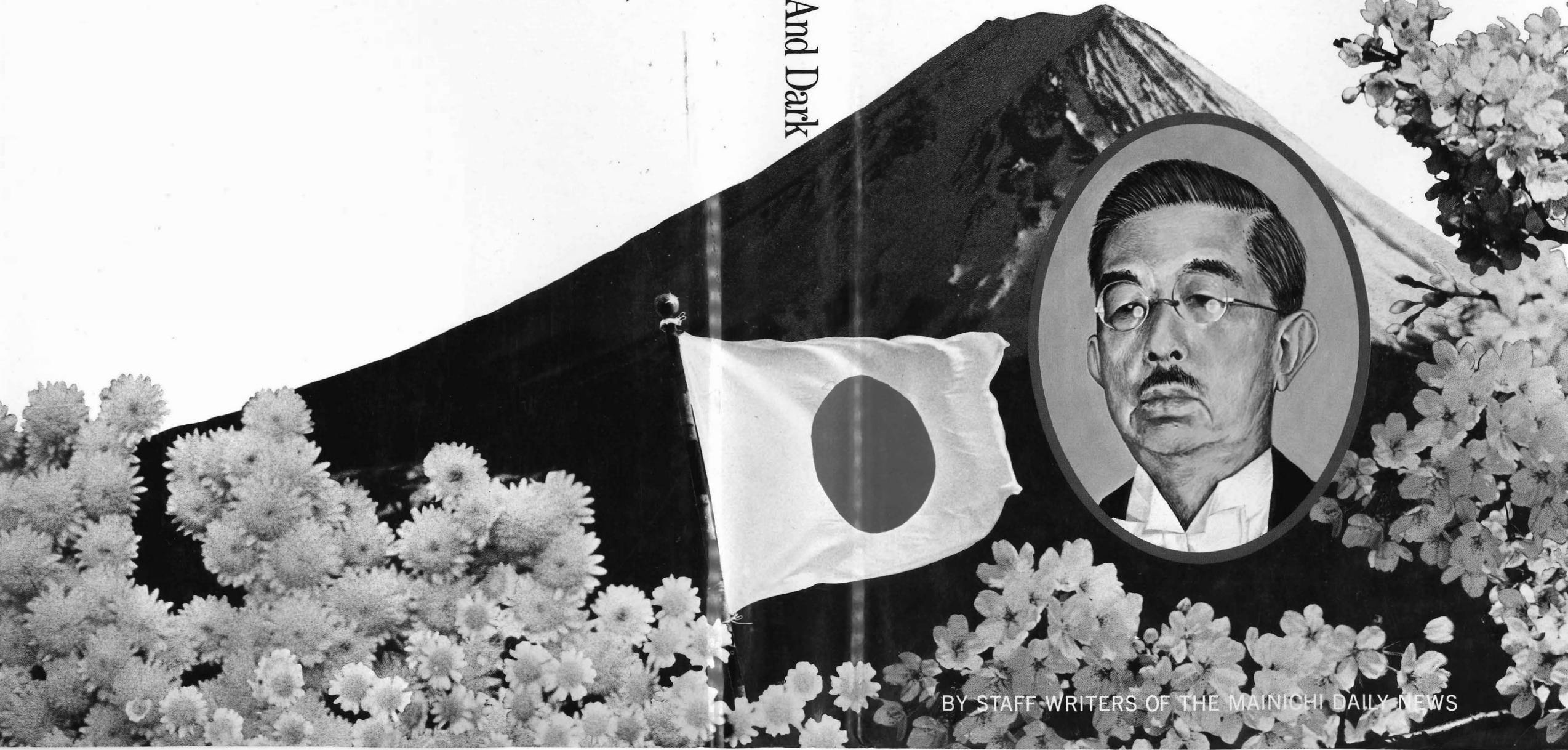


PUBLISHED BY THE MAINICHI NEWSPAPERS

Fifty Years Of Light And Dark
The Hirohito Era

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BY STAFF WRITERS OF THE MAINICHI DAILY NEWS

Fifty Years Of Light And Dark

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昭和

By the Staff of the Mainichi Daily News

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Preface

*Swift fly the years;
Motley of light and dark.
—Japanese saying*

When servicemen of the Allied occupation forces showed us a strange "lunchbox" that emitted some strange tunes called "jazz," many Japanese three decades ago were surprised to discover that a radio could be portable. Not a single one of the occupiers or the occupied at that time dreamed that Japan would one day become the world's leading manufacturer of transistor radios.

During the five decades of "Showa"—Emperor Hirohito's reign was so named—numerous other dreams have come true. Indeed, many more things formerly undreamed-of have also turned into reality. To those who lived in 1926, the first year of Showa, the capitulation of the Nippon Empire to foreign powers was utterly beyond their imagination. For the first time in the milleniums of the nation's history, Japan genuflected in the cinders of its cities in 1945 to beg for mercy from the victors.

Those who lived in the immediate aftermath of the tragic war failed, in their turn, to foresee that Japan would rise again phoenix-like to become one of the major economic-industrial powers of the world. But did those hard-driving working ants of Japan in the 1950s and 60s ever think of the pollution, the inevitable byproducts of material prosperity, that would soon endanger their archipelago once known for its serenity and beauty?

Japan today is a monster, perhaps a monster that the English-

speaking observers find the most difficult to comprehend. Language is undoubtedly a barrier, but there are more obstacles, many more.

The nation's image was once represented by Fuji-yama, Geisha and Sakura (cherry blossoms). Japan in 1975 is something that defies such an attempt at simplification. In order to know and understand the many faces of modern Japan, one has to drop a sounding lead into the complexities of its history, grasp the behavior patterns of the Japanese people, and read between the lines of the words spoken by the peculiarly taciturn people.

It was not out of sheer nostalgia that we, staff members of the Mainichi Daily News, looked back at the first year of Emperor Hirohito's reign with the purpose of a self-probe. At the time of this writing, more than 75 per cent of the 110 million Japanese are the products of the Showa era. They are the living examples of the people who built what Japan is today. They are the people who will steer the country into the uncharted ocean of the future. The years of Showa have seen their sweat and toil, their tears and smiles, their anguish and joy, their love and hate—in myriad manifestations.

We began our work by visiting libraries and poring through archives. Most fortunately, we secured the kind assistance of the file department of the Mainichi (vernacular) Newspapers where more than two dozen people are employed full time for sorting and filing various informative materials. Then we started to write a sort of narrative history, 50 installments in all, roughly arranged in chronological order. Throughout our undertaking, which extended over eight months, our approach was journalistic.

Just as so many Japanese tend to feel toward whatever they have accomplished, we feel extremely "ashamed" (hazukashii) of the fruit of our effort. True, we lack the insight and precision of professional historians and the style of native English writers. But, during the course of our work, we discovered to our astonishment that there has been no history of modern Japan penned by a Japanese author in English, despite the fact that the foreign tongue is compulsory for all Japanese children over the age of 12. Consciousness of being "the first one" has been, frankly speaking, quite exciting.

As we delved deeper into the occurrences of the past 50 years, we became "acquainted" with more compatriots who sacrificed them-

selves for the sake of many a lofty idea—everlasting justice (Yukyu-no-Taigi) for one, and many other ideals that they believed should be realized here. It was a rewarding sensation to know that we live in a land that has been inhabited by admirable people.

Incidentally, foreigners may wonder why the Japanese call 1975 the "50th year of Showa." The year 1926, when Hirohito acceded to the throne, was reckoned as the first year of the new era. The second year began a week later on January 1, 1927. Hence, the majority of Japanese feel as if they have lived through 50 full years of the reign although the exact count shows that barely 49 years have passed.

As the series of Showa articles were published twice a week in the Mainichi Daily News from January to July 1975, the editors received an unexpectedly large number of letters from readers. Some of them kindly pointed out errors which we thankfully acknowledge and have corrected in this volume. Many others encouraged us with suggestions and advice—a friendly gesture which sustained us in our journalistic voyage through the history of our own generation.

"Arigato Gozaimasu" goes to all from our staff as well as this writer.

Hitotsubashi, Tokyo
August 1975

T. T.

Acknowledgments

We express our sincere appreciation to the many readers of the Mainichi Daily News who gave us valuable suggestions and advice while the prototype of this book was being published in MDN under the title of "Showa—Turbulent 50 Years." It was their generous response, far greater than we had expected, that sustained us in this endeavor that was without precedent in the annals of English journalism in Japan.

Mr. Tadaichi Nakajima, a noted calligrapher, brushed ideographs—"Showa"—with vigor and beauty that graced the MDN

series, to whom we are greatly indebted. His work has been reproduced in the frontispiece of this volume.

We drew heavily on the massive collection of books, documents and clippings in the File Department of the Mainichi Newspapers. Our special thanks go to Mr. Toshio Haneda and Mrs. Reiko Matsushita for their expert assistance in searching for materials that we desired.

Our thanks are also due to Mr. Bunzo Tsujiguchi, former editor of the Publications Photo Department of the Mainichi Newspapers, who provided many of the photographs, some of them never published before, for the original series and for this book.

The lengthy series which formed the basis of this book would not have been possible without the diligence and devotion of Mr. Welly Tatsuo Shibata, adviser to MDN, who read our copy. An editor emeritus of English journalism in Japan with a wealth of experience dating from prewar years, Mr. Shibata not only improved our manuscripts but also gave us countless hints and suggestions on many episodes in the book to which he was witness as a working journalist.

Last but not least, we offer a comradely "Arigato" to the staff members of MDN for gladly allowing us to have our own way uninterruptedly as we worked on the series—a gesture that only added to their already heavy burden in turning out the newspapers.

FIFTY YEARS OF LIGHT AND DARK

FIFTY YEARS
OF
LIGHT AND DARK

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CHAPTER I

Blood-Splattered
Emergence
Of New Era

'Enlightenment And Peace'

Looking back at some of the passages from the Imperial Rescript of His Majesty Emperor Hirohito upon his coronation on November 10, 1928, no resident of Japan today can remain unimpressed by their apocalyptic overtone. The Imperial message certainly professes a secret knowledge of future events—but only in such an ironical manner as to stun any historian.

The Emperor on that day solemnly vouched "Our Heavenly and Imperial Ancestors, in accordance with the Heavenly Truths, created an Empire based upon foundations immutable for all ages and left behind them a throne destined for all eternity to be occupied by their lineal descendants. By the grace of the Spirits of Our Ancestors this great heritage has devolved upon Us. We hereby perform the Ceremony of Enthronement with the Sacred Symbols."

Genuine joy was evident in Japan. "Banzai resounded throughout the nation," the English language newspaper "Osaka Mainichi" ob-

served, responding to the voice from the godly height.

The young monarch went on: "It is Our resolve to endeavor to promote, within, the education of Our people and their moral and material betterment so that there may be harmony and contentment among them and power and prosperity for the whole nation, and to cultivate without, friendly relations with all nations, thus to contribute to the maintenance of the world peace and the advancement of the welfare of humanity."

Today, almost half a century later, both material betterment and a higher standard of education have been achieved. So too, friendly relations with all foreign nations. But before "Our beloved subjects" of the Emperor could fulfill the Imperial resolution, they had to sacrifice nearly the total assets of the nation to enemy bombing and fight in pitched battles with such world powers as China, the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

Introduced to the Japanese public for the first time on Christmas Day in 1926, the Chinese ideographs of "Showa," the new name for the new Emperor's reign, were chosen because they stood for "enlightenment and peace." Nobody, however, foresaw at that time that the years to come were destined to be far from enlightened and peaceful and that they would be smeared with the blood shed by millions of Japanese nationals. The age of Showa certainly has been an age of dour irony unmatched in the nation's history.

As the Christmastide approached in the year 1926, the physical condition of Emperor Taisho steadily worsened. Plagued by a malignant inflammation that ate into his right lung, the unfortunate Emperor had a fever of 38.3°C., pulse 124 and respiration count 27 at 6 a.m. on December 18. His sleep was fitful. His appetite was virtually nil. For many days he clung to life on a glass of milk and a few spoonfuls of vegetable soup until he finally succumbed. It was early in the morning on Saturday, December 25, that an extra edition of the Official Gazette was issued, reporting the Imperial demise at 1.25 a.m. that day.

His Imperial Highness the Regent and Crown Prince Hirohito instantly acceded to the Throne.

The bulletin spread rapidly across the nation, heard first of all by over 200,000 owners of radios. Then newsboys ran through the dawn, handing out extras to whomever they met as they hopped from street

to street in each of the nation's major cities. But the tens of millions of people did not have to read the extras. They had long since realized that the end of the somber age of Taisho was nearing. The moment they heard the faint ringing of bells fastened to the waists of newsboys' Happi coats, they knew what it was.

On this day, people rose from their beds hours earlier than usual. There was profound grief—but also great hope and expectation. "The new era is for enlightenment and peace!"

From the old Imperial Villa in Hayama, the seaside resort in Kanagawa Prefecture, where he attended the deathbed of his father, the new Emperor and Empress Nagako retired soon after daybreak to the new Villa in the same town. As his car passed through the town, the road was already neatly cleaned by townspeople who lined the street, curious to see the new monarch who, in his turn, greeted them, bowing his head.

Escorting the Emperor in the same car was the Grand Chamberlain carrying two of the three sacred treasures of the Imperial Household, the Sword and Jewels—the Mirror being in the Grand Shrines of Ise. Hirohito was now the "God Emperor" of the almost 2,600-year-old nation, being the 124th in line from the Heaven-descended ancestor called Jimmu. Although scholars found the early part of the Imperial lineage as well as the exact date of foundation of the nation extremely dubious, not a single one of the "beloved subjects" was expected to question the "established" godliness of the new Ruler of Japan.

To many Japanese, the advent of "Showa" appealed greatly to their imagination. For the epoch of Taisho had proved to be a disappointing anticlimax compared with the preceding Meiji which had brought about the modernization of Japan's political, economic, bureaucratic, educational and other social structures. Emperor Meiji was resourceful enough to suppress a civil war in southern Kyushu to help set the country on its feet. He won two wars with ominous enemies—China and Russia. He was masculine enough, so people thought, to keep a concubine in the Imperial Court. He was skillful in composing Waka, traditional 31-syllable poems. The Emperor appeared to be a fit leader of Japan in every sense of the word.

Emperor Taisho, on the contrary, seldom appeared before his subjects. His mental instability was a known fact among the people.

His subjects often whispered and secretly chuckled over the episode about the Emperor who, after delivering his message before the plenary session of the Diet, rolled up the Imperial Rescript and, as if peering through a telescope, looked into the faces of the surprised Dietmen. Otherwise, Taisho was virtually void of any interesting episodes.

The new Emperor of Showa, however, was totally different. Hirohito was young at 25 in 1926. He had been educated by the fabled General Maresuke Nogi in his childhood. He defied objections raised by the traditionalist camp by extensively touring England, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy. His human side surfaced when he insisted that he wanted to marry Princess Nagako, daughter of impoverished Prince Kuni. He engaged in—and won—a fierce but little publicized struggle with the powerful Prince Aritomo Yamagata who opposed the match. He had been active as the Regent for the past four years. With the Emperor's youthfulness and experience, the era of Showa certainly did appear promising.

Upon being asked by a Mainichi correspondent, Dr. Kurakichi Shiratori, famed Orientalist and professor of Tokyo University, recalled the time he asked the Regent-Crown Prince his view on the career of Napoleon Bonaparte. "Hirohito's reply," said the respected scholar, "was that Napoleon led a very active life and accomplished much but that his motive in becoming the ruler of France was not genuinely to promote the happiness and prosperity of the people, but rather to satisfy his own desire for fame." His Majesty, Shiratori asserted, then remarked that he therefore had little respect for the French hero.

Despite some certain manifestations of mental agility, Hirohito's somewhat awkward deportment was apparent from his youth. It is largely due to the excessive attention paid to the education of the "God's son" from his primary school days onward. As he entered the Gakushuin Peers' School in 1908, he was put in a First Grade class composed of a dozen hand-picked classmates. Not necessarily children from rich families, but those whose records were outstanding. All around him were such devout patriots who, if asked "What is your purpose in life?," would never hesitate to answer, "To die for the sake of Tenno Heika (His Majesty the Emperor)!"

He had no chance to be spoiled by the luxury of life. Far from it. Every facet of the life of young Hirohito was ruled by the principles of stoicism, even of frugality—perhaps best illustrated by the ascetic way of life observed by his mentor, General Nogi. The rigidity of life, however, was only most carefully prescribed. Every word Hirohito uttered should not be less than befitting the Imperial personage. Every step he took should not be less than august and impressive. Under the burden of such excessive "must-nots," the human side he once displayed during his youthful courtship gradually disappeared. When he voiced some doubts about biological authenticity of his direct lineage that descended from Heaven, his history teacher mildly rebuked the future Emperor. The "Son of God" was not supposed to harbor the slightest misgiving as to the godliness of his blood.

The awkwardness of his behavior had successfully been hidden from public eyes until 1945 when the Emperor cult was shattered by the defeat—the first in its history—of Japan. Millions of Japanese crowded to see the god-turned-human Hirohito raise his hat and nod, "Ah, so!" Many of them mimicked the strange gait of their Emperor for whom they once were so willing to sacrifice all they had.

In contrast to the general joy, it was with somber expression that the editors of the Mainichi Newspapers greeted the advent of the Showa Era. This was because of a very serious journalistic error committed by the nationwide news giant.

After Emperor Taisho fell ill, newspaper reporters in Tokyo frantically competed to obtain a hint from the advisers to the Imperial Household about what the era name of the succeeding Emperor would be. One Mainichi reporter had a lucky breakthrough. "Kobun" would be the name of the new era, he was told by a highly reliable source. Selected from very ancient Chinese classics, "Kobun" stood for "light and literary attainments." So the Mainichi reported "Kobun" as the likeliest name for the oncoming years in its first extra.

At 6.40 a.m. on Christmas day in 1926, as the ringing of the bells tied to the waists of Mainichi delivery boys barely died down in the resort town of Hayama, the meeting of Privy Councillors adjourned and the official notice was handed out to waiting reporters outside the Imperial Villa. The name of the new epoch was officially announced as "Showa."

A fatal blow to the Mainichi. President Motoyama, tendering his resignation to the board of executives, demanded that the responsibility be fully clarified. Confusion ensued for days in the paper's news room until executive editor Kido held himself responsible and resigned from his post.

The Mainichi had to wait 30 years for clarification of the mix-up. Riichiro Nakajima, then 73, interviewed in NHK radio's feature program "My Secret" in September, 1956, told the truth. An expert in Oriental philology and a member of a secretly-established "commission for deciding the name of the reign" three decades before, Nakajima testified that he had actually emerged with "Kobun" after he had extensively consulted Chinese classics. The historic scoop by the Mainichi, however, put such pressure on the commission that alteration at the final moment became inevitable. He renewed his search for another suitable name and found the auspicious "Showa."

The Japanese were not alone in expecting something better from the era of Showa. "Although a young man, he is an experienced man as a ruler. He has seen the world, speaks many languages, had the benefit of the great examples of the reigns of his immediate Ancestors," commented the Washington Post on the day of Hirohito's formal enthronement in 1928.

The New York Times admitted that "the present times are hard times in Japan" due to the disaster caused by the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 and the business depression that left the Japanese economy crippled, but the newspaper looked forward to the young monarch who "personifies youth, strength, and ambition" in Japan.

No American newspaper then foresaw the bizarre manifestation of Japanese ambition that would take place 13 years later at Pearl Harbor. Nor did a single American in the days of President Calvin Coolidge have an insight to the future in which Hirohito would "outrule" seven American presidents.

Swinging in the midst of the Roaring Twenties, Americans had other things to worry about—where to locate a proper bootlegger, how many more homers the Yankees' Babe Ruth was going to hit, and that exciting thing called the "talkies."

Tokyo, together with the entire nation, went wild with jubilation when the festive crowning ceremony was held in the ancient capital of Kyoto on November 10, 1928. The outer garden of the Imperial Palace,

Hibiya Park, and other open spaces in the capital were filled with people taking part in the celebration. Numberless masqueraders danced through the streets, shouting Banzai at frequent intervals. The Ruler and the ruled seemed to be firmly knitted in the spirit of family ties. The warships of the Imperial Combined Fleet, anchored in the ports of Osaka and Kobe, were decked with bunting. The first gun of the Imperial salute was fired exactly at 3 p.m. as His Majesty ascended the Throne. At night the warships' colored searchlights added to the gaiety on land.

As if in an attempt to calm the festive mood, however, the Mainichi's edition of November 11 carried an editorial titled "Never Again!" commemorating the 10th anniversary of the signing of the armistice of the World War (not "World War I" at that time). The editor was certainly completely unaware of the imminent fate of Japan as he penned:

"Lest mankind let pass in oblivion the costly lessons of the historical calamity, and again be loitering on the brink of a dangerous precipice, the day has been set apart on which we should reinforce our moral courage to overcome wars and build up the world of perfect peace. Every one of us, thank God, is now busy with some productive pursuit; and yet none is too busy to spend a moment in calm meditation upon how best to perpetuate the blessed reign of peace. Let us at least cry in unison, NEVER AGAIN!" The sincerity of the writer was not to be doubted.

None of those in that festive masquerade in 1928 shouting Banzai for the advent of the Showa Era, then realized the things that were destined to come.

There were some signs to indicate that the new Emperor, for one, was bracing for the tumultuous years ahead. He had already met a near-tragedy in December, 1923, when he, as the Regent, narrowly escaped the bullet of an anarchist who opened fire at him at Toranomon, outside the Imperial Palace.

Daisuke Namba, the name of this would-be assassin, was assumed 44 years later by one Kozo Okamoto when he went to Israel to gun down innocent passengers at Tel Aviv Airport.

In 1928, a little boy named Kakuei Tanaka had barely finished his primary school in snowy Niigata Prefecture. The boy was to become

the Prime Minister of Japan in later years and eventually be forced to resign in 1974 because of his ambiguous fund-raising activities, including illegal transactions involving national property in the Toranomon district.

Tanaka's case came to be remembered by the same name as the case of the Emperor's would-be-assassin. Both cases have come to be referred to as the "Toranomon Incident."

Indefinable Anxiety

The suicide of a novelist rocked Japan in the second year of Showa (1927) and a unique passage in his "Note to Old Friends" became the most-quoted phrase of the time. The phrase was "Bonyari shita Fuan" (indefinable anxiety).

Ryunosuke Akutagawa, author of "Rashomon" and more than 100 other brilliant stories, put an end to his life of 35 years on July 24, 1927, by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. The well-known writer's collapse, a bolt out of the blue, was bannerlined on the front page by the nation's newspaper editors who helped to elevate it from a personal tragedy to the stage of a social phenomenon. The incidents that ensued give us today, among others, a hint as to the basic attitude of a man who is leading the Japan Communist Party in 1975—Kenji Miyamoto.

But, before coming to the criticism penned by Miyamoto, then a student of Tokyo University, let us review the social message that the author's death conveyed to the Japanese public.

The versatile novelist expounded his tenets in his final literary product, "Note to Old Friends," which Masao Kume, his friend and then doyen of the nation's literary world, read to reporters some hours after Akutagawa's death.

"No writer has ever succeeded in describing the psychology of a suicide with total candidness. I now want to narrate to you this never-fully-fathomed mentality of those who cut their own life short by their own will," the novelist's lengthy note began.

"Newspapers, as you see, often give such reasons as financial difficulties, sickness or spiritual pain in their attempt to explain

suicides. In my experience, however, each of those given reasons is nothing but a tiny part of what motivated a particular man to take the fatal course of suicide. Far from being the real motivation, the so-called 'reasons' are more often than not the mere process which drives him to the real cause that makes him commit suicide. . . In many cases even those who actually commit suicide do not know definitely for what they are killing themselves. . . In my case at least, I can state that it (the cause for suicide) is this indefinable anxiety."

In his suicide note the gifted writer tries to explain what is inexplicable: "I have long felt a certain nagging uneasiness as to my future. It is hardly definable. You, my friend, will perhaps find it very difficult to understand my words. But what I have gone through during the past ten years tells me that, unless you are the type of man who has been tormented by the same experience as mine, you will be unable to absorb the real meaning of my words. I do not, therefore, intend to blame you for your inability to understand my yearning to perish."

Akutagawa describes elaborately how he had been thinking of nothing but death during the previous two years. Sympathy for his family members who would be left behind paled before his strong desire to annihilate himself. What should be the method of destroying himself in a painless manner—this came first to his mind, according to the final message. He first thought of self-strangulation, but he found the mental image of such a death detestable. He could swim, which ruled out drowning. There was also "a danger of being brought back to life." To be run over by a train was also detestable because his aesthetic sense rejected the imaginary sight of his own disfigured body; as for a knife or a revolver, he had no confidence in them as his hands might tremble from nervous tension. Jumping from a tall building too would end up displaying an abominable sight to many people.

The note was most pathetic—the more so as one thought of how such a sensitive soul as Akutagawa searched frantically for the way to kill himself, all the while haunted by a recurring obsession of formless fear. The obsession, moreover, was not only his. A great number of Japan's intellectuals in 1927 were feeling a sense of vague uneasiness, similar to that perceived by the neurotic novelist.

The age of Showa, enlightenment (sho) and peace (wa), was

welcomed by wishful thinkers as something which would be definitely different from the somber years of Taisho. But would it really usher in prosperity and peace for Japan? Farsighted intellectuals were spotting dark clouds looming over the economic horizon. In fact, the nation's economy was at its nadir. Ominous turmoil had been threatening the management of medium and small banks throughout Japan in that year. They were hit hard by the depression in the wake of the World War and were further crippled by the Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1, 1923.

With the hope of rehabilitating the earthquake-devastated industries in Tokyo and its surroundings, the government and the Bank of Japan were compelled to guarantee that they would honor promissory notes amounting to ¥438 million (at a time when a copy of *The English language Mainichi Daily News* cost 5 sen, 1/1,400th of today's equivalent). Out of this staggering total of the Shinsai Tegata (Earthquake Notes), ¥231 million had been redeemed by the spring of 1927. The balance of ¥207 million, including some very dubious notes remaining to be disposed of between the Bank of Japan and city banks, was regarded as the "cancer" preventing the sound reconstruction of Japan's financial capabilities.

Despite strong opposition, the government bills were passed to guarantee the remaining Tegata (promissory notes). But in the process of heated debate in the Diet, the shaky financial conditions of medium-sized banks were exposed, which eventually triggered a banking catastrophe. It started with two banks in Tokyo closing their doors in the morning of March 15, 1927, followed by a run on banks in a chain reaction. Unable to withdraw their savings, the people's strong resentment eventually led to the resignation of the Cabinet of Prime Minister Reijiro Wakatsuki in April. The banking panic nevertheless continued and, finally, an unprecedented measure—a moratorium—was announced by the government toward the end of the month, suspending all payments of debts for three weeks.

There were other anxieties felt by the nation's opinion makers. The gravest was the exploding population of Japan. Slow-developing industries at home failed to absorb the rapidly growing work force. The imaginary picture of the Japanese archipelago teeming with jobless millions became a sort of imperative idea among anxious in-

tellectuals. Birth control was for the first time seriously discussed by scholars. And, in fact, the ever-increasing population, coupled with the business slump, caused a dangerous deterioration in the morale of the general public. During 1926 there were reported in Tokyo nearly 300 cases of arson committed by those who had their houses heavily insured before setting fire to them. Akutagawa's brother-in-law was one of the suspected arsonists. He was run over by a train six months before Akutagawa's death, leaving a large amount of debt which the novelist was compelled to repay.

In their effort to divert domestic dissatisfaction, Japan's military leadership was zealously looking for the chance to further their expansionist strategies in continental China. The rising tide of Chinese nationalism on its part provided Japan's jingoists with an excellent excuse. Only three months before Akutagawa committed suicide, China's Southern troops opened fire in Shanghai at a landing force of Japanese bluejackets. Skirmishes followed, showing every sign of military cum political deterioration spreading over the civil war-stricken continent.

All the while, many values were changing rapidly within Japan. "Mobo" and "Moga" representing "modern boys" and "modern girls," respectively, entered the spotlight as the ultimate in fashion. Girls started wearing high-heeled shoes. The first fashion show was staged at the Mitsukoshi Department Store. The nation's first subway went into operation between Ueno and Asakusa, Tokyo. "Yen-taku" (¥1 for a taxi drive anywhere in the ward districts of Tokyo) spearheaded Japan's age of motorization.

Old values were swiftly fading, while new values were yet to be accepted. Literature was no exception. A quarter of a century later Howard Hibbett, American scholar of Japanese literature, pointed out Akutagawa's position as pitched between the two antagonistic literary schools—Proletarian writers and Naturalists.

"His (Akutagawa's) attention to style, his preference for techniques of indirection and restraint, his indifference to current dogma—such attitudes were heresy to both the leading literary schools," Hibbett noted. "Even his early suicide only heightens the portrait of a modern Japanese intellectual, the double victim of an unsympathetic society and a split culture."

Starting his literary career by translating Anatole France and William Yeats, Akutagawa's reading covered vernacular as well as Mandarin and European literature and thoughts. He changed his style often. He set his stories' backgrounds both in Japan and out of Japan; both contemporary and past. The characters he created ranged from Japan's early Christian martyrs to disciples of Jesus Christ and an imaginary aquatic animal "Kappa." His phrases were finely polished, his characters vivid, his description of the background persuasive and his aphorisms piercing. He was frequently cynical, almost to the extent of nihilism, but he could also be deeply affectionate and religious. His versatility was such that his stories were loved long after his death—longer than most of his contemporary writers' works. At the time of this writing, he is still popular among the nation's reading public and Japan's most coveted literary prize is called the "Akutagawa Award."

The modern history of Japan is dotted with suicides of several important men of letters, each of whom sent shock-waves coursing through the minds of the Japanese public. But even the deaths of Tokoku Kitamura in 1894, Takeo Arishima in 1923 and Osamu Dazai in 1948 could hardly match Akutagawa's suicide in its historic significance. For the death of this literary celebrity galvanized the nation at that particular turning point in the mid-1920s—a vulnerable period for Japan that was plagued by overhanging anxiety.

Many Japanese studied his last note and realized that there was no rosy future for him as well as for their country. Being more easily influenced and less individualistic-minded than many Occidental peoples, the majority of the Japanese people had looked up to men of letters and scholars as if they were watching a weathercock. The tendency persisted throughout the war and is evident to this day. Hence Akutagawa's death could not be regarded simply as the unique phenomenon of an individual novelist who had been playing with death. Immediately after his suicide was reported, several inspired youths killed themselves—feeling, or rather believing, they too felt the "indefinable anxiety."

Referring to some of these concurrent suicides, the English-language *The Mainichi* observed, "The romantic suicide of the noted novelist produced several imitators among sentimental youths." The youths, however, were not the only sentimentalists. For the newspaper

went on: "(It) may be argued that suicide is one of a few very fundamental freedoms the individual possesses over his life and accordingly it ought not to be censured. If one case of suicide causes many other similar events, we need not be alarmed; not all of those who commit suicide are bad; there are some which are for the good of all concerned. Bad ones should be prevented but good ones need not be stopped. Whether we actually use it or not, the consciousness of the right and power to exercise free choice upon life or death is a glorious feeling, which we would not like to give up just in order to be called a moralist." (July 29, 1927).

Quite different was the approach of Kenji Miyamoto, 21, student of the Economics Department, Tokyo University, who noticed a stereotype of frustrated intelligentsia in the person of Akutagawa. In his critical essay, "Haiboku no Bungaku" (Literature of Defeatism), student Miyamoto, while displaying a certain amount of sympathy for Akutagawa, maintained that it was necessary for Japanese intellectuals to "overcome" by all means such a defeatist attitude as taken by the over-sensitive novelist. The essay was awarded first prize in the August 1929 issue of "Kaizo," the then most influential national magazine.

"Ryunosuke Akutagawa was a son of a retired civil servant. Belonging to the lower middle class which, unlike the unostentatious lower class, had to take some pride in social vanities, Akutagawa's career as a writer was predestined by his birth. . . . As he advanced in years, his brilliant flashes of intelligence as well as his strong but easily frustrated ego impressed on his thought a visible stigma of his class, nurturing all the while the tragedy he finally had to meet," Miyamoto wrote.

His analysis of Akutagawa's tragic life is both clearcut and persuasive. Nobody could be entirely free from his particular class-consciousness, however hard he tried to remain aloof from the class he was born into, according to the essay. Miyamoto continued: "The final message of Akutagawa's literature was the despair over a man's incapability to attain happiness. Like every other hypochondriacs, he cornered himself until he believed he faced the so-called 'perpetual Weltschmerz mankind has to bear.' However, this way of thinking and this way of despairing are nothing new. It is the typical symptom of those sickly petit bourgeois who confuse personal despair with the

despair of society.”

Akutagawa thus represented the “Literature of Defeatism” in Miyamoto’s eyes. Indefinable anxiety was, after all, a psychological product of the idle petty bourgeois. The sickly attitude was there to be overcome by the class-consciousness of followers of communism.

Soon after the memorable essay was awarded, Miyamoto joined the Union of Proletariat Writers and later the Japan Communist Party. He has since remained as one of the most magnetic leaders of the JCP. Despite his 12 years’ imprisonment that lasted until 1945, Miyamoto never resorted to a “defeatist” attitude. His sanguine belief in a bright communistic future has become the official line of the JCP today under the leadership of the man who once verbally chastised Ryunosuke Akutagawa for having died in despair.

Radical Change In Values

It was a tiny flying machine—a monoplane with a wingspread of 46 feet and fuselage 28 feet long, equipped only with a single Wright Whirlwind motor. Without enough space to move in the cockpit, he had to sit in a wicker chair throughout, all alone for 33½ hours. But, at-taboy!, he finally made it. The sky over the Atlantic was conquered by Captain Charles Lindbergh, the Lone Eagle.

From New York a Mainichi correspondent cabled: “On Broadway between Thirty-Fourth Street and Columbus Circle, there were dense throngs who yelled themselves hoarse.” (May 24, 1927).

This moment in history dwarfed the fierce civil war raging in China and the League of Nations’ economic conference in Geneva where the yet infant Communist nation called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was pleading for the maintenance of trade relations with the powerful United States who held the omnipotent dollars in its pocket.

Inspired by Lindbergh, the Japanese were no exception in being carried away by the enthusiasm for aviation. Aeronautical engineers promptly took to building a training plane for a trans-Pacific flight—a remote ancestor of the latter-day Zero.

The tide was rapidly changing as the Roaring 20s shouted itself

hoarse to become the yet indefinable 30s. The Japanese people were aware that a certain irresistible tide was sweeping them away toward an unknown direction. Further Westernization, many sensed, was likely to be one of the outstanding currents. Some preferred to swim along while others attempted to resist the tide.

Like it or not, such Hollywood bombshells as Gloria Swanson and Greta Garbo were casting a spell over the first generation of the nation’s moviegoers. “It,” the title of a film starring Clara Bow, became a magic word, denoting something close to the “sexy” of today. Jazz and the Tango found it possible to coexist with the traditional Samisen-accompanied music. The hemlines of girls’ skirts were going up, for the first time in history, above the knees. It was Haikara (high-collared; hence fashionably concurrent with Western influence) not to fall behind the imported mode.

Guidelines for the nation’s cinema and stage producers in 1930 were “ero,” “guro” and “nansensu,” standing for eroticism, grotesqueness and nonsense, respectively. “Kareraisu,” uniquely Japanized rice curry, became a new addition to the popular Japanese menu since around 1927. Boxes of Kellogg corn flakes and cans of Heinz tomato ketchup were slowly finding customers in the big cities. “Gin-bura,” windowshopping along Ginza Street, was becoming a popular pastime of Tokyoites. Cities like Tokyo and Osaka were showing every sign of sprawling out into their peripheries. Hankyu Department Store went into business in Umeda, till then a little known quarter in northern Osaka, in 1929, catering to the population that had migrated to suburbia.

Values were changing violently. It was a painful time for those who preferred to adhere to the older values. And Japan did not have to look for the xenophobes who would do anything to defend the godly nation’s ethnic purity. Perhaps it was in a fit of patriotic outburst that the English language edition of the Osaka Mainichi and Tokyo Nichi-Nichi on May 13, 1927, printed a stern warning to “the undesirable foreign elements in Japan.”

The newspaper said: “We (Japanese) are people more prone to acknowledge our own faults than to criticize others. For this very reason, we feel unrestrainable anger and resentment against those who assume superior airs—especially in matters of morality—but who commit in the dark most detestable immoral crimes.”

Following the above paragraph was the disclosure of “a certain incident” committed by “no less than 50 Occidentals, mostly of considerable social standing,” who took advantage of “our traditional submissiveness to Western peoples.” The “victims,” according to the police report quoted by the newspaper, were nearly 100 Japanese females “including wives, professional women, actresses, and daughters of respectable families.” The overtone was somewhat reminiscent of Thomas Raucat’s satirical novel “Honorable Picnic” written in 1924, but there was no doubt that the article, chastising both Western devils and “modern (Japanese) girls” who had broken away from the traditional parental roof, was read with a feeling of “I told you so” by conservative readers.

Many people were in agony, so to speak, being psychologically unable to adjust themselves to the new age. Few knew what value they should choose from the oncoming decade of the 1930s. And then, as if to tune in to the moment, a succession of changes befell the nation’s economy.

The Great Financial Crisis of Showa, triggered by the collapse of Suzuki Shoten, then one of the major trading companies, in March 1927, plunged the economy into the darkest abyss and dragged on well into the mid-30s when the National Mobilization Law put all the economic activities under quasi-military control.

World War I had heralded a sudden expansion of industrial enterprises as well as a general improvement of the living standard in this yet undeveloped nation. A limited number of the Japanese people were able for the first time to indulge in an occasional spending spree. Their consuming power multiplied, bringing about extravagance to the privileged few.

The rest of the nation, meanwhile, remained alienated and disappointed. Likewise, a certain alienation was observed among the nation’s city banks, whose number totaled 1,300 in 1928. Many of the second-class banks, plagued by the deepening depression, had to close their doors in the face of runs. The Bank of Japan was compelled to help them with emergency loans that amounted to an amazing sum. Unprecedented in Japan’s history of money economy, ¥200 banknotes were circulated in April 1927 with their back blank—the Bank of Japan had no time to complete the printing.

Apparently bankers were still immature and so was the Minister of Finance. But, the most decisive factor might have been the shaky basis on which Japanese industries had to subsist in those days. Extreme attention was paid, for instance, to the ups and downs of hemlines in America. Silk, a vital item among Japan’s exports, depended precariously on the length of American hosiery.

When the government lifted the gold embargo in January 1930, the premature Japanese economy emerged from financial isolation but was immediately engulfed by the worldwide depression that followed “Black Thursday,” that catastrophic day on Wall Street. In April 1930, the stock market slump in Tokyo worsened to such a degree that a fist fight broke out between brokers on the floor of the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Values were changing everywhere. The number of banks shrank from 1,300 to some 700. Big banks, including Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Daiichi and Yasuda (later Fuji), strengthened their oligopolistic hold on Japan’s economy. The formidable Zaibatsu were steadily solidifying their financial grip on the nation’s economic world.

Suffering under persistent depression, the public found its target of patriotic resentment in the large-scale “buy dollar” policy pursued by Zaibatsu, especially Mitsui, in the second half of 1931. The powerful industrial-financial concern, anticipating the impending ban on gold export, went ahead to buy U.S. dollars on grand scale. The maneuver brought wealth to Mitsui in the end. But patriots and patriotically-inclined press called the Zaibatsu managers “traitors of the nation” who had handed out national currencies en masse “in exchange for white men’s money.” The government collapsed in the face of public outbursts and the newly chosen Prime Minister declared, in December 1931, the hasty termination of the gold standard which ultimately lasted barely two years.

Values were changing in the political arena, too. For the first time in the nation’s history, Japan on February 20, 1928, launched a modest experiment in democracy. “The day of days,” according to the English language edition of the Osaka Mainichi and Tokyo Nichi-Nichi, was bright with chilly gusts sweeping the Japanese archipelago. Every polling station was crowded with male voters (women had to wait until 1946) who had their first initiation into this indispensable instrument of democracy—a general election. The day, “long to be

remembered as marking a new era in the political history of Japan, saw 13 millions of newly enfranchised voters throng to local polling booths, eager to voice their choice as to who (of the candidates) should be returned."

There had been several occasions for the privileged few to vote since 1889 when the constitution first introduced a limited election system. Nevertheless, the qualifications for eligible voters had remained such that only those who paid a substantial amount of national taxes and aristocrats were allowed to choose their political representatives. The yearning among the public for political participation became so strong that many people during the preceding Taisho Era and the initial two years of Showa declared their income overly inflated in the hope of securing the right to vote.

Although the first experience of having in their hands the fate of their country was thrilling, the Japanese people, typical of such historic occasions, were quiet and solemn-looking rather than expressing their joy in a straightforward manner.

A report by one of the Mainichi's staff writers on his own experience: "Upon reaching the writing desk of the balloting place, I took my pen to write down the name of the candidate I was going to vote for. At this moment I felt as if I were in the precincts of a sacred temple or church. The more I began to realize the importance attached to casting a vote, the more my hand began to shake. I meditated a moment and prayed to God, and then I voted for the one I admired."

No doubt the newly bestowed right to vote was embraced with greater enthusiasm by the lower echelon of the community. In casting their ballots, some came in their best clothes which they had recovered from a nearby pawnshop on the eve of the historic day. Others confessed that they had to encourage themselves to face the momentous occasion by taking a glass of cold Sake, rice wine, in the morning. Still others were simply overjoyed to have received a number of letters from big political figures soliciting their vote for their respective parties.

The government was ever eager to take advantage of the naivete of the people who were yet to be initiated fully into the democratic cult. Official interference was secretly planned and put in operation by Kisaburo Suzuki, powerful Minister of Home Affairs (all prefectural governors and local police commissioners were appointed by him)

who, in addition to every kind of harrassment of the opposition, especially proletarian candidates, had his warning broadcast by radio throughout the nation the day before the election, to the effect that opposing the government was tantamount to opposing the sovereign authority of the Emperor.

Parliamentarism was only an imitation of Occidental custom, he said, and the principles of democracy were contrary to Japanese nationalism. The government structure in Japan should rather be based on the august will of the Emperor than be dependent on votes by lowly commoners. Those who attempted to topple the government by popular vote were downright un-Japanese, according to the minister.

Suzuki's statement was bannered in the next day's newspapers and instantly enraged the nation's voters except those who supported the government led by the Seiyukai Party.

The Big Press, then the vanguard of democracy, was irate. Mainichi, among others, demanded the removal of the Home Minister in its editorial on the following day. "(When) a Home Minister assails our national structure we cannot refrain from rebuking him. If he uttered his statement with serious intent, he is the enemy of public order, a betrayer of national liberty. If he said what he did for political reasons, he is nothing but a cheap demagogue. In any case, he does not deserve the honor connected with the lofty position he occupies," the newspaper thundered.

Official interference notwithstanding, the election returns were hardly satisfactory to the ruling Seiyukai. Against 466 seats in the House of Representatives, Seiyukai came out with 218 returned while the opposition Minseito (also conservative) was close behind with 216. Proletarian parties secured roughly 480,000 votes across the nation with eight of their candidates successfully returned.

When taking into consideration all the pressures by government as well as police officials and a huge sum of "backstage" political funds raised by Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka, the election results were a deep disappointment to the Seiyukai. Consequently, a prolonged political battle was fought, a struggle for power, gradually frustrating the public who wanted to see their votes honestly reflected through the first general election.

The initial experiment in democracy, incidentally, is also

remembered for the emergence of a unique duo—a political leader and his financier. The politician felt little remorse in buying votes on a large scale while his rich friend gave all-out financial support in backstage maneuvers. Although Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka is no kin of Mr. Kakuei Tanaka, the latter's much-talked-about friendship with billionaire hotelier Kenji Osano shows a striking resemblance to the solid bond that tied the prime minister of 46 years before with Fusanosuke Kuhara, a mysterious businessman-politician, whose backstage influence lingered well into the postwar period.

Perhaps it was largely in the hope of diverting the eye of the people from the ugly political struggle that the government carried out a mass arrest of leaders of the Japan Communist Party on March 15, 1928, a mere 23 days after the first general election. Rounded up were upward of 1,000 men and women, including such latter-day Communist leaders as Kyuichi Tokuda, Yoshio Shiga and Sanzo Nosaka, chairman of the JCP's Central Committee in 1975. The legal ground for the arrest was provided by the notorious Article 8 of the Public Safety Law, which read: "In case of need for maintaining safety and order of the realm, the police officers may restrict, or prohibit, or disband any outdoor gathering, or a mass movement, or a crowd, or may disband any indoor gathering."

The revelation made by the government of the JCP's secret manifesto was enough to throw the public into consternation. Such inflammable phrases as "abolition of the Emperor system," "confiscation of the property of big landowners" and "all-out support for Soviet Russia" shook the nation violently. People were told to choose, so to speak, the nation's future between "parliamentarism" and "radical revolution by evil leftists."

The nationwide arrests were by no means the first ordeal for the Japan Communist Party, established in July, 1922, but it was surely the severest blow up to then for the leftist camp. It was also the first time that the Japanese realized that their politics could be influenced by external ideologies. The London press was quick to take note of this point. The Times of London editorialized on the mass arrest, saying, as quoted by the Mainichi, that there was no question that the movement that had been nipped in the bud in Japan was an organized effort on the part of the Moscow government to sovietize Japan.

Whether or not such influence existed, the Public Safety Law, once

invoked, became the government's deadliest weapon for suppressing its political adversaries. From then on, unwarranted arrests and even torture were used by the police until they eradicated the last bastion of the pacifist forces that stood against Japan's military expansionism.

In the meanwhile, conservative politicians were solidly backed by Zaibatsu which strengthened their financial might by overcoming the Great Financial Crisis. Zaibatsu, on their part, were eagerly looking for new markets and suppliers of raw materials. The nearest target: Manchuria.

Violent Plot In Manchuria

Most historians agree that Japan embarked on the path to aggression and eventual self-destruction on September 18, 1931 when an agent of the Kwantung Army blasted the Japanese-operated South Manchurian Railway at Liutiaoko just outside of Mukden and set its grand design in motion. But as is the case with most events which have shaken the world, the Manchurian Incident did not come by accident. It had its prelude in another railway blast three years before.

Right from the outset of the Showa Era, China and specifically its northeastern region known as Manchuria had dominated the attention of the Japanese Army and politicians. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese War a decade later had given Japan a "special status" in Manchuria, but the "Balkan of Asia," as the region was often referred to, remained the scene of intense intrigues and frequent skirmishes among the three countries.

Under the Portsmouth Treaty which ended the Russo-Japanese War, Japan won the lease of Kwantung Province which consisted of the southern tip of Manchuria including the strategic cities of Dairen and Port Arthur, control of the South Manchurian Railway from Changchun to Port Arthur and strips of land along the railway—extending 62 meters on both sides—and the right to deploy railway garrisons.

The Kwantung Army started off with about 10,000 men—a modest size for the administration of Kwantung Province and guarding 430 kilometers of rails and adjacent strips of land. At its peak just before

the tide of World War II turned in the Pacific in 1943, the Kwantung Army had grown into a mighty force of some 700,000 poised to strike at the Soviet Union.

By the time the Emperor ascended to the throne on Christmas Day of 1926, China had gone through Sun Yat-sen's revolution which brought the downfall of the Ching Dynasty. On July 1, 1925 the Nanking Government was established and a week later Kuomintang Commander-in-Chief Chiang Kai-shek launched the Northern Expedition of the Chinese National Revolutionary Forces to wipe out warlords and unify the country in both name and reality.

The immediate prospect of China's unification and the rising tide of Chinese nationalism alarmed Japanese policy-makers and the Kwantung Army which had sought to solidify Japan's "special status" in Manchuria.

As Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition pressed on toward Tientsin and Peking, hawkish Prime Minister Giichi Tanaka ordered units of the Kwantung Army into Shantung Province in April 1928. The Japanese troops later occupied Tsinan where they clashed with Chiang's forces, resulting in the "May 3 slaughter" in which about 11,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians were killed. Chiang's expeditionary forces made a detour, pushed northward and finally reached Peking on June 8. When the success of the expedition appeared inevitable in mid-May, the Japanese Government issued a stern warning that Japan would take "appropriate and effective" measures to maintain order in Manchuria in the event of the civil war spreading there.

The mounting population pressure and the deepening depression had made the Japanese Army and the mainstream of the nation's political leadership turn their greedy eyes increasingly toward Manchuria which they believed would provide Japan with its vitally needed "lifeline" and Lebensraum. Nowhere was the sentiment stronger than among the officers of the Kwantung Army who took matters into their own hands out of belief in "manifest destiny" and created one fait accompli after another which the government in Tokyo was forced to accept.

It was against such a background that the first train blast occurred in 1928. Early on the morning of June 4, a roaring explosion wrecked a

20-coach train at a point where the Chinese-operated Peking-Mukden Line and the South Manchurian Railway crossed a short distance from Mukden. The blast hit the bull's eye—the VIP coach carrying Marshal Chang Tso-lin, the Manchurian warlord who was retreating from Peking to his homeground sanctuary in the face of the advance of the Northern Expedition. The warlord was seriously injured and died a few hours later. It was a triumph for Colonel Daisaku Komoto, senior staff officer of the Kwantung Army, who masterminded the plot.

The incident shocked the Army General Staff in Tokyo, but on receipt of reports from the Kwantung Army, the War Ministry quickly announced that the blast had been the work of southern guerrillas.

"Immediately after the incident," the announcement said, "our garrison troops spotted three suspicious-looking Chinese attempting to clamber up the embankment of the South Manchurian Railway. Our troops at once approached and questioned them. Whereupon, the Chinese attempted to hurl a bomb at our troops. Our men promptly stabbed and killed two of them. The third man fled." The War Ministry said that the slain Chinese had with them two bombs and three letters, one of which was addressed to a Chinese Revolutionary Forces officer. As it turned out, the poor Chinese had been tramps who had been bribed to go to the scene ostensibly to pick up an instruction from Japanese railway guards.

The War Ministry announcement failed to dispel suspicion among the nation's political leaders. As reports contradicting the Army version of the incident trickled in, the opposition Minseito threatened to grill the government of the Seiyukai led by Prime Minister and concurrently Foreign Minister Tanaka.

Prince Kimmochi Saionji, the only surviving "Genro" (Elder Statesman), urged Tanaka to make public what had really transpired, even at the risk of temporarily straining Sino-Japanese relations and antagonizing world public opinion. In the long run, Prince Saionji argued, it would be in Japan's interests. He also pressed Tanaka, himself a retired Army general, to bring to justice those responsible for the incident and restore discipline in the Army. Saionji, the Emperor's most trusted adviser whose recommendation was the sine qua non for the nomination of a prime minister, hoped that Tanaka's Army background would help bring the unruly Kwantung Army into line.

With the coronation of the Emperor in Kyoto drawing near, Prime

Minister Tanaka and other government leaders dragged their feet. After the November 10 coronation, Tanaka had an audience with the Emperor and reported that the train blast had been plotted by Colonel Komoto and that he would deal harshly with those responsible and restore the discipline of the Emperor's Army. Tanaka's report to the Emperor shocked War Minister Yoshinori Shirakawa and other Cabinet ministers who had strongly opposed disclosing the nature of the incident for fear of fanning the growing anti-Japanese movement in China to a fever pitch.

The Diet convened toward the end of the year in a charged atmosphere with the opposition Minseito squaring off for a fight to drive the Seiyukai government into a corner on the "certain grave incident in Manchuria." Ryutaro Nagai, a gifted orator and father of the present Education Minister Michio Nagai, spearheaded the Minseito onslaught in the Diet.

As the debates went on, however, the Minseito's attack fizzled out. The opposition members merely scratched the surface. The government party and rightist elements resorted to the carrot and stick policy to spread dissension in the opposition ranks. When an independent member, previously given to eccentricities, came closest to the point, publication of his interpellations in the newspapers was banned. At the end of the unproductive debates, the Minseito's resolution calling for the disclosure of the results of an official probe into the incident was killed by a vote of 220 to 198.

At the end of the Diet session, War Minister Shirakawa submitted to Prime Minister Tanaka the Army's official report saying that there was no evidence of any Japanese having been involved in the incident. The Army closed books on the incident by removing from the active list Lt. Gen. Chotaro Muraoka, commander of the Kwantung Army, and Col. Komoto. They were reprimanded for failing to put up railway guards at the site of the blast on that fateful night!

With the Army's official report in hand, Prime Minister Tanaka went back to the Emperor on June 26. When he finished reading the report, the Emperor said, "What I have heard just now seems to be at variance with what you told me last time." Tanaka was electrified. Color drained from his face. After long seconds, Tanaka recovered from the shock and managed to say, "Your Majesty will understand if I explain." "No need to explain," the Emperor cut him short. He

commanded Tanaka to go, leaving his report behind. With beads of perspiration on his forehead, the prime minister took his leave.

The following day the prime minister gave his Cabinet ministers a painful account of what happened at the Imperial Palace and asked them to tender their resignations. There was not a single dissenting voice. On July 1, the Tanaka Cabinet resigned in Imperial disgrace. The Emperor commanded Osachi Hamaguchi, president of the opposition Minseito, to form a new Cabinet on Prince Saionji's recommendation.

Except for that later crucial decision to accept the Potsdam Declaration and Japan's unconditional surrender in August 1945, this was the first and only other time that the Emperor openly intervened in politics.

The birth of the Hamaguchi Cabinet did not bring an end to the Manchurian problem, nor to the strained relations with China. The Kwantung Army's plot to replace Marshal Chang Tso-lin by his son Chang Hsueh-liang backfired. The "Young Marshal," who Col. Komoto and other Kwantung Army staff officers hoped would be more compliant to their demands, disappointed them by joining the Kuomintang and casting his lot with Chiang Kai-shek. Much to the chagrin of the Kwantung Army, the Young Marshal defiantly hoisted the Kuomintang flag at his Mukden headquarters. And in China proper, the anti-Japanese flame, whipped to a new intensity following the "May 3 Massacre," burned furiously.

Restless officers of the Kwantung Army were determined, more firmly than ever, to take bold action and detach Manchuria from China and to settle the Manchurian problem once and for all. Playing key roles in the grand design which changed Japan's future course was a trio of Kwantung Army officers—Col. Seishiro Itagaki, Lt. Col. Kanji Ishihara and Maj. Kenji Doihara.

Itagaki, commander of the 33rd Infantry Regiment at Mukden, replaced Col. Komoto as senior staff officer. Two months after Chang Tso-lin's violent death, Ishihara, one of the Army's foremost strategists and war historians, came to Manchuria as a staff officer. Doihara, one of the Army's top China experts known as the "Lawrence of Manchuria," was at Mukden as head of the Army's Special Intelligence Bureau. Both Itagaki and Doihara were sentenced to death at the postwar International Military Tribunal for the Far East.

Ishihara, who had been put on the reserve list by Hideki Tojo whom he despised as "mediocre," was a shadow of his former self when summoned to testify for the IMTFE in Sakata City, Yamagata Prefecture, in May 1947. An invalid with cancer of the bladder, Ishihara, however, managed to tell his embarrassed questioners that he, as architect of Manchoukuo, was unhappy that he had not been summoned as a war criminal and that Japan would not have lost the war had it been directed by an able strategist—a thinly-veiled mockery of General Tojo. The brilliant but arrogant war plotter who had made exhaustive studies of Frederick the Great and Napoleon, and who had called for the acquisition of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia for an eventual war of attrition with the United States, died a few hours after his testimony before IMTFE judges in Sakata.

Road To Isolation And War

We now come to the Manchurian Incident that marked a turning point in Japan's destiny. The incident, a repeat performance of the train blast which killed Marshal Chang Tso-lin in 1928, gave the military an undisputed voice in domestic and foreign policies, and paved the way for the downfall of parliamentary politics in the nation. And for the first time since the Meiji Restoration, Japan abandoned the cardinal principle of its foreign policy—promoting its national interests within the broad framework of cooperation with Britain and the United States.

When Japan detached Manchuria from China and set up the puppet state of Manchoukuo, it found itself isolated from the rest of the world. The Japanese delegation angrily walked out of the League of Nations Assembly in early 1933 when it unanimously called on Japan to respect China's territorial and political integrity. In late 1934 Japan abrogated the Washington Conference treaties of 1921 which, among other requirements, bound signatories to respect China's independence and territorial integrity. Instead Japan leaned increasingly toward Germany where Hitler seized power in 1933 and Mussolini's Italy to form the Axis for an ultimate confrontation with

the Anti-Axis powers in World War II.

In Manchuria, "Young Marshal" Chang Hsueh-liang had become increasingly anti-Japanese after his father was murdered in the train blast on June 4, 1928. Not only did he go along with the Kuomintang. He attempted to build railways parallel to and close to the South Manchurian Railway in disregard of an earlier treaty, rubbing the Kwantung Army and South Manchurian Railway officials the wrong way.

Late on the night of September 18, 1931, an explosion damaged the South Manchurian Railway at Liutiaoko north of Mukden. Nearby was the camp for the Young Marshal's crack forces. The Japanese garrison swiftly went into action. Two powerful artillery pieces which had been secretly mounted in the garrison earlier in the month bombarded the Chinese camp and a detachment of the garrison routed Chang's troops out of Mukden. When the citizens of Mukden woke up, their city was under Japanese occupation. Two days later Maj. Kenji Doihara, chief of the Army's Special Intelligence Bureau in Mukden, was appointed mayor of the occupied city.

With the outbreak of fighting, General Shigeru Honjo, commander of the Kwantung Army, immediately ordered all his troops into action "in self-defense." Three days after the incident, General Senjuro Hayashi, commander of the Korean Army, sent troops pouring across the Yalu River into Manchuria without the Emperor's authorization. With reinforcements from Korea, the Kwantung Army pressed forward in all directions.

Who set the bomb? And why? The Kwantung Army put the blame on the Chinese, but the announcement was received with scepticism in many quarters. The Japanese consul general at Mukden reported to Foreign Minister Kijuro Shidehara that the blast had been plotted by the Kwantung Army. It became known after World War II that 2nd Lt. Suemori Kawamoto of the Mukden garrison ordered a South Manchurian Railway worker to damage the track at sword point. Unlike the train blast which killed Marshal Chang Tso-lin, the second explosion was so insignificant that a southbound train passed the spot safely shortly after the bomb went off. What the Kwantung Army wanted was an excuse for opening fire to put into effect what staff officers Col. Seishiro Itagaki and Lt. Col. Kanji Ishihara had

designed—to separate Manchuria from China and to solve the Manchurian problem once and for all.

The Cabinet of Prime Minister Reijiro Wakatsuki decided to localize the fighting. Following an extraordinary Cabinet meeting on September 24, the government announced that the Kwantung Army was forced to attack Chinese in self-defense. But it said the Kwantung Army commander was under orders to make all possible efforts “to prevent the aggravation of the situation” and that Japan harbored no territorial designs in Manchuria.

But once again the Kwantung Army took matters into its own hands, leaving the government bewildered but helpless to check it. With the fighting gaining momentum in favor of the Kwantung Army, the government felt obliged to approve the military spending and accept the *fait accompli*.

With virtually all Manchuria under Japanese control in a little over a month since the incident, Col. Itagaki turned up in Tientsin to execute the second stage of his grand design. He came to the North China city to spirit away Pu-yi, the overthrown last emperor of the Ching Dynasty who had been living in seclusion in the Japanese concession in Tientsin. One night in early November, Japanese garrison troops engaged Chinese forces in a gun battle to plunge the city into confusion. Col. Itagaki's agents went into action, putting Pu-yi in a car which sped through the city and successfully arranging for his escape from Tientsin on November 10.

On March 1, 1932, Manchoukuo was proclaimed as a republic with Pu-yi as Regent. Massive celebrations were held in Hsinking (“New Capital”), former Changchun. The 27-year-old Regent had been “deeply touched” when a large crowd of Japanese and Manchus greeted him at Changchun Station the previous day. In his “The First Half of My Life,” published in March 1964, Pu-yi describes his mixed feelings—lingering suspicion that the Kwantung Army was making a puppet of him and hopeful expectation that he would restore the glory of his Manchu ancestors. As might be expected, he soon found himself a puppet.

It was not until September 15, however, that the Japanese Government recognized the new state. The government statement began by referring to Manchuria as “a land for the preservation of

whose integrity Japan on one memorable occasion set her national destiny at stake” and a land which “has now come to have an inescapable bearing upon our national defense and the very existence of our people.”

On the same day, General Akira Muto, commander of the Kwantung Army, first ambassador to Manchoukuo and governor of Kwantung Province rolled into one, signed a protocol with Manchoukuo. The protocol stated that Manchoukuo was “an independent state organized in accordance with the free will of its inhabitants.” It also provided that Japanese forces necessary for the “maintenance of national security” of both Japan and Manchoukuo were to be stationed in the new republic. The Cabinet ministers were all Chinese, but the real decision-making power was vested in the vice ministers who were all Japanese.

Regent Pu-yi was proclaimed Emperor of Manchoukuo on March 1, 1934, with the transformation of the republic into a monarchy.

“I had no freedom whatsoever,” Pu-yi was to testify at the post-war International Military Tribunal for the Far East in August 1946. With the collapse of his short-lived empire in August 1945, Pu-yi was taken prisoner by the Russians and was in a concentration camp in Khabarovsk when he was summoned to the IMTFE as a witness. Throughout his testimony and cross-examinations that lasted eight days, the former Manchoukuo emperor gave full vent to his bitter feelings during his days on the Manchu throne. He also made the bombshell statement that his consort had been “poisoned to death” by a Japanese officer who had been sent to his palace to keep watch on him. On his state visit to Japan as Manchoukuo Emperor in May 1940, he met with His Majesty the Emperor and was given the sacred sword and mirror, which he duly took home. “It was the most shameful event in my life,” Pu-yi told the military tribunal, frequently casting spiteful glances at Itagaki who was in the dock. Compared with his testimony at the tribunal, his “The First Half of My Life” was less acrimonious and displayed a more tranquil mind.

As expected, the military action of the Kwantung Army and the establishment of Manchoukuo had widespread repercussions on the international scene. In China, violent anti-Japanese demonstrations and boycotts of Japanese goods erupted in all major cities. Angry

students stormed into the Foreign Ministry in Nanking, eventually forcing Chiang Kai-shek to step down because of his soft stand on Japan's action in Manchuria.

The tension came to the boil in Shanghai where there was a large Japanese community of about 30,000 protected by a small force of marines. Leaders of the Japanese community demanded that the army act as resolutely against the "insulting" Chinese there as it had done in Manchuria. On January 28, 1932, the much-feared armed clash occurred. One school of historians charges that the clash was provoked by agents of the Kwantung Army to shift attention to the Chinese mainland away from Manchuria.

With the Japanese garrison of bluejackets greatly outnumbered, Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu cabled requests to the government in Tokyo for the dispatch of land forces to protect the lives of Japanese residents. The government agreed to rush three army divisions under the command of former War Minister Yoshinori Shirakawa and a navy fleet commanded by Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura (ambassador to Washington at the time of Pearl Harbor).

The Japanese forces drove the Chinese troops out of Shanghai after days of bitter fighting. Under Shigemitsu's passionate pleas, General Shirakawa agreed to a cease-fire on March 3, just a few hours before the League of Nations Council was to meet to debate the Manchurian problem and the armed clash in Shanghai.

On April 29, the Emperor's birthday, the Japanese forces staged a massive parade in a Shanghai park. It was followed by a gathering of the Japanese community. Shigemitsu, Shirakawa and Admiral Nomura were on a platform singing the "Kimigayo" national anthem in a drizzling rain when a bomb hurled by a Korean exploded. Fragments of the bomb knocked down Shigemitsu and Shirakawa. Enduring gnawing pain, Shigemitsu signed the cease-fire agreement in his hospital bed on May 5, just before his right leg was amputated.

General Shirakawa died on May 26. Shigemitsu survived and was later to serve as wartime Foreign Minister and to hobble along on crutches aboard the USS Missouri in the Bay of Tokyo to sign the surrender documents on September 2, 1945. It was again on Emperor's Birthday, in 1946, that Shigemitsu was arrested by American MPs and taken from his Kamakura home to Sugamo Prison to be put on trial at the military tribunal. He was sentenced to seven years' im-

prisonment—the lightest punishment handed down on the 26 "class A" war criminals.

The Manchurian Incident also put to a test the collective security system of the League of Nations. The system failed. In response to China's appeal three days after the incident, the League decided to send a commission of inquiry, headed by Britain's Lord Lytton, on a fact-finding mission to Japan and China. The commission arrived in Tokyo on February 29 (1932 being a leap year) and met with Foreign Minister Kenkichi Yoshizawa and War Minister Sadao Araki. It then went to China, then on to Manchuria where it met with Regent Pu-yi and Kwantung Army Commander General Shigeru Honjo, then back to Peking, then to Tokyo. Its report was drafted in Peking.

The commission's lengthy report was conveyed to Japan and the League on October 1, 1932, but Japan, openly hostile to the commission's fact-finding activities, had recognized Manchoukuo half a month earlier. The commission used care not to provoke Japan and admitted that Japan had special rights and interests in Manchuria. But it said that the Japanese military action could not be recognized as a self-defense measure and that it should respect China's territorial and political integrity. The commission's report was eventually laid before the League Assembly over Japan's objection. It was primarily the small and medium powers that were most vocal in condemning Japan. Britain, France and the United States (non-member), still possessing vital interests in China and looking hopefully to Manchoukuo's "Open Door" policy, were less than enthusiastic about taking strong action against Japan.

After weeks of debate, the Assembly came up with a report largely along the line of the Lytton Commission's report. On February 24, 1933, the Assembly approved the report by a vote of 42 against one (Japan) with one abstention (Siam). The Japanese delegation led by Yosuke Matsuoka just walked out. On March 27 Japan formally notified the League of Nations of its intention to withdraw from the world organization.

Before 1933 was out, Hitler pulled Germany out of the League of Nations to carry "Mein Kampf" a step further. War clouds loomed over the world horizon.

Rise Of Fanaticism

Before concluding "The Rising Sun," a voluminous narrative history on the rise and fall of "the Great Imperial State of Japan," John Toland describes a symbolic scene which left many foreign lookers-on agape one day in the immediate aftermath of the Pacific War.

"Several months after the war an aged woodman, his face deeply creased by the years, stopped in front of the Dai Ichi Building, MacArthur's new headquarters," Toland writes. The office of the then supreme military ruler of Japan was in Hibiya, Tokyo, just outside the Imperial Moat. Having soap in extremely short supply, the faces of many a Japanese in those days were still creased from the toil of the war as represented by the woodman who walked to the front of the building that housed the most awed commander of the allied forces.

The American author continues: "First he (the woodman) bowed low to MacArthur's standard, then he turned and bowed just as low to the Imperial Palace on the other side of the plaza. American bystanders watched with perplexed amusement as if he were a living paradox of the inscrutable Orient. But the Japanese who saw him understood. It was acknowledging without reservations the temporal power of today's Shogun while revering what was eternal across the avenue."

Few historians will deny the fact that the Emperors in the pre-modern days of Japan were revered, if somewhat vaguely at times, by the literate and illiterate alike across the nation, although the Emperors held virtually no political authority in the face of powerful Daimyo and even mightier Shogun. Ieyasu Tokugawa, founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate, was deified upon his death and enshrined at Nikko. But the respectability of the deified "temporal" ruler could scarcely hamper the foremost godliness of the Emperors who were "Tenshi," the sons of eternal Heaven.

