed.), Documents.
152 Ike, Beginnings, p. 67.
153 Ibid., p. 61.
154 Quoted in ibid. An equally liberal statement of party principles was made by the Aikokukoto on 12 January 1874; see Scalapino, Democracy, pp. 45-46.
156 E. H. Norman, Feudal Background of Japanese Politics, Ninth Conference on the Institute of Pacific Relations, Hot Springs, Virginia, January 1945 (Secretariat Paper No. 9), International Secretariat,
Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, p. 65.

157 Scalapino, *Democracy*, p. 69; also see pp. 70-72.

158 Ibid., p. 59.


160 Scalapino, *Democracy*, p. 56.

161 Ibid., p. 51.

162 Ibid., p. 58.

163 Ibid., p. 61.

164 Ibid.

165 Ibid., p. 62.

166 Ike, *Beginnings*, p. 68.

167 Ibid., pp. 65, 68.


171 Ibid., p. 203; Scalapino, *Democracy*, p. 62, using a different source dated 1927, cites the figure of 87,000 people and only twenty-four prefectures.

172 Shimoyama, "Chiikiteki," p. 204.

173 Ibid.

174 Goto, *Kakumei*, p. 95; Kochi's membership, however, was far greater than Tokyo's.


177 My figures are taken from the several tables appearing in

178 Ibid.

179 Ibid.

180 Ibid., p. 31.

181 Ibid., p. 32. No reliable figures are available either for Fukushima as a whole or for its districts. Shimoyama, "Chiikiteki," explains that for some provinces, complicated membership rules meant that the membership of many district parties was either not recorded at all, or not recorded properly. See especially pages 209-11. We can say, however, based on the data that we use in Chapter III and the information regarding party activity in Chapter IV, the Jiyuto in Fukushima *appears* to have been as active and as large as that in any other region in the country.
CHAPTER III

THE PARTICIPANTS

If History is not merely a series of non sequitur's, if it is characterized by continuity, then there must be a number of attributes ascribed in the last chapter to the participants of the Tokugawa uprisings, and to the economic, social, and political conditions in which the uprisings occurred, that can provide us with some idea of who the participants in the three Meiji gekka jiken were likely to be. Now to summarize briefly and in general terms what they were.

First, it was shown that throughout Tokugawa and roughly until the end of the first decade of Meiji (to 1877), those who involved themselves in Kanto and Fukushima disturbances were landowners, and in general middle-income farmers. Though often led by farmers coming from a high-income stratum, and followed by the poorer peasants, the initiators, organizers, and most of the participants in the disturbance came from the middle-income, self-cultivating strata of the rural peasantry. Secondly, economically speaking, they usually possessed about one cho (2.5 acres) or less of land, and usually produced some portion of their crop for the market. In many cases their crop was strictly oriented to the market, for example, mulberry, cocoons, silk, lacquer, tobacco and so on. Indeed, in much of Chichibu and Aizu, the mountainous terrain was unsuited for rice or cereal cultivation and required such an orientation. Because of such a concentration on marketable items, a good number of farmers from these areas expanded their economic role beyond mere farming into
merchandizing as well, and their ties to the market came to be firm; therefore the farmers were deeply affected by fluctuations in the prices of commodities.

Thirdly, social position during Tokugawa was usually a consequence of economic status in the village. The meiboka ("men of high repute") of the village were usually among the local wealthy who in turn were members of some of the older families of the village. During the earlier part of the period, wealth and seniority translated into political authority as the members of such families assumed control over village offices. They served as headmen, elders and peasant representatives, positions which then came to be regarded as hereditary offices. During much of Tokugawa, such positions carried with them the responsibility of representing the village in making appeals for tax relief to the domain authorities, and, failing there, leading the villagers in "house-wreckings" against creditors, merchants and government officials. But as the period approached its end, the responsibility was oftentimes "relinquished" to leaders of the middle-income peasantry who, unlike the old established officialdom, were not so tied to the old order nor as financially immune to natural or man-made, market-produced calamities.

This last fact relates to the final point made in the last chapter. Politically, the role of the peasantry was defined in terms of their interaction with the authorities. They were not, as mere residents of the country, ipso facto, political beings. Usually represented by one of their own, their political role may be termed as that of "supplicants" entreat ing the authorities to act on their behalf, either as mediators,
in the case where merchants, creditors, or wealthy farmers were the second party, or as (hopefully) benevolent arbitrators in the case where government itself was the second party. When peaceful petitioning failed to produce results, they turned to the only other means to influence the authorities available to them—rebellion. But even then, the success of the rebellion depended on the authorities ruling in their favour. Hence, politics for them was more of an appeal or request process, whether peaceful or violent, expressing the desire to have some need satisfied, than it was a demand-making function based upon the state's recognition of individuals or collectivities possessing certain rights. It is this distinction, perhaps more than any other, that illuminates the essentially feudal *cum* Confucian nature of Tokugawa and early Meiji political culture. While feudal in form, like the European version, having certain established relationships involving rights and obligations between rulers and ruled, it was nonetheless Confucian in *substance* and therefore highly restrictive of the manner by which the ruled could make the rulers observe what was regarded as their traditional feudal obligations.

What this suggests is that with the new Meiji political settlement, as the earlier begun process of the market society replacing the feudal society was accelerated, and therefore market relations between individuals and collectivities increasingly took the place of feudal relations, there necessarily occurred some kind of change in the way individuals and collectivities made grievances. With the feudal structure collapsing and the capitalist one rising, the Confucian form of expressing grievances by supplication gave way to the market form of bargaining
through demand and counter-demand.²

These issues are raised here in anticipation of Chapter IV, "Ideology and Organisation," because this present chapter intends to look at the socio-economic and biographical characteristics of participants of the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu rebellions with one eye on their ideological and organisational traits. For ultimately the individual qua individual was less important in expressing grievances than was the individual qua member of a collectivity. After all, organisation for supplication by farmers, up to 1877, generally made use of the communal ties of the village. Villages voiced grievances and appealed for aid as villages, oftentimes even coercing the participation of fellow residents by resorting to violence or by threats of ostracism. Without, it was presumed, the moral (and sometimes, physical) force of the entire village population behind an appeal, there was little hope of its being met.

As we saw in the last chapter, the intrusion of the market economy caused the strong communal ties of the village to disintegrate. Cash ties interfered with group solidarity and social harmony—Confucian notions in themselves—and forced village members to redefine their own social, political, and economic roles vis-à-vis the village as a unit. This situation required them to search for an ideological substitute for the now irrelevant, Confucian cum feudal form of expressing grievances. They had to search for a new ideology which could impart both morality and efficacy into their political demands. What they finally settled upon, we know from the last chapter, was the popular rights movement. We
know this to be the case because we have seen the increasing extent to which the commoners were populating the ranks of that movement. This fact in itself represents a profound change. During Tokugawa, when financial disaster struck, the peasants could only invoke some vague notion of natural justice—something which could only be granted by Heaven or Nature and not by the political system in which they lived but of which they were not a part—and could expect nothing but taxes from the real dispensers of "justice," the rulers of the political system. The peasants received nothing in return, save for the law which existed more for the protection of the rulers than for the ruled. But in the Meiji period, commoners became part of the political system—education, conscription and some leveling of the class system made them into citizens; they were no longer mere subjects. No longer were they aware only of their duties; they now had some conception of their rights. This growing awareness moved many thousands to join the popular rights movement. So impressed by this development, one commentator contemporary to the period coined a term to characterize its ideological and social underpinnings—heiminshugi of "commonerism."³

It is not unusual that such a development should have made an appearance in modern Japanese history. In his study, Modernization: Protest and Change, S. N. Eisenstadt has shown that this development, what he calls the "consensual mass tendency," has characterized the politics of a great number of countries undergoing political development.⁴ C. B. Macpherson and Barrington Moore, in tying economics to politics, have quite reasonably shown that in developing politics the abandonment
of a feudal economic system for a capitalist one usually results in the transfer of the economic principles of the market—freedom of ownership of property, free access of the market, free contracts, social and political mobility stemming from economic mobility, etc.—to the political realm. The logical outcome of such a transfer, as I hope to show in the next chapter, is the development among the members of the polity of a belief that recognizes the right of each to participate freely and equally in the political arena—or stated differently, the philosophical expression of the market society is "natural right," the right of each, by virtue of being an economic being, to acquire and to lose property freely; to be free to advance, or to lose (in the case where his chosen representative loses an election), via the franchise, political power. Universal franchise is the logical political concomitant to the economics of the market society.

Whatever the reason for the increased participation of the lower classes (heimin) in the minken movement, it is clear that during the late seventies and early eighties they were joining parties and "societies" in increasing numbers. In his seminal work, The Beginnings of Political Democracy in Japan, Ike recognized this fact, but added, "Without the extensive use of archival material and local histories, one cannot make a statistical analysis of the membership of these societies." Nor, I would add, of the "political parties." Using just the sort of material Ike suggested, this chapter will attempt to make such an analysis. First, however, a few words of caution are required.

The reader must remember that the purpose of this chapter is to
identify the participants who were involved in the three incidents according to a number of commonly used criteria. But even when this identification process is completed, the task still remains unfinished. The next chapter will finish the process by examining the participants in terms of political society and/or party membership. This chapter can, however, stand by itself insofar as we can appreciate that simple participation in the various incidents is perhaps a better means to trace the collective action of heimin than is membership in an established political party or society. Though in many individual instances the latter was necessarily anterior to the former, it was far from being the rule. A broader strata of people could be mobilized for, say, attacking a wealthy rice merchant, than they could for membership in a society or party. Indeed, oftentimes such membership was exclusive, restricted to those with education, wealth, and social and political standing, while participation in a rebellion lacked such restrictions. Consequently, by looking at these three incidents of collective action, we gain exposure to a larger number of people; we lose, however, due to that very fact, a certain degree of precision, i.e., the kind of detailed information that accompanies a study working with a limited sample. Still, as with any study dealing with large numbers of people coalesced into a movement of some size, the best historical records tend to be those that tell of a movement's leadership; this study is no exception. Indeed, to make the study manageable, there is little other choice. It is hoped, however, that by including a number of those arrested in the various incidents who were classified as "blind followers" (fuwa zuiko) by the authorities, as well
as by utilizing some aggregate figures concerning those involved, a better understanding of the social breadth of the movement can be appreciated.

Membership in a political society and/or party was mentioned as one of the characteristics that will be used to identify the incidents' participants. The others used in the analysis are residence, age, occupation, status (i.e., official status—*shizoku* or *heimin*), land ownership/financial status, arrest record, and literacy. Also, where applicable, a distinction is made between party and/or society leader and followers. In addition, information concerning the nature of an individual's connection with other participants; the prison sentence he received; and certain post-incident biographical data that seem relevant are used to identify the participants further. Most of the basic biographical information comes from police interrogations, or from court records; much of the rest comes from secondary sources: contemporary accounts, recent studies, biographies and the like. All these details appear in Appendices II, III, and IV.

Although an effort has been made to provide the same information for all of the participants in each of the incidents, in some cases it was either not attainable, or it was simply not relevant. In the former instance, for example, in the cases of literacy and prior arrests, frequently these questions were simply not asked by the prosecutor during his interrogation of the suspects. In the latter instance, there is the example of Chichibu, where local political societies were virtually non-existent and hence this category of identification is irrelevant.
The biographical information of the participants is employed in order to determine relationships and patterns among the biographical variables. By showing exactly who did involve themselves in the incidents, how factors such as residence, age, economic status, and so on related to participation, then the way is cleared for a deeper understanding of the nature of their organisation, ideology, targets, goals, and the reaction by the authorities to the rebels. For at the lowest level of analysis it is clear that who was involved significantly determines the what, why and wherefore of their collective activities. It will also aid in finding out how deeply into society notions of freedom and peoples' rights penetrated, and how, once penetrated, such actions were translated into effective action. In short, identification of the participants prepares the way for finding the point at which ideas and practice meet.

THE SAMPLES

In Chapter I, where the story of each of the incidents was told, mention was made of the large number of participants in both the Fukushima ("several thousand") and Chichibu ("ten thousand") incidents. (The Kabasan Incident, as was shown, is a special case.) For obvious reasons it would be impossible to treat the biography of each of the participants individually. The problem would be slightly eased if we were to work only with those arrested in each case, but even then not only are the figures unmanageable (Fukushima--from one thousand to several thousand, depending on the source; \(^8\) Chichibu--one source counts over 3,100 either arrested or having surrendered; another, almost 4,500 if those caught in
Gumma and Nagano prefectures are included but also sufficient biographical information is missing for the vast majority of the participants. (Most were merely fined and therefore not as thoroughly interrogated as suspected "ringleaders.") Even if the study were to focus only on those arrested who came from the two most active districts in each of the incidents, Yama and Chichibu, the figures are still unwieldy, amounting to 518 and 234 respectively.

Since it is clearly necessary to arrive at some figures that are manageable, that have substance, and that in some way are representative of larger numbers of participants, the samples were derived in the following way. In the case of the Fukushima Incident, the fifty-eight individuals charged with treason (Kokujihan, literally, "a crime [against] national affairs") and sent to the High Crimes Court (Kotoko-in) in Tokyo make up the sample. (See Appendix II: Fukushima Activists.) The weaknesses of this sample are several: (1) a disproportionately high number of them, thirteen in all, are from outside Fukushima—six from Gumma, four from Kochi, and one each from Miyagi, Yamagata, and Ehime. This definitely does not accurately reflect the real percentage of non-Fukushima people who participated in the incident; (2) only eight of the forty-five Fukushima participants came from the Aizu region; this figure does not represent accurately the high percentage of activists coming from Aizu; (3) of the fifty-eight indicted for treason, only six were convicted; the other fifty-two were released for lack of sufficient evidence in March and April, 1883. This fact causes us to query: If so many were found innocent, and therefore falsely charged, then surely the charges
were trumped up, making us wonder whether these fifty-two "activists" were as active in the incident as the treason charge led us to believe. The facts seem to indicate that the charges were, if not fabricated, then at least inaccurate. This is suggested by the number of times, four in all, between 13 January and 4 February 1883, that the government made alterations, i.e., additions and deletions, to the list of those to be tried for treason. In any case, those who made the "final list," for whatever reason, were ultimately prosecuted as the real "ringleaders" (shukai) of the disturbance, and, not incidentally, thirty of whom, as it turns out, had a direct relationship with the great popular rights leader of the region, Kono Hironaka, who was in fact convicted of treason. Whether or not it can be termed a "political trial"—Takahashi among others claims that it was—it is clear that most of those tried were political activists, the government's accusations notwithstanding, and this fact makes the sample relevant to this study. Moreover, it should be mentioned that throughout the ensuing discussion, information regarding a number of other major figures who were not tried as "traitors" in Tokyo, but who were prosecuted locally at Wakamatsu and elsewhere, will also be provided in order to supplement our sample. Finally, in an effort to learn about the "followers," we will make use of government reports on the villages and villagers involved in the anti-road construction movement.

Similar kinds of limitations also help to determine who is included in the Chichibu sample—sufficient biographical information, and the nature of the crime by, and therefore the thoroughness of the interrogation of, the individuals. In this case, however, the sample is not
restricted to those officially considered activists, i.e., those publicly tried, but includes most of those whom the Komminto itself regarded as activists. The sample consists of those forty-seven men (concerning whom more-or-less complete data exists for thirty-eight) whose activism earned them an "officially appointed" Komminto army post just prior to the outbreak of the incident.\textsuperscript{13} (See Appendix III: Chichibu Activists.) Although these individuals form the core of this section of the study, in order to provide a wider perspective of the participants' identity, supplementary data will also be utilized. General, aggregate data will be used for: (1) the 115 people who "instigated the masses into joining prior to the outbreak of violence"; and (2) the 103 people classified as "members of the Komminto" who destroyed the homes of "wealthy farmers and merchants and instigated violence in their villages."\textsuperscript{14} Among the other supplementary data to be used is Inoue Koji's analysis of 261 people prosecuted in Gumma prefecture, which he took from the fourteen-volume, \textit{Criminal Records of Chichibu Rioters (Chichibu Boto Hanzai ni Kansuru Shoruihen)}. His findings may also serve as a check against, and as a standard by which we can judge the representativeness of the strictly Saitama data marshalled here. Finally, it should also be pointed out that in the next chapter interrogation records of several participants, categorized by the government as "blind followers," will be used in order to gain an appreciation of the type of "followers" who involved themselves in the rebellion.

The limitations of the Chichibu and Fukushima data are absent from or, rather, different from those connected with the Kabasan incident,
largely due to its being a very different type of disturbance. In addition to the twenty principal conspirators, the Kabasan sample will also include information on thirteen others who were, for a variety of reasons, implicated in the abortive rebellion, thus bringing the total sample to thirty-three. (See Appendix IV: Kabasan Activists.)

Finally, before examining the data, it is necessary to caution the reader once more about the problem of how representative of the larger population are the individuals included in the three samples. For the most part, the individuals who comprise the samples were local elites—socially, economically, and politically. Most came from one of the older and wealthier families of their village, and many of them held positions of leadership in the local political society or party. These facts obviously set them apart from the larger local population. Yet, at the same time, as far as their position in the incidents or in the popular rights movement is concerned, these local elites were serving as representatives as well as leaders of the local population. The social, economic and political status advantages they held over the local population may have been responsible for their having been able to assume leadership of the incidents and of the movement, but only inasmuch as their views and actions genuinely reflected the aspirations of those whom they led. Elites, yes, but at the local level, and, as the next chapter will show, they were the elite of a movement whose goals transcended the traditional status considerations of parochial politics, but more important, the goals were shared by local elites and their followers.
The principal question being asked here is to what extent geographical origins of the participants clustered around some areas (and not others)? Did certain areas tend to turn out more activists than others? In what way, and how much, did residence affect participation? Once these questions are answered and once these findings are correlated with other characteristics of the participants, then it is hoped that in the following chapter these variables will provide insight into questions concerned with the participants' organization.

If we abstract the information on residence which appears in Appendix II, we see that of the fifty-five names of Fukushima Incident activists for whom we have residence information, forty-two are from Fukushima. If broken down according to district (gun), Tamura accounts for over half, totalling twenty-four in all, followed by Yama (seven), Ishikawa (four), Atachi (three), with one apiece for Soma, Kawanuma, Shinobu, and Futaba districts; in all, only eight of Fukushima prefecture's twenty-one districts are represented. If this breakdown is compared with the list of people originally accused of treason, dated 31 January 1883, we see a somewhat different distribution, albeit that once again Tamura district continues to rank highest. On that date not only were fifteen of the districts of Fukushima represented, but also the difference between Tamura and Yama—the latter commonly regarded by the authorities as the hub of the anti-road construction activity—is reduced to only three. If those from Kawanuma, Yama's neighbour and ally in the anti-road fight
Table 4. A Comparison of Residence of Fukushima Activists Originally Listed for Crime of Treason with those Actually Tried

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINAL LIST (13 January 1883)</th>
<th>TRIED (March and April 1883)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREFECTURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kochi</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumma</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamagata</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ehime</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tochigi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fukushima</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamura</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yama</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawanuma</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minami-Aizu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futaiba</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kita-Aizu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adachi</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asaka</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwase</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishikawa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirakawa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinobu</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwaki</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onuma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

are added to the Yama figure, then we have a better idea of that area's participation in the incident relative to the other areas.

The discrepancy between this original list of traitors and that of those who were finally sent to the Tokyo trials is probably accounted for in an observation made by Takahashi. Speaking of the unusually large percentage of Tamura district "traitors," he writes, "This fact clearly indicates that the Aizu disturbance [Kitakata Incident] was merely a pretext for the [subsequent] large-scale arrests; that the real aim [of the government] was the extermination of the Jiyuto within the prefecture, which was then under the influence of Kono [Hironaka]." And, it is necessary to add, the strength of the eastern Fukushima Jiyuto, and many of the political societies supporting it, was concentrated mainly in Tamura district, Miharu Town, where, importantly, Kono was its most distinguished popular rights advocate. All other things being equal, this fact, more than any other, appears to account for the high number of Tamura district residents appearing in our sample.

But regardless of the reason for the arrest of so many (relatively) Tamura residents, there exists other data that shows the vast majority of the participants in the Kitakata/Fukushima incident did in fact reside in the western region of Fukushima, that is, in the six districts that comprised the Aizu region. Of those having leadership positions in the Aizu Rengokai (see Chapter I), only two, Uda Seiichi and Miura Bunji, were sent to the Tokyo trials (and appear therefore in our sample). Most of the others--Hara Heizo, Kojima Chuya, and Monna Shigejiro, for example--described by the authorities as "ringleaders and instigators," were tried
in the local courts of Fukushima and Wakamatsu towns. These activists came from the Aizu districts of Yama, Kawanuma, and Onuma.

As with the leadership, most of the followers in the incident resided in the western part of the prefecture. Shimoyama Saburo cites Yama, Kawanuma, and Onuma as the three most active districts. In fact, if we examine the figures provided by the authorities at that time, it appears that a plurality if not a majority of the followers were residents of Yama district. Using as the total number involved in the Kitakata Incident that imprecise figure "several thousand" as a basis of comparison, we see in "A Report On Those Who Support the Litigation [against the government] and who Protest against the Road Building" that twenty-seven Yama district villages involving 2,120 people were regarded as the most active areas. After the wholesale arrests in December, it is known that at least 500 villagers were fined, among whom 214 were charged as having been "blind followers who massed for rebellion" (Kyoto shushu fuwa zuiko). All but three of the 214 were residents of Yama district.

Again referring back to Appendix II, if we look at the even lower level of administration, the village/town/city level, the most striking fact, not surprisingly, is the large number of participants, twenty in all, who resided in the town of Miharu, the principal urban area of Tamura district, and in its surrounding villages. The other interesting finding to be extracted from the sample, again not particularly surprising, is the absence of any significant clustering in Yama district. Of the seven residents listed, only Atsushio-kano village, located about ten kilometres due north of Kitakata, had more than one person, in fact
only two people, sent to the Tokyo trials.

Once again, however, by looking at other data, certain patterns emerge. In the list of Yama district "ringleaders" (kyokai) provided by district head Sato Jiro to Governor Mishima on 29 November 1882 (the day following the Kitakata Incident), we see that in addition to Akagi Heiroku who was later sent to Tokyo for prosecution, Wajima Akigo and Ueda Kiyomaru both came from Shinai village. In the case of Atsushio and Kano villages (later consolidated), Uryu Naoshi, prosecuted in Tokyo, was joined by Yama "ringleader" Endo Yuhachi. We also see that the very villages from which these people came were among the most active in terms of the number of residents mobilized. Atsushio-kano accounted for 221 participants, Shinai for ninety-five; respectively, these two villages ranked first and fourth in Yama district.

To summarize, then, what has been said about residence and participation in the Fukushima incident: first, based upon our sample, it is clear that urban-based activists, namely, those from Miharu of Tamura district, were regarded by the authorities as having been most responsible for instigating the disturbances of November 1882. Secondly, relying on other evidence, it appears that those leaders from the Aizu region, and especially from Yama district, were equally as active as those from Miharu, but that, for whatever reason--probably principally a political one--they were omitted from the government's "list of traitors." Thirdly, perhaps a majority of "followers" involved in the incident were concentrated in the Aizu region, principally Yama district and secondarily Kawanuma and Onuma districts. Finally, at the lowest level of administration,
the village/town/city, there appears to exist a close relationship between the village from which a "ringleader" came, and the number of participants coming from the same village. This final point, however, must be considered as a tentative one for the present, as its ideological and organisational implications will be explored further in the next chapter.

Before we move on to look at the relationship of residence to participation in the Kabasan Incident, a few words about the thirteen individuals in the sample who came from outside Fukushima are needed.

We know from Chapter I that Sato and Sugiyama, from Miyagi and Ehime prefectures respectively, were sent by Kono Hironaka to investigate the situation in Aizu prior to the Kitakata Incident. Since we have no other information on these two, we must conclude that sometime earlier they must have abandoned their native prefectures to live, and probably to study, at one of the popular rights academies in eastern Fukushima. Matsumoto, from neighbouring Yamagata prefecture, appears to have been a primary school teacher who relocated in order to teach in Miharu; it is known that he was a Jiyuto member, so very likely he moved in order to involve himself in the most active of the popular rights centres of the Tohoku region. In the case of the four men from Kochi prefecture, since we know that all four hailed from the fountainhead of early popular rights activity--Tosa--we can therefore imagine that they were popular rights activists. All we know for certain, however, is that one was a Jiyuto member who was in Fukushima visiting its Jiyuto headquarters. The other three quite possibly could have been teachers of popular rights thought at one of the local academies (see Chapter IV), for it is known that
several Tosa popular rights advocates were in their employ as teachers. About the six who came from Gumma we can be more definite. They were all members of the most prominent of the political societies of Gumma, the Yushinsha, and went to Fukushima, in the words of the leader of the expedition, Nagasaka Hachiro, "because it was clear that [Governor] Mishima's road construction plan was unjust; therefore, we went in order to instigate the people to take court action." It is necessary to point out, however, that they did not even arrive in Fukushima until 9 December, well after the Kitakata Incident and the start of the wide-scale arrest campaign against the local Jiyuto members.26

An understanding of how residence related to participation in the Kabasan incident is even more crucial—and certainly more obvious—than it was in the case of Fukushima. The most significant and consequential fact about residence is that of the twenty principal activists who plotted and participated in the incident, twelve of them were natives of Fukushima prefecture.27 (See Appendix IV.) Two of the twelve, in fact, Kono Kiroshi and Miura Bunji, appeared in the previous sample, having been accused of "treason" for their part in the Fukushima Incident. Several of the other Fukushima people as well were involved in that incident, but were tried at lower courts and subsequently released: Monna Shigejiro, Yokoyama Nobuyuki, and Isokawa Motoyoshi. Several of the others were also involved, such as Hara Rihachi and Kotoda Iwamatsu, but either escaped arrest or were simply disregarded by the Fukushima police after the incident. In any case, as Takahashi has said, "Most of them were active in the Fukushima Incident."28
Of the other eight principal conspirators in the Kabasan Incident, Ibaraki and Tochigi prefectures each accounted for three and Aichi and Ishikawa one each. All three of the Ibaraki participants were from Shimodate Town, Makabe district, while two of the three from Tochigi (information is absent for Hirao Yasokichi) came from Shimotsuga district, but from different villages. Ten of the twelve conspirators from Fukushima were either residents of Tamura (five) or Yama (five), and all of those from Tamura were Miharu Town residents; village residence was different for each of those from Yama district.

Twelve of the other thirteen people appearing in the sample were activists who were later arrested for complicity in the incident. The remaining figure, Fukao, on whom no biographical information exists, disappeared prior to the incident, thereby lending support to the contention of Yokoyama and others that he was a police spy. (Actually large numbers of reputed minken advocates, of Fukushima especially, were later arrested for suspicion of involvement; more about this will be mentioned in Chapter V.) Six of the twelve accomplices were Tochigi residents; two were from Fukushima; and one each from Ibaraki, Tokyo, Iwate, and Aichi prefectures.

In order to comment here on the importance of residence as it relates to participation in the Kabasan Incident, it is necessary to anticipate some of the findings that will appear in the next chapter on organisation and ideology. Briefly stated, other than in the case of the twelve principal conspirators from Fukushima, and even here to a large extent, participation in the incident appears to have been due more to a
common desire to overthrow the government than to the fact of common place of residence. To be sure, common geographical origins were important to the growth of the conspiracy, mainly because it made for easier communication among the rebels. Yet even with that, as we saw in Chapter I, many of the rebels first became acquainted with one another not in their home districts, but in Tokyo at one of several Jiyuto meetings or organisational functions. Common residence might have been a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient, condition that favoured participation; more important, it would seem, were the facts of shared experience in a prior incident (i.e., the Fukushima), membership in the same political societies (in Tochigi, Ibaraki, and in Fukushima), and the belief shared by all conspirators that the government should be toppled. Hence, while it was not unimportant, ultimately it was the superimposition of other characteristics of the rebels upon the factor of residence that gave it whatever importance it has.

The situation is entirely different in the case of the Chichibu Incident, as a glance at Appendix III will show. Of the forty-seven names appearing on this list—representing the leadership of the Komminto army—forty are Saitama residents and thirty-seven of these are from Chichibu. With such a preponderance of Chichibu residents, district residency becomes virtually insignificant in helping to locate particularly active political areas, making it necessary therefore to use the village/town administrative unit as a basis of reference. (See Table 5.) Upon doing this, we see that of the twenty-one villages and one town (Omiya) shown on the list, only nine had more than one Komminto army
Table 5. Comparison of Residence of Komminto Army Leaders by Town and Village with Residence of those Charged with "Massing to Riot"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town/Village</th>
<th>Army Leaders (no.)</th>
<th>&quot;Massing to Riot&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-yoshida</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami-yoshida</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-hinozawa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami-hinozawa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akuma</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isama</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuppu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omiya</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiroku</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ota</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoko-se</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iida</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-ogano</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikoda</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honnogami</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onohara</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakino</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nishinoju</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makinichi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minano</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komori</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nogamishimogo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakamoto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanezawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawaharazawa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terao</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyaen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoshigekubo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data for "Army leaders" is abstracted from Appendix III; for "Riot," CJSR I:378-83.
leader representing them; in fact, if we combine the "Upper" and "Lower" Yoshida villages, and do the same for the "Upper" and "Lower" Hinozawa villages, then the figure is reduced to seven. Thus amalgamated, these "two" villages had the highest representation, with seven and six respectively. They are followed by Isama and Fuppu, each having four; by Akuma with three; and by Omiya and Shiroku with two each. It is perhaps also significant that those villages with the greater representation were also those whose leaders held some of the higher ranks within the Kom­minto army.

If arrests can be regarded as an indication of activism, then the very same villages also rank high for producing activists, as seen in a government document entitled, "A table of those defendants charged with massing to riot."31 (See Table 5.) It shows that of sixty-one Chichibu residents coming from a total of twenty-eight villages, Hinozawa (seven), Yoshida (seven), Isama (six), Fuppu (six), and Sanzawa (five) villages ranked highest. In yet another government document, entitled simply "Names of Rioters" (Boto kimmei), listing 224 people from Chichibu, again ranked highest was Hinozawa (thirty-one: "Upper" and "Lower"), followed by Yoshida (thirty: "Upper" and "Lower"), Fuppu (twenty-seven), and Isama (fifteen).32 These villages, it is important to note, were all located within ten kilometres of one another and were situated in the north-west corner of Chichibu district, near the Gumma prefectural border. It was this area where many of the Komminto members resided, and where during November much of the fighting occurred.33

That these villages predominated in the Chichibu Incident is
confirmed by the final count of the number of rioters involved, according to village, that was calculated by the courts at the end of the year. This table shows that in terms of the absolute number of participants, Yoshida ("Upper" and "Lower"), Hinozawa ("Upper" and "Lower"), Isama, Iida, Sanyama, and several others ranked highest. (The significance of the final column, showing the number of participants relative to village population, will be commented upon in the conclusion to this chapter and also in the next chapter.) In general, because these findings compare favourably to those of our sample, and to the other Chichibu data thus far presented, we can conclude that the above-mentioned villages were the principal centres of activism at the time of the incident, both in terms of the number of individuals mobilized from them, and the number of Komminto leaders representing them.

To summarize: in each of the three cases, certain areas produced more activists than others. Tamura district in eastern Fukushima and Yama district in western Fukushima in the case of the Fukushima Incident; Fukushima prefecture itself in the case of the Kabasan Incident; and the villages of Yoshida, Hinozawa, Isama, and Fuppu in the case of the Chichibu Incident—all these areas contributed an inordinate number of both leaders and followers, followers notwithstanding in the case of the Kabasan rebellion, to the common body of participants in each of the incidents. Moreover, in both the Fukushima and Chichibu incidents, not surprisingly, the local areas that boasted the more activist of the incident's leadership also vaunted a larger number of followers. In both cases, this fact probably reflects the endurance of a tradition of local
Table 6. Number of Participants in Chichibu Incident by Village, Relative to Village Population, for Villages Contributing more than Fifty "Direct" Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>No. Participants</th>
<th>Village Pop.</th>
<th>% Pop. Mobilized (rounded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-Yoshida</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami-Yoshida</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-Hinozawa</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami-Hinozawa</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuppu</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isama</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofuchi</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomaki</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hisanaka</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akuma</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hio</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fujikura</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iida</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyama</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawaharázawa</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susuki</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimo-Ogano</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanni</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaru</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CJSR I:340-43. Population figures are based on government figures cited in ibid.; no criteria are given to distinguish "direct" from "indirect" participants. Total number of participants is shown as 6,017; total number of "direct" participants is 2,644; "indirect" is 3,373.
co-operative spirit, relatively strong communal ties, and the organisational prowess of the incident's leaders. Yet at the same time, as we shall see in the next chapter, high rates of participation also reflect the increasing extent to which farmers were receptive to the ideology of the popular rights movement.

AGE

It has been frequently observed that the leaders of rebellion and revolution are comparatively young men. We know for instance, that in the case of the Meiji Restoration, of "revolution" as some would have it, most of the principal rebels were in their twenties or thirties. With minor qualification, the same observation applies to the leaders of the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu incidents.

Again abstracting from our Fukushima sample (see Table 7a) we can see that if the age breakdown were graphed, it would closely resemble a bell. Of the thirty-nine Fukushima residents on whom we have information, twenty-eight fall between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine. Seven persons were in their late teens, three in their forties, and only one was in his fifties. The overall sample exhibits an average and median age of twenty-nine and a range of seventeen to fifty years. It is youth, however, which appears to be conspicuous. There are other data that lend support to this impression.

Takahashi has analyzed the age structure of the forty-four leaders --consisting of thirty-four from Fukushima, five from Kochi, and five from Gumma--arrested after the Kitakata incident on 28 November at the
Table 7. Age Structure of Sample Participants of Fukushima, Chichibu and Kabasan Incidents (abstracted from Appendices II, III, and IV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>a. Fukushima (residents only)</th>
<th>b. Kabasan (all participants)</th>
<th>c. Chichibu (residents only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>Median Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
home of Aizu Jiyuto leader, Akagi Heiroku. The youngest person present was seventeen (Yasuda Keitaro), the oldest thirty (Iga Wanato), and the average age was only twenty-two. He also records, in combining both leaders and followers into a sample of one hundred participants (including those sent to the Tokyo trials), that the average age was twenty-eight. In all, the data forces the conclusion that youth and activism were closely associated, at least in the case of the leadership of the Fukushima Incident; the absence of evidence relating strictly to followers prevents us from making a similar conclusion.

If youth characterized the participants of the Fukushima Incident, it was even more so in the Kabasan case. (See Table 7b.) Here the range was eighteen to forty-three, and showed an average of about twenty-six-and-a-half, and a median age of twenty-four. Those under thirty predominated, nineteen persons in all, while the thirty to thirty-nine range accounted for ten. Tanaka Shozo, who gained notoriety in the 1890's for the fight he led against the pollution caused by the Ashio copper mines, was the "old man" of the group at a frisky forty-three. The youth of the Kabasan participants places them very neatly therefore into that universal category known as "young revolutionaries."

Compared to the youthful participants of the Fukushima and Kabasan incidents, those who led the Chichibu Incident were "middle-aged." (See Table 7c.) Slightly over thirty-six is the average age of the thirty-five individuals comprising the Chichibu sample. If graphed, then the age structure more closely resembles a two-dimensional mountain, gradually rising on one side and dropping steeply on the other. At the summit would
appear those in the forty to forty-nine age group, the largest group with
twelve members. On the line up to the summit are the twenty to twenty-
nine age group (eight) and the thirty to thirty-nine age group (ten). At
one base is a single individual in his late teens, and at the other base
three who are between fifty to fifty-nine years. The range was nineteen
years to fifty-six years old.

The age structure of this sample can be compared to the ages of
those appearing in an earlier-used document, "A table of those defendants
charged with massing to riot," in order to assess its representativeness;
since this was a lesser crime, we can assume that many of the individu­
als included were followers. The collated results and a graphic
representation of them appear in Table 8.

| Late teens | 5 | no. |
| 20 - 29    | 27 | 25 |
| 30 - 39    | 25 | 20 |
| 40 - 49    | 15 | 15 |
| 50 - 59    | 5  | 10 |
| 60 - 69    | 0  | 5  |
| Total      | 77 | 0  |

Age 0 10---20---30---40---50---

Average Age - 33 years (rounded)
Median Age - 31 years
By again using the analogy of a two-dimensional mountain to describe the age structure of the participants, we see that the data in this case shapes up to be just the reverse of the former sample. Here the mountain rises steeply on the first side, peaks at the twenty to thirty age grouping, and slopes gradually on the second side, thereby indicating a younger group of participants. The picture derived from the second set of data, however, is somewhat deceptive, much like the steepness of a mountain is to someone standing at its bottom, since only three years separate the average age of the first set from the second set of participants.

To summarize, the average age of the Kabasan participants at around twenty-six was lowest, and Chichibu's at around thirty-three to thirty-six was highest; the average age of the Fukushima participants at twenty-eight or twenty-nine fell in between.

A final important point to made about age as it concerns participation is how it affects organisation. Given the well-known role that age plays in ordering personal relations in Japanese society—the dictum of the Confucian value system instructing the young to show deference to their elders—did this social fact affect the ordering of organisations? A quick glance at our Chichibu sample, especially at the column indicating the rank of the individual within the Komminto army, indicates that many, but not all, of the higher ranks were held by older men. The exceptions, however, stand out, such as Arai Shuzaburo, Inoue Denzo, and Akihara Shojiro. Likely, such exceptions—and they are present in the other two incidents as well—are explained by the fact that such notions
as jinzai ("capable man"), meiboka ("man of high repute") and minkenka ("advocate of peoples' rights") were increasingly being operationalized in *heimin* organisation during the early- and middle-Meiji periods.  

**STATUS**

Like residence and age, status was fixed, or rather, "nearly fixed" for upon performance of some meritorious deed for the community or state a *heimin* could be elevated to *shizoku* status. (The opposite was also true, as will be shown presently.) For most, however, to be born a *heimin* usually meant to die a *heimin*. This is not to say that there were no *heimin* who prospered; nor does it mean that commoner status prevented social, economic, or political upward mobility, or that *shizoku* status meant automatic prosperity. The point is merely that with *shizoku* status one's life chances were better. *Shizoku* referred to the ex-samurai who until 1877 received stipends from the government—free money in effect—and by virtue of their status had connections with those in high places, had avenues open to them that were denied to the vast majority of commoners. The classification, *heimin*, referred to all those who occupied the lower orders during Tokugawa—some *goshi* ("lower samurai"; two important examples of déclassé *goshi* are Kono Hironaka and Tashiro Eisuke), but mainly farmers, artisans, and merchants, most of whom entered Meiji with meagre assets; an official classification as *heimin* merely increased the chances that one's assets were likely to remain meagre.

Like the other "fixed" characteristics, an official status of
heimin was no guarantee that one would participate in the popular rights movement, or in any of the three incidents examined here. The purpose, therefore, of identifying the participants in terms of status is to test the proposition that the movement and related incidents included a growing number of commoners, and to use the findings later in order to determine whether status was a factor that contributed to participation and if so, to what extent.

The breakdown by status according to incident appears in Table 9.

Table 9. Official Status of Participants in the Three Incidents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fukushima (N-45)</th>
<th>Kabasan (N-31)</th>
<th>Chichibu (N-35)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heimin</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shizoku</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* "Unclear" does not refer to cases where data is absent, but only to those cases where an individual was classified by the authorities as "shizoku" but who, during interrogation, classified himself as "heimin." Except for the Kabasan, the figures include only residents of the area where the disturbances broke out.

Source: Abstracted from Appendices II, III, and IV.

From this table we can say that the percentage of heimin among the participants in the three incidents was respectively two-thirds, one-half, and one-hundred per cent. But since our samples really reflect only the leadership strata of each of the incidents, it remains necessary to inquire into the status composition of the followers as well.

