

in the mines, and many millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed, before the wage increase demanded by the workers was granted. In Kobe the populace burnt down stores, offices, and even the residences of the wealthy rice speculators. The rioters were joined in a sympathetic movement of the 8,000 workers in the Mitsubiti shipbuilding yards, whose effective sabotage so desperately threatened the interests of the ship builders that they begged the men to enter upon negotiations with them, promising to raise their wages, asking them not to leave the factory, while promising to pay 70 per cent of the day's wages for the day's work of destruction. In its anger the mob in Kobe burnt down the offices of the rent collecting agency of the city, wreaking vengeance for the misery and suffering that this company had caused them in the past.

In spite of the wild and bitter struggles that marked this uprising in all parts of the Empire, the movement was for the most part conducted in an orderly fashion. The riot usually began in a peaceful demonstration that went to the homes of the rice dealers or to the granaries to demand cheaper food. Invariably it was the police who met the demonstrators with drawn sabres that turned these for the most part peaceful demonstrations into furious attacks. The people preferred prison and even death to starvation. This is the keynote of the revolutionary movement everywhere.

When the government saw the magnitude of the movement, it appropriated \$5,000,000 with which rice was bought up to be given away to the poor, or to be sold at greatly reduced rates to stem the tide of popular dissatisfaction. Rice became cheaper all over the country, and it was understood by the poor that this reduction was the direct result of their mob action. But the cheaper rice by no means disposed of their grievances, and the uprisings went on, more vigorously and more hopefully than before. Dry-goods stores were sacked, fuel yards and fashionable restaurants were taken by storm. The riots were originally caused, it is true, by the unheard of increase in the price of the chief food staple of the

Japanese people. But the people understood also that this rise in the cost of living was due not only to the rapaciousness of the dealers, but equally to the Government and to the political rulers who were encouraging the export of the necessary sustenance of the nation to other countries for profit, who had precipitated the country into a costly war, the interests of a rapidly developing capitalist class.

Significant for the importance of the revolutionary uprising is the impression that it created upon the minds of the intelligent classes of Japan. To them the power and influence that was wielded by the despised masses over the well-organized bureaucracy and powerful military forces and well-disciplined police, was a source of amazed astonishment. The role that the army played during these fateful days, the toll of killed and wounded that was exacted from the revolting proletariat at the point of the gun and the bayonet made the army the most hated institution in the empire. The rice riots have accomplished, in spite of their final suppression, the moral overthrow of Japanese militarism. For never again can the army regain the awe and the respect in which it was always held in the eyes of the Japanese people. Indeed the Terauchi ministry, the most imperialistic and militaristic ministry in the history of Japan, fell on account of the rice riots.

The following quotations from a number of Japanese magazines give a serious interpretation of the things that happened in Japan a few months ago, unlike the garbled and for the most part ignorantly untrue reports that appeared in the American press. The *Oriental Economist*, under the title of "Political Significance of the Recent Food Riots" says: The sole responsibility for the rice riots lies with the Terauchi ministry. The exceptionally high price of rice is directly due to the policy of the Government in aiding and encouraging export trade. The political machinery of the country functions exclusively in the interests of a few big capitalists while the interests of the vast majority of the people and the workers are completely disregarded. It can be truthfully said that