During the political turmoil that put an end to the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1868, the supernatural attributes of the "godly son" were greatly emphasized. And, as the modern Meiji government emerged, the Emperor became the core of national integration and the object of worship. The omnipotence and infallibility of the Supreme Being were

solemnly upheld by the nation's first Constitution promulgated in 1889.

To the emerging politico-military-bureaucratic elite, in the meanwhile, the existence of a person who inherited a supreme prerogative from his heavenly ancestors proved to be extremely convenient. "With their evil identities hidden under the sleeve of the Imperial robe," as they were accused by self-styled monarchist patriots in the 1930s, they fully utilized the Emperor in furthering their idea. It worked so well that the means and the ends were eventually reversed. The Emperor cult was encouraged to such an esoteric extent that the sovereign's sleeve came to cover immense space in whose shadow many power-hungry parties could cosily hide themselves.

One of the comical symptoms of the sickly tendency may perhaps be best represented by the so-called "Go-Stop Incident" in June 1933. A reservist soldier in civilian clothing was caught strolling across a street at Tenroku, northern Osaka, in defiance of the "Go-Stop," as the traffic signals were then called. He was taken to a nearby police station for questioning. The incident was ostensibly no more than a petty violation of traffic rules until the Osaka regiment of the Imperial Army stepped in, protesting that the particular soldier belonged to the Army, and hence was His Majesty's soldier. No police, the Army commander contended, had right to check the advance made by a soldier of the Supreme Being.

The Osaka Police Commissioner promptly countered, "If the Army is His Majesty's, then who do you think we are?" he disputed. "Are we not His Majesty's police, too?" The issue quickly escalated into a feud between the Ministers of War and Home Affairs, engulfing the whole political arena of Japan in that year.

A more sinister outburst rocked the House of Peers (today's House of Councillors) in February, 1935. It was started by a patriotic baron who fired a fierce verbal barrage against Tatsukichi Minobe, member of the House (independent) and professor emeritus of Tokyo University. Chosen as the target was Minobe's book, "Kempo Seigi" (Full Interpretation of the Constitution) in which the jurist savant expounded his view on the constitutional status of the Emperor, the most sensitive subject a Japanese could dare discuss in those days. His theory was termed "Tenno Kikan-setsu," the Emperor as an Institution, as against the then commonly accepted "Tenno Chushin-

setsu," the Emperor as the Center, theory.

The rightist camp, indoctrinated by the highly inspirational theory of a Divine Emperor, was eagerly looking for a scapegoat in its promotion of political witch-hunting and Minobe unfortunately happened to be a handy prey. The patriotic baron and his supporters maintained that it was an unpardonable sacrilege to the Supreme Being to liken him to the board chairman of a commercial firm. The Emperor, they insisted, was not an "Institution" but the father of a big family—Japan. Master and subject in the family state should not be linked by such "Occidental" ideas as rights and obligations.

One of the advocates of the uniqueness of Japan stated, "Dr. Minobe's view may appeal to those who are educated and imbued with individualistic liberalism, but politics based on such a conception of the state is dangerous from the standpoint of guiding the people." Not only Minobe himself but his academic sympathizers should be censured, it was emphasized by those antagonistic to his theory.

So, the political debate in the Diet promised the unfolding of a scene somewhat like the Inquisition. The sorcerer, as so often the case with the Inquisition, was in fact no less faithful to orthodoxy than his prosecutors. Nor was his theory of Emperor-Institution any form of witchcraft that endangered the national structure.

On February 25, 1935, Minobe took the platform at the House of Peers to deliver his speech in self-vindication. Among those who filled the visitors' gallery was Ryokichi Minobe, the savant's son and latter-day Governor of Tokyo.

"No sane man in Japan questions the Sovereign's supreme authority, as it is clearly defined in the Constitution of the Great Empire of Japan. In point of truth, no one has emphasized it more strongly than I do in my book," Minobe opened his two-hour long speech by carefully choosing his words, explaining where he, as a docile subject of the Emperor, stood.

He went on paraphrasing his jurisprudential theory. Japanese history has never shown an instance representing the idea of an Emperor ruling for the benefit of the Imperial Family. Differing from the tradition in the West where ruling monarchs usually considered their states to be part of the royal property, Japan's Imperial rule was not solely for the sake of the personal interest of the Ruler but also for

the sake of the entire state. Therefore, Minobe asserted, "It is clear as a jurisprudential idea that sovereignty cannot be conceived as the personal right of the Emperor." But, then, what would be regarded as coming within His power from the legal point of view?

The law professor answered his own question: "We therefore conceive the nation as an organization subject to the right of governing. The Emperor as the Highest Institution controls all the rights of the nation. The functions of the nation—the administration, legislation, and judiciary emanate from the Emperor. This is the reason why the so-called theory of the 'Emperor as an Institution' has been included."

The Institution theory, he observed, "conceives the nation as a durable organization with life and purpose, or expressed in legal terminology, as a juridical person. The Emperor is in the position of the chief executive of this juridical person, superintends all rights of the nation, and that which the Emperor does in accordance with the Constitution has the force of national action."

Legal terms were carefully arranged but the whole idea was quite simple. Minobe drew a sharp line between the person of the Emperor and his functions that emanated from the Sovereign Institution. Powers of administration, legislation and judicature were in the hands of the Emperor's subjects. The Emperor's function was neither almighty nor unlimited, but should be exercised within the sphere defined by the Constitution.

Minobe's theory was in no respect a revolutionary interpretation of the monarchical rule. There were no dangers that would constitute "high treason." But as usual when the Japanese go into dispute, one party had from the outset been determined to condemn the other party as the "public enemy" and the laborious vindication, however methodically done by the "enemy," did not help. The exoteric explanation by the veteran jurist was unpardonably un-Japanese, all the more so for its rational approach (that is, disregarding that certain illogicality, uniquely intrinsic with the Japanese way of thinking).

Japan's democracy was then still in its infancy. A dispassionate exchange of views was impossible where naive dichotomy prevailed both within and without the Diet. Being yet unaccustomed to pay due respect to those who held different opinions, many politicians and opinion makers knew no other way than to categorize their colleagues

either as an ally or an enemy. In addition to that, many of the Japanese public were psychologically tuned to the idea of "family Japan." It might be viewed as a part of the insular mentality, the wish to have their nation uniquely different from the rest of the world. The mentality again might have been greatly enhanced by the conformist tendency among the Japanese people as well as the Shinto belief in esoteric national unity with the Emperor at its center.

In spite of his painstaking effort at vindication, Minobe was singled out by rightists as an evil harbinger of un-Japanese schools of thought. Pressures were put both on the government and the House of Peers by various rightist organizations, especially the National Association of Veterans. The military, its expansionist ambition partly fulfilled in Manchuria and eyeing more, was in urgent need of iron discipline to bind its ranks with the Generalissimo Emperor at its apex of solidarity. Succumbing to the pressures, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution within a month of Minobe's speech calling for the government to "take immediate and decisive measures against those schools of thought that uphold antagonistic theory to the divine structure, matched by no other nations, of our country."

Patriotic fanaticism was now firmly in the mainstream of the nation's political world. Minobe was asked to present himself before the district prosecutor for having allegedly committed lese majeste and caused "psychological disorder" in the public's mind. Finally he had to resign from the Diet but his books were frantically sought by the silent majority of intellectuals until they were sold out the eve of the total ban on their sale.

The emergence of political fanaticism—symbolized without by Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933 and within by the Minobe Incident two years later—coincided by sheer chance with the mysterious rise of yearning for death among the young Japanese of the early 1930's.

February 1932 saw the so-called case of the "Three Human Torpedoes." Three soldiers of an engineering regiment from Kyushu died heroic deaths in Shanghai when they charged into a Chinese position with a large amount of explosives tied to their bodies. The heroism of the forerunners of the Kamikaze squad was played up by the nation's journalism and was immediately picked up by poets and drama, movie

and Bunraku puppet show producers. It was, borrowing from modern Japanese jargon, an instant boom. The nation was enthralled by the manifestation of Yamato Damashii, brave spirit "accessible only to the Japanese." At virtually every primary school throughout the nation, the school principal solemnly delivered his patriotic morning sermon to the junior citizens, urging them to live up to the divine Japanese spirit.

A "Miharayama Suicide Boom" shook Japan in early 1933. A junior college coed was questioned by police one February afternoon as she was trekking down from Mt. Mihara, a volcano on Oshima Island off Izu Peninsula. She confessed that she had escorted her classmate the day before to the edge of the crater until the girl jumped into the smoke-filled abyss. The surviving girl might have been discarded as one of the sentimental sort of emotionally unstable teenagers had she not confessed she had also accompanied another friend of hers on a gloomy pilgrimage to the volcano a month earlier.

Bannered "Girl 'Pilot to Death' Tells About Her Fatal Missions," the news caused a shock wave to spread across the nation. Their photos, their letters and detailed stories told by their teachers and parents were reported, eventually arousing nationwide compassion and sympathy for the susceptible adolescents.

It also proved that the suicide fever was enormously contagious. Eager to tread the romantic path taken by the tragic girls, a surprising number of people went to Mt. Mihara to put an end to their lives. Many went to the island simply intoxicated with sentimentalism. In many cases, no adequate motivation was necessary. One man, for instance, was reported standing on the edge of the crater with many other sightseers when all of a sudden he shouted, "Sayonara, everybody!" and jumped to death.

Made a center of bizarre curiosity, the girl "Pilot to Death" died shortly afterward of a serious nervous breakdown, her death stirring the public sensation to still higher frenzy.

The followers of the death cult mounted in number to 83 by the end of May that year, three months after the initial report of the girl's suicide and more than 500 by the end of 1933

The odious boom was predated by yet another death boom ignited

by the case of "Sakatayama Love Suicide" in May 1932. The double suicide was committed by a student of Keio University and a daughter of a wealthy Shizuoka merchant on a hillside near Oiso, Kanagawa Prefecture. Not quite clear was the reason why they had to die. But girl's tomb was found violated the next morning and her body, in the nude, was located in a nearby hut. Further autopsy by the police proved her virginity and the whole nation went wild.

Countless poems were composed and a movie made in eulogy of the "Love Fulfilled in Heaven." Many young couples visited the death site so that they too could die and have their love consummated in heaven.

The unnatural fervor for death was stirring the people's minds with the most nihilistic kind of frenzy. All the while, patriotic enthusiasm was mounting. Steadily emerging was the clan of youths who wished their patriotism to be fulfilled in heaven. Death on earth meant nothing to them. It may be partly due to the Japanese people's incurable yearning for death at last found its outlet in patriotism in this particular period of Showa.

In any case, the nation was slowly but steadily becoming seasoned to the climate of a coup d'etat that brought Japan to another turning point on the road to a greater tragedy. And the name of the fatal coup was the 2.26 (February 26) Incident.

Coup In Predawn Snow

A blizzard had roared over the capital from the previous night and, although it had stopped snowing by midnight, the streets of Tokyo were draped with fresh powdery snow as February 26, 1936 was about to dawn.

At 4.30 a.m. a Mainichi reporter on night duty was stirred by an urgent telephone call. "The Prime Minister's (official) residence is being raided. OUR ARMY is attacking us!" the voice at the other end of the line shrieked. The next moment the phone went dead.

Another reporter set out from the news room and, with his car incessantly skidding over snow, had gone some distance beyond Hibiya Park when he was stopped by a fully armed soldier.

"I'm from the Mainichi, the newspaper!" he shouted.

"Who cares about the press? Turn back!" the soldier grimly retorted, his gun at the ready. The car's driver hurriedly made a turn. The reporter pondered, "Is this a revolution—what else could it be?"

It was quite an unceremonious start, hardly befitting a momentous movement of history. But the day proved to be one of the most dramatic turns of history during Showa's five decades. For that day, February 26, was to be remembered as the day of the 2.26 Incident (Ni-Ni-Roku Jiken).

Never before in the history of modern Japan had the political nerve center of the nation been seized by insurgent forces for more than three days; nor were so many senior statesmen assassinated en masse. Never before was the army of Japan split into two opposing factions, facing each other with bayoneted rifles. Never during the 50 years to come and pass was an attempt to overthrow the Japanese Government by force so close to success. But that was the case on that fateful Wednesday in 1936. The over 5 million residents of Greater Tokyo were terrified and the entire nation agonized in the throes of the gravest national crisis.

The people, however, were yet to become informed of what had actually happened. Repelled by the insurgent troops armed with field cannons and machine guns, newspaper reporters were completely barred from the "occupied" area that extended from Nagata-cho—the site of the Prime Minister's official residence, the Diet, the Metropolitan Police Department and other government offices—to Akasaka where several key army regimental headquarters were then located.

Some knowledge as to what had motivated the insurgents was available, for the Mainichi office was visited by none else than a unit of armed personnel barely three hours after the first reporter was turned back short of the Prime Minister's residence.

The soldiers came in two army trucks and a passenger car. Alighting from the latter, an officer in uniform produced a printed manifesto which he thrust into the hand of a dumbfounded Mainichi representative, adding, "In all sincerity, I express the wish that you journalists will be cooperative with the righteous cause that compelled us to rise."

The recipient of the manifesto saw the officer holding a pistol in one hand and a Japanese sword in another. Some reporters looking out from office windows above observed that other officers on the trucks had Judo belts tied over their uniform in order to hold their swords in traditional Samurai style. They also saw soldiers pointing their guns at the newspaper building.

Had the journalists been endowed with the prophetic vision to see what would happen 34 years later, the manifesto they received from the politely threatening officer would have been found phrased in traditional expressions similar to those to be written by a certain Yukio Mishima, postwar novelist who poured his zealous sympathy toward the officers of the incident in 1936 and who put an end to his life in the same manner as their leader did.

The young officers of the Imperial Army were in their most sincere and fervent pursuit, so the manifesto said, to fulfill the Divine Wish of the Emperor and, in so doing, they were compelled to annihilate those elder statesmen, military leaders, bureaucrats, political party leaders and other cardinal criminals who had been shamelessly hindering the Heavenly prerogative of the Supreme Being from materializing the Divine Showa Restoration.

"Were we to remain inactive at this gravest turn of events, the godly nation of Japan would in its most surety be destroyed by the foreign aggressive powers, namely Russia, China, England and America," the manifesto noted. Although overly using vague literary phrases, the declaration contained the damnation of Tatsukichi Minobe who expounded the "Emperor as an Institution" theory, and the government and military leaders who succumbed to pressures from without at the London Conference in 1935 by agreeing to delimit the Imperial Navy "at lesser strength than that of potential enemies."

Promptly banned by the government from printing the manifesto and with numberless telephone inquiries yielding little, the news room was dominated by hushed suspense. Nobody then was certain whether the armed men who had visited earlier were among the "insurgents" or not. Hence no one could tell in which direction the nation would be heading after this incident whose details they were yet to know. There were no reports about the whereabouts of the key political figures, less about whether they were alive or dead. Tokyo was journalisticly

blacked out under the picturesque cover of snow until finally at 8.15 a.m. the War Ministry issued its first bulletin. It read:

"At about 5 a.m. today, a party of young officers assaulted the following places: 1) the Premier's official residence. As the result of the raid, Premier Admiral Keisuke Okada died instantly; 2) the private residence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. Viscount Makoto Saito died instantly; 3) the private residence of the Chief of Military Education. General Jotaro Watanabe died instantly.

"Also raided were: 4) Itoya Hotel, Yugawara, Former Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal Count Nobuaki Makino is missing; 5) the private residence of the Finance Minister Korekiyo Takahashi. Minister Takahashi was seriously wounded; 6) the official residence of the Grand Chamberlain. Admiral Kantaro Suzuki was seriously wounded; 7) the printing works of Asahi Shimbun, Tokyo Headquarters.

"Thereupon all the military forces in the capital were alerted and deployed to counter the emergency."

People were at least assured by the bulletin that those who rose to action represented only "a part" of the Imperial Army. But the damage done was enough to give them a tremendous shock. Furthermore, army troops were deployed, the announcement said. Who, then, was going to win the army versus army showdown? And, what about the chance of the armed clash spilling over from the heart of Tokyo to the rest of Japan?

The fear of a possible civil war mounted as Tokyo was placed under martial law following Imperial sanction, granted at 2.30 a.m. Thursday on the recommendation of the Privy Council, which decided on the emergency measure at a meeting held the night before at the Imperial Palace.

Lieut.-General Kohei Kashii was appointed the commander of the Tokyo martial law zone with his headquarters established at a Kudan building where today, almost four decades later, wedding ceremonies and receptions are held.

The general's statement was presently broadcast over the radio by NHK: "At the present, peace and order are being maintained in the capital; the general public accordingly are requested to pursue their occupations undisturbed." The appeal, however, had little effect on the

public who could hardly remain undisturbed.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Takahashi was announced dead of wounds.

Early Thursday morning, the citizens were awakened by the tinkle of the bells of newsboys carrying extras announcing that martial law had been proclaimed. The printed information was scanty but ominous to the readers.

The entire forces of the Imperial Guards division and 1st Division had been mobilized. From naval vessels anchored in Tokyo Harbor, landing forces had come ashore. Troops stationed in Chiba, Yamanashi, Nagano, Tochigi and Gumma prefectures were moving toward Tokyo.

People venturing into town found that traffic across the Imperial Palace Plaza was banned and that spacious area in the midst of Tokyo was guarded by sandbags and barbed wire entanglements. The business, financial and administrative centers of Tokyo were completely deserted.

Snow began to fall again, blanketing the formless anxiety that gripped the nation's capital.

Martial zone commander Kashii presented himself at the Imperial Palace and, on his return, a most extraordinary order was issued to the forces occupying the capital's most strategic points. His message, remembered long since, read like this:

"Men, the Imperial Command has been issued. His Majesty the Emperor is now commanding you all. You, soldiers, must have acted upon the orders of your superiors, convinced of the absolute justice of their orders. But now that His Majesty the Emperor has commanded you to return to your corps headquarters, further resistance would constitute defiance of the Supreme Command, and you shall have no choice but to become traitors.

"You, who must have believed in the righteousness of your cause, would not act wisely if you persist in repeating mistakes, just because you have agreed to obey your superiors' orders. There should be no necessity of your being perpetually branded as traitors.

"It is not yet too late. Lay down your arms at once and return to your regimental standards. That is the only way for you to be pardoned. That is the prayer not only of your parents and families, but of the entire Japanese nation. Submit and return immediately."

Little by little the goriest stories about the last moments of the assassinated leaders during the predawn hours Wednesday began to be revealed.

—At the home of Viscount Saito, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, the viscountess met the raiders comprising 150 officers and men. In the face of machine gun-wielding soldiers, she declared that Viscount Saito was always willing to die for his country, but that it was not yet time for him to die.

"Kill me," she said. "If you intend to kill my husband, do so over my dead body."

The insurgents brusquely pushed her aside and, stepping into the bedroom, fired machine guns at the viscount. He was found dead with 47 wounds all over his body.

—Admiral Suzuki, the Grand Chamberlain, was aroused by noise. He calmly faced the intruders in his bedroom. Their leader, a master sergeant, spoke: "I want you, Lord Grand Chamberlain, to surrender your life for the sake of the Showa Restoration."

When Admiral Suzuki asked for more detailed reasons and the name of the responsible leader, the master sergeant declined to answer.

"So you cannot say anything? Then shoot!" shouted the admiral. Two bullets were fired. As another assassin ran to the bleeding admiral to deliver the coup de grace with a Japanese sword, Mrs. Suzuki threw herself under the sword. Folding her palms, she pleaded, "Save the finishing stroke. Let him die peacefully, please."

The intruders left, a doctor was immediately sent for, and Suzuki recovered miraculously from his serious wounds. He was to head the Japanese Government as Prime Minister in summer 1945 to negotiate the nation's surrender to the Allied Powers.

—Count Makino at Yugawara Spa escaped the assassination attempt, thanks mainly to the spaciousness of the Ryokan (Japanese inn) he was staying in. Shigeru Yoshida, his son-in-law, was to head the Japanese delegation as Prime Minister in September 1951 to sign the historic peace treaty in San Francisco.

—But what happened at the Prime Minister's official residence was far more fantastic than a plot that storytellers could possibly conceive. Prime Minister Admiral Keisuke Okada, once announced dead by the official bulletin, was in fact smuggled out of the occupied

residence safely by Thursday evening.

The insurgents believed that they had assassinated the Prime Minister but it was actually his brother-in-law, retired Colonel Matsuo, who was mistaken for the Premier and killed. When the Premier's secretaries were allowed to see their master's encoffined body, they discovered the mistake but all maintained discreet silence. For the official residence was tightly guarded, inside and out, by the rebellious troops.

One of the Premier's two maids urgently asked one of the secretaries to visit her room. The secretary immediately sensed what it was, and as he narrated later: "I proceeded directly to the servants' quarters, where I asked where the Prime Minister was hiding. Without saying a word, the maid opened the sliding door of a closet, in which I found the Premier sitting. I felt greatly troubled to see him in such a condition, but I asked the Premier to bear the hardship a little longer."

The next day he negotiated with a coup officer for permission to bring in a limited number of mourners. The permission granted, the secretary entered the guarded residence with a flu-mask, a pair of horn-rimmed glasses and a morning coat indispensable on such an occasion.

Then the disguised Premier and his secretary went to the porch, where a friendly gendarme officer, as ordered by the secretary beforehand, shouted: "You fool! Didn't I tell you seeing the dead man would upset you? Call a car! Quick!"

The car was called to the porch with the permission of the insurgent soldiers standing at the gate on guard duty. They apparently believed that someone had suddenly become sick. The secretary roughly pushed the Premier into the car, and left the residence at full speed.

The rescued Prime Minister's wish to report immediately to the Emperor was discouraged by his friend, due to the tense situation that still prevailed. News of his safety was withheld for two days after he escaped the besieged residence, until Saturday evening when he was received in audience by the Emperor. His secretary said: "Only the persons directly connected with the Prime Minister can understand his feelings and sentiment when he reported to His Majesty."

To the admiral with distinguished military achievements in various campaigns, the failure to control the mutiny as well as his

personal dishonor—according to the Samurai code of conduct—of surviving in his maid's closet must have been a humiliating embarrassment.

Okada presently tendered his resignation and was succeeded by Prime Minister Koki Hirota, who had been Okada's Foreign Minister.

Handbills were dropped from airplanes urging the insurgents to return to their barracks immediately, or else "those who resist will all be shot, as they are rebels." The appeal gradually took effect and by Saturday evening the bulk of rebel soldiers had submitted. Officers of the insurgent troops also surrendered, divested of their respective ranks and placed in guardhouses.

During the three days of extreme tension, not a single shot was exchanged between the mutineers and the troops under the martial law zone commander.

Those who participated in the mutiny numbered more than 1,400 soldiers, it was later found, under the leadership of Captain Teruzo Ando of the 3rd Infantry Regiment. They were from the Imperial Guards Division, the 1st and 3rd Infantry Regiments, and the 7th Heavy Field Artillery. Several civilian "patriot" ideologues including Ikki Kita and Zei (Mitsugi) Nishida joined the mutiny.

From Washington, Secretary of State Cordell Hull sent a cable to Foreign Minister Hirota expressing regret and condolence upon the death of government leaders in Tokyo. Hirota, the recipient of the Hull cable, was later to be hanged following the termination of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in December 1948.

Captain Ando, cardinal rebel, shot himself at the insurgents' headquarters—Sanno Hotel, Akasaka. It may strike some people as somewhat more than coincidental that the mutineers' last stronghold in 1936 is today still occupied by armed forces in Japan—although this time it is American.

Perverted Patriotism

With his knees awkwardly flexed in Japanese style, Charlie Chaplin was sitting in one of the most expensive spectator boxes at the

Kokugikan (National Sports Hall) in Ryogoku, Tokyo, watching Sumo matches when a page approached and whispered something to his young host.

The host, Ken (Takeru) Inukai, politely excused himself, saying that he had a telephone call. A few minutes later, Inukai returned and bowed low to the world-famous comedian and in an ever more polite tone of voice—the Oriental calmness, in fact, was to puzzle the actor for many years thereafter—stated, “I feel very sorry to have to say this. But I must beg your pardon and leave. My father has just been assassinated.”

It was Sunday evening in mid-May, 1932. The renowned comedian was visiting Tokyo for the first time.

The father of his super-polite host was Tsuyoshi (Takeki) Inukai, then Prime Minister of Japan, who had fallen victim to bullets fired by a band of Imperial Navy officers and some Army and civilian “patriotic” supporters. The gory case is remembered as the 5.15 Incident (Go-Ichi-Go Jiken).

The assassins stormed into the official residence of the Prime Minister at 5.40 p.m. on that fatal Sunday in May. The Premier, although warned of imminent danger, showed no sign of alarm. Nor did he make any effort to hide. “Don’t be frightened,” he said. “I’ll see them.”

Moments later, shooting their way through, the intruders broke into his private room.

“What’s all this noise about?” the Premier coolly reprimanded the excited visitors of nine men. “Let’s talk together. Through talking, we can come to understand (each other).”

Hardly a minute passed, with both parties silently gazing at each other, when a terrorist leader shrieked, “Talking is useless. Shoot!”

Several shots rang out. The Prime Minister collapsed to the floor. He died later the same evening.

Other political leaders, including Count Nobuaki Makino, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, escaped assassination, but the capital was terrorized as the assassins hurled hand grenades into the headquarters of Seiyukai, then the leading political party, the Metropolitan Police Department and the Bank of Japan. The culprits soon gave themselves up at the Tokyo Gendarmerie so that, unlike the 2.26 Incident four years later, a state of emergency was never proclaimed in the nation’s

capital.

The surprising fact, however, was that the assassins felt neither personal nor ideological enmity toward Premier Inukai. The whole incident was strictly in line with a series of acts of rightist terrorism that had constantly resisted the efforts to democratize modern Japan politically.

Right-wing fanaticism had enjoyed emotional support from a considerable number of the naive populace in Japan since the early years of the century when ultrapatriotic organizations like Genyosha (established in 1881 by Mitsuru Toyama) and Kokuryukai (Black Dragon Society; established in 1901 by Ryohei Uchida) opposed the signing of the armistice with Russia in 1905. They sponsored a mass rally at Hibiya Park in central Tokyo, in September of that year, denouncing the terms of the treaty with Russia as “disgraceful to the national honor of Japan.” The agitated masses spilled out of the park and eventually burned two police stations, 219 police boxes, 13 churches (considered as “un-Japanese religion”) and 15 streetcars (then a symbol of modernization) in and around the Hibiya area. Ever since, the rightist camp had consistently countered, within, every attempt to westernize the nation’s political system, and demanded, without, to take tough steps vis-a-vis foreign nations.

The rightists were an indefinable mixture of patriots, monarchists, fascists, idealists, romantic revolutionaries, socialists in the crudest sense of the word, Shinto spiritualists and assassin-aspirants. They in a way balanced the nation’s swelling tide of leftist thought but the point of their epee was directed mainly at the heart of the political world. Parliamentary democracy by political parties, the arch-vicious institution imported from decadent Western countries according to the rightist radicals, was something that they detested the most. Politicians, they firmly believed, were corrupted to the core by wicked industrialists and knew nothing other than to enrich their own pockets. So, the more party politics became complicated in accordance with the development of the political party system the higher their dissatisfaction mounted.

They demanded an immediate and drastic change of the entire system. Kakushin (revolutionary renovation) became the most cherished word among the rightists. The word, though used today with ideologically different connotations, appealed powerfully to the public

then, as it continues to do in our times. For there has always been this strong, if rather unrealistic, yearning in the minds of the Japanese people for the state of the nation as pure as snowcapped Mt. Fuji.

The printed manifesto scattered by the participants in the 5.15 Incident perhaps best illustrated the purist fanaticism of the young officers who rose "to clean the evil elements from the Imperial Court." The fiery manifesto appealed to "Fellow Japanese nationals," saying:

"Look straight at the present state of your fatherland, Japan! Look at its politics, diplomacy, economics, education, ideology and the military! Where, we dare ask, can you find the genuine manifestation of the godliness of the Imperial Country of Japan?

"Political parties are blind in their pursuit of power and egoistic gains. Zaibatsu (big business) are firmly in collusion with politicians as they suck the sweat and blood of the common people. Bureaucrats and police are busy defending the corrupt politico-industrial complex. Diplomacy is weak-kneed. Education is rotten to the core. The military clique is worthless and the people's thoughts are going astray.

"While farmers and workers experience indescribable hardships, men of many words are enjoying their blissful heyday. Japan is now in danger of falling into the abyss of the most decadent degeneration. Your fatherland is dying. Now is the time of Kakushin! Remain inactive at this critical moment, and your nation will cease to exist. Japanese nationals, rise in arms at once! There's absolutely no other way. Rise, and take action now!"

The phrases are harsh and the reasoning surprisingly simple and naive. But one can hardly deny that this type of purist approach has flowed as one of the undercurrents of Japanese thoughts to this day. The unique yearning for "renovation once and for all" as well as the passionate call for "action, not words" may have probably been influenced by Kokugaku (national learning) and some schools of Confucian philosophy that helped establish the basic codes of the people's conduct during the three centuries of national isolation that lasted until 1868. And nowhere did this moralistic attitude find more conspicuous expression than in the first decade or so of Showa, the reign of Hirohito.

Politicians were bad because they engaged in Westernized

politics. Industrialists were bad because they financed politicians. Showa Ishin (restoration) should be brought about in order to purify all the evils. Thus, youthful patriot-moralists took up arms and rose one after another. The result was a succession of political assassinations.

In November 1930, Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi was at Tokyo Station ready to board an Okayama-bound train when he was shot by a self-styled patriot who resented the "dishonorable concession" made by the Japanese Government at the London Conference to limit the number of naval vessels. Hamaguchi died of the wound in August of the following year. The assassin, Tomeo (later renamed himself Yoshiaki) Sagoya, was caught, tried and sentenced to death. He confessed that he had been heavily influenced by the nationalistic ideology of the Black Dragon Society. The sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. Sagoya was released from prison in 1947, only to become the idol of the postwar breed of rightists until his death in 1972.

Another wave of terrorism hit the nation in the spring of 1932, a few months before the 5.15 Incident. Ex-Finance Minister Junnosuke Inoue, the likeliest next president of the Minseito Party, was killed by a revolver shot as he was attending an election campaign meeting in Tokyo on February 9. The assassin, aged 23, confessed that he committed the crime because of his "righteous indignation" on behalf of the starving farmers, convinced that they had been placed in their difficulties through the mistakes made by the former Finance Minister's policy.

Barely a month later, Baron Dr. Takuma Dan was shot to death in front of the Mitsui Building in Nihombashi, Tokyo. Dan, chairman of the board of directors of the Mitsui interests, was the de facto Premier of the vast Mitsui kingdom. The murderer, caught on the spot, was a young (20 years old) son of a farmer in Ibaraki Prefecture. He was found to have entered a "blood alliance" with Inoue's slayer.

Coming from northeastern farming districts that were perennially plagued by a series of crop failures and unemployment, many of the indignant patriots, both military and civilian, represented the angry voice of the lower echelon of the nation.

In November 1931, for instance, a village headman in Yamagata Prefecture reported that 110 out of the village's 467 girls between 15 and 24 years of age were "sold" either to spinning firms or brothels. A

great number of children came to school with empty lunchboxes. Put up in front of village offices were signs warning, "Consult the officials before you trade out your daughters!"

The patriots' zeal to chastise the corrupt "cream of the nation," therefore, was to some extent justified by their impoverished background. Their cause was also solidly backed by many Japanese, especially by those who constituted the nation's lowest social echelon.

The major newspapers were on the side of sound reason. The *Mainichi*, for one, editorialized: "It is true that many are dissatisfied with the prevailing conditions in this country today. These conditions might perhaps prove beyond the tolerant patience of some who would prefer to destroy everything and themselves in the destruction... (but it) would be a foolish dream to think of creating a golden age overnight, and that by means of terrorism. One ought to consider the moral effect such violent measures would leave on society." (May 17, 1932)

The press opinion then, however, was representative of the minority. For, as the culprits of the 5.15 Incident faced the military tribunal, 350,000 letters pleading leniency flooded the government mailbox. Undoubtedly in the eyes of many, the atrocious deeds were justified, to a great degree, by righteous motivation.

The youthful heroes of the snowbound tragedy of the 2.26 Incident in 1936 were likewise stimulated by "righteous indignation." What made their mutiny outstanding was that they did not have the slightest intention to further their personal interests. Had they not been motivated by such total selflessness and self-sacrifice, they would never have left the recurring spiritual impact on the minds of the generations of the Japanese to come. Their patriotism was carried on by the Kamikaze suicide squads during the war. Their revolutionary spirit was remembered by the New Left students in the 1960s. And their mutiny was in a way re-enacted in 1970 by novelist Yukio Mishima, author of a trilogy on the Incident who, after storming the Ground Self-Defense Forces' Eastern Headquarters, shouted "Long Live the Emperor" and killed himself.

The rebel leaders of the bloody 2.26 Incident, long apprehensive of the nation's future, were provoked by the "decadent" trend of social conditions and the "flippancy" of the general atmosphere. Furthermore, as they were engaged in the training of soldiers, they

became fully cognizant, through these soldiers, of the depressed conditions in the farming villages. Their sympathy was around for the rank and file of the nation. The statement of reasons later given to the press by the military tribunal secretariat further explained the points initially made by the mutineers' manifesto. It also stated how they came to be devoted to the Showa Ishin (renovation) advocated four years before by the assassins of the 5.15 Incident. It went like this:

"(The mutineers believed that), in coping with the critical problems, the government authorities lacked thoroughness, the domestic administration and diplomatic dealings both suffered from inactivity, the political parties, bent on pursuing partisan profit, were indifferent to the crisis of the state, the financial cliques ignored the sufferings of the nation but were devoted to swelling their own coffers, and in the process of the conclusion of the London naval treaty there was an action that infringed upon the sovereign prerogative.

"They were convinced that in order to confirm the true principle of the Empire, based on one Ruler and subjects, it was urgently necessary to put an end to this so-called privileged class and speedily reform the state."

To the Emperor they were devoted wholeheartedly. It was the evil clouds that dimmed the Imperial eyes that they vowed to clear away. Quite ironically, however, it was none but His Majesty the Emperor who, from the very beginning of the attempted 2.26 coup, insisted that the sternest measures be taken against the "patriots."

On hearing the news of the mutiny for the first time in the early morning of that snowy Wednesday, General Shigeru Honjo, Chief Aide-de-Camp to the Emperor, recalls in his memoirs that Hirohito was enraged. "Butchering Our trusted senior statesmen as the rebel officers did," the Emperor said to him in a rare outburst of anger, "is like attempting to strangulate Us with soft velvet. We command the Imperial Guards Division to suppress them immediately."

The Emperor's words were extremely significant because they automatically helped designate the patriots as mutineers and the enemies of the nation. Had he not uttered such strong words, the Incident might well have developed into a full-scale showdown, plunging the whole nation into a bitter civil war.

There were many generals in the Imperial Army working busily behind the scenes. Some of them—especially General Jinzaburo Mazaki, then Army Councillor and self-styled patriot but burning with selfish ambition—tried to exploit the mutiny and further their own personal aims. Mazaki was aspiring to stage a coup within the Court by securing support from the rebel forces and eventually to make himself the Prime Minister.

The insurgent officers were professed worshippers of the Emperor, the Living God (Arahitogami). But, with the blessing of the Supreme Being refused, there was no recourse but to abandon their scheme to carry out the coup in order to rescue the nation from corruption and to reestablish the godliness of the Rising Sun country.

In comparison with the Emperor, the attitude of the top echelon of the Imperial Army was far from being clear. The Army Councillors met Wednesday evening and, with General Mazaki taking strong initiative at the meeting, they decided to issue a proclamation in the name of the Army Minister. It sounded suspiciously like endorsing the rebels' cause:

1. The purpose of the uprising is becoming known to the Throne.
2. Your action had been recognized as motivated by your sincere wish to manifest the national polity (essence).
3. We stand in awe (before the Emperor) as to the present state of the manifestation of the national polity, including the deplorable conditions that exist.
4. The Army Councillors have unanimously agreed to work in line with the above purposes.
5. Anything else will be subject to the Divine Wishes.

No doubt the insurgent officers felt encouraged upon reading the proclamation filled with ambiguous phrases and double entendre. It was almost a recognition of the rebels as being loyal to the Emperor. The Army Councillors even went further to invite the rebel leaders so that some compromise might be reached. The generals' opportunistic complacency was shattered, however, by the Imperial Command that ordered the establishment of the Tokyo Martial Zone Headquarters and directed its commander to suppress the forces occupying the heart of the capital, calling them "rebels" for the first time.

The 2.26 revolt was eventually suppressed without spilling a drop of blood, aside from those who were either victimized or committed suicide. The military tribunal concluded hastily its work, handing out death sentences to 17 officers within five months of the Incident. A week later those sentenced stood before the firing squad and died, each shouting "Long Live the Emperor!"

About a year later two civilians were executed by the same firing squad. They were Ikki Kita and Mitsugi (Zei) Nishida, ideological mentors of the armed revolt. Author of "On National Polity and Genuine Socialism," Kita in particular had succeeded in acquiring enthusiastic followers among patriotic army officers. Quite contrary to the latter-day "Remodeling of the Japanese Archipelago" penned by Kakuei Tanaka, Kita's next book, "Main Principles of the Draft for a Japan Remodeling Law," expounded the drastic renovation plans backed by strong patriotism.

Kita's suggestions included such drastic measures as suspension by an Extraordinary Imperial Decree of the Constitution for three years, martial law proclaimed across the nation, abolition of the peerage, liquidation of the House of Peers, confiscation of private property exceeding ¥1 million and ban on holding land valued at more than ¥100,000. The entire plan was the fantastic marriage of the Emperor-worshipping cult and communism in its most fundamental outlook. But his straightforward approach, heavily tainted by xenophobia, had never ceased to attract the minds of young Japanese. Every once in a while we still observe fresh outbursts of a "Kita-Ikki boom," which produces countless books on him and his ideology.

As far as the Japanese public was concerned, the best remembered phrases from the 2.26 Incident were uttered by an NHK radio announcer who appealed to the men and non-commissioned officers of the rebel forces, saying, "Return to your barracks now. It is not yet too late. Your parents and brothers are weeping to see you become the nation's traitors."

The impassioned appeal helped bring the bulk of the insurgents back to their units, making it impossible for the leading officers to carry out the coup. The expression "It is not yet too late" was used for many years afterward as a catchword with the twisted connotation, "It is not yet too late for Japan to return to democracy."

But the military, having once tested its strength by rocking the

nation with bloody incidents, continued rocking it. And the country's path led steadily toward an imminent war of expansion. As symbolized by the ringleader who retorted Prime Minister Inukai "Talking is useless" during the 5.15 Incident, democratic debate thereafter was destined to be marred by military intruders who stepped into Japan's fledgling parliamentarism, shouting, "Talking is useless. Shoot!"

About a week after the 2.26 Incident came to an end, a Mainichi correspondent cabled from Washington. His dispatch read: "Americans sympathetic toward Japan find it impossible to explain or excuse the recent Tokyo atrocities, which they had thought possible only in semi-civilized countries. Americans are now convinced that whoever organizes the next Cabinet, Japan's forward continental policy will become more pronounced to satisfy the nationalistic clamors."

CHAPTER II

Rise And Fall Of The Imperial State

Quagmire In China

The Americans had a traumatic experience in Vietnam—a long involvement from which they managed to extricate themselves only at a heavy cost of lives and prestige. For a good many Japanese the American involvement in Vietnam was another case of history repeating itself. In the 1930s the Japanese went to war against the Chinese whom they looked down upon then as "Chankoro," a derogatory term which pictured them as hopelessly disorganized and week-kneed people. The term, which came into wide use following Japan's victory over China in the war of 1894-95, had fed their sense of superiority over the people who had through the centuries been the supplier of superior culture and knowledge.

What made Japan's involvement in China different from the American experience in Vietnam is that Japan became bogged down deeper and deeper into a quagmire from which it could never get out.

The Sino-Japanese Incident, the eight-year-old "undeclared war"

which constantly held nearly one million Japanese soldiers tied up on the continent without any prospect of final victory, is a classic example of the failure of Japanese decision-makers to define their objectives and bring the protracted fighting to a settlement before it was too late.

The lack of coordination between policy-makers and the Army and the kaleidoscopic change of men at the top—ten Cabinets came and went in the fateful eight years from 1937 to 1945—resulted in dragging Japan increasingly into the quagmire in China.

The war which killed nine million Chinese troops and civilians and about 450,000 Japanese in uniform was a long series of inconclusive victories for the Japanese Army and Navy. What these victories on battlefields boiled down to was holding “dots” and “lines”—key cities and railway lines.

From time to time, the Japanese troops sallied out of their “dots” and “lines” to rout enemy concentrations but, with their supply lines dangerously overextended, they would return to their “dots” and “lines.” It was like playing hide and seek, only adding to the casualties on both sides and to the misery of the Chinese populace.

Chiang Kai-shek, commander of China's War of Resistance, played the cards better. He traded space for time to plunge the invaders deeper into the morass and posed as a fighter of democracy's war in a bid to have other nations come to China's aid.

But when the war ended in the summer of 1945, it was Mao Tse-tung's Communist forces who emerged as winners of the ultimate victory.

The immediate origin of the Sino-Japanese war was a minor exchange of gunfire in Peking's southern suburb on the night of July 7, 1937. The widely accepted Japanese version of the incident is that a member of the Japanese garrison, which had been on a routine night exercise, accidentally fired blank shots from a submachine gun on the northern side of Lukouchiao, a beautiful stone bridge better known as Marco Polo Bridge in memory of the Venetian traveler who became the first Westerner to cross it in the 13th Century.

The blank shots were answered by several live shots from upstream of the river and then from the direction of the Marco Polo Bridge. (Japan, Britain, the United States, France and Italy maintained troops in North China as part of the settlement of the Boxer

Rebellion of 1900).

Unlike the Kwantung Army-engineered train blasts which killed Marshal Chang Tso-lin in 1928 and sparked the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the Marco Polo Bridge incident is still much of a mystery. But it occurred at a time when anti-Japanese sentiment was running high in China.

Chiang Kai-shek had been waging a series of inconclusive expeditions against the Chinese Communists, who had called for a united national front against Japan. On December 12, 1936, when Chiang was in Sian to pep up his troops fighting the Communists, he was seized by the “Young Marshal,” Chang Hsueh-liang.

Chiang eventually reached a compromise with his captor and when released he revised his dual policy of suppressing the Communists and resisting Japan in favor of all-out resistance against Japan.

The immediate reaction of the Japanese Government and the Army General Staff was to localize the fighting in North China. On July 11, however, the Cabinet of Prince Fumimaro Konoe authorized the dispatch of units of the Kwantung Army and Korean Army and three home divisions to North China on reports that a large Chinese force was moving up. The decision promptly stiffened the Chinese attitude and Chiang Kai-shek ordered a general mobilization of troops under his command.

The “North China Incident,” as Japan referred to the hostilities, took a dramatic turn in Shanghai where the Chinese massed crack forces. On August 9, an officer and a sailor of the Japanese marine garrison, both wearing uniforms and unarmed, were killed by Chinese agents. Tension built up by the hour and the Japanese Government ordered all Japanese residents in Shanghai and along the Yangtze Valley to evacuate and return home.

On July 29 more than 200 Japanese had been massacred in Tungchow, site of the pro-Japanese Hopei-Chahar government, when the local constabulary staged an uprising.

On the night of August 13, the Japanese garrison in Shanghai and Chinese troops exchanged fire. The following day Chinese airplanes bombarded the warships of a Japanese naval fleet off Shanghai. The next day Japanese Navy bombers braved a typhoon and carried out

transoceanic raids on Shanghai and Nanking. It was now a full-scale war.

The fighting for control of Shanghai and its vicinity raged for nearly three months with Chinese forces putting up desperate resistance. The Chinese Army deployed a large supervisory unit to keep its men fighting to the bitter end. Many were shot down with bullets fired by the supervisory unit.

The defense of Shanghai made the world China-conscious. A United Press photo of a crying baby sitting on tracks in the middle of a blasted, deserted street made the war close to Americans, who had been abundantly supplied with heroic accounts of Chiang Kai-shek and his forces fighting democracy's war.

In North China, Japanese troops met with stiff resistance from the Communist Eighth Route Army commanded by General Chu Teh. A division led by Lin Piao (later to become Mao Tse-tung's handpicked successor and then still later charged with an anti-Mao plot) attacked the Japanese at a pass in the Great Wall in north Shansi and wiped out a Japanese brigade.

The Communist troops were poorly equipped but displayed an extraordinary will to fight. In her "China Fights Back," Agnes Smedley, an American freelance journalist and biographer of Chu Teh, described the Red Army as perhaps the world's fastest-moving army, with its soldiers, drawn from workers and peasants, trained to endure the greatest hardships in life and their rockbound sense of unity and discipline making them invincible.

(In 1943, Sanzo Nosaka, chairman of the Japan Communist Party as of this writing, was organizing an antiwar and anti-Japanese movement in Yen-an. Later he was to publish "An Appeal to Japanese" which the Eighth Route Army was to use extensively to indoctrinate Japanese prisoners of war.)

After the fall of Shanghai, Foreign Minister Koki Hirota (the only non-military man sentenced to death at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East) made the first overture for a settlement of the expanding war through the German ambassadors to Tokyo and Nanking.

Hirota called for the creation of an autonomous government in Inner Mongolia, establishment of a demilitarized zone between the Manchurian border and the Tientsin-Peking line, an end to anti-

Japanese policies, and a joint Sino-Japanese front against communism. Chiang Kai-shek rejected the overture, demanding that negotiations be preceded by the restoration of the status quo ante bellum.

The capitulation of Shanghai opened the way for the Japanese Army to push on to Nanking. Japan hoped that an attack on the enemy capital, Nanking, would bring Chiang to his knees and make him sue for peace on Japan's terms.

On December 1, 1937, the Imperial General Headquarters ordered an attack on Nanking. Six Army divisions, commanded by General Iwane Matsui, raced to be the first to storm into the walled capital. Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek had withdrawn further up the Yangtze River to Hankow to continue his resistance.

Nanking's fall on December 12 triggered waves of celebrations throughout Japan. In Tokyo, about 400,000 jubilant citizens staged a massive lantern parade. Japanese newspapers splashed banner headlines and photos of victorious Japanese Army columns marching into the Chinese capital. The Shanghai Chinese paper *Ta Kung Pao* ceased publication on December 14 with a prophetic remark at the end of its editorial: "For all the defeats the Chinese have suffered so far, they ought never to surrender to the invaders!"

The formal marching-in ceremony of triumphant Japanese forces on December 17 followed a three-day mopping-up operation which shocked the world except Japanese. China claims that more than 100,000 soldiers and civilians were killed in the "Nanking massacre" as Japanese troops went on a rampage of raping, plundering and looting. It was only after the end of the war that the Japanese learned of the ugly and sickening side of the biggest single victory in the China war through photos showing piles of skeletons of Chinese, women being raped and murdered, and suspected guerrillas being beheaded or buried alive.

As Chinese troops fled Nanking up the Yangtze River, Japanese planes "accidentally" bombed the U.S. gunboat *Panay*, killing three men and injuring about 20 others. Four British men-of-war, the *Ladybird*, *Bee*, *Cricket* and *Scarab*, were also subjected "by mistake" to gunfire and aerial bombing by Japanese forces.

"My first thought was that this might result in a breach of

diplomatic relations...As the details come out at home and the country begins to realize the incredible brutality of the attack I still believe that this may happen," the then U.S. Ambassador to Japan Joseph C. Grew wrote in his "Ten Years in Japan."

Japan's prompt apology and offer of full indemnity made by Foreign Minister Hirota in his unprecedented call on the U.S. ambassador at his chancery plus expressions of regret from many Japanese averted the ambassador's fear of a diplomatic rupture. But William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, asked all unions affiliated with the AFL to make the federation's boycott of Japanese goods effective immediately.

On October 5, as Japanese troops were closing in on Nanking, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt made the famous "quarantine" speech in Chicago. He deplored the recent outburst of "international lawlessness" and suggested that nations contributing to the epidemic of international anarchy should be quarantined. He did not mention Japan by name, but it was clear that he was alluding to Japan.

The Soviet Union was already pouring in economic and military aid to China after signing a nonaggression pact shortly after the Marco Polo Bridge incident. From 1938 to 1939 alone, Moscow gave China \$250 million in credit and large quantities of weapons and ammunitions. In addition, Russian volunteers went to China's aid "to fulfill their international duty and shed their blood in China," as former Soviet Marshal Rodion Y. Malinovski said in his "Finale."

Ten days after the fall of Nanking, Japan made a new offer to Chiang Kai-shek through the German ambassador in Tokyo. It called for China's formal recognition of Manchoukuo and establishment of a DMZ in central China and included other demands which the German envoy realized were too harsh for China to accept. When China asked for more details, the Tokyo government was disappointed and its new bid for settlement got nowhere.

On January 16, 1938, the government of Prime Minister Konoé made a bombshell announcement which ruled out any political settlement of the war. Denouncing the Chinese Nationalist Government for failure to appreciate the "true intentions" of Japan and for "blindly persisting in opposition against Japan," the government

statement said, Japan "will cease from henceforward to deal with the (Nationalist) Government, and they (the Japanese Government) look forward to the establishment and growth of a new Chinese regime, harmonious coordination with which can really be counted upon." Japan promptly recalled home its ambassador to China. And China followed suit. By breaking with the Chinese government, Japan had no legal Chinese authority to negotiate a settlement with. The only alternative was to set up a central provisional government.

By the end of 1938, Japanese forces had pushed further inland, occupying Soochow, Canton and Wuhan, but Chiang Kai-shek continued his war of resistance by retreating to Chungking. In its continuing but futile search for a political settlement, occasional contacts were made with Kuomintang officials in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

As a result of one of these secret meetings in Shanghai, Japanese negotiators succeeded in wooing Wang Ching-wei, one of Sun Yat-sen's most trusted lieutenants and a key figure of the Kuomintang Central Committee, over to Japan's proposition that he set up a central government in Nanking and cooperate with Japan in building a new order in East Asia.

Wang, who joined Dr. Sun's movement while he was at Hosei University in Tokyo, slipped out of Chungking with his wife on December 18, 1938 and went to Hanoi where he sent a cable to Chiang Kai-shek urging him to end the war. The Chungking government flatly rejected Wang's proposal and branded him traitor. With assassins on his trail in Hanoi, Wang went on to Shanghai and visited Tokyo at the end of May 1939 for talks with Japanese leaders.

On March 30, 1940, the Nationalist Government was inaugurated in Nanking with the blessing of the Japanese Government. The presidency was left vacant for Lin Sen, president of the Kuomintang, with Wang installing himself as vice president. On October 30, Wang assumed the presidency, signed a basic treaty with Japan and recognized Manchoukuo.

The basic treaty provided that Japan would give up its right to maintain troops in North China (won at the end of the Boxer Rebellion) and, upon termination of the state of war, would withdraw all troops from China. It was a radical departure from Japan's previous position. But it came too late.

The birth of the Nanking government gave Japan the best hope yet for getting out of the quagmire in China. But Wang's government failed to inspire cooperation from the Chinese and Chiang Kai-shek remained as firm as ever. The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 and the steady deterioration in Japan-U.S. relations made Japan's position hopeless. Americans were stepping up aid to the beleaguered Chungking government through Burma and Indochina. Pearl Harbor sealed Japan's fate in China.

Wang, however, did not survive to see Japanese forces lay down their arms and his government disintegrate. Since March 1944, Wang had been at the Nagoya University Hospital for removal of a bullet fired into him by a would-be assassin in 1935 for his soft stand on Japan. He died at the hospital on November 10, 1944.

By then, the American forces in the Pacific had penetrated Japan's inner defense perimeter in the Marianas and landed on Leyte Island in the Philippines.

Myth Of Invincible Army

For years officers and men of the Kwantung Army considered themselves as the elite of the Imperial Japanese Army and relished the reputation of being "invincible" much as the admirals of the 16th Century Spanish Armada did. But in the late 1930s they took hard beatings at the hands of the Soviet Army in several border clashes that not only shattered the myth surrounding them but alarmed military planners in Tokyo. In fact, what is known as the Nomonhan Incident in the summer of 1939 was such a debacle for the Kwantung Army that when truce was achieved, its commander and chief of staff were relieved of their posts and put on the sidelines.

In the background of the border incidents was a steady buildup of Soviet defense in Siberia and the Maritime Province in the wake of the establishment of Manchoukuo and Japan's push into China.

The immediate cause of the clashes was the vaguely defined borders between Manchoukuo and the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia, a carry-over from treaties entered into by China and Imperial Russia in the 19th Century. Each interpreted the demarcation

lines in a way favorable to itself. As recently as 1969, the Soviet Union and China traded charges of armed provocations over the Ussuri River island of Damansky (Chenpao) and the Amur River island of Goldinsky (Pacha).

When Japan entered into a mutual defense treaty with the puppet state of Manchoukuo, the Soviet Union responded by signing a similar pact with Outer Mongolia. In another tit for tat, when Manchoukuo embarked on developing border areas and laying railways primarily for military purposes, the Russians countered by double-tracking their Trans-Siberian Railway and pouring in men and money for the development of Siberia. Moscow also built up its Far Eastern defense, with its manpower estimated at three to four times the size of the Kwantung Army at the time of the Marco Polo Bridge incident.

Japan was about to bolster the Kwantung Army when it plunged into war in China and was forced to divert part of the Kwantung Army to the Chinese theater. While keeping uneasy watch over the deployment of Soviet forces in the Far East, Japan became increasingly impatient to find a way out of the war in China. Instead, it slipped deeper and deeper into the Chinese bog.

In late November, 1936, Japan signed an anti-Comintern pact with Germany which Moscow correctly regarded as a thinly veiled military alliance against the Soviet Union. The pact stiffened Moscow's attitude vis-a-vis Japan and it refused to sign the fisheries agreement for the oncoming year.

The first of the border incidents which strained Japanese-Soviet relations came in late June, 1937, just a few weeks before the outbreak of war in China. The setting was Kanchas, one of numerous isles in the Amur River. Japan insisted that the Soviet-Manchoukuo boundary was along the main stream of the river on the north side of the sandbar island while the Russians argued that it was on the south side where the river was wider. On June 19 a small Russian border unit landed on the island to be followed by reinforcements. The Kwantung Army rushed troops to the Amur River.

The incident, however, was settled in early July in diplomatic talks between Ambassador Mamoru Shigemitsu and Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov. The Soviet Union withdrew its troops and

landing craft from the island. Moscow's concession encouraged elements in the Kwantung Army who had been calling for a get-tough stand on China. But on August 21, Moscow signed a non-aggression pact with China and started sending moral and material support to the Nanking government.

The second clash occurred on a strategic hill near the Manchoukuo-Korean-Siberian border in July, 1938, when Japan was mounting the biggest operation in China in its drive to Hankow. On July 13, Russian border troops were sighted taking up a position on Chankufeng Hill. Japan had claimed the summit of the 150-meter-high hill as the demarcation line. Japanese troops in Korea sped to the foot of the hill but did not stage a counterattack.

Two weeks later, Russians occupied another eminence north of Chankufeng Hill. The Japanese garrison drove them back and, ignoring the Imperial General Headquarters' order not to expand the fighting, the local commander mounted a night attack. The Russians retaliated with bombers and tanks, inflicting heavy damage on the Japanese troops.

The bloody encounter in which about 500 Japanese troops were killed and 900 injured came to an abrupt end on July 15 as a result of negotiations between Ambassador Shigemitsu and Foreign Minister Litvinov. With the flexibility that took the Japanese envoy by surprise, the Soviet Union agreed to a mutual troops withdrawal and quick exchange of the war dead.

The last and most damaging clash, which was to go down in history as the most humiliating setback for the Kwantung Army, came in May, 1939, in the rolling expanse of grassland near the village of Nomonhan on the Manchoukuo-Outer Mongolian border. What was originally a skirmish between Manchoukuo and Mongolian border units quickly developed into full-scale fighting between the forces of Japan and the Soviet Union, committed to the defense of Manchoukuo and of Outer Mongolia, respectively.

When a small Mongolian unit crossed the Khalka River and engaged the Manchoukuo border unit, the Kwantung Army rushed a cavalry regiment and drove the Mongolians back across the river. A few days later, Mongolian troops built a bridge over the Khalka River and invaded what Japan claimed was the territory of Manchoukuo.

The Kwantung Army ordered 1,000 infantry men to the scene. A large Mongolian force, supported by Russian tanks and planes, besieged the Japanese regiment and all but annihilated it.

Alarmed by the shocking turn of events, the Kwantung Army worked out a massive counterattack plan by committing 70 tanks, over 100 antitank artillery pieces, 80 planes, 400 vehicles and 15,000 infantry men. War Minister General Seishiro Itagaki, one-time Kwantung Army chief of staff, authorized the offensive set for July 1 in response to the plea of General Kenkichi Ueda, commander of the Kwantung Army.

In the early stage of the conflict, the Kwantung Army had complete mastery of air with its superior pilots and planes. But the Russians soon brought in planes of a newer type and on June 22 attacked Japanese positions with 150 planes, about a third of which were shot down.

With its pilots showing signs of fatigue, the Kwantung Army mobilized 130 planes on June 27 for a large-scale attack on the Soviet airbase well inside Outer Mongolia and destroyed about 100 enemy planes. But the air strike was carried out without the knowledge of the Imperial General Headquarters. The IGHQ promptly reported the air assault to the Emperor, accusing the Kwantung Army of violating his prerogative as commander-in-chief. The Emperor's reprimand injected an element of dissonance in the relations between the Army's central command in Tokyo and the Kwantung Army.

The ground counterattack which followed the unauthorized air strike was launched with air support on July 1 as scheduled. The division-size Kwantung Army poured across the river and deep into the Russian-Mongolian positions. But the latter soon staged a massive counterattack with hundreds of tanks and planes. Japanese troops fought them with anti-tank artillery and suicide squads who charged into Russian tanks with Molotov cocktails in hand. It was a sanguinary battle, a battle of steel versus flesh.

Inner Mongolian troops riding camels and fighting on the Japanese side, and Outer Mongolian cavalry men fighting with the Russians outwardly lent a romantic atmosphere to the fighting. But what was being waged on the exposed terrain was a full-scale modern war involving hundreds of planes and thousands of tanks and artillery pieces.

“The daytime temperature goes as high as 120 to 130 degrees F.,” reported an Army artillery officer fresh from a tour of the battlefield. “Our men were having a hard time getting even a trickle of water. I myself had to spend three days without any supply of water. And when the night comes, the thermometer plummets. Our men sleep on the grass and sand, trembling with cold.”

The battle gave Japanese troops a foretaste of what they were to encounter in the southern and Aleutian islands in World War II.

For nearly a month from mid-July, the fighting was stalemated. The Kwantung Army requested a new air attack on enemy positions in Outer Mongolia but the Imperial General Headquarters said no.

On August 20, the Russian-Mongolian forces mounted an offensive, forcing the 23rd Division to pull back with crippling damage. Two Japanese regiment commanders burned their flags, one disemboweling himself in humiliation and the other charging into enemy fire.

Its pride hurt beyond repair, the Kwantung Army mapped out an offensive operation that would have committed three divisions. For the second time the Imperial General Headquarters turned down the request and ordered a troop withdrawal.

The spotlight shifted once again to Moscow where Ambassador Shigenori Togo, who had replaced Shigemitsu, and Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov opened negotiations for ending the war on September 8. A week later, both sides agreed to a ceasefire at their respective positions pending delineation of the border.

During the four months of fighting the Kwantung Army lost 8,440 men with about 8,700 wounded—a heavy loss in life and in the prestige of the “invincible” army. General Ueda, commander, and Lt. Gen. Rensuke Isogai, chief of staff, of the Kwantung Army were dismissed and put on the reservist list. Ueda was replaced by General Yoshijiro Umezu, who was to become the Army Chief of Staff and, with Shigemitsu, to sign the surrender documents on board the USS Missouri in September, 1945.

The Russian and Mongolian victory in the Nomonhan incident was credited to the Soviet commander, General Georgi K. Zhukov, who was to add another feather to his cap by breaking the German siege of Moscow the day before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

Behind the settlement of the Nomonhan fighting was a dramatic turn in the game of power politics in Europe. The Russians had dropped hint of their willingness to negotiate a settlement of the bloody fighting in late August, just a few days before they signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler—a pact which stunned the world.

The rapprochement of two arch rivals, Hitler and Stalin, came like a bolt out of a clear sky to the Cabinet of Kiichiro Hiranuma. In a feeble note of protest, the Japanese Government accused Germany of a breach of the anti-Comintern pact signed less than three years before. On August 28, the Cabinet resigned “in the light of a new complicated and grotesque development in Europe,” an unabashed admission of Japan’s naivete in the game of power politics.

A week after the non-aggression pact was signed on August 23, 1939, Hitler ordered a blitzkrieg against Poland. On September 3, Britain and France declared war on Germany, plunging Europe into another Armageddon. On September 17, Russian armies swarmed across Poland’s eastern frontiers. Within a few days Hitler’s army and Stalin’s army linked up at historic Brest-Litvsk to complete the partitioning of Poland.

The Wehrmacht’s dazzling successes in the early stage of the war added fuel to the demand of the Army and right-wing elements in Japan for a military alliance with Germany to break the status quo of the “have nations” and establish a “new order” in the world.

Alliance Of Convenience

A hero’s welcome awaited Yosuke Matsuoka as he arrived at Yokohama aboard the NYK’s Asama Maru on April 27, 1933. All the major newspapers paid warm editorial tribute to the man who had walked out of the League of Nations Assembly on February 24 when it unanimously condemned Japan’s actions in Manchuria. The NHK radio broadcast a live coverage of his triumphant return and newspaper planes buzzed overhead. Thousands of flag-waving citizens filled the pier to get a glimpse of their hero whose eloquent defense of Japan’s position against the “injustices” of the League had stirred

their imagination and satisfied their sense of pride.

It was a moment of triumph for Matsuoka. He was to have another in September 1940 when he concluded a military alliance with Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. Less than a year later, he made the headlines for the third time by signing a treaty of neutrality with the Soviet Union. In one of his rare displays of expansiveness and good humor, Joseph Stalin went to Moscow Station in person to see Matsuoka off, bear-hugged him and whispered, "Now Japan can move south."

Undoubtedly, Matsuoka was one of the most colorful and forceful personalities in the history of Showa. The uncle of Mrs. Hiroko Sato, wife of the late Nobel Peace Prize-winning Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, Matsuoka was born to a once wealthy shipping agent in an obscure port town west of Hiroshima. As a little boy he showed signs of intellectual brilliance and bellicosity.

Years later, Matsuoka told a group of school children that it was when he was 12 that he heard one of his teachers talking about extraterritoriality. "Of course, I could not make head or tail of that big word. But soon I gathered that it was something outrageous—Americans and Europeans treading us barefoot. I decided that when I grew up I would get these foreigners thrown out of Japan. I never abandoned my belief that we should insist on the right of equality with the white people." It was a time when patriots and intellectuals were pressing the government to get rid of "unequal treaties" imposed on Japan since it opened its doors to Commodore Perry in the early 1850s.

Just a few months before he finished an elementary school, Matsuoka left for the United States with his 19-year-old cousin. The 13-year-old boy landed at Portland, Oregon, after a stormy voyage.

Matsuoka attended the Atkinson Grammar School, Portland Academy and then a high school in Oakland, California. He earned his school expenses by working as a houseboy and at odd jobs. Eventually he worked his way through the University of Oregon from which he graduated with a BA in law in 1901.

After ten years in the United States, Matsuoka returned to Japan and immediately began preparations for the Foreign Service examinations. In October 1904 he came out at the top of 130 candidates,

of whom seven were accepted. With Matsuoka on the Army recruit list, the Foreign Ministry promptly assigned him to the consulate in Shanghai to spare him from the military service.

A man of quick mind and driving ambitions, Matsuoka shattered the image of career diplomats. Not only was his background unique. He was eloquent and could talk more than an hour on end in forceful English without a text, as he did when he made an impassioned defense of Japan in the League Council.

Life on the U.S. West Coast, where there was already a strong undercurrent of discrimination against Orientals, was hard and often bitter for Matsuoka as it was for other sensitive youths from Asia.

But Matsuoka had a soft spot in his heart for an American housewife who had shown him great affection as a houseboy. On his way home from the League of Nations, Matsuoka made a stopover in Portland and erected a marker and planted a tree at the grave of his "American mother"—Mrs. Isobelle Dunbar Beveridge.

"I cannot know what prompted her to be so kind to me. It just seems like fate that did it. Next to my mother, I could love no one more," Matsuoka said—a tribute that touched the hearts of Oregonians.

As Matsuoka basked in popular adulation, however, the nation began drifting dangerously along the road to war. The tripartite pact with Germany and Italy brought Japan to a point of no return.

When the initial nationalistic fervor generated by the withdrawal from the League of Nations and the Washington Conference system ebbed, a sense of isolation gradually took hold of policy-makers, the military and men in the street. With anti-Japanese sentiment running high in China and the Communists calling for an anti-fascist front, the Army and nationalists sought an ally. And they found one in Hitler's Germany, which had also pulled out of the League of Nations and was shaking off one yoke after another of the post-World War I Versailles system.

The Japanese-German linkup came in the form of an anti-Comintern pact signed in Berlin on November 25, 1936—less than eight months before the outbreak of war in China. Negotiations on the pact were initiated by Hitler's adviser and later Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Lt. Gen. Hiroshi Oshima, military attache at the

Japanese Embassy in Berlin, without the knowledge of the Japanese ambassador. A son of an Army general, Oshima had such ingrained pro-German sympathies that some Japanese diplomats disdainfully nicknamed him "German Ambassador to Germany."

In Manchoukuo, where he joined the South Manchurian Railway after he quit the Foreign Service, Matsuoka hailed the pact as giving Japan a "rudder," without which it had been drifting in troubled waters since the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was abrogated in 1922. The Japanese, he urged, should be prepared to go all the way with the Germans, much as a man and woman in love would be prepared to consummate their love in double suicide.

The pact ostensibly was aimed at exchanging information and holding close consultations on the activities of the Communist Internationale. In its secret provisions, however, the pact bound the two nations not to take any action that might reduce the burden on the Soviet Union in case one of them was attacked or threatened without provocation. Moreover, Japan and Germany pledged not to enter into any treaty of a political nature with Moscow without prior consultation.

"Through its intelligence activities the Soviet Union seemed to be aware of the secret provisions," wrote Ambassador Mamoru Shigemitsu who arrived in Moscow the day the pact was announced. Italy, which had withdrawn from the League of Nations in 1936 when it was censured for its invasion of Ethiopia, joined the anti-Comintern pact in November 1937.

Flushed with victory, the Army stepped up pressure on the Cabinet of Prime Minister Koki Hirota to forge the pact into a full-fledged military alliance. The Cabinet sat on the issue no fewer than 70 times but failed to reach agreement. The main opposition came from Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita and Navy Minister Admiral MitsumasaYonai who feared that the proposed military alliance would automatically drag Japan into war in Europe.

The Hirota Cabinet resigned in January 1937 and was followed by the short-lived Cabinet of General Senjuro Hayashi which fell at the end of May of the same year.