To treat the most obvious first. One Chichibu document, dated
2 December 1884, that helps in determining the status composition of the followers in this incident is entitled, "A list of names of those charged with rioting who surrendered themselves to the authorities between November 4 and November 30, 1884." The list consists of 160 people coming from seven different villages in Chichibu district. All 160 people were *heimin*. If we again use the "Table of those defendants charged with massing to riot" as a rough index of those who were followers, we see that all seventy-seven persons were classified as *heimin*. Using the even larger sample of 254 persons, including leaders and followers--Tashiro Eisuke's appointed officers, those charged with "instigating the masses . . .," and those accused of membership in the Komminto--it is significant that there are no *shizoku* listed among them. This evidence supports the contention that the Chichibu Incident was a *heimin* disturbance. The only exception to this generalization might be Tashiro Eisuke, the Commander of the Komminto army. Though born a *goshi*, his family failed to receive *shizoku* status after the Restoration.

Although not as marked as the Chichibu sample, the Fukushima one does show that *heimin* predominated by a ratio of two to one over the *shizoku* involved in the incident. If we look again, however, to the first indictment list of 13 January 1883, then the percentage of *shizoku* involved is even smaller. Assuming that only leaders in the incident were indicted for "treason" and/or for "instigating the masses," then we see that of the sixty-four leaders so charged, only ten of them were *shizoku*. Also, importantly enough, no *shizoku* appear among the 285 Fukushima residents charged with "blindly massing to riot." From this we may
gather that, (1) the heimin dominated the leadership at least by a ratio of two to one over the shizoku; (2) that most or all the followers in the incident were probably heimin; and (3) that if a shizoku were to play a part in the incident, not only would he likely be a resident of Tamura but he would also hold a position of leadership (Tamano, Aizawa, Sawada, and Hanaka, just to name some of the more important figures).

Shizoku were especially important in the Kabasan Incident as well, so much so, in fact, that it would be fair to ask why this incident was included in a treatise concerned with heimin revolts. For of the twenty principal participants, only six were heimin and of the total sample, as we saw, not quote one-half were heimin. Now that the question has been posed, it seems appropriate to respond.

The Kabasan incident was included for three main reasons. First, ostensibly at any rate, the participants conspired to overthrow the existing government in order to erect a new government more responsive to the needs of the vast majority of Japanese, who were of course commoners. Secondly, the intent of the conspirators was to mobilize the people to achieve this. That the response of local farmers to the call for rebellion was poor bespeaks several things, not the least of which was the poor organisation of the rebels and probably the good sense of the local farmers not to involve themselves in an apparently futile attempt at revolution which they regarded, perhaps, as a vendetta against Governor Mishima. (See Chapter I.) This relates to the third reason for including this disturbance in our study. Even if the Kabasan incident was in part a tomurai gassen or "battle of revenge" as it is
frequently regarded, the point still remains that the participation of heimin vitiated the shizoku class basis of the affair. This becomes all the more obvious when it is recalled that the prime mover of the entire scheme was Koinuma, a heimin. Moreover, as we shall see in the next chapter, the participants themselves explicitly stated in their manifesto that they regarded class as unimportant insofar as recruitment was concerned.

A final remark about the importance of status considerations as they relate to the three incidents is necessary. It would be a mistake to regard the distinction between heimin and shizoku as anything akin to the Marxist proletariat/bourgeoisie dichotomy that is usually made in terms of the "consciousness" each class has of itself as a class. Though one might profitably talk about the existence of a "shizoku consciousness," it was premature at that time, despite such notions as "commonerism" (chiefly the product and property of a few intellectuals), to talk about a "heimin class consciousness." Indeed, heimin and shizoku are not terms denoting economic classes; they are descriptive terms used to refer essentially, on the one hand, to the many who were not of samurai origin and, on the other, to the few who were; the principal criterion for differentiation was simple—the place in the feudal hierarchy of one's Tokugawa ancestor. If "class" as a descriptive term is at all useful, it is in how it relates to occupation, and the income and social status derived from it. To this we now turn.
OCCUPATION

For several reasons identification of the participants by occupation is not as straightforward as it was by residence, age, or status. First, there are many instances where one individual has more than one occupation, the most frequent example being the farmer/merchant, i.e., one whose farm produces a surplus of cash crops sufficient to allow him to market directly a sizeable portion of his crop in either raw or processed form. In the case of processed goods, such as silk clothing, dye, paper and the like, the farmer bypasses the merchant and sells locally. There are also examples of farmer/"lawyer," where "lawyer" (or daigennin) may refer to the practice of mediating between debtors and creditors, for example, and receiving a "fee" for the service, usually in the form of a favour or some commodity. Farmer/"village head" (kocho, shoya, kimoiri, nanushi), farmer/priest, farmer/teacher, and craftsman/farmer are additional examples. Secondly, there is the problem of individuals who are unemployed, bankrupt, or who simply have "no occupation" (e.g., due to youth). And thirdly, there is the further problem of discrepancy between different sources concerning the facts about individuals. Hence, in identifying the occupation of individuals, it has often been necessary to make a choice, based on what appears to have been their principal occupation. In many cases, however, what the individual himself identified as his occupation during the course of police interrogation has served as the source of our classification.

The breakdown of the Fukushima sample shows that for the thirty-five people on whom we have information, farmers constituted a clear
plurality of the participants, numbering fourteen in all. Following them were what could be termed the "local intelligensia," namely teachers (five) and priests (Shinto four, and Buddhist one). Next came merchants, and those who responded "none" during interrogation, each with three. There were also two doctors, one druggist, one assistant in village government, and one lawyer's aid.

Takahashi has shown that in the Fukushima case there existed a close correlation between the occupation of a participant and his residence. Most popular rights leaders from the Aizu region, for example, were farmers, mainly small landlords and well-to-do, self-cultivating farmers. The question of the nature of landholdings aside, our sample lends support to his findings: all of the Yama residents were in fact farmers (and heimin). They were also, as Takahashi claimed about most of the leadership from this area, kimoiri or "village heads." There were sufficient numbers of village heads in this region involved in the Aizu Jiyuto--more than the 80 per cent of the party membership, he says--that it almost warrants calling it the kimoiritō, "party of village heads." In our sample, eleven individuals were "village heads."

Our sample also shows a few "village heads" coming from the Tamura-Ishikawa region, but most of the individuals from this area were teachers, priests, and merchants. Again, this finding squares with Takahashi's own investigations. So too in the case of those coming from the coastal region--Soma and Futaba districts: activists from these areas, such as Aizawa and Kariyado Nakae, were on the whole either ex-samurai who had returned to farming, or priests and teachers.
Most of the followers in the Fukushima incident, we saw earlier, came from the Aizu region and Yama district in particular. Since it was a farming district, it seems safe to assume that most of the followers were farmers. More about the scale and type of farming in that region will be discussed in the section immediately following this one.

More participants in the Kabasan Incident, nine in all, engaged in farming at one time or another than in any other occupation. But of the nine, it appears that only three or four made it their sole vocation. Of those claiming to be farmers, for example, Koinuma was more a merchant/landlord than he was a farmer; Kokugi derived most of his income from the railroad, even though he farmed part-time; and Tamamatsu served as a bodyguard to Tomatsu. 57 Indeed, there were probably as many "intellectuals"—four journalists and one teacher—as there were full-time farmers. The category into which most of the participants fall is "unemployed/no occupation," accounting for eight, all of whom were shizoku. This fact tends to lend additional support to the widely held belief that a large floating body of unemployed ex-samurai were becoming political activists in the post-Restoration period. 58 Also included in the sample were two "village heads" (one kimoiri and one kocho), and three ex-policemen, one of whom we know—Monna Shigejiro—began to be active in the movement during the period in his police career when he was required to attend and spy upon popular rights' lecture meetings. 59

As might be expected, there is not the same variety of occupations among Chichibu Incident participants. Twenty-four, or nearly all of those appearing in our sample, were farmers. Although some individuals engaged
in subsidiary sericultural work such as silk-weaving, the vast majority spent most of their energies in the cultivation of mulberry or in the raising of silkworms. Even the seven individuals who are listed as having non-farming jobs--craftsman, blacksmith, dyer, merchant, "lawyer" (daigennin), priest (Shinto), and teacher--were probably closely tied to the agricultural community. The previously used "Table of those charged with massing to Riot" again supports the representativeness of our Chichibu sample. Of the sixty-one names for whom occupation data exists, fifty-five were listed as farmers. The other six were seaman, day-labourer, soldier, carpenter, mortuarist, and (bamboo) craftsman.

In Inoue Koji's study of the occupational structure of the 261 people arrested in Gumma prefecture for their participation in the Chichibu Incident (among whom ninety-two were Chichibu residents), we see that 70 per cent were farmer-cultivators, a figure lower than we would expect given the evidence just presented. However, he also notes that of the other 30 per cent, "very few of them were not tied to agriculture in some way," and lists "lawyers" (daigennin), charcoal makers, roof-thatchers, forest labourers, day-labourers, servants, dyers, plasterers, silk weavers, etc., as examples of this close tie.

Given the conditions of the Meiji economy at that time (as outlined in Chapter II), it is not surprising that so many of the participants should have been farmers. At the same time, however, unlike many teachers and priests, members of the "intellectual class," whose participation in an anti-government movement finds many historical parallels elsewhere, the fact of the farmers' ties to an essential liberal and,
at the same time, anti-government movement was certainly new to Japan and probably relatively rare historically when compared to other parts of the world. Certainly a partial explanation for this development lies in a study of the property relations existing at the time of these rebellions.

FINANCIAL STATUS/LAND OWNERSHIP

In the second section of Chapter II it was shown how farming in Fukushima had come to be increasingly devoted to production of commodities strictly for the market. It was shown that the impetus behind increased production was the inflation of the late seventies, and the rising demand domestically for sake, pottery, lacquer ware, wax, etc., and internationally for silk. Farmers of Fukushima (and of Chichibu in the case of silk) responded to this demand by devoting more and more land and energy to the production of such items. It was also shown that due to the success of the Matsukata deflationary policy, and to new quality control standards imposed by the government, prices for such products fell drastically. That fact, coupled with the constant pressures of taxation and demands by creditors for repayment of the loans taken out earlier during the expansionist boom brought on the bankruptcy, or the threat of it, of innumerable farmers. We can imagine as well that farmers from some areas—for instance Chichibu, where crop production was not diversified—were more affected by such changes in fortune than were farmers in Fukushima where crop diversification was a long-established practice.

Within this rapidly changing economic context the gekka jiken
broke out. Given the depressed state of the economy, the following ques-
tions arise: Were those who rebelled the down-trodden, the disinherit-
ed, the dispossessed? Were they the tenants, wage-labourers, or subsistance
farmers? Was it poverty that signalled the call for rebellion? Popular
conceptions would have it so. But the question requires investigation.

This section intends to examine the income and land ownership
distinctions that existed among those belonging to the farmer class, for
as it has already been shown, the farmers were the group that predominated
in the Fukushima and Chichibu incidents. Moreover, inasmuch as the
Kabasan conspirators directed their revolutionary energies at the mainly
rural population of Ibaraki prefecture, it would be instructive to look
at its relations of landownership there as a possible means to explain
why the farmers, unlike the people of Fukushima and Chichibu, did not
rise in rebellion when the opportunity presented itself.

A second reason for investigating distinctions of wealth among
the participants is to test the claim that the leadership of the popular
rights movement was changing hands from the shizoku to the heimin class
(which, from the evidence presented in the section of "status" we saw
was true), and to the gono or "wealthy farmers," in particular. We will
look at this last point first.

In the Fukushima sample of leaders fourteen individuals were
identified as farmers, and of these information on property holdings
exists for ten. Here we will supplement this sample with the same kind
of information on nine others who were active in the popular rights move-
ment, and also in the Kitakata Incident, as attested by their later
Fifteen of the nineteen farmers, it should be pointed out, were residents of Yama district. (See Table 10.)

Table 10. Size of Land Holdings of Twenty-four Fukushima Men Involved in Fukushima Incident (abstracted from Appendix II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Area</th>
<th>Number of Farmers</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>landless</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1 cho</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (priest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.1 - 2 cho</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 5 cho</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 (priest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10 cho</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 (sake manufacturer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 20 cho</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 21 cho</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on this sample it appears that most of the leadership, at least that part of it coming from the farming contingent, was drawn from landowners having more than two or three cho. It was this group, collectively referred to as gono, that "participated in the Aizu Jiyuto [branch]; they were small landlords having about ten cho, or prosperous self-cultivators having two or three cho." The question remains, however, that if this amount of land ownership characterized the gono qua leaders, what amount characterized their followers? In terms of their property holdings how are the followers to be distinguished from the gono?

Most students of this period generally distinguish between the various economic strata within the farmer class in the following manner: landlords, landlord/self-cultivator, self-cultivator, self-cultivator/
tenant, tenant, tenant/wage labourer, and wage labourer. In this way distinctions are made in terms of each person's place (role) in agricultural society. But since it is clear that those individuals encompassed, for example, in the categories of landlord/self-cultivator and self-cultivator/tenant may, because of their "split roles," share much in common with either the stratum directly above or below—depending upon to what extent their property holdings place them more in one category than in the other—the even broader but perhaps more pertinent distinction is made between strata of farmers according to the extent of their landholdings. They are: (1) jonoso, or "upper level farmers," referring to those whose cultivable land holdings are two cho or more; chunoso, or "middle level farmers," those who have between one and two cho of land; and genoso, or "lower level farmers," those owning less than one cho of land. To gain an understanding of how such a breakdown related to Fukushima prefecture, the reader is referred to Table 11.

Table 11. Average Area of Land Managed in Fukushima Prefecture, by Strata (1875)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmer Level</th>
<th>Wet Field Average</th>
<th>Dry Field Average</th>
<th>Forest Average</th>
<th>Total Land Average</th>
<th>% of Total Farming Population</th>
<th>Total Cultivated Land (excl. Forest)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1.4 cho</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>2.33 cho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several comments need to be made about this table. First, its title tells us that the figures therein represent not the average amount of land owned, but only the average amount of land managed. Secondly, as the author of the article in which this table appears says, the two strata, middle level and lower level, include self-cultivating farmers, self-cultivating tenant farmers, and tenant farmers. And, thirdly, it may safely be assumed that the 8 per cent representing the upper level farmers--included are 199 households with total family property in excess of 4,000 yen, the so-called funo, or "rich farmers"--were actual owners of property and, it is important to add, were landlords.

This last point is an important one for it clearly shows that within the upper strata there existed distinctions of wealth not adequately represented by the categorization as it appears in Table 11. Hence in speaking of this group, collectively known as gono, the modifiers "small," "medium," and "large" are usually employed. Returning for a moment to those individuals coming from our sample, we can say first that sixteen of the nineteen individuals were clearly gono, i.e., among the upper 8 per cent of Fukushima farming society, but, secondly, that the majority, the eleven who held between three and ten cho, were "small" gono. The three owning between eleven and twenty cho were "medium" gono; and the two possessing more than twenty cho were "large" gono.

Most Japanese specialists on the subject view this phenomenon of gono leadership as a "contradiction" in the popular rights movement because the "class" interests of the gono were squarely in conflict with the "revolutionary tendencies" found within the small-scale farmer class who,
in their capacity as followers, comprised the vast majority of the move-
ment. Ultimately, this "contradiction" is usually cited as the principal
cause for the failure of the incidents in particular, and the popular
rights movement in general. This thesis is propounded despite the
knowledge that the comparative history of rebellion and revolution is
replete with examples of such movements being headed by members of a
class or strata ranking above those from which most of its followers
came. It is also advanced despite its conflict with much of the data
coming from the gekka rebellions, which indicate if not prove that in
terms of property relations (and even values) those who were most likely
the followers in these incidents were not very far removed from the
leadership. "Most likely," because the data on the property holdings of
individual followers is very poor; we can only guess at who they were by
looking at the general, aggregate data on property relations within a
given geographical area. Since, in the case of the Fukushima incident,
we know that the vast majority of the following were residents of the
Aizu region, we shall focus our attention there.

A fair index of how landownership was distributed within Fukushima
prefecture can be seen in Table 12. Keeping in mind the facts that the
payment of between five to ten yen in land tax meant ownership of between
.86 and 1.7 cho and payment of more than ten yen meant holding more than
1.7 or 1.8 cho of land, what is most striking is first, the high percen-
tage of individuals owning land in the Aizu region (Yama, Kawanuma, Onuma,
Kita-Aizu, Minami-Aizu, and Higashi-Kabahara) and especially Yama district
where, as it will be recalled, the Kitakata Incident was centred; and
Table 12. Strata Structure by District Using Land Tax Payments (1883)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Land Tax Payments</th>
<th>% of District Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 5 yen</td>
<td>5 yen to 10 yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinobu</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(AIZU REGION)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yama</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawanuma</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onuma</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kita-Aizu</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minami-Aizu</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higashi-Kabahara</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


secondly, the predominance of middle and upper level farmers among landowners there. Shimoyama, in fact, tells us that the average area of land held by the average household in Yama district was 1.7 cho, or translated into land tax terms, an annual payment of five to ten yen.76

The observation that middle-income farmers predominated is reinforced by the data provided in Table 13 which shows the land ownership relations for a more-or-less typical village of Yama district.
Table 13. Farmer Strata According to Size of Landholdings, Fukuzawa Village, Yama District, Fukushima Prefecture (1872)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Area (cho)</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5 to 3.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 to 2.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 to 2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to 1.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.7 to 1.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.5 to .7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.3 to .5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.1 to .3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.0 to .1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landless</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28 households (100%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Oishi, "Shakai Keizai," p. 64, Table 18.

A high rate of individual landownership, of course, necessarily means a low rate of tenancy. How this rule applied to Fukushima prefecture is shown in Table 14.

The districts which provided most of the manpower in the incident --Yama, Kawanuma, and Onuma--stand out from the rest as having a low rate of tenancy and a high percentage of self-cultivating farmers, most of whom we may infer from Tables 12 and 13, were "middle-level" farmers. The figures for Asaka district are obviously very similar to the three above-mentioned districts; why its farmers were not active in the
Table 14. Percentage of Households and Land by Type of Cultivation for the Sixteen Districts of Fukushima (1883)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of Households (1883)</th>
<th>% of Land (1883)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self cult.</td>
<td>self tenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinobu</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atachi</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asaka</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwase</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nishi-Shirakawa</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higashi-Shirakawa</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishikawa</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamura</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yama</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawanuma</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onuma</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kita=Aizu</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minami-Aizu</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higashi-Kabahara</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Oishi, "Shakai Keizai," p. 20, Table 3.

Fukushima Incident is not altogether clear. However, one very plausible explanation for this has to do with the great financial benefits the people of the district received from the government the year before in the form of the Asaka land reclamation project. Quite possibly this
disposed them favourably toward the intrusion of the central government into local affairs, and hence they were not very sympathetic to the protests coming from Aizu.\footnote{77}

Since, as we have seen in Chapter II, the Aizu farmer had only since the late seventies begun to enjoy unprecedented prosperity accruing from a switch from staple to cash crop production, we may suppose that the threat of losing his newly acquired wealth seemed all the more odious a prospect to him. It is interesting to note that de Tocqueville, and more recently, George Rudé, observed a similar pattern in prerevolutionary France: rebellion does not come merely when times are hard, but instead it comes when a period of prosperity begins to collapse.\footnote{78} When this happened, those individuals most closely tied to the market, and hence most vulnerable to it, namely the small self-cultivator and self-cultivator/tenant, rose to protest against the economic forces of the market of which they were part but over which they had no control.

For similar reasons, in part, the farmers of Chichibu revolted. Their close ties to the market were described in Chapter II: (1) a very sizeable dependency on the import of staples from outside the district, stemming from a shortage of arable land (only 6 per cent of the total area); (2) the almost total devotion to producing silk for the market, engaged in by at least 80 per cent of all farm households in Chichibu; and (3) the growth of market towns—Omiya, Ogano, Shimo-Yoshida and Nogami—since the mid-Tokugawa period to handle the processing and sale of their silk.

It is necessary to note the strong ties to the market as a
preliminary to identifying the participants in the incident according to the nature of their financial status. There are several reasons for this. First, since data on land ownership by individuals is scanty, then only by showing the relationship of the market to general patterns of land ownership and type of crop cultivation can we infer their economic status. Secondly, one reason for a paucity of data relates to what was one of the main objectives of the Incident's participants, i.e., the destruction of all documents relating to indebtedness; this in turn tells us indirectly of the financial status of many of the farmers involved. And thirdly, most discussions of the participants' resources are usually vague and ill-defined, speaking primarily in terms of "bankrupt," "near-bankrupt," or "indebted" farmers as those who composed the vast majority of participants in the Incident.

Like Yama district in Aizu, Chichibu district displayed a relatively low rate of tenancy and a fairly high rate of landownership, but interestingly enough, unlike Yama there were very few gono. In 1885, one year after the rebellion, the percentage of households owning land is set out in Table 15.

Two points need to be made: (1) Even allowing for a measure of statistical error, the jump in tenancy--11.6 per cent--in one year is extraordinary; (2) This happened in a region where, "There were no great landlords; most people in the mountain village were self-cultivators; there was no such thing as a landlord-tenant problem." According to one contemporary observer, a Shinto priest named Tanaka Senya, there were only three families that could be called landlords, and they held only two to four cho of land.
Table 15. Percentage of Households by Type of Landholding for Chichibu District and Saitama Prefecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1885 Chichibu</th>
<th>1885 Saitama</th>
<th>1883 National Average</th>
<th>1886 Chichibu</th>
<th>1887 Chichibu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Cultivator</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Cultivator/Tenant</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Though undoubtedly an exaggeration, it does point to a significant fact about land-owning relations within the district. Unlike the Aizu area where we saw a relatively high percentage of landowners paying land taxes exceeding five yen, the figure for Chichibu was an inconsequential 4 per cent of the population (1885); those paying more than ten yen in land taxes was a diminuative 0.8%. If we consider this fact along with the high rate of landownership and the low rate of tenancy, this indicates that the average area of land owned by self-cultivators was small, certainly less than one cho. In fact, if we glance at Table 16 on the next page, we see that the average area of wet and dry fields cultivated by one Chichibu farm household (which averaged 5.2 family members) in 1884 was, respectively, .05 cho and .59 cho. Of course, as we saw in Chapter II, it could hardly have been otherwise: with only 6 per cent of its territory arable and with a population over 50,000, landholdings had to be small. Not only were their landholdings small, they were also the least valued in all of Saitama prefecture, worth only about forty yen and nine yen per tan (.245 acre; one tenth of a cho) for wet and dry fields.
Table 16. Selected Statistics for Saitama Prefecture and Chichibu District (1885)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Chichibu Dist.</th>
<th>Rank among 18 districts</th>
<th>Saitama Pref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of holding (% total land area)</td>
<td>self 88.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>self 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tenant 11.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>tenant 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. area cult. by household</td>
<td>wet .05 cho</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>wet .37 cho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dry .59 cho</td>
<td></td>
<td>dry .73 cho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of land in mulberry</td>
<td>3,389 cho</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of land area in dryfield</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of silk-worm prod.</td>
<td>9,736 koku</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 koku=4.96 bu.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. silkworm prod./household</td>
<td>.95 koku</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of same</td>
<td>28 yen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. annual land tax</td>
<td>2.1 yen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. residents paying more than 5 yen in land tax</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of same of all households</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. paying more than 10 yen in land tax</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of same of all farm households</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw silk prod.</td>
<td>6,963 kan</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1 kan=8.3 lbs.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

respectively. About all the land was good for, as we saw earlier, was the cultivation of mulberry, the principal crop of the district, which, once harvested, was used to feed the silk-worms, the other main "crop."

Since the land area under management or ownership of the cultivator was small, the scale of production of the farmers was also small, too small for the farmer to serve as his own merchant (as did many of the farmers of Yama district). It appears that this situation encouraged merchants under the aegis of several large tonya ("wholesale business")—five in all that sprang up in 1880 to 1881 (see Chapter II)—to handle the mulberry and silk trade of the many small producers. Once the farmer sold his mulberry leaves, or cocoons, or raw silk to an agent of the tonya, which of course existed to make a profit, his income in 1884 was only about twenty-eight yen. This was not nearly enough to pay taxes, repay debts, buy rice, and generally, to survive.

A quick glance at our participant sample will clearly show just how meagre that annual income was. For the six individuals for whom we have data, the range of indebtedness is twenty-five to 225 yen, with an average of seventy-five yen per person, although the mean indebtedness of about fifty yen is probably a more representative figure. Indebtedness as such, however, was no stranger to the Chichibu farmer; indebtedness had been necessary during the seventies in order to finance expanded production to meet the rising demand for silk. What was in the end disastrous for him was the type of indebtedness he was frequently compelled to bear. One type, getsu shibari ("bound by the month"), the predominant type used by loan companies, had a 15 per cent interest rate
per three month period, or 60 per cent annually. Another type, the kirikanekashi, or "limited loan" (i.e., short term), often meant an interest rate of 20 to 30 per cent per month, so if a farmer borrowed ten yen in January, by November he would owe between twenty and thirty yen. 87

Tashiro Eisuke, leader of the Chichibu Komminto, was himself an indebted, small silk farmer; he owed money to two or three loan companies, and had a mortgage on his small plot of land. 88 Tashiro, according to one source, paid land taxes on his .6 cho (dry) of land amounting to 2.4 yen (about the district average; see Table 16) and was representative of the majority of "lower middle level" farmers of Chichibu. 89

Although we lack figures on the financial status of most of the other individuals included in our sample, there is reason enough to believe they suffered similar misfortune. The very demands made by the Komminto--tax reduction, loan exemptions, etc.--probably bespeak the financial distress of its members. Collateral evidence seems to support this contention. As we saw in the last chapter, Saitama prefecture was among the nation's highest in terms of the total amount of loans made to its residents, and the number of properties mortgaged. 90 Also, data on the financial status of members of the Hachioji Komminto, a neighbour and probably mentor of the Chichibu party, reveal that most of its members were either bankrupt or approaching it. 91

These facts considered along with the small land area cultivated by the average Chichibu farmer, the extremely high proportion of farmers engaged in producing silk, and the depressed state of the silk market, together characterize the financial status of the participants in the
Chichibu rebellion. It is important to note, however, that while the
deteriorating financial status of the farmers appears to have been an
important contributing factor in bringing about the revolt, it was, none­
theless, only one of several. It seems instructive to repeat that
economic misery is a necessary, but not a sufficient cause for revolt.
There existed then (and yet exist today) too many examples of people
passively living in a state of poverty to think otherwise. As was indi­
cated in the last chapter, the farmers of Ibaraki, Makabe district,
stand as an example of this passivity.

In Chapter I we told of how hundreds of farmers from neighbouring
Gumma prefecture, especially from Minami-Kanra district, and also from
Minami-Saku district of Nagano prefecture, used the Chichibu rebellion
as an opportunity to join in "house-wreckings" against local landlords,
loan institutions, and individual creditors. We also observed that his­
torically this instance was merely one of a number of rebellions that
had spread to encompass entire areas, crossing prefectural boundaries
and behaving much like a "chain-reaction" effect. Recognition of this
pattern, however, requires that we ask why the same did not occur in the
case of the Kabasan Incident. We must ask why the Ibaraki villagers,
unlike the Gumma and Nagano participants in the Chichibu rebellion, did
not use the Kabasan revolt as an opportunity to rise up. As we know,
they were not immune to the economic misery of the depression that was
plaguing much of the rest of the country. Was there something then about
local conditions that prevented them from responding to the call for
rebellion? The answers to these questions, I believe, lie elsewhere than
in the single feature of landholding relations, probably in the type of revolt the conspirators planned. The rebellion was mainly intended to be for, rather than by, the people. This discussion however, has more to do with ideology and organisation and shall therefore be postponed until the next chapter for a fuller consideration. Here our attention will focus upon the landholding relations and economic status of those farmers who resided in the immediate area of Mount Kaba in Makabe district, Ibaraki prefecture.

As might be recalled, despite the original intention of the rebels to begin the revolution in Tochigi prefecture at Utsunomiya Town --for this reason Endo Shizu suggests renaming the affair the "Utsunomiya Jiken"—the conspirators were ultimately forced to make their appeal for revolution to the farmers of Makabe district. Except for several hundred poorly organised local farmers, who were quickly intercepted by the authorities before they could join the conspirators atop Mount Kaba, the people of this district were unresponsive. What, then, differentiated the farmers who tried to answer the call for revolution from those who did not? At least part of the answer seems to be related to the type of landholdings. In looking at this Tables 17, 18, and 19 will serve as the basis for analysis of the landholding relations in Makabe district.

From these tables, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, for the district as a whole (Table 17) it is apparent that compared to the percentage of farmers cultivating their own land in Yama (Fukushima) and Chichibu (Saitama) districts, the Makabe rate is very low, revealing
Table 17. Landholding Relations, Makabe District, Ibaraki Prefecture (1884)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>(Makabe dis.) pop. %</th>
<th>Ibaraki prefect- average</th>
<th>National Average</th>
<th>% of total land area (Makabe dis.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Cultivators</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Cultivators/Tenant</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 18. Landholders by Strata According to Size of Holding, Makabe District (1879)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount of Land Held</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor Farmers</td>
<td>less than one cho</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>1 - 2 cho</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Level</td>
<td>2 - 5 cho</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlords</td>
<td>5 - 10 cho</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Landlords</td>
<td>10 cho</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Landholding Relations in Two Villages of Makabe District:
Number 1 Responded to Call for Revolution; Number 2 Did Not (1879)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Landholding</th>
<th>cho</th>
<th>0-1</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>1.0-1.5</th>
<th>1.5-2.0</th>
<th>2.0-3</th>
<th>3.0-5</th>
<th>5.0-</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadoi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of households</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Village

| Teraueno            |     |     |     |         |         |       |       |     |       |
| Number of households| 6   | 30  | 12  | 4       | 2       | 6     | 3     | 1  | 64    |
| Per cent            | 9.4 | 46.9 | 18.8 | 6.6   | 3.1     | 9.4   | 4.7 | 1.5 | 100% |

a difference of 48.9 per cent and 27.8 per cent respectively. Accordingly, Makabe district also displays a much higher rate of tenancy than do the other two districts, respectively, 14.1 per cent and 15.1 per cent higher. Makabe then, unlike the other two, comes very close to the national average, as well as to the prefectural average. It also follows that the amount of land under self-cultivation, and tenancy, is respectively, less and more than in the case of Yama and Chichibu. They each had about 18 per cent more land under self-cultivation and 20 per cent less under tenancy than Makabe.

Table 18 shows several things, but in order to make sense of it, it is first necessary to recall from the last chapter that the principal crops of Makabe were rice and barley and hence it was primarily a staple-producing region. This is significantly different from Yama and Chichibu, where cash-crops such as silk, lacquer, tobacco and the like predominated in the primarily dry-field areas. There, although the land was not very valuable in terms of its assessed tax rate, the crop was. In Makabe, the land was valuable since much of it was in wet-field, but relatively speaking, the crop was not. This meant that the net income from one cho of Makabe rice-producing land would be worth less than, for example, that from one cho of Chichibu or Yama, mulberry-producing land. Hence, the Chichibu farmer with little land was probably better off financially than the Makabe farmer with more land. Especially so since tax rates on rice-paddy land were more than on dry-field land and, in a cash economy, that often meant the difference between solvency and insolvency. Consequently, the classification "lower-strata" farmer has
a different meaning according to the area to whose farmers the term is applied.

This said, it seems necessary to "weight" Table 18 in order to make it comparable to the figures for Yama and Chichibu. To do this we add roughly half of the figure for "middle level" farmers to the figure for "poor farmers" and estimate the "poor" or "lower strata" farmers to comprise around 57 to 60 per cent of the total Makabe farm population, which of course puts it considerably higher than the percentage in Yama district, where wealth was concentrated among the middle-level strata, and in Chichibu district, where wealth was very diffuse and no great disparities in property-holding or income existed.

The implication of this argument is, of course—and it receives considerable support from comparative historical works—that somehow the poor, or at least the poor relative to a given population, are not the ones who join in rebellion. A glance at Table 19 lends support to this hypothesis. There we see that the village which did not heed the call of the Kabasan rebels exhibits a very marked disparity in land holdings: the moderately wealthy with more than three cho of land, 6.2 per cent of the village population; the relatively poor, 75.1 per cent of the population, who owned less than one cho; and a very small "middle stratum." The other village, Kadoi, in contrast, which was active in the popular rights movement, and which responded to the rebels' call, shows a strong middle stratum and weak upper and lower strata. It should be kept in mind that, based upon the landholding relations for the district as a whole, Kadoi village was the exception, and not Teraueno village.
The absence of a strong middle stratum of landowners residing in the area seems to help explain why the rebels were unable to mobilize the local population, and, ultimately, why the revolution failed. Yet at the same time it is probably less important than other factors, such as weak planning, mistaken policy, factional infighting, and fanciful notions of capturing political power. The next chapter will treat these other factors, but, now, before continuing it would be wise to summarize the findings presented in this chapter.

CONCLUSION: LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

The participants in the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu incidents have been identified according to five characteristics—residence, age, occupation, status, and property holdings. The other characteristics shown in the three samples—literacy, arrest record, and membership in political societies and/or parties—properly require consideration elsewhere in the thesis. Using, then, the findings presented thus far, what can be said of the participants?

First of all, from the conventional perspective, they were what the newspapers of that time reported them to be. The leaders were called "pettifoggers"; "banditti and common jail-birds"; "broken-down gentlemen, indigent burghers, and professors of vice"; and "desperadoes." The followers were depicted as "slow-thinking masses"; "insignificant mobs"; and the like. Such epithets, however, do little to provide an accurate identification of the participants; what they probably do provide is an accurate account of official opinion of those people suspected to have
been most active in the various anti-authority disturbances. The Kabasan rebels, for example, were portrayed as a "band of thieves" who "disgraced the cause of liberty by an exhibition of mad licence," and were mistakenly identified as "six shizoku, five professional gamblers, and eleven heimin." The Fukushima Incident was described as a case where "a few reckless radicals succeeded in persuading the farmers that the taxes they were required to pay for local purposes were quite superfluous. . . ." The Chichibu activists were called "gamblers and hairbrained radicals" and "members of the old Jiyu party, gamblers and low-level legal practitioners."

Somewhere in all this invective there is a measure of truth; robbery (or banditry) was committed in the course of these incidents; a few activist individuals had sometime in the past been convicted of gambling, e.g., Tashiro Eisuke; some participants were radical liberals; and so on. But from the perspective of the participants themselves, from the point of view of those so labelled by the press, "robbery" would probably have been regarded as the mere act of retrieving articles of value out of which they had earlier been cheated; "gambling" would probably have been treated as a harmless means to chance to supplement an otherwise meagre income; and "radicalism" perhaps would have been interpreted as belief in an ideology which happened to be contrary to that of the government's.

Such language is of course evaluative, and outside of the objective criteria that have been used thus far in this chapter to identify the participants of the three incidents. To point out the past use of such language is, however, important at this stage, for in the final
analysis evaluative language is what is used by opposing sets of political actors in real conflict situations; and it undoubtedly reflected the image that one set of actors had of its opponents. But, more to our present purpose is the distinction made by such language between the few leaders ("agitators") and the many ("blind") followers. This distinction will be employed for the remainder of the summary.

Leaders, those who appear in the three main samples, generally came from only a certain few geographical regions of the many areas encompassed by each of the incidents. Yama and Tamura districts accounted for most of the activists involved in the Fukushima incident; the conspirators of the Kabasan Incident came mainly from Fukushima, from Shimotsuga district of Tochigi, and from Makabe district in Ibaraki; and within Chichibu district certain villages such as Hinozawa, Yoshida, Fuppu, and Isama turned out the greatest number of activists. The geographical distribution of followers, not surprisingly, pretty much coincided with that of the leaders. This applies all the more in cases where organization was a function of residence in a village community (as we shall see in the next chapter). Though not uniformly so, this was more the case with Chichibu than with Fukushima. With Chichibu we saw that the very same villages which produced most of the leaders—"Upper" and "Lower" Yoshida, "Upper" and "Lower" Hinozawa, Fuppu and Isama—also were ranked among the highest for the number of followers they turned out. Sanyama, Iida and Shimo-Ogano villages were among several exceptions to that rule, and the explanation for this probably lies in the factor of organisation. So too, it would seem, is the case where the following from some villages
was not great in absolute terms, but did show a large participation relative to the small number of village inhabitants. (See Table 6.)

The factors of organisation and ideology also appear to be relevant in explaining how so many leaders of the Fukushima Incident came from areas, principally Tamura district, other than from where most of the followers resided. Where residence of leaders and followers most closely corresponded was the Aizu region, and chiefly Yama district where the Kitakata incident occurred.

Because the demographic factor pertaining to the leadership in the Kabasan Incident was not local but inter-regional, in fact inter-prefectural, and because the appeal by the conspirators to the farmers was made at a place where most of them had no local following, residence was of little importance as a factor in participation among the relatively few farmers who did heed their call. In fact, from the outline of the incident as it was presented in Chapter I, it can easily be inferred that two of the other factors, age and status, were also of little significance in moving local residents to join in the Kabasan disturbance. It was shown that if any of the five factors were important, then it was the relations of landholdings that existed in Makabe district, and only coincidentally, the further factor of occupation, since their call to arms was made in an area largely agricultural.

The age of the participants was the second characteristic treated. The leaders of all three incidents were fairly young. We saw that the Kabasan leaders were youngest, the Chichibu leaders the oldest, and the Fukushima leaders falling somewhere in between, but closer to the Kabasan
than to the Chichibu leaders. Regardless of incident, most leaders were either in their twenties or thirties and therefore we are allowed to conclude, with minimal reservation, that our age data supports the whole notion of the "young rebel." About the followers it can be said that in the case of Fukushima the evidence is scanty, but that based on Takanashi's sample of 100 participants, there was little difference between the ages of leaders and followers. The Chichibu evidence on followers, using the lesser crime of "massing to riot" as a crude index of position in the movement, was more complete, and hence it is likely that most were in the twenty to forty age group. Especially in the Chichibu case, the factor of age as it relates to participation in rebellion, however, should be regarded as an empirical observation rather than as a causitive explanation of why individuals rebelled.

Official social status, i.e., shizoku versus heimin, was the third factor treated, and was chosen in order to test, in part, the proposition that the popular rights movement and related disturbances, such as the three under study here, were increasingly coming under the leadership of commoners. The evidence for the leadership of each incident strongly suggests that the proposition is a true one, even though this conclusion must be regarded as tentative until the next chapter establishes to what extent each of the incidents was related to the movement.

Occupation was the fourth characteristic of the participants that was examined. We saw that the leadership of the Fukushima Incident was characterized by a variety of occupations—farmer, merchant, teacher, priest, doctors—and that a close relationship existed between the type
of occupation and the residence of the individual. Most of the leaders coming from Yama district, for example, were farmers; most from Tamura were merchants, teachers and priests. The Kabasan principals also held a variety of occupations, but the most striking fact about these rebels was the relatively large number of unemployed shizoku, or, as they would have been characterized during the Tokugawa period, ronin ("masterless samurai").

The occupations of the Chichibu leaders showed much more uniformity than in the other two cases. Most were farmers, sericulturalists in fact, and even many of those who were not farmers per se were somehow tied to sericulture. The same can be said not only for the occupations of the followers in the Chichibu Incident, but for the followers in the other two incidents as well. Of course, it could hardly have been otherwise since not only did the incidents take place in rural areas but also because of the simple fact that the population of Meiji Japan of the 1880's was overwhelmingly rural and agricultural.

This last fact chiefly determined the focus of inquiry in treating the last characteristic of the participants that was looked at in this chapter, namely, relations of land ownership. There an attempt was made to determine whether members of certain economic strata, and not others, were more inclined to rebel; and secondly, in order to build upon the earlier tentative finding that the heimin were rapidly taking over the leadership of the popular rights movement from the shizoku, we sought to discover whether it was the gono stratum of the heimin that were chiefly among the new leaders.
In going about this task we decided that it was useful to distinguish between strata of farmers according to the extent of their landholdings. Accordingly, the distinction was made between "upper," "middle" and "lower" strata farmers. But because within the "upper" category, there was considerable variance in the extent of landholdings, a further distinction was made between "small," "medium," and "large." When the criteria of this distinction was checked against the Fukushima sample it was shown that the largest percentage of leaders came from the "small gono" stratum. This fact obviously squared well with the thesis that the gono strata was assuming leadership in the popular rights movement (subject, of course, to the establishment of a link between the incidents and the movement). But when we examined the landholdings of the leadership of the Chichibu Incident, we were unable to find anyone among the leadership approaching gono status. Instead, what was found was a great number of small self-cultivators, many of whom were apparently in considerable debt, and where, in terms of landholdings, there was very little difference between leader and followers. The crucial variable, it would seem, that separated the Chichibu participants from the Fukushima ones, again in terms of landholdings, was the type of agriculture that the Chichibu residents engaged in. It was a predominantly single-crop area—by necessity, as we saw—that because of a very limited arable land area permitted very few large landholdings. This fact also resulted in a very low rate of tenancy.

