The Governments of Japan and Manchukuo, as well as the Kwantung Army, appreciated that friendly diplomacy between children from the two countries would be an effective way to proclaim the legitimacy of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. There was also a need to improve public sentiment in Manchukuo, where anti-Japanese feeling was growing due to the reprehensible behavior of many of the Japanese immigrants. Therefore, the two governments greatly supported the Japanese Children’s Mission.

The Children’s Mission played an important role in the public relations of the Japanese Government by conveying messages from the Japanese Ministers of Education and Colonial Affairs and visiting leading figures in Manchukuo and the Kwantung Army. The Mission was also dispatched to Korea under Japanese rule for the Japanization of culture and politics there. Moreover, because it was dispatched to Manchukuo at the time Manchukuo was recognized by Japan as a country, the Mission was regarded as part of the celebration events and was more effective than expected because of this synergy. Eventually the Mission developed into a media event to swing public sentiment in favor of national strategies.

Later, as illustrated by another similar children’s mission established to celebrate the birthday of the Crown Prince of Japan, this approach was further developed as a way to enhance the sense of belonging to the Japanese nation, while the boys took over the leading role from the girls.

Key words: Japanese Children’s Mission, media event, Manchukuo, friendly diplomacy between Japan and Manchukuo, children