By this time a major reshuffle of diplomats had been carried out under the pressure of the Army and a growing band of pro-Axis

elements in the Foreign Ministry. At the top of the list was Shigeru Yoshida who was ordered home from the Court of St. James. A bitter opponent of any further drift to Germany, Yoshida had to endure the humiliation of being shadowed by the thought police and of even being jailed by the Army Gendarmerie toward the end of World War II. "My record of arrest perhaps made me Prime Minister," the cigar-smoking Yoshida, often dubbed Japan's Winston Churchill, said in dry humor when called upon to steer the nation in its postwar era.

Yoshida was succeeded by one-legged Shigemitsu who had been in Moscow. Shigenori Togo, a staunch opponent of a deeper entanglement with Hitler, was relieved of his Berlin post and assigned to Moscow. Oshima, the pro-German military attache, replaced Togo in Berlin and Toshio Shiratori, a strong advocate of the Tokyo-Berlin-Rome alliance in the Foreign Ministry, was assigned to the Italian capital.

Prince Fumimaro Konoe, the blue-blooded politician having the closest family connections with the Emperor, formed his first Cabinet in June 1937. But he resigned in early January 1939 due to the stalemate of the war in China and without acting on the Japanese-German military alliance.

The frustrated Army hawks and ultranationalists soon directed their attacks on the Navy. Their main target was Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Vice Navy Minister. Bands of jingoists roamed about the Navy Ministry building, openly accusing him of being a weakling unworthy of the Imperial Navy's tradition. The ministry building was even defended by a Navy unit and was stocked with provisions on rumors that impatient Army officers might storm in. On August 2, 1939, Yamamoto was relieved of his post and appointed commander-in-chief of the Combined Fleet—a job which forced him to plan and direct the attack on Pearl Harbor against his wish.

After he was shot down by American fighters waiting in ambush on April 18, 1943 on his fatal flight from Rabaul, what was believed his will was found in the safe in the Vice Navy Minister's office. "It is the pleasant duty of a warrior to die for his country, whether on the battlefield or on the home front. It is easy to fight with courage and die in action. Who knows how difficult it is to reject philistine views? . . ." The prophetic note was dated May 31, 1939.

Three weeks after Admiral Yamamoto returned to the seas came

the stunning news that Germany and the Soviet Union had signed a non-aggression treaty. The pact spared Hitler, as long as he was willing to abide by it, the frightening prospect of fighting on two fronts. For Stalin it was a sweet revenge on Britain and France for the snub inflicted on him when Chamberlain and Daladier diverted the brunt of a possible German onslaught eastward by appeasing Hitler at Munich at the expense of Czechoslovakia. The pact also gave the Soviet Union the opportunity to gain time for a German invasion that Stalin believed would come sooner or later.

The Berlin-Moscow pact not only brought the downfall of the Cabinet of Prime Minister Kijichiro Hiranuma but dealt a hard blow to the Army which had pressed for a military alliance with Germany. It gave a boost, though temporarily, to anti-alliance forces in the nation. General Nobuyuki Abe, new Prime Minister, announced that Japan would pursue a policy of non-intervention in the war in Europe and bend its energies to finding a solution of the war in China. But the new Cabinet lacked a broad base of popular support and resigned on January 14, 1940.

The Emperor's choice fell on Admiral Yonai, taking the Army by surprise. But the Army top-brass maintained a low posture in the wake of the Berlin-Moscow pact and War Minister General Shunroku Hata stayed on in the Yonai Cabinet. The Prime Minister recalled Arita to the Foreign Ministry portfolio in an attempt to salvage what chances there remained to adjust Japanese-U.S. relations. In July 1939, the United States had notified Japan of its decision to repudiate the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, effective from January 1940, as an economic sanction.

The spectacular German victories, however, revived the demand for a military alliance with Germany. The Army abandoned its low-key stance and withdrew War Minister Hata from the Cabinet. When Yonai asked the Army to recommend his successor, it refused. That brought the Yonai Cabinet down.

The Emperor commanded Prince Konoe to form his second Cabinet. Prior to the inauguration of his Cabinet on July 22, 1940, Konoe summoned three key incoming ministers—Foreign Minister Matsuoka, War Minister Lt. Gen. Hideki Tojo and Navy Minister Admiral Zengo Yoshida. Out of the meeting came a policy that sealed

any prospect of an accommodation with the United States.

The ministers agreed to strengthen the Tokyo-Berlin-Rome Axis, to sign a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, to move south and incorporate the British, French and Dutch colonies in the "New Order in Asia," and to repulse America's intervention by force. The policy marked a complete reversal of Japan's long-planned strategy for expanding to the north.

Matsuoka started off by dismissing Ambassador to Moscow Togo and about 40 other diplomats known to be critical of a military alliance with Germany and sympathetic toward Britain and the United States. With the coast clear, he went all-out to conclude a military pact with Berlin.

In late August, Germany sent Heinrich Stahmer to Tokyo as a special envoy to negotiate with Matsuoka. Agreement was reached only after 18 days of negotiations. The tripartite treaty was signed at Hitler's chancellery on September 26.

The pact was clearly aimed at the United States. Article 3 of the treaty bound the signatories "to assist one another with all political, economic and military means when one of the three Contracting Parties is attacked by a power at present not involved in the European War or in the Sino-Nipponese Conflict."

Matsuoka felt confident that his grand design of forging an alliance of the anti-status quo powers including the Soviet Union—preparatory to neutralizing the United States, extricating Japan out of the China slough and building a New Order in Asia—was on the way to becoming a reality. Stahmer had assured him that Germany would play the role of an "honest broker" in Matsuoka's bid to reach an understanding with Moscow.

By the time Matsuoka left Tokyo on March 12, 1941, for Berlin and Rome, however, there had already been signs of a deterioration in German-Russian relations. Instead of playing an "honest broker," Hitler and von Ribbentrop tried to win a commitment from Matsuoka that Japan would embark on a war in Asia and capture Singapore. By then, Hitler had ordered the German High Command to work out "Operation Barbarossa" with 150 German divisions readied to swarm into the Soviet Union in June 1941.

On his way home, Matsuoka made a stopover in Moscow and

proposed a non-aggression treaty between Japan and the Soviet Union. Molotov offered a neutrality treaty instead. When the negotiations bogged down, Matsuoka pulled the biggest bluff in his life. He made a move to pack up and go home. His tactics worked. Stalin came into the picture and on April 13 the neutrality treaty with a five-year term was signed in the Kremlin. The treaty provided for mutual respect of each other's territorial integrity, non-aggression and maintenance of neutrality when one of the signatories was attacked by a third country.

When the departure time of the train to take Matsuoka homeward arrived, Stalin ordered it delayed so that Matsuoka had a fill of drinks. Then Stalin went to the station, bear-hugged Matsuoka and told him, "We are both Asiatics" and "Japan can now move south."

The treaty worked to the advantage of both parties, at least for the time being. It was the Soviet Union this time that was spared the spectre of fighting on two fronts. It also gained precious time to prepare for the German blitzkrieg that it knew was impending. With the threat to its northern defense perimeter contained, Japan could direct its attention to the seas with their vast natural resources. But the pact put Japan on a collision course with the United States.

On August 9, 1945, three days after Hiroshima was A-bombed, Moscow declared war on Japan to fulfill its "duty to the allied powers." The neutrality pact with a five-year term was to have been in force until April 12, 1946, although Moscow had announced a unilateral abrogation of the treaty on April 5, 1945. Neither Hitler nor Stalin had any faith in their non-aggression pact. Matsuoka himself called for a strike against the Soviet Union when German troops invaded Russia. It was a time when the "sanctity" of treaties was little more than a farce.

Matsuoka was arrested in early 1946 as a major war criminal. When the International Military Tribunal for the Far East opened in May of the same year, an ailing Matsuoka summoned all his strength to say in English: "I plead . . . not guilty . . . on all . . . and every count." His voice was barely audible and "sounded like a broken reed pipe," as one witness put it. He was soon hospitalized and died at the Tokyo University Hospital on June 27, 1946 after being given final Catholic rites.

1941—A Great Divide

Let us, for a moment, place ourselves at the threshold of the year 1941 and see where Japan stood at that time. That year was one of the most memorable milestones not only in Showa's decades but possibly in the milleniums of the nation's entire history. For toward the end of that year Japan went to war with the Allied nations and, after achieving some fantastic initial successes, started to plunge headlong into the eventual devastation of the country and unconditional surrender.

On January 1, 1941, the picture looked extremely grim for the Allied powers. The European war had entered its 17th month. Hitler was at the zenith of his power. Although some unbelievable miscalculations on the part of the Reich war leaders spared the 300,000 British soldiers at Dunkirk from the coup de grace, the successful evacuation was all but balanced by the fierce blitzkrieg that left the heart of the industrial centers and much of the civilian life of the United Kingdom in ashes.

Barely a month after Dunkirk, German troops were marching down the Champs Elysees in Paris. Shortly afterward France succumbed. And the United Kingdom, lying exposed across the Channel, was bracing for the forthcoming Operation Sealion, the German plan for an amphibious invasion of the Isles. In spite of Churchill's determination and massive American aid, the glory of the British Empire appeared like a candle flickering in the wind of the war.

Meanwhile, the United States was bitterly divided. Should or should not President Roosevelt involve the republic in the European conflict? Though he had defeated his rival Wendell Willkie by a handsome margin in the election and acquired the Presidency for the third consecutive term, he could by no means override the popular sentiment that opposed the nation's being steadily drawn into the European quagmire.

So great was the Americans' dislike of being forced some day to fight Germany and Italy to win the war for Britain that the President had to assure the Americans, at the height of his election campaign, that he would keep the nation out of the conflict. There were, however, other parties of voters who strongly advocated a "save Britain now"

policy. Observers in fact agreed that if the present trend of the war continued unchanged, Britain would capitulate sooner or later. The collapse of the British Empire would follow and all of Europe would be lost to Nazi expansionism.

The United States, the only eligible Allied power capable of turning the tide, was under mounting pressure to act quickly to salvage the free world. Should the republic stay inactive, not only Europe but the wide expanse of Asia would fall prey to Japan, another expansionist, now that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's government, deprived of all seaports, was pent up in the landlocked city of Chungking.

In the Asian theater, Japan was ready "to shoot the sitting ducks." France and the Netherlands—once formidable masters of Southeast Asian colonies—were subjugated by Germany. And Britain was on the verge of collapse. Created was an ideal vacuum for Japan to fill. French Indochina, Malaya, Burma and the Dutch East Indies—a vast area rich in oil, rubber and tin was lying there only for Japan to move in.

At home, Japan's megalomania was mounting rapidly. The military clique as well as press opinion was dazzled by Hitler's magnificent success in the European theater. Why not step out of the archipelago now and grasp the lion's share? The pro-Anglo-American cabinet of Admiral Yonai collapsed in July 1940. Yonai's successor, Prince Fumimaro Kono, was under strong pressure to switch to a pro-Axis policy. It was a time when Hitler was persistently urging Japan to take Singapore, although Japan had to be prepared to face possible U.S. intervention from the Philippines if it agreed to meet the Fuehrer's request to advance southward to pick up the Pearl of the Orient.

So, instead of attacking Singapore, Japan did something—only a little short of it—on September 22, 1940.

As a result of "negotiations" with the crippled French Government at Vichy, both parties reached an "accord" that France would extend "convenience and courtesy" to the Japanese forces that crossed the border and surged into northern French Indochina in the early hours of that September day. In order to cover the invasion plot, the Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo had to concoct a story that Chiang Kai-shek's forces had designated the southernmost

provinces of China as a new war zone so that, with a view to settling the China Incident (as the Japanese war on the Chinese mainland was called) and thereby facilitating the establishment of a new order in East Asia, Japan was forced to make "peaceful use" of the Indochinese airfields.

Japan's entry into the region ired both Britain and the United States. The former retaliated by reopening the Burma Road, vital artery for military aid to Chungking, and the latter by forbidding all exports of iron and steel scrap except to the nations of the Western Hemisphere and to Great Britain, a fatal blow to resourceless Japan.

Five days after Japan's thrust into French Indochina came the signing of the tripartite treaty among Japan, Germany and Italy. Another diplomatic success by the Great Empire of Nippon! The terms of the pact were euphoric to be sure, with Japan recognizing the Third Reich's and Italy's leadership in the new order in Europe while the two European powers pledged the same for Japan in Asia—to promote mutual prosperity and the welfare of the peoples concerned.

The pro-Axisists, especially Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka, were jubilant. In a highly festive mood, the Mainichi Shimbun editorialized: "The time has at last arrived when Nippon's ("Japan" was considered humiliating and no longer in use) aspiration and efforts to establish East Asia for East Asiatics, free from the Anglo-Saxon yoke, coincides exactly with the German-Italian aspiration to build a New Order in Europe and to seek a future appropriate to their strength by liberating themselves from the Anglo-Saxon clutches."

A Mainichi columnist further challenged the imperialist powers by writing, "The democracies have only themselves to blame for the latest turn of events. They had ample time to reflect upon the position of Nippon even after the outbreak of the European War. Now the chance exists no more. If the American attitude toward Britain is non-belligerent in relation to Germany, then the new Nippon position is also non-belligerent in relation to the third powers."

A few cautious voices were heard as to the possible danger entailed in the near future by Article 3 of the tri-power treaty. But virtually no one was courageous enough to step forward and warn that the ominous provisions of the article would very probably put Japan on the collision course with the United States. The diplomatic agreement, from the advantage of hindsight, can be taken as none other than a

declaration of World War II by the signatories.

Those were the days when everybody was talking about the "New Order." The word was first coined in Japan by Prince Konoe, a controversial political Hamlet, as he returned from his summer villa in Karuizawa in June 1940, to assume the premiership. "All will agree, I presume," the then ace political figure told the press, "that a strong-going political system must be created to cope with the epochal turn of affairs in the history of Nippon. Resigning my post as the President of the Privy Council, I will henceforward do my best in furthering the New Order in the nation's political arena."

Voices of assent by various politicians hastily responded to the Prince's determined statement and political parties announced their self-liquidation one after another in order to merge into one party under the name of Taisei Yokusan-kai (the Society for Assisting the Imperial Rule), which was to administer the nation single-handedly until 1945.

Both conservative and proletarian parties abandoned, so to speak, all efforts to resist the powerful military upsurge as their members shouted "Banzai!" in unison when Prince Konoe in his inaugural address summed up the new political movement as the "performance by His Majesty's subjects of their duties in assisting the august rule."

On this day, October 12, 1940, democracy died in Japan.

The New Order was like the New Frontier and the Great Society combined, or even more. Once the New Order was established in the domestic political arena, the upholders of the Imperial rule were soon talking about a New Order in East Asia, an idea which was promptly renamed the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere." The hypocritical term, however, had its own pitfall, because the most popular cliché, alongside the New Order, in the latter half of 1940 was "Don't miss the bus." The Reich was looting the lands of the masters of the Asian dependencies. Why should not Japan do the same with their defenseless colonies? So Japan jumped on the Axis bandwagon. And the jumping was given a beautiful name, "New Order."

To cap the megalomaniacal boom, some patriotic historians came out with a certain mysterious calculation that the year 1940 was the

2,600th anniversary of the godly founding of the godliest nation in the world. Accordingly, the most elaborate details of the 26th centenary of the Empire were worked out and nationwide festivities were held in November of that year.

The mood was buoyant all the way. Patriotic songs were composed, school children marched, and Rising Sun flags were visible everywhere across the nation. Hundreds of people were honored with Imperial Awards and Their Majesties' docile subjects took to the streets by the millions to celebrate.

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress came out of the Imperial Palace and attended the national celebration of the centenary in the outer garden of the palace. More than 50,000 notables participated in the joyous function. Army and navy brass bands struck up the stirring tune of the "26th Centenary March." The common people who occupied the far distant corners of the spacious plaza shouted "Banzai!" in chorus. And Their Majesties, quite unusual even on major national occasions, sat down and took up their boxes of Bento (lunch), signifying by so doing the beginning of the repast.

The participants were deeply moved when they were later told that the Imperial personages had taken exactly the same victuals as Their Majesties' subjects. The sovereign and the subjects were really one—exactly in line with the current national motto of "100 million of one mind!"

Overwhelmed by the auspicious moment, however, few actually paid serious attention to a passage in the Imperial Rescript which Hirohito read at the national celebration. The words were: "It is Our earnest hope that peace will be restored soon and that We may share with all countries happiness and prosperity, albeit the world is now in the midst of great turmoil."

With the spirit of the nation abetted by the frenzy of New Order and the 26th Centenary, the self-glorifying Japanese were eager to welcome the bright future that seemed to lie ahead of them on this particular day—January 1, 1941. Their conviction was based on some of the most grievously simplified evaluation of the world situation.

From Berlin, for example, a Mainichi correspondent cabled on New Year's Day, conveying the assessment by the Germans of the state of the world: "It is now absolutely impossible for Britain to

defeat the Reich. Not only that, but the end of British resistance is merely a question of time. The United States at present is not prepared militarily enough to fight Japan, Germany and Italy simultaneously, as the United States' preparedness will not be completed before 1944."

From Washington: "Japanese-American relations will enter the new year with no prospect of improvement. While the appointment of Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura as Japanese Ambassador to Washington is genuinely welcomed here, official circles entertain little hope that he can accomplish much, so long as Japan's policy regarding China and Asia remains unchanged. Many suspect that Admiral Nomura's mission is to gain time for Japan, pending the uncertain European situation. The general feeling is that once Britain's position becomes untenable, Japan will take decisive action southward. Should this happen, what America should do is a question now seriously debated in both official circles and the press."

And a Mainichi dispatch from London stated: "The picture of the lives of the British people has its dark and bright sides. The destruction of London and other cities by ceaseless bombings, the sinking of 100,000 tons of shipping weekly, and the irritation caused by the blockade—this is the dark side of the outlook. The bright side lies in the indomitable spirit of the British people, the spirit that makes order out of chaos, that gives the British the energy and resolve to build again from the smoldering ruins, that makes them believe implicitly in the coming victory.

"The characteristics of tenacity, insensibility, stolidity, lack of imagination and firm social moral fiber in the British people make them ideally suited for war. While sweeping up the glass scattered on the streets as if he were raking up fallen leaves, a whistling Britisher does not have the imagination to think that this might some day happen to his own home. All classes of the people in Britain believe that if they can hold out, unlimited United States aid is forthcoming, and they feel that this will suffice to insure victory."

To the reporters' eyes the Americans were understandably indecisive while the British were mysteriously insensible of their impending fate. The real question is: Was it not the Japanese, rather than the British, who were totally insensible of where their expansionist fervor would eventually lead them? Weren't the Japanese the ones who lacked the imagination to foresee where they would end up?

One would naturally be led to question whether or not the Japanese public at that time was supplied with balanced information about the world situation. The headline of the above-quoted story from London was "Gnawing Anxiety: Britain Braces For More Ordeal," a far more gloomy sum-up of the story that presented both dark and bright sides of the people's lives in the British capital. Comparing it with the headline given to the dispatch from Berlin, "Confident Of Victory, Germans Lead Happy Lives; Provisions Aplenty Despite Controlled Economy," hasty readers would be tempted to believe in the imminent collapse of the United Kingdom. The Japanese minds, both of the leaders and the led, were simply intoxicated with unfounded self-complacency and for this the nation's Big Press was undoubtedly greatly to be blamed. Mentioned nowhere were the United States' formidable resources and its industrial might which, had they been made known to Japanese readers, might have changed the whole course of public opinion then and there.

It is important here to recall that all the political parties were dissolved NOT by the iron hands of the military leaders but by their own spontaneity. Toward the end of the nation's democracy in 1940, many politicians scrambled to woo the military clique so that they could gain political power through the support of their military friends. Taisei Yokusan-kai, the political facade to further the self-styled New Order, was mapped and organized originally by the Seisen Kantetsu Giin Renmei (Politicians' League to Fight Through the Sacred War), which the majority of the leading politicians, regardless of their affiliation, joyously joined. The uniformed were always for the war, of course. But their belligerent desire was abetted and fortified by the politicians who courted them.

Likewise, Japan's journalism was only too happy to woo the belligerent elements in the nation's politico-military circles. Keenly conscious of the surging tide of patriotism since the 2.26 Incident, scores of leading journalists, far from resisting the dangerous tendency, went straight ahead with coming to friendly terms with the promoters of "the Sacred War." As if not satisfied with doing so, the Big Press started supplying the readers with a distorted picture of the world. The patriots, in fact, kept being assisted and encouraged to a great extent by press opinions. So, politicians, journalists and military

leaders walked arm in arm, as it were, into the state of war in December 1941.

The sickly tendency still persists in the nation's journalism so that the mainstream of the Fourth Estate has till today remained as an extremely prudent critic of the powers that be. Furthermore, the overtone of the wartime dispatches is still preserved within Japan's journalism. Democratic nations, especially Britain and the United States, are portrayed as decadent while the journalists' imagination never ceases to be stirred by the naive serenity of certain totalitarian nations.

Quite unlike the case of Nazi Germany, Japan was not led by any one person as it went into the war. But the nation's journalism fed its readers with some of the most absurd hallucinations and the hallucinated public demanded that the government and the press take a tougher line—with both of them only glad to comply. Thus, in the process of turning the wheel in a vicious circle, the naked king never had his nakedness pointed out but was applauded for naked patriotism.

On January 1, 1941, Japan was being prepared for war. That, however, did not necessarily mean that the war was absolutely unavoidable. Had the nation's politicians been more firmly resolved to fulfill their political duties, had the journalists been determined to supply the nation with such information as might prove painful for their readers to swallow, Japan would not have taken the deadly course that it eventually did. The fact is that those who could have acted otherwise stayed inactive and irresponsible as they watched the hope for peace slip out of Japan's hand.

The year 1941 saw the emergence of Lieutenant General Hideki Tojo, the name long since remembered by many as an arch-villain. Nicknamed "razor blade" for his sharp mind, the general was named War Minister in July 1940, then Prime Minister in October 1941, finally leading Japan into the war by the end of that year. But the first significant measure taken by Tojo in 1941 in his capacity as War Minister was the issuance of a pamphlet called "Senjinkun," a moral code to fighting men.

The draft of the document was presented to the Throne and was approved by the Emperor on January 7, 1941. The War Minister, the compiler of the booklet, was apparently preparing the army for the

severity of modern warfare, saying in one chapter: "Men should not expect that, in the event of their death in action, their ashes will be sent back to their families."

Another passage, "Do not dishonor your name," was faithfully observed by countless Japanese fighting men who sacrificed their lives, fighting to the last man against superior U.S. forces on Attu, Pelilieu, Saipan, Iwo Jima and other South Sea islands. "Strong are those who know shame," the passage said. "You must always be aware of the honor of your kinsfolk and strive not to betray their expectations. Don't stay alive in dishonor. Don't die in such a way as to leave a bad name behind you."

Still another passage of "Senjinkun" provides the soldiers of the Imperial Army with a concept of life and death. "A sublime sense of self-sacrifice must guide you throughout life and death. Think not of death as you push through, with every ounce of your effort, in fulfilling your duties. Make it your joy to do everything with all your spiritual and physical strength. Fear not to die for the cause of everlasting justice."

The instructions held each individual fighting man firmly bound in a determination to fight unto death. They were in a way an order for Banzai attacks. They made the men prefer death with honor to survival as war prisoners. They were the principles that kept Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda on a jungle-covered Philippine island without surrendering for 30 years after the end of the war. And at the onset of the nation's crucial year, the stern words of "Senjinkun" were a clarion call to the 100 million Japanese who were ready to do anything to defend the honor of the godly nation.

Who Started The War?

There is no way of knowing whether Isoroku Yamamoto during his stay in the United States—first as a student at Harvard and later as naval attache in Washington—ever picked up the proverb, "The first blow is half the battle." But, by the time Lt.-General Hideki Tojo's "Senjinkun," moral code for fighting men, readied the soldiers of the Imperial Army in January 1941 for "death in honor rather than life in

dishonor," Yamamoto, then commander of the Combined Fleet of the Imperial Navy, was seriously pondering a preemptive attack on Pearl Harbor.

Presently, a retired ensign, Takeo Yoshikawa, assumed the false name of Tadashi Morimura and was sent to the Japanese Consulate in Honolulu. The task assigned to the young spy was simple: "Study Pearl Harbor thoroughly and report in detail on U.S. naval movements."

For Admiral Yamamoto, choosing Pearl Harbor as a target meant a serious breach of the established naval strategy of the empire. Since 1907 when the National Defense Plan was drawn up for the first time, the Imperial Navy had been traditionally training to counter a hypothetically advancing U.S. fleet in domestic waters, thereby securing command of the Western Pacific.

Yamamoto, however, was keenly aware of how the whole outlook of naval striking potentialities had changed recently due to fast developing air power. The impressive maneuvers with the use of torpedo planes, which the admiral witnessed during the naval exercises in the spring of 1940, helped confirm his revolutionary idea.

Thus, in his letter addressed to Navy Minister Koshiro Oikawa in January 1941, the admiral strongly advocated the decisive departure from tradition. He later explained his points in greater detail in his letter to Navy Minister Shigetaro Shimada in October 1941, a month before his Carrier Striking Force left the Seto Inland Sea for Hitokappu Bay in the southern Kuriles. Yamamoto's points:

1. Military operations in Southeast Asia, the Imperial General Headquarters' preference, will cause the Imperial Navy considerable loss of ships and planes. The remaining force, therefore, will find it difficult to fully counter a fresh thrust by the U.S. naval fleet even in the Western Pacific.
2. Considering the character of Admiral Kimmel, newly-appointed commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, the enemy will not necessarily adhere to the classic idea of a battleships versus battleships showdown.
3. Even if Japan's southward advance is carried out successfully, serious deterioration of national morale, once the Japanese archipelago becomes vulnerable to air attacks by enemy carrier forces,

must be considered.

Dissent was voiced both by the admiral's seniors and his staff officers. But Yamamoto, a known gambler, would not budge. He knew well that it was a dangerous gamble. "With fully determined devotion by our officers and men and possibly with help from Heaven, I am confident that the Navy can achieve the most difficult task in its history," he pledged in his letter to Shimada. He cited from Japanese history some memorable examples of surprise attacks.

In 1184 Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune, youthful commander of the warriors of the Genji Clan, launched a surprise attack from the rear of the powerful Heike's headquarters in Kobe by plunging down the steep slope of Hiyodori-goe, a near-suicidal offensive.

In 1560, Oda-Nobunaga attacked and successfully swept through the center of Imagawa Yoshimoto's superior forces at Okehazama in torrential rain.

Both cases were surprise attacks that any orthodox war strategist would be more than glad to rule out. But, Yamamoto questioned, how can one expect to catch Koji (valuable infant tiger) without crawling into Koketsu (tiger's den)?

"There's certainly a danger that all our forces would be lost," Yamamoto warned. "However, if our men's morale is not satisfactorily high, I am ready to resign my command of the Combined Fleet and assume personal command of the Carrier Striking Force."

Though reluctant at the beginning, the Imperial General Headquarters finally endorsed the admiral's plan. For they too had to face the painful reality that a resourceless nation like Japan would have to succumb to the enemies' pressure were it to keep putting off the "gamble" indefinitely.

According to the estimate by the Kikaku-in, Department of National Planning, in July 1941, Japan had stockpiles of light oil sufficient for only ten days, kerosene for a month, crude oil for a month and a half, nickel ore for two months, and semi-solid machine oil for three months. As for aviation fuel, which the government had taken great pains to stockpile, the supply was enough for only 15 months.

Director-General Teiichi Suzuki of the planning department concluded his grim report by saying, "If the state of things remains

unchanged, the Empire would become unable to rouse itself to action in a few months."

Japan's entire war machine was now geared to the "first blow" on the potential enemy's most strategic sites. The Imperial Navy assigned Commander Minoru Genda to draft plans to raid Pearl Harbor and sink the formidable U.S. Navy's battleships usually anchored off Ford Island inside the harbor, while the Imperial Army had Colonel Masanobu Tsuji elaborate a plan of operations to take Singapore, Britain's fortress impregnable from the sea but defenseless against an attack from the rear.

All the while, laborious negotiations were going on between Tokyo and Washington. Ambassador Kichisaburo Nomura in the U.S. capital was instructed to placate President Roosevelt by arguing:

"First: there is today every sign that the United States will sooner or later enter the European War. With the hope to deter the U.S. from doing so, Japan was compelled to sign the tripartite pact with the Axis nations.

"Second: Although Japan's military adventure in Mainland China may impress the American leader as unjustified aggression, the nation's genuine wish is to establish a Greater Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere where the Asiatics can coexist peacefully regardless of their nationality and race. Japan assures the U.S. that the military operations in China will soon come to an end.

"And third: Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka is firmly adhering to this principles of 'no conquest, no (military) operations, no exploitation.'" (Matsuoka's instruction to Ambassador Nomura on January 22, 1941)

The details of the Japan-U.S. negotiations that ended in failure on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, would be enough to fill many volumes of history. Many books have actually been written about them. Here, therefore, it should suffice to make a very general statement that a surprising number of key politicians, diplomats and military leaders (including even General Tojo) on both sides of the Pacific were eagerly seeking the chance for peace. What happened during the 11 months preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor will in fact stand forever as a lesson for mankind to show how people can go to war while hoping all the while to achieve peace.

It was foolish saber-rattling, ridiculous delay in responding to inviting proposals, misreading the other side's mind, unnecessary bluffs and, above all, deep-rooted mutual distrust that eventually upset the conference table where agreement to maintain lasting peace across the Pacific might have been worked out. Indeed, with the help of Catholic priests and the Japanese duo of a banker and a colonel, a Draft Understanding was agreed upon by unofficial representatives of both parties as early as in April 1941.

Japan, according to the drafted understanding, was to negotiate the conditions for withdrawal of its forces from China, provided the government of Chiang Kai-shek gave assent to merge with its rival regime in Nanking under Wang Ching-wei and the U.S. recognized Manchoukuo. To Japanese leaders—except Foreign Minister Matsuoka who was in Moscow arranging the Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact—the terms seemed to be good enough as a basis for further negotiations.

Japan's Army leaders were desperately looking for a means to extricate themselves from the China quagmire. If any honorable settlement could be arranged, they were willing to avoid fighting the superior American forces. The Imperial General Headquarters, as a matter of fact, decided on April 21 to accept the clauses of the Understanding in principle on condition that they did not harm the spirit of the tripartite treaty.

It was really a misfortune not only for Japan but for its counterpart that Japan at that time was being administered by Prince Fumimaro Konoe, an irresolute aristocrat Prime Minister, whose foreign minister happened to hold an unreasonably firm belief that he understood American psychology better than anybody else. As it happened, the hope for negotiated peace retreated from its near fulfillment by June of that year.

The hope for negotiated peace between Japan and the United States began tumbling down a slope as Japan advanced to southern French Indochina toward the end of July. The irretrievable step, taken in the wake of the Wehrmacht's invasion of the Soviet Union and the decision by the American Government to freeze all Japanese assets in America, ignited a series of chain reactions which led the two Pacific powers into the eventual war. Trade between the two countries came

to a complete halt, which to the Japanese meant, above all, a total oil embargo. The measure was immediately followed by Britain and the Dutch East Indies, leaving Japan in complete economic isolation.

The Japanese leaders were now facing a painful dilemma. As predicted earlier by the nation's economic planners, Japan would be running out of all its fuel in a matter of months—if no move were made to overcome the status quo. But America was apparently too menacing an enemy to fight. The nation had to choose between *Jiri-hin* (slow death) and *Doka-hin* (instant death).

If Japan rose to challenge the powerful Allied countries now, the nation, with insufficient resources and industrial power, might possibly be dying an instant death. This was the opinion of many military strategists including Admiral Yamamoto who had earlier admitted that Japan would not be going very far beyond some initial successes vis-a-vis America. The tragedy of Admiral Yamamoto was that he not only had to draft a plan for surprise attack on Pearl Harbor but also had it be swallowed by reluctant top brass of the Japanese military, all the while he himself was the one who best foresaw the futility of such a preemptive assault. The admiral explicitly prophesied in more than one occasion that the Imperial Navy's initial successes would not be little more than "short-lived victories."

If Japan stayed inactive, however, no other future could be expected of the nation than to die a slow death.

Instantly or slowly, Japan was doomed. Nevertheless, the nation had to decide which course to take.

By this time a solid obsession had taken hold of the mind of the Japanese. The obsession was named the "A-B-C-D Encirclement." The tiny empire was encircled and pressure put on it by the powerful alliance of American, British, Chinese and Dutch forces, as if it were a small piece of metal held between the jaws of a heavy vise. Japan was totally contained by a big oppressive circle—stretching all the way from the Aleutians in the north to Chungking in the west. The circle would slowly close in on Japan, steadily strangulating its 100 million inhabitants.

The fear was felt not only by the military but by all the Japanese people. Having been a trading country, just as it is today, Japan in those years depended for 70 per cent of its trade on the Anglo-

American bloc. Economic pressures by those countries no doubt had a great effect on the economic structure of the nation, hence the common people's life. "Should we sit back and wait for the imminent collapse? Shouldn't we go ahead and, together with Admiral Yamamoto, gamble once and for all on the empire's fate?"

It was perhaps because of this dilemma that Masatoshi Matsushita, one of the few outspoken friends of America, took up his pen in October 1941 and wrote: "(The) recent developments in the Pacific initiated by America are completely perplexing to the minds of the ordinary Japanese, for its actions in the past few years, especially since the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, give us the impression that it is America and no other country that deserves the name of 'aggressor.' These developments give rise to a grave doubt in our minds as to whether America is not a born aggressor and that the teachings which the missionaries have brought to the Orient are perhaps nothing but instruments of aggression."

Matsushita later became the Chancellor of Rikkyo (St. Paul's) University and was in 1967 an unsuccessful candidate for the governorship of Tokyo Metropolis.

The Christian scholar's statement would be interpreted by some people of today as an unseemly outburst of the moment. But few would be reluctant to admit that the following prediction that he made has been largely justified since he penned it 34 years ago. Matsushita added: "America's war with Japan would necessarily awaken racial consciousness among all the non-white peoples, and the result of this would be more far-reaching than any kind of new order. It would be well then for America to visualize fully and beforehand the important consequences which its actions will most probably bring about."

There is no denying that Japan "depended on force and conquest and the oppression of conquered peoples" as Secretary of State Cordell Hull charged in 1941. There is no denying either that some Japanese, especially the military, were belligerent. But there were at the same time those Japanese who believed, after careful observation of the international situation, that the Americans were the aggressors. Endowed with far superior economic strength, the United States had no need to shoot a bullet at tiny Japan. The freezing of Japanese assets,

embargo of oil exports and even some seemingly careless procrastination in diplomatic negotiations would be effective enough to lead Japan to eventual collapse.

The Japanese people, on their part, were plagued, as they still are, by peculiar love-hate mentality towards America. The U.S. had been the most important trade partner. The U.S. had sent a great many missionaries. The U.S. had been the pattern on which the Japanese had to model their modern life. The U.S. was the country to which so many Japanese farmers' uncles had immigrated and became rich. The Americans were after all the foreigners with whom the Japanese had fared quite well.

But the nation of promise and hope was also an object of sinister hate. What helped most to aggravate the hatred might be the xenophobia which is intrinsic among all insular peoples. But, again, that feeling may have been matched by the xenophobia on the other side of the Pacific, stirred by the fear of the "Yellow Peril." In any case, the Japanese people's feeling toward America in the first half of 1941 deteriorated to such a degree that even the most sincere friends of America were talking about "the yellow men fighting the white men." And once the hostile feeling turned into racial antagonism, no president, no prime minister and no diplomat was endowed with the capability of mending the schism.

No matter how closely one studies what went on in Washington and Tokyo during those months, he would find difficulty in locating a handy villain who insisted, "Who cares? Let's lick the enemy." Yet, despite all the prevailing reluctance, the two Pacific powers went to war. One cannot help asking if we really had to fight. Was it really an inevitable war?

On August 28 Prime Minister Prince Konoe's message was handed to President Roosevelt, in which the Japanese Government renewed its intention "to solve the unsolvable."

"The course of negotiation we have hitherto followed could bring about some unpredictably grave circumstances," the Japanese prince noted. "Let this minister suggest a summit conference, through which we might be able to come to a point to settle once for all the important matters related to our nations."

President Roosevelt's reply came five days later, declining the

offer because, the President explained, the summit talk should take place only after the basic points were agreed upon by the legitimate representatives of both governments. No doubt the U.S. leader was tempted to turn down the offer by Prince Konoe who had unleashed the Japanese Army on the China Mainland. But who could be sure that the prince was insincere as he made the suggestion?

Three Imperial conferences during this crucial period are particularly noteworthy insofar as Japan's war preparations were concerned.

"Holding the wish to maintain its self-defense and self-preservation, the Empire, resolved to dare a war with the U.S. (and Britain and Holland), will attempt to complete its military preparations by the end of October. The Empire will concurrently further its efforts to fulfill its objectives through negotiation with the U.S. and Britain"—adopted by key cabinet ministers, President of the Privy Council, and the Chiefs of the General Staff on September 6.

"The Empire, with determination to deploy its military forces in the beginning of December, will make its efforts to complete the operation plans. Diplomatic conference with the U.S. will be continued"—adopted by the same members on November 5.

"Admitting the failure of the diplomatic negotiations with the U.S., the Empire will enter into war with the U.S., Britain and Holland"—adopted on December 1.

Emperor Hirohito, sitting at the head of the conference table during all the three consultations, mostly remained silent except for an occasional interruption on his subjects' conversation. Though infrequent, some of his remarks were extraordinary and strong enough to make Japan's top political and military leaders jump.

Details of the Imperial conferences were candidly recorded in the "Sugiyama Memo" by the then Army Chief of Staff General Gen Sugiyama who committed suicide in September 1945, with his wife following suit.

On the eve of the September 6 conference, both Sugiyama and Navy Chief of Staff Osami Nagano were summoned to the Imperial Palace and the conversation there went like this:

The Emperor: Do your best to solve problems peacefully through

diplomacy. It should not go parallel with military preparations but should be given priority.

(Sugiyama answers minutely on how the Imperial Army is prepared to take Malaya and the Philippines in five months).

The Emperor: Five months? Is that not your wishful thinking?

Sugiyama: Both the Army and Navy have carefully studied the war plans. I believe we can accomplish our objectives according to the plan.

The Emperor: Do you think landing operations are that easy?

Sugiyama: I don't take them lightly. But I am confident that we have trained our men so well that they are not extremely difficult.

The Emperor: During the maneuvers in Kyushu the other day, I remember you had many ships "sunk." Don't you believe that will actually happen?

Sugiyama: I admit the mistakes during the maneuvers. But things will go more smoothly in real war, I presume, because we are much better prepared.

The Emperor: When you were the War Minister, you reported to me that you would "suppress Chiang Kai-shek's forces very quickly." You haven't kept your word. (Raising his voice) Are you absolutely certain you can win the war?

Sugiyama (in deep awe): Nothing is absolute, Your Majesty. I can only say that we will very probably win. Peace for one or two years is not what Japan is after. We have to make certain that it is durable for 20 to 50 years to come.

Emperor (loudly): Ah, so!

Sugiyama: We are by no means willing to fight, Your Majesty. We will make every possible effort to solve things peacefully. But in case that fails, I believe that we must fight.

During the Imperial Conference on the following day, President of the Privy Council Yoshimichi Hara raised points similar to the ones the Emperor had done. "Your draft war plan impresses me as if military operations are designated to come first and diplomacy only second," President Hara voiced his concern. "But war preparations, as I understand, should come only after all the diplomatic efforts fail."

And then, quite unexpectedly, the Emperor stepped in. Saying, "Why don't the Chiefs of the General Staff answer? I regret their

silence," he took out a piece of paper from his pocket and began reciting the Waka composed by his grandfather, Emperor Meiji:

*That all the seas around are brothers
Have I believed. Why,
Stir waters in turbulence of enmity?*

That day General Sugiyama noted in his memo: "It is apparent that His Majesty is encouraging us to do everything through diplomacy. I feel great trepidation."

Today, cynics may argue that the Emperor was simply parroting the opinion held by some civilian courtiers who sought to check the military. Weighing, however, all the evidence available, it is hardly possible to conclude that the Sovereign was one of the promoters of the war. Far from it. He sometimes stepped out of the framework of functions required of a constitutional monarch in his effort to curb the tide of war.

That brings us back again to the old question: Who started the war? Was General Tojo to blame? He took over the premiership in October 1941. He remained as the Prime Minister all through the first part of the war and until July 1944, when Saipan was already taken. He was indicted, tried and sentenced to death by the International Military Tribunal for Far East for his "crime against peace." But, here again, we have some evidence that he was not the type of war-monger that he is commonly believed to have been.

When Tojo was invited to the Palace to receive the order to form a cabinet, he had been packing his modest personal belongings to evacuate the official residence of the War Minister. Startled but painfully conscious that he could not decline, the general agreed to head the new cabinet. His intention then was in no respect belligerent. His secretary noted that he was resolved to "have the Emperor as the mirror of my judgment."

The Emperor, of course, was all for a peaceful solution. He directed Tojo to retract the decision earlier made at the September 6 conference in his presence, so that Japan could renew its peace effort. Tojo was eager to obey the Imperial wish. In the face of strong protest from Army radicals, Tojo in fact instructed his new cabinet to "go

back to a blank sheet of paper," that is, to nullify, at least for a while, the determination to dare plunge into war.

It was only when Japan received on November 26 an American reply, known as the Hull Note, that the Japanese leaders realized that the situation was truly irreparable. The U.S. Secretary of State was demanding the full-scale withdrawal of Japanese troops from China and Indochina, Japan's support of no other regime in China but Generalissimo Chiang's, and virtual abrogation of the tripartite pact with Germany and Italy. The proposal was a harsh one—harsher than what Japan could practically accept.

If one is compelled to name a Japanese leader who should really take the blame for starting the war, Foreign Minister Matsuoka perhaps looms as the likeliest choice. It was no doubt tragic for Japan that the nation at that crucial turn happened to have a grotesquely power-hungry and overconfident man in that important post. Matsuoka firmly believed that he understood Americans so well that he could manage them. He was, of course, wrong. But had he, too, been prejudiced by the racial discrimination that he experienced during his nine-year stay in the United States that ended in 1902?

One would be indiscreet to maintain that Japan was forced into war by subtle American diplomatic maneuvers. But with President Ford defending the American right to intervene militarily in the Middle East if the U.S. is threatened with "strangulation of oil supply" in 1975, then what was so unusual about Japan defending the same right in 1941?

Efforts were made by many responsible Japanese to stop the military machine from plunging into war. Unfortunately, war is not necessarily a conflict between the good and the evil. Was it so in 1941?

Tora, Tora, Tora!

Hovering high over Pearl Harbor, Commander Mitsuo Fuchida sent out a signal: TORA, TORA, TORA! It was 03.22 on December 8, 1941 in Tokyo and 07.52 Sunday, December 7, Hawaii time.

The rest of the story has been told and retold by numberless writers including Fuchida himself who was later converted to Christianity and became a missionary when his military career ter-

minated in 1945.

Following are skeleton excerpts from the Imperial Navy's operation log (hours are in local time):

05.00—The first wave of air squadrons starts taking off from six aircraft carriers sailing approximately 360 kilometers north of Oahu Island, Hawaii. The squadron comprising 183 planes is led by Commander Fuchida. Soon the sun begins rising over the eastern horizon.

07.49—Japanese planes arrive over Pearl Harbor. No airborne enemy forces are sighted. Fuchida radios TO, TO, TO, (They are the first two letters of "Totsugeki," a code signal for "Attack!"). The main target is Ford Island.

07.52—TORA, TORA, TORA! (The signal means "Our surprise attack has successfully begun"). Minutes later wireless officers of the aircraft carriers monitor a U.S. Navy emergency message: "AIR RAID, PEARL HARBOR—THIS IS NO DRILL." the message is not even ciphered.

09.15-10.30—The planes in the first wave return to their mother flattops. Nine planes are missing.

07.15—The second wave takes off. Lieutenant Commander Shigekazu Shimazaki leads 167 planes.

09.07—The second attack begins. The main targets are Hickam and other airfields.

13.52—All the squadrons are back to their carriers. Twenty planes of the second wave fail to return. The carrier forces start sailing for home.

The rampage lasted for less than three hours and a half, but the Senka (war results) was enormous. Eighteen U.S. naval vessels including four battleships were sunk and 231 planes destroyed. In the attack, 2,280 American military personnel were killed.

At 6 a.m. Tokyo, the Army and Navy Departments of the Imperial General Headquarters announced: "The Imperial Army and Navy on December 8 at dawn entered a state of hostilities against the American and British forces in the western Pacific."

Through the serene morning air the news sped across the nation whose 100 million inhabitants were startled and excited.

Closely following the announcement, the text of the Imperial

Rescript was broadcast by the radio: "Patiently have We waited and long have We endured in the hope that Our Government might retrieve the situation in peace, but Our adversaries, showing not the least spirit of conciliation, have unduly delayed a settlement; and in the meantime, they have intensified the economic and political pressure to compel thereby Our Empire to submission... We have therefore resolutely declared war on the United States and Britain for the sake of the self-preservation and self-defense of the Empire and for the establishment of enduring peace in East Asia." It was the declaration of the Greater East Asia War.

In Washington, Ambassadors Kichisaburo Nomura and Saburo Kurusu had an appointment with Secretary of State Cordell Hull at 13.00 local time. However, deciphering and typing the final message of the Japanese Government took so much time that the ambassadors had to ask for the delay by an hour of their arrival at the State Department.

Curiously enough, a two-volume official history of Gaimusho, published on the centenary in 1969 of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gives us no information at all as to why the staff members in the Washington Embassy were so sloppy in their important task. The book remains silent about a boisterous party they are said to have had, perhaps with plenty of Sake, the previous evening.

Ambassador Kurusu later recalled what went on that frantic Sunday morning: "At about 10.30 Sunday (December 7), final cable arrived from Tokyo instructing us to hand its content directly to Secretary Hull at 13.00. The cable also told us not to let any hired typist do the typing, for the matter was of a top secret character. The typing, therefore, had to be entrusted to a senior secretary. But the secretary was very slow in typing the document because he was extremely agitated. He often erased and started retyping..."

Agitated or not, the regrettable delay caused Japan to be called a shameless sneak attacker by American leaders and the public alike. Had the Japanese diplomats been as efficient in typing as its pilots were in maneuvering their Zeros over Pearl Harbor, Japan could at least have been spared some of the ignominy of that historic day. Following is the order of facts reconstructed from records and reports on the attack of Pearl Harbor compiled by the U.S. Joint Congressional Committee in 1945 (hours are Washington time):

13.25—Japanese planes start attacking Pearl Harbor.

13.50—Secretary of Navy Frank Knox receives Admiral Kimmel's cable: AIR RAID, PEARL HARBOR—THIS IS NO DRILL.

14.00—President Roosevelt phones Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. FDR: "Have you heard the news?" HLS: "I have heard about the Japanese advance in the Gulf of Siam." FDR: "Oh, no. I don't mean that. They have attacked Hawaii! They are now bombing Hawaii!" Either immediately before or after this telephone conversation, the President phones and passes on the news to Secretary Hull.

14.05—The Japanese ambassadors arrive at the State Department, one hour and five minutes behind the original appointment.

14.20—The ambassadors are ushered into Hull's office. Nomura: "I have been instructed by my government to hand this message to you at 1 p.m. This delay was caused by the unexpected time we had to spend in deciphering the message." Hull: "Is that so? But, why 1 o'clock?" Nomura: "I don't know. We were ordered to do so."

Cordell Hull then read the official message whose content was already known by him. Then, burning with anger, Hull spoke sharply to the Japanese ambassadors: "I must say that in all my conversations with you during the last nine months I have never uttered one word of untruth. This is borne out absolutely by the record. In all my 50 years of public service I have never seen a document more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions—infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any government on this planet was capable of uttering them."

All the efforts for peace had finally failed. But one is tempted to ponder what would have happened if the Japanese ambassadors had arrived at the State Department at 13.00 Washington time—a bare but significant 25 minutes ahead of the initial attack launched on Pearl Harbor. Had that been the case, could Secretary Hull have denounced the Japanese message as "crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortion?"

There are other things to consider. The secret code of the Japanese communications between Tokyo and Washington had been broken by the MAGIC squad of U.S. cryptographers many months before. The American political and military leaders, therefore, were in such a position that, had they wanted to do so, they could have anticipated Japan's "surprise attack" beforehand. Besides, so many warnings had been expressed by so many experts in regard to Japan's possible surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. As early as March 1941, for instance, both the U.S. Army and Navy commanders in Hawaii cabled an apocalyptic military assessment to Washington, saying, "The most probable and the most dangerous attack on Oahu is an air raid. It is believed to be most likely that such an attack will be launched from one or more aircraft carriers approaching within 300 miles of the island."

Didn't President Roosevelt expressly say at one time that he would now "wash his hands" from diplomatic negotiations and that the rest was all up to Secretaries Stimson and Knox to handle?

There were countless other substantial signs that Hawaii was about to be attacked by the Japanese forces. The Imperial Navy's aircraft carriers were strangely missing from Japanese ports. A Japanese consul in Honolulu was sending out most suspicious cables. The embassy staff in Washington was overheard being instructed to destroy their decoding machine. The U.S. leaders had received all, or almost all, of this information before they were "caught napping." Finally, approaching Japanese squadrons were sighted by a radar operator but the blips were simply dismissed as meaningless. There is indeed no excuse for Japan to have launched the attack moments before the gong was sounded. Nevertheless, wasn't it also true that the forewarned was not forearmed?

Today, more than 34 years after Pearl Harbor, a Japanese traveler who has recently returned from a trip abroad testified that Japanese diplomats were still "lousy typists." Meanwhile, a Gaijin (Westerner) traveler coming back from Sasebo, Kyushu, recently described the naval town-base of the U.S. Seventh Fleet as being just as tipsy on Sunday morning as Pearl Harbor was that fatal morning. These may be just typically irresponsible travelers' tales. But, it seems that while Pearl Harbor is well remembered today, its lesson is hardly being kept in mind.

A last minute bid for peace was offered by President Roosevelt in his urgent message addressed to the Emperor—"I address myself to Your Majesty at this moment in the fervent hope that Your Majesty may, as I am doing, give thought in this definite emergency to ways of dispelling the dark clouds. I am confident that both of us, for the sake of the peoples not only of our own great countries but for the sake of humanity in neighboring territories, have a sacred duty to restore traditional amity and prevent further death and destruction in the world."

The President's message had an undeniable ring of truth. But, as it turned out, the offer for peace arrived too late to stop the Japanese Navy that was approaching Pearl Harbor. Unable to dispel the dark clouds, the two Pacific countries entered a period of death and destruction that was destined to last for 45 months.

In July 1947, ex-Ambassador Kurusu wrote to Bernard M. Baruch, a close friend of the then already deceased President Roosevelt. A passage is worth repeating for, according to Kurusu: "I was told, upon my return to Tokyo in August 1942, by General Tojo himself, that if the personal message of President Roosevelt to our Emperor had arrived just a few days earlier and that the American note of November 26th (Hull Note), had been somewhat more conciliatory, it would have been impossible for Japan to have gone into the war."

Every important turn of history is usually surrounded by many hypothetical "ifs." Pearl Harbor certainly was no exception.

Very few of those who were really informed were in fact happy on hearing the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Speculation is today still rampant but one cannot detect anything more than a faint note of satisfaction, even from the much disputed conversation between the Anglo-Saxon leaders (Roosevelt and Churchill) on both sides of the Atlantic. FDR: "They have attacked us at Pearl Harbor. We are all in the same boat now." WSC: "This certainly simplifies things. God be with you."

Even Admiral Yamamoto, to whom the "success" was credited, was only moderately elated. Known as an insatiable bridge player, the Commander of the Combined Fleet composed a somewhat sardonic Waka poem on the occasion:

Gurasura ni hodo tokeredo

*ridaburu nite "just make" no
kokochi koso sure.*

Which might be translated as:

*Far from a grand slam is what I've achieved;
Modest let me be to state,
It's somewhat like a redoubled bid just made.*

Reports of the initial victory elated the public who were not sufficiently informed about the enemies' formidable potentiality to retaliate, and even more so since the nation's muzzled press shirked the duty of telling the public the painful truth. We may as well admit today that journalism at that period was as a whole intoxicated with the idea that "a sacred war has begun." The Mainichi Shimbun, for one, praised the "unswerving loyalty of Imperial forces," saying: "Our hearts are filled with gratitude and deep emotion. We cannot help that our eyes grow moist. . . Tremendous is a word not strong enough to describe the war results achieved during the initial day or two of the war." Its editorial observed the sharp decline in New York Stock Exchange postings with deep satisfaction—never suspecting they would soon rise again. Journalists were simply too overcome by enthusiasm then to think rationally.

Quite exceptional for such a highly educated society as Japan in 1941, virtually no one stood up to explicitly oppose the war. And for this, the nation's big press no doubt was responsible to a great degree. Although the public did understandably welcome the war that "simplified everything" after so many months of indecisive diplomatic dealings with the United States, the press, despite all the information at hand, simply joined the wave of popular enthusiasm.

Two days after Pearl Harbor, another "spectacular victory" was reported. The Royal Navy's supposedly unsinkable battleship, Prince of Wales, 35,000 tons, were sunk by the Imperial Navy's air force off Kuantan, Malay Peninsula. The Invincible Armada done in one blow! The national rejoicing soared to another summit.

On the same day, a "National Rally to Crush the United States and Britain" was held at Korakuen Stadium under the co-sponsorship of eight major Tokyo dailies including Asahi, Yomiuri and Mainichi.

Such respected journalists as Taketora Ogata, editor-in-chief of the Asahi Shimbun; Matsutaro Shoriki, president of the Yomiuri Shimbun; and Soho (Ichiro) Tokutomi, the Mainichi's widely-read contributing editor, spoke before the emotional audience who repeatedly shouted "Banzai!" and pledged that they would work together to "Bring the Eight Corners of the World under One Roof."

The nationalistic fervor quickly spread to the eight corners of the Japanese archipelago and into every Tonari-Gumi (neighborhood unit) that organized the whole nation into as many combat-determined elements. The report of a certain neighborhood unit meeting held in Kojimachi, central Tokyo, would best illustrate the journalistic standard on December 10, 1941. According to Asahi Shimbun, the scene was like this:

"Let's march on, 100 million of us! Let's march on, all the way through! The country's neighborhood units held their meeting simultaneously across the nation for 30 minutes from 6.30 a.m. Wednesday (December 10). The first such occasion since the start of the war, the meeting was to turn the 100 million subjects into a gigantic fireball for the nation's advance en masse.

"Thanks to the cooperation of the NHK radio, the joyous tidings that had just come from the south seas the same morning were brought to the ears of those who attended the inspirational meeting.

"Every home is a battleground now! We are all comrades-in-arms! We must fight through to the end! . . . Neighborhood love is burning like a flame. Let's sacrifice every bit of our life for the Emperor! A silent war cry—we could hear it—rang from corner to corner of the nation.

"It was extremely assuring that so many neighborhood unit meetings, each of them invigorated with resolution to fight out the war, were held in Tokyo, the city commissioned to lead the rest of Japan. The residents of Kojimachi Ichiban-cho gathered at the second floor room of Nakazawa Confectionery Store overlooking the enemy British Embassy, located in the rear of the shop.

"Mr. Nakazawa's voice was deeply moving. He said, 'I presume that every one of you fully understands what the radio announcement means. Now, every one of my neighbors, let us join hands and march on.' . . . Nakazawa's voice was trembling with patriotic passion."

While one is only amused to note that the British Embassy was conveniently moved to the rear of the confectionery shop, he would probably be dismayed to observe so many meaningless ejaculations inserted into almost every other sentence of the story. That, however, was the type of "objective" writing the Japanese journalists shamelessly penned in 1941.

The people in general were prompt in responding to the journalists' war cry. The same Asahi newspaper two weeks later carried a report of 20 amateur photographers who lined up on Ginza street taking photos of "unpatriotic" women dressed in "enemy fashion." With the intent to clear the country of the "enemy mood," the volunteer cameramen directed their hostile lenses at female passersby in high-heeled shoes, in Western costume "as should belong to sexy Hollywood actresses," and at anybody who was not in line with "pure and unhampered Japanese tradition." The headline over the story read, "Down With American Odor!"

Those were the days of patriotism, racial chauvinism and "Imperial Nippon" mysticism combined. Upon checking today the countless passionate stories and editorials of that period, we cannot but suspect that the nation's press played a major role in promoting what amounted to the bizarre display of a nationalistic cult. All the while shouting "Butcher the U.S. and Britain," "Chop Up Anglo-Saxon Devils," the journalists gradually abandoned their professional conscience and duty to report what was hidden behind the overly self-complacent announcements of the Imperial General Headquarters.

Perhaps it was partly due to the traditional idea of "Ukiyo"—this world is nothing but a floating existence; we can do little more than float along at the mercy of uncontrollable waves. But it was still a pity that the working journalists should have so readily forsaken their occupational code that they volunteered, even when obviously not urged by the military to do so, to promote national megalomania.

Singapore fell in February 1942. Rangoon was occupied in March. The Dutch East Indies Army surrendered in the same month. Corregidor was taken in May. And, finally, Guadalcanal was overrun by the Imperial Army's "sacred soldiers" in August of that seemingly glorious year. Journalistic nationalism mounted, meanwhile, almost outstepping the military belligerency.

As the tide changed and the Japanese forces were compelled to evacuate from Guadalcanal in February 1943, the passion for "Down with the American and English Devils" rose to a still higher peak, this time in desperate frenzy. The more, in fact, the military situation deteriorated, an even more distorted picture of facts was presented. The big press gave abundant space to patriotic poets, sponsored exhibitions of patriotic paintings and, in December 1942, organized the Patriotic Press Association of which more than 1,000 journalists and critics became members.

The journalists, however, were not the only ones to be blamed. Poets, playwrights, novelists, orators, thinkers—both rightists and leftists—religious leaders, painters, producers and actors, both Kabuki and modern, tuned in unison with practically no exception to the one and only path of patriotism. Surprisingly, they did so in many cases when they, if they had so wished, could have remained silent.

An extremely limited number of men of letters, who kept their silence, were vigorously challenged by their fellow writers. Equally surprising was the fact that so many Bunkajin (men of culture) including journalists stood up, only after the end of the war, to claim that they once "resisted" the military authorities. In most cases their claims were downright lies, or else, grotesquely exaggerated.

Looking back at the behavior of the opinion-makers during the war, one tends to believe that the Japanese have had an incurable liking all along for totalitarianism. When our nation was going one way, very many of us were hostile to those who suggested going the other way. Dissenting voices were hurriedly hushed. The Japanese once liked, and may in the future like, to bask in a blissful sense of national oneness. When "Ichioku Ichigan" (100 million as one bullet) was a catchword, few Japanese dared to deviate from the official path.

Speakers of English, the enemy language, were so looked down upon that every call by a baseball (Yakyu) umpire was given a Japanese translation in 1943. "Strike One" became "Yoshi Hitotsu," "Ball" was "Dame," and "You're Out" was "Hike."

It is almost a miracle that two English language newspapers—The Nippon Times, and The Osaka Mainichi and The Tokyo Nichi-Nichi (as the Mainichi Daily News was named then)—managed to survive through those dark years.

An editor of the MDN today recalls the tense moments when several Geta-clattering patriots stormed an English oratorical contest sponsored by the newspaper. As the audience was about to panic, the editor-in-chief calmly reasoned with the intruders, saying, "We are practicing English so that we will be able to know more about and to understand our enemies. Understanding their language is necessary if we want to eavesdrop on their secret transmissions, you know." The naive patriots nodded in agreement and stayed on to applaud the orators.

A part of the Mainichi Daily News staff stealthily vanished into the women's toilet converted into a "black chamber." They set up a monitoring apparatus inside the toilet converted into a sanctuary free from military inspection, and listened by shortwave radio (forbidden to civilians at the time) to BBC, VOA, Treasure Island, Ankara and other foreign broadcasts. The news obtained was circulated among the editors of both the vernacular and English newspapers. Some of it was printed under the datelines of neutral countries—Stockholm, Zurich, Lisbon and Buenos Aires (where there actually were Mainichi correspondents isolated by the outbreak of the war).

This valuable but highly secret newsgathering activity was given an inglorious name—Benjo (Toilet) Press.

Collapse Of Co-Prosperity Sphere

The date was November 5, 1943. The setting was the Imperial Diet Building. Gathered were not the lawmakers who had long since been turned into a rubber stamp for the government of Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo but the leaders of five Asian countries pledging to prosecute the war until final victory and establish the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere under Japan's leadership.

Undoubtedly, the meeting was a high point in the history of the Greater East Asia War, a name adopted four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor to embrace both the drawn-out war in China and the new war in the Pacific. The Japanese, who had been consistently fed with exaggerated reports of the exploits of the Japanese Army and Navy in remote lands and seas, saw in the gathering a fulfilment of the "sacred

war" to which they had been giving blood, toil, tears and sweat, a war to liberate one billion Asians from Western colonialism and economic exploitation and build a new order in Asia in which they were to share prosperity.

Attending the meeting were General Tojo, who served as host and chairman; Wang Ching-wei, president of Nationalist China established in Nanking in 1940 under Japan's sponsorship; Prince Wan Waithayakon, representative of the President of the Council of Thailand; Chang Ching-hui, Prime Minister of Manchoukou; Dr. Jose P. Laurel, President of the Philippines; and U Ba Maw, Burma's Chief of State. And there was an observer, Subhas Chandra Bose, head of the Provisional Government of Free India.

A galaxy of Japanese political and military leaders filled the spectators' gallery to witness what most newspapers termed an "historic event" in Asia.

The day before the meeting opened, the representatives of the five Asian countries were received in audience by Emperor Hirohito and honored at an Imperial banquet. More than 20,000 school boys and girls were mobilized to wave to the distinguished guests as they crossed the Double Bridge into the Imperial Palace.

At the end of the two-day session, the Greater East Asia Congress issued a five-point joint declaration. "The countries of Greater East Asia," the declaration, said:

"Through mutual cooperation will ensure the stability of their region and construct an order of common prosperity and well-being based upon justice" (Article 1);

"Will ensure the fraternity of nations in their region by respecting one another's sovereignty and independence and practicing mutual assistance and amity" (Article 2);

"By respecting one another's traditions and developing the creative faculties of each race, will enhance the culture and civilization of Greater East Asia" (Article 3);

"Will endeavor to accelerate their common economic development through close cooperation upon a basis of reciprocity and to promote thereby the general prosperity of their region" (Article 4);

"Will cultivate friendly relations with all the countries of the

world; work for the abolition of racial discrimination, the promotion of cultural interchanges and the opening of resources throughout the world; and contribute thereby to the progress of mankind" (Article 5).

The day after the adoption of the declaration, the Asian delegates and Chandra Bose were welcomed at a massive people's rally in Tokyo's Hibiya Park. "Not an inch of standing room was available in the open vista of the park," the *Mainichi* reported.

Before a cheering crowd of some 100,000 the Asian leaders expressed gratitude to Japan for driving British and American imperialism out of Asia and giving them the long-awaited chance to be the masters of their own destinies.

In his address, Prime Minister Tojo said, "As long as justice is on our side, what have we to fear? The Greater East Asia War is indeed a sacred war to right the wrong and to strengthen that which is right. We know we have the inviolable right to carry on this war, which is denied the enemy camp. . . . We see positively nothing to prevent us from winning ultimate victory. . . . I do not see why we cannot smite the foes to the finish and establish enduring peace in East Asia and the world."

German Ambassador Heinrich Stahmer, co-architect with Yosuke Matsuoka of the Tokyo-Berlin-Rome alliance signed three years before, also gave an address of encouragement. Said he: "You have built a peaceful temple of a new order based on moral foundation and the solid ground of common conviction among the allied races by expelling forever the selfish influences of the Anglo-Americans who were solely intent on exploiting various countries of Greater East Asia for their own convenient purposes, and by achieving the historical task of freedom and emancipation.

"The Greater German Reich," the ambassador told his cheering audience, was "firmly determined to fight out this decisive war. . . . in close unity with Nippon."

Despite their impassioned speeches endorsing Japan's war aims and pledging wholehearted support for waging the war until final victory was won, the Asian representatives must have been of two minds. For it was clear to them, as it was to Prime Minister Tojo and other Japanese leaders, that the tide of the war had definitely turned against Japan.

As they spoke to the roaring applause of the huge audience the

Asian leaders may have tried hard to dispel the chilling prospect that their own countries would be turned into battlefields in the near future and that in the event Japan lost the war they would be branded quislings and traitors.

Indeed, signs of Japanese retreat were coming thick and fast. Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's plan to deal another hard blow to the U.S. Pacific Fleet and avenge Doolittle's daring air raid on Tokyo on April 18, 1942, ended in a disaster off Midway two months later. The Japanese Navy lost four aircraft carriers, one heavy cruiser and 322 planes against the enemy's loss of one flattop, one destroyer and 150 planes.

The Japanese were given only a sketchy account of the naval and air battle by the Imperial General Headquarters which announced that only one flattop was lost, another heavily damaged, one cruiser damaged and 35 planes failed to return. The Midway victory prompted Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, to announce that revenge for Pearl Harbor was partly fulfilled and that the United States had reached the midway point to victory.

As the year 1943 turned, the Americans stepped up their counteroffensive on all fronts, in the north as well as the south. The Japanese Army withdrew from Guadalcanal with heavy losses (February 1), Admiral Yamamoto was killed when his plane was ambushed (April 14), and the garrison on the Aleutian island of Attu died in action to the last man (May 29), followed by the evacuation of another Aleutian island of Kiska (July 29).

In Europe, contrary to Ambassador Stahmer's boast, the Germans suffered a crushing defeat at Stalingrad (February 1), Mussolini fell out of power (July 25), and the new Italian regime of Pietro Badoglio surrendered unconditionally to the Allied forces pushing relentlessly up the Italian boot (September 9).

As the Asian leaders left Tokyo for home with copies of the Greater East Asia Declaration, Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek were converging on Cairo. On November 26, they came up with a declaration pledging to carry on the war until Japan accepted an unconditional surrender, to strip Japan of Manchuria, Formosa and all other territories the Japanese had stolen from the Chinese and to

emancipate Korea.

Close on the heels of the Cairo conference, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met at Tehran where the Soviet leader offered to enter into war against Japan as soon as Hitler capitulated.

Men and women in Japan were kept ignorant of this series of conferences. Instead, they were exhorted at every turn to produce more planes and more ships to win ultimate victory, which many of them sensed seemed to recede farther almost every week.

The Greater East Asia Congress was in fact a reflection of the absence of a long-range policy toward the occupied territories. The administration of these territories was largely left to military commanders who thought primarily in terms of military planning without enough attention paid to the more complex aspects of ruling an alien people, such as finance, economy, education and culture. It was not until November 1, 1942 that the government set up the Greater East Asia Ministry to supervise overall guidance of the Greater East Asia region.

With signs of increasing strains between the military and local inhabitants, the government was compelled to work out a formula for the future of the occupied territories and spell out war aims. Early in 1943, the government and the Imperial General Headquarters agreed to grant independence to Burma and the Philippines but left the fate of "other occupied areas" up in the air. The decision was not made public, however, for fear of an unfavorable reaction from the inhabitants of the "other areas."