The Aizu region also had a very low rate of tenancy, but what appeared to distinguish it from Chichibu was the larger area of cultivatable
land, the greater variation in crops, and consequently, the greater wealth, comparatively, of its farmers. Although the farming of both areas was similar in the sense that cash crops represented most of the agricultural production of each, ultimately the Aizu farmer was less vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the market because of the diversification in his farm produce and, secondly, because of his greater wealth stemming from his larger landholding. Still, regardless of the difference between the landholding characterizing both areas, within each area, relative to the landholdings of others, most of the participants of each incident came from the "middle level" strata of farmers. The same, we saw, was the case with the Makabe district farmers who responded to the call for rebellion made by the Kabasan conspirators. This finding lends support to the thesis that it is not the very poor who involved themselves in rebellion and revolution, but instead "some sector of the middle classes that is upwardly striving and finds its way blocked." If "middle classes" is understood in a very precise fashion, then specifically, within the farmer or peasant class as a whole, as Eric Wolf points out, it is the "middle peasant," the sector "most vulnerable to economic changes wrought by commercialism," who is revolutionary. 

This summary concludes the first stage of identification of the participants who were involved in the three disturbances. We say "first stage" because at present the participants yet remain "individuals," not tied to any larger group that attaches some purpose to its actions. In order to complete the task of identification, then, it is necessary to define in as precise terms as possible the nature of the participant's
purposive action; the extent to which they, as members of groups, can be defined in such terms; in short, the ideology and organisation of the participants.
Notes


2 The subject of the influence of Confucianism on Japanese political culture has been treated by many, among whom are: Scalapino, *Democracy*, Chapter IV; Robert Bellah, *Tokugawa Religion* (Boston, 1957); G. B. Sansom, *A History of Japan, 1615-1867* (Stanford, 1963).


6 Ike, *Beginnings*, p. 69.


10 Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 189; CJSR I:632-39. All but ten of the 234 arrested were natives of Chichibu district.


12 Ibid., p. 225.

13 These are listed in CJSR I:640-43.

14 Ibid., pp. 643-56. Other relevant aggregate data can be found on pp. 204, 292, 312, 329, 343-45, 464.

15 There were twenty-one administrative districts as of 1882. In 1896 the prefecture was reorganised to include only seventeen districts. See Kobayashi Seiji and Yamada Akira, *Fukushima ken no rekishi* (Tokyo, 1973), pp. 24-33.


*FKS*, pp. 483-84. The average village participation was slightly less than eighty; the range was seven to 128.


*FKS*, pp. 941-49. The report was dated 13 January 1883.

Ibid., pp. 482-83.

Ibid.

Ibid., pp. 483-85.


Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 264, states the number was thirteen instead of twelve, having added Kobayashi Mojiro who was officially listed as a resident of Aichi prefecture. He was in fact born in Fukushima, but his family moved to Aichi when he was only six years old, and it is therefore problematic how strong his loyalties were toward Fukushima prefecture.

Ibid., p. 259.


Most all studies of this incident reproduce this list, though frequently some names are added and some omitted. Mine comes from the original document, appearing in *CJSR* 1:640-42, identified as "Those Appointed Positions by Tashiro Eisuke at Hinozawa Village, Chichibu District, on October 31, 1884."

*CJSR* 1:378-83.

Ibid., pp. 632-39. This document is dated 28 November 1884.

Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 89.

The issue date of the court report is 30 December 1884. These figures represent only the number of people prosecuted for involvement. It seems safe to say that a good many others escaped prosecution. See *CJSR* 1:340-43.


39 Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, pp. 61, 226-27.


41 CJSR I:378-83.

42 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 91.

43 Bellah, Religion; Scalapino, Democracy.

44 See, for example, Sidney R. Brown, "Kido Takayoshi: Meiji Japan's Cautious Revolutionary," Pacific Historical Review XXV (May 1956): 152-62, for a general treatment of the concept of jinzai; for meiboka see Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 181-297; for the importance of minkenka, see infra, Chapter IV.

45 For example, see Kee-il Choi, "Tokugawa Feudalism and the Emergence of the New Leaders of Early Modern Japan," Explorations in Entrepreneurial History IX, No. 1 (1956):72-84.

46 CJSR I:403-8.


48 Ibid., pp. 640-56.

49 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 50-52. Kikuchi Kanbei of Saku district was a self-declared shizoku (CJSR I:49; and CJSR II:431), but all official records show him to be a heimin.

50 FKS, pp. 939-49.

52 See Brown, "Assassination."


54 Ibid., p. 58.

55 Ibid., p. 39.

56 Ibid.


58 See Brown, "Assassination"; Scalapino, *Democracy*.


60 Assuming that the occupation structure remained fairly stable after the incident, the following breakdown for 1888 is of interest:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>No. of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sericulturists</td>
<td>9,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silk thread manuf.</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialty silk manuf.</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weavers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cocoon &amp; silk merchants</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,365</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total No. households Chichibu dist. 13,071

*Source: Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 12.*

61 CJSR I:378-83.


64 The reason for this was perhaps described in the "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon" by Karl Marx, *Selected Works* I (Moscow, 1969): 478: "The small-holding peasants form a vast mass, the members of which live in similar conditions but without entering into manifold relations with one another. Their mode of production isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse. The isolation
is increased by France's bad means of communication and by the poverty of the peasants. . . . The great mass of the French nation is formed by simple addition of homologous magnitudes, such as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes. . . ." Applying the same structural analysis to Japanese agricultural society, we might hypothesize that their principal mode of production, i.e., co-operative rice production, allowed them the interaction denied to the French peasant.


66 The additional individuals are Watanabe Ichiro, Kojima Shuya, Miura Shinroku, Endo Naoyuki, Hara Heizo, Saji Kohei, Saji Kumimatsu, Maeda Kosaku, and Ijima Kotaro. The data comes from Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 173-74, and from Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 60.

67 Ibid.

68 Though the distinction between wage-labourer and servant is usually made, it is not relevant here since neither category provided any leaders in these incidents. On the distinction, see, for example, Nagatani Yasuo, "Gumma jiken no shakaiteki kiban nikansuru kenkyu noto," Shien XXXII, No. 1 (February 1972):81-90.

69 A cho equals 2.45 acres. The three categories are applicable to landholders across Japan, although the amount of land equivalent to each size of holding will vary slightly according to region. They certainly are applicable to Fukushima; they come from the source cited in note 70.


71 Ibid.

72 For example, see Goto, Jiyu minken.

73 Cf. Rudé, Crowd, p. 248.

74 "Value" in the sense that production of cash crops and the corresponding tendency to merchandice as well indicates some belief in capitalistic values.

75 Shimoyama, "Oboegaki," p. 158.

76 Ibid., and Oishi, "Shakai keizai," p. 20.


80 Ibid., and Ishikawa, Tonegawa, p. 212; and CJSR II:551-88.

81 Gakushuin hojinkai, shigakubu, comp., Chichibu jiken no ikkosai (Tokyo, 1968), p. 70.

82 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 9. Another source claims the total, wet and dry, field cultivation average area was .63 cho (Ikkosai, pp. 17-18). The discrepancy may be due to which year's statistics the different sources relied upon.

83 Ikkosai, p. 17.

84 Shimoyama, "Oboegaki," p. 165: "There was a preponderant tendency for direct producers--middle level farmers--also to act as small merchants."

85 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 10-11.

86 Ibid., p. 12.

87 Ibid., pp. 19-21.

88 Ibid., p. 28.


92 Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 9.


94 Jiji Shimpo, 29 March 1884 has a report on the effects of the new tax regulations of 15 March. Japan Weekly Mail, 31 May 1884, has a special supplement on taxation. Also see Chambliss, Chiaraijima.

96 These characterizations come from a variety of newspapers: Jiji Shimpo, Tokyo NichiNichi Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun, Yubin Hochi Shimbun, Choya Shimbun, and the Japan Weekly Mail and cover the period 14 April 1883 to 13 December 1884.

97 Japan Weekly Mail, 27 September 1884.

98 Jiji Shimpo, 2 October 1884.

99 Jiyu Shim bun, 8 October 1884.

100 Japan Weekly Mail, 21 April 1883.

101 Nichi Nichi Shimbun, 9 December 1884.

102 Ibid. Compare the use of this kind of evaluative language with that in French history; see Rudé, Crowd, pp. 198-212.

103 Leiden and Schmitt, Politics of Violence, p. 87.

CHAPTER IV

IDEOLOGY AND ORGANISATION

INTRODUCTION

Organisation is the most efficient means for a number of separate individuals to accomplish a commonly desired goal. It is the result of recognition of the truth of the old adage, "Strength lies in numbers," and the further recognition that the "numbers" must be purposively ordered in order to maximize that strength. At the base of organization, then, is "purpose" and "goal"; and while these two terms may be defined by the activity involved in achieving them, they may also be properly defined in terms of the ideas, or principles, that more-or-less expressly support them. If the act itself is examined, then the "targets" for which the organization was created are identified. If the ideas, or principles, of the organizations are examined, then the ideology or type of thinking that the organization professes is identified. In fact, of course, "the purpose of organization is action," so, by looking at one, of necessity the other is also examined. Abstract ideas are transformed into action when ideology is made into a justification or rationale by the organization for choosing something or someone as a target.

This chapter is an attempt to define the ideologies that underpinned the organisations involved in the Fukushima, Kabasan, and Chichibu incidents. It is an inquiry into those principles which the participants of the incidents employed to define their goals and to order themselves;
and secondly it is an inquiry into the make-up, workings, and tasks of the organisations themselves.

It is well to note here that the plural form of the nouns, "organisation" and "ideology" is used, for although there were certain similarities between the organisation and ideology found in each of the incidents, there were also differences. The organisation of the participants encompassed such widely differing forms as political parties; "political societies" (seisha), and the private schools operated by these societies; "circles" or small local groups consisting of a few "like-thinking men" (doshinsha); "friendly associations" (shinbokukai); "cells" (saibo), or local units of a larger organisation; lecture societies and the like. Moreover, not only did such forms of organisation serve to order the relationships and purposes of those involved, but they also served as vehicles or as agencies for the further expansion of other organisations. They performed a function basic to the viability of organisation, that is, the task of recruitment. For this, in addition to the organisations themselves, a variety of means were used: lectures, debates, demonstrations, and petition campaigns; familial and extra-familial relationships such as, respectively, marriage and "parent-child" (oyabun-kobun) links; speaking tours aimed at various villages and their agricultural associations; political party and society newspapers and bulletins; handbills and even songs and poems. Thus, not only could and did organisations take on a variety of forms but so too did their methods of recruitment.

The forms which organisations and the recruitment function took varied in degree, type, intensity and place. Not all forms nor recruitment
patterns could be found in any one place. In some areas, such as Chichibu, people tended to coalesce more around traditional village forms of organisation than they did around "political societies" or "circles." There, "parent-child" relations between individuals, or familial connections arising from marriage, tended to predominate as vehicles of organisation. In other areas, however, such as eastern Fukushima, the political society, or "circle," found fertile soil to nurture organisational growth. Recruitment was often impersonal, and interpersonal relations were less traditional, tied more by shared ideas than by shared in-laws or by common place of birth.

As such, the role of ideology in uniting individuals also differed according to place. It was, for instance, more important to the organisations in Tamura than to those in Chichibu. Ideology also differed according to the level at which it was expressed. If it was expressed at the level of day-to-day concerns—food, housing and capital expenditures in general—then it appealed to, and served to organise, those who were in financial difficulty; the demands, therefore, expressed by such people were particular and immediate ones. On the other hand, ideology at the more general level as an expression of a desire for a certain kind of society reflected concerns other than the issue of economic security. The point is that the same ideology, albeit expressed differently at different levels, was manifested by different forms of organisation, recruitment patterns, demands, issues and the like, according to who voiced it and to where it was voiced.

For this reason, and in this sense, it seems appropriate to speak
in terms of ideologies rather than ideology. For instance, the demands made by the Chichibu farmers, as we outlined in Chapter II, were mainly at the level of day-to-day concerns—tax reduction, debt exemption, etc. But in order to secure a remedy for such economic problems the farmers believed that a representative constitutional system of government was required. Political reform, they thought, would provide a cure for economic ills. Although it is with some hesitation that we refer to them as proponents of a democratic ideology, or at least as "constitutionalists," because of their strictly economic reasons for desiring such a system, they remain, nonetheless, democrats of a defineable type.

By way of historical comparison, the reasons they had for supporting constitutional government are not altogether different from those which served the American colonists as a rationale in demanding the same kind of system a hundred years earlier. The theme of "no taxation without representation" can be found in both cases.

Although similar in this respect, the American and Japanese cases differed with regard to the political tradition that the proponents of constitutionalism in each case had inherited. Unlike the Japanese case, the Americans had inherited the English political tradition of "natural right" which they drew upon in order to underpin their essentially economic reasons for supporting constitutional government. "Natural right" doctrine, as long ago expounded by John Locke, and underscored by Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson was, or could be when deemed necessary, used as a rationale for revolution. But even before "natural right," England had had a tradition of revolt. Speaking of England—and Americans of
course, inherited much of English tradition—Elie Halevy wrote, "... the right to riot or as it was termed by the lawyers, 'the right of resistance,' was an integral part of the national traditions."³

Largely Confucian Japan, of course, had no "natural right" doctrine to draw upon as a rationale for revolt, although as we saw in Chapter II, Japan did have its own tradition of revolt, and as we also saw, the tradition was stronger in some areas, namely Kanto and Fukushima, than in others. Evil rulers and bad government, as evidenced oftentimes by economic distress attendant upon natural disasters, was reason enough in the Confucian value system to provide the pretext for revolt.⁴ The question then arises: Within the changing economic, political and social context, as earlier outlined, when Confucian values were being supplanted by capitalist ones, was it not then necessary for the Japanese to discover new and different rationale for revolt? Did not they too need something akin to "natural right," or even "natural right" itself, to provide philosophical, political and moral support for revolts arising from purely economic causes?

The answer to these questions differs according to the incident. Resistance to change, and hence the viability of tradition, was clearly stronger in Chichibu than in the other two cases. Very likely the traditional Confucian right to revolt served to pave the way for the acceptance of, and perhaps to reinforce, the right to revolt as it was expressed in natural right doctrine. This is not surprising and can find support from comparative history, such as that of post-revolutionary France where even after the notion of natural right had more-or-less become the official
ideology of the state there were still many instances of revolt that conformed to traditional modes of organisation and justification. But even when they did so, the fact that they occurred against a changed political, social, and economic backdrop, different from the one against which they had traditionally been expressed, gave them a greater intensity or impact, or a new direction.

But for the Fukushima and Kabasan disturbances the "new" notion of "natural right" was indeed influential, not only as a justification for revolt in particular, and collective action in general, but also as a principle by and around which the participants of the two incidents organised themselves. The people involved in these incidents, like the American colonists, drew upon the principles of natural right in order to justify their opposition to the government, and to give purpose to their collective action.

Instead of using ideology to support demands arising from day-to-day concerns, i.e., economic concerns, the participants in the Fukushima and Kabasan rebellions employed ideology in their organisations to express and to underpin a desire for a certain kind of society, namely, a constitutional system of representation. Hence, though at both levels, the day-to-day and the whole society, the goal that was sought was the same, only the reasons for invoking, and the function and importance of, ideology were different. At the level of day-to-day concerns, ideology was expressed mainly in economic, immediate, and local terms; at the level of the whole society it primarily expressed political, long-term, and national goals. This distinction between the two levels at which
constitutionalism and natural right found expression is important in characterizing the differences in ideology and organisation between the three incidents.

NATURAL RIGHT AND LITERACY

In Chapter II the point was made that prior to the founding of the Jiyuto in late 1881, the leadership of the popular rights movement, as well as much of its following, was largely commoner-composed and Kantocentred. It was also stated that the new leadership had adopted natural right doctrine to serve as the ideological basis of the movement and that they embraced its principles more strongly than had the early popular rights advocates. Here we will attempt to substantiate the latter point by discussing the nature of the natural right component as it appeared in late 1870's and early 1880's minken thought and action at the local level of politics. Following that, we will look at literacy rates in the countryside in order to see whether rural folk were able to comprehend such a system of thought as natural right. Before doing so, however, we will first define what is meant by "natural right."

Natural Right: Western and Japanese

There exists no one spokesman for natural right in the sense that it has one "thinker" who has codified its principles and listed its rights, but without too many qualifications it would be safe to say that "natural right," as it is understood today, and was understood in Japan of the 1880's, consists of the principles enunciated by John Locke in his Second Treatise as well as the way his ideas were operationalized in the
American Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

Implicitly, or explicitly, natural right consists of a number of propositions:

1) Nature bestows on man qua man certain inalienable rights, such as life, liberty, property, security, and the right to take measures to protect these rights.

2) Natural right is anterior to the establishment of the state.

3) The state comes into existence when men contract with one another to establish an agency (the state) whose sole purpose is to protect and guarantee these rights.

4) The authority of the state is derived from its duty to promote and protect these rights. Laws should reflect the recognition of natural rights.

5) If the state fails to perform this duty properly, then revolution is justified.  

These five points, of course, only represent a digest of a much more complicated system of ideas, which at the very least involves a number of propositions corollary to these main five. For example, a corollary to proposition Number 3 would be popular representation, essentially a check on the state to insure that man's fundamental rights be protected. Corollary to proposition Number 1 is the notion of equal rights, i.e., no distinctions of wealth, status, etc. should be made between men in terms of their natural rights. These propositions constitute what is meant by natural right in the remainder of this work.

If there was any one "natural right" theorist within the popular rights movement, then it was Ueki Emori. He, more than any other served as the "ideological godfather" to many of the leaders of the three incidents under study here, and it was he who was the clearest exponent of the Japanese version of natural right doctrine.

Ueki is known to us primarily as the "brain trust" of Itagaki and of the Jiyuto party. But he, unlike the other prominent popular rights
theorist at that time, Nakae Chomin, was also an activist. In one way or another, he was tied to the Fukushima, Kabasan and Chichibu incidents. He was, for instance, in Fukushima for over a month in August through September 1882, at the invitation of the Jiyuto branch there. He attended a congratulatory banquet on 15 April 1883, that celebrated the release of those tried for "treason" for their part in the Fukushima Incident. He was also a good friend to Kono Hironaka and to his nephew, Kabasan conspirator Kono Hiroshi. When several of the Kabasan rebels were convicted and sentenced to death, he wrote a newspaper article in their defense: "These death sentences given to these patriots, these friends of our Party, must be condemned. Let's petition [for commutation], and inscribe our names deeply!"

When Chichibu activist Murakami Taiji was executed, Ueki wrote a memorial for him and read it at his funeral. He had also been active as a travelling lecturer in Saitama and surrounding areas since May of 1883. He is even known to have written a revolutionary manifesto for the participants of the Iida Incident (Nagano prefecture), an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government that took place less than a month after the Chichibu rebellion. Most importantly, however, throughout his entire career as an activist he relentlessly fought for a constitutional government based on universal franchise (for men and women), and on a guaranteed bill of rights.

In his call for individual liberties and freedoms he drew upon the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, and much of his natural right learning he apparently took from Vissering's *Naturrecht.*
He is also known to have read Guizot, Tocqueville, Spencer, Burke, and others. Nobutaka Ike cites Rousseau and Mill as the dominant influences on Ueki's thinking. Although neither of these can traditionally be regarded as "natural right thinkers," Ueki perhaps was able to deduce, as several have since his time, the intimacies of thought that exist between Locke, Rousseau, and Mill. In any case, at the very base of Ueki's thought was the concept of natural right. In the following song, written in 1879, and reproduced in full here, all the propositions earlier cited as the essential components of natural right are strongly suggested. This song, incidentally, was written in simple language expressly for the people of the countryside, as the title itself indicates. Yoshino Sakuzo, the great democrat of the Taisho period, edited this song for publication. He notes, "This song was said to have been exceedingly popular among peasants and common people."

"Country Songs of Peoples' Rights" (Minken inaka uta)
by Ueki Emori

Man is free.
The head thinks and the heart feels;
The body moves and runs;
Man surpasses all other wonderful creatures.
The heart and body are comparable to the universe.
Man's freedom does not allow a dearth of liberty;
We are free; we have rights.
The people of Japan must claim their rights;
if we do not, then our companion is shame.

Though the birds have wings they cannot fly;
The caged bird can see the outside.
Though the fish have fins they cannot swim;
the netted fish sees the sea beyond.
Though the horses have hooves they cannot run;
the tethered horse sees the grass out of reach.
Men are endowed with arms and legs,
we have hearts and minds
but today we have no liberty or rights.
If we call ourselves men
then each person must himself stand up and say,
"Man has rights."
The mind must think and the mouth must say,
"Whether freedom continues or ceases
We all hear and feel its call."

The rights of freedom are possessed by everyone;
freedom is a gift of heaven.
Men have both intelligence and strength;
there is no gain in not using them.
Living without freedom, not having freedom
is the same as being dead.

Think of the salt: salt is salt because it is salty;
if it's not salty then it is the same as sand;
Sugar is sugar only because it is sweet;
if it's not sweet it might as well be dirt.
Man is man only if he is free.
If he is not free, he is like a puppet.

From ancient times government has been oppressive and tyrannical.
It destroys homes and kills people,
It suppresses speech and prohibits discussion.
Does it do anything that is good?
For this kind of government
the granting of rights and liberty is seen
as swallowing a bitter mixture of salt and sand,
not sweet like the earth.
Whether rich or poor, strong or weak,
all men are the same under heaven.
No one is above another and no one is beneath another.

The people of Japan call for the extension of rights,
but there are no methods to extend our rights,
because the law allows us no freedom.
If a government is evil,
if it checks the freedom of the people,
if it checks their wealth and takes their money,
if it does these wicked things without good reason,
them it makes a great mistake.

The peoples' welfare is unobtainable.
Let's resolve for constitutional laws
and for the early popular election of an assembly.
Onward! Onward! People of our country.
Let's push for the rights of liberty.
Work diligently, thirty million people,
Rise up, be prosperous and go forward  
A political system of constitutional freedoms  
is the pressing need of today.  
Cultivate wisdom and pursue scholarship.  
Become enlightened people and  
let's make brilliant the majesty of our country.  

The content of this song shows, as well as anything, the revolutionary  
implications of natural right doctrine. Although it does not explicitly  
urge a call to arms, nor the overthrow of the government, it does define  
the contemporary situation in such a way that the reader (or singer) is  
compelled to conclude that if the government fails to erect a constitu­
tional system, then there is little alternative but revolution.  

Still, its content does differ somewhat from the Western variety  
of natural right. Although it claims that right is anterior to the state,  
that the people possess natural right, it does not go the entire distance  
and suggest that the locus of sovereignty resides with the people. By  
its omission of any negative reference to the Emperor and the imperial  
system it stops short of suggesting the entire notion of "popular sover­
eignty." Ueki was not alone in this regard. Other natural right advoc­
cates also stopped short of calling for popular sovereignty. One example  
of this is clearly seen in a petition sent to the Emperor on 7 December  
1880 by four representatives of the Aizu region, Endo Naoyuki, Hara  
Heizo, Okada Kensho, and Kuroda Yutaka. After making the standard,  
polite introduction, the petitioners wrote:  

In reflecting upon present day conditions in our country, we have  
reached a point where all the people sincerely and completely wish  
for a national assembly. Compared to giving free play to the menace  
of a Western type of revolution which would strip [your majesty] of  
sovereignty and give it to the people, the strengthening of coopera­
tion between those high and low by allowing [an assembly] would be  
better . . . .
In these times we must first ask what is the proper road to take. If we ask what are the peoples' wishes for the future, then it is the convening of a national assembly; the establishment of constitutional laws; the declaration of the rights of both the monarch and his subjects; the expansion of the liberties of citizens; and, in general, the advancement of the prosperity and the good health of the country based on the development of spirit (seishin). . . .23 (Emphasis mine.)

If the meaning of natural right as expressed by these advocates has any Western parallel, then it would probably be the English experience of the seventeenth century when the political system was troubled over the task of defining the relationship between, and the respective rights of, the king and parliament.24 There is even evidence, albeit of an anecdotal type, that some individuals were aware of the similarity of the conditions prevailing in Japan and England of the two respective periods. In the song, Jiyu no Uta ("Song of Liberty"), which, as Nobutaka Ike notes, "became very popular in this period," we read,

Follow the path of the English Revolution
Yesterday a King, today a rebel.
Cromwell's beckoning with a flag of Liberty in his hand
Almost upset Heaven.
By putting King Charles to death
The basis for liberty was laid.25

As songs, this one and Ueki's "Country Song of Peoples' Rights" probably reached the attention of many in the countryside who lacked the education, and therefore the ability to read the memorials and manifestos written by the leaders of the popular rights movement. Still, it is probably impossible to measure the extent to which such oral means of communication of popular rights notions affected country folk, let alone to determine whether they were important in moving people to rebellion. For most, names of persons such as "King Charles" and "Cromwell," or of
events such as "The English Revolution" were probably just that—names, and probably therefore not all meaningful. The thoughts expressed by Ueki—intended for rural people—probably were meaningful, although this may not be obvious to the reader because much of the simplicity of the song is lost in translation. Nonetheless, it seems fair to assume that the likelihood of rural people comprehending the meaning of such songs, or manifestos, petitions, memorials, etc., was increased to the extent that they either were (1) literate; or (2) were members of, or had connections with, political societies or parties. We will examine the instance of literacy first.

**Literacy in the Countryside**

Innumerable students of Japan have cited the relatively high rate of literacy among the Japanese population at the time of the Restoration as a partial explanation of how Japan was able to modernize so efficiently and quickly after that date. By the end of Tokugawa there were some 17,000 different schools in Japan, 15,000 of which were terakoya ("parishioners' schools") that served the common people in towns and villages, and an estimated 40 to 50 per cent of the male population and about 15 per cent of the female were literate. This legacy from the Tokugawa period, moreover, was enhanced when in 1872 the Education code was enacted by the government, calling for the eradication of illiteracy. By 1875, 40 per cent of all boys and 15 per cent of all girls were attending elementary school; by 1883, the figures were 67 per cent and 34 per cent. Although up to this time the content of schooling was largely Confucian and nationalistic and hence showed largely "utilitarian" motives (one
index of its "utilitarianism" was the proscription of teachers from joining political movements), it did nonetheless provide a great many with the basic tools needed to learn and absorb new ideas. Also, its emphasis on "merit," "success," "talent," and so on, though utilitarian in motive, were values universal in effect and therefore easily adopted by the politics and movements in opposition to the government. In any case, from this brief outline, we may assume that many of the activists involved in the popular rights movements, would likely have been literate. How, then, does this generalization square with the data presented in the participant samples for the three studies appearing in Chapter III?

We will look at the Chichibu case first, for if any of the three incidents could be suspected of having a leadership and following that was largely illiterate, it would be this one. The data appearing in the sample is far from conclusive, but when it is supplemented by other collateral data, a clearer picture emerges.

The most immediate limitation of the data stems from the fact that usually the question of literacy was never asked during interrogation (for this reason there appears no special column in the sample for this characteristics, but it is contained under "other": see Appendix III). Only five people questioned by the authorities were expressly asked about literacy. Four of these five claimed to be literate. (It should be noted that Ochiai Toishi was not literate at the time of the rebellion, but later taught himself reading and writing while serving a prison sentence for his involvement in the Osaka incident [November 1885].) If, however, we use such information as whether or not a person acted as
a petitioner at some time, whether his business required reading and
writing skills, whether he was known to have done writing of one sort
or another, whether he was a former goshi, as was Tashiro, and so on, as
probable signs of literacy, then within the sample there are ten others
in addition to the above-mentioned five individuals who could be classi­
fied as literate. About the rest of the leadership appearing in the
sample it is impossible to say, although we may conjecture as to their
literacy based on certain other bits of evidence.

In 1874, when many of the rebellion's participants would have
been of school age, the percentage of Saitama children in school was 29.4
per cent; the breakdown by sex was 47.1 per cent for boys, and 11.7 per
cent for girls. By 1879, the figure for boys had increased to 63.6 per
cent, and for girls to 21.6 per cent. It is also known that Chichibu
ranked among the highest of Saitama districts in terms of the number of
children in school as of 1884 through 1885. That education in Saitama
progressed so quickly, moreover, is not surprising when it is realized
that during the Bakumatsu period (1853-68) about fifty private schools
and about 600 "parishioners' schools" were in existence.

In Inoue Koji's sample of 261 Chichibu Incident participants
arrested by the Gumma prefecture police, who during their interrogation
did question the suspects on this point, 202 individuals or 77 per cent
claimed they could at least write their name and position. Among these
202 persons, Inoue was only able to distinguish between the barely
literate and the completely literate; respectively, the figures were
about 60 per cent and 40 per cent.
Another piece of evidence pointing to a fairly high rate of literacy in Chichibu has to do with its close ties to the silk market. Inoue tells us that it was not unusual for Chichibu residents to read newspapers frequently in order to gain information about the conditions of the Yokohama and (even) American markets. "Even villages located in the deepest valleys were aware of how close Tokyo and Yokohama were." Also, the prosperity of the region prior to 1884 served to bring merchants, politicians (Oi Kentaro, for instance, visited Chichibu in early 1884), and even artists to Chichibu. "At this time Chichibu was not a closed society; and its openness was accompanied by a political awakening." To whatever extent a political awakening did occur in Chichibu, based on the evidence presented thus far it seems likely that the fairly high literacy rate prevailing in the region was partly responsible for it.

All twenty-five of the Fukushima individuals for whom we have information were literate, and most of them, it appears, could be termed highly literate. Newspaper reporters, former and present shizoku, town and village chiefs (who had to file monthly reports to their government superiors), doctors, students of private political society schools or party schools, lawyer's aides, and so on, bespeak of a very high degree of literacy competency. Even the one individual (Ishii Teizo, who during interrogation, said he was "barely [literate]"), was known to have formed his own local study circle. Also, other leaders, mainly from Yama district, whose names were frequently mentioned in the last chapter—Hara Heizo, Uda Seiichi, Endo Naoyuki, Nakajima Yuhachi, Watanabe Shuya, etc.—appear to have been highly literate, indicated not only by the petitions
they wrote, but also by the village government posts they held. Of course, this high level of literacy among the leaders of the incident is not surprising once we recall the types of occupations they held (Chapter III)—teachers, priests, merchants, "village heads," and so on.

There is some reason to believe that many of the followers in the incident were also literate. In addition to the high national literacy rate, as earlier shown, it is known that in the last years of Tokugawa terakoya existed in Fukushima prefecture, of which over 90 per cent were operated by wealthy farmers. We may also assume that a fairly high rate of "political literacy" existed among the followers. In one document dated 20 November 1880, entitled, "Facts relating to the delegation of Hara Heizo, representative of Yama district, for the petitioning for a national assembly," we see that 271 people, all heimin, from twenty-eight different villages, affixed their signatures. Although it may be argued that some or even many of these people had little idea of what they signed, it seems more likely, given the evidence thus far presented, that it was otherwise. Moreover, it is easily imagined that even if they were unable to read the document, someone, probably the local organiser, explained the significance of the document to them.

Take for instance the testimony of Ishii Teizo, who earlier during interrogation responded "barely" to the question of literacy:

Q. Had you earlier [before the incident] joined the Jiyuto?
A. Yes, I had.

Q. What do you believe to be the purpose of the Jiyuto?
A. To establish a Constitutional form of government.
Like the Fukushima case, it appears that most of the individuals of the Kabasan Incident appearing in the sample were literate. Most either responded positively during interrogation to the question of literacy, or were known to have attended either a domain, prefectural or seisha ("political society") school. Several even were probably "highly literate," as seen by their occupations—teaching, writing, government and politics. There is the further fact of so many having come from Fukushima, and having been involved in the Fukushima Incident, and therefore in terms of background were probably equally as literate.

Literacy as such, however, means only that the individuals of the three incidents were capable of reading, talking intelligently, and presumably understanding political ideas such as natural right, freedom, representative government and constitutionalism. Still, not all political activists need be literate, even though, as we have just seen, many of those who are included in the three samples were. As it was intimated earlier, an understanding of political notions, i.e., "political literacy," is augmented by membership in, or a connection with some type of political group. Here, we will look at two such groups that came into existence during the second period of popular rights development referred to earlier as "the Period of Organization and Promotion."

Both of these groups are political societies of Fukushima prefecture, but one, the Sanshisha ("Society of Miharu District Teachers"), was, as its name suggests, based in Eastern Fukushima, and was, for reasons soon to be revealed, representative of a good number of other political societies that emerged in the late 1870's. The other is the Aishinha
("Society for Mutual Regard") and it was based in the Aizu region. Since both were forerunners of the Fukushima Jiyuto, and since the members of both were deeply involved in the Fukushima Incident several years later, they are therefore important for understanding organisational and ideological antecedents. Also, as we shall later see, a good number of the Kabasan participants were earlier tied to one or the other of these two societies. Finally, before examining these two societies, it is necessary to mention that during this second stage of popular rights development, Chichibu and most of its residents drop out of sight and do not emerge as relevant political actors until the early 1880's.

NATURAL RIGHT AND POLITICAL SOCIETIES

Sanshisha

In January 1878, on his way from Ishikawa district to take up a new government post at the Fukushima prefectural government office, Kono Hironaka, ex-samurai (goshi) of old Miharu domain, stopped in Miharu Town to renew relations with several old friends. While there he contacted the village head of the town, Noguchi Kazushi, Shinto priest Tamano Hideaki, ex-samurai Matsumoto Shigeru and Sakuma Shogen, druggists Asaka Gihei and Kageyama Masahiro, sake manufacturer Matsumoto Eicho and headmen Iwasaki Seigi and Miwa Shoji. Together they established the Sanshisha. (Note that five of these individuals appear in our sample, and were therefore tried for "treason" in 1883.)

Just two years earlier, Kono, inspired by the formation of the Risshisha of Tosa, had organised the Sekkyosha ("Open Society of Ishikawa"),
in Ishikawa district while serving there as kucho ("ward chief"). As legend would have it, however, or as Kono himself would have it in his biography, it was not just the formation of the Risshisha that served as the inspiration, but, rather, his reading of J. S. Mill's On Liberty. Kono wrote:

> Until then [March 1872] I had been nurtured on Confucian and Kokugaku (native Japanese) studies . . . but then, [after reading Mill] I realized the importance that should be placed on the rights of the people and on the liberties of the people.

In the statement of principles and the rules of organisation of the Sekkyosha we are able to see the influence of Mill, and of democratic notions in general. Free speech as the best means to arrive at enlightened decisions on important matters; the importance of the political education of youth; the importance of a representative assembly to express the aspirations of the people, and so on, tell of the influence of Mill and other democratic thinkers on the society, and on Kono himself, who served as the first President of both the Sekkyosha and the Sanshisha. The principles, rules, and organisational structure of the two societies are virtually indistinguishable and therefore an in-depth examination of either would be equally profitable. But since the Sanshisha appears to have had more influence on both the Kabasan and Fukushima incidents and their participants, we will examine it.

A document entitled, "The Principles and Rules of the Sanshisha" (Sanshisha shishu oyobi shasoku) best characterizes the nature of the society. In its "Statement of Principles" we see a very sophisticated treatment of the essential argument of natural right doctrine. It reads in part:
Society consists of a union of people who have both rights (kenri) and duties (gimu), which run parallel to one another. They cannot be separated even for a short time because they are the important truth of human existence. Even though they are steadily assaulted by placing excessive importance on wealth and honor, they cannot be beaten. They are inherent natural rights (tempu koyu no ken). . . . They are the true road of nature, of heaven and of earth, and in truth are both private and public. Although these rights and duties have always existed [in nature] they have not yet been settled to a sufficient degree, and can only be determined by energetic public debate and discussion. To fail to do this is to deny our nature as men. . . . The people of Japan today perform their duties. . . . A settled policy is needed to advance in a direction that will benefit society by enlarging the natural rights of the people. . . . To this end, having concluded that a permanent and widely held public debate [is needed] like-thinking individuals have formed a compact.45

(Emphasis mine.)

Following this preamble is a statement of the rules of the San-shisha that consists of forty-eight articles, divided into five sections. The five sections concern: (1) general rules; (2) meetings; (3) definitions and duties of Society office holders; (4) rules of debate and discussion; and (5) Society finances. Although the last four sections are of some interest, it is section One dealing with general rules that tells most concerning the principles of the society and their operation. It consists of eleven articles, five of which seem the most pertinent:

Article I: This Society will be called the Sanshisha, taking its name from Miharu machi of Tamura district where it will be established.

Article II: There will be no distinction made between the high and the low [or rich and poor--kisen] for membership in this society. All have equality of rights (doto no kenri); no one will lose his rights so long as he performs his duties.

Article III: Those who become members of this society are expected to perform the duties assigned to them by the headquarters and branches with a docile devotion (wajun mame). They are expected to study the principles we practice; to take them seriously; to find and correct their weak points; to nurture conditions for self-government; and to work to extend the rights of liberty.
Article V: Members must obtain the permission of the society head before joining another society.

Article VI: All positions other than "head of the society" (shacho) and conference head (gicho) will be elected by ballot. All officers may stand for re-election and a period of one week every year will be set aside for elections. [The gicho is elected at each general meeting by those in attendance: Article VIII.]

The natural right and democratic content of this document speaks for itself—the notions of equal rights, critical thinking, self-government, extension of rights and liberties, and an open ballot. The only questionable parts of it are the expectation in Article III that the members serve with "docile devotion," and the restriction in Article V on the freedom of members. The former case can be written off as the Japanese version of "party discipline," especially since in the same article we see that members are encouraged to study and improve themselves. This stricture is also merely an extension of the idea pronounced in the society's "Statement of Principles": obligations must necessarily accompany rights if organisation is to work effectively. This is probably the case with Article V as well. After all, Kono himself served two societies at once and the Sanshisha was in correspondence and had relations with twenty-seven different political societies of fourteen prefectures, among them four from Fukushima itself (Sekkyosha, Aishinsha, Kyofusha, and the Boshinsha). In fact, probably because of Kono's dual leadership, the relations between the Sekkyosha and Sanshisha were very close.

There is also one other rule of the society that may cause some doubt as to how democratic it was. And that is the first sentence of Article VI that removes the office of "society head" from election. In
Section 3, article 34, defining the office and its responsibilities we read, "The Society head presides over all general affairs of the society, oversees correspondence with other societies, punishes members who break the rules of the society, and interprets the laws in cases where members bring disgrace to the society; he has this authority until he retires from office." Since no rationale is provided for permitting Kono to wield such strong executive and judicial authority, the reason can only be conjectured. Possibly it represents an instance of historical continuity, taking as its precedent the tendency prevalent during Tokugawa (and before) to elevate a single individual to an all-powerful position of authority, e.g., the Shogun or the daimyo. Or possibly it was the fact that Kono Hironaka himself held the post; he was, after all, a nationally recognized minken leader and a man of charismatic qualities to whom people naturally looked for leadership. "His personal charm brought into the movement all sorts of men irrespective of class or age." In this sense he was like Itagaki, a drawing card for the movement and therefore of such importance that it was difficult to conceive of someone of sufficient renown able to replace him. Also, his views were recognized by most as democratic and populist, and hence probably produced little apprehension among his following that he would abuse his authority. For Kono himself, the rule certainly was not the result of a fear of not being elected, because the head of the Sekkyosha, which position he held, was an elective post. But whatever the reason for the decision not to elect the President, the more important point of the society's essentially democratic nature should not be overlooked.
Besides the objectives laid out in the aforementioned statement of principles, the Sanshisha, like the Sekkyosha before it, had as one of its main purposes "the political education of the youth" of the area. The Sekkyosha, in order to achieve this goal, built the Sekkyokan, a "hall" for its society where lectures, meetings, and discussions concerning politics could take place. Although used by all of its some 200 members—most of whom were farmers and heimin of Ishikawa and Shirakawa districts, according to one police report—it was intended mainly as an educational institute, an "academy" for the youth of the region. The Sanshisha, for the same reason, established the Seidokan ("Academy of the Right Road"), probably around 1881. A handbill circulated to advertise its opening (scheduled for 9 January 1882) said its purpose was "the study of scholarly materials dealing with politics, law, economics, and history." On the same handbill appeared "a summary of its aims"--"to further educate men of talent (jinzai) and to study scholarly materials broadly related to our region."