On May 29 of the same year, the government and the IGHQ came up with a decision to incorporate Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Celebes as Japanese territories and to make every effort to tap their vast natural resources and win the minds of the local inhabitants.

The changing picture of the war forced Japan to adopt a defensive strategy and pay more heed to the wishes and needs of the local populace whose cooperation was indispensable to such a strategy.

On August 1, 1943, Japan sponsored the establishment of independent Burma under the leadership of U Ba Maw. The Republic of the Philippines was proclaimed on October 14 under the presidency of Jose P. Laurel, Secretary of Justice in the administration of President Manuel L. Quezon who had fled to Corregidor with MacArthur and later proceeded to Washington to head the government-in-exile.

At least in Burma and the East Dutch Indies (Indonesia), Japanese troops were welcomed as liberators who had freed the people from the shackles of British and Dutch colonialism. For example, the tiny Burmese Independence Army, which was organized by a handful of Burmese nationalists in Bangkok, swelled rapidly as it crossed the Thai border into Burma with Japanese troops. By the time the Japanese Army occupied Rangoon on March 8, 1942, the BIA had about 10,000 regulars and 100,000 non-regulars.

In Indonesia, the Japanese freed Sukarno and Hatta from Dutch prisons and allowed Indonesians to sing native songs and fly the national flag, both of which had been banned under Dutch rule.

As the months passed, however, the "liberators" gradually revealed the ugly side of their nature. There were the inevitable strains and stresses between the occupier and the occupied.

Shortly after the fall of Singapore on February 15, 1942, the Japanese Government renamed the former British Crown Colony "Shonan" Island (Sho being taken from the Showa and Nan meaning south) and built a Shinto shrine there—a gesture flaunting the end of the British Empire but one which showed an utter lack of sensitivity toward the islanders who were predominantly Chinese and Malays.

The pledge to "respect one another's traditions and develop the creative faculties of each race" (Article 3 of the Greater East Asia Declaration) sounded hollow to many in the occupied territories. They were fed an overdose of "Hakko Ichiu" (Bringing Eight Corners of the World Under One Roof with Japan serving as the "head of family") and Japanese-oriented pacification propaganda.

One eminent scholar, who saw the war as essentially a cultural war, argued that Japanese should be made the common language of Greater East Asia "as a fundamental condition for binding the one billion people and for propagating the Japanese spirit and the Japanese way of life." And in the final analysis, the Japanese military authorities were the ones who had the final say in every aspect of the life of the local inhabitants.

With the prospect of the war tipping steadily in favor of the Allied powers, many independence leaders had second thoughts about collaborating with the Japanese. Japan's debacle in Imphal encouraged Burmese leftists and nationalists to form an underground

Anti-Fascist People's Liberation Freedom League. On March 15, 1945, the Burmese Army staged an armed revolt against Japanese troops.

In the Philippines, MacArthur's return sparked a widespread anti-Japanese guerrilla war with Filipino nationalists harassing Japanese troops being pushed into the mountains. Ferdinand E. Marcos became the most decorated guerrilla fighter.

Recalling the "reign of terror" under Japanese rule, Teodoro A. Agancillo, an outstanding Filipino scholar and historian singles out slapping, so often employed by the Japanese military and civilians alike, as having been the most insulting. To a Filipino, to be slapped is to be considered inferior and, for this reason, he would rather be hit in the face or body with a clenched fist than slapped.

"It was this failure of the Japanese," Agancillo argues, "to understand Filipino psychology that explains why they (Japanese) failed to win over the Filipinos to their idea of a Greater East Asia Co-Prospersity Sphere."

During former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka's visit to Southeast Asia in January 1974, many Thai and Indonesian demonstrators were still accusing Japanese businessmen and tourists of failing to understand the "values and traditions of our peoples."

Home Front In Total War

"We, of course, do not expect to return alive as we take up guns and bayonets to embark on our glorious mission of crushing the stubborn enemy. Those of you students whom we are leaving behind will, I am sure, follow in our footsteps in the not distant future and march over our dead bodies to win victory in the Greater East Asia War."

Hushed silence enveloped the jam-packed stadium in the Outer Garden of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo as Shinshiro Ebashi, a senior literature student of Tokyo Imperial University, responded to a no less impassioned send-off speech given by Shinji Okui, a medical student of Keio University.

Gathered on the morning of October 21, 1943, in what was to become 21 years later the venue for the Tokyo Olympic Games were thousands of students of 77 colleges and universities in Tokyo,

Kanagawa, Chiba and Saitama prefectures. With rifles on their shoulders, the students wearing their school caps for the last time had marched past a reviewing stand, splashing through innumerable puddles in a steady, cold rain. The spectators bleachers were filled with some 65,000 middle school boys, women's college and girls' high school students as well as the parents and relatives of the students who would soon be on the way to the war front. Girl students and family members repeatedly wiped away tears as they watched column after column of grim-faced students march behind the banners of their schools.

Millions across the country visualized the emotion-charged pageant as they listened to a description broadcast by the NHK radio.

On the reviewing stand were Education Minister Chokei Okabe, sponsor of the send-off parade, Prime Minister and concurrently War Minister Hideki Tojo, and Navy Minister Shigetaro Shimada.

"The decisive moment has come when one hundred million of us take up battle positions and overcome the hardships confronting our fatherland with the totality of our strength," Tojo intoned. "It goes without saying that in our enemy countries, the United States and Britain, too, young students are going to the battleground. But I do not have a shred of a doubt that you will overwhelm them in spirit and in combat capability."

After the three-hour parade and ceremony, the battle-bound students marched through downtown Tokyo to the plaza of the Imperial Palace and raised cheers of Banzai for the Emperor.

Many of the students did not come home alive. About 650 student-turned-officers died in the Navy's Kamikaze missions. (The earlier mentioned Ebashi luckily survived and is now a professor at his Alma Mater).

It was indeed a total war—a war which involved every man and woman, young and old; a war which demanded the maximum conformity and sacrifice of every Japanese, whether on the battlefield or on the home front.

The government announcement on October 2, 1943, of the end to the deferred drafting of college and university students except those in the medical and science departments was but one aspect of the general mobilization of the nation's manpower and resources for the conduct of

the total war.

Students over the drafting age of 20 were given only until November 5 to return to their hometowns and report for physical checkups, with enlistment scheduled to begin on December 1. The processing period of five weeks was rapid when compared with the one year granted to those coming of age in prewar years. The physical checkups were held in their hometowns so that the students would have time to pay homage to their ancestral graves—a poignant reminder that they would never have a chance to return home once they were enlisted.

Even before the students were called to the colors, the squeeze on the life of the people had been tightened almost by the month, accompanied by an ever stricter control of thought and any deviation from the official line and war effort.

Food and daily necessities, from rice to pants, had been rationed since shortly after the outbreak of the war. Each family member was given coupons with slips of “points” varying according to their age. Different “points” were allotted to different items of clothing.

Regimentation of the people’s life was made watertight by the Tonari Gumi (neighborhood units), which served both as the distribution end of rationed daily necessities and as a watchdog for any deviation from the government line.

But the austerity in the early stage of the war was of the kind that every people at war should endure with good grace. The initial spectacular victories scored by the Army and Navy gave the people a tremendous uplift. The steady deterioration of the people’s life began with the change of the tide of the war in early 1943.

The government exhorted the people to produce more planes and more ships so the valiant soldiers could match their enemies who enjoyed an abundance of material. “No want until we win” became the rallying cry for the people.

The first half of 1943 brought a series of reverses in the war situation as the United States forces mounted counteroffensives on all fronts. The people’s life came under increasing strains.

On September 22, 1943, the government eliminated males from 17 types of work and replaced them with women in the first of a series of desperate measures to put more men into war production. The day

marked the birth of the women’s volunteer corps. Women under 25 began replacing males as train and bus conductors, station ticket punchers, cooks, waiters and barbers.

The revision of the Drafting Law abolishing the deferred induction for college students was followed on Christmas Eve of 1943 by the lowering of the drafting age to 19. In less than a year, it was to be lowered to 18.

The writing on the wall became more pronounced as the year 1944 dawned. On February 2, the Japanese garrison on Kwajalein Atoll in the center of the Marshall Islands died to the last man.

Four days later, the government put all males between 12 and 60 and females between 12 and 40 (unmarried women and widows) into war production.

Beginning with the new school term on April 1, all boys and girls in secondary schools were mobilized to work in factories or for digging trenches and air shelters. The students worked 10 to 12 hours a day. Their monthly “reward,” after deduction of tuition (hardly any lessons were given) and other expenses, was fixed at ¥30 for college and high school students, and ¥20 for secondary school boys and girls.

On February 21, Tojo made himself the Army Chief of Staff in addition to his dual role as Prime Minister and War Minister in what the government said was a determined effort to streamline the conduct of the war. A month later, Admiral Mineo Koga, who had succeeded Isoroku Yamamoto as commander of the Combined Fleet, became missing near Davao, the Philippines.

The American landing on Saipan on June 15, 1944, suddenly raised the specter of air raids on the Japanese islands. The following day, several B-29 “Superfortresses” from a base in China carried the war to the home front by bombing the industrial complex in northern Kyushu.

The fall of Saipan, where the Japanese Army and Navy garrison of 32,000 and some 10,000 civilians fought to the last with hundreds of women, their children strapped on their backs, leaping off a dizzying cliff into the sea in a mass suicide, brought the Japanese islands within striking distance of the dreaded B-29s.

While the battle of Saipan raged, the government decided on June 30 to evacuate elementary school pupils, from the third to the sixth

grade, from 13 major cities to protect them against the danger of air attacks. During the summer, about 400,000 youngsters in Tokyo, Yokohama, Kawasaki, Yokosuka, Nagoya, Osaka, Kobe, Amagasaki and the five northern Kyushu cities said "Sayonara" to their tearful parents and headed for remote villages and towns. In Tokyo alone, about 250,000 of them were evacuated to 12 neighboring prefectures.

"My schoolmates and I were ordered to evacuate to Tochigi Prefecture when I was a fifth grader. What with physical checkups and shipment of personal belongings, I felt like a soldier on the way to the battlefield. I pledged to myself to stick it out until we won the war. Thus began my one and a half years of living away from my parents and my war against hunger and fleas," wrote Hiroshi Akemura in the preface to his book. "The Time Your Father Was a Child During the War." A company employe, Akemura is now the father of three.

The little bright boy that Akemura was 30 years or so ago left a remarkable record of his days in the mountain-locked town of Mato, Nasu County, Tochigi Prefecture, about 100 kilometers northeast of Tokyo. He kept a diary with a vivid summary of the day's events in the school and the dormitory. Even in that remote town, school lessons were disrupted with increasing frequency by air raid warnings. Akemura and his classmates would often go into the hills to gather herbs and cultivate vegetables to supplement their meager ration of food. From time to time, the youngster grieved at reports that the houses of their classmates had been burned down.

In fact, empty stomachs and noxious attacks of fleas and lice, and scabies resulting from malnutrition were universal among the evacuated pupils.

Two of the some 320 pupils of the Gekkohara Primary School in Tokyo's Meguro-ku were killed on the night of July 7, 1945 when B-29s bombed Kofu City, Yamanashi Prefecture, where they had been staying in a temple. Their school in Meguro and the homes of most pupils had been burned in a fierce air raid on the night of May 25 that left much of the capital's downtown region in smoldering ruins.

"When I broke the news, all the pupils burst into tears," recalled one of the teachers who had accompanied the pupils to Yamanashi.

It was a grim aspect of the total war which made no distinction between combatants on the war front and non-combatants on the home

front.

Every available plot of land in the cities was planted with pumpkin, potato and other vegetables to augment the sub-subsistence level meal, consisting most of the time of thin porridge or bean-cake. Rice was in such short supply that most city dwellers had to sell what few luxury items they had—a wedding items they had—to obtain just a few bowls of rice on the black market. It was a pathetic but common sight to see burned-out city dwellers in rags picking gleanings in suburban paddies already harvested in chilly autumn winds.

On March 5, 1944, all high-class restaurants including the Seiyoken in Tokyo's Ueno Park and Osaka's Tsuruya were shut down. Waitresses and Geisha girls joined the production force and the structures were converted into dormitories.

On April 1, strict restrictions were clamped on travel. Those making long-haul trips were required to obtain police permits. All limited express trains and dining coaches were done away with. On August 15, exactly a year before Japan's surrender, diamond and platinum were purchased from citizens and dealers at prices arbitrarily set by the government so that the precious metals could go into the production of radio weapons and aircraft parts. This was promptly followed by the requisition of aluminum, copper, iron and tin.

Gongs in Buddhist temples and bronze statues, and even the great bronze Torii gate to the Yasukuni Shrine for the war dead, were dismantled and taken to war factories.

On the night of March 10, 1945, more than 300 B-29s from Saipan, Guam and Tinian rained death and destruction on Tokyo. Whipped by strong winds, numerous fires set by napalm bombs turned the eastern half of the capital into an inferno, killing some 72,000 persons—nearly as many as were killed in the A-bomb over Hiroshima—and rendering nearly one million homeless.

Nagoya met the same fate on March 12 and Osaka on March 14. Major General Curtis LeMay, commander of the B-29 operation, carried the indiscriminate incendiary attacks to other cities of any significance except Kyoto and culminated them with the A-bomb holocausts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (The Japanese Government

displayed super-magnanimity, or was it super-callosity to the sentiment of the victims of the indiscriminate bombings, when it conferred the First Class Order of the Rising Sun on General LeMay, then U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, on December 4, 1964, for his "contribution to the development of the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force and to Japan-U.S. relations).

One authoritative survey put the number of those killed on the home front at 299,485 with 368,830 wounded and 8,750,000 people made homeless. Tokyo topped the list of the dead with 97,000, followed by Hiroshima Prefecture with 86,141 and Nagasaki 26,238.

The food was becoming even more scarce, more homes were being burned, and the newspapers and radio brought more announcement of reverses on the war front. Hungry and sleepy (for air raid warnings and alarms came almost every night, forcing them to scurry into damp shelters), the people were close to the breaking point. Yet they clung desperately to the hope that the war could still be won somehow by the "bullet of one hundred million people" or by some miracle when the Americans dared to trample underfoot their "divine land."

Kamikaze That Didn't Work

For many years Japan's Imperial Navy had captured the imagination of the little boys of this seafaring nation. Battleships like *Mustu* and *Nagato* were mighty floating citadels on which every teenage boy wished some day to become a crew member. Shapely *Nachi* and *Maya*, typical heavy cruisers, were often glorified subjects of the books that boys liked to read and reread. The young people's emotions were stirred as they uttered the romantic names of swift-moving destroyers (the Japanese term for destroyers was the less belligerent *Kuchikukan*—dispenser).

Each Japanese destroyer, in fact, carried a poetic name such as *Harusame*, *Murasame* and *Shigure* (various phases of rain); *Harukaze*, *Isokaze* and *Nowake* (of winds); and *Yamagumo*, *Asagumo* and *Yugumo* (of clouds). They were admirable, so the nation's youngsters thought, not only because of their mighty power but also their romantic names, evoking the many *Waka* and *Haiku* lines that

have sung of the beauty of Japan.

Although carefully hidden from the public eye, the existence of an invincible pair of super-battleships, 63,000 tons each, had been known and admired by millions of young Japanese by the time of Pearl Harbor. They were *Yamato*, named for the cherry blossom-adorned *Nara Basin* where the godly ancestor of Japan founded its monarchy, and *Musashi*, the *Kanto* area known for the manliness of its Samurai. A superb marriage of elegance with valor!

Stirred by the gallant tunes of "I'm a Son of the Sea," "Pacific Ocean March" and "Naval March," the dream of many boys in those days was to grow up so that they could some day "die like scattering flower petals" on the deck of a naval vessel "in defense of the divine nation Japan." Every year aspiring students vied for entrance to the Naval Academy on *Etajima Island* off *Hiroshima*.

For many of these youths, their dream of dying for Japan finally came true in October 1944 as General *MacArthur's* forces closed in on *Leyte*, the Philippines, to fulfill their commander's famous pledge—"I shall return." More precisely, however, the dream was only partly materialized because, with the bulk of the Combined Fleet already crippled in *Midway* and further smashed to pieces in that crucial month by the U.S. Navy's task forces under Admiral *William Halsey*, the young men of Japan only had a few more ships left to die on. Instead, they rigged 250 kg. bombs onto their *Zero* fighter planes and dived into the enemy fleet. The name given to this form of attack was *Kamikaze*—the Divine Wind.

The yearning for aesthetic death, long-cherished ideal of Samurai, was ever present. For the initial *Kamikaze* units were named *Shikishima*, *Yamato*, *Asahi*, *Yamazakura* and *Kikusui*. The first four names were quoted from the well-known *Waka* poem composed by a patriotic 18th Century *Kokugaku* (national learning) scholar, *Motoori-Norinaga*:

What, if asked, is the spirit pure of Japan?

Cherry blossoms glowing in the morning sun

Will be my answer.

Kikusui was the emblem of *Kusunoki-Masashige*, a warrior patriot who sacrificed his life in combating the superior forces of traitor

Ashikaga in 1336 at Minatogawa in today's Kobe. In his righteous determination, the patriotic warrior vowed to be reborn seven times to defend the country from all enemies.

The term "Kamikaze" itself called forth in the minds of Japanese the memory of the "Divine Wind" in 1274 and 1281 when the nation was about to be invaded by the fearful Mongolian armada. In both attempts, strong winds dispersed the enemy fleets, miraculously saving the nation from subjugation.

The initiation of the Kamikaze suicide attack is credited to a tragic figure, Vice Admiral Takijiro Onishi, who was assigned to command the First Air Fleet in early October of 1944. The Fleet, then headquartered in the Philippines, was a far cry from what it used to be in 1941. Falling far behind the theoretical power of 350 working planes, Onishi on his arrival in Manila found that only 149 planes were air-worthy. They were far from being sufficient to defend Leyte against the approaching enemy forces. A drop in the production of fighting planes was to blame. So many skilled personnel, furthermore, had been lost in the course of the war that not only pilots but the maintenance corps were hopelessly understaffed and lacking training. Something had to be worked out to upgrade the defense—and quickly.

Admiral Onishi may have been inspired by his close friend Yoshio Kodama, a rightist magnate dreaded to this day, who believed in the tactic of assassination—"One man, kill one enemy." Although there is no evidence as to whose idea he copied, Onishi was determined that a certain until-then-unimagined tactic should be employed to counter the superior enemy forces.

That led him to another gamble, that is, an addition to the first blow he delivered on Pearl Harbor. For Onishi was the one who had been entrusted by Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto to draft the highly speculative plan for a surprise attack on that strategic harbor. Now he had to gamble again. And the gamble, this time, was Kamikaze. Perhaps with intense spiritual power, men would be able to achieve something impossible to accomplish otherwise.

The determined admiral was well aware of his unorthodox approach. He was also conscious of his "criminal act" in sending his men to certain death. He was resolved to cleanse his crime with his own blood. But as he ordered the first suicide squad to be recruited, his staff officers only noticed that the "father of Kamikaze" seemed to be

reflecting deeply.

Onishi confided his plan first to Commander Asaichi Tamai, the man commissioned to train the young pilots. The commander had lived together with his pupils for almost a year and, while he was vehemently devoted to training them, a kind of father-son love had developed between him and his fledgling fliers.

The commander invited 23 young pilots to his quarters and revealed what Admiral Onishi had proposed. His young trainees responded without the slightest sign of hesitation. "There was a sudden burst of joy," Tamai later described the scene to his staff officer. "They seemed to have been so overwhelmed by emotion that they could not fully express it to me. But, their eyes glistening with joy to die for the fatherland, every one of them volunteered to join the squad." The Kamikaze candidates were barely 20 years old.

The first Kamikaze pilots were thus chosen. The next problem was whom to appoint the commander of the suicide unit. Both Onishi and Tamai agreed that he should be a graduate of the Naval Academy. Even the hand-picked elite of the Imperial Navy, they believed, should not be excluded from the doomed task. Youthful Lieutenant Yukio Seki was sent for. This time a staff officer was on hand to observe the conversation.

"Commander Tamai embraced Lieutenant Seki's shoulder and gently patted him on the back," the staff officer later described the tense moments.

"Seki!" the commander said. "This is the battle we have to win by all means. Admiral Onishi is thinking of unleashing human bombs. I'd like to ask you to take personal command of the initial attack. Will you do so?"

Seki was silent. With his elbows on the desk and holding his head in both hands, he was thinking deeply. Eyes closed in anguish, he remained immobile while the commander waited. Hardly a minute passed, however, before the young officer raised his head and looked up at his commander. He said clearly, "Please give me the job."

Tamai looked back at Seki's eyes intently. "Thank you!" was all that he uttered. Tears began to form in the commander's eyes.

The staff officer interrupted, "Lieutenant Seki, are you married?" Totally expressionless, Seki answered quietly, "Yes." The officer

could say no more.

That night Lieutenant Seki wrote his farewell letters to his family. One was addressed to his parents: "Honorable father, honorable mother. Forgive me for not having fulfilled my filial duties. Standing now at the crossroads of my nation's fate, I decided to sacrifice myself for the sake of Japan. Nothing can be a greater honor than this for a military man like myself. I beseech you, my parents, please take good care of yourselves."

To his wife he wrote: "Dear Mariko. I beg your forgiveness for I, as a husband, have not done enough for you before I perish. I believe that you, as wife of a Samurai, have for long been mentally prepared for this day. Be good to our parents. As I write this, I recall innumerable memories.

"Emi-chan (their daughter), always try to be cheerful."

Several futile days passed with Lieutenant Seki unable to locate enemy carriers. Every time he returned to the base, Seki apologized to Commander Tamai for not quickly carrying out his assignment. But, at 10.40 a.m. on October 25, 1944, his unit finally sighted a fleet of baby flattops in the Gulf of Leyte. Skipping over the waves so that they were not caught on the enemy radar screen, a formation of Kamikaze planes banked head-long toward the target and, after climbing to some 5,000 feet, dived onto the hostile ships. That put an end to Rear Admiral Clifton Sprague's carrier St. Lo.

Other U.S. naval vessels including a couple of auxiliary carriers were damaged by the surprise attack under the command of Lieutenant Seki. But, as a whole, the actual loss inflicted by the suicide attackers was far smaller than Admiral Onishi had hoped for. Many human bombs were shot down before they reached the target. And, even when they succeeded in crashing their planes into an enemy ship, the damage was in many cases only minor.

Strange to say, however, the scale of damage they inflicted on the enemy was not what really counted as far as the Kamikaze raiders were concerned. Rather, standing at the threshold of a journey to sure death, they embraced a kind of consoling paradox—that the very worthlessness of their death, could heighten the spiritual significance of their physical sacrifice.



Emperor Hirohito in formal attire for his Coronation on November 10, 1928.



Empress Nagako at the Coronation in twelve-robe Juni-hitoe court costume.



Rebel forces marching before the Diet Building on the snowy morning of February 26, 1936. With the heart of Tokyo occupied, key politicians slain, the nation was on the brink of a civil strife.



A woman attendant in Kimono pumping fuel. Working girls in the 1930s were the vanguards of the "awakening sex."

Military salute to the Emperor's "Sacred Photo" (in a miniature shrine) was a daily ceremony at every primary school.



Village headman and a police officer urging a father not to "sell" his daughters in 1934.

Wife seeing off her husband—would he be coming back from the battle front in China?





Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka addressing a luncheon at the Imperial Hotel in October 1940 to celebrate the conclusion of the Japanese-German-Italian treaty of alliance.



An executed Chinese in Tientsin. Mainichi photo stamped "Printing Prohibited" by army censor.



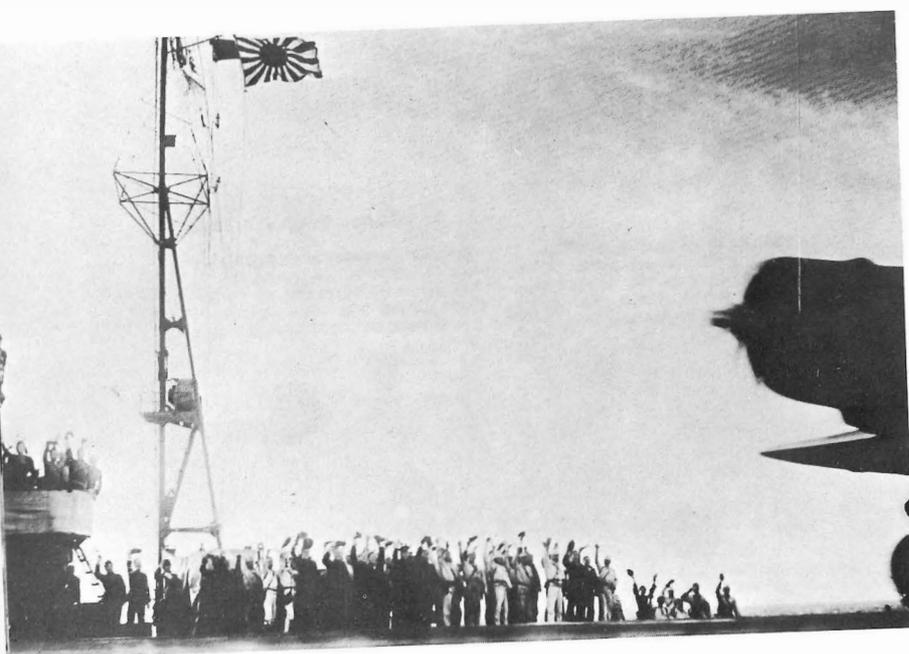
Quagmire - two army officers wading through marsh in central China.

Participants in the Greater East Asia Conference. Left to right: U Ba Maw, Chang Ching-hui, Wang Ching-wei, Tojo, Wan Waitayakon, Jose P. Laurel and Subhas Chandra Bose.



Imperial Army infantry troops charging into a Chinese stronghold in northern China.





→ Lt. General A. E. Percival (right) signing the document for the unconditional surrender of Singapore on February 15, 1942



← Pearl Harbor-bound, an Imperial Navy Zero takes off from the deck of a carrier (December 7, 1941)

Start of the "Bataan Death March." Disarmed U.S. fighting men were ordered to walk south through the jungle. Fatigued, hungry and thirsty, many perished under the blazing sun.



Japanese nurses chatting with Indian soldiers in Singapore. The city was renamed "Shonan."

Flying low through anti-aircraft fire, a Kamikaze plane plunges into the USS Yorktown. The suicide assault was in line with the traditional Japanese idea of self-sacrifice.



The superbattleship Yamato, 63,000 tons, never reached its destination — Okinawa.



A Kamikaze pilot pens a brief farewell message to his mother.

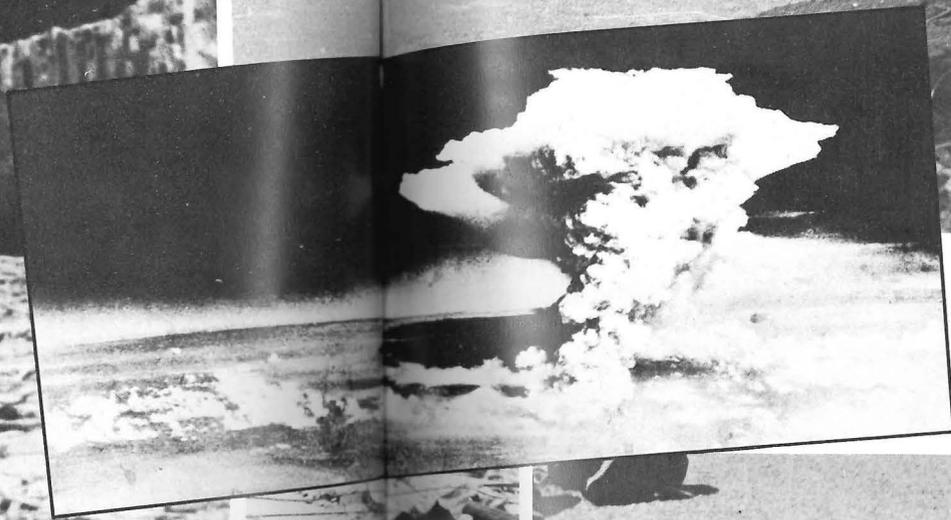




Urakami Cathedral (Nagasaki) destroyed by A-bomb. For the city's Catholics, it was the second martyrdom after the 17th Century Christian rebellion.



Carpet bombing by U.S. air raiders left most of Japan's major cities in cinders.



Mushroom cloud over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, the day of horror and agony.



Air raid victims in northern Kobe city. The town was an inferno.



...And on August 15, 1945, the subjects prostrate themselves before the Imperial Palace to apologize to the Sovereign for their inability to win the war.



↑ General Douglas MacArthur (right) watches as Mamoru Shigemitsu signs the surrender document for the Japanese government.



→ This photo galvanized the hearts and minds of many Japanese. The diminutive and stiff Hirohito presenting a striking contrast with the relaxed MacArthur

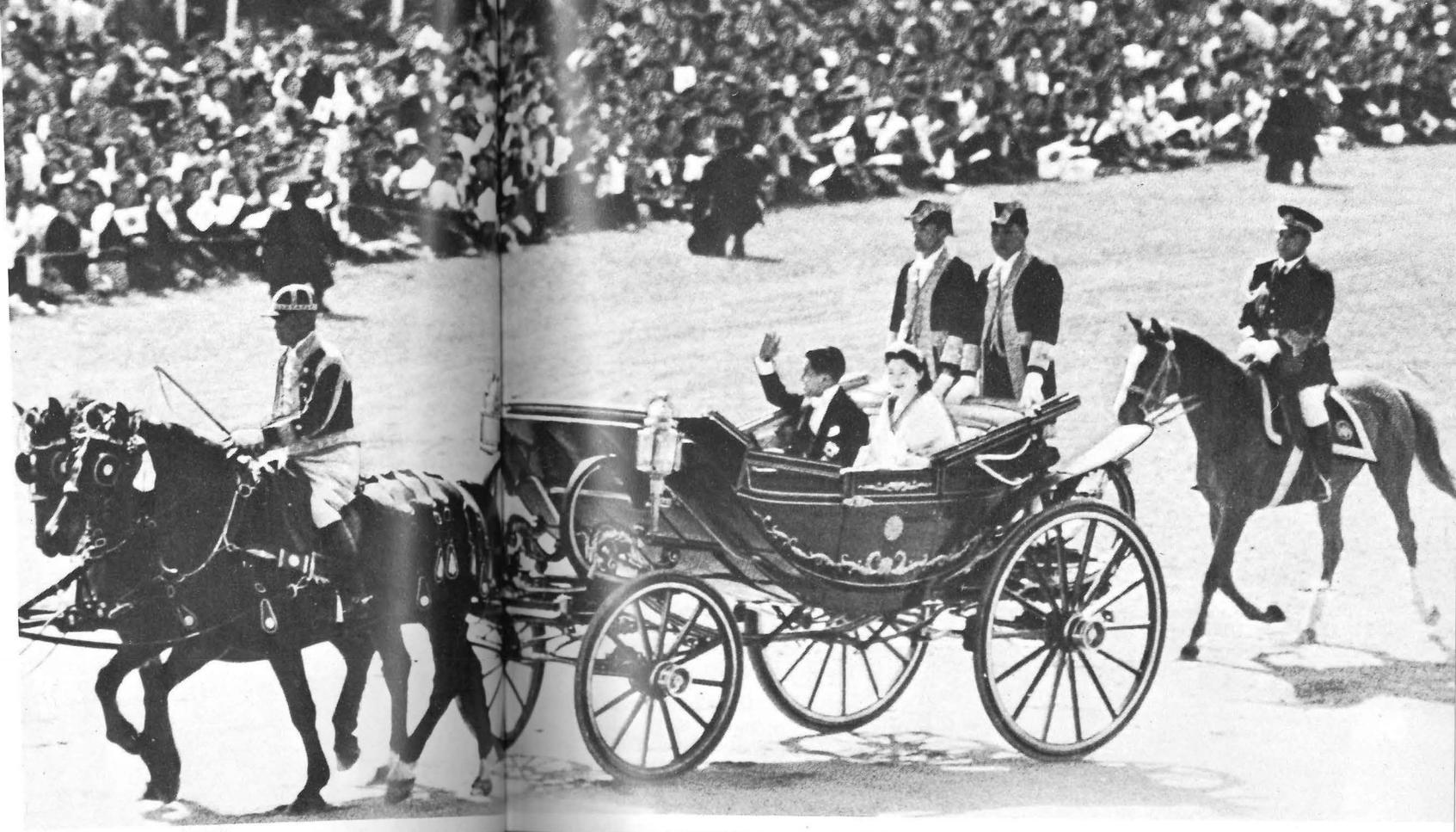


To the shy Japanese women, the GI's seemed at first like creatures from outer space. This photo was taken close by the Imperial Moat, Tokyo.

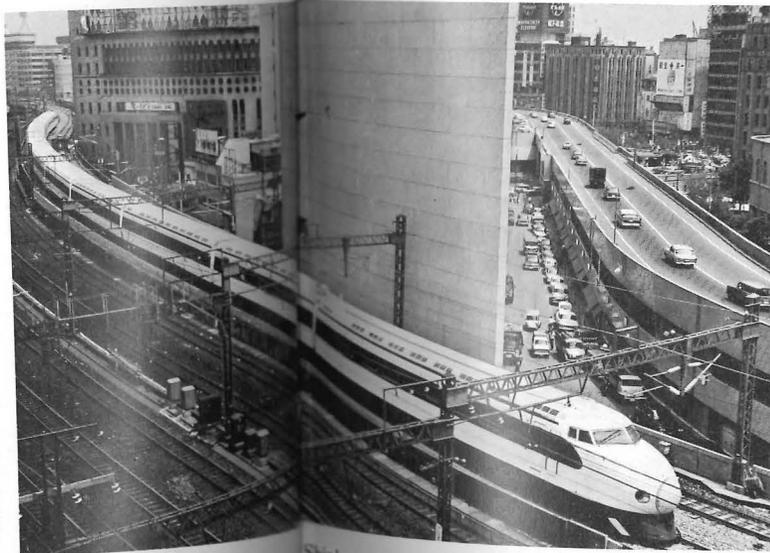
Following their wedding on April 10, 1959, the Crown Prince and his Consort set out on a procession in downtown Tokyo amid the cheers of hundreds of thousands of happy wellwishers.



Rising from an obscure factory owner, Konosuke Matsushita symbolized booming economy.



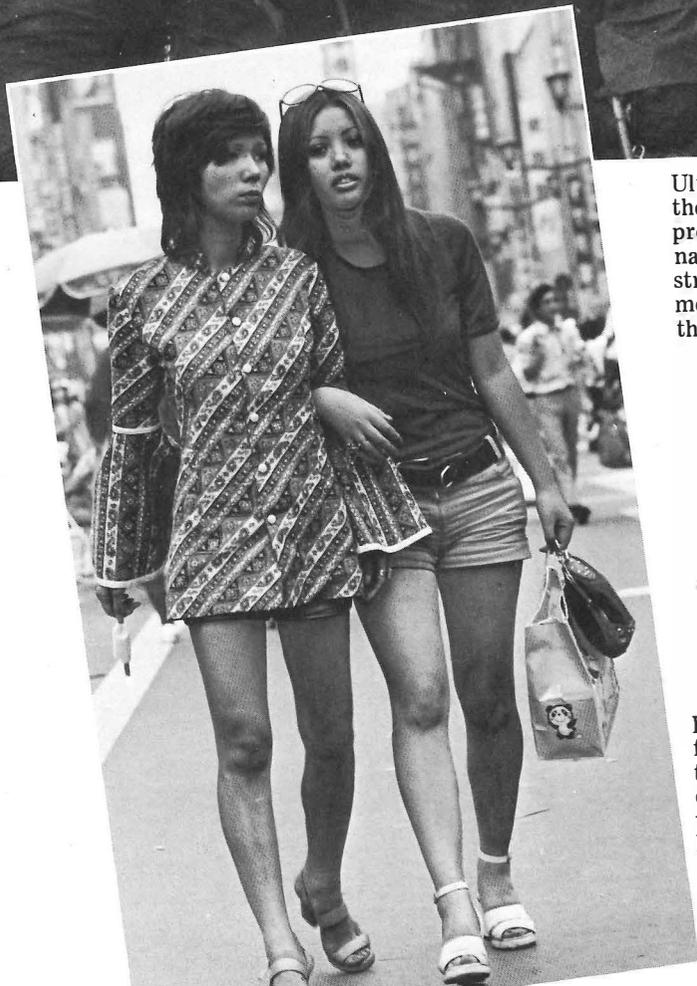
Inejiro Asanuma of the Japan Socialist Party was stabbed on October 12, 1960. This photo won a Pulitzer Prize.



Shinkansen's "Hikari" bullet train swishes past central Tokyo at 210 kilometers per hour.



A few minutes before his death, novelist Yukio Mishima looks down at his listeners.



Ultraleftist students fighting the police at the site of the projected New Tokyo International Airport. The fierce struggle against the establishment led to the birth of the dreaded Japan Red Army.

Hot pants were the prevailing fashion among young girls in the early 1970s. Gone are the days when Japanese women were shy and never let their legs be exposed to public view.

Had they been able to sink one enemy carrier in exchange for a Zero fighter they manned, it would be no more than observing the conventional tactic of "sacrifice the small in order to achieve a big result." The principles of Kamikaze were totally different. It was essentially the self-effacing act committed by individuals spiritually devoted to the divine land of Japan. By voluntarily annihilating themselves they could perhaps expect the heavenly deities to sympathize with their righteous cause, and Heaven would in return be sending forth a real Divine Wind as it did during the attempted Mongolian invasions.

But, even if they failed to evoke any supernatural response, the sacrifice itself would still be significant because it was a wholly self-fulfilling act of devotion—regardless of reward. Though it may sound a paradox, the less damage they could cause the enemy, the even more meaningful would their death be from the spiritual point of view.

Today no sane war historian would admit that the Kamikaze squad achieved anything strategically substantial in the developments of the later stage of the Pacific War. More than 2,000 young men, in fact, sacrificed their lives—only to sink a baby carrier, several destroyers and half a dozen transport ships. But few at the same time would deny that the emergence of the suicide raiders added a certain spiritual aspect to the nature of the otherwise conventional war.

It is easy to laugh at the Kamikaze planes' ineffectuality. But that is not the whole picture. While attempting to sink big ships, unrewarded death was what most of those patriotic youths hoped for. Consciously or unconsciously, they opened their mind's eye to this paradox on the eve of their one-way trips. For this reason they were deified by the rest of the Japanese while dreaded by American fighting men as desperados who were less human than ordinary human beings.

It was not naive heroism. It was not blind fanaticism. It was not a craving for more enemy blood. But it was the realization of a gossamer life and everlasting justice supported by the purest motivation that led the young Japanese to their willful deaths.

The forerunners of Kamikaze were the pilots of the midget submarines that sneaked, or tried to sneak, into Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. With the sole exception of Kazuo Sakamaki who was

obstructed from carrying out the final attack by trouble with his sub's engine, surfaced, lost consciousness and became the "POW Number One" in Honolulu, nine men died on the spot. Although their attack proved to be hardly more than futile, the nine pilots were extolled back home and they were made Gunshin (war gods).

Even before Lieutenant Seki jammed his Zero on the U.S. fleet in the Gulf of Leyte, several suicidal attacks had been launched during the desperate battles in Guadalcanal and Mindanao. By the time the U.S. forces stormed Okinawa, Kamikaze had become such a standard tactic of Japanese forces that the term Tokko-tai (special attack corps) was as well known to the Japanese as "devil divers" were to the Americans. The self-sacrifice inspired the Japanese and bolstered their morale as did so many isolated troops who died to defend the south sea islands rather than surrender to enemy forces. Gyokusai, literally "shattered diamond," was observed by the defenders of Attu, Saipan, Pelelieu, Iwo Jima and countless other southern atolls. The death en masse, called "Banzai attack" by the Americans, is today attributed to Senjinkun, Imperial Army's code of conduct issued by General Tojo in January 1941.

To keep one's name unstained rather than to survive in disgrace was no doubt the prescribed rule in the rigorous document. However, one would tend to believe that the tendency had existed long before General Tojo put it in words. Nor has the tradition completely died out in today's Japan.

Remember the Kamikaze raiders who belly-landed their plane in the occupied airfield at Yomitan, central Okinawa, on May 25, 1945. The pilots, emerging from the plane's cockpit, hurled hand-grenades at parked U.S. planes and dumps of aviation gasoline finally to be gunned down to death by enemy machine guns. The suicidal act presents a striking resemblance to the Japanese trio who attacked Lod Airport, Israel, 27 years later.

Few Imperial Navy vessels remained active by the time the Kamikaze tactic had to be employed in full swing in 1945. Japanese youths no longer had any opportunity to die on board romantically named ships. Instead, they had to be content with giving euphoric names to their suicide formations. Each unit of the one-way travelers was named Shiragiku (White Chrysanthemum), Ginga (Milky Way)

Jinrai (Godly Thunder), Mitate (Emperor's Shield) or Oka (Cherry Blossoms). Midget submarines sent out from mother submarines were called Kaiten (Turn the Heavenly Fate) and Koryu (Biting Dragon). A detachment of loaded speed-boats was named Shinyo (Shaking the Ocean). The names were products of genuinely patriotic, if not slightly sentimental, determination to save Japan from approaching doom.

"As the air raid on the Japanese archipelago was intensified, we noticed a definite change in the morale of the Kamikaze volunteers stationed in southern Kyushu," testifies Captain Rikihei Inokuchi, the staff officer who asked Lieutenant Seki if he was married. "They became more desperate than ever. They became more agitated emotionally by the conviction that only by their deaths could the fatherland be saved from imminent destruction.

"There were, however, other breeds of Kamikaze pilots who held their lives dearer. These youths were so reluctant to volunteer that the base commander had to call the unwilling candidates and talk them into the mission of self-sacrifice."

The minds and hearts of Kamikaze nominees did understandably oscillate between the joy of patriotism and despair of approaching death. The moment of uncertainty varied according to the individual, Captain Inokuchi says, in some cases lasting for a few short minutes to several painful days in others. In most cases, however, they were sooner or later able to overcome the "fondness of life," eventually opening their eyes to the blessed realization of "everlasting justice." They would soon be smiling benignly at the tiny moment of joy they experienced in the last stage of their short life. Singing the song of their alma mater, a letter from an ex-girl friend, local girls visiting the base to demonstrate folk dances, or even opening of a can of pineapple made them indescribably happy. Totally immersed in a unique state of happiness, they were feeling the bliss of every moment.

Letters written by Kamikaze pilots comprise one of the most moving collections of literature that appeals straight to the hearts of readers.

Commander Minoru Hisaya, graduate of Osaka University, on the eve of his mission to the Marianan seas: "My beloved brother. Your big brother is now all prepared to jump into the arms of imperishable eternity. At this moment, neither life nor death harasses my mind any

longer. It is occupied by a certain serene nothingness. I only hope you will grow up to become an intelligent young man. I advise you not to waste a single day in your school life. Don't forget this last advice of mine. And dearest young sister: Have you ever seen lotus flowers, so purely beautiful despite the muddiest pond they grow in? I want you to live like one of them. Try to live a life absolutely pure and right. However filthy this world may be, you can stay aloof in your purity if you so wish. Please do not forget your brother who has loved you in the purest depth of his heart."

Masataka Furukawa, 23, rank unknown, graduate of the Osaka University of Foreign Studies, before his mission to Okinawa: "Rolling waves will be my tomb. Gathering clouds will be my epitaph. My doubt over the meaning of a man's life still torments me now that I'm soon to forsake it. The more I think about it, the further I am led into a state of ambiguity. The only things I can be sure of now are that Japan is fighting a decisive war, that godly Japan is free from all attempts to destroy it, and that I have to die to prove the truth of all. Die I must. Die I must bravely, so that I can undo this knot of personal doubts."

Hajime Oikawa, 23, rank unknown, graduate of Morioka Technical High School in Iwate Prefecture, before his mission to the south sea islands: "Who do you think I am; a fool who has come to realize how dear this thing life is only three days before my death? A rainy day gives me another day of survival today—a bonanza. How delightful it is to scare my friend that I'd become a ghost tomorrow and will probably wake him in the midst of the night. My co-pilot is sound asleep beside me. Could this silly face of his be the face of a war-god tomorrow? How funny to listen to jazz music on the night before going out to kill the jazzy Americans! How funny, too, is the servant who just came up to me to ask how many beds he should make tomorrow!"

There are thousands of more letters in a similar vein. Some people may discard them as a crude manifestation of sentimentalism. But when one reads a brush-painted letter that keeps repeating "Okaasan" (Mother!) from beginning to end, he can hardly remain unmoved by the sincerity with which the young—so very young—writer penned the heartfelt word.

The letters of Tokko-tai pilots represent the loftiness as well as weakness of the human mind. They had long been convinced that the godly nation would forever remain unsmearred. When, therefore, all

the realities bore so many signs to the contrary, they decided to estrange the realities and espouse the impossible idealism. On the loftiness there is hardly need to elaborate.

The Japanese people back home were naturally moved deeply by the noble sacrifices by their youths. "The victory achieved by Lieutenant Seki and his five Sacred Eagles filled us with the deepest veneration," according to Tomio Nakano, then chancellor of Waseda University. "Waseda students and myself stood up the moment we heard the news and silently prayed for the repose of the sacred souls. If we were to do no more than feel impressed by the noble act of our beloved sons, however, it would be a slovenly negligence of our duty. We have to follow the path of our admirable youths. Victory is close at hand. Only by following the example of Lieutenant Seki can we prove that we are the products of this godly country."

Chancellor Toshiyuki Majima of Osaka University was also zealous in his glorification of Kamikaze. "The essence of Yamato-Damashii (Japanese spirit) we all know is to belittle our humble lives for the sake of the Emperor. And this has been so for the milleniums of this nation's history. We are far superior in our spiritual strength to American and British devils. We have to show it now."

The last batch of Kamikaze planes took off from Oita base in northern Kyushu on the evening of August 15, several hours after the declaration of surrender was broadcast over the radio. Leading the suicidal squad was Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki, then commander of all naval Kamikaze. He had been holding himself responsible for the death of the Commander of the Combined Fleet Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto (Ugaki was the chief of staff at the time of the Commander's death) and for the deaths of so many young Kamikaze pilots.

He headed his plane in the direction of Okinawa and never returned. His death was in all probability a futile one because no damage was reported by the U.S. fleet in Okinawan waters that evening. He, too, seems to have died with gathering clouds as his epitaph.

Vice Admiral Takijiro Onishi, the father of Kamikaze, was the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations at the end of the war. Having

secretly determined to kill himself ever since he sent out Lieutenant Seki, he cared little about his and his family's safety. He seldom took cover even when Tokyo was under the severest air attack. His rightist friend Yoshio Kodama remembers the day when Onishi's home in Shinjuku was burned to ashes. Onishi would not budge from his office where he was busily mapping out the next operation.

"You must pay some attention to your family," Kodama tried to reason with him. "I'm going to see if your wife escaped safely. How about that?"

Onishi's answer was quiet and curt: "Please do so if you wish. In case you find my wife dead, dig a hole and let her lie there peacefully."

On August 14, the Imperial Conference finally decided to accept the terms of the Potsdam Declaration. Onishi was strongly against the decision. He broke precedent by pleading directly to the Emperor, "Your Majesty, I beseech you, give us some more time. The Imperial Navy has not done its best to live up to Your Majesty's command. We'll strive really hard from now on. So, Your Majesty, I beg of you, give us five more months."

The Emperor silently left the room, leaving Onishi alone and helpless. Not a single other attendant of the conference would speak to the depressed admiral as they hurriedly dispersed.

From the Imperial Palace, Admiral Onishi went to the office of Kodama to borrow two Japanese swords. Kodama handed them to him, knowing what Onishi wanted to do with them.

In the early morning of the day after the unconditional surrender was announced, Kodama was visited by Onishi's chauffeur. He was immediately taken to the admiral's modest official residence. There in a room, squatting on a Tatami, Onishi had made a cross cut across his stomach, exactly according to the ancient rite of the Samurai. The room was a sea of thick blood. Onishi's intestines were all before him.

The admiral stared at a naval surgeon who was with Kodama. Still conscious with a mighty effort of will power, he said, "Doctor, don't do anything to stop me from dying."

Kodama, tears streaking down his cheeks, pleaded for permission to send for Mrs. Onishi. "Admiral Onishi, please, please hold on! Wait until your wife arrives!" Kodama shouted.

Onishi smiled back gently, "Baka (Idiot)! This is a military man dying. What Samurai do you expect would wait for his wife's arrival at

a time like this."

The "father of Kamikaze" thus put an end to his life—to join all his youthful subordinates who had preceded him.

Blood Vs. Iron In Okinawa

"Do you mean to say they don't have any guns? Not even a rifle?"

"No, sir, not a single rifle."

"How about a spear? Or perhaps bows and arrows?"

"No, not even those."

"Then they must at least have daggers."

"Nothing whatsoever, sir. As far as we know, they have never experienced war in the Ryukyus. The islands are absolutely peaceful within and without. They are hospitable to anyone who comes close to their islands."

Okinawa was for the first time in its history being discussed by Westerners. The scene was the island of St. Helena. The speaker was Captain Basil Hall, skipper of an English merchant ship, on his way home from a voyage to China and Okinawa in 1816. And the disbelieving listener was Napoleon Bonapart, in exile on the South Atlantic island.

The French military genius just couldn't believe what he was hearing about people who loved peace so passionately. Incredulous at the beginning of the conversation about any band of men totally ignorant of how to fight a war, the deposed Emperor of France was ultimately led to admire those who could defend a nation not by arms but by disarming smiles.

Had he been reborn 129 years later, however, he would have disbelieved seeing the same island teeming with Japanese soldiers this time, ready to fight the Americans. For, in 1945, Okinawa was the scene of a bloodbath.

The pre-invasion American bombardment of Okinawa was like an "iron typhoon." Shells dropped en masse, accompanied by deafening noise and blasts everywhere. Houses, trees, even stonebuilt family

tombs came crashing down. The whole island heaved.

Nevertheless, there were some moments of miraculous calmness as if the typhoon were preparing for another gigantic hammering. Perhaps the American gunners were having their lunch.

Students of the Okinawa First Girls' High School, Naha, were crowding a small annex at the end of the school playground for their commencement ceremony. They had previously been told once that there would be no ceremony that year because "the Americans are coming." But late in the afternoon of Thursday, March 29, 1945, Principal Noda came back from the Army headquarters bringing back happy tidings. The military had approved holding the ceremony. The students were given a night's leave from their "voluntary service" at a nearby military base.

The annex was much smaller than the school auditorium, but much less would it be the target of shelling. So, by 9 o'clock that night, the girls sat in the darkened room and started singing "Look Up at the Lofty Teaching of Our Teachers," a traditional commencement song. Singing that song had always been a sentimental occasion at the parting ceremony every year. This year, it was even more poignant because the entire atmosphere was so very abnormal. One of the girls whispered to her classmate, "Don't you remember the bush thrush last year?" Certainly. She would never forget. A year ago during the commencement ceremony, a thrush began chirping outside the window a minute or so after their seniors had finished singing the traditional song. In the hushed auditorium everybody could hear the chirping. A romantic harbinger of spring. It was then the beginning of the new season when everything was peaceful and promising.

Today, a year later, they were attending the ceremony in the lull of the enemy's shelling—an ominous quietude that would soon be broken. A pair of candles set on the rostrum were the only illumination in the somber room. Not a bird was singing outside. Many teachers were missing—mobilized for the defense of the island. Few parents were present. Nor were the graduating girls aware of what would happen to themselves a week later.

Heavy bombing and shelling continued carpeting the island. On Sunday, instead of the spring, the Americans arrived.

In the early morning of April 1, the first day of the new school year.

a Japanese observation post sighted "at least 12 battleships, 13 cruisers, 50 destroyers and 300 large transport ships as far as we can count. Also countless small vessels in heavy concentration off Kadena. They are approaching!"

At 08.30, the U.S. Tenth Army started landing its forces on Hagushi beach west of Kadena, central Okinawa. Surging waves of LSTs disgorged helmeted infantrymen as well as field guns, jeeps and heavy tanks. Both Kadena and Yomitan air-strips fell into enemy hands before sunset.

The Japanese 32nd Army put up only feeble resistance at the outset of the first major showdown of ground forces. From a few advanced posts, suicide squads, organized by whoever had survived the shelling, set out toward the two occupied airfields that night to kill GIs with swords and bayonets.

It was not that the Commander of the 32nd Army, Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima was reluctant to meet the enemy. He has been well aware of the vulnerability of central Okinawa. In fact he had expected exactly what the U.S. Army did on that L-Day. Ushijima's strategy was to let enemy forces land rather than to face them on the beach. With substantial U.S. forces on the island he would be able to score a greater victory, so he believed, in the more hilly area north of Shuri.

The quick fall of the two air bases, however, was a shock to Ushijima's staff officers. Squatting in a narrow cave beneath the ancient Shuri castle, they had a heated discussion on Tuesday night over what to do. Fiery chief of staff Lieutenant General Isamu Cho insisted on abandoning the original strategic plan and launching a general counter-offensive against the enemy.

Cho had long represented a radical faction of the Imperial Army. A member of Sakura-Kai (Cherry Blossom Society), an intra-army band of patriots, Cho had once planned a coup d'etat in March 1931. The coup proving abortive, he planned another in October of the same year. Had this coup been successful, Cho would have appointed himself the Director General of the Metropolitan Police Department.

Nine years later, the impatient general was in Okinawa to "bolster" the 32nd Army under gentlemanly General Ushijima. Other staff officers opposed Cho, contending that luring the enemy forces to

the Shuri front had been an established and, therefore, well-rehearsed strategy of the Army and that many entrenchments had been built for that purpose.

Cho would not listen to prudent advice. He retorted: Did not the Combined Fleet headquarters want the two fields recaptured quickly? The Navy obviously had some decisive offensive in mind and, to make it successful, they were asking that the enemy air force be cleared from the Okinawan skies. Politely but firmly the Navy had in fact sent a message to Ushijima: "We ask your force to do everything to block the enemy activities from the two occupied airfields for at least ten days. We presume you have already made preparations to do so."

Many commanders of various advanced posts were also asking their headquarters to take immediate action before the landed enemy fortified its position.

"Don't ask for guaranteed victory. We must not be afraid of our inferior manpower," Cho persisted. He finally pushed through his viewpoint.

But the order for a general counterattack had to be postponed several times due to the enemy's heavy barrage. In spite of some adventuresome night attacks, a few of which proved to be only moderately successful, Ushijima's forces suffered more losses than they inflicted on the U.S. forces.

Although the Shuri defense line kept holding back the enemy advance surprisingly well, a heavy toll was taken at and around Kakazu and Maeda Ridges—the beginning of the Japanese casualties that by the fall of Okinawa were to exceed 100,000 men lost.

The Imperial Navy, in the meanwhile, decided to sacrifice the super-battleship Yamato for the rescue of Okinawa. Of the two giant ships that Japan had built for the war, the sister battleship Musashi had already been lost in Philippine waters. The Yamato, the single remaining pride of the Combined Fleet, was anchored off Tokuyama, Yamaguchi Prefecture, waiting for the order to sail out on its last sortie.

Ensign Mitsuru Yoshida, Yamato's communication officer, today the Chief of the Government Depository Department, the Bank of Japan, describes how an air of desperation prevailed in the ship's gun room on the eve of its last campaign.

Ever since the squadrons of their own navy air force had sunk the Prince of Wales in December 1941, Japanese naval officers had become fully conscious of the futility of "big ship with big guns." Yamato's young officers too were skeptical of the Suijo Tokko-Kogeki (Special Naval Attack) tactic by the 63,000-ton battleship.

Yoshida quotes one of the officers who made a sardonic remark, "There have been three giant follies committed in the history of mankind. They are the Great Wall, the pyramids, and Yamato." Many of those present concurred.

Ensign Yoshida went to his quarters to find his mate, Ensign Nakatani, sobbing as he leaned over his hammock. Yoshida saw that Nakatani was holding a letter from his mother in the United States. The letter had just arrived, Yoshida was told, to the Nisei officer via Switzerland. His mother was writing in faltering Japanese: "How are you? We are all fine here. Do your best in your job. I am looking forward to the day when we can meet again in peace."

Nakatani had been studying at Keio University when the war broke out. From the time of his assignment to the Yamato as a deciphering officer, he had often been an object of open derision for his "Americanized behavior." But, now, Yoshida thought, "This Nisei ensign is sailing to the bottom of the sea with me, and with the Yamato."

Yoshida knew perfectly well that the coming campaign would be a desperate one. He knew that General Ushijima had sent a wireless to the Yamato, advising the commander to call off the whole operation, "Sincere thanks for your cooperation. But this is not a good opportunity. Please postpone your special sortie."

The commander in Okinawa was alluding to the enemy's strong air power over the island. The general knew and every young officer on board the Yamato knew that the battleship would never be able to reach Okinawa successfully.

Despite Ushijima's warning, Yamato and its escort of one cruiser and eight destroyers left its Seto Inland Sea base at 15.20 on April 6, 1945. The fleet was not covered by a single escort plane. The battleship carried only 4,000 tons of fuel, barely enough for a one-way trip to Okinawa.

Vice Admiral Seiichi Ito, commander of the fleet, had strongly

opposed the sortie at the beginning. But now, taking personal command of the mission, the determined admiral sent his message to all men on board: "Heaven stands firmly on our side. The fate of the Imperial nation rests on your shoulders. Do your best in your resolution to annihilate the enemy by displaying the spirit of the Naval Special Attack forces!"

Ensign Yoshida, however, secretly likened the last sortie to "a man walking alone into the darkness of night with a lantern in his hand."

By the early morning of April 7, Yamato's fleet was off the southern tip of Osumi Peninsula, Kagoshima Prefecture, heading west at 18 knots when it received a cable from the Navy Ministry: "His Majesty the Emperor has dispatched H.I.H. Prince Takamatsu to the Grand Shrines of Ise to pray for the success of the Special Attack Fleet."

All this while the fleet was trying hard, but in vain, to shake off an enemy reconnaissance plane above Yamato. Belatedly the naval air base at Kanoya, Kagoshima, sent 20 Zeros to escort the 10-ship fleet only to have them shot down, all of them, by U.S. fighters waiting in ambush.

Among the Zero pilots killed over the Yamato was the son of the commanding Admiral Ito.

Ensign Yoshida, standing on the ship's bridge close to the admiral, noticed that Ito received the report calmly "without moving a muscle of his face."

To the U.S. Navy's task force sailing off Okinawa, the Yamato and its fleet were "the last of the big game," big but defenseless without air cover. The 63,000-ton game was now practically at the mercy of the U.S. air raiders. Vice Admiral Marc Mitscher sent off his planes, with the first wave arriving in the sky over the Japanese fleet by 12.20 on April 7.

"Three large formations approaching!" Yamato's radar officer shrieked. "Three hundred on starboard and 250 on port bow . . ."

Yamato increased its speed to 27 knots and continued on a zigzag course.

"Here they come!"

Twenty-four ack-ack guns and 150 machine guns of the Yamato opened fire on more than 100 planes of the first wave of diving T6Fs and TBFs. The anti-aircraft fire was thick but soon Ensign Yoshida was sighting scores of torpedoes closing in on the giant ship from all directions.

The Yamato managed to swerve from most of them but failed to escape the last one that crashed against its port bow.

"We got one at last, didn't we?" Chief Navigator looked back at Yoshida and smiled faintly.

Close on the heels of the first wave of planes came the second, and then the third. The huge steel structure of the Yamato was soon covered with flowing blood and severed human limbs amidst the cries of "Banzai!" by dying sailors.

The Yamato, however, survived five waves of enemy air raids. With her hull tilting 35 degrees to portside, the giant battleship was still sailing at 12 knots.

The lull continued for only about 10 minutes.

Soon the sixth, seventh and eighth waves of fresh attackers were swarming over the battleship. Machine gun bullets fell on her deck "like rain" and collapsing geysers washed her bridge "like a typhoon."

The announcement came: "impossible to regain balance." Admiral Ito saluted everyone on the bridge and left for his room where he was to stay to share the ship's fate.

And finally Ensign Yoshida saw the captain of the ship, Rear Admiral Kosaku Ariga, start binding his body to the compass.

"Abandon ship" was signaled. A staff officer left the bridge, reverently holding the Emperor's photo.

Less than 10 officers were now left on the bridge. They looked at Admiral Ariga, a well-liked captain who was secretly nicknamed "Gorilla" by the junior officers. The admiral looked back at them. "Why don't you follow the order and abandon ship?" he ordered sternly.

"Captain, Dozo!" a signalman crawled to him and offered four biscuits.

"Arigato," the admiral took them with a smile. By the time he ate the second biscuit, the Yamato began capsizing.

The Yamato sank in a huge explosion at 14.23—marking the end of

the "big ship with big guns" age.

Yoshida was rescued and brought back to Sasebo. After a few days of recuperation in the naval hospital, he was given a special leave. First of all, he wanted to surprise his parents.

Arriving home, he was welcomed calmly by his father. "My son, sit down. Have this cup of Sake."

The father invited him to the dinner table without any sign of agitation. His mother stood up silently and vanished into kitchen to prepare some Tsukidashi (simple relish).

Yoshida, casually looking back at a letter rack, found his last telegram of Sayonara on top of other mail. His own farewell message, he saw, was so smeared by his parents' tears that he could not make a word of it. Then and then only was he able to realize how his parents felt on their son's safe return.

The collapse of Yamato and its fleet sealed the fate of Okinawa. Maeda Ridge had to be abandoned temporarily on April 26. Kakazu had fallen two days earlier.

On the day Maeda fell, the officers and men in Okinawa heard the broadcast of new Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki: "Together with you, brave fighting men, I am resolved to sacrifice my humble self in joining my effort with yours. I ask that you respond to Heavenly providence in smashing the enemy who now occupies a part of Okinawa."

Not a single soldier, not even General Ushijima, then knew that Suzuki had secretly been commissioned to negotiate the end of the war with the U.S.

Group after group of Kamikaze dived onto the enemy fleet off Kadena. But rigged with a ton of explosive and sometimes even 1.6 tons of it, the suicide planes were so slow in approaching their targets that most of them were shot down into the sea. No longer was there any effective strategy to stop the continuous unloading of the U.S. military supplies.

By early May the Battle of Okinawa showed every sign of a war of attrition. On May 7, isolated detachments of Japanese soldiers were still in a cave close by Maeda Ridge, resisting the enemy's advance. But the Japanese front was slowly being rolled back on both flanks by the repeated attacks of the Tenth Army and Marine Corps. Every yard

of their advance and every inch of Japanese retreat was paved with abandoned bodies.

Fresh Japanese reinforcements were thrown in from the south of the island but to no substantial avail. By May 21, the 32nd Army under General Ushijima was standing with the city of Shuri at its back.

Mobilized as nurses, students of the Okinawa First Girls' High School were retreating with the soldiers. "If taken prisoner by the Americans," they were warned by the Heitai-san (friendly soldiers), "every man will be killed, flattened under bulldozers, every woman will be raped and re-raped."

They should escape from the "vicious hands" of the approaching Americans by all means, was the dire warning. But where could they escape? There was absolutely not a single square inch of safe land in Okinawa—safe from the enemy's continuous carpet shelling.

Only comparatively less dangerous were the natural as well as man-made caves that lined the craggy shoreline of southern Okinawa. Many of the caves had been turned into field hospitals. The escaping highschool girls took refuge in these caves.

Hundreds of wounded soldiers were daily transported from the northern front and the population of the caves multiplied sharply.

During the daytime, the girls tended the groaning soldiers. Soothing the despairing and applying bandage to the mortally injured, they sometimes had to take chopsticks to pick maggots that quickly ate into the open wounds. The air of the makeshift hospitals was unbearably stuffy and nauseating with the smell of blood.

By night, the girls had to venture out of the caves into the flare-bomb lit terrain. Each of them had to fetch a bucketful of fresh water. Water was badly in need to wash wounds, to wash bloodstained clothes, and very often to moisten the lips of dying men.

Water was also vital for the girls' survival. A cup or two of water, a bowl of rice and a piece of sugar cane were generally the only victuals that could be distributed among the caves' inhabitants.

With bucket in hand, they dashed from the cave to nearby well. Moving objects made a very good target for the U.S. machine-gunners. Many girls were killed on their mission. The wounded inflated even more the number of patients, many of whom were simply abandoned in the cave to die.

Few civilians thought, however, of surrendering to the enemy forces. Plagued by the murder-rape obsession, many surged south in a desperate search for a safe shelter. Soldiers also were taking cover in the south.

Since May 29, when the vanguard of the Tenth Army started arriving at the ancient citadel of Shuri, an effective defense line was no longer formed. By mid-June, General Ushijima moved the headquarters of the 32nd Army to Mabuni, a hill at the southernmost tip of the island.

Soon the cavernous hideouts in the area became over-populated. Many civilian refugees were refused entry to caves occupied by the Japanese military. Others were ordered to evacuate from a shelter they had taken great pains to secure. "For operational reasons," the army had the priority, the Okinawans were told.

The civilians, the original inhabitants of Okinawa, had to move from one cave to another in a frantic search for safety. During that search, hundreds were shot by the GIs and sometimes by the Japanese soldiers. For both armies were by now very close to each other. The American forces occupied the surface while the Japanese held the underground of the island.

Many mothers were told to "dispose of the baby," because a crying baby would easily draw the attention of American flame-throwers. Some, in fact, were threatened—their babies would be stabbed if they cried again. But cry the babies did.

The deep-rooted antipathy of the Okinawans to "Yamaton-chu," the Japanese "mainlanders," has a justifiable reason stemming from their wartime experience. They had for years looked upon the Imperial Army as a guardian of their home islands. Once the Americans landed, however, the local people had to face the greatest disappointment. The Army, in fact, fought the enemy but, contrary to their expectations, it did little to defend the lives of the Okinawans.

Even worse, they were often exploited. A group of high school boys were given a day's orientation on how to handle a mortar and then, on the next day, sent out to counter enemy tanks.

Many men, the majority of them old men, were hired as unpaid porters to carry the staff officers' personal belongings. Hundreds died

on such a "coolie mission" to Mabuni. Those who arrived safely were irate when they saw a staff officer carefully take out a pair of Geta sandals from the blood-smeared baggage.

Besides such exploitation, all the Okinawans were taught to fight the enemy unto death—for the glory of the Imperial nation of Japan. But, when the war finally ended in August 1945, the Okinawans found that their home islands had been sacrificed in the defense of the four larger islands that were "Japan proper." The supposedly friendly Army was posted in Okinawa, they realized, not so much to defend Okinawa as to cause the greatest possible damage on the U.S. forces which otherwise would have invaded Kyushu or even landed on the coast of Chiba Prefecture in Kanto more quickly.

The most sinister was the case of the 300-man defense unit at Tokashiki island, Kerama, under Captain Yoshiji Akamatsu. It is on record that Akamatsu ordered the islanders to commit mass suicide. He is also said to have killed several villager-moderators who were dispatched by an American officer to advise the captain to surrender.

As late as March 1970, the ex-captain was met by angry demonstrators when he arrived at Naha Airport to attend a memorial service for the dead of the island.

Although novelist Ayako Sono has written a well-substantiated book to prove the contrary, the "atrocities" committed by Captain Akamatsu still play a symbolic role in stirring afresh the "sufferer mentality" of the Okinawans. Today, that mentality shows some signs of having been exploited again, this time by those who insist that Okinawa still is a scapegoat offered by Japan's conservative government to the gluttonous imperialist-militarist Americans.

As for the average Okinawans, most of them simply say, "What is in our heart is not understood by the Yamaton-chu."

Okinawa was about to fall by June 21, 1945. On this day General Ushijima received a farewell dispatch from the Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo. He also knew that General Simon Buckner, Jr. had been killed in action. Ushijima's staff officer recalls that "the general read the report (Buckner's death) without the slightest show of satisfaction."

Two days later, Ushijima walked to the entrance of his headquarters in a cave. There, he and his fiery Chief of Staff General

Cho committed traditional Seppuku (death by self-disembowelment). Ushijima was 57 and Cho 49 at the time.

Whoever remained alive in the cave attempted to follow the commander's precedent of self-liquidation. Some used a pistol while others pulled the pin off their last hand-grenade.

The Americans were using every means, from public hailers to Nisei interpreter and tear gas, to induce the cave dwellers to come out. But the fear of death-rape persisted.

In all, 1,105 high school boys and 263 girls died in the course of the bloodiest battle of the Pacific War. A monument dedicated to Himeyuri-Butai (Troop of Princess Lilies, composed of high school girls who died) at Mabuni cliff draws many Yamaton-chu sightseers today. One wonders how many of them are sympathetic enough to sense the faint smell that still seems to linger on that hill of suicide—a smell of blood.

The Japanese "mainlanders" have yet to probe deeply into their conscience in earnest search for the obligation that they owe to the Okinawans. There is no doubt that the 32nd Army was stationed on the island to defend not Okinawa but something rather very ambiguous—say, the national essence of Japan. In the effort to do so, the Army perhaps paid inadequate attention to the Okinawans, the people who were not considered wholly Japanese until the formal annexation by the Meiji government in 1878. But, would it give some consolation to the exploited people of Okinawa to vouch that the "mainlanders" too were resolved to sacrifice their lives gladly once their area was invaded, and that the 3,000 men on board the battleship Yamato actually did so in their effort to rescue Okinawa?

There is no denying that the war history of Okinawa was written in blood. A rare exception might be a 12-year-old girl whom a young GI found sitting near the cave entrance where her mother had just died. She was sitting on the dusty ground, embracing a younger sister and a two-year-old baby brother.

The GI offered her a Hershey chocolate bar. From a cave a couple of yards away, an elderly matron shrieked, "Don't take it! It's poisoned!"

But the little girl looked fondly at the offered present. She must have thought, "Well, if this is poisoned, why not eat it and die? Mother

is dead. Life is going to be miserable anyway. This is the time at last for us to die."

So she accepted the chocolate and, breaking it, gave a tiny piece to her baby brother.

Suddenly, the GI, who had been watching intently, started sobbing the moment the baby sucked on the chocolate. The girl cried. Soon the eyes of everyone present were filled with tears.

Ernie Pyle, perhaps the war correspondent best qualified to describe such a scene, had died two months before on Ieshima. He was among the 12,281 Americans who were killed during the fighting on these islands.

Pika-Don Over Hiroshima

The official announcement was too curt for anyone to fully absorb the significance of what had really happened. The enigmatic bulletin of the military headquarters, however, will forever remain as an admission of the coming of a new era—the era of the ultimate weapons.

"Imperial General Headquarters, August 7, 1945 (15.30 hours): 1. Fairly great damage was caused in Hiroshima City when it was attacked by a small number of enemy B-29s on August 6. 2. Although the enemy is believed to have utilized new-type bombs, details are now under investigation."

Only that much was what the Japanese public learned from the morning newspapers August 8—fully 48 hours after the "Pika-don" (the audiovisual impression of the bomb) flattened its first populated target in western Japan. The Mainichi, English language newspaper which still claimed in that stage of the war to be "A National Newspaper for International Readers," added its own story about the "fairly great damage." Headlined "Attached to Parachute," the story was about as terse as the official one:

"A small number of enemy B-29s penetrated into Hiroshima on August 6 shortly after 8 a.m. and dropped a number of explosive

bombs, as a result of which a considerable number of houses in the city were destroyed and fire broke out at various places.

"It seems that the enemy dropped new-type bombs attached to parachutes which exploded in the air. Although details are still under investigation, their explosive power cannot be made light of."

The closing clause sounded ominous. Soon rumors were circulating among millions of Japanese. None knew exactly what "the new-type bomb" actually could be. But, within three days of the destruction of Hiroshima, many Japanese knew that the conventional type of shelter would no longer guarantee their safety from the new kind of warfare that had just dawned. Many spoke about the death ray bomb.

A few knowledgeable persons speculated over the atomic bomb. "But... why Hiroshima?" still others questioned. Wasn't the city the home of so many Americans of Japanese ancestry?

Then, three days later, they learned that Nagasaki, this time Japan's most Christian city, had been flattened the moment another "Pika-don" flashed. No doubt our enemy was determined to annihilate us all. Not only that—they were determined to do so with a weapon of a hitherto unknown type.

On the afternoon of August 5, the day before doomsday, Professor Yoshitaka Mimura of Hiroshima Bunri University (predecessor of today's Hiroshima University) was lecturing before a group of 600 Army officers assigned to the Hiroshima garrison. The theoretical physicist expounded on recent developments in military science for an hour or so.

Then, during the subsequent question and answer period, a youngish lieutenant colonel stood up and asked: "Could you tell us, sir, what the atomic bomb is? Is there any possibility that the bomb will be developed by the end of this war?"

The professor picked up a piece of chalk and drew a rough sketch of chemical reactions on the blackboard, as he explained, "Our scientists including Dr. Yoshio Nishina of the Tokyo Institute of Physics and Chemistry have theoretically penetrated into the secret of nuclear fission. Once applied to practical use, their findings will produce a far more powerful bomb than the conventional ones. The bomb could be even smaller than a piece of caramel candy but, if it

exploded 500 meters above a populated city, it could possibly destroy 200,000 lives."

"When can we have that bomb?" the colonel repeated his second question.

The professor mused for a second or two and then answered: "Well, it's difficult to say. But I can tell you this much: not before the end of this war."

The physicist did not have to wait for the next war. At 08.15 August 6, 1945, barely 20 hours after Mimura's prophecy, the bomb-bay doors of Enola Gay opened and the "Little Boy" dropped into the serene sky, 31,500 feet above Hiroshima. What the Mainichi described as "parachuted bombs" were a pair of wireless transmitters sending data back.

Forty-three seconds later a blinding purple flash streaked across the city. The professor, standing on the porch of his neighbor and talking to the head of the neighborhood unit, had his body lifted and hurled inside the house. A moment later the gigantic explosion deafened him and in another moment everything around him was afire.

The people of Hiroshima were caught totally off guard. Japan's air defense system had long ceased being effective to counter the swarming B-29s. The enemy bombers traveled so high and so fast that neither AA guns nor Zero scramblers could possibly reach them. There was no other way than to let them gambol as they pleased.

The people had also become fairly accustomed to the daily air raids. Most of them did not take cover even during the air-raid alarm until the bombing actually started. The formations of B-29s trailing long white wakes of vapor were almost pleasantly beautiful. So, many people stood outside the shelters and looked up at them.

The night of August 5-6 was one of the typical nights. The alarm was sounded at 00.25 August 6 and lasted for seven hours. At 07.31 of that doomed Monday the signal, "all clear over Hiroshima," was given by the Army Defense Headquarters of the Chugoku area.

It was the beginning of a normal day. Housewives were preparing breakfast. Children were getting ready to go to school. Workers were already in their factories starting the machines. Volunteers of the civilian air defense unit climbed down from watchtowers to rest.

National Volunteer Squads and groups of high school boys were lining up for their day's work of tearing down some houses in the densely-populated heart of the town. For the city office had previously decided to eliminate many offices and private houses for greater effectiveness by fire-fighters.

Masanobu Furuta, a duty announcer of the NHK broadcast station at Hiroshima, heard a bell ringing. It was the Army headquarters calling. He listened to the man on the other end of the line read a bulletin: "Three large-sized enemy planes sighted at 08.13 over Saijo, heading west in the direction of Hiroshima. Full precautions required."

Furuta ran into a studio, switched off the program and started reading from the paper, "Three large-sized enemy planes sighted at 08.13 over Saijo, heading west in the direction of Hiroshima. Full precautions..." when he sensed the whole room shudder. The ferroconcrete building abruptly heaved and then began tilting slowly.

A big fireball, with a diameter somewhere between 100 to several hundred meters, hung over the city. The impression of the fireball varied from yellowish red to purple and magnesium blue. Heat waves spread out from this source of explosion at a speed of four kilometers a second.

In the immediate vicinity of the hypocenter the earth was exposed to a heat of 6,000 degrees Centigrade (more than 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit). Together with it came the shock waves of the explosion equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. They traveled at a speed of 4.4 kilometers per second applying an enormous pressure on the earth below—from 4.5 to 6.7 tons per square meter, lasting for 0.4 second.

Then the mushroom cloud shot up to as high as several thousand meters in the sky, sending forth radioactive emanations.

The fire engulfed the whole city and soon a strong wind started to blow from all directions. The violently disturbed atmosphere began pouring "black rain" in a torrent. Many people who survived the initial burn felt that each raindrop was as piercing as a hailstone. The "black rain" lasted for two hours. Soon many were shaking from cold in the midst of summer.

Those unfortunate enough to have been at or around the blast center simply disappeared. Those within a radius of four kilometers

suffered severe burns. Their white blood and lymph cells were destroyed. The characteristic symptoms were intense thirst, constant bleeding, violent vomiting and diarrhea—the beginning of slow death.

A lengthy narrative penned by Toshiko Saheki for the official history of Hiroshima City on the disaster is possibly one of the most moving but the most sickening accounts of our times. The housewife, who eventually lost 13 of her kin, describes how the tragedy of death haunted her family, taking away its members one by one.

"My flesh, my flesh... it's being severed from my bones. Help me!" her sister kept pleading as she died an agonizing death. Toshiko's in-laws, horrified at the sight of her burnt face and the odor of suppuration, would not go to the bedside to tend the dying girl.

Her brother, with his skull exposed, was found lying in a sea of blood, side by side with his totally burnt son and his daughter with two ribs sticking out of her chest—all three perfectly conscious and crying for a cup of water till they died several days later.

A month after the nightmarish day, Toshiko's brother-in-law came home carrying her mother's head in a Furoshiki wrapping cloth. When he had dug the lot where their house used to stand, he explained, he had found the severed head buried in the mud.

Another brother of the housewife kept moaning and screaming until he died in delirium.

Within 70 days from "Pika-don" Toshiko thus lost her mother, parents of her husband, two brothers, a sister, a sister-in-law, a nephew, a niece, two uncles, an aunt and a cousin. The housewife herself had to suffer from prolonged atomic disease which was to torment her for the rest of her life.

She concludes her story with a touching line—"With this stigma of war carved on my flesh, my only hope is that men would never start this futile thing called 'war' again."

No reader of her description of a "living hell" can remain unaffected by the details of the horror that befell an estimated 255,000 residents of Hiroshima. No doubt the atomic bombs saved millions of American as well as Japanese lives that would have been lost had the war dragged on. The impression of the tragedy nevertheless transcends all reasoning. The massacre at Hiroshima and then at

Nagasaki, will remain the most atrocious act ever committed on mankind and its civilization.

It was not until a little after 08.30 that the Imperial General Headquarters learned what had happened in Hiroshima. Major Masatake Okumiya of the Navy Department of the Imperial General Headquarters picked up the phone and was puzzled by a strange report from Kure, a city 26 kilometers south of Hiroshima: "We saw a big flash—and then a mushroom cloud. It's still mounting over Hiroshima. Some of us here heard a noise like thunder. We don't know what this is all about. The Second Army headquarters in Hiroshima doesn't answer the phone. This is as far as we know right now..." The subsequent conversation went like this:

Okumiya: "Was it an air raid or a ground explosion?"

Kure: "We don't know yet. We've sighted only two B-29s."

Okumiya: "How's the weather over there?"

Kure: "It's fine. It's a very fine day."

Major Okumiya immediately phoned the Army Department of the Imperial General Headquarters, the National Air Defense Headquarters and the Ministry of the Interior but found no one in Tokyo capable of giving him a satisfactory explanation.

The second report from Kure arrived shortly before noon, yielding not much more information than the initial one. Hiroshima apparently was in great confusion. The city had been practically wiped out. But no one could imagine what had caused such tremendous havoc.

The Imperial General Headquarters dispatched two investigation teams the next day. Dr. Yoshio Nishina, the man who had "theoretically penetrated into the secrets of the atom," accompanied the Army team. As their DC-3 touched down at Hiroshima Airport, Lt.-General Seizo Arisue, leader of the team, discovered "every single blade of grass at the airport had turned brown and bent in one direction. I looked toward the town and found nothing obstructing my view except a solitary tree trunk scorched totally black. Nobody came to meet us. We waited until finally a man came tottering out of a nearby shelter. It turned out to be the commander of the airport defense unit, a lieutenant colonel. His face was charred."

All the while that the team traveled through the flattened town of

Hiroshima in a truck, Dr. Nishina remained silent—obviously in deep contemplation.

"Can you find a corpse without exterior injuries?" the nuclear scientist finally asked. "I want to see it dissected post-mortem."

The body of a soldier was brought to a laboratory of the Daiwa Spinning Company. No sooner had the first stroke of the surgical knife exposed the entrails of the dead man than Nishina reached for the liver and, pulling out the completely inflamed gland, he declared: "Do you see this inflammation? There's absolutely no doubt about it now. This is the atomic bomb."

Japan's "father of nuclear science" knew perfectly well what nuclear fission could do to the human body. With a cyclotron set up in his laboratory in Tokyo, he had been experimenting with the rudimentary procedures of nuclear transmutation almost singlehandedly. Nishina, however, died an unhonored death in 1951 from liver cancer. It was found at the time of his death that the number of his white blood cells was far below the average—the after-effect of his extensive trip in Hiroshima only two days after the initial radioactive contamination. Of Nishina's disciples, two scientists, Hideki Yukawa and Shinichiro Tomonaga, later received the Nobel Prize. Both were conferred the honor for their achievements in the field of theoretical physics. Japan never had a chance to apply it to manufacturing the deadly weapon.

The exact figure of atomic bomb casualties is by no means definite, due to the loss of official documents and also due to the endless number of victims who are still dying from the after-effects. The estimate by the municipal authorities of Hiroshima in August 1946 was 118,661 dead, 79,130 injured and 3,677 missing.

Besides Japanese residents, there were an estimated 40,000 Korean workers and their dependents living in the city at the time the bomb was dropped. However, there is no way of telling how many of them died and how many of them are still suffering from atomic disease.

There were other foreign casualties besides Koreans. Four Southeast Asian students were attending an early morning natural science class at Hiroshima Bunri University when the bomb crushed the school building.

"As I regained consciousness, it was very dark inside the destroyed classroom," Arifin Bey, an Indonesian student recalls in his memoirs. "It was equally dark outside, too. 'Where did that beautiful summer morning go?' I wondered. 'Could this be an earthquake?' I heard someone say, 'Where's the professor?' We called his name. No answer. We called again. Still no answer.

"We crawled out of the devastated building. Out in the street we found that many people were running in all directions. Some were crying, others were shouting as they ran. The city was flat with only a handful of concrete-built houses standing. Fire was starting in many places." (Memoirs in the official history of Hiroshima).

The Indonesian student survived the ordeal later to become a Counsellor with the Indonesian Embassy in Tokyo. He is at present a foreign correspondent. There were also some students from China, Mongolia and Manchoukuo. Their fate remains unknown.

According to fragmentary records, 23 American prisoners of war are believed to have been in the city on the crucial day. An ex-warrant officer with the Imperial Army's Gendarmerie at Hiroshima, testified that all three POW camps were destroyed by the bomb and that 22 of the POWs were killed instantly.

There are other witnesses who saw some Americans, obviously escaping from the camps, walking around the town in the succeeding hours of the "Pika-don."

A telephone operator saw a young American soldier lying near the debris of the Army Headquarters, who kept calling out, "Water, water..."

Yoshie Shigetomi, reporter of the Mainichi bureau at Hiroshima, saw an "almost naked GI" assaulted by an excited band of Japanese workers near the hypocenter. He was caught, had his hands tied, and was thrashed by the people who shouted, "Revenge! Revenge!" But there is, again, no means to know clearly how many of them met what kind of fate.

Haruo Masumoto, non-commissioned officer of the Army Medical Corps, remembers that he treated in late July a captured young U.S. Air Force crewman who was extremely scared.

"Are you scared because you expect torture?" an interpreter asked.

"No, it's not that," was the answer. "I shall die if you keep me here. In a few days our people are going to blow up this city, Hiroshima."

Three days later, on August 9, 1945, the second bomb was exploded over Nagasaki. The "Fat Boy" this time was a bomb of the same type as the one tested earlier at Alamogordo, New Mexico. It was, in a sense, a coup de grace administered to the nation that had already been crippled by the ordeal of Hiroshima.

For Nagasaki, it was the second martyrdom after the 17th Century rebellion of 38,000 Christian faithfuls who fought the persecution of the Tokugawa Shogunate and perished.

This time the target was again a religious symbol, the Catholic cathedral at Urakami. The moment the giant ball of fire engulfed the scenic valley of Nagasaki, the beautiful cathedral collapsed. Its statues of the Blessed Virgin and many saints were shattered to pieces.

The bombing of Nagasaki, killing roughly 39,000 and injuring 25,000, was actually the unexpected result of a deadly roulette. Although Kokura (in today's Kita-Kyushu) was the initial target for the second atomic attack, it happened to be obscured by smoke and haze. After repeatedly trying to bomb the industrial city by radar, the bombardiers of "Bock's Car" gave up their initial plan and headed for the alternate destination—fine weather-blessed Nagasaki.

There is no evidence that the U.S. Air Force tacticians planned it that way, but the "Jap" victims who suffered agony under the "technically successful" bombardment of the religious city somewhat resembled the 26 saints who in 1597 were crucified at Nishizaka, only two kilometers from the hypocenter.

The destruction of Nagasaki unfortunately coincided with the initiative taken by the Soviet troops that crossed the Manchoukuo-Soviet border in the eastern and western parts of Manchoukuo and started marching south. As explicitly stated in Foreign Commissar Molotov's final message to the Japanese ambassador, the Russians said that "this policy is the only means to bring peace nearer."

Near, to be sure, was the peace, but the date of expiration of the Russo-Japanese neutrality pact was not quite so near. Who, then, can blame Ambassador Naotake Sato for politely reminding the Russian foreign commissar that the Soviet Union was violating the treaty

almost a year before it ceased to be valid?

The blood-stained experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continued to be remembered in the years that followed. In fact, it was to have the sickliest political after-effect on the nation's leftist camp. Inspired by the well-publicized disaster of the two cities, the anti-nuclear weapon/test movement was supported in March 1956 by as many as 33,510,264 people who had signed a humanistic appeal for peace. The swelling tide of the movement for peace also saw the emergence of one of postwar Japan's most controversial figures, Kaoru Yasui. It also caused an irreparable schism between the nation's Socialists and Communists, a schism which perhaps set the pattern for the present-day controversy over the Dowa (Burakumin minority) problem.

A scholar of Soviet law (professor of Tokyo University) before the Pacific War, and then a theoretical supporter of the Greater East Asia War after 1941, Yasui changed his face for the second time after the nation's surrender.

Supported by housewives of Suginami-ku, Tokyo, he set out to collect signatures for the movement to ban nuclear test/weapons. Presently he became the director-general of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs—a powerful organization that gradually metamorphosed into a joint facade of the Japan Socialist and the Japan Communist parties.

The ban-the-bomb force gathered momentum from the Lucky Dragon (Japanese fishing boat exposed to radioactive fallout at Bikini atoll) Incident in March 1954. And leader Yasui was given the International Lenin Peace Prize in 1958.

Soon the JCAAHB was playing a major role in protesting the U.S. military bases in Japan, the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty, American monopoly capitalism et al. In July 1961, the organization solemnly adopted a resolution affirming that "A nation that will take the initiative in resuming nuclear tests should be condemned as the enemy of peace as well as the enemy of humanity."

It was ironic, however, that startling news came from Moscow of all places barely a month or so after the lofty pledge was adopted. In September, the Soviet Union launched a series of nuclear explosions in arctic Novaya Zemlya, including that of an incredible 50-megaton

hydrogen bomb.

Yasui's explanation—"We must calmly analyze the various political situations that compelled the Soviet Union to resume the test"—did not quite fit in with public opinion in Japan.

Nor did the official stand of the JCAAHB find wide support when it urged the Japanese to "correctly analyze" the inevitability with which the People's Republic of China was forced (by the imperialist forces) to test its nuclear bomb in October 1964.

For many years, Japan's renovationist camp was split uncomfortably among three choices—"bad American tests and good Soviet tests," "bad American and Soviet tests and good Chinese tests," and "all tests are bad."

At one time, supporters of the JSP and the JCP engaged in fierce fistfights during an international convention supposed to promote peace.

The whole affair steadily began to assume every character of a farce and deviated from the initial pledge of "No More Hiroshimas." As in the case of other lessons, the catchword is often cited but its meaning hardly ever learned.

Begging For Mercy Through Kremlin

In February 1945, Iwo-jima was yet to fall to the U.S. Marine Corps and Okinawa was still intact. The Japanese people had reasons aplenty to brace for the approaching Doomsday but certainly—many seriously believed—the Divine Wind (Kamikaze, that is) would arrive in time to dispel the devilish invasion by the foreign powers.

The realistic Allied leaders were unimpressed by winds of any kind, however. They met in the Crimean town of Yalta early that month to draft a rough sketch of how to end the war in both European and Asian theaters.

For the quickest possible surrender of Japan, the key was Russian participation in the last stage of the Pacific War. According to Churchill, "Marshal Stalin had voluntarily proclaimed as early as November 1943 at Tehran that the Soviets would declare war on Japan the moment Germany was defeated." If this were true, the Secretary

General of the Soviet Communist Party perhaps was so rightfully realistic that he shared a common sardonic belief with some diplomats of those days—a belief that all diplomatic agreements were simply hoaxes.

Hoax or not, both signatories of the Russo-Japanese Neutrality Treaty of April 1941 were obviously not quite sincere in maintaining the “bonds and amity between them” as promised by the treaty. For, despite the provision of its Article 3 (the present Pact . . . shall be valid for the period of five years), we know that Japan’s Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka was advocating an “advance north” strategy barely two months later.

It was now Stalin’s turn in Tehran to propose the unilateral abrogation of the treaty that prescribed the “peaceful and friendly relations” between the Soviet Union and Japan. The situation changes ethics, it seems.

At Yalta, Stalin was more specific than he had been at Tehran. Again according to Churchill’s entry in his memoirs, the powerful Soviet leader proposed something that was beyond the imagination of the naive Japanese leaders of 1945. “In the most rigid secrecy,” the British Prime Minister notes, “Stalin informed Roosevelt and myself at the Crimea Conference of the Soviet Government’s willingness to enter the war against Japan two or three months after Germany’s surrender, on the conditions . . .”

And the conditions were these:

- (a) Preservation of the status quo in Outer Mongolia.
- (b) Restoration of the Russian rights lost in the year 1904 (Russo-Japanese War), viz.:
 - (I) A recovery of Southern Sakhalin and the islands adjacent to it.
 - (II) Internationalization of the commercial port of Dairen, with safeguards for the preeminent interests of the USSR and restoration of the lease of Port Arthur as a Soviet naval base.
 - (III) Joint operation by a Soviet-Chinese company of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the South Manchuria Railway, providing an outlet to Dairen, on the understanding that the preeminent interests of the USSR will be safeguarded and that China will retain full sovereignty over Manchuria.

- (c) Acquisition by the USSR of the Kurile Islands.

Churchill’s stand is disputable. He admits, “These conditions were embodied in a personal agreement between Roosevelt, Stalin, and myself . . . We all three agreed to see that the Soviet claims were fulfilled without question following the defeat of Japan.” Then in the next paragraph, the cigar-smoking Prime Minister somehow ducks his role in the secret agreement: “I must make it clear that though on behalf of Great Britain I joined in the agreement, neither I nor Eden took any part in making it. It was regarded as an American affair, and was certainly of prime interest to their military operations.”

Not only did Josef Stalin link the Russo-Japanese War with the Pacific War of four decades later, but he retracted the provisions agreed upon by Admiral Evimii Vasilievich Putyatin and the Tokugawa warlord in 1853, when both parties recognized the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu as a part of Japan.

Undoubtedly military considerations take the first priority during wartime and it is understandable that Roosevelt was badly in need of Russian military help—to save the lives of countless American boys.

One never ceases to be astonished, however, in observing how American ethics had conveniently changed from 1941—when it accused Japan of its territorial ambitions in the Far East—to 1945 when the U.S. leader “in the most rigid secrecy” invited the Soviet ruler to take Southern Sakhalin and all the Kurile Islands in exchange for a little additional push on the already crippled Japanese Empire.

One is almost tempted to ask if the Queen of the Netherlands could as well have justifiably claimed suzerainty over the Kuriles since the 1,200-kilometer arc of the northern islands was first “discovered” in 1634 by one Maerten Vries of the Dutch East India Company.

If the President of the United States was desperate in his search for the help of his Russian ally, Stalin was somewhat cleverer than the ailing American leader—clever enough to wait until the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. It was, in fact, only a day before Nagasaki was bombed that the Kremlin hastily and heroically declared war “to punish the Japanese territory grabbers.”

Knowing nothing about the secretly guarded agreement at Yalta, Japan was frantically looking for a chance of negotiated peace with the Allied forces through no one else but the Russians. But before doing so,

the empire had to overcome the long-held conviction that the godly nation was for some supernatural reasons immune from foreign invasion.

On February 14, 1945, three days after the Yalta Conference was closed, Prince Fumimaro Konoe, an aristocrat ex-Premier, was received in audience by His Majesty the Emperor to report on the recent developments in international politics. The prediction made by the prince on that day was far-reaching by any standard.

Japan would in all probability experience a communist revolution, the prince said, if it continued fighting with the Allied forces. He pointed out that Sanzo Nosaka (chairman of the Central Committee of the Japan Communist Party in 1975) had moved from Moscow to Yenan in his attempt to politically subvert Japan. The military clique of Japan, in the meanwhile, had deliberately led the nation through the Manchurian and Chinese Incidents and then the Greater East Asia War so that they would accumulate enough political potentiality to force their type of Kakushin (renovation) on Japan's politics.

Both the communists' and military's efforts, despite their seeming dissimilarity, were not necessarily hostile to each other, according to the worried prince. In order to prevent such schemes from materializing, he explained, Japan should accept whatever terms of peace were offered by the democratic Allied powers.

Some of the prince's inside informers had already told him that a sizeable number of military leaders were secretly getting in touch with Nosaka's ideological followers in China's communist headquarters.

"Although they (army renovationists) are rightist extremists," the prince asserted, "they could turn into communists overnight. Rightists, Your Majesty, are leftists wearing a patriotic mask."

Emperor Hirohito was incredulous. "Do you think my subjects would calmly accept a negotiated peace now? Should we not wait until our military forces can achieve one or two substantial victories somewhere?" the Japanese monarch suggested.

The ex-Premier's answer was pessimistic: "Could we possibly expect any such victory at this stage? Half a year or a year from now, everything would be too late."

In the spring of 1945, it was not yet too late for a negotiated peace.

A small number of Japanese actually made attempts to talk directly to the English-speaking enemies, as in the case of a navy attache at the Japanese Embassy in Berne, Switzerland.

Commander Yoshiro Fujimura and his Japanese friends contacted Allen Dulles, representative of the OSS (later CIA) in the Swiss city. They sent several coded cables to the Navy Headquarters in Tokyo, suggesting that Japan's surrender be negotiated through their channel.

By May 1941, when the Third Reich had to accept unconditional surrender, the fall of Japan was clearly imminent and unavoidable to the eyes of the Japanese residents in Switzerland. Their judgment was not clouded by blind patriotism and belief in supernatural Kamikaze.

After many days of procrastination, however, Tokyo's reaction was disappointing. The Navy brass back home were skeptical of direct negotiation with the American representative. "It could be the enemy's plot. Be careful of their duplicity," was about the only response the commander obtained from Tokyo.

The offer from Berne was unceremoniously brushed aside by Tokyo and was never taken up again.

The Japanese leader's failure to exploit the Swiss channel may be indicative to some extent of the typical Japanese narrowmindedness that honors the maintenance of a rigid line of command more than the actual value of operation.

The cautious approach by the OSS representative and the efforts made by a small group of Japanese in Berne are today excluded from most Japanese records of the war. Few Japanese were flexible enough then to perceive the weight of the offer when it came from "a mere navy commander." Few still do.

The top Japanese leader in the desperate days of their nation were still prey to surprisingly naive inflexibility. The Soviet Union was not only an ally of the Western Powers but tied to Japan by the neutrality pact, they reasoned, therefore, whatever negotiations to be undertaken should go through no other channel but Moscow.

This way of thinking still dominates Japanese mentality today. Usually called the act of "Suji o tosu" (sticking to the proper chain of relations), many Japanese adhere to "proper procedures," no matter how futile and inefficient that principle might prove to be.

Not surprisingly, Japan's attempt at negotiations through Moscow remained "stuck" for many months. Tokyo's request in September 1944 to send a special envoy to the Russian capital was unanswered by Stalin.

It is a most bizarre fact of history that Japan was pleading mercy through Kremlin leaders—who had been resolved since November 1943 to declare war on Japan. Didn't the Russian dictator indulge in some moments of sidesplitting laughter each time he saw the sad-faced Japanese Ambassador leave his office?

On June 8, 1945, with Okinawa almost totally lost and many of Honshu's cities in ashes, Japan's war leaders were still adamant. During the Imperial Conference on that day, Deputy Chief of Staff Lt.-General Torashiro Kawabe asserted: "The Imperial Army is confident that we can effectively counter the enemy landing forces on mainland Japan. Our men are now fortified with admirable spirit of Kamikaze. In the next campaign on our own shores, the Army will no doubt show its best qualities."

One may question if the Army strategist believed in the invincibility of Japan only because he wanted to believe it. But the same unfounded belief was shared by journalists as well.

The (English) Mainichi of July 17, 1945, reflected a similar belief:

"People, when driven to the wall, are liable to look for a miracle. . . We have strong spiritual power and vitality unparalleled in the world. . . The rise in unison of the military, the officials, and the people is the very factor that will call forth the miracle of the Nippon race.

"The actual war situation is indeed very unfavorable for Nippon. In a war, however, victory or defeat is generally decided by a narrow margin. . . Now is the very time for all the 100 million people, whether they be military servicemen, Government officials or civilians, to join a general march forfeiting all personal profit and desire for fame."

Then the newspaper enumerated 11 "weak points of the United States, the archenemy of Nippon," including among others "decline of the American people's morale," "anti-war sentiment," "stringency of the people's life on the home front" and "mounting American casualties."

The patriotic spirit found an echo in the statement by War Minister General Korechika Anami in the wake of the Soviet's initial attacks on Japanese forces in Manchuria. The minister addressed the nation: "Now that things have come to such a pass, argument is unnecessary. For us there is no other way than to fight out this sacred war determinedly for the defense of the Divine Land."

All through the three statements—Kawabe's, Anami's and the Mainichi's—outstanding is an appalling lack of realism. Such unsubstantiated phrases like Divine Land, people's Nippon and servicemen's determination were nothing but part of a beautiful illusion with which many Japanese were wholly intoxicated in those days. Minister Anami's phrase, "argument is unnecessary," in particular, revokes the words uttered by the assassins of Prime Minister Takeki Inukai during the 5.15 Incident (in 1932).

If there was one active statesman then endowed with a more or less realistic vision of the future, it was Marquis Koichi Kido, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and the closest confidant of Hirohito. Kido read through the transcript of the June 8 Imperial Conference and was astonished by the asserted determination of the attendants to fight on.

The senior politician was interviewed by a Mainichi reporter in August 1974. To the question, "Exactly when did the Emperor come around to the view that the war should come to an end?" Kido stated:

"I had a foreboding of the tragic outcome as early as January 1945. 'Now, this is as far as we can go,' I felt. I expressed my feelings candidly. I believe that His Majesty was of the same opinion as I. However, the Emperor, faithful to the requirements of his lofty duties, tended to couch his opinions in extremely vague terms in the presence of his closest entourage. His Majesty, I presume, expected me to work for him. And that was exactly what I did in defiance of the constant threat from the Army which did not want me to do so."

Having been advised by Marquis Kido, the Emperor summoned the members of the Supreme Council (Prime Minister, Foreign, War and Navy Ministers, War and Navy Chiefs of Staff) to the Imperial Palace on the afternoon of June 22. "We have heard enough of this determination of yours to fight to the last soldier," the Sovereign stated. "We wish that you, leaders of Japan, will strive now to study

the ways and means to conclude the war. In doing so, try not to be bound by the decisions you have previously made.”

His words were clear. They plunged the six dignitaries into great shock. For it was the first time any Japanese leader had explicitly pointed his finger at a negotiated end to the war.

“State your opinions,” the Emperor urged, but his subjects, thunderstruck by the unexpected turn of events, kept their silence for awhile.

“We would join our might, Your Majesty, in materializing Your gracious will,” Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki mumbled as he bowed very low.

Coming back from the Palace, Suzuki confided to Hisatsune Sakomizu, Chief Cabinet Secretary: “I was filled with great trepidation today. The Emperor said exactly what I wanted to say (to war leaders).”

Suzuki had been a narrow survivor of the 2.26 Incident in 1936 and Sakomizu, one of the secretaries who rescued the then Premier Keisuke Okada from the Prime Minister’s Official Residence during the abortive coup. Both had reason enough to hate the patriotic military.

Instructions were dispatched to Ambassador Naotake Sato in Moscow to persuade the Soviet Union to offer its good offices in concluding the war. The Russians remained non-committal, nonetheless.

By July 14, Japan was suggesting sending an ace political negotiator to the Russian capital. The proposed name was Prince Konoe, the anti-communist ex-Premier who had volunteered to meet President Roosevelt in 1941, in vain. This time the suggestion was turned down because, Ambassador Sato was told, both Party Secretary General Stalin and Foreign Commissar Molotov were leaving for Potsdam. Japan was desperate. There was not the slightest sign of a breakthrough in the sole channel—Moscow.

On July 16, Churchill toured through the ruins of Berlin. He entered the Chancellery where Russian guides led him to the bottom floor of Hitler’s shelter. The German dictator and his mistress committed suicide there, he was told.

Later on that day, he was billeted in a cozy little abode in Potsdam, a scenic suburban town outside the German capital. The Big Three—Truman, Churchill and Stalin—were to meet there to discuss the

disposition of defeated Germany as well as the terms of surrender for Japan.

Before the first plenary session opened the next evening, U.S. Secretary of War Henry Stimson walked into Churchill’s cottage and handed him a slip of paper on which was written, “Babies satisfactorily born.” It was “worldshaking news” from Alamogordo, New Mexico, on the successful test of the first atomic bomb.

Early on the morning of July 27, the official monitoring station in Tokyo received the Potsdam Declaration signed by the American, British and Chinese leaders (the Soviet Union was not belligerent at that time).

The Supreme council in Tokyo was immediately called to study the offered provisions. Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo pointed out that the ultimatum offered a very favorable chance for Japan. Instead of demanding all-out “unconditional surrender” from Japan, Article 1 of the declaration said, “Japan shall be given an opportunity to end the war.” In the only passage that contained what might be considered a severe condition the expression was clearly circumscribed: “We call upon the Government of Japan to proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all the Japanese armed forces...” Japan could scarcely hope for anything better.

Prime Minister Suzuki agreed with Togo. The rest of the Council, however, remained unwilling to abandon their hope for successful negotiations through Moscow. Could not Japan perhaps work out somewhat more favorable terms with the kind help of the Kremlin?

Navy Chief of Staff Soemu Toyoda and War Minister Anami insisted that the Prime Minister’s address to the nation should be strongly worded so that the Japanese public have no doubt about the government’s determination to fight on. The measure was absolutely necessary, the two military representatives contended, to uphold the national morale.

The Cabinet Information Bureau promptly invited representatives of the mass media. They were instructed to print excerpts of the declaration. No editor was “expected to make any comment,” they were told. They were to report that the Japanese Government was “paying no attention” to the ultimatum—no more, no less.

Both the Army and Navy brass put further pressure on Suzuki the

following day. The Prime Minister should make it very clear that Japan really paid no attention to the declaration, they emphasized. Suzuki had no alternative but to comply.

He met the press that afternoon. Asked to comment on the news from Potsdam, the aged Prime Minister stated: "The government holds that the (Potsdam) Declaration is by no means an important issue. We simply Mokusatsu-suru (literally: kill it with silence). We are not going to dare step aside from the determined course of the war."

The political leader's comment shocked Foreign Minister Togo. He protested to Suzuki, but it was too late.

The following morning, July 29, all the Tokyo newspapers played up that Japanese Government's attitude was to "silently kill"—to ignore—the enemy's offer of peace. By "Mokusatsu," the Prime Minister wanted to imply "no comment," thereby leaving some space for further negotiation. Taken out of syntax, the phrase came to assume a very ominous overtone.

Soon the expression started to backfire. Tokyo newspaper headlines were relayed to the United States and Britain through neutral countries.

With Japan "rejecting" the ultimatum, there naturally was no other way left for the United States but to use atomic bombs—to force Japan to surrender.

It was a semantic confusion that cost combined casualties of 142,000 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and many more in other air raids, as well as in Manchuria, in the final two weeks of the war.

But before Japan finally accepted the offered hand, another semantic ambiguity was to torment the leaders of the succumbing nation. And what is more, the last attempt at a military revolt all but thwarted the fate of the nation.

The countdown, however, for the death of the Great Empire of Japan had begun.

CHAPTER III

Trauma Of Defeat

The Longest Week

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Emperor Hirohito: aged 44. Ruler of Japan. Holding supreme prerogative, he is the central figure of the national essence (Kokutai) and worshipped by 100 million subjects.

Kantaro Suzuki: 77. Prime Minister. Commander of torpedo fleet in the Battle of the Japan Sea; later made admiral; Grand Chamberlain in 1936; seriously injured when shot by the 2.26 Incident assassins but miraculously recovered.

Mitsumasa Yonai: 65. Navy Minister. Nicknamed "silent admiral"; stolid advocate of peace since before the war.

Korechika Anami: 59. War Minister. Once a military attache with the Imperial Household; patriot-royalist to the marrow; gentle in appearance but determined within.

Shizuichi Tanaka: 59. Commander of the Eastern Region, Im-

perial Army. Having served as a military attache both in London and Washington, he is one of the few "enlightened" generals.

Shigenori Togo: 62. Foreign Minister. Blunt and outspoken, he resisted the declaration of war in 1941.

Hiroshi Shimomura: 70. Director-General of the Information Bureau. Formerly vice president of Asahi Shimbun and president of NHK.

Yoshihiro Tokugawa: 38. Chamberlain.

Kenji Hatanaka: 33. Major of the Imperial Army. Staff of the Military Affairs Section, the War Ministry. Staunch patriot, ready to sacrifice anything to preserve the Kokutai of the Sacred Land.

There are no clearly distinguishable acts, nor scenes. With little intermission, each actor's performance takes place concurrently and continuously—causing overall confusion, although the scene of action is generally limited to the Imperial Palace in the heart of Tokyo and its vicinity, including the Ministry of War at Ichigaya, northwest of the Palace. For the readers' convenience, this story is tentatively divided into two acts.

TIME: Thursday, August 9–Wednesday, August 15, 1945. The days are sweltering but the nights are refreshing and quiet, except for the intermittent drone of airplane engines.

Act I

Six men are seated for the Supreme War Council meeting in the Imperial Palace. 10.30 Thursday, August 9.

PM Suzuki: Gentlemen, I must announce that I have come to the realization that we cannot carry on this war indefinitely. With the (atomic) bomb dropped on Hiroshima and the Soviet Union declaring war on us, it seems that there's no way left for us but to accept the Potsdam Declaration. Would you gentlemen now state your opinions?

Awkward silence follows the Premier's surprise announcement.

NM Yonai: Why do you keep silent? Are you, Army leaders, still

confident of the success of the "seashore confrontation?" This is the time for us to stop procrastinating. The better course would be to surrender right now and, by doing so, save the nation from distress. Think not solely of your "face" at this stage.

Suzuki: I'm inclined to accept the enemy's terms with only one condition—that Japan's Kokutai be preserved by all means.

WM Anami: I object to the Premier's proposal. Who can be 100 per cent certain of defeat in the coming battle on our seashore? We haven't even fought it yet. There is a saying, "He who loses his life shall find it." We certainly can't swallow this (Potsdam) Declaration. I demand that at least three conditions be fulfilled in addition to the one the Premier has suggested—that our military forces be disarmed by our own command; that all war criminals be tried in a Japanese court; and that the occupation of Japan by the enemy military be limited to some specific areas in Japan and be terminated as soon as possible.

Their arguments deadlocked, the Supreme War Council arrives at no conclusion by 13.00 when the Cabinet meeting is scheduled to start. Breaking off the Council, PM Suzuki and his Cabinet members meet at 14.30 to discuss a truce for the first time in the nation's history. FM Togo reports what has gone on between Tokyo and Moscow until the search for the good offices of Russia was abruptly shattered by the Russian advance into Manchuria.

Another somber report arrives—the second "new type" bomb has destroyed Nagasaki. America apparently has many more atomic bombs in its stockpile. The situation is certainly desperate. The Cabinet debate drags on until 22.30 without coming to a consensus. WM Anami is adamant that his soldiers can chastise the enemy in the coming campaign.

Meanwhile, D-G Shimomura is granted an audience by the Emperor. The meeting lasts for an unprecedented two hours. Shimomura is seeking to persuade the Emperor to appeal directly to his subjects through radio—a measure never taken before. Would the God speak to the grassroots? Shimomura's face, however, is beaming as he emerges from the audience room.

D-G Shimomura: His Majesty has agreed. War or peace, the Emperor will talk straight to the nation. I'm glad.

At 23.50 PM Suzuki asks the members of the Supreme War Council to convene before the Emperor. They are ushered into the 18 by 30 foot conference room in the underground shelter within the Imperial Palace. The air in the room is unbearably stuffy.

The same arguments are resumed before the Emperor, who takes a chair set on a small podium. Should Japan ask the Allied powers to clarify one condition as suggested by PM Suzuki, or four conditions as insisted on by WM Anami? Futile discussions again.

By 02.30 Friday, everyone is exhausted. There is no compromise in sight. Then, suddenly, PM Suzuki rises to his feet.

Suzuki: It appears that our arguments are irretrievably deadlocked. We can talk on and on like this without finding a solution. But, I have to remind you, gentlemen, that there won't be many hours left for talking. Whichever course we take, we have to decide and now. I believe there is absolutely no other way but to ask the Divine Being for his gracious opinion. With the profoundest trepidation, I dare ask for the Imperial judgment.

The conferees are so taken aback by the PM's bold proposal that they forget to protest. The aged Prime Minister laboriously steps forward before the Emperor. He bows very low and mumbles something. The Emperor slowly stands.

The Emperor: I have seriously considered the present situation. One thing is obvious. Continue fighting, and we will be plunging the entire nation into further devastation and distress. I cannot bear any longer to see my innocent subjects tormented under the cruelties of war. There are certainly conditions that can hardly be accepted. Disarmament of the Imperial forces by foreign hands, for one. But we have to bear it now. I think of the spirit of those who have died for the nation's cause and I reflect upon my incapacity to respond to their loyalty. My heart aches as I think of those who have faithfully fulfilled their duties and who now have to bear the disgrace. But this is the time when we must bear the unbearable to restore peace to the nation and to the world.

The decision is made. The war must come to an end. Those are the

words that have issued from the Imperial mouth.

The Japanese leaders have just attended a conference that delivered the death sentence to the never-before-conquered fatherland. And it was no less than the Sovereign himself who prescribed the demise of the Empire. Who are we who have precipitated the nation's destiny to such a state that the Sacred One had to admit his incapability?

For a minute or two, they are sitting there stupefied. Then, someone starts sobbing. Tears of shame, or tears of awe? Overcome by emotion, the sobbing quickly spreads to the whole room. Some are weeping profusely—so unlike the Samurai.

The Cabinet meeting is called to formally sanction the decision at the Imperial Conference. PM Suzuki summarizes the discussion in the underground shelter. The Emperor wanted to end the war on only one condition—no alteration of the national essence. Does anyone dare argue against the Sovereign?

Anami: I want to make it doubly sure that in case the enemy doesn't accept our proposal, we will fight to the last man.

Suzuki: Yes, you can have my word on that.

Promptly messages of acceptance are dispatched to both the Swiss and Swedish Governments—acceptance of the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration “with the understanding that the said declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a Sovereign Ruler.”

D-G Shimomura meets the press Friday afternoon. He is commissioned to prepare the nation for the moment of surrender. He has to do so carefully.

Shimomura: The situation is now at its worst, we admit, but of course the government will do everything in its power for national defense. The 100 million people are urged to do their utmost to defend their country, surmounting all the difficulties lying ahead.

In the War Ministry, WM Anami is surrounded by an excited band of young officers. They are dissatisfied by the decision made by the “corrupt elements who hide underneath the Emperor's sleeves.”

Anami: The Imperial decision has already been made. Whatever may happen from now on, the Imperial Army must remain firmly united. You are under no circumstances free to do what you and only you think is right. One disorderly act might well upset the whole nation.

Someone shouts at Anami: "You've said 'whatever may happen.' Are you, the War Minister, thinking of surrendering to the enemy?"

Anami: (raising his voice): Anyone who intends to disobey the Imperial order, do so over my dead body.

The War Minister's official statement issued Friday afternoon shows the mark of pressure from young officers. For Anami is declaring: "Even if we are forced to eat weeds, gnaw sand and sleep in the fields, we are firmly convinced that we can find a way out of the present crisis only by continuing to fight resolutely." He is striking quite a contradictory note from the Shimomura statement.

At 00.45 Sunday, the Foreign Ministry receives a reply from the Allied powers.

"With regard to the Japanese Government's message accepting the terms of the Potsdam proclamation but containing the statement, 'with the understanding that the said declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler,' our position is as follows: From the moment of surrender, the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate the surrender terms..."

Also in the same message: "The ultimate form of the Government of Japan shall, in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration, be established by the freely expressed will of the Japanese people."

The Cabinet meeting is called at 15.00 Sunday afternoon. WM Anami is furious.

Anami: It is now clear that our proposed condition has been

rejected. With "the rule of the nation shall be subject to" and the ultimate form of government decided by "the will of the Japanese people"—with those passages, they are proposing to thwart the Sovereign's prerogative. I maintain that we fight on to the bitter end in defense of our sacred national polity.

Togo: I was granted a gracious audience by His Majesty this morning. The august decision was that the enemy's explanation was satisfactory. The Sovereign wished that I convey the Imperial message to the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet meeting is like a complicated English translation course. The debate over "subject to" and "the will of the people" drags on until 17.30—again without producing a consensus. The Army Signal Corps, meanwhile, is eavesdropping on every diplomatic communication, which infuriates them.

WM Anami's understanding is that "subject to" means the Emperor should be "subjugated to" the Allied commander. Absolutely unacceptable!

PM Suzuki has to agree to make one more contact with the Allied powers as to the exact definition of the controversial "subject to."

At 02.10 FM Togo is elated as he receives a cable from the Japanese Minister in Stockholm. The Allies' answer, the minister reports, is a victory of American diplomacy over a Russian protest. The U.S. leaders have no intention of deposing the Emperor, he assures.

About a dozen young officers storm into the War Minister's room at 10.00 Sunday. Among the excited faces is Major Hatanaka's.

Major Hatanaka: The Army should prevent the government from accepting the Potsdam Declaration. If we can't do so, General Anami, you must commit Seppuku!

Anami refuses to comment. But he visits PM Suzuki twice during the day and personally conveys the Army's determination to fight. The conversation during the second visit:

Anami: I pray you, Prime Minister, wait just two more days.

Suzuki: The time is now, War Minister. We must not miss this

opportunity. The Army must comply with the government's decision.

The War Minister turns his back and leaves without saying any more. A doctor who happens to be attending on the Prime Minister comments, "Can it be that the War Minister is resolved to kill himself?"

Suzuki: Yes, I know. I'm sorry. But we can't help it.

At 21.00 Major Hatanaka and his colleagues explain their plan on army deployment. The war must go on. And, in the course of doing so, pacifists like Suzuki, Togo and Yonai should be rounded up. Anami is unmoved. He keeps refusing to "deviate from the Imperial wish," but finally consents to give his decision (on a coup d'état) by Tuesday noon. Hatanaka persists but the War Minister remains firm.

On Monday afternoon, the Foreign Ministry receives a protest from Washington. Japan is unreasonably putting off the announcement of the surrender. In Tokyo, however, neither the Supreme War Council nor the Cabinet meeting is able to arrive at a conclusion. PM Suzuki is in agony.

The curtain is dropping on Japan in the final agony of the war. Trapped in the midst of the coup plot is WM Anami whose military spirit urges him to fight till the last man. His dedication to the Emperor, however, commands him to lay down arms now. But what if the Allied Powers demand that the Emperor be deposed after the Imperial Army has disarmed its soldiers?

Also plunged into the deepest dilemma is PM Suzuki. At his age, this is perhaps his last chance for dedicating himself to the cause of the nation. He must do all he can. But he is doubtful if the Army will concur with his decision. He knows from long experience that it is beyond his might to stop the military. If he goes ahead and accepts the enemy's terms now, he may be splitting the nation into two. Besides, is his Foreign Minister absolutely certain that the Emperor system, the very core of the national essence, will be preserved?

The situation is extremely fluid. Time, nevertheless, is rapidly moving on. The enemy is demanding a prompt reply. If Japan were to remain ambiguous—perhaps a third atomic bomb—on Tokyo? With the noisy rattling of sabres of Army officers audible backstage, the

curtain continues to descend.

Act II

The curtain rises on Japan again. Time is Tuesday, August 14, 1945, the day War Minister Korechika Anami pledged his junior officer-patriots that he would give his last word on the coup d'état. He must decide. His dual role, one as the military leader and the other as the Emperor's loyal servant, torments him. Clock, meanwhile, is ticking.

On Tuesday morning it happens that Anami has no time to deliver his decision on the coup plot. For all the Cabinet members, the President of the Privy Council, the Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff, and the Army and Navy Chiefs of Military Affairs, 23 men altogether, are called to an audience by the Emperor at 10.50 that morning. The final decision on the semantic confusion is about to be made.

The place is again the sultry underground shelter. PM Suzuki sums up the discussions both at the Supreme War Council and the Cabinet Meeting. Eighty per cent of the conferees, he explains, agreed to accept the Potsdam Declaration while 20 per cent were against. The leaders of Japan are in such a lamentable disarray that they have to turn to the Sovereign for his gracious judgment.

Then, the Chiefs of Staff stand up to beg for an Imperial order to make just one more inquiry with the Allied powers as to the exact meaning of "subject to" and, if their answer is not satisfactory, to keep fighting on. Both military leaders are passionate in their appeal. They are almost in tears.

His Majesty slowly stands.

The Emperor: The argument of the opposition (to accepting the Declaration) is impressive. But my attitude has not changed from last Friday. I have given very careful thought to the situation both of the world and Japan and come to the conclusion that we should not continue the war. True there are certain misgivings about the preservation of the national polity. After studying thoroughly the enemy's offer, however, I cannot but notice their good will. Everything depends, after all, on our people in whom I trust. So I am for the ac-

ceptance of the provisions of the Declaration. I am resolved to do anything that is requested of me. If you think I should appeal to the nation through radio, I will do so. No doubt our people, especially the soldiers, will be shocked by our decision. If necessary, I am ready to talk directly to the armed men. I wish the Cabinet would start drafting the Rescript of acceptance (of the Declaration) as soon as possible.

The pain the Sovereign is feeling is manifest in every word he utters. As he discloses his mind, the conferees notice that he touches his eyes from time to time with a white handkerchief. Presently the sound of sobbing engulfs the entire conference room.

It is now noon Tuesday, August 14. The Cabinet members retire to the Prime Minister's Official Residence to affix their signatures to the official decree of surrender. The Sovereign is omnipotent. No subject can presume to alter the decision.

WM Anami returns to the War Ministry at Ichigaya—dejected. More than 20 young officers rush into his room, each with fists trembling from intense emotion. Anami quietly narrates the proceedings of the Imperial Conference.

Anami: His Majesty has personally vouched that the national polity would be preserved. His confidence in the Imperial Army is complete. We must not do a thing that will harass the Gracious Mind.

“And, sir, what is your own opinion?” one of the junior officers asks.

Anami: The Sovereign said to me, “I understand your feelings well. It must be very painful to you, but please bear the burden.” I'll obey him all the way. What else can I do?

The Cabinet secretaries begin drafting the Imperial Rescript in euphonic language. D-G Shimomura phones to NHK.

Shimomura: His Majesty wants to have his Rescript recorded. Send a team of recording technicians to the Imperial Household Ministry by 15.00.

Major Hatanaka, in the meanwhile, is running around trying to

persuade top army generals to rise for the nation. “We must be true to the tradition of the Imperial Army unto death.” However, the moment he enters the room that belongs to General Shizuichi Tanaka, Commander of the Army, Eastern Region, a stern voice booms.

General Tanaka: Don't speak to me about that stupid idea of yours. I know before hearing it from you. Return home at once!

The Cabinet secretaries are taking time in writing the Imperial Rescript because of countless suggestions, mostly minor alteration of phrases, made by the Cabinet members.

The recording is postponed to 18.00 and then to 19.00. At 21.00 an NHK announcement throws the country into the wildest speculation.

“Very important news will be broadcast at noon tomorrow (August 15). Every national is requested to turn on his radio and listen,” the announcement says.

Finally at 23.25 Tuesday the Emperor walks to his office in the Imperial Palace. The recording of the Rescript begins. He stands before a microphone. D-G Shimomura stands nearby.

The Emperor: How loudly should I speak?

Shimomura: Ordinary speaking voice, Your Majesty.

Shimomura bows and the Emperor begins reading.

The Emperor: To Our good and loyal subjects: After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions in Our Empire today, We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure . . .

Shimomura sees tears slowly well up in the Emperor's eyes. He himself is feeling streaks of hot sweat running down his back.

The Emperor reads twice. A record is cut each time. The Emperor suggests a third reading. But nobody dares ask him to do so, knowing the enormous burden of responsibility that has already piled up on the Sovereign's mind. It is 23.50 when he leaves the office and retires to the underground bedroom.

WM Anami walks into the Prime Minister's office. Looking

straight into the Premier's eyes, he stands at attention.

Anami: I apologize for all the trouble I have caused you, sir. My only wish has been to assist you as a good representative of the Imperial Army. Please understand.

Suzuki: I've always appreciated your help greatly, Anami-San. I am glad that you now speak very frankly. Each of us is second to none in our love for Japan.

Anami: I thank you for your benevolent forgiveness. This is a box of cigars presented to me by one of our officers in the Philippines. I don't smoke, Prime Minister. Please accept my humble gift.

He puts a small newspaper-wrapped box on the Premier's desk, salutes and leaves. Suzuki is seeing his War Minister off for the last time.

It is already past midnight. The historic day of August 15, 1945, has come.

D-G Shimomura and the NHK crew are at a loss as to whom they should entrust the two precious records on which they have just recorded the Emperor's proclamation. To carry them out of the Palace now and put them in the NHK safe would be the best course.

"But it wouldn't be very wise to transport the Imperial records so late at night when . . ." suggests one of the crew. He has heard that some radical Army officers are plotting a conspiracy, intending to ambush all those who pass the Palace gates. Others understand the implication of the unfinished sentence.

The records are better kept within the Palace tonight. But who will take charge of the security? There is no good place in the Imperial Household Ministry. Quite by chance they meet Chamberlain Yoshihiro Tokugawa who is on duty. Would Tokugawa-San keep the records? The man is known for his frank character.

Chamberlain; Tokugawa: Certainly. Leave them with me.

Tokugawa goes into the room that belongs to the Empress' secretary. Opening a small locker, the chamberlain puts the two records on the inside shelf and locks the door. "O.K. You may go now." D-G Shimomura and the NHK crew begin to leave the Palace com-

ound. They are stopped at the gate by soldiers holding rifles with bayonets fixed and hustled away to a small hut near the Double Bridge facing the Outer Plaza.

Patriotic Hatanaka, failing to persuade Commander Lt.-General Takeshi Mori of the First Imperial Guards Division, guns down Mori and issues a fake order: "The Imperial Guards Division, faithfully observing His Majesty's will and in its effort to uphold the national essence, will carry out the following orders: Secure the Imperial Palace area; secure the NHK; block all Palace telephone communications except those with the Imperial Guards Division Headquarters."

Hatanaka is determined. The Imperial voice shall not be broadcast.

By 02.00 Wednesday, the Imperial Palace is occupied by a regiment of soldiers. Sentries seal all the gates. D-G Shimomura and the NHK technicians are searched. No records. They must be hidden somewhere within the Palace, Hatanaka is convinced.

Soon soldiers begin ransacking offices of the Imperial Household Ministry. The underground shelter where His Majesty is sleeping is surrounded. And Chamberlain Tokugawa is checked by a unit led by a lieutenant.

Lieutenant: We are searching for the Minister (of Imperial Household) and the records. You must know where they are. Confess!

Tokugawa: I know nothing.

Lieutenant: If you keep saying that, I'll cut you up with this sword.

Tokugawa: Do so, if you wish. But that will not help.

Lieutenant: Chamberlain, don't you have any Japanese spirit?

Tokugawa: Oh, yes. I have the spirit. You are conceited to think the military alone are defending the nation.

Lieutenant: Baka!

He hits Tokugawa with his fist. The chamberlain falls. The soldiers go to search somewhere else.

The records have been protected. His glasses are gone, but Tokugawa still can see. He watches the eastern sky begin to brighten.

At 04.20, another band of patriots bursts into the Official Residence

of the Prime Minister. PM Suzuki is gone. They sprinkle oil over the floor and light a fire. Fortunately it is not gasoline but heavy oil.

Hastily they head for the next target. Suzuki's private residence is burned. This time again the Premier escapes from an assassination attempt. Earlier he had survived the 2.26 Incident.

The NHK building is seized by a company of armed men. Some officers enter the studio and hold announcer Morio Tateno at gun point. "I want to speak to the nation," one of them demands.

Tateno insists: "You must obtain permission from the Army's Eastern Region Headquarters, if you want to do so."

They stare at each other, neither moving an inch.

At 05.10, reinforcement battalions are lining up before the Imperial Guards Headquarters—ready to march into the Palace.

General Shizuichi Tanaka, Commander of the Army, Eastern Region, arrives.

Having been informed of the assassination of Lt.-General Mori, Tanaka is resolved to suppress the conspiracy. He talks to the combat-ready units.

Tanaka: What you did last night is light years removed from the true spirit of the Imperial Army. The Gracious Words have already been uttered. Follow the Emperor's wish and stop this folly right now!

General Tanaka then proceeds to the Palace gate. A sentry stops him. Friend or foe? His bayonet is pointing at the General.

Sentry: Who's there?

Tanaka: Your commander!

Tanaka rides past the appalled guard, meets the commanding officer and orders him to evacuate all the intruders. The regiment commander readily complies, learning for the first time of the death of his division commander. Tanaka walks further toward the underground shelter, the Emperor's abode. A chamberlain emerges.

Tanaka: Where is the military attache?

Chamberlain: He is not in, sir.

Tanaka: Where is the Grand Chamberlain?

Chamberlain: He is not in, either.

Tanaka: Is His Majesty in here?

Chamberlain: Yes, but...

Tanaka: Ha, ha. You are telling me a lie. You don't have to be afraid of me. Don't mistake me for the chief of the intruders.

General Tanaka shows him his name card. The chamberlain's face brightens with relief. Six hours—and the court conspiracy is over.

Major Hatanaka is now inside the NHK studio, pleading: "Five minutes. Give me five minutes to talk to my fellow compatriots."

Announcer Tateno refuses to give in. Several more minutes of staring. Finally the major staggers back. "I understand. I'll evacuate my men."

Outside, the patriotic major learns of the death of WM Anami. Squatting in the veranda of his home, Anami, his face toward the Imperial Palace, had composed a farewell poem and ritually disemboweled himself.

Hatanaka walks to the Outer Plaza of the Palace to die, putting a bullet through his own head.

For General Tanaka, savior of the Palace, death was to come nine days later. He shot himself in the heart.

The NHK radio is now alerting the nation: "There is going to be a very important announcement by His Majesty in person. Don't fail to turn on the radio." The message is repeated again and again.

And now it is noon. The national anthem. The Japanese people are soon hearing their Ruler's voice. The stilted and archaic words are far removed from their daily speech.

The Emperor: To Our good and loyal subjects... We have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is unsufferable...

The Sovereign's voice is strained. For he is announcing the death of the once Great Empire of Japan.

Toward New Japan

Standing before old-fashioned radio sets, the Japanese people were weeping. The day was August 15, 1945, and the time was noon. Being heard throughout the land was the voice of His Majesty the Emperor. It sounded stilted and void of human aura. The Emperor was using archaic expressions not fully intelligible to the non-educated. Yet, the message was clear: the war was ending—in Japan's defeat.

"After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual condition in Our Empire today," the Imperial voice was heard as saying, "We have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure."

The Emperor continued that the war situation had developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world had all turned against her interests—and added that should he continue to fight, it would not only result in an ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also it would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.

"We are keenly aware of the inmost feeling of all ye, Our subjects," the Emperor went on. "However, it is according to the dictates of time and fate that We have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable."

With this Imperial Rescript, the Emperor declared termination of the Pacific War—a war of peculiar savagery which Japan could have avoided if only its armed forces had kept away from politics.

Said the English Mainichi of August 16 issue: "Upon learning of the Imperial Rescript, we, the subjects, are filled with awe, and cannot help weeping in consideration of our responsibility for causing His Majesty such grave concern. We have no words to express our apologies."

But the tears the general public were shedding were out of mixed feelings: they were sorrowful over the loss of the war, but they were at the same time feeling relieved at the thought that they were finally being released from the torment the war had brought on them.

In fact, Japan as a nation had been on the brink of almost total

collapse. As many as some three million people had perished in and out of the Japanese islands; residential houses destroyed in air raids, or demolished by the Japanese Government for the purpose of holding the effect of air raids to a minimum, had numbered about 3,100,000, rendering more than 15 million people homeless.

The lack of farming utensils had resulted in a shortage of agricultural products, and the people were almost starving. In June 1945, a Health and Welfare Ministry survey indicated that in six major cities, the average nutritive ratio of the Japanese had dwindled from 2,400 calories a day in the past to 1,800 calories.

The chaos was to drag on into the years that followed. With the repatriation from abroad of millions of servicemen and civilians, unemployment was running high. In 1946, the people with no jobs numbered 10 million across the nation.

The social turmoil was compounded by raging inflation. Immediately before the outbreak of the war on December 6, 1941, Bank of Japan notes in circulation totaled ¥4,700 million; this increased to ¥28,600 million on August 15, 1945, hit the ¥50,000 million mark in December the same year and surpassed the ¥60,000 million level in February 1946. Many became deranged. The death rate of sick persons ran at a record high. And murders in quest of food were not uncommon.

With these social phenomena as a backdrop, General Douglas MacArthur, with a corn cob pipe clenched between his teeth, flew in from the Philippines on August 30, 1945, to take charge of the occupation of Japan as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). Thus started the occupation, in which Japan underwent the full force of bloodless political and social "revolution" inspired and supervised by an American general.

In September, based on the Potsdam Declaration, MacArthur disarmed the Japanese Army and Navy—and went on to arrest scores of Japan's wartime leaders as war criminals to be indicted later at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. Then, before the year 1945 was out, the Supreme Commander issued a string of SCAP directives to democratize and decentralize Japan. The changes, which affected the entire life of the nation, were instituted one by one through the medium of the Japanese Government.

Meeting Kijuro Shidehara, the then Japanese Prime Minister, on October 11, MacArthur instructed Japan to carry out five major changes as the first step to democratize itself—the emancipation of women; the encouragement of the unionization of labor; the opening of the schools to more liberal education; the abolition of the system which, through secret inquisition and abuse, had held the people in constant fear in favor of a system of justice; and the democratization of Japanese economic institutions.

In the same month, the spirit of Japan's state-controlled education system was dealt a deadly blow, when SCAP issued a directive clarifying the educational aim and policy of the Occupation Forces. In announcing the issuance of the directive, Col. Ken. R. Dyke, chief of the Civil Information and Education Section, flatly declared: "In the event of the enforcement of this directive, the thought of the Japanese will be fundamentally revised in the end."

"The general aim of the directive," added Col. Dyke, "is to prevent the spread of militaristic and ultra-nationalistic thoughts." With the enforcement of the directive, in fact, the school curriculum was altered in such a way that the Emperor was dethroned from his divine position. And the Education Rescript (granted in 1890 by Emperor Meiji), which had implied the Emperor's divine status, simply went into blurred oblivion.

SCAP did not stop there. It went on to "freeze" the assets of the Imperial Household valued at ¥1,590,615,500 (when a copy of the English Mainichi was 10 Sen, one-tenth of ¥1) in cash and negotiable papers, land, timber and buildings alone. The step was followed by another SCAP directive abolishing State Shinto—the "last evil roots," according to the General Headquarters, of the Emperor system.

The tentacles of feudalism were thus removed gradually as directive after directive pared one element after another from the old system. But SCAP had one more task to achieve, which was intended to give a finishing touch to the first phase of the occupation of Japan—drafting of a new Constitution.

As it turned out, drafting of Japan's new Constitution had to go through a complicated process. This was mainly because the Japanese Government leaders had been in a frame of mind to retain the Emperor's prerogatives, while Douglas MacArthur had a different view in

mind. Moreover, there was a "misunderstanding," on the part of the Japanese Government, over the interpretation of the Potsdam Declaration with regard to the Emperor—a misunderstanding, the root of which could be found in the days immediately before the war's end.

On August 10, 1945, informing the Allied Powers of its acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, Japan said the acceptance would be made on the understanding that the declaration "did not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler."

The Allies' reply, however, did not clarify any specific pledge on Japan's monarchy. It simply said that from the moment of surrender, "the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate the surrender terms." The reply also stated that the ultimate form of government of Japan would be established "by the freely expressed will of the Japanese people."

The Allies' reply was a disappointment but, at least, thought the Japanese leaders, it did not seem to totally rule out the possibility of the monarchy's survival. And they strained the plain meaning of the Allies' message to give it an interpretation compatible with their own hopes. The "wishful thinking" was still in evidence even after Japan was brought under Occupation, and the main concern of the government leaders was how to retain the Emperor system intact.

It was as early as October 1945 that MacArthur instructed Prime Minister Kijuro Shidehara to work out the draft of a new Constitution. Accordingly, the government assigned State Minister Joji Matsumoto for the job—while various political parties, including Socialist and Communist, were working on their own versions.

(In their own draft, the Communists were demanding outright abolition of the monarchy, while in the Socialists' draft, the Emperor was to be retained and a part of the sovereignty was to rest with him.)