The Seidokan was headed by Sakuma Shogen, Matsumoto Shigeru and Asaka Saburo. (All three were later tried for "treason"; see Appendix II.) It was housed in an old domain school building and provided dormitory rooms and dinners for three yen a month to those students coming from outside Miharu. For those residing in the town, only six sen a month was charged for fees. The Seidokan also brought in lecturers, some, such as Hirozaki Masao and Nishihara Keito, from as far away as the Risshisha of Kochi prefecture. Although lectures were the primary mode of education, debates were also organised. Another interesting feature was
that instructors and students ate together, a somewhat "democratic" fea-
ture in those times.

Although it is not known for certain what the topics of study
were, it can be assumed that they resembled those emphasized at the Sek-
kyokan. There, students were divided into three "organs," each of which
specialized in the study of certain subjects. "Organ One" studied "the
spirit of the laws," science, theories of social equality, and methods
of thinking. "Organ Two" dwelled on the history of England, the origins
of freedom, the basis of law, social contract, notions of right, morality,
theories of political economy, and of representative government. "Organ
Three" studied the French Revolution, comparative political systems,
principles of politics, the economics of wealth, and the political his-
tory of the West. Each Saturday evening representatives of the various
organs would lecture and discuss the past week's research, and all were
obliged to attend.54

Most students, it appears, were seventeen or eighteen years old,
and were the sons of "small gono," headmen, and ex-samurai of the region.55
Many from the Seidokan were later active in the Fukushima and Kabasan in-
cidents. Kotoda Iwamatsu, Isokawa Motoyoshi, Yamaguchi Moritaro, Amano
Ichitaro, and Kono Hiroshi (nephew of Kono Hironaka), for example, were
all students at the Seidokan who later rebelled at Mount Kaba. (See
Kabasan sample, Appendix IV.) Kono, Yamaguchi, and Isokawa had also
studied at the Risshisha school before entering the Seidokan.

The authorities, naturally enough, counted such schools as sub-
versive. At least one attempt was made to close down the school, in
March 1882, and it is known that one of its leaders, Matsumoto Shigeru, was imprisoned and fined for refusing to obey a court injunction to close down the school. In one government report about the Seidokan, it was said: "There are no rules in the organization, no one who manages it. Consequently, the conduct of its students is likely to become exceedingly violent. Its members agitate ignorant people. . . . It is like a poison slowly flowing into the veins of society." On the lines of this metaphor, Governor Mishima tried to play the role of "doctor" by neutralizing the effect that the minken "poison" had on the body politic.

The political education of the region's youth, however, was a policy with long-term consequences. In the short term the Sanshisha sought to bring about a national assembly. It therefore was continually involved in petitioning the government. Perhaps the most interesting, and most telling point regarding its democratic nature, was a draft of a petition to establish a national assembly written by Sakuma Shogen, member of the Sanshisha and head of the Seidokan. Dated 1880, it provides a scheme for convoking a constitutional convention that would write a provisional constitution, which would in turn provide for a national assembly. Sakuma's scheme worked in this way:

1) All males over twenty-two years who are family heads elect five representatives from their district (gun).
2) All gun representatives elect three representatives from the prefecture.
3) The prefectures' representatives will meet in Tokyo and elect forty members to sit on a constitutional convention. They would study the laws of various countries and rely on the expertise of public and private citizens knowledgeable in this area.
4) The members would then elect seven from among themselves to draw up a provisional draft of the constitution.
5) Upon completing it, the (forty) members would discuss, debate,
and decide on sending it to the government.
6) The government would set up a national assembly based on the pro-
visional constitution and would discuss and debate its merits
and decide on making it the Constitution of Japan.59

In some respects this scheme is reminiscent of the American experi-
ence,60 although perhaps it is even more democratic in the sense that
the Japanese Constitution would be the product of a male franchise that
was free of any property qualifications. In any case, it underscores the
essentially democratic nature of minken societies of eastern Fukushima.
As a basis of comparison, we now turn to western Fukushima and examine the
Aishinsha of the Aizu region.

Aishinsha

Just as the Sanshisha and several other such societies were the
forerunners of the Jiyuto branch of eastern Fukushima, the Aishinsha was
the political antecedent of the Aizu branch of the Jiyuto. Yet despite
this commonality, there were distinct differences between these two poli-
tical societies. If a contemporary parallel can be made, then we could
compare the differences between the Aishinsha and the Sanshisha with the
differences between, say, the Democratic Party of Indiana and the Demo-
cratic Party of New York. Historical, geographical and sociological
factors separated the two societies, though members of each would claim
allegiance equally strong to the principles espoused by the greater
minken (and later, the Jiyuto) movement.

The Aizu region had consisted of different domains during Toku-
gawa, most of which were loyal to the Tokugawa rule, and hence opposed to
the new Restoration government. Even as late as 1869, Aizu loyalists had
continued fighting against the Imperial forces being sent from Tokyo and from Eastern Fukushima as well, in what historians have come to term "The Boshin War." A number of individuals appearing in our sample, for example, were victims of that war, either having themselves fought or having lost fathers who did. In either case, they lost much of their property and fortunes, and several were reduced to penury. Takahashi asserts in this regard: "The dissatisfaction stemming from such experiences was probably the reason they attached themselves to a new political movement."

Geographically, Aizu was situated far to the west, part of it bordering on Niigata and Yamagata prefectures. It was also cut off from Eastern Fukushima by high mountains, which made communication a slow and difficult ordeal. Also, the centres of political activism, which encircled Kitakata Town in Yama district, were mainly agricultural areas, thus further distinguishing the region from the centres of activism in Eastern Fukushima where trade and commerce dominated.

Sociologically, as the above point suggests, most of its inhabitants were farmers who, as we have already seen, composed the body of participants in the Fukushima Incident. In the less commercialized farming districts, organisation for any purpose, including political, tended to centre around the already existing village structure. At the apex of the village structure was the village head, who tended to be a hereditary holder of this office, and coincidentally, one of the larger land holders in the region. From this superior political and economic position, he would traditionally be in charge of village affairs, political
or otherwise. As the linchpin for community solidarity and social harmony, he could either promote or hinder political organisation.

It would be expected then that those conditions—the political, geographical and economic—might make the ideology and organisation of the AishinsHa different from that of the Sanshinsha. We could expect, for example, the AishinsHa to employ either a more traditional ideology as a rationale for its activities, or perhaps a modified version of natural right, or even a complicated combination of the two. Yet previously in our discussion of natural right doctrine and its relation to the minken movement we quoted at length the 7 December 1880, petition by four Aizu region representatives that called for a national assembly as the best means to give vent to popular opinion, and thereby to avoid a "Western type of revolution." Although this document provides some indication of the ideological basis of the AishinsHa, other supporting evidence is required. Unfortunately, as Shoji Kichinosuke informs us, the same kind of detailed information earlier provided for the SanshinsHa—a statement of principles with rules of organisation—is simple nonexistent today. Still, the following document does provide good insight into the nature of the principles governing the AishinsHa:

"A Statement of Aims" (10 November 1878)

Man is separated from birds and animals by the protection he provides for himself through his miraculous intelligence to produce articles for his survival. We can say that using his intelligence, which secures for him the ability to use his powers for self-protection, is in the end a self-duty, one of several. If he does not understand that he must protect his own liberty in order to extend his right to realize this basic duty, then in fact nothing separates him from the birds and animals.

Today, people are resigned to servility, because servility means peace, and take all of this from those under the Emperor [i.e., the
government]; but the time has come when we ought to consider our own happiness, and demonstrate a spirit of self-government (jichi). Like the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers [China] that consist of the drops of water from many roofs, the State consists of individuals.

If we all cooperate and work together, even though we bear the insults of foreign countries, we will come together into one body as do the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers.

There are both foolish and wise people, though even the foolish may become wise, and through communication with one another, all ought to see to their own best interests. Accordingly, we promise to try to spread wisdom in this country, and to get together and meet with the people to share our views. Talking and lecturing about where rights and duties reside, in other words, teaching regard for oneself as one would regard his country, is our purpose, so we will call our society the "Society for Mutual-Regard."

What appears most important about this document is that while it lacks a strong, explicit statement against government abuses of power, it also is a clear, and somewhat sophisticated, pronouncement of the rights of men as a consequence of their duty to preserve themselves. In this sense, it is unlike the Lockean principles of natural right as outlined by the Sanshisha, and closer to the Hobbesian concept of natural right. At the same time, however, its attack on servility—or as Hobbes would have had it, obedience to the Leviathan as the best means to secure life and property—and the attendant call for self-government, brings it back closer to Lockean natural right. This fact suggests what many recent theorists have noted about Hobbes and Locke, i.e., the philosophical debt that Lockean natural right owed to Hobbes.

As well as this intimation of the right and duty to secure self-government there exists additional evidence that helps to define more precisely the ideological nature of the Aishinsha. It is known, for instance, that Uda Seiichi, later tried for "treason," and Anse Keizo, village head of Kitakata where the society was founded, wrote the Aishinsha
charter, which consisted of four sections and twenty-five articles, and that the names of fifty-four individuals appeared on the document as founding members. It is known that the *Aishinsha*, founded one year after the *Sanshisha*, bore some resemblance in terms of principles and organisation to the latter, particularly so since Anse was a native of Tamura district, Tsuneha village, where Kono Hironaka once served as vice-head, and during which time they became good friends. Other than Anse and Uda, the other principal movers behind the *Aishinsha*, were Nakajima Yuhachi, Yamaguchi Chiyosaku, Kojima Chuya, Akajiro Heiroku, Endo Naoyuki, and Igarashi Takehiko, all of whom, incidentally, were later prosecuted for "treason." (See Appendix II.)

It is further known that these same individuals, and others such as Hara Heizo and Watanabe Shuya, were later the leaders of both the *Aizu Rengokai* and the *Aizu Jiyuto*. With this knowledge, and since the *Aishinsha* "Charter" is lost, it has become customary to infer the ideology and organisation of the *Aishinsha* from that of subsequent organisations, especially its Jiyuto branch.

There exists justification for doing this, over and above the fact that pertinent *Aishinsha* documents are missing. First, only four years separate the founding of the *Aishinsha* and the *Aizu Jiyuto* branch (February 1882). Secondly, during this time it appears that no dramatic change in the leadership composition of the local popular rights movement occurred. Anse became the first head of the *Aizu Jiyuto*, and the other party officials were Miura Mojiro (V.P.), Uda Seiichi, Nakajima Yuhachi, and Miura Nobuyuki. All but the two Miura's were signatories to the
"Statement of Aims" quoted previously. Also, a police report concerning the Aishinsha, dated 3 July 1880, says that it was composed mainly of "prefectural assembly men, wealthy farmers, and village heads coming from the various villages." Checking this against the Aizu Jiyuto membership we see that prefectural assemblymen Endo Naoyuki, Uda Seiichi, Kojima Shuya, Nakajima Yuhachi, Watanabe Ichiro, and Yamaguchi Yoshisaku were all members of the Aizu Jiyuto. The same individuals, plus Hara, Miura Nobuyuki, Miura Bunji, Igarashi Takehiko and Akajiro Heiroku (among others) were gono; and finally, as we saw in the last chapter, most of the above-mentioned individuals were "village heads," provoking one specialist on this incident to characterize the Aizu Jiyuto as the "party of village heads."

A third and final justification for inferring the ideological character of the Aishinsha from the Jiyuto branch subsequently formed in Aizu has to do with what appears to have been the existence of ideological continuity, and also with its close ideological connections with the San-shisha and other natural right organisations of Eastern Fukushima. In March 1881, fourteen individuals from different political societies from all over Fukushima, including Endo and Hara from Yama district in Aizu, signed "A Draft of the Principles of the 'Society of Resolve' of the Tokoku Region" (Tokoku Yushikai no shishu soan). It represented a reaffirmation of the principles enunciated in July 1879, when the Kyoaido-bokai ("Society Aiming at Mutual Respect") was founded as a secret alliance of all the political societies in Fukushima and as a means to strengthen their region's ties to the national Aikokusha. This document began:
Man is a creature deriving freedom from heaven. He therefore has the rights of freedom. On this depends his happiness. . . . When he loses his rights he cannot secure the safety of his life or his property; he cannot have nor.enjoy prosperity; it does not take a scholar or a genius to know this. . . . To protect our [natural] rights we need [legal] rights in our country and in our society.74

This might appear to confirm only Hara and Endo's personal belief in natural right were it not for the fact that they were acting as representatives of the entire membership of the Aishinsha. Underscoring this contention that the predominant ideology of the Aishinsha was natural right is the knowledge that at the lecture meetings of the Aishinsha, Hara and Endo, along with Miura Shinroku and Uryu Naoshi, were the most frequent speakers, teaching "a simple straight-forward, pure natural right doctrine."75

Hence we can conclude that despite the peculiar historical, geographical and sociological factors of the Aizu region that would tend to have made its political society, the Aishinsha, impervious to the natural right notions characterizing the eastern Fukushima societies, it was nonetheless reliant on some version of natural right, though as we saw, it was less anti-government and more Hobbesian than that of the Eastern Fukushima societies.

Where these historical, geographical, and sociological facts had some influence on the character of the Aishinsha, and later on the region's Jiyuto branch, was in the particular way it organised itself. Put very simply, "as opposed to the [Eastern] Fukushima branch which assembled representative personalities of various districts, aiming its recruitment primarily at meiboka ("men of renown"), the Aizu branch organized itself around villages which served as the basic organizational
unit." By using this more traditional means of organisation, Takahashi adds, "The Aizu branch was stronger as a result."  

Several years before "The Period of Activism," therefore, Fukushima prefecture boasted of a number of political societies that shared the belief that natural right doctrine was the best ideology to govern their activities. Now to continue the discussion begun in the last section of Chapter II, we will study how natural right doctrine was manifested in the activities of the local Liberal Party branches after the founding of its national headquarters in October 1881.

PERIOD OF ACTIVISM, 1881-1884

The Jiyuto in Fukushima

The Aizu Jiyuto branch was established in February 1882, four months after the establishment of the national party and two months after the Fukushima branch was formed in Fukushima Town. Hence, Fukushima prefecture had two Jiyuto branches. This came about in spite of earlier attempts by members of each area's political societies to form a unified party. The Kyoaidobokai, as we saw, was one such attempt. Symptomatic of its failure, as far as Aizu popular rights groups were concerned, was its building of the headquarters in distant Sendai, situated on the Pacific coast, as far away as it possibly could be from Aizu and yet still be situated in Tohoku.  

The Tohoku Yushikai, whose principles to which Hara and Endo were signatories, was referred to above as another such attempt; it experienced brief success for about one year, until the Aizu popular rights leaders broke from the group and formed their own Jiyuto branch.
Although the various societies that composed the Tohoku Yushikai (Sanshisha, Aishinsha, Sekkyosha, Boshinsha, etc.) shared common principles as the basis of organisation, in practice they could at best only unite into a loose confederation. The shukuen or the "old grudge" that had existed since the "Boshin War" when Aizu residents fought against Miharu Imperial troops, as one source puts it, still served as an obstacle preventing organisational unity. Also, the strong sense of regionalism characterizing Aizu, in part due to its geography and in part to its different patterns of landholding and agricultural production, had been manifested as recently as 1878, when, during the government's reorganization of the prefectures, the people there had sought to have the government create a separate Aizu prefecture.

The strong sense of regionalism could also be seen in the explicit emphasis of the Aishinsha on "self-government" (in the earlier quoted "Statement of Aims"), and the implicit emphasis on natural right while failing to mention its broader implications such as representative and constitutional government. That task had been left to a few individuals, such as Hara and Endo, but mainly to popular rights advocates of eastern Fukushima. For this reason Takahashi could say about the Aishinsha, and hence about the Aizu Jiyuto, that "Its political colouring was duller than the other two societies [i.e., the Sanshisha and Sekkyosha]."

Of course, when the road project commenced under Governor Mishima's orders, the sense of regionalism and hence the Aizu Jiyuto's desire for local self-government and, conversely, its dislike of central government intrusion into local affairs, was heightened. As pointed out in Chapter I,
it was a tension and conflict that has attended the politics of modernization in all places, i.e., the conflict between centralism and regionalism. It was perhaps no accident, therefore, that the Aizu Jiyuto was formed in the same month Mishima was appointed to Fukushima. Certainly, it was no accident that the Aizu Rengokai, "based on the aims and principles of the [local] Jiyuto that principally sought to crush the road-building project" (as the Yama district head characterized it), rose to defend the Aizu Jiyuto's notions of self-government.

"The Provisional rules governing the Aizu branch of the Jiyuto" (Jiyuto Aizubu kari no moa kisoku) was not prefaced by a statement of principles—it probably was not necessary since by its name alone it endorsed the principles of the national party—but from the articles themselves we can derive some notion of what ideas guided the Aizu branch.

**Article I:** We will establish a regional branch of the Jiyuto at Kitakata, Iwashiro shu, and call it the "Jiyuto Aizu Branch." The party members of this branch will determine the nature of the organization in accordance with the conditions of this region.

**Article II:** There will be one director (buri) and three officials for party affairs. All will serve a one-year term and will be elected by those in attendance at the regular party meeting.

**Article III:** The Director will oversee (sotoku) and supervise party affairs in the name of all branch members and shall supervise all decisions made at ordinary and extraordinary party meetings.

**Article IV:** Party Affairs officials shall handle regular party matters of the branch under the supervision of the President.

**Article V:** Officials will receive a wage to be determined by the president.

**Article VI:** The expenses of the branch will be borne by the party membership.

**Article VII:** All sub-branches will have one executive and, for convenience sake, all other functionaries shall be appointed by him.
Article VIII: All those joining or leaving the party ought to be investigated by the leadership of the sub-branches.

Article IX: In the various sub-branches, a list of the membership will be made at the end of every month and sent to headquarters at Kitakata.

Article X: At the same time detailed reports about the situation and conditions of the region should be reported.

Article XI: In March and September of each year there will be a general meeting to which each sub-branch will send five delegates. The location of these meetings will be decided by a resolution at the immediately previous meeting.

Article XII: At the ordinary meetings the president will make a report on the budget, the finances, and the conditions of the party. 84

The important ideas to be gleaned from this document are: (1) its realistic emphasis on a party that accurately reflects conditions of its immediate area, which, put into historical context, probably meant that some issues and principles espoused by the national party were considered more pertinent than others to the Aizu branch; (2) a strong executive, but one nonetheless checked by democratic elections by the party membership (estimated at about 300); 85 and (3) reasonably firm control by the centre over its sub-branches, and within the sub-branches themselves, control over their own affairs by one figure who was appointed by central headquarters.

The manner in which the Aizu Jiyuto branch organised its sub-branches clearly tells of its wish to reflect prevailing regional conditions. From evidence taken from later court testimony by party members and from the personal papers of Aizu Jiyuto member Miura Shinroku, we can clearly discern the nature of its local organisation. 86 The basic unit of local organisation was the "cell," as it was termed by the incident's
participants during court interrogation; or the "organ" (kumi), as it was termed by Miura in his diary. Each "cell" consisted of anywhere from two to seven villages and had one "person responsible" (sekininsha) at its head. These "cell" leaders were appointed by the Aizu Jiyuto headquarters, presumably by its four officials. Each "cell" took its name from the principal village included in it, and its leader usually came from this village.

Records leave us with examples of eleven "cells," consisting of thirty-nine villages in all. Here we provide only three examples. (1) The Komeoka "cell" was comprised of Komeoka itself, Kanno, and Miyakawa villages. It was headed by Miura Bunji, who was later tried for "treason" for his part in the Fukushima Incident, released, and then subsequently convicted for his role in the Kabasan Incident. (2) The Atsushio "cell," led by Endo Yuhachi, identified as one of the principal activists during the incident, consisted of Atsushio, Sota, Torimiyama and Santa villages. (3) The Yamato "cell," located ten kilometres west of Kitakata, included the village itself, Kofuneji and Honhata, and the "person responsible" was Saito Yamokichi, one of many individuals whose claim to fame stopped there, as far as historical records are concerned.

It is also important to note as a basis of temporal comparison how these same villages, before they became units or "cells," responded several years earlier to the Yama district petition to open a National Assembly (quoted earlier). Of the 271 signatories from Yama district, the Komeoka "cell" accounted for 152, the Atsushio "cell" for only nine (Santa village was not listed as having any petitioners), and the Yamato
"cell," ninety-six signatures; together these three cells contributed 94 per cent of the signatures appearing on the petition. Hence considerable continuity existed from the second stage of popular rights development into the third stage.

The leadership of the "cells," and of the Aizu Jiyuto in general, was a remarkably homogeneous group in terms of social, economic, and political status. Most were, as we have seen, village heads, and most came from villages situated in the northern half of the Aizu basin—Atsushio, Komeoka, Kanno, Shinai, etc. But superimposed on these commonalties, Takahashi tells us, were the "ties of blood and of marriage." Takahashi counts between thirty and forty village heads as minken leaders related by such ties. Three brothers of Nakajima Yuhachi, for instance, were village heads of different Aizu villages and were later imprisoned after the incident. The headman of Kanno, Endo Naoki, and Toyama Teiji, headman of Iwatsuki village, were both brothers-in-law to Nakajima. In all, more than ten members of this family were later arrested. Another instance is that of Miura Bunji and Makabe Kijo who were members of "branch families" (bunke) of Jiyuto activist Miura Shinroku's "main family" (honke). The list goes on and on. Takahashi claims not only that "blood relations and marriage were at the core in the formation of the Aizu Jiyuto leadership," but also that when government repression became severe these relationships held the movement together.

When repression became more intense during the months leading up to the Kitakata incident, the "cells" were employed in the tax boycott and mass litigation movements. It appears that in some villages, for
example Shinai village (part of the Kumagaya "cell"), where Akajiro was a "hereditary" village head and, during village meetings, sat in the traditional seat of honour, the participation in these movements was large and very effective, no one having broken the boycott under government pressure. Komeoka is another such example: in that village headman Miura Bunji and gono Watanabe Shuya used the traditional moral force of their social positions to keep the members of their villages together during the tax boycott.

This point was suggested in the last chapter, that is, the close correlation between the village from which a leader came and the number of villagers mobilized from the same village. However, the reason for high rates of mobilization and village solidarity was not necessarily due only to bonds of traditional relationships between a village authority figure and its inhabitants, as suggested in the above two cases. It may also have been due to political reasons, i.e., political indoctrination of the village inhabitants by a political leader who, coincidentally, was also a headman. This seems to have been true of the influence of Akajiro and Miura Bunji, in the two cases just cited. In short, it seems that both traditional relationships and those defined by new political ideas served to bring villagers into the movement. Yet, although both were operative, the leaders of the movement were not appealing to tradition in their efforts to mobilize supporters, but instead were proclaiming the rights of man.

In addition to the "cells," the Aizu Jiyuto also organised itself through, and lent its own organisation to, the Aizu Rengokai, which
consisted of eighty-six towns and 493 villages located within the six districts comprising the Aizu region. The executives of this organisation were Nakajima Yuhachi ("head"), Uda Seiichi, Hara Heizo, Miura Mojiro, Kojima Shuya, Saji Yomatsu, and Watanabe Ichiro, all of whom were identified in the last chapter as among those who were arrested for their part in the Fukushima Incident. Government reports at that time singled out Hara, Uda, and Maeda Kosaku as the principal "trouble-makers." One report claimed, "These three Jiyuto members are representative of the malcontents; they call extraordinary meetings of the Aizu Rengokai and make motions against the road-building." Once the Rengokai was suspended by Governor Mishima (see Chapter I), these same Jiyuto members plus several others--Yamaguchi, Akajiro, Igarashi, etc.--commenced organising the tax boycott, mass litigation, and petition movements to reconvene the Rengokai, taking all of these issues to the people of the region in the form of lecture meetings. At least fifty-two lecture meetings were held in April 1882, involving over 200 lecturers who travelled throughout the territory to speak about the various movements under foot.

It was also during this time that party activity, perhaps due to these lectures, spread to Aizu districts outside of Yama.

Lecture meetings, rather than "academies" as in the case of the Eastern Fukushima Jiyuto, served as the primary means to proselytize and recruit members to these various movements in Aizu. The topics of the lectures were as varied as the speakers. On one occasion Hara, Uryu, Miura Shinroku, Endo Yuhachi and Miura Mojiro were the principal
Hara lectured about "The Battlefield of Reason" (Dori no senjo), wherein he explained that "in a young society, only if reason is employed on the [political] battlefield can the ways of brute force be completely overcome," and moved on to discuss how that thought related to the current political situation. Uryu lectured on the natural rights of man and how their realization in positive law would bring society the rewards of heaven. Miura Shinroku gave a lecture entitled "The Incompatibilities of Society" (Shakai no futekigo), which anticipated by four years the radical liberal Oi Kentaro's famous Jiji yoron (1886; "A Treatise on the Needs of These Times") wherein Oi called for a law to equalize landholdings. In Miura's words, the lecture tried "to explain how in an enlightened society the inequalities of intelligence and wealth can be overcome" and argued that "now is the time to apply one's energies to the task of equalization (yonarashi) of wealth and education." In another lecture, "Chitose no ichigu" ("One Chance in a Thousand Years"), he said that the Imperial Will calling for a national assembly and "giving people political rights to participate in government" would only have "one chance in a thousand" of being realized if it were postponed until 1890. For his part, Endo explicitly urged members of his audience "to join our political party in order to safeguard its principles." All of these addresses, incidentally, were given on 2 May 1882, at Kitakata, and in "forced" attendance, taking notes, was a Kitakata policeman appointed by the local constabulary.

These speeches and ones like them were given throughout the Aizu region beginning in April 1882, and continued until the Kitakata incident
in November. It is difficult to say exactly how many heard them. It is
known, however, that at one lecture broken up by the police at Wakamatsu,
300 people were in attendance. At another on 12 May 1882, at Waka­
matsu, with Hara and Miura Shinroku speaking, over 200 attended. Aver­
age attendance was less in smaller villages; for example, at Aoki village
on 26 May, broken up by the police, eighty villagers attended. Takahashi
reports that the usual figure for a village lecture was "several tens,"
but also notes that there was at least one instance of 1,200 people fil­
ing the lecture hall at an Aizu Jiyuto meeting. Whatever the figure,
it is certain that the Aizu Jiyuto reached a good number of ears through
its lecture meetings.

For this reason, and for the other reasons that have been men­
tioned--"cells" relying on village leaders who were also Jiyuto members,
strong family ties among the leadership, and the use of the Aizu Rengokai
--Takahashi was correct in stating that its organisation was stronger
than that of eastern Fukushima. The Eastern Fukushima Jiyuto was diffuse
and universalistic, looking more to the Tokyo central headquarters and
to the Kochi branch for ideological and organisational leadership, than
to itself. In a very real sense its location, i.e., the fact that it was
the Fukushima Jiyuto, was incidental. It was Jiyuto, first and foremost,
and the Fukushima Jiyuto only secondarily. The writers of the history of
the Liberal Party recognized this. In referring to the Sanshisha of
Miharu (along with the Kyugasha of Iwate), they said, "Suddenly they
have become the leading advocates of liberalism (jiyushugi)."

In great part this universalism was undoubtedly due to Kono
Hironaka's leadership. Not only, as we have seen, was he the founder of local political societies in Fukushima, but he was also one of the early activists in the national popular rights movement and a founding member of the national Jiyuto in October 1881. His goals for the nation were identical to his goals for Fukushima. These goals were best defined on 1 October 1881, in a platform policy of the Jiyuto signed by himself and ninety-eight others.

Our party seeks to expand freedom, defend rights, increase welfare and happiness, and map out social reform... Our party seeks to establish a constitutional government in order to fulfill the above goals.103

Like most of the others who were national leaders of the Party, Kono too was in favour of legal and non-violent means to accomplish the above goals. Only once in his long and successful career as a politician of national importance did he advocate violence (as we shall see). For the most part he strictly abided by the law. In fact, it was really only "accidental" that he became embroiled in the Fukushima Incident. Even after Governor Mishima had overturned the anti-road bill passed by the prefectural assembly, of which he was chairman, Kono said, "This problem of road construction should definitely not be the main business of our party."104 That he tried to ensure that this was the case is shown by the agenda of items discussed in the third regular meeting held at Fukushima Town on 20 May 1882, and attended by Kono and twenty others. The four issues discussed were:

1) The submission of a written report to the Emperor asking for a shortening of the waiting period for convening the national assembly.
2) The warning to Governor Mishima about his arbitrary actions.
3) The recruitment of new party members and the establishment of party branches in other districts.
4) The decision whether to send party members to speak at various districts within the prefecture.\textsuperscript{105}

Notice that nothing here was mentioned about aiding the Aizu Jiyuto; in fact it was not until October that the struggle in Aizu became the most important item on the Fukushima Jiyuto agenda.\textsuperscript{106} But most importantly, throughout the entire episode, it appears that Kono (and other easterners) was unable to extrapolate the important and more general question of self-government from the single issue of the Aizu road construction scheme.

It was only after repeated suppression of party activists by the Governor, and the continued introduction of the Aizu affair as an important topic into party meetings by others (such as Aizawa, Hanaka, Hirajima, etc.) that Kono and several others committed the crime of sedition for which they were later prosecuted. The evidence for the crime of sedition ("treason") was a "written vow" (seiyaku) in the form of a "blood pledge" (ketsumei) that was literally sealed in blood by six young Jiyuto members--Kono Hironaka (thirty-three), Tamano Hidaeki (thirty-four), Aizawa Yasukata (thirty-three), Hirajima Matsuo (twenty-eight), Hanaka Kyojiro (twenty-six), and Sawada Kiyonosuke (twenty); it was dated 1 August 1882. Since this document bears considerable resemblance to manifestos subsequently drawn up by the Kabasan and Chichibu rebels, we quote it in full here.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Our party will overthrow the oppressive government which is the public enemy of freedom and will endeavour to construct a political system that reflects the views of the public.
\item In order to achieve this goal of our party, we renounce personal
life and property, we free ourselves from the ties of mutual kindness and affection, and will concern ourselves completely with the situation confronting us.

(3) Our party honours and defends the constitution, as we resolved in our party conferences, and we endeavour to act as one mind and body in this matter.

(4) In the event that realities crush the intentions of our party and we encounter all manners of disaster, even if time lapses over years and months, our party will never disband.

(5) If a member transgresses his written vows and betrays the secrecy of our party and its members, then he should immediately kill himself.

These five articles of our vow should be carried out decisively, lest our party die.107

The vow was written by Hanaka and edited by Sawada,108 and was found by the police on 1 December 1882, during an extensive search of the Mumeikan ("The Hall of No Names"), the Jiyuto headquarters in Fukushima Town.109

The blood pact is interesting for its curious combination of natural right doctrine, as seen in its first article, with the self-sacrificing, "honour-above-everything" mentality that so strongly characterized the samurai of the Tokugawa period. It is no mere accident, then that all six oath-takers were born into the shizoku class (though Kono and Tamano were déclassé).

The Mumeikan, where the oath was found, was the central headquarters of the Eastern Jiyuto branch. To a great extent, it took over the duties of the Seidokan and the Sekkyosha (and of other political societies) once the Eastern Jiyuto branch was founded. It was originally situated at the home of Okano Chizo in Fukushima Town; there in late December 1881, twenty men from throughout all of Fukushima met to establish a Jiyuto branch110 (eight of them were later tried for treason).
Prior to its first general meeting in March, it set up a schedule for regular party meetings, appointed representatives from each district to serve as liaison officers, made preparations to establish the Fukushima Jiyu Shimbun, and appointed editors for the paper; it established entrance and fee requirements, meeting times, and election procedures; it set up dormitories for visiting lecturers and popular rights advocates; and it established relations with the Tokyo headquarters and professed allegiance to the National Party. In short, it was thoroughly organised as a Jiyuto branch to serve all districts within Fukushima prefecture. However, since it made no mention of organising village membership, its organisational and ideological character more closely paralleled that of the National Party than it did the Aizu branch.

This is not to say, however, that it was ineffective in spreading popular rights ideas. Although like the Seidokan and Sekkyosha in that it directed recruitment toward individual meiboka whom these organisations sought to mold into minken shishi ("warriors for peoples' rights"), the Mumeikan was also indirectly responsible for the growth of the popular rights movement among those living in the countryside. It had a "rippling effect" when an individual trained by these organisations would return to his village and organise a "political circle." Takahashi claims that many political circles sprang up throughout eastern Fukushima during the late seventies and early eighties; here we will look at one named the Doshinkai ("Society for Mutual Advancement") that began operation in December 1881, at the village of Utsu, located about twenty kilometres north of Miharu (Tamura district).
During the interrogation of Kamada Yuzan (eighteen), the name of his friend and fellow villager, Okawa Masaeizo (twenty-five) (both were tried for treason and are therefore listed in our sample) came up and the following exchange took place between Kamada and the prosecutor:

Q. From whom did you receive the rules of the Miharu Jiyuto organisation [the Seidokan]?
A. They were distributed by Okawa of the Doshinkai of "Upper" Utsu village, Tamura district.

Q. When was this Doshinkai established?
A. Around December, 1881.

Q. How many members does it have and who were its central figures?
A. There are fourteen or fifteen members and Okawa is its leader.

Q. Who is this Okawa?
A. He was a primary school teacher, but now he sells wine bottles.

The questioning then changed topics to find out Kamada's relationship with Kono and the Mumeikan:

Q. Around what month did you become acquainted with Kono Hironaka?
A. On July 24, 1882, I first met him at the Mumeikan.

Q. When you came to the Mumeikan, whom did you speak about?
A. About Matsumoto Miyaji.

Q. Who is this Matsumoto Miyaji?
A. A primary school teacher in Miharu town who at the time was working for the Jiyuto Party newspaper.

Q. For what purpose did you come to the Mumeikan, the "hangout of the Jiyuto?"
A. In order to kill time with some friends... and to speak with Miyaji and Kono about working for the newspaper...

Eventually the questioning moved on to Kamada's journey to Aizu on 13 October 1882, in order to meet Uda Seiichi about a financial contribution to the party newspaper. He then recounts his reasons for deciding to stay and help in the fight there, mainly out of sympathy for friend Akajiro Heiroku who was losing his property to public auction for his refusal to pay taxes.

He was also asked:

Q. For what reason did you join the Jiyuto?
A. To promote its principles of expanding the rights of liberty.
Kamada, then, a Jiyuto member with close connection to the Doshinkai, a "political circle," typifies the "rippling effect" that the Seidokan (via Okawa) had upon young heimin farmers of the rural areas. From contact with Okawa, he became involved in Mumeikan affairs, which in turn led him to the Aizu road struggle, then to befriend Akajiro, and to be tried eventually as a "traitor" for a political crime.

Nor is this an isolated example.

Sugamura Taiji, also tried for treason, and six other members of a political circle, the Taishokan ("Great Righteousness Society") of a small village midway between Miharu and Utsu, were known to have marched into Aizu to assist the struggle in late October, announcing themselves as Tamura soshi ("political stalwarts of Tamura"). Their actions bespeak of the influence that the various "academies" of the Jiyuto had upon individuals, of the way the Mumeikan could transform abstract ideas into concrete action.

But the Mumeikan's existence, like that of the Aizu Jiyuto, was short-lived. Once the Kitakata Incident occurred in late November 1882, and the wholesale arrests began, both Jiyuto branches and the various "academies" effectively folded. Although a few party stalwarts continued to fight for the principles of the Jiyuto, by litigation and local organising, most members merely faded away. Not until the first Diet election in 1890 did any re-emerge, and then, as we shall see in the last chapter, some exchanged the clothes of the popular rights activist for the new suit of the nationalist.
The Jiyuto and the Kabasan Rebels

Of all the principal characters involved in the three incidents under study, the Kabasan rebels distinguish themselves by placing ideology above organisation. They were men of action who believed that acting according to the dictates of their ideals—quickly and without reservation—was more important than building an efficient organisation that might implement their ideals. They, more than any of the other rebels of the gekka jiken, were true revolutionaries, blindly determined to overthrow the ruling authority of the Meiji State. In many ways their actions, if not their ideas as well, resemble those of nineteenth-century European and Russian populists whose "conceptions of 'obligations' towards the people, and 'sacrificing oneself for the people'" prompted them to attempt suicidal attacks against the Russian State. The Kabasan rebels seemed to have believed with Herzen, "the true founder of Populism,"

The people suffer much, their life is burdensome, they harbour deep hatreds, and feel passionately that there will soon be a change. ... They are waiting not for ready-made works but for the revelation of what is secretly stirring in their spirits. They are not waiting for books but for apostles—men who combine faith, will, conviction and energy; men who will never divorce themselves from them; men who do not necessarily spring from them, but who act within them and with them, with a dedicated and steady faith. The man who feels himself to be so near the people that he has been virtually freed by them from the atmosphere of artificial civilization; the man who has achieved the unity and intensity of which we are speaking—he will be able to speak to the people and must do so.118

And like Herzen, Bakunin, Chernyshevsky, Nechaev and other Western Populists, the Kabasan rebels believed that if they acted faithfully for "the people," the people themselves would respond in revolution. It was the Bakuninist idea that "it was not the peasant masses who had to be prepared, but the small group of revolutionaries which would light the spark."119
In fact, as we saw in Chapter I, the Kabasan rebels, much like their Western counterparts, did not really go to the people. In part this was due, again as in the case of the Russian populists, to "the need for secrecy" which "had prevented them from establishing even those personal and direct relations with the peasants" that were absolutely necessary in order to gain their support. Conspiracy, intrigue, secrecy, and a self-imposed isolation from the very ones they intended to serve were all conditions that the Kabasan rebels had to endure because they had opted for the "small movement" strategy, but only after considerable debate within their ranks over the merits of the strategies of assassination versus raising a peoples' army. Nor surprisingly, the Russian populists of the late-nineteenth century had experienced a similar debate: between the forces of the Zemlya I Volya (Land and Liberty) who argued for "going to the people," and the Narodnaya Volya (The Will of the People) who favoured employing small, conspiratorial groups armed with bombs to assassinate government officials. In both the Russian and Japanese cases, the "assassination faction" emerged as the victor in the debate, but only after the fruitlessness of the methods of their opponents in the "debate" had been demonstrated.

What the adoption of the strategy of assassination does to organisation has already been indicated in Chapter I. What happens is that a small, conspiratorial organisation comes to be the final outcome of recruitment, a process defined in terms of personalities, tactics, dates of events, chance and other forces over which the men involved have very little control, rather than in terms of rules, guidelines, programmes, in
short, anything which may impart viability to the group. Compared to the organisations of the Fukushima and Chichibu rebels, that of the Kabasan insurrectionists was ad hoc, dictated more by shared beliefs than by rational structures. In this section, we shall examine those "shared beliefs," the ideology of natural right which committed its believers to make revolution in its name.

Throughout much of the planning for the assassination Koinuma Kuhachiro played the pivotal role in the conspiracy, or as one specialist has phrased it, "Koinuma was the principal axis of the plot from the beginning." It was Koinuma who devised the plan of employing bombs, and, along with Kono Hiroshi, did much of the recruiting. But if Koinuma was able to attract members to the group because of his strong commitment to assassinationism, he was also capable of alienating them from the group. Ohashi Genjiro was one example. In the early stages of planning, Ohashi's home had been used as a meeting place, and later as a place to make bombs. But disagreement with Koinuma over the "small movement" issue caused him to break with the rebels shortly before the rebellion. Ohashi said:

In our talks Koinuma and I could not come to an understanding. He disregarded all that I said. Even though I frequently stated my position to our companions, I was worried since they disagreed with me.