On December 8, Matsumoto emerged with his draft at the Budget Committee meeting of the House of Representatives. With the premise that "this is not the government's view but my personal opinion now in charge of preparations and study for the constitutional revision,"

Matsumoto declared that the new Constitution should not alter the main principle of the old Constitution which is that the Emperor has the prerogatives.

Said Matsumoto: "The major principle that the Emperor will assume the rights of sovereignty of the State does not require any revision and I also hold that there is no such necessity at all. On this point, I think that learned persons in this country share the same opinion."

In February 1946, the Japanese Government submitted the Matsumoto draft to MacArthur. But SCAP flatly turned it down on the ground that it was only a rewording of the old Constitution and thus was not democratic. SCAP then instructed the Civil Government Section of the General Headquarters to map out a "model draft." When MacArthur's aides began working out the new draft, they were given, in the form of guidance, three principles on which the Constitution was to be based: First, the Emperor system should be retained, but it must be subject to the will of the people; second, war was to be forsaken forever; and thirdly, "all forms of feudalism" must be abolished.

When the "model draft" was completed, it was shown to the Japanese Government with the verbal ultimatum that if this were rejected, the Supreme Commander would place it before the Japanese public in advance of the first postwar general election scheduled for the spring of 1946.

MacArthur had his reason to reject the Matsumoto draft. Several countries, notably the USSR and Australia, were insisting that the Emperor be indicted as a war criminal and the Emperor system totally abolished in the "reborn" Japan; and Washington itself was still foggy as to whether the Emperor system should be retained.

MacArthur in the meantime knew that he would run into great difficulties in laying Occupation policies over the Japanese with no Emperor. When Washington seemed to move in favor of the indictment of the Emperor, he advised that he would need "at least one million reinforcements," should the Emperor be indicted—and perhaps hanged. He was also aware that, if Japan's new Constitution were to retain the Emperor system not much different in nature from the one defined in the old Constitution, the countries already insisting on the

abdication of the Emperor would become even more vociferous and, as a result, Washington would finally have to agree with them.

Shortly after the SCAP draft was presented to the Japanese Government, MacArthur reiterated that the "core" of Japan's new Constitution must be the Emperor as a symbol and the renouncing of war forever.

The government had no choice. After applying minor technical changes, the government made the draft public in March—to the surprise of the general public who noticed that in several months, in which the Matsumoto draft was replaced by that of SCAP, the status of the Emperor had changed from a sovereign to a mere symbol. But, perhaps, the most stunned were the Socialists. The content of the announced draft was more "democratic" than that of their own draft of the new Constitution in which a part of the prerogatives was to rest with the Emperor.

The constitutional revision plan, based on the SCAP draft, was presented in April 1946 to the Diet by the Cabinet of Shigeru Yoshida which was organized as a result of a general election held earlier the same month. Understandably, arguments centered around the issues of the "Emperor as a symbol" and the renouncement of war. Conservatives were still insisting that prerogatives should be held by the Emperor. Whereupon the cabinet minister in charge of presenting the new Constitution to the two Houses had to spend a lengthy time explaining that the drastic change in the Emperor's status "did not impair" Kokutai, Japan's fundamental national polity.

As for the renunciation of war that was incorporated in Article 9, the Communist Party argued that it was foolish to renounce war for self-defense. When Sanzo Nosaka questioned this at the House of Representatives, Prime Minister Yoshida emphasized that Japan would renounce all wars forever. "In the past," Yoshida said, "all the imperialist wars were conducted in the name of self-defense."

This was a strange remark to make. For it soon turned out that Article 9 became a great embarrassment to the Americans—and to Yoshida himself. In 1953, Richard Nixon, the Vice President at that time, said in Tokyo unofficially that it was wrong for his country to insist that a no-war clause be written into Japan's new Constitution. The fact was, however, that Article 9 did not prevent the Japanese

Government from creating the National Police Reserve of some 70,000 men armed as infantry soldiers which, in four years, was enlarged and reorganized into a well-equipped modern army, navy and air force.

The new Constitution was promulgated on November 3, 1946, and effectuated on May 3 the next year. A virtual brainchild of SCAP, the 103-article, 11-chapter Constitution was a "finishing touch" to Phase I of the Occupation of Japan. But it was an Occupation made by the United States alone, rather than by the Allied Powers. In fact, the Occupation Forces were under the direct command of the Supreme Commander, an American who was appointed by Washington and acting on its instructions. Then it seemed to be only natural that, in the future, with the changes on the international political scene, the main consideration of the United States would be to convert the "reborn Japan" into its ally—in its struggle against communism.

No Longer Divine

With the effectuation on May 3, 1947, of the new Constitution, Japan made a new start. The monarchy had survived the stormy postwar years, but the Emperor was no longer the sovereign ruler of Japan, much less a living deity as implied in the earlier (Meiji) Constitution which itself was thrown on the scrap heap. In fact, totally upsetting the spirit of the old Constitution instituted in 1889, the new Constitution ruled out the Emperor's prerogatives and emphasized that sovereignty now rested with the people.

"The Emperor," declared Article 1 of the new Constitution, "shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power."

The old concept about the Emperor thus crumbled away, and the mystique surrounding him faded. The Emperor was now a human being. But it was none other than the Emperor himself who took the initiative in shattering the nation's long-standing belief that the Emperor was God.

According to the autobiography of the late Kijuro Shidehara, Hirohito, one day in late autumn of 1945, spoke about a certain past

Emperor who fell sick and died without receiving medical treatment. That particular Emperor, Shidehara quoted Hirohito as having told him, was not medicated because his entourage were so deeply in awe of the imperial personage that they would not allow physicians to feel the pulse of the "divine body."

Shidehara thought the reigning Emperor was dropping the hint that unless all the mystiques about the Emperor were lifted, he would become "unfit" as a monarch in the democratic Japan. Hirohito then added, according to Shidehara's autobiography, that he was hoping that he could grant an Imperial Rescript denying the deification of the Emperor "before the next spring is out."

On December 25 the same year, Shidehara, the then Prime Minister of Japan, worked out a draft of the Imperial Rescript, the content of which lived up to what the Emperor had hoped for.

The Rescript, granted on New Year's Day of 1946, read in part:

"... As the result of the defeat of the War which lasted long, We think the people are apt to become fidgety and sink into the abyss of despondency. Certainly it is a cause for profound concern that there are signs of confusion of thought due to the marked decline of morality affected by the growing tendency of radical sophistries at last.

"Be that as it may, We are with you, the people, and wish always to share common interests, joys and sorrows with all of you. The bondage between Us and you, the people, is constantly tied with mutual trust, love, and respect; it is not brought about by mere mythology and legends. It is never founded on a chimerical conception which ascribes the Emperor as a living deity and, moreover, the Japanese as superior to all other races of people, hence destined to rule the world...."

The Rescript pleased Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Announcing a special message on the same New Year's Day, MacArthur praised the Emperor for undertaking a leading part in the democratization of his people.

"His action reflects the irresistible influence of a sound idea," he said. "A sound idea cannot be stopped." Later, SCAP let it be known that the Emperor had not consulted him or sought his advice before deciding to publicly announce that he was not God.

As a matter of fact, the agony that the Emperor experienced

before, during and immediately after the war had been decisively human and earthly in nature. In his book, "Sebiro no Tenno" ("The Emperor in Civilian Clothes") published in 1957, Osanaga Kanroji, former Vice Grand Chamberlain of the Imperial Household Agency, surmised how agonized the Emperor was on the eve of the Pacific War—being torn between his position as a sovereign and "personal" feelings against war.

In the Palace, Kanroji said in the book, chamberlains could hear the Emperor murmur himself as he walked up and down the length of his office alone. "That illustrated the agony of His Majesty," Kanroji wrote. "The chamberlains looked at each other, whispering, 'Again.' Their faces appeared sad and gloomy."

Kanroji also described a scene at a ministerial conference held in the presence of the Emperor on September 6, 1941, at which the government and military leaders virtually decided to wage war against the United States. When the atmosphere of the conference became unmistakably in favor of war, according to Kanroji's book, the Emperor produced a slip of paper.

On the paper was a verse composed by Emperor Meiji, his grandfather, which expressed the hope for universal peace. The Emperor recited it aloud and said that it was most regrettable that, despite the Imperial wish for peace, war had become inevitable. "Silence prevailed over the conference table," wrote Kanroji. "Those present cast their eyes downward and uttered not a single word." (See Chapter II—Who Started the War?)

Yet, to the reigning Emperor, the most painful moment was no doubt the moment of Japan's defeat. In three years and seven months, more than three million Japanese had been killed and the major cities reduced to ashes—in a war declared, and ended, in his own name. However much the Emperor might have been against the war "personally," the Pacific War was a war authorized by himself.

On September 27, 1945, shortly after Japan's surrender, the Emperor called on MacArthur at the U.S. Embassy.

Seeing the Emperor, the Supreme Commander noticed that he was nervous and the "stress of past months" was showing plainly. MacArthur offered the Emperor a cigaret and lighted it for him, and saw his hands shaking. He could imagine how deep and dreadful must

be the Emperor's agony of humiliation, and he was fearing that the Emperor might have come to plead his own cause against indictment as a war criminal. But it was to the contrary.

Recalling his first encounter with the Emperor, MacArthur said in his book published in 1964 ("Reminiscences" by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, McGraw-Hill Book Co., copyright 1964 Time Inc. Reprinted with permission):

"...But my fears were groundless. What he said was this: 'I come to you, General MacArthur, to offer myself to the judgment of the powers you represent as the one to bear sole responsibility for every political and military decision made and action taken by my people in the conduct of war.' A tremendous impression swept me. This courageous assumption of a responsibility implicit with death, a responsibility clearly belied by facts of which I was fully aware, moved me to the very marrow of my bones. He was an Emperor by inherent birth, but in that instant I knew I faced the First Gentleman of Japan in his own right."

It was on this occasion that a well-known photo of the Emperor and MacArthur standing side by side was taken. In it, the diminutive Emperor, wearing a morning coat and striped trousers, is shown standing stiffly beside the tall American, who looks quite relaxed and informal in an open-necked shirt, with his hands resting on his upper hip. The photo, which was given much publicity, perhaps on instructions from none other than SCAP, was to the Japanese a painful reminder of who the conquerer was—and a more convincing denial of the divine status of the Emperor than the Imperial Rescript granted the following year, in which the Emperor himself denied his deification, or the new Constitution made effective two years later.

But there arises a question: Have Japan's Emperors in fact been divine beings throughout the nation's history—and, as such, sovereign rulers of the state?

The concept that the Emperor is God had apparently stemmed from the Japanese mythology appearing in the nation's oldest chronicles—Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) and Nihon Shoki (Chronicles of Japan) written, respectively, in A.D. 712 and 720—which

hold that Emperor Jimmu, said to be Japan's first Emperor who founded the empire of Japan in 660 B.C., was a descendant of God or, more exactly, of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu Omikami.

Details of the myth differ between the *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki*, but its core consists of legends of the Sun Goddess and legends of how her direct descendants unified the Japanese people under their authority. The myth also says Emperor Jimmu was born in Hiuga in today's Miyazakai Prefecture in Kyushu—where his divine ancestors descended from a celestial plateau called Takamagahara—and how he died at the age of 172 in Kashiwara in present-day Nara Prefecture.

It goes without saying that in the modern study of history, the myth is treated simply as a myth whose credibility is held dubious. And the credibility was often doubted in olden days as well.

Razan Hayashi (1583-1657), a Confucian scholar of the early Edo period, doubted if Emperor Jimmu was in fact a divine descendant. "If he really was, why was he not born in the central part of the Japanese islands where it seems to be more strategic for his venture to unify the nation?" the scholar wondered. "Why had he to be born in remote Kyushu?"

Becoming suspicious of the very existence of God, scholar Hakuseki Arai (1657-1725) theorized that God was a human being, and concluded that all the Gods in Japanese mythology were war heroes of ancient times.

On the other hand, there were of course many who believed that God existed and created the Japanese islands just as the myth claims. Norinaga Motoori (1730-1810), for one, who authored the "Annotation of *Kojiki*," maintained that God did exist, even though the existence was beyond human wisdom. Not surprisingly, however, to most of the general public at that time, everything about God and the divine nature of the Emperor remained an enigma.

The Emperor's divine nature came to be taken for granted among the public, it is only fair to say, during the Meiji Era (1867-1911) when the Restoration was achieved and the prerogative shifted from the hands of the Tokugawa Shogunate to those of the Emperor. In the course of their attempt to establish the constitutional polity in Japan and to convert the nation into a modern state, the statesmen, who had engineered the Restoration, needed an "absolute authority" as a

center of the nation from both political and spiritual points of view. And the Emperor, it was believed, would best serve this purpose.

Along this line, the government of Emperor Meiji granted one Imperial Rescript after another, in which the absolute authority of the Emperor and his divine status were emphasized. On January 4, 1882, Emperor Meiji granted the Imperial Precepts to the Soldiers and Sailors which said: "The forces of Our Empire are in all ages under the command of the Emperor (since the days of Emperor Jimmu more than 24 centuries ago) . . . and the military authority . . . was scarcely ever entrusted to a subject."

Then in the Imperial Constitution promulgated on February 11, 1889, it was decreed that the Emperor is "sacred and inviolable" and that Japan "shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal."

And, said the Rescript on Education granted on October 30, 1890: "Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof . . ."

Then requesting the loyalty of the subjects to the Emperor, the Rescript continued that ". . . should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth."

Thus it became highly irreverent for the people to subject the Emperor to public discussion, and a critical approach to the national myths—which were apparently presented before the Japanese as spiritual, if not historical, facts—often led one into the crime of lese-majeste.

In the course of time, the Education Rescript had become a sort of Holy Writ, and every school across the country kept a copy, encased in a paulownia box, at a "sanctum" built in the form of a shrine on the campus. The Rescript had become so holy that, in January 1891, the late Kanzo Uchimura, a noted theologian who, at that time, was a lecturer at the First Higher School in Tokyo, was expelled from the school when he refused to lower his head and bow toward the copy.

A modern study of history inevitably contends that most parts of the Imperial Rescripts granted in the Meiji Era were on the fictitious

side. That the Emperor is not a living deity is self-evident; and the history of Japan shows it also fictitious that the Emperors had always been the sovereign rulers of Japan or the supreme commanders of its armed forces.

A brief scan over the history of Japan leads one to discover that there was a time when the nation had no Emperor. During the three years between the era of Emperor Jimmu and the next Emperor in line (Suizei), no Emperor existed in the country—but Japan as a nation was nonetheless in existence. This is just one historical fact that denies the theory that Japan has always been governed by sovereigns called “Emperor.”

In 1952, in the monthly magazine *Chuo Koron*, the late Sokichi Tsuda, one of the nation’s leading historians, argued that at no time, except on several occasions, had the Emperors ruled over the Japanese people with the prerogatives. The “intrinsic” nature and function of the Imperial Household (until the Meiji Era), said Tsuda, had lain in the fact that it was a “tangible symbol” of Japan as a unified, independent nation.

Tsuda also maintained that the Imperial Household had always been the “central leader” of the nation’s culture—and went on to prove this by citing that while few Emperors were known as capable war commanders or efficient politicians, many of them were in fact good scholars, or excellent artists or literary men.

It is apparent that the deification of the Emperor and the establishment of the theory that the Emperors were uncontested sovereign rulers of Japan were products of politics based on the national mythologies. It was these myths which Japan’s military leaders used to muscle in and to prod the nation into waging a string of wars against foreign nations.

But, at the same time, it was also these myths that have made Japan one of the rarest countries of the world—a country that retains cultural and spiritual aspects which are, even today, under heavy influence of an Emperor system believed to have been established thousands of years ago, and yet is a nation fully conforming with the modernity of the 20th Century.

From Out Of Chaos

With two children, one 11 and the other 8, ours is a family of four. My husband is working for the city office. For us, it’s a forbidden spiritual luxury to think about our future. We are so preoccupied with the daily life; our only concern is how to survive today—and hopefully tomorrow.

We consume 10 days’ ration of food in five days, supplementing the deficiency with costly food sold in the black market. People say we should also go and see the farmers in Chiba and buy agricultural products from them. They say even if we pay the train fare to Chiba, it more than pays off. But the trouble is we have no extra hand who can travel. We cannot afford the train ticket in the first place.

We have no other choice but to go and find food in the black market. We have to eat somehow. My husband’s monthly salary is ¥200, while our livelihood costs are about ¥600 every month. To make both ends meet, we sell everything we can. I know we cannot get along much longer this way. (A housewife in Kofu City, Yamanashi Prefecture).

From Nov. 2, 1945 issue of *Asahi Shimbun*

Everywhere in Japan, the scars of war were much in evidence. Tokyo was a no man’s land of charred rubble and a handful of half-burned buildings helplessly standing in the midst of the holocaust. The population of the nation’s capital had decreased to 2,400,000 from 6,500,000 in prewar days, and its buildings, including residential houses to only 370,000 from 1,300,000.

Across the nation, a total of 90 major cities had been air-raided, with the result that 2,500,000 buildings—about 2,000,000 of them residential houses—were demolished, either totally or partially. And the number of homeless people amounted to a staggering eight million.

The Stars and Stripes was fluttering in the center of Tokyo, and gum-chewing Americans in uniform were everywhere, marching, strolling or driving in a strange vehicle called Jeep. Domestic politics were in a state of total disarray, while the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) was hammering out one measure after another to “democratize” Japan.

The Emperor system of the past was denied outright, and Hirohito

himself "came down from above the clouds" and declared that he was no longer a living deity. State Shinto was abolished and militarism totally wiped out. The agrarian system was receiving reforms, while Zaibatsubusiness concerns were being dissolved.

In fact, in the political and social confusion that followed Japan's surrender, what had been a virtue in the past was a vice; what had been valuable and good in the prewar days was now valueless and evil. Gradually, the people lost their sense of values, which resulted in a spiritual vacuum created within them, and they became increasingly indifferent to social developments unless the developments involved them directly.

A group of the nation's wartime leaders, including Prince Fumimaro Konoe and Gen. Hideki Tojo, committed, or attempted, suicide, but the news hardly created a shockwave among the public. The public could not have cared less; struggling for bare livelihood, they were concerned and preoccupied with only themselves.

Not surprisingly, the country was infested with all types of crime—thefts, armed robberies, rapes and murders. Murders had numbered only 77 cases across the nation in 1940, but the figure jumped to 341 in 1946. It was the time when bandits armed with guns were only willing to pull the trigger when resisted; it was the time when a man would kill his brother in a quarrel over a piece of potato; and a son would batter his father to death for a small rice ball. Admittedly, some of the crimes were committed for food, and for food, many people fell easy victim to crime.

When arrested in 1945 on charges of raping and killing seven women, a man named Yoshio Kodaira confessed that he had lured the women to deserted places on the pretext that he would give them food. "It was easy," said 42-year-old Kodaira. "The women were overjoyed and they followed me."

Indeed, food was in extreme shortage, and many people were literally starving. In the days immediately after the war, it was not uncommon at all to see hungry and malnourished people collapse and die on the streets. On November 18, 1945, the major Tokyo dailies reported that since the end of war, a total of 300 people had starved to death in Kyoto, 148 in Kobe, 100 in Fukuoka, 72 in Nagoya and 42 in

Osaka. "In Tokyo, an average of six persons were dying of starvation every day and an average of three in Yokohama," the newspapers added.

Most of them were homeless and jobless people who had become extremely weak and infirm; in the daytime they wandered around towns in search of left-over food, and at night they slept on the bare concrete floor or railway stations or underground tunnels with only a thin blanket to keep warm. Even if there was a job for them, the result was much the same. As a day laborer, a man could not get paid more than ¥1 or ¥2 a day—but a small rice ball cost ¥10 and a bun ¥15.

The hungry people swarmed to any place where there was promise of food. One late autumn day in 1945, some American GIs threw chocolates and candies onto a platform of Yokohama Station from the windows of a passing train. The Japanese on the platform rushed over in a desperate race to obtain the unexpected "gifts" given in a humiliating manner.

Seeing this, an aged man wrote a letter to a Tokyo newspaper and questioned if the Japanese were, with the defeat in war, reduced to the status of a beggar. "Are we Japanese all beggars now?" the old man wrote. "Where has our pride gone? In olden days, a Samurai was not supposed to appear hungry even if, in reality, he was starving."

But at a time when starvation was nothing but a stark reality of everyday life, who could have blamed hungry people for rushing for something to eat? And was it not the Samurai spirit, which despised basic human feelings and desires as undeniably lowly, that had oppressed the Japanese in feudal days and, in modern times, played a major role in urging the Japanese to a war of savagery?

In his "Daraku-ron," or "On Apostasy," the late Ango Sakaguchi, a noted novelist, argued in 1946 that the Japanese "were depraved" not because Japan lost the war, but because the Japanese were, after all, human beings. With a touch of paradox Sakaguchi then urged the Japanese to "become more depraved" so that they could resume humanity in themselves at the "lowest depth of morality" where all "spiritual vanity" makes no sense.

In the meantime, black markets had sprung up throughout the country, and they were enjoying a thriving business. Just a couple of blocks away from where an undernourished person was lying dead on

a street, an enormous number of ¥10 and ¥100 notes were busily shifting hands at a black market. In early 1946, some 76,000 people were doing business at 234 black markets in Tokyo and, in Osaka, about 6,000 were black-marketeering at 23 places.

The variety of goods traded was miraculously abundant. In fact, there was almost nothing that could not be found. On February 25, 1946, the Tokyo police found that, of a total of 25,043 people black-marketeering in Tokyo on that particular day, 4,867 were dealing in food, 3,267 in textiles, 1,697 in leather goods, 1,442 in metal products and the rest in various other kinds of merchandise.

It is hardly surprising that everything in the black markets was costly. One Sho (1.5 kilograms) of rice cost ¥120 and one Kan (3.75 kilograms) of potatoes ¥65; a pair of rain shoes were ¥270, a bicycle tire ¥350 and 10 cigarets were sold at ¥15—at a time when, according to a survey made by the Health and Welfare Ministry in June 1946, the average monthly salary of workers in the Tokyo-Yokohama area was ¥570 for an office clerk and ¥536 for a factory hand.

The goods that were traded in the black markets had come from a variety of sources—plants and factories, warehouses of the defunct Imperial Army and Navy, and the camps of the U.S. Forces. Food, including rice and vegetables, was brought in to the markets by “Katsugiya,” or “carriers.” The countryside swarmed with visitors, most of them carriers, from cities and towns in search of foods.

Every evening, the trains returned to cities bulging with the foraged food. When the trains were overcrowded to the point of suffocation, the overflow of people contrived to climb into the coaches through the broken windows. Others rode on the buffers of the locomotive and on the couplings between the coaches.

The public was waging a desperate struggle of bare subsistence, but the people were to experience more difficult days—with the raging inflation becoming increasingly uncontrollable. In December 1941, Bank of Japan notes in circulation amounted to ¥4,700 million; this increased to ¥28,600 million in August 1945, to ¥50,000 million in December the same year—and to more than ¥60,000 million in February 1946.

Just how fast the inflation galloped is evident from the following fact: in the scant three-day period between February 14 and 16, 1946,

the amount of money circulating in the nation jumped from ¥60,500 million to ¥61,500 million. Meanwhile, the consumer price index in June 1946 was 15 times that of 1933, and rose to almost 25 times in January 1947.

What had caused the runaway inflation was rather easy to trace. In a little over three months after Japan's surrender, the government made an enormous amount of expenditures—¥26,600 million—in the name of extra military spending as an indemnity to the war industry for alleged losses the industry had suffered during the war. The sum was indeed colossal: it accounted for one-third of what Japan had spent for military purposes between September 1937 and August 1945. The government then released some ¥100,000 million worth of “military material,” which big business enterprises, including Zaibatsu concerns, felt free to round up.

With the money for indemnity in one hand and the “military materiel” in the other, big business fired employes en masse and curtailed production—and waited as what they had with them spiraled. Given these elements, it was more than obvious that the nation would be struck by inflation very soon.

When the inflation did strike the nation and kept aggravating its economy, the government of Kijuro Shidehara announced in February 1946 that it would “freeze” all the bank deposits of private individuals and business enterprises alike, and would replace the current yen notes with new currency.

The extraordinary measure was put into practice on March 7 the same year, but it soon turned out to be a fiasco. The amount of money in circulation dropped to ¥16,100 million on March 10, but it was quick to take an upward trend. In less than three months, the amount increased to more than ¥30,000 million and, on September 9, Japan was once again seeing ¥60,000 million of money circulating in the country.

Because of the ineptness of the government, the inflation was still there, raging across the nation, and the people were perching on the border of death. And it was only a matter of time that the general public would unleash its anger over the government ineptitude, first in the form of labor strife which quite understandably, developed into a series of political struggles.

Due partly to SCAP's encouragement given to the formation of

labor unions, the labor offensive was already gaining momentum in Japan in the days of late 1945. The strike on October 8 by a group of Koreans working at the Yubari and Joban mines set off 32 other strikes in October alone, in which a total of 17,293 people participated. In November, 36,363 people took part in 66 strikes across the nation and 109,509 workers staged 141 strikes the following month.

It seemed that the working people were fast learning how to join force in their struggle. The number of unions jumped from zero in 1944 to 707 embracing 378,481 people in December 1945 and to 12,006 with a total of 3,679,971 members in June 1946. And they were under the leadership and guidance of both the Socialists and Communists in their struggle against the capitalist.

It was in October 1945 that, on the instruction of SCAP, the Japanese Government set free political prisoners who had been behind bars for year. Out of gaol came a small band of dedicated Communists, including Kyuichi Tokuda and Yoshio Shiga. Soon after their release from Fuchu Prison in the suburbs of Tokyo, they organized a new Japan Communist Party, the first "legal" Communist Party in Japan's history.

On October 10, the new Japan Communist Party issued a statement titled, "Appeal to the People." In it, appreciation was expressed for the occupation of Japan by the Allied Powers as opening the door for Japan's "democratic revolution." But, as it turned out later, the "eulogy" to the Allied Forces under the command of Douglas MacArthur was the product of a sheer childish illusion on the part of the JCP leaders. For, with the change in the world's political scene, a strong, robustly anti-Communist Japan became a prime aim of the United States—and SCAP stood, not only once but twice and thrice, in the way of the JCP leading major labor struggles and shattered the Communist dream to achieve in Japan their version of a "democratic revolution."

Early in 1946, Douglas MacArthur was watching the JCP with a certain amount of fear. In fact, advocating and agitating radicalism, the Communists were making much headway among the public. To the hungry and angry people, the radical Communists were more attractive than the lukewarm Socialists. The Communists were now becoming public heroes.

It was on April 17, 1946, that MacArthur made clear for the first

time his no-nonsense attitude toward the Communists. In Tokyo, some 200,000 people, led by Kyuichi Tokuda, were demonstrating after a protest rally held in Hibiya Park against the Shidehara Administration. When the crowd attempted to storm into the Prime Minister's official residence, SCAP unhesitatingly sent six armored cars and as many Jeeps, all full of U.S. soldiers, and had them dispel the demonstrators.

On May 19, Tokyo was again in a chaotic condition with some 250,000 demonstrators vociferously demanding food and a meeting with the Emperor. Kyuichi Tokuda, pointing in the direction of the Imperial Palace, was shouting: "We are starving. How about him?" And Shigeru Yoshida, a cantankerous old conservative who was to assume the premiership in a new administration, was encountering extreme difficulties in organizing a cabinet. So chaotic was the situation in the nation's capital that Yoshida at one moment totally gave up his effort to form a cabinet.

In fact, his secretary told the demonstrators staging a sit-in to please retire because "Mr. Yoshida has abandoned the idea of assuming the reins of government," It seemed that the public was winning a revolution.

But, again, SCAP emerged as a savior of the Tories. He issued a "grave warning to the Japanese" in which he said he was prepared to take every necessary step to restore and maintain order in Tokyo. Thus, the conservatives' crisis was averted. Politics in Japan were not in the hands of the Japanese, but were resting in the palm of an American.

Yoshida got his government started, but he did not have a special recipe for curbing the inflation, either. In the autumn of 1946, the labor offensive became even more furious. Some major unions scored brilliant results, and this nursed a sense of confidence in the minds of the workers.

In November, about 1,600,000 government and public enterprise workers organized a "joint struggle committee," which was then affiliated with 16 unions of private corporations. In their campaign of a "year-end allowance," the joint struggle committee in December demanded that the Yoshida Cabinet resign en bloc.

Understandably, the persistent labor offensive annoyed and

irritated Yoshida, a part of whose panacea was to assume an arrogant air. On January 1, 1947, delivering his New Year's message on the radio, the Prime Minister lapsed into an ungentleman-like fit of temper and billed the union members as a "bunch of bastards."

Yoshida's message laced with abusive words stirred up the workers' hatred toward him and fostered even tighter comradeship among them. A showdown between the government and labor loomed as inevitable.

On January 18, the joint struggle committee, whose membership had by then swollen to 4,500,000, slapped the government with the ultimatum that should its demands (including those for the payment of "allowances" and the establishment of the "minimum basic salary" system) be turned down, it would call a general strike two weeks later—on February 1.

To encourage themselves, the committee members held a pep rally on January 28 in Tokyo which was participated in by more than half a million people. The atmosphere of "on the eve of a revolution" prevailed over the length and breadth of the Japanese land.

But the leaders of the labor movement—the Communists and Socialists alike—had overlooked one important factor. The existence, that is, of SCAP. Despite the bitter experiences in the past, they were still inclined to view the Allied Forces as a "liberation army" and most of them seemed to believe that SCAP would not intervene. And the committee had failed to work out a countermeasures for a possible intervention by MacArthur.

Douglas MacArthur ordered the cancellation of the general strike first verbally on January 30, and then in black and white on January 31. In the face of the SCAP order, some of the hardcore leaders of the joint struggle committee insisted they should go ahead as had been scheduled. But the Communists were among the first to back down.

In the end, Yashiro Ii, chairman of the committee, was summoned to the General Headquarters and was ordered to broadcast the cancellation.

"The general strike has been canceled," Ii announced before the microphone, his voice trembling. "Let's take a step backward for a moment before leaping two steps forward. Banzai for the workers and farmers!"

Japan's largest-ever general strike was thus aborted. But the incident produced a number of side-effects, many of which still linger, if in different form and spirit, in present-day Japan. Quite a few workers lost their confidence in the Communist Party which yielded to the SCAP pressure so easily—and the Socialists cashed in on this and expanded their influence on the nation's labor world.

The "bitter defeat" also made union leaders become aware of the importance of "educative activities" in which, in the course of time, scholars and artists have come to participate.

And the abortive "February 1 General Strike," as it was to be called later, recocheted in that it encouraged students to organize their own association which was, in later years, to develop into one of the world's most radical student organizations—Zengakuren.

Kilroy Was Here

It was a sweltering day and the Kanto Plain in central Japan was covered by the canopy of bright blue sky, splotched with tiny patches of fleecy clouds.

Farmers of the rice-growing town of Atsugi, some 15 kilometers northwest of Yokohama, were ordered, however, to lock themselves in their houses in broad daylight by the local police who only told them that a "high-ranking" officer of the Allied forces would fly into Atsugi Naval Air Base—which had been used as a training airfield for Kamikaze pilots up until a few months earlier.

Senior town officials knew that the "high-ranking" officer would be Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, but most of the local farmers only sensed that the visitor would be a VIP because of the tight security measures being taken in the town. Security officers of local Kempei-tai (military police) units had visited farmers' houses around the air base during the previous week to round up scythes, field knives, mattocks and other agricultural tools which could be used as weapons.

Then, at around 3 p.m., August 30, 1945, a C-54 plane, with "Bataan" emblazoned on its nose, nestled down on the narrow airstrip of the base. Gen. MacArthur stepped out of the plane with a long-stemmed corncob pipe clenched between his teeth.

When a photograph of MacArthur's arrival splashed across the nation's newspaper on the following day, the people were stunned to find that the Supreme Commander of the triumphant army was in informal attire—without a tie or medals—in a sharp contrast to Japanese generals who were invariably clad in medal-studded formal uniforms on an important occasion.

Many Japanese were astonished to see with their own eyes this glimpse of "Americana" against which they had been directed to fight at all costs. The shock was a symbolic signal indicating the termination of nightmarish totalitarianism and the beginning of a new era.

Gen. MacArthur and members of the Allied forces, virtually most of them Americans, marched into bombed-out cities and towns with the light steps of self-confident men.

It was the beginning of the postwar American Occupation of Japan—a hectic period of swift transition, cataclysmic social reforms and quick cultural blending that was aimed at melting the essence of the Sword and Chrysanthemum tradition into a new culture which was partly symbolized by Coca-Cola and paper cups.

The impact of a sudden historical change forced the vanquished Japanese masses to make quick mental and psychological adjustment to a radically new way of seeing life, whether they liked it or not. The adjustment had to be made in confusion, friction and bewilderment.

What apparently overwhelmed the average Japanese in the immediate postwar days were complicated sentiments coupled with severe hunger and a critical shortage of goods. First, it was fear and humiliation for receiving conquering enemy forces for the first time in the country's recorded history. Second, it was perhaps relief over the termination of nightmarish totalitarianism and a faint hope for an unknown future.

So, the mixed sentiments of despair, fear, confusion, curiosity and a faint hope filled the hearts of the Japanese when they first caught glimpse of the tall, well-fed and vigorous-looking troops of the Allied Powers as they set foot on Japanese soil on a hot summer day in 1945.

To the residents near Atsugi Air Base in Kanagawa Prefecture, where the first contingent of Occupation troops arrived, the Americans were synonymous with food because candies, milk and bread provided at the makeshift Army camp were the most prized food for the

Japanese who had kept scrambling for a few sweet potatoes.

Children and adults, suppressing the feeling of fear and shame, queued in front of the field camp. It was a more urgent business to fill their stomachs, rather than to worry about the uncharted tomorrow of their country.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur told Lt. Gen. Robert L. Eichelberger, commander of the U.S. Eighth Army, upon his arrival at Atsugi Air Base: "Bob, from Melbourne to Tokyo is a long way, but this seems to be the end of the road."

The Commander-in-Chief of the United States Forces for the Far East set foot on Japanese soil with a sense of accomplishment, but it was the beginning of a difficult period—with one of those unique developments which rarely occur in a nation's history.

MacArthur flew into Atsugi as if arriving at any air base for an unimportant occasion.

A ramshackle motorcade of quickly mobilized decrepit vehicles took MacArthur and his party to Yokohama which then looked like a "phantom city."

Residents of Yokohama City locked themselves up in their homes because they were seized with fear. When they were informed that the first contingent of the Allied troops would arrive at Atsugi, citizens of the international port city steeled themselves against possible cruelty and injustice by the conquerors. Fast-acting cyanide tablets to be used for the worst were secretly passed among residents—especially among women—in some communities. The women were encouraged to dress like men and cut their hair short to avert the GI's attention.

MacArthur entered the New Grand Hotel near the port and set up temporary general headquarters there. The main headache for the local Japanese officials was how to carry out logistical support activities for the Occupation troops smoothly.

As many as some 3,000 beds, rounded up from hospitals in major cities and towns in the Kanto region, were brought into Yokohama by train. Many of the hospital beds were discarded because they were too small for the American troops.

MacArthur's military secretary later wrote that a "steak dinner" was served to the supreme commander and his "Bataan boys" on the

night of their arrival at the hotel. The late Yozo Nomura, then president of the New Grand Hotel, is said to have confessed later that what looked like beefsteak was actually a "pollack slice." "Frozen pollack was the best we could serve at that time," Nomura is quoted as having said.

The members of the U.S. Eighth Army and other Allied forces were billeted at "makeshift barrack buildings" hastily set up at about 30 places in the city by officials of the Yokohama Municipal Government.

By that time, many Allied navy vessels had entered Tokyo Bay. Among them was the huge battleship Missouri, 45,000 tons, on which the formal surrender ceremonies took place on September 2.

The ceremonies were held on the quarterdeck of the battleship which had been christened after President Harry Truman's home state. After much ado, Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu was finally selected for the odious duty of signing the surrender papers. No Cabinet minister would volunteer for the "humiliating" task.

Stump-legged Shigemitsu—who was wearing a morning coat and a silk hat—nervously signed the surrender document. Lt. Gen. Yoshijiro Umezumi signed for the Imperial High Command. After signing the papers, Gen. MacArthur, his eyes wet, said: "Today the guns are silent. A great tragedy has ended..."

Shigemitsu later wrote that he realized the reality of defeat when he heard the deafening roar of an armada of hundreds of giant B-29 Superfortresses and another 1,000 Navy fighters that swept over the Missouri for a victorious formation flight.

It was a cynical turn of history that the surrender ceremonies were held in the same bay where Commodore Perry's "black ships" had forced the reopening of Japan less than a century earlier.

MacArthur and about 8,000 troops of the First Cavalry Division of the Eighth Army moved into Tokyo on September 8. The general then promptly set up his new general headquarters in the Dai-Ichi Building, an imposing marble and granite structure, in downtown Tokyo, across from the Imperial Palace moat. MacArthur's quarters was set up in the American Embassy in Akasaka.

The postwar Occupation of Japan in theory was Occupation by

Allied forces. Gen. MacArthur was therefore not only the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Forces in Far East, but also the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). The highest decision and policy-making structure for the postwar Occupation of Japan was the 11-power Far East Commission which included, in addition to the United States, China, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, Australia, the Philippines, India, the Netherlands, France, Canada and New Zealand. Pakistan and Burma later joined the group. So, contingents of Australian forces and troops from New Zealand and India—acting in behalf of the whole British Commonwealth—were among the Occupation force members (BCOF).

Through it all, however, the Occupation of Japan was an American show and MacArthur was in reality the "American proconsul" in Japan.

The American Occupation of Japan was executed under policies of the three-point programs of the United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan which were mainly aimed at wiping out Japan's military machine, democratizing Japan's political and social systems, and reviving her economy.

The post-surrender policy also directed MacArthur to exercise his authority through Japanese governmental machinery and agencies, including the Emperor. It also permitted the Japanese Government to exercise the normal powers of domestic administration. So, SCAP functioned as a government within a government.

Mainly because of this "indirect control" system (and for face-saving purposes), the Occupation forces were euphonically translated into Japanese as "Shinchu-gun," which means "military forces stationed" in Japan, rather than "Senryo-gun," or "occupation forces."

Occupation policy decisions and directives emanating from MacArthur's staff offices were transmitted to local governments of 46 prefectures of the nation through the Eighth Army headquartered in Yokohama, the First Corps in Kyoto and the Ninth Corps in Sendai City, northern Japan. The district Army corps had so-called Military Government teams which functioned as channels to transmit SCAP directives to the respective prefectural governments for legislative administration, education, information, public sanitation, economic

activities, labor and welfare programs.

Under this system, many American officials, both military and civilian, of each specific field, visited cities, towns, villages and other communities across the nation to supervise or instruct Japanese officials in implementing SCAP policies. Some SCAP officials became the first "Gaijin" to visit remote communities.

The system, however, was not free from troubles. Both Japanese and American officials reeled under frustration and confusion over the complications of parallel bureaucracies, the linguistic barrier and lack of trained specialists.

Despite such troubles, MacArthur maintained the tone of the American occupation by demonstrating unchallenged leadership.

His large service cap, his long-stemmed corncob pipe and sunglasses promptly became household words among Japanese of all walks of life. MacArthur showed virtues that the Japanese masses were bound to admire. To the eyes of the average Japanese, MacArthur's strong sense of loyalty, controlled discipline, will power and unflagging leadership were brilliant assets of men of high quality which were once possessed by Samurai leaders.

Many Japanese, as well as Americans, gathered around the entrance of the Dai-Ichi Building to watch MacArthur enter and leave for his daily motor trips between the GHQ building and the American Embassy. He was in a sense a "superstar" of the time although he was disliked by some people who denounced him as a "military dictator."

The impact of what Japanese historians later called the "Occupation subculture" struck the hearts of many young Japanese, while tough-minded and tradition-bound elder citizens frowned at them.

Sporting a GI haircut and wearing second-hand gaberdine service trousers promptly became a fad among young men, especially among teen-agers. Many young women spent much of their salaries buying coveted American lipsticks, manicure sets and nylon stockings, some at the black markets. The fad of what could have been called the "GI subculture" struck the Japanese youths in Tokyo, Yokohama, Yokosuka and other cities with the speed of lightning. Swing jazz and quick-tempoed jitterbug music overwhelmed downtown dance halls. The "spit 'n' polish" image of American GIs was a target of admiration among many young men and women.

Obvious evidence of rapid Americanization swept through the downtown districts in Tokyo, Yokohama and other "base towns" where Occupation troops were stationed.

American names were given to streets. Houses confiscated or requisitioned for Occupation personnel were identified by numbers.

U.S. Forces bases and installations mushroomed, along with an increase of American servicemen coming to Japan. They included Washington Heights, Grant Heights, Doolittle Park, Roosevelt Recreation Center, Octagon Theater, Lincoln Housing Center and Johnson Air Station, to name but a few.

The arrival of American troops in Japan quickly produced a craze among the Japanese to learn English. English conversation schools mushroomed and conversation textbooks sold well among Japanese of all age groups.

A linguistic hero of the time was Tadaichi ("Joe") Hirakawa, a Japanese who was educated in the U.S. (a graduate of the University of Washington in Seattle). Popularly known as "Uncle Come, Come," Hirakawa captured the hearts of language students with his radio program on NHK that continued from 1946 to 1951. The theme song of the radio program also became popular among the postwar Japanese. It went like this: "Come, come, everybody; How do you do and how are you? Won't you have some candy, one and two and three, four, five; Let's all sing a happy song, singing tra la la la..."

Various kinds of American education films were also frequently shown in classrooms at Japanese schools. The films were used to teach Japanese students how to play baseball or basketball skillfully, or to introduce patterns of American family life and the American government system to Japanese students. In the earlier stage of the Occupation, SCAP, however, banned the showing of Samurai films with the apparent intention of wiping out the "Kamikaze spirit" from the Japanese public.

MacArthur did not forbid fraternization. Inter-marriage between Occupation personnel and Japanese was not forbidden either. Between 1945 and 1957, about 25,000 American servicemen married Japanese women. Many biracial orphans born out of wedlock were adopted by U.S. military families.

Some lucky children born between American military fathers and

Japanese mothers grew up into the entertainment and show business worlds, thanks to their "good-looking" Eurasian features. But, a majority of the "war babies" were and still are treated as a sort of "outsiders" and their path is obstructed by Japan's traditional custom of shunning mixed-blood. It is almost impossible to find a youth born between a black GI and a Japanese mother among fulltime employes of large "famous" companies in Japan.

Meanwhile, despite the trends of an inter-cultural blend, both Japanese and Americans felt frustration because of SCAP restrictions on their conduct. There were things and places which Japanese and Americans were not allowed to do or visit.

GIs were not permitted, for instance, to go to any drinking establishments and night spots unless they were specifically marked "On Limits." Neither were they allowed to stay in Japanese houses after around 11 p.m. without formal permission of their commanding officers.

On the other hand, Japanese people were not allowed to ride on some trains exclusively reserved for Occupation personnel. Japanese passengers were enraged upon seeing such Occupation-personnel-only trains running almost empty while they were squeezed into overcrowded coaches.

While friendship between Japanese and Americans was cultivated, friction and emotional irritations were inevitably spawned and troubles occurred.

The Japanese people felt irritation when they saw drunken American servicemen driving oversized cars in downtown sections with heavily-powdered Japanese girls. Urbanists felt indignant when wives of high-ranking Occupation officers told them that they were afraid of going shopping in downtown department stores because "there are many Japanese people in the stores."

The Japanese public reacted with shock when the central government authorities directed police chiefs of all prefectures across the nation to permit the establishment of special facilities of "organized prostitutes" for members of the Occupation forces.

In Tokyo, the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) was organized on August 26, 1945. The RAA had 25 "recreation centers" in the metropolis.

The government theorized at the time that such facilities would serve as a sort of a "breakwater" to "protect daughters of good families." When the RAA facilities were closed in March 1946, many "workers" at such facilities poured out on the street in a search for patrons. The vice squads of the Metropolitan Police Department rounded up about 40,000 women of the streets in 1946 alone.

Crimes committed by Occupation troops in postwar Japan posed a major problem in the history of the Allied Occupation. Although the vast majority of Occupation servicemen were prudent in their conduct, there were some who caused trouble.

According to government statistics announced in 1958, more than 5,500 Japanese were involved in troubles (including murders) caused by Occupation servicemen in 39 prefectures in the nation during the seven-year occupation that ended in 1952. (Reports were not submitted from the other prefectures.) About 2,500 of them died, mostly in traffic accidents, the statistics said.

Cases of bad conduct by U.S. servicemen were frequently reported in Okinawa, especially before the administrative right over the Ryukyu Islands were formally returned to Japan in 1972.

The most celebrated incident involving a U.S. serviceman in the 1950s was the "Girard Case" which occurred on January 30, 1957. An elderly Japanese woman was killed when hit by an empty shell fired from a grenade launcher by U.S. Army Specialist William C. Girard at a U.S. Army firing range in northern Kanto Plain. The woman was collecting empty shells within the firing range when she was struck by the shell.

The Girard case became a big national issue as his commanding officer at first refused to transfer him to a Japanese court.

Girard was later tried at the Maebashi District Court and received a three-year suspended sentence. He went back to the U.S. immediately thereafter. The point at issue was whether the Army specialist had been on or off duty when he fired the shell. It also posed a question on the limit of Japanese jurisdiction over U.S. servicemen.

With such a social trend as the backdrop, the Japanese public began to express openly their dissatisfaction over special privileges that Occupation personnel "arrogated" to themselves.

Problem-oriented residents near U.S. bases expressed outright

anger and annoyance when they saw Americans living in large houses that were centrally-heated and located in fenced-off installations under the around-the-clock watch by Japanese security guards.

Such feeling of frustration stimulated the dormant sense of nationalism among the Japanese public and ignited an anti-U.S. military sentiment. The dissenters organized anti-U.S. base struggle groups at various places in Japan. The anti-U.S. military campaigns in the 1950s became the source of the base struggles which were later staged against the signing of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and against U.S. military involvement in Asian problems.

MacArthur's reign over the Occupation came to an abrupt end when President Truman dismissed him on April 11, 1951. MacArthur's sudden dismissal stunned the Japanese. They expressed bewilderment at the general's sudden departure from Japan.

Gen. Matthew B. Ridgeway took over from MacArthur as SCAP.

The seven-year Occupation ended on April 28, 1952 when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into force. The U.S. armed forces continued to be stationed in Japan under the name of "Churyu-gun" (garrison forces) under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

The American occupation of Japan was not only the most crucial phase of Japanese-American relations but also the most unique period in the modern history of Japan. Whether they liked it or not, the Japanese had to accept the Occupation as a fact of history. When the Occupation was over, the Japanese quickly began to rebuild in Japanese patterns, particularly in the field of economy and commerce. The Japanese also recovered their pride and restored the cultural heritage that was their own.

Homeward From Over The Seas

An infectious sense of relief and excitement swept through hundreds of anxious men and women—gathered at the pier of Maizuru Port on the Japan Sea coast on June 27, 1949—when they caught sight of the Takasago Maru as it loomed through the morning haze. The crowd pressed forward to the edge of the pier and stood craning as the

ship slowly made its way to the pier.

It was a familiar scene repeated at Maizuru and other ports each time a repatriation ship arrived and disgorged former soldiers and civilians, their faces deeply lined and their undernourished physiques wrapped in a motley of clothes but their eyes moist at the green of the mountains of their motherland and at the thought of a tearful reunion with their next of kin.

It was the time when "Gampeki no Haha" (A Mother on the Pier), a deeply touching song about an aged mother making repeated but vain trips to repatriation ports to meet her son, turned the thought of hundreds of thousands of Japanese to the fate of their husbands, sons and relatives still held captive in Siberia. Another song, "Ikoku no Oka" (The Hill in Alien Land) which had been on the lips of Japanese POW's in Siberia, became an instant hit when a repatriate sang it in NHK's amateur singing contest.

That particular morning, repatriation bureau officials sensed something strange about the ship. Aboard the Takasago Maru were 2,000 former soldiers who had spent nearly four years in POW camps in various parts of the Soviet Union—four long years of a struggle for survival amidst hunger, disease, forbidding cold and hard labor in which many of their comrades had breathed their last.

What the officials and relatives on the pier heard was a chorus of the Internationale. Many of the repatriates on the decks wore white towels around their heads and their arms were interlocked as they sang the socialist hymn.

When the gangplanks were finally lowered, they did not break their ranks. "We are making a landing before the enemy," as one repatriate shouted. "A majority of the returnees would like to see a democratic form of government in Japan—I mean, a Communist government," said former Army Captain Isamu Ishihara who served as head of the repatriation group.

What has since become of this particular group of "brainwashed" repatriates is impossible to find out. Their blatant landing, which embarrassed the officials and waiting families, was one episode of the vast operation to bring home about seven million soldiers and civilians cut off from their motherland when Japan accepted unconditional surrender on August 15, 1945.

Article 9 of the Potsdam Declaration said, "The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with opportunity to lead a peaceful and productive life."

When Japan laid down its arms, about 3,110,000 men, more than half the Imperial Army's strength of 5,690,000, were scattered all the way from the Manchurian-Siberian border down to the Burmese-Thai frontier and on isolated Pacific islands. The major concentrations of troops were in China (1,050,000), Manchoukuo (700,000), Korea (290,000), Taiwan (160,000) and the far-flung Southern Region (820,000). The Imperial Navy, though most of its warships and airplanes had been destroyed, was still 1,667,000 strong, of whom some 427,000 were overseas.

The overriding concern of the Cabinet and, for that matter, of the Emperor in accepting the Potsdam Declaration had been whether the millions of Japanese soldiers would swallow the humiliation of being disarmed by the enemy, the very antithesis of the military tradition which had made surrender, to say nothing of being disarmed, a shame and disgrace of the highest order.

With this in mind, the Emperor sent three Imperial Family members to Manchoukuo, China and the Southern Region as his proxies to convey his message demanding full compliance with his command to the dazed subjects "to endure the unendurable and suffer the unsufferable."

Prince Takeda, a colonel, flew to the Manchoukuo capital and delivered the Emperor's message to top Kwantung Army officers. After the ceremony, the special plane carrying the prince took off for Seoul, escorted by four Kwantung Army fighter planes. After making sure that the prince's plane landed safely at Kimpo Airfield in Seoul's suburb, the escort planes headed back to their base outside of the Manchoukuo capital. But when they saw Russian planes parked at the airport, Captain Kodama and three other pilots dived into the base in suicide crashes.

Sporadic confusion occurred in some remote theaters of war. This was inevitable. Some soldiers in the Dutch East Indies elected to help Indonesians in their struggle for independence from the Netherlands, just as some cast their lot with the nationalists in Indochina. Hundreds were caught up in the vortex of the deteriorating civil war between the Nationalists and Communists in North China. By and large, however,

the disarmament of Japanese soldiers was conducted without serious trouble, paving the way for their early repatriation.

It was an entirely different story in Soviet-occupied areas including Korea above the 38th Parallel and Manchoukuo. Local Russian commanders disarmed Japanese units haphazardly, cutting them off from communications. The disarmed Japanese soldiers were deprived of not merely weapons but also what little personal belongings they had, herded to major railway junctions and packed off by freight trains to Siberia. Eventually they ended up in labor camps—Khabarovsk and Birobidzhan in eastern Siberia, Chita and Irkutsk near Lake Baikal, Ulan Bator in Outer Mongolia, Alma Ata and Tashkent in southwestern Russia, and Kazan and Moscow to the west.

Repatriation of Japanese soldiers and civilians began in early September 1945 with two hospital ships, the Takasago Maru and Hikawa Maru (which today lies at Yokohama Port as a floating hostel) picking up a starving Navy garrison in the Central Pacific. By the start of the year 1946, soldiers and civilians started coming home in growing trickles from South Korea, Taiwan and the Southern Region.

The massive operation gathered momentum in 1946. At its peak in mid-1946, the operation involved 158 defunct Imperial Navy craft of all categories and 191 vessels loaned by the United States—100 LSTs, 85 Liberty type ships and six hospital ships. Each month, tens of thousands of gaunt repatriates set foot on the soil of their motherland to see many of the cities in ruins, and their kin and friends eking out a hand-to-mouth existence.

For all subsequent criticisms of him, Chiang Kai-shek's stock rose to a new high. He won the gratitude of millions of Japanese, both repatriates and their families, for arranging a speedy repatriation of POWs and civilians, true to his pledge to "return hatred with benevolence." (When he died on April 5, 1975, Chang's magnanimity was remembered by a large number of Japanese in their tribute to the last survivor of the wartime Big Four.)

The ordeal that awaited soldiers and civilians in the Soviet-occupied areas beggars description. Particularly ill prepared were the civilians who had counted on the once mighty Kwantung Army for protection in just such a contingency. By the time the Russian legions

poured across the Manchoukuo frontiers shortly after midnight of August 8, the Kwantung Army had been turned into a shadow of its erstwhile fame, with its crack divisions having been redeployed to Okinawa and the Japanese main islands.

"Ours was a brigade with no ammunition," wrote Masao Suzuki who had been drafted into Army in Tientsin in January 1944. In his "Two Years without Spring"—a vivid account of his life in Ulan Bator—Suzuki wrote that his brigade had been made up mostly of elderly men of thin build. "To top things off, our equipment was almost nil. I, for one, had a rifle seized from the Chinese Eighth Route Army but not a single round of ammunition. It was a group of refugees rather than a fighting unit."

As they headed southward from all parts of Manchoukuo, hundreds of thousands of men, women and children were harassed by Russian troops and Manchu bandits who had a field day in robbing, looting and raping.

"It was beyond description," recalled Hisaya Morishige, a noted stage and motion picture actor, who had been on the staff of the Hsinking (Chanchung) Broadcasting Station. One night Morishige heard a scream from the home across from his. He hurried over and found his neighbor dead in a pool of blood with a gunshot wound in the head. A Russian soldier had cut him down when he came to the rescue of his wife about to be raped.

In their weary march south, not a few women, too exhausted and too hungry to carry their babies any longer, just left them crying. Some even killed them with their own hands, frightened at the prospect of their being killed by bandits. Still others left their babies in the care of Chinese women.

Mrs. Tei Fujiwara separated from her husband, a meteorologist at the Hsinking Weather Station, on the night of August 9. Carrying her month-old daughter on her back, pulling her three-year-old son by the hand and her six-year-old boy trailing her, she hurried to the station. Her husband, who was to become a novelist under the nom de plume of Jiro Nitta, volunteered to stay on the job.

The woman and her children were lucky to reach Sunchon in North Korea before August 15. Three days after Japan's surrender, she couldn't believe her eyes when her husband turned up. Their happy

reunion was a short-lived affair, for two months later Fujiwara and other able-bodied male refugees were rounded up and packed off to Manchuria.

Mrs. Fujiwara sold off what little she had been able to escape with to keep herself and her children alive. She managed to earn a few yen a day by peddling soap. She gladly disposed of her husband's Longine watch to get an injection for her diphtheria-stricken daughter.

After about a year in Sunchon, 50 kilometers east of the mouth of the Yalu River, Mrs. Fujiwara managed to get a ride on a freight train to Pyongyang and then as far south as she could safely go by train. Her destination and that of a horde of wretched Japanese displaced persons was Kaesung just below the 38th Parallel, about 55 kilometers away.

But the refugees were forced to take a long detour, picking their way through barren mountains to avoid being detected by the Russians.

"Mom, I can't walk anymore," Mrs. Fujiwara's three-year-old son pleaded in a whimper.

"You fool! Go and drop dead, you fool!" the angry mother shouted and slapped him in the face.

The frightened boy managed to struggle to his feet. The mother grabbed him by the wrist and started dragging him up a muddy mountain trail in a pouring rain. Both her boys were shaking with cold and hunger, but their mother prodded them on for fear of losing sight of the rear of the silent column of refugees plodding through the darkness.

During a brief recess, Mrs. Fujiwara got her little daughter off her back into her arms to feed her but her breast had long since dried up. "I munched soya beans and gave them to her by mouth. She sucked them desperately from my mouth. She hadn't had a drop of milk for more than 10 hours..."

Up and down the long trail, the straggling Japanese limped along, hungry, thirsty and their bare feet bleeding and swollen. They had long since cast off any sense of shame or decency.

When Mrs. Fujiwara finally crossed the 38th Parallel into Kaesung and was rescued by American troops, she and her children were bombarded with sprays of DDT. She had a number of pebbles removed from her bleeding soles. For several days she had to crawl to the

medical center from her tent and went on her knees to get water, go to toilet and wash the diapers of her daughter.

Mrs. Fujiwara's "Nagareru Hoshi wa Ikiteiru" (The Shooting Star Is Alive) is a moving account of a mother's unwavering determination to protect her children in the most trying circumstances. It is also a sickening account of what men and women are capable of in their struggle just to stay alive. Cheating, suspicion and total disregard for compatriots, whether whimpering children or sick women, were the order of the day.

The egocentrism of which Mrs. Fujiwara had a full taste and which often made the plight of repatriates even more wretched than did the bandits was by no means confined to civilian refugees. It was manifest among prisoners of war in even more stark and sickening form.

There was the case of the "Siberian Emperor," a former Army intelligence agent who organized a "democratization group" in Khabarovsk and put out the "Nippon Shimbun" which was sent out to numerous labor camps in the Soviet Union. The newspaper was invariably laced with stories singing the praise of the Japan Communist Party, which was then virtually at the beck and call of the Russian party, and denouncing the Japanese Government for not sending repatriation ships, which was not the case.

POWs branded reactionary by the group were prone to be turned over to the Russian authorities as war criminals. The group gave priority of repatriation to brainwashed POWs. The "emperor," who was allowed to walk freely in Khabarovsk, proposed in 1949 sending a letter of appreciation to Premier Stalin for his "benevolent treatment" of the Japanese POWs. He circulated his appeal to various camps and collected the signatures of about 67,000 POWs, many of whom undoubtedly signed up for fear of being branded reactionaries and their chances of early repatriation being nipped.

As late as December 1955, some 760 POWs in the Khabarovsk camp went on a hunger strike to press for better treatment. They refused to work until April 9, 1956, when the Russians called in about 2,000 troops to put down the strike.

The most sensational example of a Japanese POW hazing fellow

POWs involved a former military police sergeant, Shigeyoshi Ikeda. Calling himself Yoshimura, the tough, shrewd soldier replaced his senior officers as head of the some 1,000 POWs in a labor camp on the outskirts of Ulan Bator. Yoshimura set for his men a "norm" far exceeding what the Mongolians demanded. By insinuating himself into favor of Mongolian camp officials with his fine performance and by surrounding himself with a band of tough bodyguards and "spies," Yoshimura ruled his fellow POWs with an iron hand.

His punishment of fellow prisoners for any misconduct or failure to meet their highly inflated target was blood-curdling. Not only did he order a cutdown in the already meager food rations for them. They were tied to utility poles, their hands bound up behind them, throughout the night when the temperature would often go as low as 40 degrees below freezing.

By dawn the punished POWs would be found prostrate, their heads down as if they were in a praying posture. Yoshimura's "Praying at Dawn" torture, in which several POWs died, struck terror into POWs throughout the Ulan Bator area.

Shortly after his repatriation in November 1947, Yoshimura was tracked down to his hideout at the home of his wife's parents in a remote island off Nagasaki Prefecture. He was summoned to the Diet where 15 of his victims confronted him. Yoshimura defended his action as inspired by his desire to see his men repatriated early as a reward for doing far more than was demanded.

Yoshimura was subsequently indicted and sentenced to 10 years in jail by the Tokyo District Court. He fought his case to the Supreme Court, which in May 1958 upheld a high court's sentence of three years for his atrocity—a punishment well deserved.

Trial Of War Plotters

On the morning of December 23, 1948, as they sat at the breakfast table with their radios on, the Japanese were given a somber description of how wartime Prime Minister Hideki Tojo and six other major war criminals were executed at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo.

"All the condemned men spent their final day writing letters,

visiting with the Buddhist priest (Dr. Shinsho Hanayama, professor of Tokyo University), and bidding each other goodbye. They ate sparingly during the day both Japanese food and U.S. rations," the General Headquarters announcement said. "Twenty minutes prior to the time set for the first hanging, four condemned men were escorted by guards from their individual cells to a private chapel erected on the first floor of the cell-block where they were confined. Following final Buddhist rites in this improvised chapel, the condemned were escorted to the gallows," the announcement went on.

After the chapel ceremony, the prison officer led the handcuffed criminals to the death house followed by a U.S. Army chaplain and Dr. Hanayama. Two U.S. military guards flanked each of the condemned men, who wore U.S. Army fatigues (work clothing) completely devoid of insignia of any kind.

Following identification, former Generals Kenji Doihara, Iwane Matsui, Tojo and Akira Muto walked without assistance up the 13 steps to the gallows platform where they turned to face the witnesses, all members of the Allied Council representing the United States, Britain, China and the Soviet Union. When each of the four took his place on the gallows platform, black hoods were placed over their heads and the ropes were adjusted.

"The chief executioner on the platform saluted the commander of the execution detail and reported that the condemned were prepared for execution. The executioner then turned toward the condemned men, signaling that four traps be released. It was then one and one-half minutes after midnight..."

Twenty minutes later three other Class A war criminals, ex-General Seishiro Itagaki, ex-Prime Minister Koki Hirota and ex-General Heitaro Kimura were hanged simultaneously.

In his "Discovery of Peace," Dr. Hanayama said that just before the first group of four left for the death house, there was "a spontaneous call for Banzai."

"I think it was Mr. Tojo who asked Mr. Matsui to take the lead. They shouted 'Long Live the Emperor!' and 'Long Live the Great Empire of Japan!' three times."

As the priest-scholar accompanied them across the courtyard to the death house, Tojo and the others had "Namuami Dabutsu"

(Buddhist prayer) on their lips. "They disappeared inside the death house with smiles on their faces."

It was a quiet end for the former military top brass and the former prime minister who had been sentenced to death at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East on November 12, 1948. They all went to their deaths like meek lambs, sparing the Occupation authorities the shock caused in another part of the world by ex-German Field Marshal Hermann Goering who committed suicide by taking poison just before he was to die by hanging.

The day the Japanese war criminals were executed, General Douglas MacArthur issued a statement calling on the Japanese to pray for peace—a poignant reminder that the military tribunal had tried by implication all Japanese people.

Years later, MacArthur wrote in his "Reminiscences" that holding political leaders of the vanquished in war criminally responsible was "repugnant" to him. But he was pleasantly surprised at the attitude of the Japanese people during the trial. "They seemed to be impressed both by the fairness of the procedures and by the lack of vindictiveness on the part of the prosecutors."

Was the trial fair? And were the prosecutors above vindictiveness?

In his post-execution statement, MacArthur admitted that there might be dissenting voices over the punishment meted out against Tojo and 24 other major war criminals.

Indeed there were dissenting voices, although most Japanese were not aware of them and the strict press censorship ruled out the possibility of Japanese newspapers criticizing the judgment of the military court. In its editorial on July 7, 1946, for example, the Mainichi Shimbun expressed "profound apology" for publishing affidavits by several war criminals "in violation of the order of the Civil Information and Education Section of the General Headquarters."

Undoubtedly, most Japanese had expected that some sort of punishment against Tojo and other wartime leaders would be inevitable. They had the feeling that the trial would contain elements of revenge. The Japanese have their own version of "Might Is Right" in "Kateba Kangun, Makereba Zokugun" (If you win, you are on the

righteous side; if you lose, you are on the evil side).

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East was set up under orders issued by General MacArthur as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) "for the just and prompt trial and punishment of the major war criminals in the Far East."

Shortly after his arrival in Japan as conqueror, MacArthur ordered a massive hunt for the planners and executioners of Japan's militaristic and expansionist policy which was the cause of "serious world troubles, aggressive wars and great damage to the interests of peace-loving peoples as well as the interests of the Japanese people themselves."

Tojo, who attempted to shoot himself just seconds before the U.S. military police arrived at his home, and 27 other "major" war criminals sat in the dock as the tribunal opened on May 3, 1946. By design or by accident, the selection of the venue for the trial had an ironic ring about it, to say the least.

The conference room of the War Ministry where Tojo and other Army leaders had mapped out the strategy for the Greater East Asia War had been converted into a glittering courtroom to try them. As if the choice had been by design, one was reminded of Hitler's uncanny vindictiveness in meeting defeated French generals after the fall of Paris in the exact reverse situation and setting from World War I. The Fuehrer had ordered the same train coach in which Germany was forced to sign an armistice in World War I brought to the woods of Compiegne for a taste of sweet revenge.

The opening of the trial in Tokyo was delayed a few hours awaiting the arrival of Generals Seishiro Itagaki and Heitaro Kimura who had been flown earlier in the day from Bangkok. The session was again thrown into confusion when Dr. Shumei Okawa, an ultrarightist theoretician and writer, gave two hearty slaps on the bald pate of Tojo, seated in front of him.

Tojo and 24 others were found guilty with seven sentenced to die by hanging, 16 to life imprisonment and ex-Foreign Ministers Shigenori Togo and Mamoru Shigemitsu to 20 and seven years, respectively, in prison. Ex-Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka and ex-Admiral Osami Nagano died of illness during the trial and Dr. Okawa was declared unfit to stand trial on grounds of insanity (which many believed he had

successfully feigned).

There is no doubt that the Tokyo trial and the Nuremberg trial for German war criminals, on which the former was patterned, added new dimensions to international law. Out of the two trials emerged the concept of crimes against peace and crimes against humanity.

The crimes against peace included "the planning, preparation, instigation or waging of a declared or undeclared war of aggression, or war in violation of international law, treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing." Included in the crimes against humanity were "murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed before or during the war, or persecutions on political or racial grounds."

In addition to punishment of functionaries of a defeated nation for crimes against peace and humanity, individuals were punished for violation of conventional law and customs of war, such as maltreatment of prisoners of war. (About 5,700 Japanese officers and men were tried for crimes in this category in courts set up both in Japan and abroad. Some 920 of them were executed, including Generals Tomoyuki Yamashita who was hanged and Masaharu Homma who died before a firing squad in the Philippines.)

It was MacArthur who set up the Tokyo tribunal, who appointed the president (chief judge) of the court, who designated the chief of counsel (chief prosecutor) and who had the power to "reduce or otherwise alter the sentence, except to increase its severity." He did not intervene in the court's judgment with his prerogative.

The judges came from 11 countries: Australia, Britain, Canada, China, France, India, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Soviet Union and the United States. Neutral countries were not represented.

Australia's Sir William Webb, chief justice of the tribunal, had compiled a report to the Australian Government on Japanese atrocities in New Guinea. When chief defense counsel Dr. Ichiro Kiyose, who was to become the Speaker of the House of Representatives, challenged his qualifications on the grounds that his background would not ensure impartiality, Sir William was visibly disturbed. Kiyose's motion, made at the outset of the trial, was

rejected, however, on grounds that all judges had been appointed by MacArthur and therefore none of them could be challenged.

In his opening statement, the Australian judge said in a thinly-veiled revengeful tone that the positions of importance held previously by the defendants in the courtroom did not entitle them to any better treatment than the poorest Japanese soldier or Korean guardsman. The chief judge, who did more "speaking" than "hearing," often intervened in favor of the prosecutors and against the defense counsel.

Judge Delfin Jaranilla of the Philippines was a survivor of the Bataan "Death March" and had been a prisoner of the Japanese throughout the war. It was not surprising that the Filipino judge would say in his concurring opinion, "If a means is justified by an end, the use of the atomic bomb was justified."

But the attitudes of Sir William and Jaranilla were the kind that damaged the credibility of the affirmation signed beforehand by all the judges "to administer justice according to law without fear, favor, or affection" and "to bring our open minds both on the facts and on the law."

In his "Reminiscences," MacArthur said he had recommended that any criminal responsibility attached to Japanese political leaders for the decision to wage war be limited to an indictment for the attack on Pearl Harbor.

As it turned out, the court tried the Japanese for crimes perpetrated back to January 1, 1928—the year the Kellogg-Briand Treaty was signed. The celebrated Treaty of Paris, as the document is known, said in Article 1: "The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relation to one another."

If the Treaty of Paris served as the criterion for punishing the Japanese war criminals, one cannot but wonder if the Soviet declaration of war on Japan six days before its surrender was not a violation of the Paris pact, as was the case with Moscow's invasion of Finland in the winter of 1939. In neither of the cases could the Soviet attack be justified as an act of self-defense. On August 8, 1945, when Soviet troops began pouring into Manchukuo, the Japan-Soviet treaty of neutrality, signed on April 13, 1941, was still in force. The Soviet

invasion of Finland began two days after Moscow denounced their non-aggression treaty.

But the prosecutors at the Tokyo trial made a long list of treaties and assurances violated by Japan. The list included the Japan-Soviet neutrality treaty! Moscow's declaration of war said that the Soviet Government took the action "to accelerate the restoration of peace and save various nations from further sacrifices and suffering and that this is the only way in which the Japanese people will be enabled to avoid the destruction which was suffered by Germany after she rejected the offer of unconditional surrender."

The announcement had a strikingly similar ring to the American justification for dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: to hasten the end of the war and to save American and Japanese lives.

But again, wasn't the use of the atomic bomb a violation of established international law and customs? When an American defense counsel argued that the atomic bombing gave Japan the right to retaliate in any way it saw fit, the chief judge said that the court would consider his motion and then rejected it summarily. Judge Jaranilla of the Philippines was being just more straightforward when he said that an end justifies a means.

For all its lofty ideals and the judges' pledge to try "without fear or favor," the Tokyo tribunal handed down the victor's justice.

Not all the judges were of the same mind, however. Powerful dissension came from Judge R. B. Pal of India. The only judge with a distinguished background in international law among the 11 judges, Pal questioned the competency of the court to try Japanese on charges of crimes against peace and humanity and rejected the charge of conspiracy. In his massive opinion, the Indian judge recommended that all the defendants be acquitted and released immediately.

About the atomic bomb, Judge Pal had this to say: "If any indiscriminate destruction of civilian life and property is still illegitimate in warfare, then, in the Pacific War, this decision to use the atom bomb is the only near approach to the directives of the German Emperor during the first world war and of the Nazi leaders during the second world war. Nothing like this could be traced to the credit of the present accused."

Pal's minority opinion, an in-depth legal analysis of war crimes

completely divorced from hatred and vindictiveness, however, was not read in the courtroom as a majority of the judges overruled the defense counsel's motion that both majority and minority opinions be read as in the Nuremberg trial. The Indian judge ended his opinion by saying that posterity would pass its verdict on the use of the atomic bomb.

The bodies of Tojo and six other executed war criminals were promptly put on board a U.S. Army truck and taken to the Kuboyama Crematorium in Yokohama. Part of their ashes was scooped up by a Japanese lawyer in the trial who happened to live nearby. Most of the ashes is said to have been dumped into the sea from a U.S. plane. The Occupation authorities spurned the request of the bereaved families that the ashes be given them.

On April 22, 1965, the ashes that had been saved were formally turned over to the families at the annex of the Health and Welfare Ministry. Two years later, the families and their friends buried the ashes on a hillside near the hot-spring resort of Atami, about 80 kilometers southwest of Tokyo. On the back of the cenotaph are the names of the seven reproduced from their last calligraphic exercises just before they walked up to the gallows. The Chinese ideographs on the marker, "Shichishi no Haka" (Grave of the Seven Gentlemen), were written by Shigeru Yoshida who had been humiliated by Tojo and his group during the war.

CHAPTER IV

Miraculous Revival

Bloody Summer Of 1949

From the outset, the year 1949 seemed to have been destined to face political and social turmoil. In the third postwar general election of the House of Representatives held on January 23, the conservative Democratic-Liberal Party led by Shigeru Yoshida had 264 of its members elected to the Diet and became the majority party. The Socialists suffered a bitter setback (their Diet seats decreased to 48 from the pre-election strength of 143) and surrendered its position as the first party—while the Communist Party amassed some three million votes and boosted the number of its seats in the Diet from only four to 35.

Socially, in the aftermath of the defeat in the war, the people were still leading precarious lives amidst raging inflation. In fact, inflation was the archenemy of the public. The amount of money circulating in the nation had increased to approximately ¥425 billion from some ¥30 billion only four years earlier, making the life of the people in general

increasingly harder. And, not surprisingly, the labor force was stepping up its struggle against the government and management, demanding better wages and livelihood.

It was against such a politico-social background that Joseph M. Dodge, a Detroit banker, arrived in February to take charge of a series of economic programs which, with the full backing of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, were designed to put Japan on a sound fiscal footing. Working closely with Hayato Ikeda, the then Japanese Finance Minister who, later in 1960, became the Prime Minister, Dodge hammered out one stern measure after another, putting emphasis on a balanced budget, reduction of bank notes in circulation, and generally strong tight-money policy.

The "Dodge Line," as Dodge's series of economic measures were referred to by the Japanese, succeeded at least in stopping inflation. But it was at the cost of an economic depression, some of the harshest working conditions since the end of the war four years earlier and the dismissal en masse of the working personnel of both public organizations and private business enterprises.

The "Dodge Line" stirred the public's uneasy feelings and this reached the peak on May 24 when the Yoshida cabinet announced a plan to fire some 170,000 out of a total of about 1,650,000 public servants. As a result, the leftist-oriented labor offensive became furious, while the conservatives attempted to counter this by trying to enforce the public security ordinance in every prefecture across the nation.

Suddenly, the atmosphere of a showdown between the conservatives and progressives began to prevail over the nation, centering on the government's personnel curtailment plan.

The "core" of the plan was the dismissal of some 9,500 employees of the Japanese National Railways, and this prodded the JNR labor union into launching massive and aggressive anti-personnel retrenchment campaigns. Soon, small-scale railway sabotage began to occur at many places—as if to herald the occurrence of a string of bizarre incidents, all involving the national railways, which in later days were to be called the "black mist" of Japan.

It was cloudy in Tokyo on Monday, July 5, 1949. Sadanori Shimoyama, 48, left his home in Shinagawa-ku in a chauffeured black Buick at about 8.20 a.m. He was the president of the Japanese National

Railways—the man who, just the day before, had announced the dismissal of 37,000 of his men as the "first wave" of the planned JNR personnel curtailment.

On the way, the JNR president said he would do some shopping before reporting to the office and instructed his chauffeur, Masao Onishi, to drive him to the Mitsukoshi Department Store at Nihombashi. When Shimoyama's Buick arrived at Nihombashi, however, the time was not yet 9.30 a.m., the store's opening hour. Whereupon Shimoyama told Onishi to take him to the nearby Shirokiya (now Tokyu) Department Store.

Finding that Shirokiya was not open either, Shimoyama said he would go to the Chiyoda Bank (which, until the war's end, had been called the Mitsubishi Head Office) near Tokyo Station. Shimoyama spent some 20 minutes at the bank and returned to his car.

"Upon returning to the car, the boss said, 'It seems about time for Mitsukoshi to open,' and instructed me to drive him to the store again," chauffeur Onishi later told the police when questioned. "When we drove to the store, it was already open. But the boss did not get out of the car at once. He seemed to be pondering over something. He remained in the car for a couple of minutes and then got out, saying, 'I'll be back in five minutes.' " Sadanori Shimoyama walked into the department store. It was 9.37 a.m.

At 5 p.m. the same day, chauffeur Onishi was still in front of Mitsukoshi, waiting patiently for his master. Becoming bored, Onishi switched on the radio of his car—and was dumbfounded: the newscaster was announcing the news that the president of the Japanese National Railways was missing.

Onishi did not know it, but at the head office of the JNR, a hue and cry had been raised over the failure of Shimoyama to report to work. He had been expected to confer with ranking JNR officials and representatives of the Occupation Forces about the "second wave" of the JNR's personnel curtailment to be announced the next day. The conference had been scheduled for 1 p.m., but no one knew where he was or what he was doing.

Chauffeur Onishi phoned the JNR head office shortly after 5 p.m. But all he could tell was that Shimoyama had not returned yet to his car from Mitsukoshi. As time passed by, the fear mounted that the JNR president might have been kidnaped—and perhaps murdered.

In fact, Shimoyama had been repeatedly threatened for undertaking the role of dismissing the railway employees en masse. And not many days had gone by after the Communist-oriented JNR labor union announced, when its third request for negotiations with the management on the dismissal was turned down, that the JNR and its management would be responsible for any consequences that might arise.

When Shimoyama's mysterious disappearance was made known, it was widely felt that if the Communists had anything to do with the mystery, it would give the government an excuse it had long been waiting for—an excuse for outlawing the Japan Communist Party. The government had continuously been insinuating that it wanted "to outlaw the Japanese Reds," and Gen. Douglas MacArthur had also been hinting that this should be done.

The clock struck 12 midnight, and July 6 was about to dawn. But, despite a frantic police search, the whereabouts of the missing JNR president were still in the dark. Heavy rain had started falling in Tokyo. Police officers investigating on the field were drenched to the skin.

It was at 12.26 a.m., July 6, that the night's last train bound from Tokyo's Ueno Station for Matsudo in suburban Chiba Prefecture pulled into Ayase Station of the JNR's Joban Line. Motorman of the train Toshio Shiina, 26, stepped down onto the platform and hailed the assistant station master. "I spotted what appeared to be a mangled human body alongside the tracks near an overpass of the (private) Tobu Railway Line in Gotanno (in Tokyo's Adachi-ku)," the motorman said. "Will you send someone to confirm it?"

Two men were promptly dispatched. And at the site motorman Shiina had mentioned, they found a rainwashed human body which had apparently been run over by a train. The scene that loomed in the railway men's flashlight was gory and grotesque. The badly battered head had been severed from the torso. Other parts of the anatomy—pieces of arms and legs—were spread out over a radius of about 85 meters.

Examining the corpse's personal belongings that were also scattered all over, the two discovered, among other things, a wrist-watch that had stopped at 20 minutes past 12—and an identification

card and a batch of visiting cards. The name printed on both read clearly: Sadanori Shimoyama, President, The Japanese National Railways.

Shimoyama's extraordinary death caused a tremendous sensation among the general public and set off a spate of speculation over whether his death was by suicide or by murder. The way he died was indeed bizarre. Why, in the first place, was his body lying on the railroad tracks in Gotanno—as far away as some 15 kilometers from the Mitsukoshi Department Store in Nihombashi which he had walked into earlier in the morning, saying that he would return in five minutes?

After a string of investigations, the police announced that Shimoyama went—or was taken by someone—to Gotanno for some reason and was run over at 12.20 a.m., July 6, by a JNR freight train which was bound for Mito Station in Ibaraki Prefecture from Tokyo's Tabata Station.

But the police were not positive about whether it was suicide or murder. Given the political and social developments in the early days of 1949 and the fact that Shimoyama, under heavy psychological pressure resulting from his dismissal of a massive number of JNR workers, had been suffering from neurosis, both the suicide and murder theories seemed to be convincing, each in its own way.

On July 10, a spokesman for the "special investigation headquarters" of the Shimoyama Case glumly admitted that the police were still unable to arrive at a conclusion. "After three days of intensive investigation," the spokesman said, "there is not enough evidence to determine whether Mr. Shimoyama was murdered or killed himself."

Meanwhile, in the course of the investigation, the police learned that a middle-aged man "quite resembling Shimoyama" appeared, at about 2 p.m. on July 5, at a Japanese-style inn named "Suehiro" in Gotanno and spent some three hours in one of its rooms until around 5.20 p.m. This led the police to learn also that what was believed to be the same middle-aged man was seen in Gotanno on July 5 by a number of persons at varying times and spots.

The man, according to the police, was first seen in Gotanno at about 1.45 p.m. by a 20-year-old official of the Tobu Line's Gotanno

Station among the passengers who alighted from the train at the station. Then the man was seen by—besides the employes and the proprietress of the inn “Suehiro”—more than 10 men and women between 5.30 p.m. and about 11.30 p.m.

The person who last saw the “middle-aged man” at about 11.30 p.m. was Tanizo Kato, 30, living in Minamicho, Gotanno. Shown by the police a photo of a group of people, among whom was Shimoyama, Kato unhesitatingly pointed to the face of the late JNR president and said, “This is the man I saw.”

“With his eyes cast downward, the man was coming from the direction of a tunnel (which was very close to the spot where Shimoyama’s body was discovered) in an exhausted manner,” Kato told the police. “I watched him for a while, wondering who he was. The man halted at a street corner and watched me, too. He then walked away westward in the rain.”

It was not 100 per cent certain if the man in question was really Shimoyama. But if it really was, what had brought him to Gotanno, a town which seemed to be the last place for him to visit, and what was he doing there?

The enigma surrounding the death of the JNR president was so mysterious that not only the police officers and public prosecutors but also newspapermen and authoritative doctors in the field of forensic medicine were divided over the murder theory versus suicide theory.

In the course of time, the police became inclined to believe that Shimoyama had committed suicide, while the public prosecutors veered toward the murder theory. In the journalistic field, the Asahi Shimbun was running stories from the standpoint of murder, while the accounts appearing in the Mainichi Shimbun seemed to be indicating that Shimoyama had killed himself. And in the world of legal medicine, Tokyo University was for the murder theory and Keio University against it.

Roughly, the murder theory was based on:

1. The spot where Shimoyama’s remains were discovered was too removed from his daily orbit, as well as being too unlikely a place for him to go.
2. It occurred at midnight. It was raining considerably.
3. There was little bleeding. From the medico-legal point of view,

it could be assumed that he was run over after he was dead. It was also inferred that he was beaten to death in view of the hemorrhage at various spots on his body.

4. His head, hands and feet were dismembered as if he had been chopped off on a cooking board, giving rise to the theory that he was so placed on the rail.

5. Shimoyama was a technician. The theory prevails that no intelligent person would select railway tracks as the place to end his life.

6. No will was left. On the morning of his disappearance, he neglected an important conference at his office to visit the Mitsukoshi Department Store. This fact supports the theory that he was lured out of his routine by someone.

On the other hand, factors denying the murder theory were:

1. Though it is said that an intelligent person would never kill himself on railway tracks, it was recalled that Shimoyama had been connected with railways throughout his career. It might have been a “natural” course of action that he selected this way to die.

2. The theory was advanced that if it were murder, the murderer(s) might not have allowed the remains to carry the identification card, visiting cards and other articles which would easily reveal the identity of the victim.

3. It was reported that Shimoyama told his chauffeur that it did not matter whether he visited Mitsukoshi or Shirokiya. This weakens the theory that he was kidnaped by outsiders.

4. It was learned that a man, who might quite likely have been Shimoyama, spent, all alone, some three hours on July 5 at an inn in Gotanno in the neighborhood of the spot where he was found dead. This also denied the theory that he was kidnaped by someone and taken to Gotanno.

Late July 10, after conducting a post-mortem examination on Shimoyama’s corpse, Profs. Tanemoto Furuhata and Shichiro Akiya of the Tokyo University Medical School submitted to the police an interim report that the autopsy indicated that Shimoyama was already dead some three hours—or, more exactly, between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m.—before he was run over by a train. They reached this conclusion

mainly on the basis of the relatively slight amount of bleeding in evidence.

This conclusion, however, was denied and denounced by Prof. Hisahira Nakadate of the Keio University Medical School, also an authority in the field of forensic medicine. Although he was not present at the autopsy, Nakadate contended that the heavy rain on the night of July 5 accounted for the absence of blood.

The dissident opinions of the two most authoritative medical schools of the nation added fuel to the controversy over the mysterious death of the head of the national railways.

Denying vociferously the rumor that Communists had something to do with the death, the leftist groups sought to show that he committed suicide under psychological pressure from his responsibility for the mass dismissal. The conservatives, on the other hand, maintained that he was murdered, perhaps by the Communists in the JNR labor union. "If this isn't a murder," said Yukio Kagayama, the then vice president of the JNR, "what else could be a murder?"

Later, Kagayama established his own murder theory and published it in the magazine "Nippon" in June 1959. According to Kagayama, Shimoyama, who was very keen on collecting information about the JNR union, was summoned to Mitsukoshi (by Communist members of the union) and, at gun-point, was taken by car in the direction of Mamiana (where the USSR Embassy is located). He was then killed at a "certain place," and his killer(s) laid his body on the railroad tracks in Gotanno so it would be run over by a JNR freight train.

Holding that the "middle-aged man" who appeared in Gotanno on July 5 was a "stand-in" of Shimoyama hired by the killer(s), Kagayama concluded his theory by presuming that behind the Shimoyama Case was an "international revolutionary force."

But, the most unique murder theory of all was presented in 1963 in the book titled "The Black Mist of Japan" authored by Seicho Matsumoto, a well-known detective story writer. Although Matsumoto, like Kagayama, conjectured that the "man in Gotanno" was a stand-in, his speculation about who killed Shimoyama was totally different from that of Kagayama's.

Matsumoto said that in the background of the "murder of

Shimoyama" was the bureaucratic rivalry within the General Headquarters of the Occupation Forces, particularly between the Government Section (GS) and General Charles Willoughby's G-2 (intelligence).

According to the whodunit author, the GS, as the main policy maker for the democratization of Japan, was oriented toward eliminating rightist tendencies in Japan and was therefore willing to tolerate a strong Communist movement. On the other hand, G-2 was alarmed by the growing Communist dominance over the labor unions.

Matsumoto argued in his book that a lieutenant colonel named Donald R. Changnon, director of the Rail Transportation Division of the Civil Transportation Section of the GHQ, who was allied with and backed by G-2 and Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC), had been attempting to free the labor unions from Communist influence, in defiance of the fact this would run counter to the policies of the GS.

Changnon, said Matsumoto, did not take a liking to Shimoyama, who was not too willing to obey his instructions. And, according to Matsumoto, Changnon and the CIC emerged with a scheme to expel Shimoyama from the post of the JNR president and to distract public sympathy from Communists.

Not a single word was mentioned in his book to indicate clearly that Shimoyama was murdered by Changnon and his company, but the entire tone of the book implied that it was the Americans who "liquidated" Shimoyama and put the blame on the Communists for it.

In late 1949, the police disbanded its Shimoyama Case "special investigation headquarters," adopting the suicide theory, and the statute of limitations of the case itself came into effect on July 5, 1964. But, whether Shimoyama's death was in fact suicide has remained a question mark among the public—and, as it turned out, the death of Shimoyama was only the beginning of a bloody summer in Japan.

The night of July 15 at JNR's Mitaka Station was calm and serene, except for the feeble sound of a drum being beaten somewhere far away as part of a Japanese folk music for the Bon (mid-summer Buddhist festival) dance session. In the station's car barn were several trains which had been shunted there after the day's operation.

Shortly after 9 p.m., the light was turned on in one of the parked trains. Then, the seven-coach train began to slowly trundle forward.

There was no one in the train, not even in its engine room.

Gathering speed up to 70 kilometers per hour over a half-mile stretch between the car barn and the Mitaka Station building, the train crashed into a guard rail at the end of the spur side-track branching off the No. 1 track. The train hurtled over the guard rail, and its first four coaches jumped across the steps of the station compound, crushing passengers just leaving the station. The train then leaped some 60 meters across a road and smashed into a residential house outside the compound, almost totally destroying the structure. Six people were killed and 14 others injured, some seriously.

Coming as it did only two days after the JNR announcement of the "second wave" of personnel curtailment (in which 62,000 of its employees were fired) and at a time when Shimoyama's mysterious death was still vivid in memory, the incident sent a serious shockwave across the nation and triggered another spate of speculation.

The police promptly announced that the incident was a clear case of deliberate sabotage, basing this opinion on the fact that the train was proved to have been "put away" for the night in the car barn, which meant that the power transmission line was lowered, the brake set, and the switch cut off completely. "The train," said a police spokesman, "could not have been moved without deliberate human action."

In several days after the incident took place, the police arrested a total of 10 men, nine of them Communists, on charges of "having conspired to overturn the train to cause social unrest." The only non-Communist among the arrested was Keisuke Takeuchi 28, a national railway employe who had been discharged in the JNR's manpower reduction plan.

But, after 60 public hearings, the Tokyo District Court in August 1950 found no evidence of conspiracy and released all the defendants—except Takeuchi, who had confessed. Concluding that Takeuchi alone had committed the crime in an act of insane revenge for having been fired, the court sentenced him to life imprisonment.

Takeuchi appealed the case to the Tokyo High Court, claiming that his confession was made under duress. The court upheld the earlier "not guilty" verdicts for the nine Communists but increased Takeuchi's sentence to death. And, after his appeal to the Supreme Court was turned down in June 1955, Takeuchi died of a brain disease

in Tokyo's Sugamo Prison in 1967.

Within a year after its occurrence, the "Mitaka murder train" case lost much of its political significance because of the release of the alleged "Communist conspirators." But, during the year of 1949, the political and social impact of the incident, which took place immediately after the mysterious Shimoyama Case, was great.

In view of the fact that Shimoyama was discovered dead on the day after the "first wave" of the JNR's personnel curtailment plan was announced and that a train went out of control two days after the announcement of the "second wave," the public not surprisingly became inclined to view both incidents as evidence of terrorism carried out by Communist unionists.

With the social climate growing increasingly unfavorable for Communists, the JNR unionists lost the chance to stage a series of planned walkouts against the firings. Taking advantage of this, the management dismissed 14 Communist members of the JNR union's central committee—and almost totally succeeded in freeing the union from Communist dominance.

Then came the last of what had been in store for the summer of 1949. This time the place was Fukushima Prefecture in northern Japan where Communist control over the labor unions, including the JNR union, remained intact.

Reported the August 18 issue of the English Mainichi:

Fukushima, Aug. 17 — Three crew members were instantaneously killed when the engine of the Ueno-bound train No. 412 overturned and four passenger cars were derailed today at 8.10 a.m. at a point one kilometer north of Matsukawa Station on the Tohoku Trunk Line of the Japanese National Railways.

It was discovered that on the scene of the tragedy, the outside rails were denuded of bolts and joining plates. Two of the joining plates and four bolts, as well as six-foot iron pincers and other accessories believed to have been used to disjoin the tracks, were discovered in the adjoining rice paddy and field.

It was further confirmed that some of the tools were property of the JNR. As a result, suspicion is increasing as to the premeditated attempt to overturn the running train. It is believed that the criminal act was committed between 1.30 a.m. and 3.10 a.m.

The police theorized that the derailment was conspired by a combined force of the members of the Fukushima branch of the JNR union and the members of the Matsukawa Plant branch union of the Tokyo Shibaura Electric, which was also facing a massive dismissal of some 5,000 workers.

First, a 19-year-old boy named Katsumi Akama, a discharged national railways employe, was arrested on the information that, on the night of August 16, the boy told his friends that "a train will overturn tonight." Then, based on his confession, 19 others, ten of them members of the Tokyo Shibaura union and most of them Communists, were arrested on a conspiracy charge.

Indictments were soon obtained against them, but the defendants vehemently insisted on their innocence, claiming that Akama's confession was made under duress and that their indictments were a "frame-up" on the part of the public prosecutors.

All the defendants were found guilty at the Fukushima District Court. But, 10 years later in August 1959, all of them were acquitted by the Supreme Court. The statute of limitations came into effect on August 16, 1964—and who overturned the train remained a total and eternal enigma.

As it turned out, the series of bizarre incidents that characterized the summer of 1949 in Japan had an unfavorable reaction for the progressives.

In fact, the number of labor unions and their members which stood at, respectively, 35,000 and 6,650,000 people in June 1949 decreased to 29,000 and 5,770,000—a record setback in the nation's labor history.

In 1964, Yukio Kagayama, JNR vice president at the time of Shimoyama's death, said: "With the three incidents as a turning point, Japan made a great 'turn' and started on its (economic) upward path."

The War In Korea

On March 6, 1946, former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was delivering a speech at an American university and was

vociferously charging that the Soviet Union was "seeking indefinite expansion of her power and doctrines."

"There is a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilization caused by Communist parties or fifth columns around the world," the audience heard Churchill say. "The Communists have obtained power far beyond their numbers and are seeking to obtain totalitarian control."

Advocating the equivalent of an Anglo-American military alliance in the face of the "Soviet shadow across the world," Great Britain's wartime leader said he did not believe that the Soviet Union desired war, but added: "What they desire are the fruits of war and indefinite expansion of their influence."

Not surprisingly, the speech was quick to draw Communist response. On the Moscow radio, Josef Stalin fumed on March 16 that Churchill's speech was a "semi-ultimatum" to all non-English speaking nations, and flatly denounced "Churchill and his friends" for trying to spread the belief that only Anglo-Saxons and Germanic nations were of any value in world affairs.

Stalin then went on to add that Churchill reminded one of Adolf Hitler. "Hitler began the causes of the war by introducing race theories in which he declared that only people who speak the German language are people of pure race," said the Soviet leader. "Mr. Churchill also begins incitement for war with a race theory, giving privileges to races who speak the English language and who have the right to decide the fate of the whole world."

The verbal attacks traded by the two giants on the international political scene was just one example indicative of the growing hostility between the Communist bloc and the so-called "free world." In the years after World War II, the free world was under the heavy influence of the United States while, on the other hand, the nations in the Communist bloc were strengthening their comradeship, with the Soviet Union as their leader. The schism that had developed in the monolith of the erstwhile Allied Powers was wide and large.

In fact, signs of the Cold War were evident everywhere across the world. In 1947, the Soviet Union and six East European countries plus the French and Italian Communist Parties formed the Cominform. On their part, 12 free world nations, including the United States and

Britain, countered in 1949 with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). On the Asian front, the Chinese Communist Party led by Mao Tse-tung drove out Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang Party to Taiwan and placed mainland China under its control in 1949. And on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea and South Korea were glaring at each other across the 38th Parallel.

With the development in Asia of the Cold War, the United States, as leader of the free world, had to change its Asian policy. In an attempt to keep nations in the Far East from the Communist hands, the United States gave ample aid to Chiang Kai-shek's Taiwan and Syngman Rhee's Republic of Korea—and made every effort to make Japan a robustly anti-Communist country.

The conclusion in February 1950 of a Sino-Soviet alliance treaty made the Asian situation even more delicate and tense—for the pact mentioned Japan by name and declared that it was to “curb aggression by any foreign power directly or indirectly connected with Japan.” With the publicly announced Sino-Soviet antagonism against Japan, the Korean Peninsula, which juts out toward Japan from the Chinese mainland between the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan, loomed as a key area on which the fate of the entire Far East seemed to be resting.

In the early morning of June 25, 1950, the telephone rang in the bedroom at the American Embassy in Tokyo of Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). “General,” said the excited voice on the other end of the line, “we have just received a dispatch from Seoul, advising that the North Koreans have struck in great strength south across the 38th Parallel at 4 o'clock this morning.”

A hot war had finally erupted from out of the long-smouldering Cold War. The next day, the English Mainichi carried a banner on the front page and reported: “The North Korean Communist-backed Government this morning (June 25) officially declared war on South Korea seven hours after its troops launched heavy attacks at least at four critical points along the 38th Parallel....”

No Japanese newspaper carried a report on how the initial “heavy attacks” were provoked. But to some Japanese, who knew that most of the U.S. fighter planes in Japan had been concentrated on June 23 in

Kyushu, the nearest Japanese island to the Korean Peninsula, a war in Korea was something that had not totally been out of their minds. And, combined with this fact, the purge by SCAP of 24 “brains” of the Japanese Communist Party on June 6 was taken by some Japanese as an American effort to forestall Communist-inspired criticism of the war that was to occur some 20 days later.

In any case, the Communist attacks were heavy and swift. No sooner had the war broken out than the North Korean forces penetrated some four kilometers into South Korean territory on Ongjin Peninsula at the western extremity of the parallel. Kaesung, about 60 kilometers northwest of Seoul, fell into Communist hands as early as 9 a.m. And a series of heavy battles was reported in Chunchon where Communist tanks went into operation.

On the same day, at the request of the United States, the United Nations summoned a special session of the Security Council in Lake Success in New York. The Soviet Union, which had been boycotting the U.N. in protest against the membership of Nationalist China, did not have its delegate present.

At the session, U.S. delegate Earnest A. Gross branded North Korea as an aggressor and insisted that all U.N. member countries “refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities.” The Council approved his proposal and adopted a resolution condemning North Korea's attack on the South and calling for immediate cessation of hostilities, with the invading forces to be withdrawn to above the border. Thus, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter by 51 nations, the Security Council took action for the second time in history under Chapter 6 of the charter, which empowers it to use armed force if necessary to keep peace.

On June 27, the U.N. held another Security Council meeting in Lake Success and, in its first step to impose military sanctions against an “aggressor,” the Soviet-boycotted world organization called on all its members to join the United States in sending arms to hurl back the Communist invasion of South Korea. Events began to move rapidly in the three main areas of activity—Korea, Washington and Tokyo.

Authorized by Washington, Gen. Douglas MacArthur sent to South Korea an assortment of military equipment, following his first shipment of ammunition. Then he provided ships and aircraft to evacuate

American civilians in Korea. The transport by sea of the civilians was carried out under heavy U.S. air cover—the first direct U.S. involvement in the Korean War—to make safe the three-day voyage between Inchon, the port of Seoul, and Kokura in Japan's Kyushu.

Meanwhile, the Communist forces were surging down further south. At about 9.30 a.m. June 27, an army of the North Korean soldiers began entering the city of Seoul. An American fighter plane providing cover protection during the evacuation of Americans from Kimpo Airfield shot down a Soviet-made Yak fighter which "interfered" with the evacuation efforts. The war was apparently expanding. Direct and outright U.S. involvement in it seemed to be only a matter of time.

Declaring that the Communist invasion of South Korea proved that Communist aggressors had progressed "from mere subversion to armed invasion and war," President Harry S. Truman, as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Armed Forces, on June 28 ordered American Air and Sea Forces in the Far East to give South Korean Government troops "cover and support in their resistance to the North Korean invasion." The President at the same time ordered a faster buildup of anti-Communist military strength in the Philippines and Indochina, and ordered the Seventh Fleet to be in readiness to "prevent any attack on Taiwan."

The U.S. Forces in the Far East were placed under the command of Gen. MacArthur who, on June 29, flew to Korea for a "first-hand" observation of the war. When he arrived, Seoul was already in enemy hands. From atop a hill near the capital of South Korea, SCAP saw the city on fire and towers of smoke rising from the ruins. There was the constant crump of Communist mortar fire. Below the hill were the retreating, panting columns of disorganized South Korean troops. Everywhere were the stench and utter desolation of a stricken battlefield. The sky was resonant with shrieking missiles of death. The roads were clogged by a writhing, dust-shrouded mass of refugees.

The sight from the hill appeared to be so desperate that SCAP thought the South Koreans had become incapable of countering the enemy forces. In his "Reminiscences" (McGraw-Hill Book Co., copyright 1964 Time Inc. Reprinted with permission), MacArthur recollected:

"The scene along the Han was enough to convince me that the

defensive potential of South Korea had already been exhausted. There was nothing to stop the Communists from rushing their tank columns straight down the few good roads from Seoul to Pusan at the end of the peninsula. All Korea would then be theirs. Even with air and naval support, the South Koreans could not stop the enemy's headlong rush south. Only the immediate commitment of ground troops could possibly do so..."

On July 1, President Truman authorized the use of American ground troops, and the first U.S. combat force landed in Pusan the same day by air from Japan's northern Kyushu. An English Mainichi article datelined "Somewhere in Korea, July 1" reported: "An American infantry battalion arrived by air in Korea today and went into action immediately, taking up defensive positions 25 miles north of Taejon."

Five days later, however, this advance group, the First Battalion, 21st Infantry, known as Task Force Smith, was almost totally destroyed under heavy Communist fire. The 24th Division, commanded by Major General William F. Dean, also suffered considerable casualties.

News reports from the battlefield soon indicated that the Occupation troops from Japan were soft, inadequately equipped, and lacked the discipline to take on the trained, battle-hardened North Korean army. In his book "With MacArthur in Japan," William Sebald, the first postwar American Ambassador to Japan, wrote: "...It was not that our troops were less brave; they simply were unprepared to fight a war on such short notice. As MacArthur had predicted some three years earlier, Occupation duty had taken its toll."

On July 7 in Lake Success, the U.N. Security Council authorized the United States to name Gen. Douglas MacArthur commander of the international forces fighting in Korea. But this move failed to turn the tide. Battling their way down the south in an estimated strength of six infantry divisions and three constabulary brigades spearheaded by some 200 Soviet-made tanks, the North Koreans forced MacArthur's troops to withdraw further south—and, at the end of August, the U.N. forces found themselves confined in what amounted to an extended beachhead around Pusan. It appeared that another Dunkirk was about

to be restaged in Korea.

In Japan, in the meantime, there were two marked public attitudes toward the war in Korea. The *Asahi Shimbun* editorialized on June 1 that Japan under Occupation had nothing to do with the situation in Korea. "It goes without saying," read the *Asahi* editorial, "that the position of Japan, which has no right of self-determination, in relation with international strife or foreign civil war, is purely that of a third party."

On the other hand, the *Mainichi Newspapers* on July 2 carried an editorial that ran counter to that of *Asahi*. The *Mainichi* appreciated the fact that the United States had deployed anti-Communist "defense line" from Korea to Taiwan, and expressed gratitude over the U.S. effort "not to let the Red influence creep into Far East."

"It has now become clear," the *Mainichi* added, "on whom Japan should rely if invaded by foreign powers."

As the situation in Korea developed, it soon turned out that Japan could not remain as a mere "third party."

The first sign of the war's impact on Japan appeared as early as June 26 in the form of brisk transactions in stocks in Tokyo's *Kabutocho*. The news of the outbreak of the war wiped away the doldrums that had been prevailing over the Wall Street of Japan, and the day's turnover jumped to 1,800,000 shares from 1,030,000 shares two days earlier. As might be expected, the shares traded were mostly those of enterprises related to the war industry.

Then the Japanese Government itself shattered the "third party" idea into pieces. Only seven days after the outbreak of the Korean War, the government made it public that it was only natural for Japan to "cooperate with the United States in the mobilization of its military power," and that, therefore, the government would take every necessary step meeting this purpose within the scope of the Constitution and the Japanese law."

On July 8, Douglas MacArthur sent a letter to Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida instructing him to establish a National Police Reserve of 75,000 men and to increase the Maritime Safety Board by an additional 8,000 men. In issuing this instruction, SCAP said that "events disclose that safeguard of the long Japanese coastal line against unlawful migration and smuggling activity requires

employment of a larger force under this agency (Maritime Board) than is presently provided by law."

But, regardless of the SCAP rhetoric, everyone knew his—or, more precisely, the U.S.'—aim: the creation in Japan of a competitive military power against the possible threat of Communism. Thus, with the Korean War as a turning point, the strength of Japan's police force was boosted to 200,000 men from 125,000 and that of the maritime force doubled to 16,000 men, creating the basis of the present 230,000-strong Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

All this while, the war was continuing in Korea and dragging into its third month. The U.S. Eighth Army commanded by Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker was waging a "hold-or-die" battle at the southern tip of the peninsula—a position, east of the Naktong River, known as the Perimeter. The Communist power was overwhelming, so much so that William Sebald said in his "With MacArthur in Japan" that "...Walker was holding back the Communist tide by sticking his fingers in the dike of the Perimeter."

To save the situation, Douglas MacArthur needed to accomplish a miracle. And he did it on September 15 by landing the U.S. 10th Corps in Inchon, the port city near Seoul. The September 17 issue of the English *Mainichi* reported:

Aboard the invasion flagship off Inchon, Sept. 16—American Marines stormed the beaches at Inchon and drove inland toward Seoul yesterday.

The Marines hit three beaches at once—Red beach on the western waterfront of Inchon, Blue beach on the south, and again on Wolmi Island where artillery came ashore to take over the fire-support job from destroyers and planes.

In Inchon they ran into frantically reinforced Communist defense forces which had been on the road to Inchon since the naval bombardment opened up three days ago...

The Inchon Landing proved to be a great success (for MacArthur). Sandwiched by the 10th Corps from Inchon and the Eighth Army attacking from the south, the North Korean forces fell apart.

Having recaptured Seoul by September 28, MacArthur's troops

drove northward across the 38th Parallel, seized Pyongyang on October 20 and reached very close to the Yalu River.

It seemed that the guns in Korea would fall silent at any moment. In fact, in a conference with President Truman held on Wake Island on October 15, MacArthur said that the Eighth Army would be recalled to Japan by Christmas.

But the situation took an unexpected turn. On November 4, a spokesman for the Eighth Army admitted officially for the first time that Chinese Communist divisions were fighting against the U.N. troops in Korea. "The Eighth Army confirms," said the spokesman, "that the Chinese Communists in contact are in sufficient numerical strength to be the equivalent of at least two divisions."

Before long, the Chinese "volunteers" and their Korean comrades drove back the U.N. forces into Seoul and then further south. The prospect of a cease-fire vanished.

Ironically, the longer the war in Korea dragged on, the more Japan prospered economically. In a manner of speaking, Japan was putting on weight by feeding on the bloodshed in Korea. Converted into a "supply depot" for the U.N. troops fighting in Korea, Japan produced all types of war materiel and offered skilled labor. Mountains of war supplies went to the Korean battlefield from Japan, and American planes and ships operating out of Japanese bases largely depended on skilled Japanese personnel.

In fact, the scope of the nation's economy was fast returning to that of the period of the Pacific War. More than 1,000 plants and factories of the war industry, which had been closed down by SCAP at the time of Japan's defeat five years earlier in the Pacific War, were ordered by the same SCAP to resume business. And the prosperity, called "tokuju buumu," or "special procurement boom" at that time, was, it turned out, postwar Japan's first milestone in the path leading to what was later to be called the "economic miracle" of the Orient.

In the first year of the Korean War (from July 1950 to June 1951), the amount of the contracts concluded by Japan's war industry and related business in the "tokuju buumu" accounted for some \$328 million, or approximately ¥107,000 million (c.f.: Japan's national budget for fiscal 1950 was about ¥3,200,000 million). The amount was \$331 million in the second year, \$476 million in the third and \$295 million in the fourth (from July 1953 to June 1954).

To Japan, admittedly, the war in Korea proved to be an economic boon which paved the way for her fast recovery and reconstruction from the despair of the defeat in the Pacific War. In his highly optimistic Diet speech on January 26, 1951, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida expressed gratitude over the growing signs of the nation's recovery supported by the economic prosperity. Yoshida said:

"It is gratifying to us all that of late Japan has made notable progress on the road to recovery and reconstruction. By last year's end, signs of progress were observable even in remote nooks and corners of the land.

"The complications in the Korean situation, brought on by the invasion of Chinese Communist forces, have so intensified the Cold War that its symptoms are evident in every part of the world.

"But Japan, with the influence and activities of Communists steadily subsiding, enjoys internal peace and tranquility such as you know...."

The war in Korea was brought to an end when the cease-fire agreement was finally signed at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953. Earlier on April 11, 1951, General Douglas MacArthur had been dismissed as SCAP for, according to the words of President Truman himself, his "inability to give wholehearted support to the policies of the United States Government and of the United Nations in matters pertaining to his official duties."

On the morning of April 17, 1951, MacArthur's plane rechristened "The Bataan" from "SCAP" after he was fired as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, left Tokyo's Haneda Airport. The plane flew into the morning haze to the northwest and then circled out toward Tokyo Bay where, five years and eight months earlier, MacArthur, in a strikingly different ceremony, had accepted the surrender of Japan aboard the U.S. battleship Missouri.

Peace Treaty Amid Cold War

"Japan of today is no longer the Japan of yesterday. We will not

fail your expectation in us as a new nation dedicated to peace, democracy and freedom...Nowhere more than in Japan itself can there be found today a greater determination to play a full part in saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war..."

In the glare of television and news camera lights, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida read from a thick scroll of paper in a clear and steady voice characteristically devoid of emotions and histrionics. U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson, seated behind the short, stocky Japanese Premier, and delegates from 51 countries on the floor of the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House, sat with earphones on as Yoshida's speech was read simultaneously in English by American-born diplomat Toshio Shimanouchi.

"...It is with feelings of sorrow that we recall the part played in that catastrophic human experience by the old Japan. I speak of the old Japan because out of the ashes of the old Japan there has arisen a new Japan. My people have been among those who suffered greatly from the destruction and devastation of the recent war. Purged by that suffering of all untoward ambition, of all desire for the path of military conquest, my people burn now with a passionate desire to live at peace with their neighbors in the East and in the entire world..."

Earlier in his speech Yoshida referred to a certain point of the draft peace treaty "which cause us pain and anxiety." He singled out territorial disposition, particularly Russia's occupation of the northern islands of Habomai and Shikotan.

"The second point is economic," Yoshida continued. "Japan has lost 45 per cent of her entire territory, together with its resources. Her population of almost 84 million has to be confined within the remaining areas, which are war-devastated, with their important cities bombed and blasted." With the treaty about to be signed giving Allied nations which suffered no damage from the war the right to seize Japanese private property in their countries, "there is fear as to whether Japan, reduced to such a predicament, could ever manage to pay reparations to certain designated Allied powers without shifting the burden upon the other Allied powers," Yoshida asserted.

Yet, the Prime Minister said, Japan was accepting the peace

treaty which would restore the Japanese people to "full sovereignty, equality and freedom and reinstate us as a free and equal member in the community of nations. It is not a treaty of vengeance, but an instrument of reconciliation. This fair and generous treaty commands, I assure you, the overwhelming support of my nation."

Yoshida spoke on the night of September 7, 1951 in the eighth and final plenary session of the "Conference for the Conclusion and Signature of the Treaty of Peace with Japan."

The signing ceremony came on the morning of September 8. The plenipotentiaries of 49 nations signed the treaty in alphabetical order, from Argentina to Vietnam. Signing for Japan at the end of the roll call were Prime Minister Yoshida, Hayato Ikeda (Finance Minister), Gizo Tomabechi (Supreme Chairman of the Democratic Party and a member of the House of Representatives), Niro Hoshijima (member of the House of Representatives), Muneyoshi Tokugawa (member of the House of Councillors) and Hisato Ichimada (governor of the Bank of Japan). Representatives of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Poland stayed away from the ceremony.

Late in the afternoon Prime Minister Yoshida drove to the U.S. Sixth Army headquarters in San Francisco's Presidio where he signed the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty with Acheson, John Foster Dulles, architect of the peace treaty, and Senators Alexander Wiley and Styles Bridges. Yoshida was the lone signer of the controversial treaty for Japan.

The San Francisco conference brought Japan back into the community of nations after six years of occupation, more specifically as a member of the "free world" and as keystone of the U.S. military strategic deployment in the Far East. The San Francisco system not only injected an element of long and bitter division in the country but pitted Japan against its Communist neighbors. But given the circumstances that prevailed in the summer of 1951, Japan had hardly any other option if it was to emerge from the shackles of foreign occupation. It was the heyday of a bipolarized world dominated by the United States at the zenith of its power and by the Soviet Union which boasted the monolithic unity of the Communist bloc.

"Unfortunately, today, the world is faced with new threats of aggression. Many of the countries represented here are now engaged

in a hard fight to uphold the United Nations against international law-breaking. There are thugs among nations just as among individuals," President Truman had said at the outset of the San Francisco conference which opened on September 4. The U.S. President's remarks, unmistakably aimed at the Soviet delegation headed by Andrei Gromyko, were symptomatic of the radical changes that had occurred since delegates from 50 allied nations unanimously adopted the U.N. Charter in the euphoria of wartime collaboration in the same Opera House six years earlier.

That euphoria quickly dissipated when Japan laid down its arms and a "cold war" developed on all fronts. The United States and the Soviet Union came to the brink of war over the Berlin blockade which lasted from June 1948 to May 1949. Before the Russians lifted the blockade, the United States had brought into being the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a military alliance to be countered by the Communist bloc in the Warsaw Pact of 1955.

In late 1949 the Communists won control of mainland China, forcing Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government to flee to Taiwan. The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China quickly signed a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Defense, pledging in Article 1 to come to each other's help when attacked by Japan or any other power allied with Japan. The war in Korea, which had broken out in May 1950, was still raging when the Japanese peace conference opened. The massive entry of China's "volunteers" in the Korean conflict precluded Peking from being invited to the San Francisco conference. Neither was the Nationalist government on Formosa, whose disposition was left undecided in the draft peace treaty.

With the United States predominantly responsible for the occupation of Japan, it was inevitable that it would have a great voice in any peace settlement with Japan. And in fact it was the United States that worked out the draft of the treaty.

The intensifying cold war and especially the Korean War, in which Japan served as the staging base for the U.S. forces, had brought about a switch in U.S. occupation policy. Its early stress on Japan's "democratization" and "demilitarization" was dumped unceremoniously. Two weeks after fighting erupted in the Korean peninsula, Gen. MacArthur ordered the creation of a 75,000-man police

reserve force and reinforcement of maritime safety personnel—a step widely regarded as the start of Japan's postwar rearmament. He also ordered a wholesale purge of Communists and the de-purge of wartime political and economic leaders.

With the draft treaty in hand, John Foster Dulles, special State Department adviser, made a round of the capitals of the Allied nations to win their support. India refused to attend the San Francisco conference. It objected to the U.S. plan to bring the Ryukyu and Bonin islands under U.S. trusteeship and to sign a security treaty with Japan at a time when Japan was not "truly sovereign" yet. India also demanded that the island of Formosa be returned to China.

Dulles met with a strong demand from Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines for guarantees of security against Japan. The United States placated their fears by entering into mutual defense arrangements with Australia and New Zealand and with the Philippines a few days before the San Francisco conference. The Philippines and Indonesia were dissatisfied with the treaty's clauses on reparations.

With minor adjustments, the U.S. draft was laid before the conference under the joint sponsorship of the United States and Great Britain.

It was an "unusual conference," as Sir Carl Berendesen, New Zealand delegate, put it. Unlike past peace conferences in which delegates discussed the terms of a peace settlement around the table, the participants in the San Francisco gathering had been invited to sign what was laid before them. The Netherlands' delegate, Dirk Stikker, reminded the conference of the French saying, "Out of the shock of conflicting opinions the truth springs forth." But both delegates said their governments agreed to the "statements only" conference because of the "obstructionist policy" of the Soviet Union.

At the start of the first plenary session, Conference Chairman Acheson called for a vote on the rules of procedures that had been worked out to forestall just such a delaying and obstructionist policy on the part of the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Gromyko demanded that the conference first put to a vote his proposal for inviting China which, he said, "has an indisputable right to take part in the peace settlement for Japan" and without whose participation "it is

impossible to establish a durable peace in the Far East.”

Acheson promptly ruled Gromyko's proposal out of order. The Polish and Czech delegates repeatedly rose to a point of order and each time they were ruled out of order.

With the conference voting down by wide margins every proposal and motion put forward by the Communist delegates, the meeting went on as the American and British sponsors had designed it.

In his lengthy statement, Gromyko denounced the draft treaty for failing to give “any guarantees against the rebirth of Japanese militarism,” for not providing for the withdrawal of foreign occupation forces, and for “flagrantly violating the legitimate rights of the Chinese people to an integral part of China—Taiwan and the Pescadores.” He described the draft treaty as “not a treaty of peace but a treaty for the preparation of a new war in the Far East.”

Gromyko then came up with a 13-point amendment to the Anglo-American draft treaty. Among other things, he called for Japan's recognition of Russian sovereignty over southern Sakhalin and the Kurile islands, for Japan's sovereignty over Okinawa and Bonin islands, for withdrawal of occupation forces, and a ban on any foreign troops and military bases in Japan.

Demanding a ceiling on Japan's armed forces to be permitted for the purpose of self-defense, Gromyko proposed (a) a land army of 150,000 men, (b) a navy with a personnel strength of 25,000 and a total tonnage of 75,000 tons, and (c) an air force of 200 fighter and reconnaissance planes plus 150 transports with a manpower strength of 20,000.

Gromyko took the Japanese delegates by surprise when he demanded that the straits of Tsugaru between Honshu and Hokkaido and of Tsushima between Japan and Korea be open for the passage of only such warships “as belong to the Powers adjacent to the Sea of Japan.” The conference had been called to sign the draft treaty and Gromyko's amendments went unheeded.

When the peace conference ended, Japan was left with the embarrassing task of deciding which China, Communist or Nationalist, to deal with. Under U.S. prodding, it signed a peace treaty with the Nationalist regime on Taiwan on April 28, 1952. Japan pledged not to deal with the People's Republic of China as a party to the peace treaty, a decision which was to leave the two neighboring countries in a state

of war until Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka went to Peking in the autumn of 1972 and jettisoned the treaty with the regime on Taiwan.

After years of hard bargaining, Japan reached reparations agreements with Burma (\$200 million, later augmented by \$140 million in gratuitous economic cooperation), the Philippines (\$550 million), and Indonesia (\$223,800,000). Japan also provided gratuitous economic aid to the three Indochina states which had waived claims to reparations—Laos (¥1 billion), Cambodia (¥1.5 billion) and South Vietnam (\$39 million). Japan's rapid economic progress made it possible for her to settle the reparations issue without a serious impact on the national life, contrary to Yoshida's concern in San Francisco.

The peace conference brought to the boil domestic debates over Japan's future course and its security. The nation was split into two camps, one favoring “Tasu Kowa” (peace with a majority of the Allied powers that had fought Japan) in view of the prevailing circumstances which would leave Japan dangerously exposed in a “power vacuum,” and the other insisting on “Zenmen Kowa” (peace with all Allied nations).

It was not so much the peace treaty as the security pact, linked up with the peace treaty, that provided an issue of bitter and traumatic debates. Prime Minister Yoshida was in favor of maintaining Japan's security through the collective system under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, but Dulles rejected his idea because of the Vandenburg Resolution of 1948. The U.S. Senate resolution bound the United States not to enter into regional and other collective security arrangements unless they were based on “continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid.”

Yoshida obviously exploited domestic opposition in resisting American pressure for rearmament. Eventually Dulles also saw the wisdom of not pushing Japan too far in order to retain Japan firmly in the Western anti-Communist alliance. The result was the “provisional” security pact signed immediately after the peace treaty.

Inasmuch as it was made virtually conditional upon the peace treaty, the security pact contained elements of inequality for Japan. The pact consisting of only five articles, for example, did not commit the United States to defend Japan but granted the United States the

right to keep its armed forces on Japanese territory. The pact said simply that the U.S. forces “may be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan.”

Neither did the pact give Japan the right to check the deployment of American forces from Japan for operations in the Far East whose definition was not spelled out. This contained the danger that Japan might be drawn into conflicts without its knowledge and against its will. The pact, though “a provisional security arrangement,” also did not say when it would expire.

The peace and security treaty issue split the nation down the middle, all the way from political parties to labor unions and the intellectual community.

When the National Diet convened on October 1, 1951, to ratify the treaties, the ruling Liberal Party of Prime Minister Yoshida, the conservative opposition Democratic Party and rightwing Socialists passed the peace treaty, 307 to 47, with dissenting votes coming from leftwing Socialists and Communists. Three members of the Democratic Party, whose secretary general was Takeo Miki, to become Prime Minister in 1974, bolted the party and voted against the peace treaty. The security treaty cleared the House of Representatives, 289 to 71. The House of Councillors passed the peace treaty, 175 to 45, and the security pact, 147 to 76.

Both the peace treaty and security pact took effect on April 28, 1952. The termination of procedures did not mean an end to domestic debates. Instead, they erupted off and on throughout the 1950s largely in connection with issues involving American military bases and the conduct of U.S. servicemen, and leapt almost out of control when the security treaty was revised in the tense summer of 1960.

‘Jimmu Boom’—Economic Take-Off

In the middle of the 1950s, lagging several years behind the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Japan was about to take off on the path of economic independence, and the entire nation was

steaming in a concerted effort to catch up with economically-advanced countries.

It was in 1955 that the Japanese economy entered a period of phenomenal brilliance, called the “Jimmu Boom.” The boom restored the Japanese economy to normalcy in many ways.

More importantly, it marked the beginning of a cyclic series of peaks and troughs, the dawning of the period of heavy and chemical industrialization, and the start of a low-interest policy, which combined and eventually led to the “miracle growth” the nation had never experienced before.

The unprecedented buoyancy of the economy was named after the Emperor Jimmu, founder of the Japanese Imperial line claimed to be 2,635 years old, as of 1975. The reigning Emperor Hirohito is the 124th monarch of this Imperial line.

It is true that the Japanese economy had experienced booms prior to the arrival of the Jimmu Boom, including the one created by the Korean War (1950-1953). But in the pre-Jimmu days, the situation was far from being called normal.

There were, for instance, rampant attempts to make fortunes by making use of the shortages of goods and inflation. During the Jimmu Boom, such negative behavior of businessmen ceased to exist as they became more mindful of growth through investments more constructive and healthy.

The Jimmu Boom—the nation’s first really phenomenal economic upsurge—came as a three-stage explosion of exports, investments and consumption in that order and lasted for two and half years before the economy saw the first trough in the normal cyclic movements.

In fiscal 1955, the initial year of the emperorish boom, the international balance of payments regained equilibrium, the economy expanded without accompanying inflation, and the nation’s financial situation improved considerably.

In a retrospective analysis of the fiscal 1955 economy, the author of the 1956 edition of the “Economic White Paper” stated triumphantly, “We are no longer living in the days of postwar reconstruction,” a phrase which subsequently went into wide use. The White Paper is an annual publication of the Economic Planning Agency, covering the nation’s economic activities during the previous fiscal year. The first

Economic White Paper published in July 1947 pointed out that the government, corporations and households were all suffering from a big deficit. (The Japanese fiscal year starts in April.)

The phrase was implanted firmly in the minds of the Japanese, providing them with a sense of relief based on the recognition that the period of difficulties following the defeat in war was over. The phrase spread through the entire nation like wildfire and was certainly one of the most popular catchwords of the day.

Economically, however, the phrase was not uttered entirely in jubilation, although it is true that it symbolized the tremendous economic growth achieved by the nation in the decade following the end of the war.

In that period, the per capita income increased by an annual average of 11 per cent, industrial production 22 per cent, and exports 24 per cent. By fiscal 1955, many of the economic indicators had regained the levels before the end of the war, some of them outstripping the peaks of the past. The industrial production capacity, for instance, is estimated to have reached 200, compared with the previous high of 190 in 1945, the year when the war ended, with 1952 set at 100.

While writing that the period of postwar reconstruction was over, the author of the fiscal 1956 Economic White Paper warned that subsidence of the reconstruction boom might decelerate the growth of the economy "unless Japan undergoes a transformation toward heavy and chemical industrialization through technological innovation."

Fiscal 1955 was a year of encouraging records. The international balance of payment produced a surplus of \$535 million, almost equaling the income from special procurements which was included in the balance.

The equilibrium in the balance of payments was hailed as the sign that the Japanese economy had recovered the long-sought independence. In the years following the end of the war, the Japanese economy had to be shored up by American aid and then had to rely on special procurements arising from the Korean War.

Foreign exchange reserves, which are the means for purchasing goods from abroad showed a favorable increase of 30 per cent, reaching \$1,400 million. The reserve of U.S. dollars increased remarkably by \$300 million, totaling \$900 million, which was large enough to pay for four months of imports.

Signs of the favorable trend of the balance of payments were already beginning to appear during the second half of fiscal 1954 when exports, especially steel and nonferrous metal products, bounced upward.

But in those days, the increase in the exports did not necessarily mean that Japan had obtained stable overseas markets or that Japanese products had attained sufficient international viability.

Japan was described as a "marginal supplier" since the fluctuation of Japan's exports to a certain country was bigger than the rates of increase and decrease in the total imports of that country. In fiscal 1955, the increase rate of Japan's exports surpassed by far the pace of the expansion of world trade, which was 8 per cent.

Japan had to wait until the third economic boom (1966-1969) for total liberation from the instability of the international balance of payments which had dragged down the Japanese economy every time it hit peaks in the previous flush times.

The shipbuilding industry set the pace for the export boom which, in turn, kicked off the Jimmu Boom. After experiencing a lucrative Korean War boom, which boosted the demand for tankers, the industry had been groaning under a severe slump.

Almost 90 per cent of the 56 shipyards were idled before orders began to be received from the autumn of 1954. The revived flow of orders resulted from the government's export incentive measures and the active inquiries from abroad, mainly from Greek shipowners, who appreciated the fixed price system and the shorter period of construction at the waiting Japanese shipyards.

Among the export incentives was the subsidy to cover up to 50 per cent of the deficit involving ship export. In those days, Japanese shipbuilders had to be satisfied with below-cost contracts in order to keep shipyards in operation.

The fund for the subsidy was derived from the profits of trading companies earned through the import of Cuban sugar. The sugar import quota was granted on the condition that the trading firms would compensate for the deficit in ship exports, up to 5 per cent each of the export price of ships.

In 1954, Japanese shipbuilders were able, by making use of the system, to win export contracts for 42 vessels, totaling 854,980 gross tons. Those contracts assured shipbuilders of an income of more than

\$100 million one to one and a half years after the conclusion of the export contracts.

Feeding on the blood shed in the Korean War and cashing in on the rumored plot of Greek shipping magnates to have manipulated the Suez conflict, the Japanese shipbuilding industry climbed to the top of the world ranking of shipbuilders by launching 1.75 million tons in 1956. In that year, the export of ships totaled \$257.1 million, a dazzling increase of 30 per cent over the previous year.

The proportion of ships in the export of machinery also rose to 49.0 per cent in that year, heralding the arrival of the age of the heavy and chemical industries.

Ever since 1956, the Japanese shipbuilding industry has maintained the world's No. 1 shipbuilding position throughout. Lloyd's Register of Shipping was to state that in 1974 Japan's shipbuilders launched 17.61 million tons, which was 50.2 per cent of the world total.

Besides the improvement of the international balance of payments, the economy of fiscal 1955 showed an expansion without accompanying inflation. The economic resurgence of fiscal 1955 was thus dubbed as a "quantitative boom," a translation from the German expression "Mengen Konjunktur."

During that fiscal year, mining and industrial production increased by 12 per cent, mainly sustained by the favorable increase in exports and the per capita income rose by 10 per cent, while prices showed little upturn.

The manifestation of this ideal state of things did not result solely from economic factors, but depended on Providence—in this case, good weather. The favorable weather conditions helped boost the 1955 rice crop to a historic high. The year's crop rose to 12.07 million tons, an increase of 12 per cent over the previous year. It shattered the record of a little more than 10 million tons set in 1933. (The 1974 crop was 12.29 million tons.) Introduction of chemical fertilizers and the wide adopting of a new method of cultivation of seedlings were claimed to be the factors, other than the favorable weather conditions, which enabled the record rice crop to be realized.

In fiscal 1951, the second year of the Jimmu Boom, the economy amassed yet greater vigor as businessmen engaged in an intensive race to carry out plant and equipment investments. The "quantitative

boom" was switched into the "investment boom."

Expansion of the economy in that year exceeded every expectation. The per capita income rose by 13.9 per cent, and mining and manufacturing production 23.4 per cent, as against the respective predictions of 4.3 per cent and 7.2 per cent.

Private plant and equipment investments increased by 80 per cent, amounting to ¥1,400,000 million. Investment for inventories also showed a sharp increase of 40 per cent, reaching ¥640,000 million.

The course taken by the increase of private plant and equipment investments was as follows:

Such investments had already started to climb from the latter part of fiscal 1955 in sectors related to exports such as steel, shipbuilding and machinery industries, spurred by the increase in exports.

When fiscal 1956 was entered, the investments in the field of consumption goods increased as the export boom began to affect the domestic demand, activating the latter.

Becoming more confident about the future increase of the domestic demand and encouraged by the increase in the income of the corporations that they managed, businessmen began to allocate massive investment funds for capital goods and production goods.

The precipitous increase in plant and equipment investments also reflected the anxiety of businessmen who were unwilling to see their corporations drop out of the struggle for survival because the investments being carried out by others were neglected.

The low interest rate policy of the government, as well as the competition among banks to lend more money, specifically for such fields of priority as the heavy and industrial sectors, also helped boost private plant and equipment investments.

Fifty per cent of the increase in the fiscal 1956 industrial production resulted from such plant and equipment investments. Fifty per cent of such investments were directed to the steel and machinery sectors and 20 per cent to the chemical industry.

Reflecting the investment boom, machinery orders increased by 2.7 times in fiscal 1956. Among the biggest reasons for this was the decision of electric power companies to build more thermal power stations, and the introduction of modernized facilities in other industrial sectors.

The steel industry, which spent ¥128,200 million during the period between 1949 and 1955, mobilized a spectacular ¥625,500 million in the following five years up to 1960, to carry out its second modernization program.

Through the modernization program, which was carried out in two steps, Japan's steel industry was able to equip itself with more modern production facilities such as the strip mill capable of higher grades of processing.

The economy, however, started tumbling precipitously from around the middle of fiscal 1957. Production, which hit the peak in May 1957, fell by 10 per cent in the following 12-month period. Prices declined 11 per cent from April 1957 to June 1958 and imports sagged by 37 per cent from the second quarter of 1957 to the first quarter of 1958.

The diffusion index—a combination of seven economic indicators which move in parallel with the growth or decline of the economy—dipped below the level of 50 per cent (meaning more than 50 per cent of the seven economic indicators were on a downslide) in June 1957, and hit zero per cent in February. The turning point came in April 1958.

(At present—as of 1975—DI comprises 25 indicators. Leading indicators include machinery orders, the Tokyo Stock Exchange index and the wholesale price index of raw materials; coincident indicators: construction starts, new job offers and production index; and lagging indicators: plant and equipment investment, the index for inventories of materials and the product inventory index.)

The slump of the economy was caused by the tight money policy which was necessitated by the deterioration of the international balance of payments resulting from the sharp increase in imports during fiscal 1956. In that year, the pace of imports was faster than the pickup of production, reflecting partly the huge amount of capital outlays for modernization of plants and equipment.

After the slump was overcome faster than expected, the Japanese economy enjoyed another boom which lasted for three years up to the middle of fiscal 1961.

This boom was characterized by stable prices, improvement of the employment situation, and the favorable trend of the international balance of payments.

During that period, the Japanese economy almost wound up its

process of transformation and Japan was able to establish itself as a leading country in the heavy and chemical industries.

The Jimmu economic boom was the godsend, not only for the economy of the nation but also for housewives. They found that various electric home appliances, which began spreading from around the period, could ease their daily household chores tremendously.

The washing machine was the first to enter the scene in the “electrification” of households. Every six out of 100 households owned one in 1955, the initial year of the Jimmu Boom.

The diffusion rate of washing machines rose to 9 per cent in the following year and exceeded the 10 per cent level, as of March 1957, reaching 13 per cent. Since then, the diffusion rate had gone sky-high.

As known from experiences in various quarters of the world, any kind of durable consumer goods starts selling like hot cakes once the diffusion rate surpasses 10 per cent.

Some circles attribute the phenomenon to the demonstration effect which lures people to “keep up with the Joneses,” but a Japanese expert in the sales of electric home appliances had the following to say.

After a certain durable consumer item permeates rich families, who comprise 10 per cent of the entire households, it begins to attract the upper middle class. Some five years later, the diffusion rate reaches 50 per cent, and from then on it climbs to saturation in three years. The easy payment plan is effective when the price comes down to one-tenth of the monthly income.

Along with washing machines, black and white TV sets and refrigerators were hailed as the “Three Sacred Treasures” of households. They became the most coveted items among electric home products.

Trailing behind but fast catching up with washing machines were B&W TV sets. The number of families which had contracts with Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) to view TV broadcasting made an amazing climb to 50,000 by March 1955. Regular TV broadcasting had commenced in 1953 with 1,110 initial viewers.

Thereafter, the number of contracts showed geometric progress, reaching 165,000 by March 1956. Some of the low-brow programs aroused mounting criticism among quarters who were concerned about the possible ill effects that such TV programs might have on

juveniles. "TV will turn the hundred million people of the country into imbeciles," it was charged.

While the TV boom was flashing across the country, the cinema industry was enjoying its peak, unaware that its doom was just ahead. In 1956, a total of 452 cinema houses, which was four times the figure at the end of the war, were in operation in Tokyo.

Coming in last among the "Three Treasures," refrigerators saw a slow but steady proliferation.

The accommodation for those items, namely housing, was being given greater attention as the economy made forward strides. It was in 1956 that the Japan Housing Corporation started to accept residents in its housing complexes.

The corporation started with 240 apartment units, having two bedrooms and a dining kitchen, located in Chiba Prefecture adjacent to Tokyo Metropolis. Those who successfully won the right to live in one of those housing complexes were enviously called members of "Danchi Zoku" (the housing complex tribe). As of 1975, the corporation has supplied almost one million units of apartments, 60 per cent rental with the rest sold on the instalment basis.

While the entire nation continued to enjoy buoyancy, the Jimmu Boom rapidly became deflated in mid-1952 following introduction of the tight money policy which was necessary to improve the deteriorating international balance of payments.

In an analysis of the fiscal 1957 economy, the Economic White Paper announced the "return of economic cycles." The document put the blame on the huge accumulation of stocks for the plunge of the economy, calling it "an inventory recession." Inventories had been increasing faster than demand, and the tight money policy naturally dealt a vital blow to the enterprises which were heavily dependent on bank borrowings.

Immediately after the enforcement of the tight money policy, inventory investments still remained active, and entrepreneurs were hit by the lack of funds for the settlement of their businesses although products were selling well. The situation became the origin of the phrase, "black ink bankruptcy."

The slump that followed the Jimmu Boom, however, disappeared fast, with the recovery taking the shape of the letter V. The slump was

characterized by minimal social impact. The number of the unemployed, bankruptcies, and dishonored bills remained relatively small.

The recovery from the brief slump led to the second "explosive" boom which lasted from July 1958 to December 1961. Plant and equipment investments lifted the Japanese economy this time again.

While it had been repeatedly feared in the disputes among economists that the excessive plant and equipment investments would create an oversupply of production facilities the fear had never materialized in the course of the postwar economy of Japan.

The explanation given was that during the decade following 1955, the Japanese were highly capable of "absorbing" capital and technology, thanks to their personal characteristics.

First of all, the Japanese are eager to save money. Huge personal deposits were pumped into the industries to finance the massive plant and equipment investments. In those days, the ratio of saving stood at more than 15 per cent of the household budget.

Secondly, businessmen are willing to make investments in production facilities and to introduce new technologies.

In addition, the high educational standards of workers enabled the industrial modernization to proceed smoothly. The ample supply of labor, also contributed to the continuous high growth of the economy.

The dense population was also considered as a favorable factor for economic growth as the high density of population enhanced the efficiency of the infrastructure.

Riding the crest of the economic resurgence, Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda announced his attention-drawing "income doubling plan" in 1960. The plan was designed to raise the people's income by 26 per cent in three years and 100 per cent in 10 years. The objective was to be realized along with the projected annual economic growth of 9 per cent.