Saeki Masakado was another example. He expressed doubts that political reform would necessarily follow once high-ranking officials were assassinated. He argued for more preparation and planning, especially among local residents whom he felt should be included. But "from the first my opinion was not acceptable as workable by the others, especially with
regard to planning matters in local areas." Consequently, Saeki quietly disappeared several days before the rebellion.

Koinuma's commitment to assassination was as strong as his commitment to the popular rights movement. His start in the movement may have had something to do with his failure as a businessman. We know that he suffered frequent financial losses during the time he assisted the family business of tea refining, milk production, and dyeing in the mid-seventies.

In any event, by 1879 or 1880, when he was in his late twenties, Koinuma began to get involved in the popular rights movement. His introduction to the movement probably came from his friends Arai Shogo and Shioda Okuzo, two of the principal activists of the Shimotsuga district (Tochigi prefecture). These three friends were among the hundred or so popular rights advocates of Tochigi who were originally involved in petitioning for the establishment of a national assembly in 1880. In February of that year, Koinuma, Arai, and Shioda attended a large popular rights conference held in Tsukuba, Ibaraki prefecture, where members of political societies from across the country attended. On 1 October 1882, these same three were among the leaders of the prefecture who established the Tochigi Jiyuto; its membership eventually was the second highest in the nation (after Akita). With the founding of the party, Koinuma immediately began serving as one of its many "travelling lecturers."

In January 1883, however, after the Fukushima incident, and after repeated setbacks in the push for self-government in the Tochigi prefec-trutal assembly (of which Arai and Shiota were members), Koinuma, Arai, Shiota, Fukao Masashi (later discovered to be a police spy by Yokoyama Nobuyuki) and others held a secret conference in a small inn located
in Tochigi town to discuss the significance of the Fukushima Incident and how it would affect the expansion of party strength. Several other such meetings were held during the same year, but the details are not known. It is known, however, that around this time Koinuma was becoming disenchanted with the ineffectiveness of peaceful politics. He said then,

The carrying out of political intrigue by the clique government and its allegiance to a philosophy of conservatism, more than the remnants of feudalism, the authority they hold, and the arbitrary way they utilize the law to obstruct the advancement of popular sentiments, is responsible for the arrest in social progress. Also, the citizenry behaves like a puppet, allowing the social order to become petrified . . . .

Once having characterized this political and social malaise, he proffered his solution: "An extraordinary sickness demands an extraordinary remedy." The "remedy" that Koinuma chose, we of course know. It seems that he regarded the method as inseparable from the "remedy." He stated during interrogation, "I decided to use bombs for assassination as I recalled my earlier experience and imagined what a suitable device they would be for this purpose." The "experience" to which he referred was the lessons he took in 1877 or 1878, from a certain Fukuda of Fukushima on how to make bombs. Koinuma's story, however, differs from that of his disciple, Yokoyama Nobuyuki. Yokoyama testified:

Q. State the source of the invention.
A. In producing the bombs, there were many hardships we encountered: the use of detonators, the [difficulty] of scientific books, etc.
Q. Yes, but weren't there other reasons for using bombs?
A. I got some facts from newspapers that told about their use by European and Russian nihilists (kyomuto), and felt they were better for assassinating people.

It is strange that Koinuma's and Yokoyama's stories are not the same;
since November 1880, Yokoyama had been Koinuma's near-constant companion, when at the age of sixteen he became Koinuma's permanent boarder. An answer can only be conjectured: although Yokoyama undoubtedly learned about bombs from Koinuma, he was attracted to the reports on the nihilists and decided to imitate them.

The methods that Koinuma chose, however, were less important than the end he sought. During his trial he identified the nature of the problem and proposed the necessary solution:

Today's political system displays its oppression of liberty by high taxes and high prices for goods, by the difficulties of the people, and by their suffering. My hope is first, to aid the people in accordance with Jiyuto ideas. My other hope, the highest one, is for like-minded men and myself to communicate and then to summon our energies for a revolution that ends only in death (kesshi kakumei).

Like the Russian populists, Koinuma's first hope, then, was "to aid the people," but he realized that in order to do this it was first necessary to ally himself, not with "the people," but with "like-minded men." Nonetheless, he sought "from the beginning," in his own words, "to act on the hope that I might sacrifice myself for the nation." But that note of patriotism does not make Koinuma one of the ideological ancestors of the militaristic "Young Officers" of the 1930's, as one might suspect. The fascists of the thirties justified their violent activities by invoking the names of samurai who led the Restoration. Koinuma, however, drew upon an entirely different precedent, in his own words, "the overthrow of the English government that had obstructed the rights of liberty." No less committed "to aid the people" was the more cerebral Tomatsu Masao, the head of a popular rights academy for Jiyuto youth and
the man to whom the leaderless Kabasan rebels turned in late September after Koinuma had been injured by one of his own bombs. Tomatsu, unlike Koinuma, was a Jiyuto leader of national renown and known in his native Ibaraki as "one of the great men of this region" (ikkojin no ketsubutsu). Along with such notables as Itagaki, Ueki Emori, Nakae Chomin, Kono Hironaka, Tanaka Shozo, Miyabe Noboru, Naito Roichi, and Oi Kentaro, he was a signatory to the early Aikokusha petitions for a national assembly. Because of his participation in the popular rights movement, and because of a new law proscribing the involvement of teachers and government officials in politics, Tomatsu lost his job as a primary school teacher in Shimodate around 1880. This experience undoubtedly embittered him even more toward the government. He regarded this law and the loss of his job as an infringement of the individual's right to establish relations with whatever and whomever he wished (the popular right movement and his friends in it). His feeling for the right of free association was reflected in the short poem he composed upon losing his job:

If we search for the thing
that makes a man what he is,
 isn't it one's true friends?

Having lost his job, he devoted more time to politics. In October 1881, he was present at the establishment of the National Jiyuto, and for whatever reason, came to align himself with his good friend and radical Jiyuto member, Oi Kentaro. Within the Jiyuto itself, Tomatsu was regarded as a radical. A secret Jiyuto report written in June 1884 (Jiyuto no seiryaku oyobi naijo) about the internal conditions of the party, said,
Within the Liberal Party itself there are, of course, radicals (*kageki kyushin no mono* [literally, "people of extreme and violent persuasions"]). They have come to carry out radical activities, independent of the Party. They have come to be called the *Kesshi-ha* ("Death-seeking faction"). There are several factions and they are dispersed among several areas, and take as their leaders Miyabe Noboru, Saito Isao, and Oi Kentaro.\(^{146}\)

Following this appeared the names of twenty-four individuals listed according to prefecture. Gumma had nine, Ibaraki eight, Chiba four and several other prefectures one apiece. The report guessed that about 500 party members (between 20 to 25 per cent of the total membership)\(^ {147}\) were active in this faction. Tomatsu was named as one of its Ibaraki leaders. The Gumma *Kesshi-ha* formed the core of the Gumma Incident (May 1884) and later Tomatsu remarked in a letter about this incident, "If the Gumma Incident had not occurred, then the [Kabasan] probably would not have taken place."\(^ {148}\) This connection was also noted by Endo Shizuo: "The Oi Kentaro faction was built upon the support of two groups, Miyabe's of Gumma and Tomatsu's of Ibaraki."\(^ {149}\)

What "membership" in the "Death-seeking Faction" meant, in the case of Tomatsu at least, was a commitment to revolution. As we have seen, his particular scenario for revolution in Japan was somewhat different from the "assassination-ism" advocated by most of his fellow Kabasan rebels. Tomatsu's plan for revolution can be understood by looking at a pact that he, along with Oda Jiro, who was later tied to the Chichibu Incident, and Seikyo Kyodo, a resident of Chichibu, wrote jointly in Hachioji (Kanagawa) on 2 August 1880, but dated by them, "Year one of the Era of Free Self Rule":

> We join forces to raise an army of revolution in Kanto, covering Kanagawa, Saitama, Tokyo, Gumma, Ibaraki and Tochigi. It will
overthrow the oppressive government that makes itself the enemy of freedom, and we will build a new government that is completely free. Under heaven we join forces and make this great alliance that will bring good fortune to our country.150

In order to realize this ambitious plan, Tomatsu understood that the organising of a rebellion would mean involving the one organisation that had the necessary resources and the connections—with the various popular rights organisations of the Kanto area—to allow it to superintend the rebellion and, subsequently, to form a new government. This central organisation was, of course, the Jiyuto headquarters in Tokyo. Accordingly, Tomatsu dispatched one of his followers to go to Tokyo and to speak to Oi and Ueki about receiving party aid for this plan. Oi, however, objected, arguing that the time was not yet ripe for a revolution; only Ueki Emori did not oppose the scheme.151

That failure did not stop Tomatsu from trying on his own to organise a rebellion around the capitol. In early August, Tomatsu sent future Kabasan rebels Kobayashi, Isokawa, and Hirao to meet with some of his contacts in the Hachioji Poor Peoples' Party (Komminto). The goal of the emmisaries was to try to persuade the Hachioji Komminto to join the revolution. Upon returning, they reported to Tomatsu: "They are unable to understand our reasons for revolution. They are lacking in principles, spirit and will, and they would not discuss the matter seriously."152 Another attempt by Tomatsu to recruit the copper miners at Ashio, Gumma, also met with failure. This series of failures to try and mobilize "the people" probably made Tomatsu all the more receptive to the Kabasan rebels' request for Tomatsu to serve as leader. (See Chapter I.)
Tomatsu's commitment to revolution was not limited to attempts to raise armies. He also tried to educate those whom he regarded as potential revolutionaries. To this purpose, Tomatsu established an "academy" for young popular rights advocates in his home at Shimodate, probably in August 1884, although it was likely operating informally before that time. The name of the academy was the Yuikan ("Academy for Those with Purpose"). It appears that both its name and purpose were modeled after the central party's youth academy, the Yuikkan ("Academy of Unity"), as the following quote taken from the official Party history indicates:

The different Yuikkan that have been built in several areas seem to have members who are inclined toward the use of arms, stressing bravery among their young members, promoting sword competition, horse races [and so on]. . . . Among these small societies that study the literary and martial arts that are most popular are the Yuikan of Shimodate [Tomatsu's] and those found in Kochi prefecture.

Helping Tomatsu manage the Yuikan was fellow Kabasan rebel Tamamatsu; he served both as fencing instructor and as bodyguard to Tomatsu. Helping Tomatsu manage the Yuikan was fellow Kabasan rebel Tamamatsu; he served both as fencing instructor and as bodyguard to Tomatsu. They were described by one of their contemporaries in this way: "These two men nurtured political ideas and planned together in order to inspire activity among the young men of the area; they built this research academy that taught the literary and martial arts." One of its members and later Kabasan rebel, Kobayashi, even left the presumably more prestigious central party's Yuikkan to study at Tomatsu's: "I went for the opening of the Yuikan so I could study literary and martial arts. I decided to attend on the advice of [fellow Kabasan rebel] Hota Komakichi. . . ." Hota, however, did just the reverse of Kobayashi and left Ibaraki
before the Yuikan was opened to become a student of the Tokyo Yuikkan.

Hota also tells us (in courtroom testimony) that there were "about thirty-seven or thirty-eight students at the Yuikkan." We also know that at least thirteen of the Kabasan rebels met each other for the first time there, and later did much of their planning there as well. Kobayashi maintained, in fact, that the very decision to begin the rebellion was made at the Tokyo Yuikkan. Also, some of its students who were living in the Yuikkan dormitory took advantage of their residency to purchase and hide bomb materials in their rooms. One of its older students, Hirao Yasokichi, who also rebelled at Mount Kaba, wrote the manifesto which was copied and later distributed to Ibaraki peasants.

It is not surprising that the Tokyo Yuikkan served as a hotbed of radical activity. In fact, it had been founded by the Jiyuto headquarters in the hope that it would help to divert the radical tendencies of the party's more youthful members. It had opened on 10 August 1884, after nearly a year of "concentrating its [the Jiyuto's] energies on getting financial contributions." Its first director was the old popular rights stalwart Kataoka Kenkichi, and at its opening ceremonies were other such Jiyuto notables as President Itagaki, Hoshi Toru, Ueki Emori, Oi Kentaro, Miyabe Noboru and Tomatsu Masao; in all, some 500 party members were in attendance. Like the Ibaraki one, the Tokyo Yuikkan was set up as "an institute for the study of the literary and martial arts." Although it is not known precisely what kinds of subjects were studied, we can guess at what they were by examining some of the ideas of several of its students, albeit its more radical students—the ones who participated in the Kabasan Incident.
As stated earlier, Hota was one who studied at the Tokyo Yuikkan. From the following exchange between Hota and the prosecutor, we clearly see that his reference to "the cabinet" (Council of State or Dajokan; the cabinet as such did not come into existence until 1885) indicates an awareness of its oligarchic powers:

Q. What was your purpose for attacking government officials?
A. To establish a political system having true liberties, not encumbered by existing organizations such as the cabinet; the present government interferes and oppresses; it needed to be overthrown.

Q. What methods could you properly use other than brute force?
A. Our party members have made speeches, pointing out the lack of government reform and its irrational operation, and have discussed the cruel way it treats its citizens. We seventeen [rebels] wanted to reform politics, to base it on free speech and discourse. . . .166

The arguments for less concentration of power in the hands of the cabinet and for free speech as a way to reform the political system might very likely have come from a reading of Locke or Rousseau, and Mill, respectively. Whatever the source, the emphasis is on the need to overthrow the government in order to create conditions which would allow political reform. The same thought is echoed in the words of Kobayashi, the Kabasan rebel who left the Tokyo Yuikkan in order to study at the Shimo-date Yuikan:

I had always hoped for, and thought how to bring about, the prosperity and freedom that would advance the nation. Above all, I thought that the extremism (kyushinshugi) of the radical party (Kagekito) might bring about an atmosphere of liberty; it might reform politics by overthrowing the oppressive government of Japan.167

These ideas were not necessarily learned at either academy, for Kobayashi subsequently remarks that "I had held these ideas for several years and had mentioned them more than once to those I visited on my journeys throughout our country."168 As likely as not his ideas merely
received intellectual reinforcement from his studies. An equally important influence on his thinking were those with whom he discussed these ideas. He names them as, fellow Kabasan rebels Kono Hiroshi, Sugiura, Isokawa, Yamaguchi and Amano, "people like myself who were of the opinion that their goal should be to reform our wicked society (ja-aku shakai) by embracing liberalism (jiyushugi)." His appraisal of his friends was indeed correct. Kono sought to effect his "greatest hope, revolution, in order to create a decent order." Kotoda's "principal purpose was to use brute force (wanryoku) to reform the Meiji government." Isokawa simply wanted to "reform politics." Sugiura's goal was "to assassinate ministers of state in order to bring about the revolution (kakumei)." In short, all seemed to agree with Kobayashi's definition of "wicked society": "an oppressive system of politics that crushes the common people." But perhaps the most eloquent and heart-rending statement made by any of the rebels was that made by Kokugi Shigeo in a letter dated 1 August 1883, sent to Miura Bunji:

My words seem inadequate to express how unbearable and strong my resentment is. I relentlessly plan reform for our society and commit myself to advancing the liberty and rights of the people whenever I look upon the wretched conditions existing today. My heart is nearly splitting, and you, my friend, I am sure, must feel the same. Our political system only treats unimportant, trivial details, and ignores the basic problems. Perhaps that is a job that you and our friends must take on.

All these personal statements made by the different Kabasan rebels are important for the individual hopes, goals, plans and frustrations that they express. But perhaps the most important statement made by any of the rebels is the one they made collectively, the manifesto written by the Yuikkan student Hirao, but signed by all sixteen men who climbed Mount
Kaba. It is also important for the statement it makes about the nature of the ideology they shared, the doctrine of natural right. Because of its importance, we quote the entire document.

Of first importance in making a nation is to equalize the wealth and rights that heaven has bestowed on each individual, and to make clear the basis of equality. Secondly, the principle behind setting up government is to restrain and to preserve both the well-being of its citizens, and their liberties coming from their natural rights (jimmin tempu). Having done this, government should enact rigid laws, and should administer them impartially.

Looking closely at the situation in our country today we see that internally we do not yet have a national assembly, and externally we have not revised the foreign treaties. In order to achieve these objectives we embark on a course of political treason. It appears that our wise and virtuous Emperor is being neglectful, not realizing that this is not the time to make great exactions on the people who are walking the road of starvation. As individuals who regard ourselves as humanitarians and as patriots, we regret this pitiful situation and cannot endure it. We cannot endure witnessing this breakdown, sitting idly by, and must, therefore, prop up our great country, as one would do for a large tree. Accordingly, we will assemble an army on Mt Kaba, Makabe gun, Ibaraki ken, to fight for revolution, and to overthrow the despotic government that has made itself the enemy of freedom; and then to establish a completely free constitutional form of government.

Fellow countrymen, all thirty-seven million of you, heed the call of our party. We who are here are not for the most part patriots of the shizoku type. Spread the word and announce it to your fellow countrymen. [Dated, 23 September 1884, and signed by sixteen men.]

The philosophical basis of the Kabasan manifesto is straightforward natural right doctrine; all men possess the fundamental rights of liberty, property and "well-being"; in some unexplained way, all men have contracted with one another "to retain and preserve" these rights by establishing a state; the legitimacy of the state rests upon this "contract"; at present, however, the manifesto maintains, neither the laws enacted by the state, nor the administration of them, are in accordance with the terms of the contract; neither foreign nor domestic policy is
responsive to the rights of the citizenry; as "humanitarians and as patriots" the Kabasan rebels are duty-bound to overthrow the government that has betrayed the trust of the people, and to erect in its stead a constitutional government which manifestly guarantees the natural rights of the people. Finally, in the last paragraph the rebels make explicit that they are acting not as traditional style samurai who are intent merely to revenge some empty, valueless feudal code of honour, but instead are acting as patriots concerned only for the rights of their fellow citizens.

This final point deserves some elaboration. It will be recalled from Chapter I that the recruitment process was guided not by the attempt to enlist "men of high repute" as was the case with, say, the young samurai who assassinated Okubo Toshimichi in 1878.177 Instead they sought like-minded men, setting aside the factor of social status. It was a classless affair, a point the government never quite understood, as the following exchange between Miura and his interrogator shows:

Q. Who was the leader?
A. No one.
Q. Was it Tomatsu?
A. Only nominally; it was a heimin-shizoku [affair].178

It would be a mistake nonetheless to confuse its classless nature with the fact that it was also "leaderless," and to combine the two facts to make the incident even more democratic than it really was. As the following testimony by Hota indicates, the exigencies of the situation did not lend themselves to the creation of a structured organisation headed by a chosen or elected leader:

Q. Who were the ringleaders (kyokai) of the uprising?
A. There were no ringleaders.
Q. How could that have been?
A. We were never quite sure of the exact moment we would rise up, so we had no ringleaders or instigators.

Q. That being the case, then who among you acted as manager (shukan)?
A. If you use the term "manager" (shuji) in the sense of overseeing our finances, then it was the eldest (nencho), Tomatsu Masao, although he did not ever refer to himself as a manager, even at the Yuikan. 179

To some extent, these remarks may have been made in an effort to save Tomatsu from the death penalty (if so, it did not work), which is what leadership of the incident almost certainly meant, we can be sure, in the eyes of the rebels at the time of the trials. For we know from Chapter I that the rebels headed straight for Tomatsu's Yuikan after the robbery failed and after Koinuma was injured. Tomatsu's reputation, the name of the Yuikan, and its close location to Utsunomiya were all factors that drew the leaderless rebels there, but undoubtedly, Tomatsu gave the group some leadership that it would not have had otherwise. Hence, the issue of leadership, while important, should not obscure the more important point of the classless nature of the incident. For it is this fact which points to the emergence of a new type of radical in Meiji politics: a type of radical who believed that shared ideas, rather than shared class status, was the most important factor in co-operating to bring about a democratic revolution.

And it was indeed revolution, and not mere rebellion, they intended to make. As this was the first instance of attempted revolution during Meiji—after many rebellions that sought only to make the government responsive to certain limited demands—the authorities were anxious to discover whether it was an attempt at revolution. Consider this:

Q. In one instance, you said your aim was "to change" (henkaku) the
government in the sense of bringing in a new administration. In another you said your goal was "to overthrow" (tempuku) the "wicked Japanese government." Which is it?

A. Our goal was to overthrow completely the present government.  

The term "tempuku" was used too often by other rebels as well to allow us to think that their aim was less than revolution. No! All seem to have digested enough natural right doctrine to be able to understand and act upon its revolutionary implications. Certain laws were regarded by the rebels as infringing upon, even violating the basic natural rights of all men: the right to associate with whomever one wishes, as in the case of Tomatsu; the right to take legal action without fear of arrest, as in the case of Monna; the right to have laws administered impartially and the right to equal voice in government through a representative assembly, as declared by their manifesto. That all of this was not mere rhetoric was, of course, proven by their subsequent attempt at revolution which sought to give concrete expression to their abstract ideas of natural right.

If the Kabasan rebels are to be faulted, it cannot be for not acting according to principles. Rather, it must be for what Toyama Shigeki described in this way: "The mistakes they made during the pre-rebellion process, one could say, were silly." Naive," "unrealistic," "ill-planned," "poorly organized" are all appropriate designations, in retrospect, for many of their actions and the rationale underlying them. They made no real nor earnest attempt to establish relations with the people in the local area, nor did they take any positive action to mobilize local farmers, as did the leaders of the Fukushima Incident. They were "isolated men," as Endo put it, "caught in their own trap
(jiyo-jibaku), and like the Russian populists, purposely separated themselves from the people."\textsuperscript{182} Although the local people probably understood what the manifesto said, for them it was only an act of dangerous violence."\textsuperscript{183} Only Tomatsu, Monna, and Hirao believed throughout the entire affair that members of their party should endeavour to recruit local residents. But the few attempts that were made ended in failure. In contrast, the others appear not to have thought much beyond the original plan of assassination, which, of course, precluded any thought of recruiting large numbers of people.\textsuperscript{184} Instead, they believed blindly that this act itself would serve as an inspiration for "the masses" to rise in rebellion. A representative view of such blind trust was stated during the court interrogation of Yokoyama, Koinuma's right-hand man.

Q. ... how were the people able to trust in you?
A. They could clearly judge our purity (integrity: kepakk\textsuperscript{u}) by the manifesto we issued.
Q. What is the gist of the manifesto?
A. That it was necessary to raise an army (gihei or literally, "righteous army"), to make the government good, and to obtain and protect the freedom and natural rights of all men.

The Kabasan rebels did indeed resemble the participants of the Narodnaya Volya. That movement's principal "theorist," Nechaev, promoted the "propaganda of the deed," which called for "liquidating the worst officials to give constant proof that it is possible to fight to government [and] to strengthen the revolutionary spirit of the people ... .\textsuperscript{186} Yokoyama's testimony, as we saw, attributed some influence to Russian nihilists and their use of bombs, probably referring to the 1881 assassination of Alexander II. Only the use of bombs in assassinations was new, however, for assassination as "propaganda of the deed" had a long
history in Japanese politics. After reciting a list of a number of high
Tokugawa and Meiji government officials and politicians who had met
their end by an assassin's sword, W. W. McLaren remarked, "There is some­
thing in the taking of the life of a fancied enemy of the country, no
matter how highly placed, as a protest against or a criticism of his
actions, that appeals to the Japanese mind, and the nation looks upon
such conduct with a leniency[!] Not with the Kabasan rebels] that is only
to be explained by the defects of the military despotism under which
they lived for centuries."187

For the Kabasan rebels, however, assassination was not a tool to
be used merely to dramatize a cause. It was also for them a means to
effect the type of political change that was dictated by their ideals.
It was perhaps another of the ironies of history that the principal insti­
tution and instrument promoting much the same cause for which the Kabasan
rebels fought, the Jiyuto, was publicly embarrassed by this incident,
and by others that had preceded it, and dissolved itself a month later,
shortly before the outbreak of violence in Chichibu.

The Komminto and the Jiyuto

In both the case of the Fukushima and Kabasan incidents, many of
the participants had a more-or-less direct relationship with the popular
rights movement. The Sekkyokan, Seidokan, and the Aizu Jiyuto branch,
the Fukushima Jiyuto branch, the Mumeikan, the Ibaraki and Tochigi Jiyuto
branches, the Yuikan and the Yuikkan, and relationships with well-known
individuals of the central Jiyuto had some influence on most of the Fuku­
shima and Kabasan leaders, and even on some of the followers.
In the case of the participants in the Chichibu Incident no such clear relationship existed.

By the time of the dissolution of the national Jiyuto, on 29 October 1884, just two days before the Chichibu rebellion began, Saitama prefecture could only boast of a Jiyuto membership of between 121 and 135 people; Chichibu district itself accounted for thirty of these. And twenty of these thirty did not become members until late in the life of the party, between October 1883 and May 1884. Among those listed in our sample fourteen were either members, claimed to be members, or were locally regarded by fellow villagers to be members, but two of the fourteen came from outside the prefecture. Consequently, on the surface, at any rate, the relationship between the Jiyuto and the Chichibu Incident participants is not a very strong one.

In order to investigate the ideological and organisational basis of the Chichibu Incident, therefore, it will be necessary to see whether a less direct relationship existed between the incident and the Jiyuto specifically, or the popular rights movement generally. The key, it seems, to approach this question is the nature of the organisation that the Chichibu participants themselves built, the Komminto. We should see whether this organisation was *sui generis*, or whether it modeled itself in some way after the Jiyuto or some other organisation. We ought also to examine whether its members drew upon principles espoused by the popular rights movement or whether, for instance, they drew upon traditional peasant notions of "natural justice" as a rationale for revolt.
difficulty in categorizing the Chichibu revolt, although the categorizations of each writer differed substantially. The author of the Tosui minken shi (1903) wrote, "Since the common people were motivated by the desire to exterminate high interest creditors, and to petition for tax reduction, it was a peasant uprising." Thus by looking only at the immediate aims and targets of the rebels, Sekido Kakuzo was able to say that it differed little from a traditional Tokugawa-type peasant uprising. Today's principal chronicler of Meiji disturbances, Aoki Koji, shares this view of seventy years earlier, modifying it only in quantitative terms by referring to the incident as a "rebellion" (hoki) because of the large numbers of people who participated. Inoue Koji takes exception to this view, however, making what seems to be an important distinction between the hyakusho ikki of Tokugawa and the Chichibu Incident: "With a simple peasant uprising, at the sound of gunfire the people scattered and their swords glistened in flight, but in the case of the Chichibu Incident the farmers displayed the attitude, 'Stop only after death' (taorete nochi yamen)," and for this reason he says it was more comparable to the famous Satsuma Rebellion (1877).

In the official Jiyuto party history, the Jiyuto-shi, the incident and its participants were characterized in this way:

This group that gathered was composed of discontented farmers, gamblers and hunters, and having assembled in force mainly wrecked government property, threatened government officers, burnt land deed certificates, punished high-interest creditors and landlords, stole and distributed money and goods, and generally expressed their discontent in a direct fashion. They took the name of Shakkinto (Debtor's Party) or Kosakuto (Tenants' Party) and in fact we probably ought to look upon them as one vehicle for the extension of socialism. (Emphasis mine.)
This is interesting to note because even though it mentions, albeit more precisely, the same type of activities that characterized a traditional peasant uprising as outlined by Sekido, the Jiyuto-shi writers arrive at a vastly different conclusion about the fundamental ideological character of the incident. Granted, this characterization may merely reflect an incomplete understanding of socialism at this time, or even a more general fear of socialism, but it does nonetheless point to the existence of some ideological underpinnings to the political party formed by the Chichibu rebels.

That such was the case is further attested by yet another contemporary writer, the Shinto priest and Chichibu resident, Tanaka Senya. He did not see socialism as the driving ideological force of the rebels but rather saw "liberalism" (jiyushugi) at its base. It was he who suggested the term, Jiyu Komminto ("Liberal-Poor Peoples' Party") to describe the Komminto's ideology in a term which has recently been popularized by the works of Inoue Koji. But while Tanaka credited the existence of an ideological relationship between the Jiyuto and Komminto, he also noted that Komminto members had less than a complete understanding of Jiyuto policy and principles, which in turn led to their failure to accurately reflect the ideas of the Jiyuto: "The various types of wild language used by the poor people is connected to the Poor Peoples' Party and falsifies the orders of Mr. Itagaki." A clear instance of this can be seen in the testimony of "blind follower," Kobayashi Kenkichi (twenty-four), farmer and heimin from Gumma prefecture arrested for violent activity.
Q. What do you think the ideology (*shugi*) of the Jiyuto is?
A. Its ideology is to destroy those who control the money market, those banks and those usurers who greedily charge excessive interest; and it is to help the poor people.\(^{198}\)

This seems to represent a clear instance of translating a political ideology with a goal orientation expressed at the level of the entire society, into a justification for action which is oriented toward the achievement of goals at the level of local society. It also points to other things Tanaka said about the Chichibu rebellion. He noted four principal causes of the rebellion. The influence of the Jiyuto was only one; the other three were usury, antisocial gamblers, and an unresponsiveness on the part of the authorities toward the economic deprivations being suffered by the people.\(^{199}\) Although Tanaka, like the vernacular press at the time, seems to place undue emphasis on the influence of "gamblers" (*bakuto*)—we will examine this aspect later—he does seem to have been correct in the importance he placed on economic privation, and the authorities seeming unresponsiveness to it, as a source of the rebellion. This can be seen by examining first, the demands that were made by the Komminto and secondly, the nature of the targets of the Komminto.

The source of the Komminto demands is seen most clearly in a poem written just before the rebellion by an unknown Chichibu resident, entitled "Making Tombstones":

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The wind blows,
The rain falls,
Young men die.
The groans of poverty
Flutter like flags in the wind.

When life makes no sense,
even the old people quarrel.
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The words on our tombstones,
buried in the snowstorms of 1884,
are not visible to the authorities.

In these times
we must cry out loudly. 200

Privation, despair, and rebelliousness are the themes of this poem, and
the eradication of the source of these problems was the purpose behind
the demands made by the Komminto. They were: (1) a ten-year debt mora-
torium on repayment of all loans, and a repayment schedule based on
annual installments over a forty-year period; (2) the closure of local
schools (and hence no school tax) for three years; (3) consideration by
the Home Ministry (Naimusho) of a reduction of miscellaneous taxes, and
also the land tax; and (4) a reduction of local, village taxes. 201

Several things need to be mentioned about these demands. First,
all are obviously economic demands, lacking in political content. The
only political facet of them is that they were directed at the government.
Even the first demand, which sought debt relief from the financial burdens
contracted privately between farmers and loan dealers, was directed at
the government as it was the only authority with power enough to resolve
the problem. This could of course be construed as "traditional" inasmuch
as there were instances during feudal times when because of crop failure
a benevolent domain lord would respond to peasant demands and order all
debts of farmers in his region to be cancelled. 202 Yet in the Chichibu
rebellion the four demands were being made of the government not by a
village leader acting as a representative of the feudal community, but
rather by individuals chosen from a political party whose membership tran-
scended the village. It is also important to recall that the political
context in which these demands were made was also vastly different from that of even thirty years earlier.

Secondly, the occasion of the rebellion was not the first time the demands were made. In late August, Sakamoto Sosaku had gone at the behest of other leaders to petition a loan dealer of Ogano for a four-year debt moratorium and a forty-year repayment scheme. In early September, Tashiro Eisuke, Kato Orihei and Okashiwa Tsunejiro, Jiyuto member from Gumma, met and decided: "From now on, no more meetings! We will assume responsibility to unite the poor people and go to and petition the Omiya authorities, state the situation, and take whatever court action is necessary." They spoke to various village leaders, gained their support, and on 30 September, they, along with four others, representing twenty-eight villages, petitioned at the Omiya police headquarters, calling for the authorities to take action against usurers. The police chief, however, refused to meet with even one of their party. They tried the next day, this time sending Takagishi Zenkichi to Ogano and Ochiai Toishi to Omiya, but again the authorities refused to see them. At this, a small peaceful demonstration of 500 to 600 people was organised at Ogano for the same purpose as that of the petitioners, but once again the authorities refused to meet with any of their representatives. Moreover, this second petition was even more modest than the last; it called for only a four-year moratorium on debt repayment and a ten-year repayment schedule. Also, simultaneously, individual Komminto members tried negotiating with individual creditors, but met with little success.

These attempts at using legal and peaceful means to make the
authorities respond to their demands are emphasized here in order to show that the rebellion, and the demands made during it, was not spontaneous nor entirely unprovoked.

Nor was there a lack of precedent or motivation for abandoning the law and turning to violence. In early September while these Chichibu individuals were busy using peaceful tactics, the Komminto of Hachioji had assembled 8,000 villagers, attacked the homes of loan dealers and government offices, and succeeded in having their village taxes reduced and in having the terms of loan repayment eased.207

These instances underscore Tanaka Senya's contention that one of the reasons for rebellion was the growing unresponsiveness of the authorities. Due in part to the flood of petitions coming since 1880, demanding a national assembly, and the tidal wave of petitions for financial aid since the Matsukata deflation policy began taking its toll, the central government reacted by writing an ordinance requiring that the approval of local government officials was necessary before a petition would be accepted by the Tokyo government.208 This action merely shifted responsibility to local governments which, as we have seen, were no more responsive than the central government. That did not stop, however, a few "concerned individuals" from beginning a petition drive which sometimes developed into a larger movement. In this sense, the petitions themselves helped serve to recruit members to the poor peoples' movement.

The final point to be made about the Komminto demands is the extent to which they had become slogans among the people of Chichibu by the time the rebellion began. On the morning of the first day of rebellion,
1 November 1884, at the Muku shrine in Yoshida village, a scene described in Chapter I, the "Rebels' Agreement" (*Boto yakujosho*) was announced and all were asked to swear allegiance to the following purposes:

1. We will aid the poor people.

2. If negotiating with a money lender out of court, and he deserts the negotiations, we should take the specific remedy of "house-wrecking" and kill him.

3. We will take over the village government offices of the various villages and destroy or take the signed documents found there.

4. If one of our Party is apprehended or arrested during this incident, we will take specific action of rescuing him by attacking and destroying the police station or prison in question.

5. We will make a forcible appeal (*goso*) to have various taxes and school expenses abolished, all taxes except the national land tax. 209

Reading this agreement, it is easy to recall the earlier quoted testimony of Kobayashi Kenkichi who recited the Jiyuto "ideology" in much the same terms as the agreement. Also, in going through the court testimony of a number of those captured early in the incident, we see such comments as:

The reason [for joining] was to reduce school fees, defer loans, and to stamp out usury.

The reason was to destroy public documents concerned with loans and mortgages.

[The reason was] to besiege creditors and government offices and destroy all public documents concerned with debts. 210

And so goes the testimony. Here we are not only seeing the Komminto demands being expressed as reasons for participating in violence, i.e., in order to have these demands realized, but we are also seeing what the targets of rebellion were.

What then were these targets? A police report dated 6 November...
1884, stated: -

With a common hatred they unite to coerce the authorities and money dealers, and the young rioters set fire to their buildings, destroying them completely. They also combine to menace rich farmers and in great numbers they plunder the goods and the money of the rich. After finishing there, they attack government offices... They are led in this by gamblers and their spokesmen are members of the Jiyuto; both these groups have authority.211

The invective aside, the facts support this report, at least concerning the targets of attack by the rebels. In a comprehensive report entitled, "The Condition of the Towns and Villages Where the Rioters Raided,"212 eighty-four villages and towns are listed as having been attacked. Within all of these towns, private homes were most affected, 556 in all having been damaged or destroyed. Village government offices were second with seven, followed by six police stations and four court houses. Robbery was the most frequently committed crime—510 homes (497 in Chichibu district, thirteen in Kodama district) had either food, money or weapons, etc. taken from them. At court houses or police stations, over 500 official documents were either destroyed or damaged by fire—land registers, tax assessments, mortgage papers, house registers, etc. In terms of total property damage, the government estimated it as 43,783 yen. In terms of injuries sustained by the people involved, only sixteen people in all lost their lives (two policemen, fourteen rioters) and only twenty-two were reported injured (seven policemen, fifteen rioters). Of course, although all these figures are questionable as to accuracy, they nonetheless indicate how limited was the personal and property damage done, when contrasted to the great numbers of police and rebels involved.

The fact of this relatively minor damage also contrasts with what
was reported in the newspapers at the time. Reports of widespread looting, plundering, rape, brutality, and violence in general dominated the newspapers. Even "the killing of women and children for the amusement of the rioters" was reported in a government pamphlet released to all the newspapers in mid-November, entitled *Saitama jiken dempo roku*.\textsuperscript{213} The *Choya Shimbun* referred to villages controlled by The Poor Peoples' Army as "anarchist villages" (*musei no kyo*).\textsuperscript{214} When on 5 November it was reported that the Tokyo garrison had been mobilized, the newspapers displayed even greater alarm concerning the extent of the violence.

Once members of the Komminto were arrested and interrogated and something was learned about the nature of its organisation, and once the government figures came out showing how mild the violence had been, government leaders and others expressed surprise.\textsuperscript{215} Probably the principal reason for so little violence was (1) the specificity of the targets chosen by the Komminto, as we saw earlier in their "Rebels Agreement" (and indicated by the figures just shown); and (2) the strict organisation guiding the Komminto.

On the same day the "Rebels Agreement" was announced, President Tashiro Eisuke had a subordinate read the Five Articles of the "Army Code":

\begin{enumerate}
\item I personally will behead any and all persons who:
\begin{enumerate}
\item commit robbery;
\item violate women;
\item drink wine;
\item rob and burn without permission, or
\item violate orders given by leaders.\textsuperscript{216}
\end{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}

It is of course impossible to say whether the threat of decapitation served to deter rebels from committing such crimes, especially since it is not known if the occasion ever arose. Regardless, most of the evidence
points to a considerable measure of party discipline; certainly no acts of rape of licentious drinking took place. That the Komminto was so disciplined, and that its targets were so specific, can be seen in the organisational character of the Komminto army itself, the process of organisation leading up to its establishment, and in the ideological cohesiveness of its leadership. Now to consider each of these in turn.

From our sample alone (Appendix III) where the "rank" or position of each is listed, we can readily discern the tight manner in which the Komminto army was structured; we find a president (commander), a vice-president, division and vice-division commanders, squad commanders, secretaries, treasurers, supply officers, communication officers, and so on. With this kind of military ordering of the party we might expect a rigid chain of command to have existed that would have made Tashiro, at its apex, a supreme commander whose authority was inviolable. This, however, was not the case. What existed instead was a sharing of authority among a few individual leaders, not all of whom held the highest ranks. (Possibly some were given higher ranks but no real authority, in order to induce them to exercise their local prestige to attract greater numbers of recruits.)

We can see how power was shared by relating what happened at a meeting of the principal leaders held at Anoyama on 26 October, five days before the outbreak of violence. In attendance at Anoyama (see Chapter I) were: Tashiro, Kato Orihei, Inoue Denzo, Kokashiwa Tsunejiro (Gumma), Kikuchi Kanbei (Nagano), Ide Tamekichi (Nagano), Shibaoka Kumakichi, Sakamato Sosaku, Kadodaira Sohei, Takaqishi Zenkichi, and Arai Shuzaburo.
Although they decided there to postpone the start of the rebellion to 1 November, before this decision was made Tashiro had proposed that they wait even longer, suggesting at least thirty days. His reasons, undoubtedly revealed at this meeting, come to us from a later police interrogation:

Q. Why did you wish a postponement?
A. Had we gotten a 30 day postponement, in addition to Saitama prefecture we could also have organized a simultaneous rebellion among the people in Gumma, Nagano, Kanagawa and Yamanashi prefectures. This would have created a situation where a forceful petition to the government to reduce taxes would have been accepted due to the violence. . . . Also the army we would have mobilized could have withstood an assault by the police and army. . . . Finally, this [extra mobilization] was necessary due to the proximity of our region to Tokyo.219

Tashiro, however, received support for his proposals only from Inoue Denzo. Whether a formal vote was taken or whether the numerical strength of each side was only intimated during discussion, it is not known. Regardless, those who favoured commencing the rebellion immediately predominated.

It is claimed that Inoue's support of Tashiro's postponement argument stemmed from his visit to Oi Kentaro in Tokyo on 20 September. Inoue told Oi of the Komminto intention to rebel in late October and Oi supposedly expressed his strong disapproval, arguing as he did with the Kabasan rebels, that it was a "rash undertaking" and that the time had not yet come for a Kanto-wide rebellion, especially since it appeared that the Komminto had not prepared sufficiently.220 To insure that his views would be well represented in Komminto councils, on 23 October he sent to Chichibu his own envoy, Shige Naokuni, in order to persuade the Komminto to abandon their plans for rebellion. Shige, however, as Oi
later testified, found himself in sympathy with the rebels and joined them. 221

According to testimony later given by Kokashiwa, it was Kato Orihei, V.P. of the Komminto army, who was the principal advocate of the "rebellion now" argument. 222 Reminiscent of the Kabasan rebels, Kato and the others of this "faction" (mentioned above) apparently assumed that once the Chichibu farmers rose in rebellion, those activists in surrounding areas would do the same. The logic of this dominant group was, "If the poor people of Saitama are planning [rebellion] independently, then so must those of the other prefectures as well." 223 Although this may have been faulty reasoning on their part, Tashiro was finally convinced by it. To the question put to him by the prosecutor, "Why did you limit yourself to the Chichibu region?" Tashiro replied:

My Gumma friends, Kokashiwa Tsunejiro and Horiguchi Kosuke, had been active there for three years, and Shimaki Tairokichi of Kanagawa prefecture whom we may regard as a person of Chichibu, [was active there]. Kato Orihei, acting as a gambler, also mingled among the people there. 224

At the risk of oversimplification, but drawing a contemporary parallel, it appears that Tashiro, at least, put himself into a Nixon/Watergate situation, allowing himself to believe the fables, derived from hope more than from fact, told to him by his "advisors." Whether or not it was this self-deception that finally caused him to abandon the plan for a Kanto-wide rebellion and opt for the "rebellion now" argument is not known. Inoue Koji does conjecture, however, that what may have convinced Tashiro ultimately was the experience of seeing the large crowd of 3,000 that first day. 225
In either case, the point is that despite the military structure of the Komminto army, decision-making power was not monopolized by its leader Tashiro. The second most important decision of all—when to rebel—was made collectively. The most important decision—whether to rebel—had already been made by most of these very same individuals on 13 October. (See Chapter I.)

In this regard, although Tashiro was the one who determined who would fill which positions in the party-army, the authority to do this was conferred upon him by these other leaders. In fact, before he even began assigning duties he first conferred with Inoue, Kato, Sakamoto and Takagishi. Based on these talks he said, "We will gather our comrades together and select people for roles and instruct them on their duties." He did that with the advice of the above-mentioned members on the eve of the revolt. "Thus, in this way," he said, "we together assigned roles and our course of action advanced." Also, special authority was entrusted to battalion chiefs (daitaicho) Iizuka Seizo of Shimo-yoshida village and Arai Shuzaburo (Obusuma district), as well as to Kikuchi Kanbei. "We decided that this arrangement would last from October 31 to about noon on November 8. I tell you, during the process of deciding roles, there was no quarrelling."

Tashiro's interrogator, probably reflecting wide-spread official surprise at this high degree of organisation, questioned Tashiro repeatedly about the violent activities of Komminto members, whom the interrogator believed had contravened the oath they took on the first day of the rebellion. During this questioning, Tashiro readily admits that men under
his command set fire to the houses of usurers, destroyed police stations, and extorted money, but insisted nonetheless, "We decided from the first that we would limit and restrict destruction to government places, police stations, and so on; our intention was not only to destroy..." (emphasis mine). In speaking of burning the home of one usurer who had accumulated 50,000 yen "in ten years of cheating the poor," Tashiro said, "We put our lives on the line in order to aid these poor people." (emphasis mine). As Shibaoka, battalion commander and kobun to Tashiro, phrased it, "Extreme steps had to be taken to aid the poor people. The rich people aren't dying; it is the poor people in Chichibu who are starving to death."  

Neither did they confine themselves to destroying the homes of the rich; they also extorted money. Ide Tamekichi, collector of funds for the Komminto, was delegated the responsibility to visit the wealthy during the rebellion and convince them "to give money as a condolence gift (koden) in order to redeem themselves, acquire the proper attitude, and attain innocence by providing for military expenses as a non-military way to aid the poor..." In this manner, Tashiro informed the interrogators, almost 3,000 yen was collected, adding that for every "donation" a receipt was given. (The Kabasan rebels had done the same for most of the money, food, and weapons they had appropriated.)  

Thus having structured itself along military lines, having established a pattern of decision-making among the leadership, and having found rather unconventional means of financing itself, the Komminto showed all the characteristics of an on-going organisation save one, that of
recruitment. How did the Komminto go about getting new members? What means were employed in mobilizing the 3,000 people who assembled at Hinozawa on 1 November 1884, and the other 7,000 or so who joined once the rebellion began?

About the 7,000, the authorities were probably correct in describing them as "blind followers" (fuwa zuiko), although little about them is really known. Most were probably not unlike young Kobayashi of Gumma, earlier quoted, who gave us the rather pedestrian view of what the Jiyuto ideology meant. He was also one of the many whom the authorities claimed was "coerced" into participating in the rebellion.238 Paraphrased, the story he later gave the police went this way:

I left home on October 31 to go to Saku district in Nagano to collect stones and charcoal with my brother. The first night we stayed at an inn in Minami-Kanra district (Gumma) and left the next morning early, and by night reached the Chichibu border, where we stopped for a drink. At about 10 p.m., "400 Jiyuto people" arrived at this inn. We were asked to join the party and were told that if we did so, our financial troubles would soon end. They were all armed with guns, or knives, or bamboo spears. We decided to join.239

He went on to relate how during the next few days he was assigned the task (along with 100 others) of transporting ammunition to various army squads. He was then asked:

Q. While on the march did other people join the Jiyuto?
A. Laborers (ninsoku) who were then working joined, but they did not know what they joined.240

We also see examples of travelling salesmen caught in the rebellion;241 friends of friends who heard of a "gathering";242 people whose relatives were ill and needed money for medicine;243 people merely caught looting a place the rebels had already attacked;244 and so on. It was probably people similar to these who were among the group known as "blind
followers." Whether, like our first example, they were "coerced" into joining is questionable. No doubt many claimed that they were coerced, once it was learned that the authorities would not prosecute in such instances. This fact probably explains why such a large number, 3,238, surrendered themselves to the authorities. Moreover, "coercion" to participate should also be understood in the sense that Inoue interprets it: "It was a function of the strength of the cooperative relations of the village." He does concede, however, that there were instances where ninsoku saisoku ("forced labour") and karidashi ("those rounded-up") were compelled to participate by village organisers.

To some extent this was also probably the case for a fair portion of the 3,000 original participants as well, although with this number "the strength of cooperative relations of the village" probably played a much larger role than did karidashi. Inoue provides us with a schema showing how this large number of people fit into Komminto organisation.247

Source: Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 84.

Fig. 1. Schema of Komminto Organisational Structure
"C" represents the 3,000 mobilized by the Komminto; "B" represents the 100 to 130 people who were local organisers of the Komminto; and "A" represents the thirty Jiyuto members of Chichibu district. The "grey" area shows that about one-half of the thirty were Jiyuto/Komminto members, i.e., the fourteen individuals from our sample (mentioned at the outset of this section) who were either officially listed as members (e.g., Iizuka and Ochiai), claimed to be members (e.g., Tashiro and Kato), or were regarded locally as members (e.g., Ono Naekichi and Arai Makizo). Inasmuch as those in "C" were the objects of mobilization for those included in "B," we may treat them simultaneously. (Those in "B" may be considered the 127 people identified in Chapter III as "ringleaders and instigators" [for whom data was presented concerning age, residence, and occupation].)²⁴⁸

The tie between those in "B" and "C" that bound them together during the rebellion were the co-operative ties of the village. Individual villages tended to be characterized by a population most of whom engaged in the same type of agricultural production, e.g., silk, mulberry, lacquer, etc. This required co-operation among the farmers in the harvesting and marketing of the same item. Village meetings became agricultural society meetings. The person or persons who dominated such meetings, the "men of renown," were usually the ones who were economically better off than the rest. At the time of the rebellion, however, many such individuals found themselves in as much financial difficulty as the rest of the village population. In such cases, they often became the local organiser for the Komminto.
Consider the case of Arai Shigejiro of Isama village (which, as seen in Chapter III, was ranked among the highest for contributing participants); he served as a "provisions officer" in the Komminto. He specialized in producing lacquer and cocoons, and according to an 1873 survey owned .68 cho of dryland, enough to make him a middle-income farmer, if most of his production was cocoons and lacquer. In an 1884 survey he was classified as shiryoku naishi or "without means." In late August, as "a new debtor," he began helping to organise the Komminto and was known to have been in contact with Tashiro. A contemporary, Tanaka Senya, characterized him in this way: "There are many [Komminto members] in Isama village. The lacquer tree farmer, Shigejiro, neglected his family business, trained his wife and daughter to use a sword, and frequently stopped farming upon hearing reports of freedom [movements]." He had also recruited thirty households in Isama village for the Komminto. By the time of the rebellion he and four other Isama organisers (including Kato Orihei) led more than 180 people to the fight.

Ono Naokuni, a heavily indebted farmer from Fuppu village and Vice-Commander of the First Battalion, is another example. Like Arai Shigejiro, he was known locally as a Jiyuto member and had in the past served village members as a spokesman in meetings with creditors. Using three or four young men, he extended his recruitment drive outside his own village, even into Nagano prefecture, and by the time fighting commenced he had 140 people in what he called the Fuppu-so or "Fuppu organ." He is also known to have come under the political wing of Arai Shuzaburo, a former primary school teacher and "radical activist" from Obusuma.
district. It is significant to note that Ono has been credited with lese majeste, the only known instance of this in all three of our studies:

"Since we fight the Imperial Court itself, we will need reinforcements." 253

No mention is made whether reinforcements ever arrived, but it is known that Ono's very tight-knit following remained that way until the very end of the rebellion.

Less specific in the way of evidence but equally as meaningful in showing how Komminto members were able to organise the villagers of their area is a comparison of Table 6, showing those villages contributing more than fifty "direct" participants (Chapter III), with those villages from which the leaders, as they appear in our sample, came. Kami-hinozawa, for instance, the village organised by Muratake Shige and Morikawa Sakuzo contributed 52 per cent of its population to the rebellion. Shimo-hinozawa, led by Iizuka Seizo, Arai Makizo and Kadodaira Sohei, mobilized 36 per cent of its population. The correlation between these high rates of mobilization and Komminto organisers is not a spurious one. We see it with Inuki Jiyusaku and Iida village; Imai Kozaburo and Sanyama village, Miyakama Tsuari and Inoue Denzo and Shimo-yoshida village, and so on.

At this level of organisation, between those in groups "B" and "C," using the schema earlier extracted from Inoue, the unifying, ideological basis appears to have been expressed in terms of the four Komminto demands earlier quoted. Relief from taxes and usurious loan rates was probably what ultimately convinced most to organise in the one instance, and to be mobilized in the other. But superimposed upon this basically
economic bond was one which originated with that group labeled "A" in Inoue's scheme, i.e., the "Jiyukomminto" members as Tanaka Senya called them. Most of these fourteen individuals were tied to one another since August, when they initiated the formation of the Komminto. And although different kinds of relationships existed between different "Jiyukomminto" individuals and their local Komminto organisers, the relationship between these fourteen was essentially political, and specifically, was based upon the common tie each had to the Jiyuto. Recognizing this fact, and given the nature of the organisational relationship between Komminto organisers and the villagers, then we would expect a certain amount of Jiyuto ideology to have filtered down directly to the Komminto members, and indirectly to some of the 3,000 or so villagers.

Among the so-called Jiyukomminto, those definitely listed in the Jiyuto party membership list from Chichibu were Inoue Denzo, Iizuka Zeizo, Ochiai Toishi, Takagishi Zenkichi, Akihara Shojiro, Kadodaira Sohei, and Sakamoto Sosaku; from Nagano, Ide Tamekichi, and Kokashiwa Tsunejiro from Gumma. Although not usually credited with Jiyuto membership, even though he claimed it, Kikuchi Kanbei's name appears in a 9 October 1884 listing of Nagano prefecture members. All but a few of these ten individuals appear to have been very active members as well. Takagishi was one of eight Saitama representatives at a Jiyuto meeting in Tokyo in March 1884, also attended by Kabasan leader Tomatsu Masao of Ibaraki and by Fukushima Incident participant from Gumma, Iga Wanato. It is also known that Takagishi, along with Ochiai, Sakamoto, Inoue Zensaku (not a Jiyuto member, but among our sample), and Arai Teijiro
(also in the sample) signed a "blood pact" in February 1883 that called for a national assembly, a decrease in taxes, and reform of the government. Ochiai, Takagishi and Sakamoto were, moreover, the initiators and original organisers of the Chichibu Komminto in August 1884. Ochiai re-emerged a year later when he was arrested along with Oi Kentaro in the abortive Osaka Incident. He was also among those who joined the Party after Oi Kentaro lectured in Chichibu in February 1884. After Oi's tour, Jiyuto membership in Chichibu rose from eight to fifteen in March, to twenty-six in early May, and to twenty-eight in late May. Besides Ochiai, two of the new inductees were Takagishi and Sakamoto.

Moreover, Inoue Denzo, as we have already seen, was in communication with Oi Kentaro in October 1884, and supposedly had spent some time at the Tokyo Jiyuto headquarters in December 1883 with Iga Wanato, Kono Hiroshi and Murakami Taiji. Murakami, it is interesting to observe, was a Chichibu resident, but a member of the radical Jiyuto political society, the Yushinsha of Takasaki in Gumma. It was headed by Miyabe Noboru, who was connected with the Kabasan conspirators, and earlier had been arrested for allegedly taking part in the Gumma Incident of May 1884.

An early twentieth-century historian writing on the Chichibu Incident claimed that Murakami was the important connecting link that tied the Tokyo and Chichibu Jiyuto to the Gumma Yushinsha. Not only did Murakami apparently serve as a messenger between Takasaki, Tokyo, and Chichibu, but he is also credited (by Tashiro) as having recruited Tashiro into the Jiyuto. Tashiro's interrogation went:

Q. Are you affiliated with a political party?
A. In late January or early February of this year (1884), I joined the Jiyuto.

[Questioning the truth of Tashiro's answer, the interrogator asked:]

Q. Did you formally join the Jiyuto at that time?

A. . . . Murakami Taiji, who belonged to the Jiyuto of our region, and who served as an intermediary between the Tokyo headquarters and our region, invited me to join the Jiyuto in a conversation we had. I questioned him on its ideology (shugi). . . . He answered by reciting twice in a loud voice, two poems.

Q. Do you remember these poems?

A. One I've forgotten. I can recall one or two lines of the other.

Q. State them.

A. One was, "Cut up wicked people, purify the public party; people who fish must seek them in valley rivers."

Q. Do you remember the other one now?

A. Now I recall very little. Something like, "Look upon your wife and children and do for civic affairs what a husband [does for his family]. . . ."

Q. What then?

A. I continued thinking about what these poems meant.

The questions and answers continued in this manner without Tashiro ever saying directly, or the interrogator ever believing, that he became a member of the Jiyuto.

He was also asked about his relation to Inoue Denzo, Iizuka, Kato, and Takagishi, and whether they "were friends before the rebellion." Tashiro replied, "No, we only became friends in the course of the recent uprising." He further identified them all as Jiyuto members.

Subsequently, Tashiro was asked a question the answer to which explains an important aspect of the relationship between the Jiyukomminto members and Komminto organisers.

Q. Inoue and Murakami were both important people within the Jiyuto, but you were made President over both of them. [Why]?

A. I will guess why this was so. By nature I like to help the weak and crush the strong. During these times when poor people suffer and many are affected, I have served as a middleman (nakama) in their difficulties and have served as a mediator for 28 years. The number of people I call kobun exceeds two hundred. I guess I was made president because I have demonstrated a belief in the
necessity to aid the poor, as seen in my commitment to the four demands as outlined by Inoue Denzo [cited earlier].

This "Robin Hood" attitude was formally recognized by the Court when it sentenced Tashiro to death on 19 February 1885, identifying him as "known in the rural party as a kyokaku ('chivalrous man' or 'Robin Hood')." But besides this aspect of social concern shown by Tashiro towards the poor is the important point he made about his kobun. As we just saw, Tashiro claimed some 200 kobun to his credit as an oyabun-kyokaku. Most were probably farmers who asked Tashiro, known locally as a "lawyer" (daigennin), to intercede on their behalf as a spokesman to creditors. In fact, when asked about occupation, Tashiro identified himself as a chusaisha, one "who mediates for farmers in cases of lending, borrowing and other matters." 

Among those in the Chichibu sample at least four were known to be kobun of Tashiro: Shibaoka, Ide, Horiguchi, and Akihara. From the court testimony of these four it appears that this oyabun-kobun relationship was at least partly responsible for their involvement in the rebellion. The clearest evidence of this relationship is the case of Shibaoka, the only other person in the sample, besides Tashiro, who was a resident of Omiya. In explaining how he became involved, he makes it clear that his personal relationship with Tashiro was among the principal factors.

Q. Are you in debt?
A. I took out a loan in August 1878, from Zawayama Yuno of about 24 or 25 yen.
Q. And therefore you became a ring-leader in this violence?
A. It is not true that I hoped to have my debt cancelled by joining the violence. . . . The poor people suffer high interest loans demanded by usurers. This makes them poorer; that, and the drop in prices of various goods. I decided that I would like to see those deplorable conditions ended and decided to devote all my energy, even my life, to aid the poor people. *My hopes rose gradually after talking with Tashiro and I gradually became a ringleader of the rioters in this spirit.* . . . It was not for my own gain that I joined the Komminto.

Q. Tell us about the deliberations that led to your joining the Komminto.

A. Around September 2, [1884] I spoke with Tashiro Eisuke . . . .

Q. Was there a compact (*keiyaku*) that tied you [to the party]?

A. No . . . it was due to a debt of obligation (*ongi*) I owed to Tashiro.269 (Emphasis mine.)

Ide's relationship to Tashiro, as that of Horiguchi and Akihara as well, was not as clearly spelled out during interrogation. Although Ide characterized himself as "a simple follower of Tashiro Eisuke,"270 his involvement in the rebellion did not stem from this alone. A Jiyuto member since October 1882, he was an activist who, along with Kikuchi, went to Chichibu in late October in order to present a petition to shorten the waiting period for the convening of the National Assembly.271 As Kikuchi stated their purpose:

It should be obvious that the present day government has rejected all virtue. It promises a national assembly by 1890. But now it is November 1, 1884. Today we will overthrow the present government by starting a rebellion that will spread throughout the entire nation. This will then become the revolution (*kakumei*) that will convene the national assembly.272

Ide was a serious revolutionary. In passing sentence on Ide, the court listed as one of his crimes the signifying of an Omiya government building occupied by the rebels as the "Revolutionary Headquarters" (*kakumei honbu*).273 Ide, moreover, was not employing mere rhetoric, for in his capacity as the principal intellectual involved in the rebellion, he had considerable knowledge of notions like revolution. In the summer
of 1970 one of his descendants discovered a number of his books in an old family storehouse. Among them were Volumes 2 to 4 of *A History of the French Revolution* (*Fukkoku kakumeishi*); a volume of Herbert Spencer's *Social Statistics*; a number of volumes on French laws, constitution and contracts; Mosse's *Lectures on Self Government* (*Jiji sei kogi*); and so on. That he read these is suggested by the fact that he was known to have spoken to lecture societies in Saku (a district in Nagano), where among other things he preached the need for self-government.

When Ide and Kikuchi first arrived in Chichibu they stayed at the home of another locally well-known oyabun, Kato Orihei. Like Tashiro, Kato claimed Jiyuto membership, and a large kobun following of thirty or forty people, acquired mainly due to his renowned generosity as a "good pawnshop owner" (*shichiya ryosuke*). Among his kobun were Ochiai, Takagishi Zenkichi, and Sakamoto Sosaku (the three initiators of the Komminto, and all Jiyuto members). The court's prosecutor characterized Kato as the "person of the strongest character among the leaders of the rioters." He was also known to have served as a petitioner for fellow villagers plagued by unpaid loans and high interest creditors.

Kato and Tashiro were also the ones to whom the press and the authorities referred when they spoke of the Chichibu rebels being led by "gamblers." Tashiro had, in fact, been arrested and fined on charges of gambling in mid-1884. But not only was this his only prior arrest; it should further be noted that gambling was not outlawed by the Meiji government until January of that same year. Since mid-Tokugawa, gambling had flourished in rural areas, particularly in market towns like...
Omiya where crops were sold for cash. It was not unusual for successful gamblers to act as local *kyokaku*, "godfather-style," in order to build up a following large enough to make the authorities think twice before interfering with their activities. But the close association of these two roles of *kyokaku* and "gambler" is not in itself reason enough to regard Tashiro as a mere gambler. He was also "lawyer," farmer, and one who did good deeds for those in his community. The same applied to Kato as well. As Inoue Koji has said, "Kato was an *oyabun*, but this relationship of patronage did not necessarily mean that it was expressed through [relations between people frequenting] gambling halls. It was rather built upon the human relationships existing in the mountain villages." But in any case, in those financially troubled times, it seems quite probable that good numbers of farmers sought to supplement their regular income by gambling (to which development the anti-gambling ordinance was probably a response).

Having seen that the relationships between the Jiyukomminto members were based on both shared (Jiyuto) ideology and on *oyabun-kobun* relations, we must now ask how these relations worked in organising strictly Komminto members (having already seen how these Komminto members mobilized their own villagers), and also inquire whether the ideas of those at the top filtered down among organisers and followers.

We saw in Chapter I already how the Komminto began, i.e., how on 10 August 1884, about a dozen men at the Ogano market happened to get into a discussion about how bad the times were, and decided then to meet two days later at Anoyama mountain to discuss whether they could do
anything about it; how they decided to begin a petition campaign against creditors and how the police continually broke up their meetings. The petition campaign was spearheaded by Jiyu-komminto members and was apparently the original and central vehicle by which the 130 or so Komminto members organised themselves. They in turn organised the members of the villages from which they came. Some, such as Tashiro, were responsible for a number of villages. Tashiro spent ten days in mid-October travelling between eight villages for which he claimed mobilization responsibility. Undoubtedly, Tashiro relied on his kobun of these villages to aid in his efforts. But besides this type of personal relationship, there are also strong indications that the organisational activities of Komminto members employed the impersonal, Jiyuto ideology as a means to mobilize villagers.

The Jiyuto fu, or "Liberal Party current," had great influence on the local farmers according to Arai Shuzaburo, Komminto organiser. One instance of this is the statement of a fifty-two-year-old illiterate farmer:

As far as the terrible hardships being suffered by the general farming population during these times are concerned, we of the Jiyuto and its President, Itagaki Taisuke, will carry out programs that will aid those people. . . . We will eradicate high interest loans and will work to have the various taxes reduced.

This, according to Inoue Koji, was an example of belief in the "myth (shinwa) of Itagaki" shared by many farmers. "The farmers," he said, "probably felt proud of their relations with the Jiyuto." For many, of course, the Jiyuto was interpreted simply in terms of its ability to have demands met, and was used to justify "house-wreckings" against
creditors and usurers. Some, as the testimony of Hondo Isao indicates, equated their relationship with the Komminto to a tie with the Jiyuto:

Q. Are all the rioters Komminto members?  
A. No, you are mistaken. They are called Jiyuto members.  

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And when asked to identify the ringleaders, he was easily able to cite Kikuchi, Murakami, Tashiro and others as ones who were "fervent believers in liberalism" (jiyushugi). 288 Another participant referred to local organisational meetings in Hinozawa as "Jiyuto meetings." 289

Such evidence of villager awareness of the existence of the Jiyuto, and its connection, however tenuous, with the Komminto, does not of course prove, nor even suggest, that they involved themselves in the rebellion because of a belief in Jiyuto principles learned from local Komminto organisers. It only indicates a possible awareness of an extra-traditional justification for revolt that they may have adopted through Komminto organisers, who in turn adopted them from the so-called Jiyu-komminto members.

CONCLUSION

Shoji Kichinosuke has written, "In this period of Absolutism, when the political parties were as yet undeveloped, political creeds centered around the problems of land and taxes." 290 Nakajima, one of the Aizu activists in the Fukushima Incident, made much the same point when he wrote, "The people who say give us back our rights and give us happiness are basically making one point about the road construction problem, namely, that by carrying out our goals for political reform, they can have their rights and their happiness." 291 Land, taxes, rights, and
happiness—the people involved in the three incidents were protesting against an absolute government that denied them any measure of control over any of these. Their protest was a fight to gain control. To gain control they understood that first the government had to be reformed. And it had to be reformed in such a way as to allow the people continued control over their land, their taxes, their rights, and their happiness. Necessarily, a constitutional form of government that guaranteed the "inherent natural rights" (tempu koyu no ken) of all men was the best and only way to ensure continued popular control. To this end, a popularly elected national assembly had to be convened immediately, not in 1890 when it was convenient for the government, but in 1882 or 1884—Now! whatever the date—when the People needed it. But granting, even, that setting up an assembly was no easy task, that it was not to be entered into either quickly or lightly, at least in the meantime permit free speech and association in order to enable the citizenry to arrive at enlightened decisions on important matters.

This was the reasoning the popular rights movement imparted to the people of the countryside; this, and what Ueki wrote in his song for the farmers: "If we call ourselves men, then each person must himself stand up and say, 'Man has rights!'" In each of our three cases, this is what happened. The farmers of Fukushima said they had the right to participate in decisions affecting their land, their roads, their labour, their taxes, and their lives; the Kabasan rebels said that all the people of Japan, and especially the poor who were victims of an oppressive government, had natural rights to share equally in the wealth of the
nation; the Chichibu rebels said they had the right not to suffer impoverishment because of usury, speculation in the markets, excessively high taxes, and government policy which aided the entrepreneur and hindered the small independent producer.

Very likely under similar circumstances of the ancien régime, at least the Fukushima and Chichibu rebels would have done what they did in 1882 and 1884. But, they would have done so in an entirely different way. They would have been organised by village only, and they would have justified their revolt by invoking the same rationale that their grandfathers had. In the 1880's, however, they rebelled as members or affiliates of a political party which told them that they had rights, political rights, because they were men. As we saw, of course, they employed certain traditional means of organisation—oyabun-kobun relationships, familial ties, communal relationships and the like—but only after reconceptualizing them as elements of organisation which transcended the old types. "Rice roots" democracy had, at least for the moment, found fertile soil.
Notes


2 Jefferson wrote in a letter to James Madison, 30 January 1787: "I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical. Unsuccessful rebellions indeed, generally establish the encroachments on the rights of the people which have produced them. . . . It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government. . . ." Quoted in Adrienne Koch, ed., Jefferson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971), pp. 36-37.


5 It was "official ideology" in the sense that the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" (27 August 1789), the Constitution of 1791, and the Jacobin Convention of July 1793 endorsed the principles of natural right.


7 Ibid.; p. 219.


9 Ike, Beginnings, p. 130.

10 Ibid., pp. 124-29.


12 Ibid., p. 754.

13 He was known to have met with Kono Hiroshi on 21 October 1883. Ibid.
14 Nojima Kitaro, *Kabasan jiken* (Tokyo, 1890), p. 394. The article appeared in the *Tosa Shim bun* sometime in June 1886 and was entitled "The Court Verdict of Tomatsu Masao and the Eighteen."


16 Ienaga, *Ueki*, p. 754.


19 Ienaga, *Ueki kenkyu*, p. 349.

20 Ibid., pp. 349-51.

21 See for example Kingsley Martin's astute analysis of the intellectual debt that utilitarian and social contract thinkers owed to Locke and other natural right thinkers; *French Liberal Thought*, p. 8.


27 Ibid., p. 276.

28 Ibid., p. 272.


31 Ibid., p. 196.

32 Ibid., pp. 154-55.

33 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 90.

34 Ibid., p. 22.


36 Ibid., p. 38.


38 Irokawa, "Freedom," p. 177, quoting a study done by Shoji Kichinosuke.


40 Ibid., p. 332.

41 Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, pp. 16-17.


47 Ibid., p. 16.


49 Article VI of the Sekkyosha charter; ibid., p. 15.

50 Ibid., p. 16.
This police report was dated 3 July 1880 and can be found in ibid., p. 7.


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 23. Given the topics of study, these "academies" may very well have been the first schools that taught Political Science in Japanese history.

Ibid., pp. 26-27.

Ibid.


"The state ratifying conventions were elected by voters who themselves constituted only a small fraction of the American population. To that extent, the process of ratification [of the U.S. Constitution] was not a democratic action." From Louis H. Pollak, ed., *The Constitution and the Supreme Court: A Documentary History I.* (Cleveland, 1966): 116. Also see Pollak's discussion on literacy and property qualifications as revealed in the "Randolph Plan" and the "Patterson Plan," pp. 60-63.


Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 46.

Ibid.


Ibid., p. 44.


In Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, pp. 6-7.


Ibid., p. 20.


Takahashi, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 86.

Ibid., p. 37.

Ibid., p. 38.


Kobayashi and Yamada, *Fukushima rekishi*, p. 188.


Ibid., p. 18.


*Fukushima kenshi* (FKS) XI:457. The report was dated 11 July 1882 and was submitted to the governor.


Ibid., p. 163.

Ibid., pp. 62-63.

Ibid.
Kobayashi and Yamada, Fukushima rekishi, p. 204.

Ibid., p. 188.

FKS XI:457-58.

Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 174.

Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 38.


Ibid., p. 59.

Hirano, Oi, pp. 65-70. Also see Marius Jansen, "Oi Kentaro: Radicalism and Chauvinism," Far Eastern Quarterly II, No. 3 (May 1952): 305-16.

Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 59.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 60.

Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 98.


Quoted in Goto Yasushi, Jiyu minken: Meiji no kakumei to hankakumei (Tokyo, 1972), p. 173.

Quoted in ibid., p. 178.

Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 33.

Ibid.


Itagaki, Jiyuto-shi II:255.


Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 436.

Ibid., pp. 435-43.

Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 27.
The complete interrogation is reproduced in Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, pp. 485-94.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Quoted in ibid., pp. 1, 35.

Ibid., p. 580.

Ibid.

Ibid., chaps. 20 and 21.

*KJKS*, p. 772.

Ibid., p. 122.

Ibid., p. 798.


Ibid., pp. 34-35.


Endo, *Kabasan*, p. 28.


Nojima, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 58; and Endo, *Kabasan*, p. 36.

Quoted in ibid., pp. 32-33.

Ibid.
135 KJKS, p. 103.
136 Ibid.
137 Ibid., p. 21.
138 Endo, Kabasan, p. 35.
139 KJKS, p. 103.
140 Ibid., p. 102.
141 Ibid., p. 107.
142 Ibid., pp. 541-46.
143 Article VII of the Shukai Joretsu, made into law in April 1880.
144 Endo, Kabasan, pp. 57-58.
145 Quoted in ibid., p. 58.
146 Quoted in full in KJKS, pp. 549-51; also in Goto Yasushi, "Jushichinen gekka jiken ni tsuite," eds. Horie and Toyama Jiyuminkenki II, Gekka to kaitai I:246.
149 Endo, Kabasan, p. 128.
150 Quoted in full in Ebukuro Fumio, Chichibu Bodo (Kumagaya, 1952), p. 29; Goto, "Jushichinen," p. 262; Endo, Kabasan, p. 159.
152 Nojima, Kabasan, p. 55.
153 Nojima, supra, p. 219, says the founding date was 4 September; Taoka Reiun, another contemporary, says 10 August, Meiji hanshin den (Tokyo, 1953; rpt., originally published 1909), p. 68.
154 Nojima, Kabasan, p. 219; the pronunciation is almost the same. Each is a three-character word having the same first and last characters. But for the Tokyo Yuikkan the middle character means "one"; for Tomatsu's Yuikan it means "to do" or "to perform."
KJKS, p. 467.
Nojima, Kabasan jiken, p. 219.
KJKS, p. 453.
Ibid., p. 467.
See Kobayashi's testimony, ibid., pp. 455-56.
Ibid., p. 23; and Itagaki, Jiyuto-shi III:49.

In Yokoyama's testimony, KJKS, p. 25, we read: "Q. 'Who wrote the manifesto?' A. 'Hirao did.'" Even from contemporary sources--Tosui minken shi, Meiji hanshin den, Kabasan jiken (Nojima), and Jiyuto-shi--we learn little about Hirao. For a comparison of Hirao's manifesto and Ueki Emori's for the Iida jiken, see Endo, Kabasan, pp. 204-5. For a list of Hirao's personal effects found on his body, and for a physical description (post mortem), see KJKS, pp. 375 and 360.

Nojima, Kabasan jiken, p. 137.
Endo, Kabasan, p. 144, quoting from the Jiyuto-shi.
Nojima, Kabasan jiken, p. 138.
Ibid., p. 137.
KJKS, p. 468.
Ibid., p. 455.
Ibid.
Ibid., p. 462.
Ibid., p. 235.
Ibid., p. 42.
Ibid., p. 46.
Ibid., p. 191.
Ibid., p. 455.
Quoted in Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, pp. 267-68.
KJKS, p. 476.

178 *KJKS*, p. 32.

179 Ibid., pp. 469-70.

180 Ibid., p. 461.

181 From his Introduction to *KJKS*, p. 1.

182 Endo's commentary in Appendix of *KJKS*, p. 797.

183 Ibid., p. 798.

184 Endo, *Kabasan*, pp. 104, 138-41. Endo believes the self-imposed isolation was a function of the rebels' own sense of the lonely life of the "terrorist." Goto, "Gekka," p. 217, also uses the term "terrorist" to describe the Kabasan rebels. Unfortunately, I believe both are guilty of reading twentieth-century "terrorism" into the nineteenth-century liberal movement.

185 *KJKS*, p. 25.


188 Sato, "Jiyuto-in meibo," pp. 31-32. The figures 121 and 135 represent respectively the number of members recorded by the Jiyuto party itself, and the number counted by Sato from the periodic membership lists published by the *Jiyu Shimbun*.

189 Ibid.

190 See Rudé, *Crowd*, pp. 22-23, 30, 225, for the European notion of natural justice used by the peasants, especially one manifestation of it, the "taxation populaire."

191 Written by Sekido Kanzo, Tokyo, 1903. This passage is quoted in *Nihon seiji saiban shi roku*, 3 vols. (Tokyo, 1969), 2:68.
Aoki, *Meiji nomin sojo*, pp. 73, 83. Referring to the Chichibu Incident, Aoki said, "It was an economic conflict between debtors and creditors."

Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 183-84.


There is evidence that this was the case. Consider this short article in the *Japan Weekly Mail*, 7 June 1884: "A socialistic mass meeting was held in Osumi district, Sagami, Kanagawa prefecture on the 27th of last month. . . ." It was likely referring to a Komminto meeting.


*CJSR* II:564.

Ibid., I:66.

Ibid., II:563.


For example, see Hugh Borton, *Peasant Uprisings*, pp. 99-106; 115-16; 146-54 for three instances of successful protests in this regard.

Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 42.

Ibid., pp. 43-45.

Ibid., p. 46.

Ibid.


*Ikkosai*, p. 45.

Tanaka Senya's papers in *CJSR* II:553. Also reproduced in *Nihon Seiji saiban shi roku* II:75. This latter work claims that Kikuchi Kanbei was the author.
210 CJSR II:14-46.

211 Ibid., I:621.

212 Ibid., I:421-24; 446; 458; 487-502; 506-8.


214 Ibid., p. 185.

215 Ibid.

216 CJSR I:106-7.

217 Related in Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 61-64; compare with those meeting on 12 October, at Shimo-yoshida, mentioned in Ide Magoroku, Chichibu Komminto gunsho (Tokyo, 1973), p. 21.

218 Ebukuro, Bodo, pp. 68-69.

219 CJSR I:102-3.

220 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 67-68.

221 Ibid., p. 68.

222 Ibid.

223 Ibid., p. 69.

224 CJSR I:117.

225 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 70.

226 See footnote 217.

227 CJSR I:103.

228 Ibid.

229 Ibid.

230 Ibid., pp. 104-5. Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 71, mistakenly claims that all ranks were assigned by Tashiro, Inoue and Kato together.

231 For the entire but lengthy exchange between Tashiro and his interrogator, see CJSR I:106-8.


233 Ibid., pp. 109-10.
234 CJSR I:56.
235 Ibid., I:111.
236 Ibid.; also see Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London, 1969), p. 96 for a discussion of the same practice as it was done by the "expropriator" type of European bandit.
237 KJKS, pp. 138-41.
238 CJSR II:270-71; CJSR I:492.
239 Ibid., pp. 65-66.
240 Ibid., p. 67.
241 Ibid., II:14.
242 Ibid., p. 5.
243 Ibid., p. 11.
244 Ibid., p. 6.
245 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 194.
246 Ibid., p. 86.
247 Ibid., p. 84.
248 Inoue uses the same figure, ibid.
249 Ibid., p. 85.
250 Reproduced in ibid., p. 86.
251 Ide, *Komminto*, pp. 65-78.
252 Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, p. 82; also see Hirano, *Oi*, p. 110, where he refers to Arai as one of the local "intelligensia" (interi), along with seven other school teachers, two Shinto priests, and two school administrators, all of whom were members of the Komminto.
253 Quoted in Tanaka Senya's diary; CJSR II:570.
254 See sample, Appendix III.
255 This list is reproduced in Uehara Kunichi, *Saku jiyu minken undo shi* (Tokyo, 1973), pp. 273-77.
256 Ide, Komminto, p. 43.


258 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 38.

259 Hirano, Oi, p. 112.

260 Ikkosai, p. 44.

261 Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 34.

262 Ibid., pp. 34-35.


264 Ibid., pp. 115-16.

265 Ibid.

266 Ibid.

267 Ibid., I:362; also quoted in Ebukuro, Bodo, p. 205. Also see "Kyokaku" in the Nihon Rekishi Daijiten III (Tokyo, 1968):508-9.

268 CJSR I:100.


270 Ibid., I:120.

271 Ibid., II:214.

272 Quoted in Ikkosai, p. 56.

273 CJSR II:215; Ide, Komminto, p. 119.

274 Ibid., pp. 121-22.

275 Ibid., p. 127.

276 For example, see the testimony of Hondo Issan, ibid., II:15.

277 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 37. Kato was even said to have renounced a debt of 150 yen. Hondo, a Kato kobun, revealed much about his oyakata's stirring personality during his interrogation. See CJSR II:15.

278 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 37.
279 CJSR I:46 and 359.
280 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 92.
281 Nihon Rekishi Daijiten III:509.
282 Ibid.
283 Inoue, Chichibu jiken, p. 37.
284 Ibid., p. 71.
285 Quoted in ibid., p. 71.
286 Ibid., p. 81.
287 CJSR II:16.
288 Ibid., p. 15.
289 Ibid., p. 10.
290 Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 236.
291 Ibid., pp. 310-11, from a document entitled "Tokubetsu Naisoku," referring to the internal rules of the Aizu rokugun rengokai.
CHAPTER V

CONSEQUENCES AND CONCLUSIONS

The decade of the 1880's was not a propitious period for rebellions and rebels, particularly if they happened to be connected with the popular rights movement. In this last chapter we will show what happened to the rebels after their capture by the authorities, to the individual rebels themselves and to the groups of which they were part. We will show in the first part of this chapter that to a considerable extent the rebels of all three incidents were victims of a pattern of political oppression that was well established by the time of the rebellions, that indeed was itself in large measure a reaction to the advances made by the popular rights movement. We can say now that the repression which the rebels of each of the incidents suffered was excessive, and far beyond (at least) a modern Western conception of fairness or justice. The penalties imposed on the participants of the three incidents far outreached either the nature of their crime or any prior criminal records. Only four of the Fukushima participants, that we know of, had a prior record of crime; only two of the Chichibu leaders, and eleven of the Kabasan rebels had criminal records. But even in the latter case, the crimes were of a political nature, and most stemmed from their part in the Fukushima Incident, and most were acquitted. This is necessary to realize at the beginning of this chapter for in the first section we seek to answer the question, "What happened to the rebels?"

The second section of this chapter will address itself to the
issues raised in the Introduction, all of which revolve around the one central question, "Did the popular rights movement fail?" In approaching this question we will draw upon many of the findings we reported earlier in the thesis and briefly touch upon some not reported but which nonetheless help to provide us with an answer to this question. These findings concern the farmers' movement that occurred after the 1880's. Based on our own findings and others, we will challenge the dominant interpretations of North American scholarship that argue either that "the first attempt (at democracy) failed in Japan" or that it could not have failed because it was never tried. To anticipate somewhat, we will argue that democracy did not fail and that it was in fact "tried."

CONSEQUENCES

What then of this so-called "pattern of political oppression?" It was based on two separate but interrelated facets of the immediate post-Restoration problems attending what some modernization theorists have termed "the crisis of consolidation." The first of these facets was the new government's demonstrated ability to effect one major type of socio-political reform after another without suffering any serious setbacks. The abolition of the old domains and the creation of centralized administration; the land reform and land tax of 1872 and 1873; the legal dissolution of the feudal class system; the unification of the national market; conscription, reforms in education, banking, communication, and industrialization—all were effected in quick succession with remarkable success while at the same time demonstrating a capability of dealing with
unarmed and armed opposition to them. With such success at reform, the government grew more and more certain of its power and authority, but, at the same time, more and more anxious about its maintenance. This certainty and anxiety were increasingly and steadily manifested in the number of repressive laws it proclaimed to ensure continued and future success at its programme of fukoku kyohei ("rich country, strong military").

This point related to the second facet dealing with the "crisis of consolidation." Domestic order was absolutely necessary in order to modernize, particularly in the midst of an international context rife with great power imperialism. Without domestic order, Japan could not modernize; without modernization she could not retain her political sovereignty. Indeed, it had already been violated by embarrassing treaties of extra-territoriality and "most-favoured nation" trading relationships. To Japan's modernizing leaders, these threats from without must have made the threats from within seem all the more dangerous. No sooner had its new conscript army subdued the thousands of discontented samurai under Saigo Takamori in 1877, it must have seemed, than an equally subversive body called the popular rights movement began to raise its ugly head. Yamagata Aritomo, chief architect of Japan's modern military forces and Home Minister at the time of the Kabasan and Chichibu rebellions, privately confided to allied oligarch Ito Hirobumi in a letter dated 4 July 1879:

Itagaki's scheme is to call for the peoples' rights, slander the government, abuse officials with reckless and groundless attacks and thereby arouse disgruntled shizoku and spread unrest throughout the
land. By prolonging this situation he hopes to unite the people and overthrow the government at the opportune moment.¹ (Emphasis mine.)

Four years later when many thousands were organised into Jiyuto branches, Yamagata was no less apprehensive. Complaining again to Ito about present laws not being harsh enough, he wrote:

With this condition prevailing at present, I am apprehensive that unless we take drastic measures to deal with the political parties, it will prove hopeless to attempt to achieve the goal of preserving the independence of our imperial nation.

At least Yamagata, Japan's Bismarck, wanted yet more blood and more iron in order to preserve his nation's sovereignty. To do this he believed that yet stronger pieces of legislation had to be added to an already well established pattern of political oppression.

What then was the nature of this political oppression?

It began in 1873 when newspaper codes and libel laws were enacted in order to curtail a press already showing signs of libelous liberal independence. In 1875 the press laws were made even more stringent, threatening fines, imprisonment, and suspension of publication for newspapers whose editors allowed intemperate criticism of the government and its policies. More than two hundred writers were punished during the next five years for violating its provisions.³ Shortly after the Jiyuto and other parties were formed and had established their own organs, such as the Jiyu Shimbun, the government responded with an even tougher law in April 1883. For violating this new newspaper and publishing code 474 writers and editors were prosecuted during 1883 and 1884.⁴

Freedom of speech was limited in other areas as well. On 9 December 1880, the first of several laws restricting the right to petition was
proclaimed. A year before, in April 1879, less than a year after the government allowed prefectural assemblies to be elected to serve as advisory bodies to the governors, a law was invoked that threatened assemblymen with deprivation of all rights for a seven-year period if they "treasonably" overstepped their already much curtailed prerogative to debate legislation. In December 1882 the government went even further by proscribing communication and meetings between members of different prefectural assemblies.

This last law was actually an amendment to the earlier Law of Public Meetings (shukai jorei) that had been enacted on 5 April 1880. This law forbade students, teachers, policemen, soldiers, and other government personnel to attend any political meeting or to join any political organisation. It also placed restrictions on the scheduling and the content of political meetings and it furthermore prohibited political societies to combine or to communicate with one another. Violators could be prosecuted for treason. In January 1882 the effect of the Public Meetings law on political society members worsened when a new ordinance was issued, making offenders of this law and others subject to prosecution for a felony rather than a misdemeanour. Between 1883 and 1884, 309 individuals were prosecuted for breaking the Meetings law, among whom were several of the leaders of the three incidents. But perhaps more important than numbers arrested was the countless numbers of political meetings broken up by the police who were acting in accord with the provisions of this law. It is known, for instance, that in the first eight months of 1882 the Fukushima police reported observing 306 political
meetings (Jiyuto), broke up sixteen of them, and arrested two speakers. Clearly, the popular rights movement by this time was "... considered a real and present danger by the Oligarchs." But how then did this pattern of political oppression manifest itself in the three incidents?

We saw in Chapter I that after the Kitakata incident of 28 November, wholesale arrests were made throughout the entire prefecture, not just in Yama district where the incident occurred or even in Tamura where the eastern Jiyuto headquarters was located. Estimates vary, but anywhere between one and two thousand party members or supporters were arrested in late 1882, although more than half of these never set foot in Aizu during the entire summer of that year. The reason for such wide-scale arrests seems to be clear. On 28 November, Governor Mishima wrote a secret message to his secretary Murakami Juncho:

Concerning the wicked rioters at Kitakata, it is an opportune moment to arrest all those related people yet remaining [unarrested]. If you have an insufficient number of policemen, talk to the other police branches in the region, and mobilize and deputize the 150 men of the Miharu Fencing Club (Gekkento). Dispose of this problem firmly, omitting no one. Time is of the essence. You ought to call in the police from other districts if yours are insufficient. Send me a reply immediately.

That night the Aizu Jiyuto headquarters was assaulted by forty policemen aided by special deputies, and forty-four Jiyuto members were arrested. Within the next several weeks, 518 Aizu Jiyuto supporters and members were charged with crimes ranging from being a "ringleader" and "inciting crowds to riot" to "instigation" and mere "rioting"; these were all felonies. About 325 of the 518 men were charged with "blindly following and assembling to riot," a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of one to two yen. Many of those Aizu men charged with the more serious
crimes—and this applies to those from eastern Fukushima as well—found themselves thrown into veritable torture chambers without even being informed of the nature of their crime. It is claimed that about 200 Jiyuto members and supporters were tortured, and prison diaries, memoranda between officials, court records, and newspaper accounts seem to substantiate at least the fact if not the number as well. Igarashi Takehide's court testimony, for instance, includes references to the marks on his body which he revealed to the court. In April the Choya Shimbun published a report about a prisoner "frequently ordered to leave the jail and appear in the police station in muddy and snowy weather; that he was kept standing day and night without a morsel to eat; that he was refused food and that the police sergeants sometimes kicked his feet, causing blood to flow." Jiyuto member Haneda Kiyomizu from far off Soma district was a victim of the arrest campaign; he was charged with "insulting an official" and forced to stand out in the cold; he contracted pneumonia as a result, and died in prison. There are too many stories to discount them, stories of beatings, torture and even suicide taking place in prison while these "traitors" were waiting to be tried.

Those who actually made it to court seem not to have fared much better. Most of the known Jiyuto members were prosecuted at the Fukushima Felony Court or at the Wakamatsu Misdemeanour Court. Those found guilty at the former court were sentenced to six or seven years in prison; those found guilty at the latter to between one and five years. About thirty of those found guilty of felony charges later appealed the court's verdict, and in all cases the lower court's decision was overturned,
testifying therefore to the political nature of the charges brought against these men. Moreover, by the time these men were released, the judge who first sentenced them to prison, Akagi Kenichi, had been politically rewarded and promoted to succeed Mishima as Governor of Fukushima.  

If these are two indications of the political nature of the arrests, then the treason trials in Tokyo was another. The basis of the charge brought against all fifty-seven men was an alleged connection between the "blood pact" promising to overthrow the government signed by Kono Hironaka and five others (earlier quoted; see Chapter IV), and the Kitakata incident that was supposedly led by the other fifty-one men charged with treason. The trial lasted nearly two months, from early February 1883 to early April, and during that time it became apparent that there was no evidence to connect the Kitakata incident to the "blood pact," and hence fifty-one of the men were acquitted. The "Blood Pact Six" did not do as well. Two of their lawyers, Hoshi Toru and Oi Kentaro, used the trial as a political platform to indict the government for its crimes; this certainly did not help the six. Kono defended himself by arguing that when he used the word tempuku ("overthrow") he really meant kairyo ("reform"). Hanaka and Hirajima, however, said that the word tempuku meant for them what it did for everyone else, adding that "reform" could only occur if the government were overthrown. All six were found guilty of "conspiring to overthrow the government." Kono was sentenced to seven years imprisonment, and the others to six years. Tamano died in prison the next January, and the others were released in February 1889 when they were pardoned on the occasion of the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution.
For both the eastern and western branches of the Jiyuto, the aftermath of the Kitakata incident was disastrous. Overt political oppression had cost the Jiyuto its best leaders, a hundred or so at the upper levels of the party hierarchy, and hundreds at the lower levels. Among the many followers a fear of being arrested kept many away from party-related lectures and meetings; attendance dropped. Some activists, such as Monna, Hara, and Saji who were acquitted of treason, tried taking Governor Mishima to court for abuses of power, but were threatened with arrest; many others who had escaped arrest earlier went into hiding, only to be caught two and three years later and sent to prison. Others, we know, turned to scheming and plotting the overthrow of the government; such was the case of the Fukushima men involved in the Kabasan Incident.

One would imagine that the Kabasan revolt was the perfect, clear-cut case for the government to prove treason. After all, sixteen men openly declared their intent to bring down the government by force, and actually tried to do so. Moreover, "Since the government officials regarded the Kabasan Incident as extremely serious, they employed all their police and investigative powers to arrest all those concerned." Obvious evidence, concerted investigation, and even an open admission of guilt by the rebels during pretrial interrogation pointed to treason. As Kono Hiroshi stated their crime, "We who involved ourselves in this incident can only be understood as having committed treason . . . ." What could be clearer? Let Kono himself explain what the government did. Continuing his above-quoted statement, Kono said:

... but the policy of this administration is to pervert the law greatly. We ought not to be prosecuted as ordinary criminals. In
other words, what the Justice Ministry has done is to manipulate the law by debasing the charge, but this cannot even for one day fool the Japanese people; it cannot protect the authority of the government; ultimately this act will come to be regarded as a great blot in the records of the Japanese judiciary.\(^{21}\) (Emphasis mine.)

In other words, the government changed the charge against the Kabasan rebels from treason to "armed robbery," presumably in order to "de-politicize" the trial and to prevent the kind of negative publicity the government received as a result of the Fukushima Incident treason trial. That trial had also served to catapult Kono Hironaka into the ranks of the great patriots; the government did not want the same to happen to Hironaka's nephew Hiroshi and his fourteen compatriots.

The altering of the charge surprised the Kabasan rebels. All the pretrial questioning by police and government prosecutors--some of which was related in Chapter IV--concerned itself with the nature of their treasonable act, and in fact the rebels had been charged with treason on the basis of this early investigation. Not until 6 March 1885, after the preliminary hearings had been completed, was the charge changed to armed robbery resulting in murder.\(^{22}\)

This alteration also made necessary changes in nearly 300 other charges, ones which had been laid against about 300 accomplices who came from Tochigi, Ibaraki, Fukushima, Yamanashi, Chiba, and Tokyo.\(^{23}\) The list included such prominent popular rights advocates as prefectural assembly member Naito Roichi of Aichi prefecture and Tanaka Shozo of the Tochigi prefectural assembly--the government said about him: "Tanaka has long [behaved] like a crafty cancerous tumour; taking a hatchet to it was long overdue"\(^{24}\)--and included such unknowns as Koinuma's entire family.
All but a handful of the 300 were released within a month to ten months after their arrest. Only such "principal offenders" (seihansha) as Ohashi and Naito were indicted for having given money or shelter to the rebels after the incident. Now instead of being charged with aiding traitors, they were charged with aiding robbers.

Not until September 1885 did the trials begin. The fifteen rebels were tried in four different courts--Tokyo, Tochigi, Chofu, and Chiba--nearest to the place where each was captured. In all four courtrooms sat policemen whose duty was to report on all Jiyuto members and supporters attending the trials. Once again, Oi Kentaro was serving as defence attorney, but unlike the Fukushima trials Oi did not remain throughout the trial period, resigning in late September, probably in order to begin planning for his ill-fated expedition to liberate Korea.

The trials began with protestations made by Kono, Koinuma, Amano, and others against the change in the indictment. For example, Kono reasoned, "If you examine the manifesto distributed by the defendants, then it ought to be readily apparent that the crimes of stealing money and army were committed in order to carry out a crime against the State." Koinuma simply claimed, "Making the bombs was for one purpose only--to use them to overthrow the Meiji government." Yamaguchi advised, metaphorically, "If the court cannot judge our unworthy crime with the public eye of justice, then its incompetent eyes ought to be closed forever." But it was Amano who pointed out to the authorities the real nature of the trial: "You fear that by punishing us correctly you will make us into martyrs." The government in fact disallowed the manifesto and the oral
declarations of the rebels as evidence. One prosecutor argued, "Their plot to overthrow the government in order to effect social reform is merely an oral declaration; there is no evidence that makes them guilty of treason." Yet one judge of the Tokyo trials believed their "mere oral declarations" and wished to try them for treason; he was dismissed.

In July 1886 the sentences were read. All were found guilty of armed robbery resulting in murder. After a circular letter had passed through the hands of each of the four trial judges, allowing them to agree on a proper sentence, Tomatsu, Yokoyama, Miura, Kokugi, Kotoda, Sugiura, and Hota were sentenced to death. Kusano, Isokawa, Kono, Kobayashi, and Amano were given indefinite prison terms. Due to commiserative circumstances—it is not clear what this refers to—Tamamatsu and Hara received indefinite prison terms, reduced from the death penalty. Koinuma was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment, Monna to thirteen, Saeki to ten, and Ohashi to nine; the "complicitors" escaped with light sentences. Of the principal rebels, only Yamaguchi was not sentenced; he died in prison while awaiting what most certainly would have been the death sentence. Except for Tomatsu, all those given the death sentence appealed, but on 12 August 1886 their appeals were denied. Yokoyama died in prison a month before he was to walk to the gallows; the others were hung on 6 October 1886.

One year later, a memorial service was held in Tokyo for the seven dead Kabasan rebels. Hoshi Toru, later a Diet member, Minister of Communications, and a victim of political assassination in June 1901, decried political extremism while at the same time intoning, "Those for
whom we hold this memorial service did not lay down their lives in vain. Was not their purpose to put an end to bad laws?" 30 Just three months after making that speech a new law was passed—the Peace Preservation Law (hoan jorei)—that gave the authorities the right to expel anyone "scheming something detrimental to public tranquility . . ." 31 from the capital for a fixed period of time; Hoshi Toru was one of the 570 writers and political figures ordered out of the capital.

What of the Kabasan rebels not executed? Hara and Ohashi died in prison from tuberculosis. The others were passed over in February 1889 when in celebration of the new Constitution most political prisoners were released from prison. Not until 1893 through 1894 were they freed, and then, even for the shizoku among them, their Constitutional rights were not restored until July 1897, but even then they were only given the rights accorded to heimin. 32

Most of the Chichibu rebels were heimin; no vainglorious protests were uttered by them in an effort to convince the prosecutors of their treason. Yet as we shall see, the newspapers at least were ready for a treason trial to be called a treason trial, and for the government to prosecute on the basis of hard evidence. And in this case, both the newspapers and the government were able to identify the real "traitors": they were the "agitators" and "instigators," not the "blind masses" who had been "led astray." In fact, the more than 3,000 farmers who surrendered themselves to the authorities for the most part escaped with an average fine of about one-and-a-half yen, although during the depression when the average annual income was only twenty-eight yen, the fine must be regarded
as heavy. The lucky ones escaped altogether, retreating to distant hamlets where they easily found anonymity among their agrarian peers. The authorities did not seek them out as they had done with those who escaped after the Kitakata incident. Instead, they sought only those responsible for working the common people into such a frenzy that they revolted.

These types—"gamblers, Jiyuto and Komminto members, and lawyers" were the targets of the law. And it was not the same kind of law that was practiced in the other two incidents. In those incidents months and even a couple of years separated arrest, trial, and prosecution. In the Chichibu case, several days before the rebellion had ended, Home Minister Yamagata instructed his secretary to have a certain Judge Shimada and a prosecutor Okada sent to Omiya to help the local judiciary set up an Extraordinary Crimes Court (ringi jusai saibanjo) in order to deal with what he called the "bandits" (hito). Yamagata also ordered a battalion of garrison troops to help round up the "bandits," as well as the "wandering outlaws" (furo no kyoto) who "prey on the sufferings of law-abiding citizens."

Probably reflecting the government's views on the "bandits," the Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun wrote:

The immediate cause [of the rebellion] was mainly the agitation of villainous gamblers and radical wanderers. . . . Since they could not realize their European-type socialist party, they sought to create misery and death. . . . They agitated the unthinking poor people. . . . It was a terrible crime of treason. Treason was their objective, the greatest single danger in these times. This wide-scale rebellion gave rise to fears in everyone that we were heading toward the point of revolution. (Emphasis mine.)

As if to emphasize the point even more, the Tokyo Nichi Nichi
Shimbun was very specific in a 14 November (1884) editorial entitled "Destruction is the Enemy of Society." After observing the tendency for "parties of destruction" (hakaito) to emerge in other areas of the world --the anarchists in Russia, the Socialist Party in France, and the Fabian socialists in England--it said that in the Chichibu rebellion:

Those responsible for the destruction in this uprising were the ones known as "Radical Party Members" (kageki no seito-in). They preached about the expansion of "unlimited freedom" (museigen no jiyu) to their followers. . . . Their radical talk about freedom is an empty and abstract theory. It is not possible to make all people equal, to do away with differences between the rich and the poor, between the high and the low. . . . Theirs is a politics of dissatisfaction; they call for the very destruction of the law.39

In subsequent articles and editorials, Jiyuto party members came to be cited repeatedly as those "agitators who were appealing to the aspirations of society's lower classes."40 Calls for the prosecution of the Jiyuto, "not yet silent,"41 though in fact already dissolved, grew more frequent, even in newspapers other than the Tokyo Nichi Nichi, albeit in a less vindictive tone.42 In the other papers the "plight of the poor farmer" was stressed equally, and it was emphasized that in many cases "rioters reportedly compelled people to participate."43 Whether it was because the newspapers called for leniency for the poor farmers, or because the sheer number of them (3,249 by 28 November)44 would have made prosecution an impossible task, the government decided to prosecute only the thirty-seven men known as Tashiro's lieutenants (see Appendix III), the 115 who "instigated the masses," and the 103 men listed as "members of the Komminto."45 Since all but fourteen were residents of Chichibu, we may seriously question the allegations of the government and the newspapers concerning the important role played by "outside
agitators" and "wandering outlaws" in stirring up the "unthinking masses" to rebel. In any case, the specific charges laid against the nearly 250 rebel leaders were fomenting rebellion, robbery, and instigation of violence. 46

Most of the Chichibu rebels received sentences of five to eight years imprisonment, although some, such as Tashiro's eighteen-year-old son, received as little as six months. Those receiving the longer sentences were for the most part released in February 1889 as part of the general amnesty. Tashiro himself and seven other "ringleaders" were sentenced to death in February 1885, less than three months after their arrest. Two months later Tashiro, Kato, Arai Shusaburo, Takagishi, and Sakamoto were unceremoniously hung. The other three had been sentenced to death in absentia. Inoue, as we know, had already escaped to Hoddaido where he lived the remaining thirty years of his life quietly as a farmer. Kikuchi had gone underground after the incident and was not apprehended until two years later. For some reason his sentence was commuted from death to life imprisonment, but he was released in 1905 as part of an amnesty granted in celebration of Japan's victory over Russia. He returned to his village in Saku where he lived the remainder of his life quietly with his son, the village doctor. 47 The third Chichibu rebel sentenced to death in absentia was Ochiai. Insofar as his later experiences parallel those of some of the post-incident experiences of rebels involved in all three incidents, we will give them more attention.

Ochiai did not resurface until the trials for the participants of the Osaka Incident in 1887 when it was discovered that he had been living
the last several years under a false name. He related a story that included working in a mine for a while, brooding over the death sentence his fellow rebels received, and wondering how he could save them. He then went to Tokyo to seek the one man whom he believed might be able to assist, Oi Kentaro. He first visited Naito Roichi, who had just recently been released from prison (Kabasan Incident), and together the two men went to the Yuikkan to speak with Oi. Besides Oi, also present were Arai Shogo (also arrested for complicity in the Kabasan Incident), the brother of convicted Kabasan rebel Tamamatsu, and Kobayashi Kazuo. They explained their plot to effect a "liberal revolution" in Korea, and Ochiai agreed to join them. Ochiai was appointed to assist several others in robbing Tokyo merchants to raise money for the plot. He successfully completed that task and along with the others headed toward Nagasaki where they were to meet the army of over 100 men that Oi had assembled. But on the way there Ochiai and his companions were arrested. Ochiai was subsequently sentenced to ten years imprisonment. Upon his release he returned to his Chichibu village where he spent the remaining forty years of his life as a Christian convert working for the Salvation Army, and, according to another source, as an active supporter of nationalistic causes.

If the latter is true, then Ochiai was not alone in "switching" his liberal colours for nationalistic ones. His mentor in the Osaka Incident, Oi Kentaro, is certainly one of the other, better-documented cases of this. Less well known figures who were also participants of one or the other of our three incidents can also be cited. Shirai Enbei,
for example, one of the young Tamura minken activists indicted (but acquitted) for treason in the Fukushima Incident is another. First elected to the National Assembly in 1890, and again in the second Diet, he was an avid supporter of the Navy Expansion Bill (*Kaigun kakucho-an*). When he subsequently lost his Diet seat to Kono Hironaka, Shirai turned to banking, using his close contacts with the zaibatsu ("financial clique"). By 1915 he was again serving in the Diet as a Seiyukai Party member, in large part due to the aid he received from the Party leader and later Prime Minister, Hara Kei. 50

Two other examples of converts to nationalistic causes are Arai Shogo (Osaka Incident) and Koinuma Kuhachiro, leader of the Kabasan Incident. After his release from prison in 1889, Arai was elected to serve as a member of the Tochigi prefectural assembly in 1890; several years later he served in the Colonial Ministry. Koinuma, "father of the assassination faction," also spent his later years as an assemblyman in the Tochigi legislature, where he oftentimes had to suffer the opposition's jeers of "Kabasan General" (*Kabasan shogun*). Koinuma's biggest disappointment during this period stemmed from the failure of Kono Hironaka, then Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, to get him a post in a central government ministry. 51

These examples raise doubts as to the seriousness of the early minken leaders' commitment to the principles of natural right and to the movement that incorporated those principles. Such cases as these seem to lend support to the argument that says the liberal movement was never very liberal, that Itagaki's chameleon-like qualities were not unique to
the upper echelons of the popular rights movement, but in fact charac-
terized all levels of participation. Yet at the same time, is it fair
to assume that men like Koinuma did in fact abandon their principles?
Would this not be an act of assigning guilt by association? To ascertain
whether they did in fact abandon their earlier held principles would
require an in-depth examination of their later acts and speeches in the
prefectural assembly and elsewhere. To do this would take us well beyond
the immediate focus of the thesis. However, we may suggest that a com-
mitment to democracy as well as to nationalism is not necessarily a
contradiction in values, particularly if sufficient attention is
accorded to the international context in which Japan, the Japanese in
general, and the democrats within Japan found themselves in the 1880's
and 1890's. It should be remembered that this was a time of interna-
tional violence, of big power diplomacy and imperialism, which taught
the weaker nations that armed might best served as the basis of a
nation's sovereignty. Japanese conservatives and liberals alike under-
ostood this lesson. However, the liberals, unlike the conservatives,
believed that the necessity of Japan being militarily strong should not
interfere with the development of social justice at home. But again, to
treat the entire question of the compatibility of a belief in democracy
with nationalistic sentiments would require much more attention than is
possible to give here. Having said this, it seems necessary to treat
one other result of the gekka jiken for which we have sufficient evi-
dence: the dissolution of the institution to which these incidents were
so closely tied, the Jiyuto.
It would be a mistake to say that the Jiyuto dissolved itself on 29 October 1884, a month after the Kabasan Incident and two days before the Chichibu Incident, because of these and other incidents like them. 52 There is little doubt, however, that the six gekka jiken that occurred prior to dissolution were an important contributing factor. 53 Despite the party's claims each time one broke out that the party had nothing to do with them, the fact that the leadership in each were members of the party (or claimed to be), and their following adopted Jiyuto principles as slogans of rebellion, was all too evident to ignore in the case of the authorities and impossible to disprove in the case of the party. 54 The official party history, the Jiyuto shi, makes the further point that these incidents served to provoke ever stronger government oppression: "Beginning with the Fukushima and Takada 'hells,' and continuing with the Gumma and Kabasan violent uprisings, the government effectively prohibited the freedoms of speech, publication, and assembly. As a result, it became impossible for the Jiyuto to carry out its movement with unity and moderation." 55 Of course, since we know that these "freedoms" had been severely restricted well before the occasion of the incidents, we must conclude that the authors were speaking in relative rather than absolute terms. In any case, the party historians point especially to that section of the Public Meetings Law that forbade communication between the central headquarters and its "branches" (in fact, the law also forbade combinations, so the branches were separate entities) as responsible for party disunity, because it prevented central control over the activities of the members on the periphery.
Not only the deleterious effects of repressive legislation contributed to the dissolution of the Jiyuto. Since its inception the party had been plagued by factionalism between the radicals and the gradualists at the highest levels of the party hierarchy. The party split between these two factions had been very pronounced at the time of Itagaki's trip abroad in 1882, but was even more evident in March 1884, when at the party convention the two members most critical of President Itagaki's policies and furthest removed from him ideologically, Oi Kentaro and Hoshi Toru, were elected as advisors to the President, contrary, needless to say, to Itagaki's wishes. Against this backdrop of repressive laws and party factionalism the Kabasan Incident occurred, guaranteeing dissolution. As the party history says, "After that our party decided to dissolve."

Dissolution, however, was effected only at the centre. It certainly did not affect the decision of the Chichibu Komminto to rebel. Neither did it have any impact on the popular rights societies of Iida and Nagoya in December 1884 when they tried their hand at revolution. Briefly, the Iida-based Aikoku Seirisha (Nagano prefecture) and the Nagoya-based Aikoku Kodo Kyokai (Aichi prefecture) together conspired to overthrow the Meiji government. Their plan involved the use of counterfeit money to raise funds for arms, the infiltration of the Nagoya army barracks by minken advocates for purposes of recruiting soldiers to mutiny, and the mobilizing of farmers in Aichi, Nagano, and Kanagawa. Planning lasted over a year, and the leaders of the incident recruited no less a personage than Ueki Emori as author of their revolutionary manifesto.
The plot, however, was discovered in the early stages of its execution and quickly suppressed. But even this was not the last of the gekka jiken. In June 1886 the Shizuoka Incident occurred; it was a plot by ex-Jiyuto members to assassinate the leaders of the government who were due to meet at a resort in Shizuoka. Not even planned as well as the Kabasan Incident, this last of the "incidents of intense violence" ended not with a bang, but with a whimper.

After this succession of failures on the part of Jiyuto members to alter the Meiji government by employing violence, the popular rights movement changed considerably. By 1886 the depression that had so oppressed farmers earlier in the eighties had subsided and signs of prosperity were beginning to manifest themselves. The new political movement that sprang up in 1887, the Daido DanketsuUndo (The Movement for a Union of Like Thinkers), seemed politically atavistic, resembling more the min-ken movement as it was in its earlier stages than as it was in its developed stage: it was largely led by and composed of ex-samurai and sprang from the issue of Japan's independence (or lack of it) from foreign control, especially the treaties imposing extra-territoriality. But as this movement took shape, it included a number of former liberals whose concerns for the nation went beyond that of treaty revision, also emphasizing the need for reduction of the land tax and for freedom of speech and assembly. But in part because it did not seek support on a wide scale from the millions of farmers in the countryside, in part because its leaders were co-opted by the government, in part because of new repressive legislation (e.g., the Peace Preservation Law), and in part because splinter groups
were forming in preparation for the altered political situation that would attend the constitutional phase of Japan's political development, the Daido Danketsu movement collapsed. Several new political parties emerged to take its place, but, unlike the old Jiyuto before its demise, the new parties did not seek mass support; they did not have to, for under the new constitution property qualifications determined that only 460,000 citizens out of Japan's population of fifty million would determine by their votes which of the elitist parties would control the parliament.

CONCLUSIONS

Japan entered its constitutional era with seven "national" political parties. None were popularly based, and all were very nationalistic. A mere 1 1/2 per cent of the population could vote in Diet elections. The government was controlled by oligarchs and "transcendental cabinets" which permitted the parties little power, and no power to the people whom they regarded as children to be led. New laws restructuring local government in 1888 were implemented in order to isolate the villages, foster patriotism, and to prevent "the spread of ideological movements and . . . party strife into the realm of local government," in short, to keep "the countryside peaceful and stable." Forty per cent of Japan's farming population were tenants. Only an estimated 5 per cent of the population could vote in local elections, i.e., 5 per cent were regarded officially as citizens (komin). And finally, if the Fukushima case is at all representative, then rural political societies in 1890 were
dominated by *shizoku* and wealthy *heimin*, mainly the *gono* stratum of the farming class.  

In the face of all this evidence, not to mention the later developments of the 1930's, how can we argue that the first attempt at democracy succeeded in Japan? And, can we say that it was even attempted?

The findings presented in this thesis strongly suggest that democracy was attempted, especially at the lower levels of society and politics. Now to summarize briefly what those findings were. In the first chapter it was shown how the rebels of each incident invoked Jiyuto symbols, slogans, and organisational precepts as a means to give to their anti-government activities a measure of legitimacy and coherence. In all three incidents a recurrent demand of the rebels was a constitutional and representative form of government; this they regarded as necessary for the implementation of a system of local self-government, of a political system based on the natural rights of man, and of an economic system responsive to the financial plight of small independent producers of agricultural commodities. In the second chapter we outlined those historical, social, economic, and political elements that together combined to create the necessary objective conditions for the emergence of a liberal-democratic movement. They were: a tradition of rebellion in the areas where the *gekka jiken* of the 1880's occurred, a tradition that included an important economic "levelling" component; a constantly changing agrarian social structure that witnessed the political ascendancy of the middle-level farmers, whose vulnerability to the changing market situation was accompanied by increased participation in, and leadership of,
peasant uprisings against local and domain authorities; the attempts by
the new Meiji government to exploit the agrarian community in order to
create a solid industrial base for the modernizing economy; and the rise
of the popular rights movement which changed dramatically from a movement
led and composed by the old feudal elite of southwest Japan to a Kanto-
centred and commoner-led and composed liberal party that derived its
strength from the hundreds of member and affiliated political societies
spread throughout Japan.

The types of people who were members of the local popular rights
societies and parties, and more precisely, those whose membership in such
groups was recorded by their participation in one of the three rebellions
(a fact in itself an indication of how deep was their commitment to the
movement) were the topic of the third chapter. There we saw that the
leadership in each incident was largely drawn from the local elite and
was a fairly homogeneous group in terms of the different characteristics
for which information was given, but that differences existed between the
leadership of each according to incident. One important difference was
that the leadership in the Fukushima Incident came mainly from the small
gono stratum of agrarian society but in the Chichibu Incident from the
middle-level farmer stratum. However, despite this difference, it ap-
peared that relative to landholding patterns the leadership of each was
neither very wealthy nor very poor, but rather fell somewhere in between.
Also in this respect, it appeared that the following closely resembled
the leadership, although to a much greater extent in Chichibu than in
Fukushima. Yet if the economic position of the followers in the Kabasan
Incident is any indication, then the followers in the Fukushima Incident also were middle-level farmers. It was also suggested that this fact of middle-level farmers involving themselves in rebellion finds considerable support in the comparative history of rebellion and revolution.

Chapter IV sought to place the people examined in the previous chapter into an ideological and organisational context. We saw that the different organisations employed by the rebels were governed by a liberal-democratic ideology that made the rights of the individual, as opposed to the rights of the State, into the central principle governing socio-economic and political existence. Although the political creed they followed, natural right, was oftentimes centred around problems of land, labour, and taxes, and their organisations around traditional types of social relationships, nonetheless their democratic organisations and ideology differed from and transcended the local economic concerns and traditional social relationships. Evidence was also offered to show the existence of extensive "rice roots" participation in popular rights organisations and enthusiasm for democratic ideas, though it must be conceded that local elites seem to have been more involved and to have had a deeper understanding than their followers.

This brief review of the evidence marshalled in this thesis, I believe, should remind us that democracy was in fact "tried." Those who say it was not appear to be guilty of deducing antecedent political developments from the nature of succeeding political circumstances. In other words, those who say democracy was not tried look mainly at the list of undemocratic, socio-economic and political features characterizing Japan
in its constitutional era and infer from that set of circumstances that earlier movements could not have been democratic. Or in other terms, they look at the political institutions of the Japanese state as of 1890, conclude they are oligarchic or Confucian, and then further conclude that the processes leading up to that situation must have been consistent with that outcome. In part their mistake stems from the level of politics at which they focus their study and perform their analysis, namely, the elite level, staffed by national government and party figures and the institutions through which they expressed themselves. A study, for example, of Itagaki and the other early popular rights advocates will show that they were not interested in, nor did they promote, universal franchise free of property qualifications; but a study of the Sanshisha and the Seidokan, and one of its leaders, Sakuma Shogen, will show that minken advocates at the local level were interested in, and did promote, these ideas. There is also little indication that the early leaders of the popular rights movement sought to educate all men, irrespective of social status, about their inherent natural rights; but the political societies of Fukushima did, and the Kabasan rebels sought to create just such a society where natural rights would be the legal rights of all men. A study focused at the national elite level of politics would also fail to show that both the Fukushima and Chichibu rebels sought to effect a type of national government that would be more sensitive to the needs of the people as they were expressed at the local level of government. Even the less articulate Chichibu rebels realized that this could only come about by democratic reform at the highest levels of government; nowhere is
there any indication that the early national minken leaders or the national government were responsive to this notion of local self-government, perhaps the very foundation of a democratic system.

Hence, it is quickly and unreservedly conceded that at the upper levels of party politics and government, democracy was not attempted. But to say it was not attempted at all because "... none of the Meiji leaders advocated the establishment of a democratic form of government," is not only to ignore the proclaimed purposes of thousands of commoners who came to believe in and fight for their rights as men, but also it is to neglect that vast majority of the population who lived their social, political, and economic lives not in the capital but in the many small hamlets spread throughout Japan. Though many of them may not have been "relevant political actors" in the sense that they were without substantive political rights and in the sense that they were unable to realize a democratic system of government, their fight for rights made them nonetheless political actors.

This brings us to the second and more difficult question, "Did this early attempt fail or succeed?" Having already admitted that it failed in terms of not being able to effect a constitutional democratic form of government, and conversely, to prevent the establishment of the imperial absolutist form of government (as embodied in the Meiji Constitution), we must at the same time emphasize that "failure" can only be understood as having occurred at one level, again at the level of national politics, or in Robert Scalapino's terms, at the level of "the landed and capitalist elites," those whom he identifies as early popular
It was these types of early "liberal leaders" who failed, because, again in Scalapino's terms, "... neither of these groups could truly represent the cause of liberalism or the principles of a liberal party movement." The landed groups, he says, "were interested primarily in refighting the battle of feudalism and in stemming the tide of urban industrialization. They had an interest in liberalism mainly to the extent that it could be used as a tool in battle." The capitalist elites, as he expresses it, "Rather than concentrating upon broadening individual and corporate rights beyond the sphere of government . . . were quite naturally seeking to exploit the full potentialities of governmental paternalism." On this point I stand in complete agreement. At the national elite level, the democratic movement did fail. Nearly his entire analysis of the minken movement was performed at this level, and on these terms it is much too incisive to argue against. Yet because Scalapino concerns himself almost entirely with the national elites of the movement, he necessarily ignores the local elites and non-elites, those who have served as the focus of our study. He says of them: "The lower economic classes could scarcely play a vital role in a sustained political movement, particularly a liberal movement, occurring in this period." He concedes that "... the peasant class, whose activities, as we have seen, took the form of scattered violence under the impetus of economic misery" could serve "as a subsidiary force in some respects." But he adds that, "The rigorous logic of Japanese political evolution dictated that the role of the masses in this period would be one essentially negative in character."
On the contrary, our study indicates that the "lower economic classes" were coming to play a more "vital role" in the movement all the time, first through the organisation of political societies, political study circles, lectures, petitions, and so on, and then later through the increasing extent to which they were organising themselves in the Jiyuto itself and in related parties such as the Komminto. Moreover, who is to say whether they could have "sustained" the movement; the law and the national party leaders hardly gave them a chance. Furthermore, when Scalapino says "particularly a liberal movement," we must interpret this to mean that the undifferentiated "masses" were unable to understand liberal principles. Yet we have seen instances where admittedly illiterate farmers claimed they were rebelling for a constitution and for Jiyuto principles. Although this might be regarded as mere "mouthing borrowed slogans, though even these were of some importance in mustering popular support for a radical cause," there is no reason not to believe that, like the Parisian crowds mouthing Vive le Tiers État!, the Komminto rebels, for instance, had assimilated these ideas and given them a content more in line with their own particular economic interests. Certainly even the most illiterate of the peasants could understand that element of natural right doctrine which says all men are equal. It was not altogether different, after all, from the "leveling" aspects of the yonaoshi ikki that their fathers, or perhaps even they themselves joined in the late 1860's. Moreover, we have seen how such slogans as "Itagaki's World Reform" and "aid the poor, equally distribute the wealth" were employed by the Komminto rebels.
Scalapino is right, however, when he cites "economic misery" as an impetus behind peasant violence, but he is wrong if he believes it to have been the only factor. Ideas, as just indicated, were another impetus; party organisers and petitions that communicated these ideas to the farmers were certainly another; and another was the type or source of economic misery, i.e., whether it stemmed from excessive taxation, or from the knowledge that prices were high because of commodity speculation, or from food shortages in the countryside due to the need to feed urban consumers; whether it was due to loan dealers who fed upon those peasants forced to mortgage their land (and hence, fall into tenancy); or whether it stemmed from producing a surplus of cash crops only to discover that the market had no need for them. The point to be made is that many factors contributed to peasant violence, not simply undifferentiated "economic misery."

Finally, it is questionable whether one can refer to the "role of the masses" as essentially negative in character. Aside from the value judgement implied with regard to the use of violence (particularly since the farmers were also victims of violence), their role was negative only in the eyes of the authorities. And after all, the authorities had a very narrow conception of what the "positive role" of the farmers should be: in the earlier-quoted words of Thomas Smith, it was "to be relentlessly exploited for the modernization of the non-agricultural sector of the economy." Naturally, any attempt to avoid exploitation, or conversely, to demand the political and social rights that should be accorded to men gua man, would be regarded as "negative" by the
authorities. But for the farmers who rebelled, rebellion was a positive action that circumstances and principles required them to take. It was a positive expression of solidarity, made in the midst of a political situation that would not allow them to employ peaceful means with any hope of success. It is this situation to which Scalapino should refer, I believe, when he uses the expression "the rigorous logic of Japanese political evolution."

If then it can be granted that the democratic movement failed at the top, but succeeded, if only for a short time, at the bottom, what about the rest of the "failure thesis?" Was this first attempt in the 1880's a prophesy if not a prediction of the bankrupted attempt to establish a democratic form of government in the Taisho period, the so-called "Taisho Democracy?" Is it true that, "The history of Japan after 1931 represented the logical culmination of previous trends--an era in which ultra-nationalism and militarism took a dominant position, easily breaking through such negligible obstacles as were placed in their path?" In other words, did the "logic" of Japanese history dictate that authoritarianism, ultra-nationalism, and militarism were to be the norm of Japanese politics? And, conversely, was the democratic experiment bound to fail? In other words, is it democracy, not fascism, which is aberrant?

The implications of this theory are vast and beyond our scope or ability to deal with here in the concluding pages of this thesis. But a few words are necessary, not only because we must finish answering the question concerning success or failure of democracy in the long run, but also because of the relevance which this entire proposition has for
democracy in Japan today. For if the "failure thesis" is a sound one, then we must prepare ourselves for a resurgence of ultra-nationalism in the Japanese body politic in the years ahead.

Even if we accept Scalapino's fairly elaborate definition of democracy as an essentially correct one—briefly, recognition of the innate dignity of man, and of his right to make choices in an "open society"—we must still regard it as incomplete. These principles by themselves, or even when they are incorporated in political institutions as guiding maxims and reinforced by the guarantee of positive, common, or constitutional law, are meaningless unless there exists within the citizenry such a firm commitment to these principles that they are willing to fight to defend them. A tradition of rebellion against political oppression is needed, one that, whether it is called democratic or not, manifests itself over long periods of time as fights to preserve the innate dignity of man and his right to make choices. This is not to say that all rebellion is inherently democratic, for certain conditions have to prevail before liberal democracy is possible; it is only to say that a tradition of rebellion can impart to those living in a post-feudal, capitalist-market society—one where choice in the market place is inherent in the order—the impetus to demand and fight for the same rights in the political sphere as they have in the economic. A free market permitting the freedom to own and lose property and to enter into contracts—where justice comes to be defined in terms of the keeping of contracts and injustice in terms of the breaking of contracts—logically expresses itself politically by the freedoms to choose governors
and to enter into political associations that serve to defend these economic rights. Also, needless to say, the right to enter into such economic and political contracts must be paralleled by political freedom of expression.

In the constitutional era, this logic manifested itself in many ways. The farmers of the 1880's had learned that imperial absolutism was absolute and that they were not going to change the political system by armed rebellion. But that does not mean they ceased rebelling. They continued, but, as they had in the past, their post-gekka jiken rebellions reflected the changing socio-economic and political context. Hence, their rebellions after 1890 were not against the authorities—a trend we already observed in Chapter II—but instead against landlords, village officials and merchants: rights could be demanded from these less-than-absolute personages. Between 1888 and 1897, virtually all of the recorded 579 "disturbances" (inclusive of many forms of rebellion) were aimed against these types of local power figures; less than 4 per cent were aimed against the central government. Tenant-landlord conflicts and struggles against village officials accounted for 55 per cent of all the disturbances of this period. Suffice it to say that this trend continued, both in terms of quantity and type, through the remainder of the Meiji period, through the Taisho period, and even into the Showa period, after the militarists were well into the process of assuming power. There were, for example, more tenant disputes in 1937—the year Japan invaded China—6,170 of them, than there were during any year of Meiji or Taisho. Moreover, many of these tenant disputes against
landlords were aided by tenant unions, a relatively new feature in the ever-developing tradition of rural rebellion in Japan.

Of course, these figures remain only a numerical intimation that the vast majority of Japan's population, the farmers, were continuing to fight for their rights. Further studies are needed to determine whether these struggles had strong anti-government undertones, whether they reflected more generalized beliefs in the principles of equality, freedom, and the rights of man. But if we may do what we have accused others of doing, and make two deductions, then we would say first that the warm reception the people of Japan gave to Taisho Democracy, and second, the equally warm one they gave to the democratic reforms effected by the Occupation after the Second World War, lead us to infer that effects of the democratic experiment begun by the farmers of the 1880's was not lost to subsequent generations.
Notes


2 Quoted in ibid., p. 101; the letter was dated 22 January 1883.

3 Scalapino, *Democracy*, p. 60, n.49.


5 Ibid., p. 145. According to the *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 15 December 1882, petitioning had to be conducted in four steps, from the village head to the prefectural governor, to the relevant ministry, and then to the *Dajokan*.


7 Ibid.; those among our sample prosecuted were Saeki, Matsumoto Yoshinaga, and Yoshida Koichi.


9 Hackett, *Yamagata*, p. 97.


11 Quoted in ibid., p. 187.

12 Ibid., pp. 189, 224.

13 Ibid., p. 206.

14 Quoted in the *Japan Weekly Mail*, 21 April 1883; also see Takahashi's version of the story, *Fukushima jiken*, p. 208.


16 Ibid., pp. 226-27.

17 Ibid., p. 225.

18 Hirano, *Oi*, p. 81.


Quoted in Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 244.

Taoka, *Hanshin den*, p. 78.

Ibid., p. 78; Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, pp. 240-41. The breakdown by prefecture was Tochigi-115, Ibaraki-50, Fukushima-47, Yamanshi, Chiba, and Tokyo made up the remainder.

Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 241.

For example, at Kono's trial on the day of 18 September, it was reported that twenty-eight or twenty-nine Jiyuto members were along the 100 or so spectators. See Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, pp. 245, 252.

Wagatsuma et al., *Nihon saiban shi*, p. 54; and Hirano, *Oi*, p. 89; and Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 251.

All quotes taken from *ibid.*, pp. 246-47.

Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 248.

Taoka, *Hanshin den*, p. 79.


Quoted in Ike, *Beginnings*, pp. 185-86; also see Hackett, *Yamagata*, p. 105; Hackett says that this law had the goal of "permanently crippling the liberal movement with one blow . . . ." Aside from this, another new law that was a direct result of the Kabasan Incident was the Regulations Governing Explosives (*bakuhatsubutsu torishimaru kisoku*) of 27 December 1884. It forbade the making of explosives and threatened the death penalty for anyone using bombs for the purpose of injuring people, damaging property, or disturbing the public order. See Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, p. 265.

*KJKS*, p. 503.

Based on Tanaka Senya's 1884 account; see CJSR II:553-54; also see CJSR II:271 for police statistics; and Inoue, *Chichibu jiken*, pp. 194-96.

See CJSR I:621 for information on the many rebels the government was unable to apprehend and the reasons why.

*Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 2 November 1884.


Ibid., p. 409; and for the quote, *Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*,...
6 November 1884 in an editorial entitled "Boto ikki."


39 Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun, 14 November 1884.

40 Ibid., 24 November 1884.

41 Ibid., 20 November 1884.

42 For example, the Choya Shimbun, Yubin Hochi Shimbun, and Yomiuri Shimbun.

43 Yomiuri Shimbun, 6 November 1884; the Police also held this view; see CJSR II:270-71, and CJSR I:487-501.

44 CJSR I:632-39; if indirect participants are counted, then the figure exceeds 6,000!

45 CJSR I:640-56. These figures are only for Chichibu. Equally as many were prosecuted in Gumma, Kanagawa, and Nagano. See Ide, Kom-minto, pp. 196-97. CJSR II:248, shows 201 people prosecuted in Gumma as of 8 December 1884.

46 CJSR II:249. The police chief of Omiya described these leaders as "party members and gamblers who disrupted the public peace and order."

47 Ebukuro, Bodo, pp. 174-76; Nakazawa Ichiro, Jiyu minken no minshu-zo (Tokyo, 1974), pp. 156-58; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 190-96; and CJSR I:640-56.

48 Ishikawa, Tonegawa, p. 212; Inoue, Chichibu jiken, pp. 37, 192-93.

49 See for example, Marius Jansen, "Oi Kentaro: Radicalism and Chauvinism," The Far Eastern Quarterly XI, No. 3 (May 1952):305-16.

50 See Appendix II.

51 Endo, Kabasan jiken, p. 272.

52 Note: Scalapino, Democracy, p. 107, says that the Jiyuto dissolved after the Chichibu jiken; Norman, Emergence, p. 183, says the Kabasan Incident occurred in 1885; both are wrong.

53 Besides the Fukushima and Kabasan incidents, they are the Takada jiken (March 1883), the Gumma jiken (May 1883), the Kamo jiken (July 1884), and the Akita jiken (June 1881). For the Akita and Takada incidents, see Aoki Keiichiro, Nomin undo II:324-37, and 349-53; for the
For example, a *Jiyu Shimbun* editorial of 28 September, several days after the Kabasan Incident, denied any party involvement. Yet the party history says that it was unable "to control innumerable fervent patriots . . . ." and cites this as one reason for dissolution. See Endo, *Kabasan jiken*, pp. 267-68.


57 Itagaki, *Jiyuto shi*, p. 75.

58 Details of this incident can be found in Goto Yasushi, "Iida jiken," comp. Neiji shiryo kenkyu renraku kai hen, *Jiyu minken undo* III:102-47.


61 Steiner, *Local Government*, p. 36.


66 Ibid., p. 115.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid., p. 114.

69 Rudé, *Crowd*, p. 221.

70 See Chapter II, n.116.

72 Scalapino, Democracy, p. xi.

73 Aoki, Meiji nomin sojo, pp. 90-91, 122-23, 144-45.

74 Inaoka, Nihon nomin undo, pp. 104-5.


Choya Shimbun. September to December 1884.


Irokawa Daikichi, Ei Hideo and Arai Katsuhiro. *Minshu kempo no sozo:


Murano Renichi and Irokawa Daikichi. Murano Tsuneemon: Minkenka jidai


Yomiuri Shimbun. September to December 1884.


Yubin Hochi Shimbun. September to December 1884.

ENGLISH SOURCES


Bowen, Roger W. "The Politicization of Japanese Social Bandits." In


Japan Weekly Mail. January 1883 to January 1885.


APPENDIX I

DECLARATION OF RESTORATION OF RIGHTS*

1) [Our purpose is to] restore our rights and guarantee happiness.
2) We will carry out these resolutions with unbending will.
3) The rights we want to be restored:
   a) Improper elections of [Rengokai] council members.
   b) Implementation of the road project is contrary to [Rengokai] resolutions.
   c) The course (route) of the road was arbitrarily decided.
   d) A request for an extraordinary meeting [of the Rengokai] was rejected.
4) Upon restoration of the above rights, the Rengokai should be reconvened and carry out the following objectives:
   a) The route of the road should be in accord with population density in the Aizu region.
   b) The route of the road should be responsive to the interests of the people of the area.
   c) A committee [of local representatives] should be established in order to inspect and decide upon how the road construction will be carried out.
   d) Unless the people in the neighboring district agree to carry out their part of the road construction, no work will be done.
5) If these purposes just cited are not attended to, then we will not do construction work.

APPENDICES II, III, IV

INTRODUCTION

Appendices II, III, and IV consist of biographical data on the participants of the Fukushima, Chichibu, and Kabasan incidents respectively. The reasoning behind the selection of the individuals who appear in each of these three appendices can be found in the opening pages of Chapter III. The code used in each of the appendices to indicate biographical data is as follows:

* This document, of which the above is an excerpt, appears in Shoji Kichinosuke (ed.), Nihon Seisha seito hattatsu shi (Tokyo, 1959), pp. 312-13.
1) Prefecture (ken)
2) District (gun)
3) Village (mura) or town (machi)
4) Age at the time of the incident
5) Status (heimin or shizoku)
6) Occupation
7) Financial status/land holdings (according to cho)
8) Literacy
9) Political party and/or political society affiliation
   (In the Chichibu case only, rank in the Komminto Army is substituted.)
10) Prior arrest
11) Other
12) Source of information

APPENDIX II

FUKUSHIMA ACTIVISTS

Kono Hironaka
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 33
5) Heimin (declasse samurai)
6) "None" (court testimony); merchant, politician
7) Wealthy
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Sanshisha (head)
   Sekkyosha (head)
10) No
11) Leader of national Jiyuto; later, govn't. off.
12) Takahashi, Fukushima min-ken, pp. 181-85; FKS, pp. 755-65

Uda Seiichi
1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Shibage
4) 32
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/village head
7) 3 to 8 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Aishinsha (head)
10) ?
11) Pref. Assembly member, 1879, 1881, 1892, 1896

Kawaguchi Genkai
1) Fukushima
2) Ishikawa
3) Yotsugura
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 229-34; *FKS*, pp. 725-32

Hirajima Matsuo

1) Fukushima
2) Atachi
3) Nihonmatsu
4) 28
5) Shizoku
6) Teacher
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) Friend of Ueki; elected to Diet seven times

Tamano Hideaki

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 34
5) Heimin
6) Shinto priest
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; *Sanskshisha* (founder)
10) ?
11) Friend of Oi Kentaro
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 188-95; *FKS*, pp. 911-21

Miura Bunji

1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Komeoka
4) 26
5) Heimin
6) Farmer, village head
7) 18.2 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; *Aishinsha*
10) Yes (*Kitakata jiken*)
11) Kabasan participant
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 251-53

Akajiro Koichi

1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Kumagaya
4) 19
5) Heimin
6) Farmer, village head
7) Bankrupt (landless)
8) Probably
9) Jiyuto; *Seidokan* head
10) March 1882
11) Friend of Kono Hironaka

Matsumoto Yoshinaga

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 40
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/village head
7) Bankrupt (landless)
8) Probably
9) Jiyuto; *Seidokan* head
10) March 1882
11) Friend of Kono Hironaka

Yoshida Koichi

1) Fukushima
2) Ishikawa
3) Ishikawa
4) 37
5) Heimin
6) Shinto priest; village head
7) .5 cho (1907)
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; *Sekkyosha*
Aizawa Yasukata
1) Fukushima
2) Soma
3) Koze
4) 33
5) Shizoku
6) Farmer; teacher
7) 4.6 cho
8) Yes (Confucian studies)
9) Jiyuto; Boshinsha (head)
10) ?
11) Pref. Assembly, 1879-81; Newspaper ed., 1890's
12) FKS, pp. 765-66; Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 267-69

Igarashi Takehiko
1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Iwagetsu
4) 32
5) Heimin
6) Farming; village head
7) 7 cho; later bankrupted
8) Yes
9) Aishinsha
10) Kitakata incident
11) Rengokai leader; Dist. Council head, 1896, 1905
12) FKS, pp. 733-37; Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 265-66

Kageyama Masahiro
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 36
5) Shizoku (court test., heimin)
6) Druggist/merchant
7) 7 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Sanshisha
10) ?
11) Pref. Assembly, 1881; Friend of Kono Hironaka
12) Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 196-99

Hanaka Mojiro (Kyojiro)
1) Fukushima
2) Shinobu
3) ?
4) 26
5) Shizoku
6) None
7) (None?)
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Iwashiro kyokai
10) ?
11) One-time newspaper reporter
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 527-28; FKS, pp. 910-11, 928-29; Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 20, 33

Akajiro Heiroku
1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Shinai
4) 47
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) 1.6 cho
8) Yes
9) Aizu Jiyuto; Aishinsha
10) ?
11) Home, headquarters for local Jiyuto
12) FKS, pp. 851-54; Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 174, 247-49

Suzuki Shunan
1) Fukushima
2) Ishikawa
3) Iwase
4) 50
5) Heimin
6) Doctor
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) Studied under Goto Shimpei
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, p. 48

Sawada Kiyonosuke

1) Fukushima
2) Atachi
3) Nihonmatsu
4) 20
5) Shizoku
6) Teacher
7) Little
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto (*Mumeikan*)
10) ?
11) Hirajima was mentor
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 224-25

Teruyama Shugen

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 36
5) Heimin
6) Buddhist priest/farmer
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) Yes
11) --
12) Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, pp. 335-36

Sato Kiyomasu

1) Fukushima
2) Date
3) Okura
4) 30
5) Shizoku
6) None
7-8) ?
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) Former pref. assembly member of Miyagi; helped Kono build *Kyoaidobokai*
12) FKS, pp. 776-80; Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 20, 172

Yaginuma Kamekichi

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 22
5) Heimin
6) Teacher
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Seidokan
10) ?
11) --

Matsumoto Miyaji

1) Yamagata (born)
2) Yama (relocated)
3) Yonezawa
4) 33
5) Shizoku
6) Teacher
7) 6.7 cho; wealthy

Shirai Enbei

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Sugeya
4) 36
5) Heimin
6) Sake-manuf./farmer/village head
7) --
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Kyofusha
10) ?
11) Pref. Ass. 1880; District head, 1890; Diet, 1890, 1892, 1915 (Seiyukai); Est. bank; friend of Hara Kei
12) Takahashi, *Fukushima minken*, pp. 286-90

**Sato Somatsu**

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Ogura
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, p. 561

**Matsumoto Shigeru**

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 40
5) Shizoku
6-7) ?
8) Probably
9) Sanshisha/Seidokan
10) ?
11) --
12) Shoji, *Nihon seisha*, p. 561

**Kono Hiroshi**

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 17
5) Heimin
6) None
7) (Father wealthy)
8) Yes
9) Seidokan
10) No
11) Kabasan partic.
12) FKS, pp. 867-75 (See Appendix IV)

**Kato Hiroshi**

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Okura
4) (young)
5) Heimin
6) Aid to village head
Kariyado Nakae
1) Fukushima
2) Futaba
3) Karino
4) 28
5) Shizoku
6) Shinto priest/farmer/teacher
7) 6 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Boshinsha
10) ?
11) Ran for Diet seat, 1890, 1892; arrested for Kabasan and Osaka incidents; Seiyukai party

Asaka Saburo
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 29
5) Heimin
6) Merchant/druggist
7) ?
8) Probably
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) --
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 175-76; FKS, pp. 875-78

Sekine Tsunekichi
1) Fukushima
2) Ishikawa
3) Tadake
4) 17
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) ?
8) Yes (former student)
9) Connected with Mumeikan
10) ?
11) --
12) FKS, pp. 854-64; Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 171

Nakajima Yuhachi
1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Sangawa
4) 30
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/weaver
7) 2.4 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Aishinsha
10) ?
11) Pref. Assem. 1881, 86, 1890, 92 Rengokai leader
12) Takahashi, Fukushima minken, pp. 225-29; FKS, pp. 737-46

Enbe Yoshiko
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 27
5) Shizoku
6) Village head
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Seidokan
10) ?
11) --
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 332-33; Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 85

Yamada Shingai
1) Fukushima
2) Atachi
3) Nihonmatsu
4) ?
5) Shizoku
6-11) ?
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, p. 561
Miwa Shigeasaemon
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Okura
4) 35
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/village head
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Sanshisha
10) ?
11) --
12) FKS, p. 770; Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 333-34

Kata Katsuzo
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 770

Matsuzaki Yoshikazu
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Yokodo
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 770

Sakuma Shogen
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 34
5) Shizoku
6) Village head
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Sanshisha
10) No
11) Head of Seidokan
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 329-30; Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 24

Okawa Masaezo
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Utsu
4) 25
5) ?
6) Teacher/peddler
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Seidokan; Doshinkai
10-11) ?
12) Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, p. 85

Kurihara Sogoro
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 17
5) Shizoku
6-7) ?
8) Yes
9) Seidokan (student)
10) ?
11) --
12) FKS, p. 865

Sato Mankichi
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Kanya
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) Shoji, Nihon seisha, pp. 560-62

Suzuki Shigeru
1) Fukushima
Ishii Teizo
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Utsu
4) 20
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) (Son of landlord)
8) "Minimal"
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) Formed own pol. circle

Yasuda Keitaro
1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Utsu
4) 17
5) Heimin
6) Son of farmer
7-8) ?
9) Doshinkai
10) ?
11) --

Nagasaka Hachiro
1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma
3) Takasaki
4) 37
5) Shizoku
6) None
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Yushinsha
10) No
11) Friend of Kono Hironaka

Yamaguchi Junshu
1) Gumma
2) Yutano
Iga Wanato

1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma
3) Takasaki
4) 30
5) Shizoku
6-8) ?
9) Jiyuto; Yushinsha
10-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 775

Takahashi Sodai

1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma
3) Heika
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-8) ?
9) Yushinsha
10-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 775

Oki Kenbei

1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma
3) Takasaki
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-8) ?
9) Yushinsha
10-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 775

Matsui Tasuhito

1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma

Arao Kanzo

1) Kochi
2) Tosa
3) Kotakasaka
4) 27
5) Shizoku
6) None
7-8) ?
9) Connected with Mumeikan
10) ?
11) Arrived in Fukushima, 15 November 1882
12) FKS, pp. 781-83

Kawaguchi Seiju

1) Kochi
2) Tosa
3) Kotakasaka
4) ?
5) Shizoku
6-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 780

Kogawa Matao

1) Kochi
2) Tosa
3) Karairu
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) FKS, p. 780

Okamoto Shoei

1) Kochi
2) Tosa
3) Choe
APPENDIX III

CHICHIU ACTIVISTS

Tashiro Eisuke
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Omiya
4) 51
5) Heimin (ex-samurai)
6) Farmer; "mediator"
7) Indebted 80 yen; mortgage on .6 cho
8) Yes
9) President/Supreme Commander
10) Early 1884
11) Claimed Jiyuto membership; local notable
12) CJSR I:45-47, 359-61, 382, 631; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 37-38; Ide, Komminto, pp. 17, 33-34

Miyakawa Tsuari
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shimo-yoshida
4) 56
5) Heimin
6) Shinto priest
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Treasurer
10) ?
11) --
12) CJSR I:384, 640; II:191-94

Kato Orihei
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Isama
4) 34
5) Heimin
6) Pawnshop owner
7) 1.6 cho (mortgaged)
8) ?
9) Vice-President; Vice-Commander
10) No

Shibaoka Kumakichi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Omiya
4) 46
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) Indebted 25 yen
8) "Barely"
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<th>Location</th>
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<td>Toda Seitaro</td>
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<td>Saitama</td>
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<td>Chichibu</td>
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<td>Ota</td>
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<td>Heimin</td>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Platoon Commander</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Early Komminto organizer</td>
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<td>Inoue Denzo</td>
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<td>Saitama</td>
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<td>Shimo-yoshida</td>
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<td>Heimin</td>
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<td>Silk broker</td>
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<td>&quot;Fairly wealthy&quot;</td>
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<td>Yes (village copyist)</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>Yes (no conviction)</td>
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<td>friend of Oi Kentaro; escaped arrest (November 1884)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Nami Iya</td>
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<td>Saitama</td>
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<td>Chichibu</td>
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<td>Yokose</td>
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<td>Heimin</td>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Platoon Commander</td>
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</table>
Arai Torakichi
1) Gumma
2) Tago
3) Kamihino
4) 43
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/charcoal maker
7) "Poor farmer"
8) No
9) Platoon Commander (for Isama village)
10) No
11) Married; children
12) CJSR I:62-65; Ide, Komminto, pp. 193-209; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 77-78

Genkubo Jiroshi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Akuma
4-8) ?
9) Ammunitions Officer
10-11) ?
12) CJSR I:104

Arai Tonashi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Fuppu
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-8) ?
9) Vice-Commander, 1st Battalion
10-11) ?
12) CJSR I:640

Iizuka Seizo
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shimo-yoshida
4) ?
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Commander, 2nd Battalion
10) ?
11) Jiyuto member; escaped arrest
12) CJSR I:640

Ochiai Toishi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shimo-yoshida
4) 35
5) Heimin
6) Part-time farmer
7) .7 or .8 cho
8) Learned reading and writing in prison
9) Vice-Battalion Commander
10) ?
11) Jiyuto member; kobun of Kato Orihei; escaped arrest; arrested for Osaka jiken
12) CJSR II:611-21; Ide, Komminto, pp. 34-53; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 36-37; Ishikawa, Tonegawa, pp. 212-15

Takagishi Zenkichi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Kami-yoshida
4) 35
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/dyer
7) Indebted 20 yen; near bankrupt
8) Yes
9) Platoon Commander
10) No
11) Jiyuto member; early Komminto organizer; kobun to Kato Orihei; petitioner for debt relief
12) CJSR I:47-48, 376-77, 382; Ide, Komminto, pp. 34-53; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 37, 83; Nakazawa, Bungei, p. 15
Inuki Jiyusaku
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Iida
4) 32
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Platoon Commander
10) ?
11) Early petitioner for debt relief
12) CJSR II: 234-35; I: 382, 640

Muratake Shige
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Kami-hinozawa
4) 45
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Platoon Commander
10-11) ?
12) CJSR I: 379, 641

Sakamoto Isaburo
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shiroku
4) 34
5) Heimin
6) Bamboo craftsman
7-8) ?
9) Platoon Commander
10) ?
11) Known locally as Jiyuto member; died while serving 6 yr. prison term
12) CJSR I: 641; Inoue, Chichibu, p. 87

Shioya Nagakichi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shiroku
4) ?
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiyuto member; kobun of Kato</td>
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<td>3) Shimo-yoshida</td>
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<td>11) Died serving prison term</td>
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<td>Arai Shigejiro</td>
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<td>11) Possibly Jiyuto member; advisor to Tashiro; sentenced to 6 yr. 6 mos. prison term</td>
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<td>12) CJSR I:381, 641; Inoue, Chichibu, p. 86; Ide, Kom-minto, p. 17</td>
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4) 53
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Ammunition officer
10) ?
11) Died during 6-yr. prison term
12) CJSR II:161-62; I:378, 641; Ishikawa, Tonegawa, p. 233

Arai Komakichi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Akuma
4) 49
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Firearms platoon commander
10) ?
11) Komminto organizer
12) CJSR II:220-21; Ishikawa, Tonegawa

Arai Teikichi
(or Teijiro)
1) Gumma
2) Tago
3) Shimohino
4) 42
5) Heimin
6) Carpenter
7) 10 cho
8) Yes
9) In charge of pack horses
10) ?
11) Jiyuto member (wife also); friend of Miyabe Noboru
12) CJSR I:122-30, 622, 641; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 43-44; Ide, Komminto, pp. 160-82

Ono Naekichi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Fuppu
4) ?
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) Indebted 225 yen; 1.1 cho land mortgaged
8) ?
9) Battalion vice-commander
10) ?
11) Known locally as Jiyuto; died in prison
12) CJSR II:253-54; Inoue, Chichibu, pp. 40, 83, 87-88; Ide, Komminto, pp. 65-78

Shimazaki Sosaku
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Nakino

Ishida Mikihachi
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Fuppu  
4) 27  
5) Heimin  
6) Farmer  
7) Indebted 50 yen  
8) ?  
9) Platoon Commander  
10) No  
11) Sentence: 6 yrs.  
12) CJSR I:379; Ide, Komminto, pp. 61-78

Ono Yukichi
1) Saitama  
2) Hanzawa  
3) Oka  
4) 43  
5) Heimin  
6) Farmer  
7-8) ?  
9) Platoon Commander  
10) ?  
11) Brother of Ono Naekichi  
12) CJSR I:381; II:208; Inoue, Chichibu, p. 40

Imai Kozaburo
1) Saitama  
2) Chichibu  
3) Sanyama  
4) 36  
5) Heimin  
6) Farmer  
7-8) ?  
9) Platoon Commander  
10) ?  
11) Sentence: 7 yrs. imprison.  
12) CJSR I:378; II:229-30, 237-38

Arai Teijiio
1) Saitama  
2) Chichibu  
3) Isama  
4) 44  
5) Heimin  
6) Farmer  
7-8) ?  
9) Messenger  
10) ?
11) Jiyuto member; one who first recruited Tashiro
12) CJSR I:382; II:232-34

Takagishi Kenzo
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Isama
4) 45
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7-8) ?
9) Messenger
10) No
11) Member of Isama village Health Association; died in prison
12) CJSR I:292-97, 379, 642;
II:100-106

Arai Makizo
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Onohara
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-11) ?
12) CJSR I:642

Horiguchi Kozuke
1) Gumma
2) Nishi-Gumma
3) Shibugawa
4) ?
5) Heimin
6) Manager of Law office
7-8) ?
9) Messenger
10) ?
11) Persuaded Tashiro Eisuke to join Komminto; kobun of Tashiro
12) CJSR I:642; Ide, Komminto, p. 16; Inoue, Chichibu, p. 50;
Sakai, "Chichibu Sodo," p. 6

Sakamoto Sosaku
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Fuppu
4) 27
5) Heimin
6) Blacksmith
7) Near bankrupt
8) ?
9) Messenger
10) ?
11) Jiyuto member; kobun of Kato Orihei; early Komminto organizer; death sentence
12) CJSR I:373-76; II:9-10,
135; Inoue, Chichibu, p. 37; Ide, Komminto, pp. 34-53

Shimada Seisaburo
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Honnogami
4) 27
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/rice-polisher
7-8) ?
9) Messenger
10) ?
11) Prison term: 3 yrs. 6 mos.
12) CJSR I:378, 642; II:168-69

Komai Teisaku
1) Saitama
2) Chichibu
3) Shimo-hinozawa
4) ?
5) Heimin
6-8) ?
9) Messenger
10-11) ?
APPENDIX IV

KABASAN ACTIVISTS

Koinuma Kuhachiro
(Tadayaro)
1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Inaba (Mibu machi)
4) 32
5) Heimin
6) Landlord farmer/merchant
7) 60 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) No
11) Early popular rights activist; married, children
12) Endo, Kabasan, pp. 29-33; Nojima, Kabasan, p. 150; KJKS, pp. 102-16, 572

Tomatsu Masao
1) Ibaraki
2) Makabe
3) Shimodate
4) 36
5) Shizoku
6) Ex-school teacher
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto; Yuikan head
10) No
11) Friend of Oi Kentaro; early popular rights activist; founding member of Jiyuto
12) KJKS, pp. 44-48, 477-80, 484, 514-17, 519; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 219-23; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 57-59

KJKS, pp. 50-52, 497-503; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 219-23

Hota Komakichi
1) Ibaraki (born in Tokyo)
2) Makabe
3) Shimodate
4) 24
5) Shizoku
6) "None"
7) Lived off others
8) Probably
9) Jiyuto (November 1882); Yuikkan
10) No
11) --
12) KJKS, pp. 465-74; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 207-8

Sugiura Kippuku
1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Okawada
4) 37
5) Shizoku
6) Farmer
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Boshinsha
10) ?
11) Friend of Kono Hironaka
12) KJKS, pp. 189-204, 313-14, 809; Takahashi, Fukushima, p. 263
Miura Bunji

1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Komeoka
4) 28
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/village head
7) 18.2 cho
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto;
10) Fukushima Incident, December 1882
11) Executed 1886
12) KJKS, pp. 28-32; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 146-47; Takahashi, Fukushima, pp. 60, 251-53, 271-75

Isokawa Motoyoshi
(Tagokichi)

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 24
5) Shizoku
6) Farmer
7) Impoverished
8) Yes
9) Seidokan
10) Fukushima Incident (released)
11) Friend of Kono, Kotoda, Kusano; moved to Korea, 1904
12) KJKS, pp. 46-50; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 113-18; Endo, Kabasan, p. 89

Yamaguchi Moritaro

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 18
5) Shizoku
6) None
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Risshisha; Seidokan
10) No
11) Died in prison
12) KJKS, pp. 422-33, 809; Nojima, Kabasan, p. 104; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 59-60; Takahashi, Fukushima, pp. 261-62

Amano Ichitaro

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 19
5) Shizoku
6) None
7) Poor
8) Yes
9) Seidokan
10) ?
11) Father friend of Kono Hironaka; killed in Boshin War
12) KJKS, pp. 216-26, 230-31; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 103-4; Takahashi, Fukushima, pp. 261-62; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 59-60

Kotoda Iwamatsu

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 23
5) Shizoku
6) Journalist/unemployed
7) Father sake manuf.
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) Fukushima Incident
11) Ties with Tochigi Jiyuto
12) KJKS, pp. 42-44, 602, 609; FKS, p. 790; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 97-98; Taoka, Hanshin, pp. 59-60; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 54-55, 68-69
Kusano Sakuma

1) Fukushima
2-3) No fixed residence
4) 19
5) Shizoku
6) None
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) ?
11) Early activist in popular rights
12) KJKS, pp. 44-46; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 87-88; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 118-20

Hara Rihachi

1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Shimoshiba
4) 35
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) "Middle-income" farmer
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto (Aizu branch)
10) Escaped Fukushima arrest round-up
11) Friend of Uda Seiichi; died in prison
12) KJKS, pp. 32-40; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 142-48

Kono Hiroshi

1) Fukushima
2) Tamura
3) Miharu
4) 19
5) Heimin
6) None
7) (Father, wealthy merchant)
8) Yes
9) Rissshisha; Seidokan
10) Fukushima Incident
11) Nephew of Kono Hironaka; active in popular rights since 16 yrs. old.
12) KJKS, pp. 247-55, 565, 809; Taoka, Hanshin, pp. 59-61; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 107-112; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 65-70

Yokoyama Nobuyuki

1) Fukushima
2) Yama
3) Atsugawa
4) 21
5) Shizoku
6) Ex-policeman
7) Unemployed; impoverished
8) Yes (Meiji horitsu gaku)
9) Jiyuto
10) Escaped Fukushima arrest round-up
11) Friend of Uda Seiichi; died in prison, 1885
12) KJKS, pp. 20-28; Endo, Kabasan, p. 36; Takahashi, Fukushima, pp. 266-71

Kokugi Shigeo

1) Fukushima
2) Nishi-Shirakawa
3) Shinda
4) 21
5) Heimin
6) Railroad repairman
7) Father--headman, sake-manuf.
8) Yes (Medical school)
9) Jiyuto, Seihenkan (Tokyo)
10) ?
11) Friend of Miura, Hara, and Kono; executed 1886
12) KJKS, pp. 40-42, 580; Takahashi, Fukushima jiken, pp. 266-71

Hirao Yasokichi

1) Tochigi
2-3) ?
4) 30?
5-7) ?
8) Yes
9) Yuikkan
10) ?
11) Killed during Incident
12) KJKS, pp. 25-26, 38-39, 360, 375; Nojima, Kabasan, p. 137; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 202-5, 219

Kobayashi Tokutaro

1) Aichi (born in Fukushima)
2) Hekumi
3) Noda
4) 18
5) Shizoku
6) Farmer
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Yuikan
10) No
11) Friend of Naito Roichi
12) KJKS, pp. 453-64; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 88-89, 91-93; Nojima, Kabasan, p. 112

Arai Shogo

1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Sugami
4) ?
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/village head
7) Wealthy farmer
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) March 1884
11) Joined Osaka Incident; wife, daughter of Eto Shimpei; later govn't. figure
12) Endo, Kabasan, pp. 33-34

Fukao Jujiro

1) Tochigi
2) ?
3) Tochigi City?
4) ?
5) Shizoku
6) Lawyer
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Yuikkan
10) ?
11) Pref. Assem. 1887; Mayor, 1937; married to sister of Monna
12) Endo, Kabasan, p. 35

Monna Shigejiro

(Mojiro)

1) Fukushima
2) Kita-Aizu
3) Wakamatsu (no fixed address)
4) 23
5) Shizoku
6) Ex-policeman
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Mumeikan
10) Fukushima Incident (acquitted)
11) Admirer of Baba Tatsui
12) KJKS, pp. 14-20, 28; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 191-92; Ishikawa, Tonegawa, pp. 170-78, 234-46
Ohashi Genzaburo

1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Tocho
4) 32
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) Wealthy
8) "Barely"
9) Jiyuto; Yuikan
10) No
11) Friend of Koinuma; one of original planners of incident
12) KJKS, pp. 116-31, 348-50; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 121-22; Endo Kabasan, pp. 134-37

Iwamoto Shinkichi

1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Inaba
4) 20
5) Heimin
6) Teacher
7) ?
8) Yes
9) ?
10) No
11) Friend of Koinuma
12) KJKS, pp. 70-76

Saeki Masakado

1) Ishikawa
2) Kanezawa
3) Shimoatara
4) 24
5) Shizoku
6) Teacher/reporter
7) Unemployed
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
10) Four times, 1881-83
11) Friend of Koinuma
12) KJKS, pp. 133, 315, 256-66; Nojima, Kabasan, pp. 122-25; Endo, Kabasan, pp. 82-85

Tateno Yoshinosuke

1) Ibaraki
2) Tsuzurakaza
3) Kotsutsumi
4) 27
5) Heimin
6) Farmer
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto (Spring 1883)
10) No
11) Friend of Tomatsu; Later implicated in Osaka Incident
12) KJKS, pp. 128-34

Tanaka Shozo

1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Yanaka
4) 43
5) Heimin
6) Farmer/pref. assemblyman
7) Wealthy farmer
8) Yes
9) Kaishinto
10) ?
11) Diet member, 1890; after 1891, anti-pollution campaigner

Iwanuma Saichi

1) Tochigi
2) Shimotsuga
3) Tochigi
4) 31
5) Heimin
6) Attorney
7) ?
8) Yes
9) Jiyuto
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurihara Sogoro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fukushima</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Miharu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shizoku</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Merchant (kitchenware)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yamada Yuji</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Iwate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Minami-Iwate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yamagiwa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Heimin</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shinyama Yaro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fukushima</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Onuma</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Matsuya</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Heimin</td>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naito Roichi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aichi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hekiumi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kami-jubara</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shizoku</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Politician/writer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yazumi Kinnosuke

Tokyo
Nihonbashi
Nihonbashi
22
Heimin
Son of inn owner
?
Hid Tamamatsu after Incident
KJKS, p. 55

Shin'ichi Yano

Tokyo
Minami-Iwate
Yamagiwa
19
Heimin
? 
Hid Yokoyama, Hota and Kobayashi after Incident
KJKS, pp. 55, 512-13
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bakufu</td>
<td>&quot;Tent Government&quot;; refers to the Tokugawa rule under the Shogunate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiji kenri</td>
<td>The right of self-government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daigennin</td>
<td>&quot;Lawyer&quot; or mediator between debtors and creditors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daimyojin</td>
<td>&quot;Divine Rectifier&quot;; refers to god-like figure who serves as guide to peasants in world reformation uprisings (yonaoshi ikki)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gekka jiken</td>
<td>&quot;Incidents of intensified [violence]&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gimin</td>
<td>Martyr; specifically, a leader of a peasant uprising who is prosecuted by the authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun</td>
<td>Administrative district between the prefectural and village levels; the government appointed head is the guncho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han</td>
<td>Feudal domain of the Tokugawa period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heimin</td>
<td>&quot;Commoner&quot;; a status designation of the Meiji period used to refer to some ex-samurai, and most farmers, artisans, and merchants whose forefathers had the same occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiken</td>
<td>&quot;Incident&quot;; refers to various kinds of disturbances ranging from popular demonstrations to rebellions; e.g., the Kitakata jiken and the Chichibu jiken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiyu minken undo</td>
<td>The Freedom and Popular Rights Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiyuto</td>
<td>Commonly translated as &quot;Liberal Party&quot; although &quot;Freedom Party&quot; is more accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanto</td>
<td>The region consisting of the seven prefectures surrounding Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuni</td>
<td>Province of the Tokugawa period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machi</td>
<td>Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meiboka</td>
<td>&quot;Man of repute&quot;; local or national personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition/Explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minken</td>
<td>Popular rights; a minkenka is an advocate of the popular rights movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyakata-kokata</td>
<td>&quot;Parent-child&quot; relationship between social superiors and inferiors unrelated by blood; also known as oyabun-kobun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ri</td>
<td>A measurement of distance equalling 2.44 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen</td>
<td>A monetary unit equalling one-hundredth of a yen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shizoku</td>
<td>A status designation of the Meiji period referring to former nobles of the feudal period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoya</td>
<td>Village head; also known in some areas as nanushi, kimoiri, or as kocho in the mid-Meiji period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uchikowashi</td>
<td>&quot;House-wrecking&quot;; a form of violent peasant uprising during the Tokugawa and Meiji periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonaoshi ikki</td>
<td>&quot;World reform uprising&quot;; a millenial or primitive communistic form of peasant uprising predominating in the late Tokugawa and early Meiji periods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>