Although interrupted by a critical recession which climaxed in a crisis of securities firms, the Japanese economy was again buoyed to a third boom starting from 1966 and lasting for a record 59 months.

In the course of the history's longest economic boom, the Japanese economy attained the goals set by Ikeda. By 1968, the gross national product outpaced that of Germany, climbing to second place in the free

world. The tremendous growth of the economy cost Japan the reputation of "the Yellow Yankee," as Japanese entrepreneurs started invading developing countries, mostly those in Southeast Asia, cashing in on the government "commodities assistance."

During the period between 1961 and 1970, the Japanese economy attained an annual average increase rate of 10.8 per cent. Even in 1965 when the economy was trapped in the severest slump in the postwar period, the growth rate stood at 4.6 per cent.

Enter New National Idols

"Kyodatsu" (state of lethargy) was the expression often used to describe Japan and the Japanese in the years immediately following August 1945. All of a sudden, there was no national goal. For the nation which had continuously striven to win the war since July 1937—for the nation, in fact, whose every effort had been devoted to emerging as one of the world's great powers ever since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the end of the war ushered in a state of total aimlessness. The militant country that had never known how to stand still now had to stand still. The Japanese society that had been competition-oriented and essentially geared to the enhancement of the national status, had to abandon all its ambitions. What should it do now?

The nation was perplexed. The people sat back devoid of any idea as to what to do next. The Emperor on many occasions expressed his wish to convert Japan into the "England of Asia." A school of pacifists suggested that Japan should become the "Sweden of Asia," while a larger number favored a Switzerland. Some of the most ardent peace-lovers—in many cases opportunistic converts from wartime militarists—could not care less as to what kind of life the Swiss were actually leading. That the Swiss women had no right to vote (they had to wait until 1971) and that compulsory service in the national militia was demanded of its men, never entered the minds of the makeshift pacifists whose eyes were dazzled by the blessed neutrality that the European state maintained throughout the two world wars.

An overwhelming number of Japanese intellectuals still dreamed

of directing Japan toward the path of Bunka Kokka (country of culture). The phrase was uncomfortably ambiguous in its content but Bunka (culture) to them vaguely represented something that stood at the opposite pole from war. Hence, Switzerland was definitely Bunka.

The birthday of Emperor Meiji, national anniversary set on November 3, was hastily renamed "Bunka no Hi" (Culture Day). Bunka Kunsho (Order of Culture) was conferred on an assortment of nine senior citizens including scientists, painters and a novelist. Cheap apartment houses built on bombed-out lots in major cities were called Bunka Jutaku (cultural residence). An exchange of opinions by several leading journalists, university professors and novelists was called Bunka Zadankai (cultural round-table discussion). When a kitchen utensil manufacturer put Bunka Hocho (cultural kitchen knife) on sale, it was a smashing success. The product has since become one of the cherished essentials of the Japanese kitchen in subsequent years, so much so that a frustrated man in Kanagawa Prefecture stabbed his noisy piano-playing neighbor with a "cultural knife" in the autumn of 1974. And soon a new breed of opinion makers, called Bunkajin (men of culture), came to occupy a unique position in Japanese journalistic circles.

The Bunkajin, quite as ambiguous a term as Bunka itself, represented the cream of Japanese intelligentsia who were to guide the trend of national thought to this day. They included a vast spectrum that ranged from MacArthur worshippers of 30 years ago to anti-conservative commentators, advocates of nuclear disarmament, and supporters of Tokyo's Governor Ryokichi Minobe of today. The thoughts of Bunkajin, especially of Shimpoteki (progressive) Bunkajin, have left an indelible mark—for better or for worse—on Japanese public opinion during the past 30 years. But the genesis of the culture-cult was in the period of lethargy that followed the summer of 1945.

The postwar Bunka reached its first eminence on "Bunka no Hi" (Culture Day) in 1949. A dispatch from Stockholm revealed that the Swedish Academy of Science had awarded the 1949 Nobel Prize for Physics to Professor Hideki Yukawa of Japan. It was the first unmistakable success of Japanese Bunka. All the mass media instantly joined in a laudatory chorus. "Was it mere coincidence that the happy

news came on Japan's Culture Day?" the Mainichi's editorial asked. Another Tokyo daily was immediately sharing the national glory with the scientist as it theorized: "The glorious prize given Dr. Yukawa is not only recognition of his personal achievements but it is also an honor for Japanese physics, for our entire academic circles and for all the Japanese people." The wartime spirit of "100-million as one bullet" seems to have persisted. Whatever honor or dishonor that came to a Japanese individual was automatically regarded as affecting the Japanese race.

Dr. Yukawa became, as it were, an instant national hero. He was a shining hope in hungry days. An unquestionable Bunka incarnate.

Inspired by the national success, hundreds of parents named their newly born sons Hideki. Every minute detail of Yukawa's career was excavated, from pre-school days onward, and hailed as an example of ideal education. The scientist's home in New York (he was then a temporary member of the staff of Columbia University) was flooded with telephone calls from the Tokyo press, each congratulating him and inquiring what lofty message he had for the Japanese people back home. Japanese readers were greatly encouraged as they were told that the professor had stated over the international telephone: "I hope that all of you will endeavor for better days with bright hope." Bright days, they felt sure, were certainly ahead and they would be days of Bunka.

Inviting the honored physicist, newspapers vied to organize a Zadankai (round-table discussions) participated in by whatever Bunkajin they could find in the tiny Japanese community in New York. The discussions unanimously stressed, in conclusion, the mental capability of the Japanese race. How Yukawa came to "theoretically discover" the existence of meson, tiny atomic particle, and what the discovery signified were extensively played up by the press—pushing aside the news of the Cold War and the civil war in China.

The prize, furthermore, would bring the spectacular sum of \$30,171.74 to Dr. Yukawa. Before the physicist said anything definite about it, the Japanese press had taken it for granted that he would share the money with his countrymen, as he did his honor. The Mainichi, for one, was saying, "We are certain that the money will be used for the good of physics and for the physicists in Japan." Then, the press turned the scientist into an omniscient teacher. Editors were

soon asking his opinions on virtually everything—from international politics to education, literature, way of life, and so on.

Appearing in the spotlight at about this time was a less scholarly but far more popular national hero—a 19-year-old swimmer, Hironoshin Furuhashi, who splashed his way to a new world record in the 400-meter freestyle in August 1948. Radio announcers shouted themselves hoarse as they reported the splendid performance, minute by minute, of the aquatic ace. Everyone plunged into wild delirium. Nobody, in fact, could have been a more symbolic national hero than Furuhashi who, in those days when the common people scarcely had any adequate clothes to wear, was clad only in swimming trunks as he shattered the world record virtually every time he competed in a swimming meet. A Nihon University student, Furuhashi had been mobilized to work in a factory during the war, where he had his middle finger caught in a machine and lost it. Not only did he embody all the woes that the Japanese had suffered in the wartime but he seemed to represent an encouraging promise that the Japanese were able, after all, to overcome handicaps and become a world power once again.

A year later in Los Angeles, Furuhashi again sensationally broke the world record by a big margin over American competitors. In Japan, throngs of spectators packed the theaters that showed the newsreel of the sport event. The mood of the people somewhat resembled the time when they saw a dramatized film of the "victory" at Pearl Harbor. This time the Japanese victory was endorsed by a U.S. swimming coach, Robert Kiphuth, who asserted, "All we could think was that it was a terrific, terrific performance. We are all lost in admiration."

The ace swimmer eventually set 23 world records within two years. The Japanese public was carried away by the feat of the "Flying Fish of Fujiyama." The national pride was vindicated for the time to everyone's satisfaction.

The Japanese Bunka experienced its second moment of pride when the film "Rashomon" won the Grand Prix at the 12th International Film Festival held in Venice in September 1951.

The film opens with a weird scene of a half-destroyed ancient gate (Rashomon) in the rain. A witness begins to narrate the proceedings in

a court of justice where those who are concerned relate their testimonies—the testimonies about a husband and wife who were traveling through the desolate country outside Kyoto when they were assaulted by a bandit. The story flashes back from the ancient gate to the court and further from the court to a thick forest into which the bandit guides the couple. The film keeps flashing back into the depth of the human ego. The traveler is played by Masayuki Mori, his wife by Machiko Kyo, and the bandit who binds the traveler to a tree in the thick bush, rapes the wife and takes the life of the husband is played by Toshiro Mifune.

The crime was committed, but did the wife ask the bandit to kill her husband? Everyone has his or her own different story to tell about the identical incident, drawing the spectators into profound reflection upon man and man's nature. Who is telling a lie? Everyone of them seems to be lying. What is the real truth? The scenario was based on two short stories, "Rashomon" and "In the Bush," written by Ryunosuke Akutagawa. The film was directed by Akira Kurosawa.

The background is ancient Japan, the characters are equipped with modern egotism and the camera work is superb, with the actors and the actress at their best. The film indeed was a work of art. The honor at the Venice festival made the film a box office success, and that success, in turn, catapulted a controversial figure, Masaichi Nagata, to fame.

Nagata, nicknamed "Trumpet" for his extraordinary manner of talking big, headed the Daiei Motion Picture Company that produced "Rashomon," later owned a baseball club, associated with influential but dubious conservative politicians, and finally got caught up in a political racket that put an end to his business as well as his political career.

But, in 1951, it was his celebrated racing horse "Toki-no-minoru" that was enjoying even greater fame than its owner. It won ten victories in as many major racing events including the Japan Derby. The horse was expected to win many more prizes when it died suddenly from tetanus in June of that year.

On April 19, 1951, diminutive Shigeki Tanaka was all smiles as he said, "I'm very, very happy to have won." All Japan, too, was very, very happy at the news that Tanaka had finished first in the 55th

Boston Marathon. Following the success of Furuhashi, Fujiyama's Flying Fish, the marathon runner, only 160 centimeters tall and weighing a mere 56 kg, once again became a symbol of the perseverance of the hard-working Japanese. The coveted victory in the marathon, in which 155 distance plodders from all over the world competed, went to this shy boy from Hiroshima Prefecture. The 19-year-old "Atomic Boy" (Tanaka's nickname in Boston) had been able to afford only a one-way air ticket to America. For both his expenses and return fare, he had to rely on help from the Japanese community in the United States.

According to the records, Japanese runners had been awarded gold and bronze medals in the marathon race at the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936. These medals were actually won, however, by two Korean athletes registered as Japanese. This time, it was a "genuine" Japanese who ran for 2 hours 27 minutes 45 seconds, conquering the strenuous Heartbreak Hill in a drizzling rain, and into the arms of the awaiting Boston mayor.

A picture of the laurel-crowned runner was played up on the front page of every Tokyo newspaper. "Appare," "Dekashita," "Yokuyatta"—the maximum verbal tributes were paid him by the nation's journalism. In a way, the Japanese people were congratulating themselves on their own capability to endure hardship. For the post-war economy of Japan was then running through the heart-breaking race of "Oitsuke, Oikose"—catching up with and overtaking the advanced nations by its people's devotion to economic growth.

About a year later, in May 1952, 40,000 fans were shouting "Banzai!" as another athlete, the nation's boxing ace, won another world title for Japan. It was Yoshio Shirai, 28, who pounded out a unanimous and clearcut decision over Dado Marino of Hawaii, the flyweight boxing titleholder.

The radio broadcast over a national hookup drowned out the evening's commotion in Ginza and other busy quarters across Japan. The nation held its breath to hear how Shirai endured the Hawaiian boxer's ferocious rushes through the first half of the 15-round bout and come back with effective punches towards the end of the fight. Each of the best ringside seats, originally priced at ¥3,600 (US\$10), was being sold as high as ¥7,000 outside Korakuen Stadium where the event took

place. Even a seat in the far-off outfield bleachers cost ¥700 at a time when a Mainichi Daily News copy cost only ¥6 (it is ¥70 today).

The son of a carpenter brought up in downtown Tokyo, Shirai immediately became the idol of the working class in Japan. He successfully defended his title four times before losing it eventually, by a unanimous decision, to Pascual Perez of Argentina in November 1954.

Pingpong, this curiously political sport, also played its role in February 1952, in fulfilling the national pride of the Japanese people. The joyous tiding arrived from Bombay where a Japanese girl duo won the Corbillon Cup, signifying the women's world team championship. They upset the favored Rowe twins of England, 3 to 0, in the final match of the World Table Tennis Tournament. The girls were welcomed, as if they were a pair of victorious generals, when they climbed down from the plane at Haneda Airport.

But the excitement of the nation's womanhood hit the ceiling when Miss Kinuko Ito, 21, placed third in the Miss Universe Pageant held at Long Beach, California, in July 1953. For some time many Japanese men had difficulty swallowing the jubilant news that a representative of Japanese women, traditionally famed for their fidelity perhaps but not until then for their well-proportioned physique, could ever win anything at an international beauty contest where the participants had to appear before the male judges in swimsuits! But, believe it or not, that was what this first generation fashion model, a graduate of a Tokyo high school who was 164 centimeters tall, weighing 52 kg., and with vital statistics of 86-56-92 centimeters, had done. Instantly Japan fell in love with little Kinuko (Miss Silk).

Kinuko had had no experience in modeling until the autumn of 1951 when the Mainichi Daily News invited Tina Leser, an American fashion designer, for a series of then-still-novel fashion shows throughout Japan. Kinuko answered the call for what was to become an entirely new profession for Japanese women—fashion models. She passed the tests and was accepted, but found to her dismay that she had to wear high-heeled shoes for the first time in her life. "These are no shoes for walking," one of her colleagues heard her groan, almost in tears. "What would happen if I stumbled before so many spectators."

She actually quit modeling after the fashion show was over and became a typist, but was recruited again to represent Japan in the

Miss Universe competition. Her attitude at Long Beach, too, was typically Japanese. "No, I can't smile. I'm so shy and feel awfully tense, you know," she protested when photographers insisted on "cheese" snapshots.

Back home, "Hattoshin" (ideal proportion with stature eight times the vertical span of the face) became the most often quoted expression of the day. Many Japanese women lamented that they were only "Rokutoshin" (six times instead of eight) because their legs were so short compared with their long torsos. But rapid changes were taking place. The physique of young Japanese girls began to improve remarkably, probably because of improved diet. Fashion modeling moved into the vanguard as an occupation for the "improved" girls. Men were stunned to hear that Kinuko was making \$150 a week in the United States when their average monthly salary hardly added up to that sum.

Those were also the glorious days of Rikidozan, Japan's pioneer and Number One in Puro-Resu (professional wrestling). A drop-out from the Sumo world after reaching Sekiwake rank, Rikidozan chose wrestling as his second career, fought his way to fame with his famous Karate-chop, and cast himself perfectly into the hero image of Japan. He was the perennial "good guy" while his opponents, usually Westerners, were given the role of the bad, very bad, guys. In the scenario, he was hit, tossed about and prey to many a foul trick by Gaijin wrestlers until he finally stood up, determined to wreak vengeance with the omnipotent Karate-chop. He helped Japanese men expand themselves psychologically, no doubt. Millions, in fact, were in ecstasy as they watched Rikidozan's heroic maneuvers on the television which was just coming in, often not their own set but in front of a nearby electric appliance shop, peering over many shoulders while standing on parked bicycles.

Rikidozan fell from fame only when he died in December 1963, two weeks after he was stabbed by a gangster at the cabaret New Latin Quarter in Akasaka. The 39-year-old wrestling hero was survived by his charming 22-year-old wife and lamenting fans.

In 1954, Pakistani Foreign Minister (now Prime Minister) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had not yet labeled the Japanese as "economic animals."

There were, however, plenty of symptoms that they would deserve the nickname sooner or later. A majority of the hardworking Japanese company employees were zealously paving the way for the nation's economic prosperity while they remained faithfully solidified under their *Kaisha* (commercial firms) as if they were soldiers under a commander. The war, in other words, did not really come to a complete end in 1945 as far as Japan was concerned. Military war had undoubtedly ceased, but economic war continued. The Japanese working force was laboriously advancing on the path to victory—dreaming someday of catching up with and overtaking the western competitors in terms of the Gross National Product.

Entering the spotlight as a place reserved for those tired of hard work was the Pachinko (pin-ball machine) parlor. The Pachinko business enjoyed its first boom in the 1950s. In April 1954, there were as many as 951,000 working Pachinko machines, with their annual sales aggregating ¥240 billion, approximately half as much as the nation's exports for that year. The so-called "automated Pachinko" machines had been introduced a year earlier and the innovation enthralled "the maniacs with educated thumbs." The business experienced vicissitudes in the 20 years that followed. But, in December 1972, the nation's Pachinko parlors were still going strong with 1,629,336 machines and annual sales totaling almost ¥1 trillion.

It is very difficult to explain Pachinko to those who have never set foot on Japanese soil. It is essentially children's game but to frustrated grown-ups it provides an ideal oasis in the midst of big cities. Pachinko parlors are in a sense an urban jungle equipped with a curiously soothing effect on the tired nerves of working men. They give a consolation that can hardly be obtained, perhaps, outside the Zen monastery. Stand before a machine, with your ears completely deafened by the *Ryuko-ka* (popular songs), blaring over the loudspeakers, with your feet getting numb from hours of standing, and with the surface of your mind occupied by the philosophically abstract movements of Pachinko balls, and you find yourself in a state of unique nothingness.

Pachinko is hardly an expensive pastime unless one becomes addicted to it. A single Pachinko ball used to cost a modest ¥2 in 1954 and it is only ¥3 today, an astonishing stability in an age of quasi-astronomical inflation. Moreover, you might receive some packs of

cigaretts in exchange for your earned balls, a prize that can be bartered for cash (officially forbidden) at a shabby little house in the backstreet, an exchange business operated by a local widows' association—how quintessentially Japanese this Pachinko thing is. In any case, the business began to come into noticeable existence in the 1950s when Japan's economy was barely on its own feet.

The years 1953-56 saw Japan's struggle for and the eventual conquest of Mt. Manaslu, an 8,125-meter peak in the central Himalayas. After two abortive attempts to scale the world's eighth loftiest mountain, Toshio Imanishi, a 41-year-old Osaka civil engineer, and a Nepalese Sherpa stood on the ice-bound peak on May 9, 1956. It was Japan's "Premiere 8,000." Motion picture theaters were again packed by those eager to see the Rising Sun flag fluttering against the indigo Himalayan sky. It was also a proud moment for the *Mainichi* Newspapers that sponsored the three expeditions.

Those were the years when the Japanese people could afford to look forward and think big. Ahead of Japan was the boundless future to march in. Although there were many hardships, the nation had climbed out of the most difficult years. There were so many heroes emerging in the fields of Bunka and sports. Despite some tens of thousands of anti-heroes who brooded in Pachinko parlors, the GNP was steadily growing.

Cinderella Story Of Michiko Shoda

Had there not been the Cinderella story of Michiko Shoda, then 24, the postwar history of Japan would have been a very somber one despite all the glory of its economic success. When the Imperial Household Council, after months of deliberation, announced the engagement of His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Akihito to the daughter of Hidesaburo Shoda, a rich flour mill executive but a commoner, on November 27, 1958, the whole nation was thrilled.

The future Princess met the press for the first time that afternoon. She began her initial comment by shyly saying, "Everything is just like a dream... From my heart I trust him and respect him." The

pretty young girl was smiling radiantly and her pale afternoon dress was very, very chic.

Outside the Imperial Palace, there was joy on every level of Japanese life. Young girls were weeping romantic tears over the Imperial love story. Many, the nation's newspapers reported, considered it one of the greatest romances in centuries.

Even in the midst of the hula-hoop fever, the romance was startling enough to make millions of the Japanese people giddy. Until the formal announcement was made, few Japanese in fact had realized that Japan was "democratized" to that extent. Shattering ancient traditions and risking the lessening of the monarchy's prestige, the Crown Prince wanted to marry a commoner's daughter whom he loved. An event undreamed of in the 26-century history of the Empire!

Public opinion was clearly divided. Hard-core traditionalists, representing a minority, expressed the anxiety that the pristine sacredness of the Imperial Family might be seriously impeded by mixing it with the "base" blood of common stock. The Emperor had undoubtedly disavowed his own godliness in 1946, but had not the Kamikaze suiciders gladly sacrificed their lives for the preservation of the national polity? And doesn't the essence of the national polity lie in the sacred lineage of the Emperor system—the unique tradition that had never been affected by humanly ambition and love? For centuries the Emperors of Japan had meticulously kept the family blood pure and holy. Enduring all shortcomings intrinsic to the purity (Emperor Taisho, for one), had they not remained stoically aloof from their subjects?

Now the heir-apparent was stepping out of the time-honored framework and desired to marry a girl, a commoner, because he loved her. How would he atone to the spirit of all the deceased patriots? Wasn't it a purely Western idea for a man to get married because of "love?"

Then again, are the Shodas really commoners? The father of the future Princess was the president of a flourishing flour company. Somebody, somebody very close to the throne, was plotting to create an Imperial-industrial complex, so the hidebound traditionalists reasoned.

The rest of Japan, by far the majority, rejoiced. The 25-year-old Crown Prince, in their eyes, was the New Japan incarnate. Who cares about time-worn tradition? This is a new nation blessed by the new Constitution which vests sovereignty not in the Emperor but in the people. *Demokurashi* (Japanese concept of democracy) means freedom, doesn't it? Why, this is a victory, then, for the "liberated" Crown Prince who was choosing his bride of his own free will.

The fact that Miss Shoda was "one of the people" instead of the aristocracy, customary source of Empresses, was welcomed as strengthening the bonds of intimacy between the people and the Imperial Family. The distaff side of the nation was carried when told that the Prince, during his pre-betrothal days, used to talk with Michiko for hours over the telephone. For the royal person, denied all manifestations of human desire, including going out of his palace to visit his sweetheart, courtship by telephone was a splendidly revolutionary idea.

"What would be the phone number of the Crown Prince, do you know?" a working girl was overheard by a Weekly Shincho reporter as she was talking to her girlfriend in a commuter train. "I dunno. Have you checked the telephone directory under KO (for Kotaishi, the Crown Prince)?" was another girl's reply.

The fact was that the Japan Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation had been requested by the Chamberlain to the Crown Prince to set up an unlisted direct connection between the Prince's palace and the Shodas' home in Gotanda, Tokyo. The magnanimous corporation made no charge for the special telephone, it was reported.

The telephone company was not the only one to make such a lavish gesture. When tenders were called for the construction of a multi-million yen new palace for the Crown Prince and future Princess, Hazama-Gumi Co. surprised its competitors by bidding a mere ¥10,000. The bidding was eventually reinvented. It was 17 years before the same construction firm was to be bombed by anarchists for its "economic invasion of Southeast Asia" in February 1975.

A congratulatory mood permeated even Japan's usually austere financial world. The posted price of the stock of Nisshin Flour Mill Company owned by the Shodas had begun to soar several days earlier and on the day the betrothal was formally announced, it was ¥213, a ¥60 jump from two weeks before. All the banks, insurance companies and

department stores throughout the nation were asking for photos of the couple. Within a few days, the nation was seeing an avalanche of photos of the romantically engaged couple displayed in the show windows of numerous banks and branches of business companies.

The Big Press was zeroing in on the felicitous occasion. They, in fact, had been preparing for the moment for years. Each of the mass-circulation newspapers in Japan had organized a team of full-time "Okisaki-sagashi" (hunt for the Princess candidate) reporters.

The Mainichi's city news desk had compiled every conceivable "candidate" in and out of the aristocracy. The overall number at the start of the journalistic maneuver in 1955 amounted to an astonishing 1,000. Ten reporters were assigned to investigate the candidates one by one—the family's social status, its financial condition, the number, if any, of her father's concubines, the would-be candidate's beauty, health, education, friends and many other qualifications.

Their assignment was to interview every one of them without being spotted by rival newspapermen. It was certainly the biggest "dagnet" ever spread by the Japanese press. Gradually the reporters, most of them originally recruited from the police beat, learned how to manage the typical upper class conversation full of honorifics.

By April 1958, seven months before the formal bulletin was issued, the number of the qualified brides had dwindled to 20. Among them was "Michiko Shoda: a pretty tennis partner of the Crown Prince." She was tall, but not taller than the Prince. She was of a rich family, but modest (her monthly pocket money never exceeded ¥1,000) and prudent in personality. She was healthy (160 centimeters tall and weighing 50 kilograms, slightly on the plump side) but elegantly Japanese in Kimono. She was beautiful but not extravagant. Graduated from the University of the Sacred Heart in Tokyo with a conspicuous record, she was graceful in manners and fluent in English. And, above all, when the Crown Prince was watching her play tennis, look! his eyes were gleaming.

Never before had the nation's journalism battled in such a romantic setting as the hard-working "bride-hunters" did. The battlegrounds were the elite Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club one day and the classy tennis court in Chofu City on another. In that summer the Crown Prince was playing tennis in the refreshing plateau of the Karuizawa

summer resort in Nagano Prefecture. The Shodas had a villa on one of the hills. Reporters, dressed in tennis suits and with a small camera in hand, were sitting at courtside pretending to be innocent bystanders.

Back in the perspiring heat of Tokyo, other reporters were visiting the homes of chamberlains and advisers to the Crown Prince every evening. One day, while looking at the blueprint of the projected new palace for the Prince, a reporter cried out, "Hey, what d'ya know! He's got this tennis court inside the palace ground!" A smashing discovery that stirred the hearts of the many reporters present.

The Shoda family, approached many times, would neither say anything definite nor give even a remote hint. Reporters were repeatedly bowed off politely. A tip, however, was given by one of the family's friends in September that Michiko was attending the world meeting of the Sacred Heart alumnae in Brussels as Japan's representative. Mainichi correspondents in Paris, New York and Washington were alerted instantly. A Washington man succeeded in boarding the plane in which she was flying back to Japan from the American capital via Honolulu. He sat next to her and, feigning to be a businessman not quite unrelated to her father's trade, struck up a conversation with her.

The Imperial Household Agency, in the meantime, invited the representatives of all the newspapers, magazines and television networks. The Grand Chamberlain suggested a journalistic moratorium. "I want you all to understand the vulnerability of the upper class," he pleaded. "Each medium in its excessive zeal to locate the future Princess might print the name of the wrong candidate. Think of that girl's future—it would be a tragedy."

The journalists assented. One might get a scoop, they reasoned, but all the others would naturally suffer. Stirred by the instinct for self-defense, all of them signed the Kyotei (agreement) that none would print the name until the official announcement. So, the battlefield shifted from tracking down the would-be fiancée to how good a supplement they could publish on the day the official word came. It meant a gamble, and a very precarious one.

A leakage would mean a disaster. The Okisaki-hunters were allotted a room at the far end of the newsroom. Their stories on Miss Michiko Shoda, considered to be the leading candidate, were set in

type by a few handpicked composers who worked in a corner of the printing shop. Galleys were numbered, stored in a special room, and locked. The whole enterprise somewhat resembled the clandestine Pearl Harbor operation.

The Mainichi reporters were tormented all the while by a nagging doubt—would the Crown Prince really marry a commoner? The abortive royal-commoner romance of Britain's Princess Margaret and Group Captain Peter Townsend was still fresh in their memory.

But on the joyous day in November 1958, the Mainichi hit the jackpot. Out went millions of prepared copies of the special supplement—prepared 17 days before and fortified by numerous additions since.

The captain of the Okisaki hunter team ran back from the press conference by the Director-General of the Imperial Household Agency.

"Bucho (city news editor)! It was Michiko-san, after all." He was now sobbing.

"Good, good. Very good!" The editor hugged him. He was also in tears.

One of the mischievous reporters patted the shoulder of the emotional journalist, "You can have a very long rest now. There'll be at least 25 years before you'll be looking for the bride of the Crown Prince's son."

The life of the Crown Prince had indeed been a solitary one. Japan's Imperial Family, by tradition, had left princes shortly after their birth in the care of court nobles. Born on December 23, 1933 (the eighth year of Showa), little Akihito was removed from his parents' palace when he was only three years old. Since then, he had to live a separate life, which allowed him to see his parents, brother and unmarried sisters only once or twice a month.

He was a boy of tender heart by nature. Though sensitive and compassionate, he was more often respected than loved by those loyal courtiers who felt deep awe at virtually anything he did or said. There was hardly any room for humanly affection.

While attending the Gakushuin Peers' School, he would frequently say to his friends, "I envy you because you can live with your parents." That he was lonesome could not be doubted. But there was no outlet for his emotion. For the future ruler of Japan was not supposed to allow others to spot his weak points. His self-consciousness

evoked sympathy in the hearts of his limited number of friends. They sometimes attempted to help the "Gagged Prince" or "Solitary Prince" step out of his monarchical reservedness, but to no avail.

It is questionable too, how far his life was "emancipated" in the postwar days when he was placed under the personal tutoring of Mrs. Elizabeth Gray Vining, a Quaker widow governess.

To a young man like Akihito, meeting vivacious Michiko Shoda was like stepping into warm sunshine. In the summer of 1957, the Crown Prince, who had never really mixed with girls in his school or court life, fell in love with a girl called "Mitchie."

It was at an international tennis tournament in Karuizawa where the Prince proved himself to be an excellent competitor. The informal mood of the cool resort gave him a momentary chance for relaxation. The young Prince was soon seen with a Peace cigaret between his lips—a yearning perhaps for a manly show-off.

He invited some friends, male and female, to a nearby coffee shop. Among the invited was "Mitchie," Michiko Shoda. From around the coffee table rose the gay laughter of young people. And another Peace or two. The solitary Prince was alive for the first time in his life.

Prudent upper class vacationers averted their eyes a few days later when they saw the Prince rowing a boat on tiny Sengataki Lake with Miss Shoda seated in the bow—shyly smiling. This summer, they thought, would remain forever memorable for the Crown Prince. Rumors started circulating.

Monarchy was doubtlessly a declining fashion in postwar Japan, too. But the announcement of the Prince's betrothal to the girl who was a commoner revived the popularity of the royal family all at once. If the Senzenha (prewar generation) identified themselves with the Emperor to such an extent that they would sacrifice their lives for his cause, the younger Sengoha (postwar generation) saw the hope of the new age in the determination of the young Crown Prince.

He was a Showakko (son of the Showa Era) who, by choosing his own bride not only upset court tradition but spearheaded the shattering of the strict family rule of prewar Japan. This was no longer a time for parents to decide whom their sons should marry. They had come to stay: democracy, freedom, young will and love—all combined. As it did in 1789 France, "Le Serment du Jeu de Paume"

(Tennis-Court Oath) had a definite ring of liberty and equality.

From early dawn, more than half a million Tokyoites lined the streets from the Imperial Palace to the Togu (the Crown Prince's) Palace in Akasaka. People throughout the nation rose early and turned on their television sets at 6.25 a.m. to watch Miss Michiko Shoda bid farewell to her parents at her home in Gotanda to become the bride of the Crown Prince. The day, April 10, 1959, was destined to be a day of pomp and splendor. An air of excitement wrapped the Japanese archipelago.

The austere wedding rite began at 10 a.m. The Crown Prince was clad in an orange court robe with a black crown and Princess Michiko, Consort of the Heir Apparent, was dressed in a formal Juni-Hitoe, a twelve-fold ceremonial robe of ancient court ladies. It was like the unfolding of an antique picture scroll—a scene out of the 11th Century Heian Period. The "Tale of Genji" was being revived.

From the Kashikodokoro sanctuary deep inside the Imperial Palace, television cameras relayed a glimpse of the couple treading the corridor of the Shinto building, led by the Chief Ritualist. Nine hundred and seventy illustrious guests stood in front of the outer sanctuary to see the couple disappear into the inner sanctum. Mrs. Vining was the only invited foreigner. Observing court tradition, Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress were stoically absent. It was after the rite that the wedded couple were received in audience by Hirohito. Then the biggest spectacle of the Showa Era began.

The Crown Prince wore the Collar of the Grand Cordon of the Chrysanthemum and the Princess the First Order of the Sacred Crown over her own decollete designed by Simone Noir of the Dior Fashion House, Paris.

The gala wedding procession was like the re-enactment of a fairy tale. Following the cavalcade of horse-drawn carriages and mounted court guards holding the Crown Prince's standard was the carriage carrying the newly-wed couple. The bride was smiling elegantly, the bridegroom was waving his hand—also all smiles. The people were applauding, cheering, throwing confetti and shouting "Banzai!"

The golden chrysanthemum crest on the side of the maroon coach gleamed in the benign spring sun. A drum and bugle corps of junior

high school students, the U.S. Air Force Band and the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Band struck up joyous tunes as they joined the pageantry.

Princess Michiko's tiara, studded with 1,000 diamonds, was dazzling. Little attention was paid to a 19-year-old boy who moved toward the royal coach as it was parading just outside the Imperial Palace. The boy, quickly pulled down from the coach-step, later confessed to police interrogators that he was against the Emperor system. The news, however, was prudently played down by the nation's Big Press.

The classic pageantry had been well publicized by shrewd television manufacturers ever since the schedule was revealed months before. "This time," they persuaded consumers, "You MUST have a TV set in your sitting room."

As a matter of fact, television played a major role in covering the day's event. With more than 100 TV cameras installed behind the lines of well-wishers, every detail of the hour-long procession was relayed to every corner of Japan. The cameras zoomed in on the coy little Princess and one could see everything marvelously clear on the television screen. It was a felicitous moment for the nation's electrical managers, as well as for all the workers in the industry, their subcontractors and advertising agencies.

The nationwide registered number of television sets, which totaled only 165,666 at the end of 1955, jumped to an amazing 1,982,379 in 1958 and 4,148,683 the next year. "Terebi" (television) became the way of Japanese life. Moved by their deep homage to the Crown Princess, the manufacturers of electrical household appliances coined a word for the occasion—"Mitchie Boom."

Behind the whole scene, it was said, sat clever Shinzo Koizumi, former Chancellor of Keio University and longtime adviser to the Crown Prince. Conscious of the changing political tide and determined to put the monarchy on a more solid foundation than its traditional charisma, the enlightenmentist scholar positively encouraged the Crown Prince to marry a commoner daughter.

By risking the sacrifice of a "sacred cow," he dared to advocate the introduction of "healthy" blood into the Imperial Family. The Shodas fit his purpose perfectly. With the family's branches firmly married into some of the nation's most distinguished families both

economic and academic, Hidesaburo Shoda, the flour mill president and father of the Princess, was related not only to prewar Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi but also to subsequent Prime Ministers Eisaku Sato and Takeo Miki, Chairman Yoshizane Iwasa of Fuji Bank, Chairman Hiroshi Anzai of Tokyo Gas Co., and numerous other professors and econo-industrial celebrities.

When, therefore, the Crown Prince wedded Miss Michiko Shoda, the Imperial Family was noticeably bolstered by the core of Japan's "establishment."

Nonetheless, until the day the Crown Prince actually begins ruling the era that will succeed Showa's, one might still keep wondering whether or not Koizumi's scheme is working out. There have already been some cautious voices of misgiving uttered as to the capabilities of the fortyish Crown Prince and symbol-to-be of future Japan.

Citing the instance of the royal visit by T.I.H. the Crown Prince and Princess to Nepal in the spring of 1975, some Tokyo weeklies wrapped, in careful phrases, their criticism of the Prince's lack of initiative in making use of the occasion for promoting friendship with Southeast Asian neighbors. Not quite infrequently one would hear a sinister remark in today's Tokyo that the Crown Prince is a "husband to Princess Michiko" perhaps but little more.

The times, of course, have greatly changed since the days when the Emperor's words were a godly decree. Denied the exertion of all political influence, the Crown Prince's position is understandably awkward—at least compared with the prewar days. His authority is so prescribed by the postwar Constitution that it hardly extends beyond being the successor to the ritual head of state. Given the situation, what initiative can he really take?

The Japanese people's median feeling was observed by David Riesman, American sociologist and author of "The Lonely Crowd," in 1961. As Riesman was leaving the International House, Tokyo, he saw a number of policemen coming up the driveway. He was told that the Crown Prince was coming to a wedding ceremony. The social scientist's comment: "I think I got a glimpse of him but he is so undistinguished-looking that I couldn't be sure (people are sorry for Princess Michiko, who is married to such a stiff and stultifying man—but then, they added, how can he help it, having been brought up in the palace)" (Parentheses by Riesman).

CHAPTER V

The Price Of Prosperity

Thirty Days That Shook Japan

On February 26, 1936, the heart of Tokyo had lain in the hands of platoons of soldiers led by a handful of self-righteous young army and navy officers, but the rest of the nation was totally unaware of their short-lived coup attempt. From mid-May to mid-June of 1960, the heart of Tokyo was rocked by what many in Japan and abroad feared might be the beginning of a revolution. Not only did the rest of the nation follow the turmoil over radio and TV and in the newspapers, but in fact, millions of workers, students and ordinary citizens were directly involved in the most traumatic political outburst in the nation's history. The root of the trouble was "Ampo," as the security treaty with the United States is called in Japanese.

The month-long upheaval over the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty not only split the nation down the middle. It laid bare the immaturity of Japan's parliamentary democracy planted on its soil at the end of World War II. The turmoil forced U.S. President

Dwight D. Eisenhower to cancel his trip to Japan after he had embarked on his tour. And it spelled the doom of Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi.

A combination of factors was at work in the disturbance that started on January 6, 1960 when a new security pact was signed in Washington by Prime Minister Kishi and U.S. Secretary of State Christian A. Herter. The original treaty, signed immediately after the San Francisco Peace Treaty in September 1951, had been the subject of intense debate from the very beginning for its "unequal" provisions. (Refer to Chap. IV—Peace Treaty Amid Cold War)

A succession of Japanese governments sought an early revision of the "provisional" arrangement but the United States countered by calling on Japan to shoulder a larger burden of defense. After years of Japan's overtures, Washington finally agreed to discuss a revision in September 1958.

In some respects, the newly signed treaty was an improvement over the old one. It bound the United States to come to Japan's aid against an armed attack in the "territories under the administration of Japan" (Article V). It provided for "prior consultation" in case of "major changes in the deployment into Japan of United States armed forces, major changes in their equipment, and the use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations to be undertaken from Japan" (Article VI and Exchange of Notes). It also set a time limit of 10 years (Article X).

The Socialist and Communist parties, which had voted against both the peace treaty and the security pact, did not want any security arrangement with the United States at all. (The rightist Socialists, who had voted in favor of the peace treaty but against the security pact, seceded from the party and founded the Democratic Socialist Party on January 24, 1960, under the chairmanship of Suehiro Nishio).

No amount of effort on Kishi's part would have won the Socialists and Communists over to his side. They were on an entirely different plane as far as the nation's security was concerned.

The government of Prime Minister Kishi, on its part, often displayed lack of cohesion and clarity in its replies to Socialist critics in the Diet. More importantly, it did not go as far as it should have to

reach the people at large, a factor which added to their latent misgiving about the security pact.

And there was the question of style and personality of the prime minister who inspired little, if any, love or respect from the masses. They remembered him as one of those arrested as major war criminals, though he had been spared a trial, and identified him as the epitome of reactionism. Kishi was obviously only joking when he said, "I read only the sports section," but his brand of humor wasn't the kind that helped him to establish rapport with the press.

There was another important domestic factor which fanned the flames against the security pact. On March 30, 1959, Presiding Judge Akio Date of the Tokyo District Court ruled the security pact unconstitutional in the "Sunagawa Case" involving seven men arrested for obstructing a land survey for extension of the U.S. air base in Tachikawa on Tokyo's western suburb. In one of its speediest actions, the Supreme Court rescinded the Date ruling and sent the case back to the district court for retrial on December 16.

The security treaty, the Supreme Court in a unanimous judgment said, was a matter of such high-level political nature, with a direct bearing on the survival of the state, that it should be determined by the Diet, the Cabinet and ultimately by the people.

The court decision, which came just two weeks before Kishi's departure for Washington to sign the new pact, was denounced by the anti-treaty forces as "utterly irresponsible" for it "waved its constitutional power to determine the constitutionality of laws, regulations or official acts." If the Supreme Court judges did not attach much significance to their reference to "ultimately by the people," the anti-treaty forces took it as meaning that the court decision justified their "right to resist" the pact which they insisted was unconstitutional.

Beyond Japan's shores, too, there were developments of great import whose repercussions had a delicate impact on the treaty revision issue.

In South Korea a violent student uprising erupted on April 19, 1960 and threw President Syngman Rhee out of power, forcing him to become an exile in Hawaii.

On May 5, Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev stunned the world

by announcing that a Russian rocket had shot down an American U2 spy plane when it penetrated Russian territorial airspace and that its pilot, Francis Powers, was captured alive. Khrushchev then departed for Paris for the Big Four summit conference scheduled to begin May 16.

When he reached Paris after Moscow's announcement of a successful launching of the first artificial satellite to beat the United States in the space race, the Soviet Premier again denounced the U2 flight and withdrew a standing invitation to Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union. The Paris summit collapsed, freezing a thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations that had begun with Vice President Richard M. Nixon's Moscow visit in July of the previous year and Khrushchev's own American visit two months later.

The U2 incident added fuel to the treaty revision debate in the Diet. Socialist Ichio Asukata (now mayor of Yokohama) grilled the government on the presence of the "black jets" at the U.S. Atsugi Air Station in Kanagawa Prefecture. Moscow was warning that U2 bases might be made the target of Russian retaliation. U.S. assurances that the U2s in Japan were engaged solely in weather observation did not dispel the popular anxiety.

On May 10, six days before the Paris summit, Japan and the United States announced that President Eisenhower would arrive in Tokyo on June 19 on his way home from a trip to the Soviet Union to celebrate the Centennial of Japan-U.S. relations.

With the shock from the summit collapse still reverberating around the world, tension was steadily building up in the Diet. As the close of the Diet session on May 26 approached, Prime Minister Kishi and the Liberal-Democratic Party were becoming visibly impatient. Outside the Diet Building, tens of thousands of unionists, students and ordinary citizens were massed daily for presenting "petitions," a new form of tactics conceived by the People's Council for Preventing Revision of the Security Treaty. The council had been founded in late March 1959 with the Socialist Party, General Council of Trade Unions of Japan (Sohyo) and 11 other organizations as key members and with the Communist Party sitting in as "observer." The council had been holding a "unified action" every month, beginning April 15, 1959.

On the evening of May 19, as rain started falling, tension mounted

almost minute by minute in and around the Diet. Word spread through the milling throng of anti-Ampo petitioners that the Liberal-Democratic Party was planning to extend the Diet session by 50 days.

Inside the House chamber, Socialist Diet members and their secretaries staged a sitdown in the corridor outside the office of Speaker Ichiro Kiyose in an attempt to block the opening of the plenary session. Another group of Socialists put up a barricade in the room adjacent to Kiyose's to prevent him from sneaking out through the back door.

Shortly after 10 p.m., the Speaker called on the Socialist pickets to disperse. At 10.25 the preliminary bell for the plenary session echoed. The second and final bell rang at 10.35. The Liberal-Democrats began filing into the chamber.

A few minutes before 11, Kiyose called in the police. Within a matter of 10 minutes, uniformed policemen, 500 of them, arrived in haste and started evicting the Socialist lawmakers and their secretaries, one by one, as they sat with their arms interlocked. The Socialists were dragged down the corridor, their hands and legs held firmly by the police, and their shirts ripped open.

Another police squad forced its way into the room next to the Speaker's, knocked down the barricade put up by the Socialists inside and shoved them out.

With the obstacles cleared, Speaker Kiyose, whose oratory as chief defense counsel in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East belied his thin, small frame, was virtually spirited away by House guards and shoved into his chair on the dais to the applause of the waiting Liberal-Democrats.

Ten minutes before midnight, the House minus all opposition members voted a 50-day extension of the Diet session. Then Kiyose announced that the next plenary session would begin at 12.05 a.m. the following day—just a few minutes off.

The plenary session opened, again without opposition members, and the chairman of the ad hoc committee on the security treaty made a terse report. The Speaker called for a standing vote on the pact and related bills. All present rose. Then came a tumultuous roar of "Banzai." The session was over at 12.19 a.m.

More than a dozen Liberal-Democrats stayed away from the

voting on the security pact. Among them were former Prime Minister Tanzan Ishibashi and leaders of anti-mainstream factions including Takeo Miki and Ichiro Kono.

"I thought that the process of gaining Diet approval was of great importance," Miki told reporters. "No amount of time would be enough to persuade those who were opposed to the treaty from the beginning. But there are many who are basically in favor of the treaty but who harbor misgivings about its contents. We politicians owe it to ourselves to convince these people."

The Diet was paralyzed. The opposition including the Democratic Socialists termed the voting null and void and refused to take part in any further Diet proceedings. The Socialist members of the House of Representatives tendered their resignations en bloc in a gesture designed to force Prime Minister Kishi to dissolve the House and call a general election. Their resignations were deposited with Party Chairman Inejiro Asanuma, but this threat did not materialize.

The "forcible passage" of the pact whipped the anti-treaty movement to a new intensity. On the afternoon of May 20, about 7,000 Zengakuren students who had broken with the Communist Party massed near the Diet Building. At the climax of their blatant demonstrations, some 300 of them surged into the compounds of the Prime Minister's official residence. The People's Council called for larger protest demonstrations and rallies.

The press also joined in a chorus demanding a general election. The Asahi Shimbun moved its editorial from its regular place on Page 2 to the front page and called on Liberal-Democrats to revolt against Kishi to force his resignation.

The anti-treaty movement now receded somewhat into the background. A struggle for the defense of democracy and parliamentarism became a rallying cry. Scholars and professors organized lectures and took to the streets.

Sakae Wagatsuma, professor emeritus of Tokyo University, who had been a classmate of Kishi's in the university, reminded Kishi of his days in Sugamo Prison as a war criminal and gave this friendly advice: "Kishi-kun, the only way left for you is to quit politics immediately and spend the rest of your life going fishing, which you used to like so much."

The treaty's passage in such unusual circumstances also brought

the latent anti-American sentiment to the surface. Under the Constitution giving the House of Representatives superiority in treaty and budget matters, the security treaty was to become "automatically approved," without similar action by the House of Councillors, a month later, on June 19—the very day President Eisenhower was to arrive in Tokyo.

The anti-treaty forces charged, with good reason, that Ike's visit would strengthen the hand of their hated prime minister. Even before May 19, many intellectuals with known sympathies for the United States joined the Socialists and Sohyo in pleading with Eisenhower to postpone his visit. They warned that such an untimely visit would not only tarnish his image as a man of peace but do irreparable damage to Japan-U.S. relations.

Kishi was equally determined to have Eisenhower visit Japan as scheduled. His prestige and, as he put it, Japan's prestige were at stake. He brushed aside the suggestion of the overworked security authorities that they would not be able to guarantee the President's safety. Instead, he told them to tighten security measures.

The prime minister himself was under mounting pressure from the nation's business circles. The powerful Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) said that the security pact should be ratified at any cost by the Kishi Cabinet but that Kishi should step down after the treaty had been ratified.

On June 7, the White House announced there would be no change in Eisenhower's Japan visit. On June 10, Presidential Press Secretary James C. Hagerty flew into Tokyo to make final arrangements for Eisenhower's visit—now only nine days away.

When Ambassador Douglas MacArthur II's car carrying Hagerty, Thomas E. Stephens, Presidential Appointments Secretary, and the envoy reached the Benten Bridge just outside Tokyo International Airport, about 500 unionists blocked its way. It was only after riot police hurried to the scene that a helicopter that had been hovering above could land and pick up the three for a flight to the U.S. Embassy.

"Traditionally, the Japanese people have always treated the representatives of other governments with courtesy and respect," Hagerty told reporters in a gibe at the mob violence he had just been subjected to. "The singing of the Internationale as they stoned,

shattered the windows, cut the tires, and tried to overturn the Ambassador's car in which we were riding, suggests that they may not even owe their allegiance to Japan. Or at least it raises that question," Hagerty said. But, he continued, there would be no change in Eisenhower's impending visit to Japan.

As Eisenhower left Washington on June 12 on his tour of the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa, Japan and the Republic of Korea, Prime Minister Kishi asked Socialist Chairman Asanuma and Democratic Socialist Chairman Nishio for a "political truce." Nishio agreed. Asanuma did not even see Kishi.

The people waited in suspense amidst reports that Eisenhower arrived to an enthusiastic welcome in Manila. On June 15, the People's Council mounted the 18th "unified action" in which it claimed 5,800,000 unionists participated, disrupting some trains.

Afternoon newspapers hit the streets, saying that the unified action had been conducted in an orderly manner and that another "petition" parade, by now an almost daily routine, was scheduled for the evening.

It was an evening that was to see the bloodiest battle between Zengakuren students and the police, a battle that produced a martyr, a battle that forced the government to ask Eisenhower to postpone his visit, and a battle that set the stage for Kishi's departure.

About 7,000 Zengakuren students massed near the Diet Building and tore down a gate of the House of Representatives. No fewer than 4,000 of them poured into the Diet compounds through the gate and over the fences, setting fire to police vans and hurling stones. Police fought back with water cannons, tear gas and clubs. Millions sat in utter shock and horror before their TV sets as the cameras focused on the blood-soaked faces of the students sprawled on the pavements, dazed and groaning.

In that orgy of bloodshed, Miss Michiko Kamba, a senior literature student at the University of Tokyo, died of either strangulation or internal bleeding or both. Sohyo and Zengakuren immediately charged that the 22-year-old coed had been murdered by the police.

The violent melee left about 560 persons injured, nearly half of them policemen. The arrests included 174 students and 27 rightists who had charged into a group of students with staves.

Miss Kamba's death, which was mourned in a "people's funeral" on June 24 at the Hibiya Public Hall, triggered strikes and protest rallies on college campuses throughout the country. With the massive protest movement threatening to get out of control, Prime Minister Kishi made the painful decision on May 20: to ask that President Eisenhower postpone his visit.

In Manila, Hagerty said the President expressed his "full and sympathetic understanding" of the Japanese Government decision. The President also regretted that "a small organized minority, led by professional Communist agitators, acting under external direction and control, has been able by resorting to force and violence" to prevent his visit.

On the morning of May 20, seven major metropolitan newspapers came out with an unprecedented front page "joint declaration" entitled "Reject Violence and Protect Democracy."

"The bloody incidents which occurred on the night of June 15 inside and outside the Diet precincts, aside from the causes leading to them, are to be regretted for throwing parliamentarism here into a crisis. Never as now have we become so concerned over the future of Japan," the declaration stated.

"Democracy is a matter to be debated with words. No matter what the reason and despite whatever political troubles may arise, the use of violence to advance an argument absolutely must not be permitted," it went on. While calling on the government to act quickly to restore the situation, the declaration urged the opposition Socialist and Democratic Socialist parties "to forget the points of dispute and promptly return to the Diet."

The declaration—signed by the Asahi, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai, Sankei, Tokyo, Tokyo Times and Yomiuri—drew a bitter response from many of the anti-treaty activists as "betraying" their cause. Others charged that the newspapers had made a shameless faceabout after whipping the flames of the anti-treaty movement.

With Eisenhower's trip canceled, much of the heat of the anti-treaty movement was lost. Stepped-up petitions and demonstrations, even a rightist's stabbing of Socialist Party adviser Jotaro Kawakami as he was receiving petitions, proved anticlimactic. Prime Minister

Kishi, who said he was acting in behalf of the "voice of the voiceless people," refused to bow to the pressure demanding his resignation—not until the treaty had been ratified.

At the stroke of 12 on the night of June 19, the security treaty became "automatically approved" by the Diet as Kishi and several other Cabinet ministers waited in the heavily guarded Prime Minister's official residence. Outside, students and workers kept chanting "Down with the Kishi Cabinet!" but a sense of weariness and frustration was unmistakable in their voices.

On the night of June 21, the Cabinet ministers affixed their signatures to the instruments of ratification and had them brought to the Emperor for his approval. Foreign Minister Aichiro Fujiyama and U.S. Ambassador MacArthur exchanged the instruments of ratification on June 23, bringing into effect the treaty that had divided the nation.

The same day Kishi announced his intention to resign. On July 19 Hayato Ikeda took over the reins of government with his famed "low posture" and income-doubling plan. The storm was over.

When Ikeda called a general election for November 20, the Liberal-Democratic Party surged back to power with 296 seats, two more than it had in May 1958. The Socialists ended up with 145, down 21. Even combined with the Democratic Socialist Party which scored a meager 17, the total was four less than in the 1958 election.

Was Prime Minister Kishi right after all? Or did the Socialists have an insulated opinion of their power? Or are the Japanese simply people who are easily warmed up but who become disinterested just as easily?

Whatever the case, the "Ampo Struggle" in which an unprecedented number of people were roused into political action left an indelible stamp on the nation's history. In fact, the spectre of the "Ampo Struggle" continues to haunt the conservatives in power. And the Socialists and Communists will undoubtedly invoke it if there should be a future showdown with the conservative government over any change in the security system or revision of the war-renouncing Constitution.

Defense Forces Under 'Peace Constitution'

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

—Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan

At 10 a.m. on July 7 of an unspecified year, the Japanese Foreign Ministry and Defense Agency received grave information both from the U.S. Forces, Japan, and the U.S. Ambassador in Tokyo.

"In defiance of the Korean armistice treaty, the Communist Chinese and North Koreans have started bombing the Republic of Korea. It has been also learned that a considerable strength of the Communist forces is deployed in the southern part of North Korea," the U.S. side told the Japanese authorities. "Should the situation aggravate, the United States shall have to make a grave decision."

Twelve days later, on July 19, a massive number of Communist bombers air-raided major cities and military bases in South Korea, which was followed at night by Communist ground attacks along the 38th Parallel.

During the night of July 21, the Japanese Government summoned a special Cabinet session and decided to issue an emergency message. "The nation is now in the midst of a threat of Communist invasion," the Prime Minister announced on television. "I request that all the Japanese pay every effort to defend the country."

Next morning, all types of antiwar demonstrations were staged throughout the nation. But the demonstrators were quickly dispersed by squads of riot policemen who did not seem to hesitate to fire at the demonstrators if they did not disband. Armored cars of the Ground Self-Defense Force were ready to go into action to help the riot policemen execute their duty.

In the middle of August, the Prime Minister ordered the Self-Defense Forces to be prepared for action. To comply with possible

Communist guerrilla activities, soldiers were posted in major cities.

It soon turned out that the nation was in fact infested with Communist guerrillas. At many places, the city water was found contaminated with chemical poison. And in apparent sabotage, trains were derailed and overturned on trunk lines of the Japanese National Railways.

Early in September, concluding that these incidents were signs indicating that the Communists were finally invading the nation "directly," the government decided to alert the Self-Defense Forces—and to supplement the shortage of SDF personnel by drafting men between 20 and 30 years old. Nuclear warheads were attached to ground-to-air missiles and ack-ack guns were installed at strategic points.

Soon after the turn of the new year, the Communist forces surged down to Pusan, at the southern end of the Korean Peninsula. In Japan, the guerrillas were becoming even more active. They destroyed trunk roads and attacked radar sites including the ones on Mt. Takao in the suburbs of Tokyo and on Sado Island in Niigata.

At one radar site that was spared from guerrilla attack, SDF men spotted some 10 unidentified aircraft flying over the Genkai Sea off Kyushu.

Jet fighters of the Air Self-Defense Force took off, but not soon enough. Another squadron of unidentified planes were already invading the skies over Kyushu from the direction of the Goto Archipelago.

Flying low, the invading planes showered the target cities with napalm, creating seas of flame. Those who failed to escape were burned to death instantly.

Guerrillas were all over Kyushu. They consisted of some Japanese—and Communist Chinese and North Koreans who had smuggled themselves into Japan. With so many guerrillas in action who could not be told apart from ordinary Japanese citizens, the war in Kyushu took on the aspect of a civil war. In late May, the rumor spread that the guerrillas had established an underground "liberation government" at a certain place in Kyushu.

After the first air raid, the Japanese Government appealed to the United Nations that Japan was being invaded by a foreign enemy and requested the immediate dispatch of U.N. Forces. Accompanied by the

Japanese Ambassador to the U.N., the Prime Minister flew to New York to file the request in person.

But the decision of the U.N. was slow in coming, for its Security Council turned out to be a vehicle for politicking by the Big Powers. As a result, all that the U.N. could immediately decide was to send a fact-finding team to determine whether the war in Japan was in fact caused by a foreign invasion—or was a mere "civil war."

All this while, the Japanese Government was hammering out "war-time" policies one after another. Oil, iron and metals were placed under government control, and price controls were placed on major commodities to avert inflation. Financing was also subjected to government, and investments for the war industry were amply encouraged.

Meanwhile, casualties were increasing in Kyushu. As usual, the victims were mostly noncombatants—women and children. At this moment, the war was limited to Kyushu. But what would become of Japan if the war escalated to an extent in which Tokyo, the nation's capital, were to be bombed as well . . . ?

It goes without saying that the "war" described above is an imaginary war. Or, more precisely, it is a war reconstructed according to what was "secretly" imagined and studied in 1963 by the Defense Agency in its "desk study" of the "Mitsuya Sakusen (Three Arrows Operation)," which set off a nationwide controversy when a Socialist Dietman revealed its contents in February 1965 at the budget committee meeting of the House of Representatives.

The controversy stemmed mainly from the fact that in the Mitsuya Sakusen, in which China and North Korea were regarded as an enemy, the Defense Agency called for a total of 87 "war-time" laws to be promulgated—with some of them constituting phases of virtual martial law and contradicting Japan's "peace Constitution."

The exposed contents of the Mitsuya Sakusen made the Japanese feel that the Self-Defense Forces had finally grown so big as to have their own say, if in an imaginary case of emergency, in the field of law-making. And the public began wondering once again about what they had long been pondering: Are Japan's Self-Defense Forces, a virtual military power, "legitimate" under the Constitution which clearly rules out the possession by the state of armed forces?

From the outset, the “legitimate” nature of the SDF has been dubious. The National Police Reserve, the forerunner of the present Ground Self-Defense Force, was created in July 1950 on the instructions of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in charge of the occupation of Japan, without debates in the National Diet.

It had the name related to “police” and its officially announced mission was to maintain security within Japan, but the National Police Reserve (of 75,000 men) was an unmistakable military power with a strength equivalent to four army divisions. It was armed with carbines, rifles, light and heavy machine guns and even with bazookas.

Behind the creation of the Police Reserve was the Cold War which, in Asia, developed into a hot war on the Korean Peninsula. And MacArthur’s—or, more precisely, the United States’—true aim was, Japan’s Constitution notwithstanding, to make it a competitive military power against communism.

In fact, speaking at the Constitution Research Council of the Liberal-Democratic Party, Keikichi Masuhara, the first Director General of the Defense Agency, confided in March 1963 that when the Police Reserve was inaugurated, “all concerned” expected that the Constitution “would be revised in five years.”

In 1952, with the effectuation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the National Police Reserve was renamed as the National Security Force, which was then converted in 1954 into the Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

With the inauguration of the JSDF, the government embarked on a string of long-term “defense build-up programs.” In the first program (1958-1960), the government spent ¥464,100 million to build up the “basic defense capability.”

Between 1962 and 1964, a total of ¥1,392,600 million was expended for the second defense build-up program, and ¥2,543,800 million for the third program (1967-1971).

Thus, in the 1960s, Japan built up its “defense capability” at a higher rate than that of several of the world’s great powers, including Great Britain, France, West Germany—and even the United States.

As a result, in terms of the military budget, Japan was ranked the 14th largest military power of the world in 1968, the 13th in 1969 and the 12th in the following year. At present, the combined number of the

Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces personnel is 232,969.

In the official version, the JSDF exists solely to defend Japan from foreign invasion. But people often wonder if this is 100 per cent true. They become suspicious when they learn the fact that maneuvers practiced by the GSDF are mostly for battle on extensive regions on land. “Why don’t they maneuver along the sea coasts?” they often wonder. “If their role is to beat back an enemy invading Japan, the initial and most important war will be waged along the nation’s coastline.”

There are many other elements that give rise to public suspicion. Why, for instance, do the JSDF men have to maneuver in so many landing operations? Why, as another example, do the JSDF need more than 1,000 tanks—when it is recalled that 30 years ago, the U.S. Occupation Forces concluded that tanks could not be effectively used in a terrain such as Japan’s?

These suspicions of the general public boil down to one vital question: Are the JSDF a legitimate existence? At the same time, it is a fact that quite a few Japanese take a view in favor of the existence of the JSDF.

In a public opinion survey conducted by the Mainichi in 1968, some 82 per cent of those polled said that Japan needed the Self-Defense Forces, while those who expressed negative views accounted only for 15 per cent.

But it seems to be a little too hasty to conclude that the JSDF enjoys full support from the majority of the Japanese as a “military power.” For the same survey indicated that of the people who favored the existence of the JSDF, 27 per cent said the JSDF was necessary for “rescue work at the time of natural disasters” and 31 per cent for the “maintenance of security” within Japan. Only 17 per cent of them said that Japan needed the Self-Defense Forces against possible invasion by foreign enemies.

Because of these “delicate” sentiments that the Japanese have toward their armed forces, the Defense Agency often runs into difficulties in expanding the JSDF facilities and constructing new bases. In 1972, the JSDF bases and installations occupied some 90,000 hectares of land at 2,000 places across the country. But, despite the series

of defense buildup programs announced since then, there has been little expansion to this date.

Even some of the JSDF bases and facilities already in existence are at times endangered by mounting public criticisms. A live-shell firing practice that the Ground Self-Defense Force conducted in 1972 at its Nipponbaru Firing Range in Okayama Prefecture met a strong protest from local residents. The protest was so strong that Yasuhiro Nakasone, the then Director General of the Defense Agency, had to glumly announce at a Diet session that the overall use of the range for GSDF firing practices would have to be considered with "utmost care" in future.

Likewise, the use by the JSDF of the Fuji Maneuvering Area at the foot of Mt. Fuji, the only place in the country where long-range firing practice and large-scale (division size) drills are possible, is often blocked by local residents staging sit-ins in protest. This is in spite of the fact that the Defense Agency spends some ¥1 billion every year as rental for the land in the area, which contributes to the economy of the local people.

Antibase voices are louder in the cities with "progressive" mayors. In their anti-JSDF movements, the "progressive" mayors of Okinawa's Naha, Ishigaki and Hirara met in May 1972 and decided to adopt a "pinprick policy" against the JSDF personnel on the land. The cities declined to undertake the job of recruiting new defense forces personnel, denied the admission of the JSDF men to public housing, and refused garbage and sewage disposals within the bases.

In November, Naha emerged with yet another "pinprick" tactics: it decided not to accept residential registrations from the JSDF personnel living inside the base. "The Self-Defense Force base has a nature of extraterritoriality free from the municipal administration," the city office said in announcing the decision. "It is debatable whether people living in such an installation can be called citizens of Naha."

Naha's decision set off a chain reaction. After seeing a "surprising and forcible" transfer of a GSDF air squadron to within a U.S. Air Force Base in his city, Mayor Kozo Abe of Tachikawa, suburban Tokyo, let it be known that Tachikawa would follow Naha's example and "withhold" acceptance of the residential registrations of the GSDF newcomers who, according to the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, would reside within the U.S. base.

In announcing his decision, Abe said that their registrations would be withheld until the doubt was cleared as to whether it would be legal to accept as citizens the Self-Defense Force personnel living within a U.S. military installation to which the Japanese law did not apply.

In January the following year, the city office of Tachikawa in fact turned down the applications for residential registrations submitted by 17 GSDF newcomers to the city—and instead handed them a certificate saying that their applications were duly rejected.

The decisions of the "progressive mayors" were a headache for the Defense Agency. For without having themselves accepted as citizens, the JSDF personnel concerned were virtually deprived of all civil rights.

The mayors brought their harassing policy to an end several months later when the question was raised as to whether their tactics might violate the basic human rights of the affected JSDF men. But the mayors, it seemed, scored a considerable success—in that their strategy did harass, if for a short period, the Defense Agency and brought under full public review the crunch between the JSDF and the people taking a negative attitude toward them.

The "legitimacy" of the JSDF has always been a delicate issue at the judicial level as well. The delicate nature of the issue was clearly indicated in a court ruling handed down in 1967 in what became known as the "Eniwa Case."

The case involved two brothers dealing in dairy trade in Eniwa Town in Hokkaido who complained that their milch cows had become incapable of turning out enough milk, the reason being their nervousness due to the sound of firing at a GSDF firing-range near their ranch.

After their protests failed in securing effective results, they severed the communications cable in the range in December in 1962—and were sued by the GSDF. The case itself was minor. But when the arguments in the court developed into a stage where the war-renouncing clause of Japan's Constitution became a major issue, the "legitimacy" of the JSDF seemed to have become the focal point to be clarified.

On March 29, 1967, the Sapporo District Court, after holding more than 30 public hearings, handed down its decision: it acquitted the defendants, but remained silent on its interpretation of Article 9 of the

Constitution.

When the judicial interpretation about the issue was made clear, its impact was understandably stormy. On September 7, 1973, in the "Naganuma Nike Base Case," Presiding Judge Shigeo Fukushima of the Sapporo District Court flatly ruled that the existence of the JSDF violated Japan's Constitution and thus upheld the claim of a group of farmers in Naganuma Town, Hokkaido, who had filed suit against the planned construction in their town of a missile base of the JSDF.

The verdict set off a spate of heated controversies, pros and cons, across the nation. The Liberal-Democratic Party branded Fukushima's verdict as based on the "illusion of a dogmatic interpretation of the Constitution," while the Socialists lost no time in stepping up their anti-JSDF campaigns.

The state brought the matter to an appellate court and the case is still pending at present, leaving the question of whether Japan's Self-Defense Forces are in fact legitimate under the "peace Constitution" wide open to debate for many years to come.

But the fact is that, legitimate or not, the JSDF does exist in Japan supported by the tax money paid by all the Japanese, including those who vociferously argue that the existence of the JSDF violates the nation's Constitution.

Assassination That Millions Saw

Yasushi Nagao, 30, unmarried, was an iceberg type of a man. Cool in any emergency. "I'll tell you the secret of staying calm even when there is a most unexpected turn of events," he used to say. "Play poker as often as you can. And you'll learn to stay cool even if you lose your entire month's salary."

On that afternoon on October 12, 1960, Nagao was calm as usual in the midst of deafening din. With a heavy Speed Graphic camera in his hand, he was standing before the stage of Hibiya Public Hall, Tokyo, watching Suehiro Nishio, Democratic Socialist leader, conclude his speech. The next speaker was Inejiro Asanuma, chairman of the Japan Socialist Party. The moment Asanuma's name was announced, shouting and booing filled the spacious hall.

The shouts and noise were from a rightist minority seated in knots here and there among the audience of more than 1,000. "Agent of Peking," "Moscow's dog," "Down with the red JSP," "Shut up" and "Baka-yaro!"

The Socialist leader, nevertheless, started delivering his political speech. In his usual growling voice Asanuma revealed the Socialists' platform for the general election scheduled for the following month. As he remarked, "Our party is strongly for the normalization of diplomatic ties with Peking in the earliest possible future," the jeering mounted to such an ear-splitting level that the master of ceremonies had to plead for quiet. Defying the hecklers, Asanuma went on, "The Liberal-Democratic Government is subjugating Japan to America's global ambition (to contain Mainland China). Japan, if it follows the present path, will eventually end up being an orphan of Asia!"

On top of the shouts, a rightist youth climbed up to the stage and threw propaganda handbills into the air. He was seized by guards. Soon a squabble broke out between a rightist and a Socialist supporter who occupied the front row—just behind where Nagao was standing. Police came in and forced the two to leave the hall.

Most of the other news cameramen followed the police to take pictures of the two. Nagao calmly stayed on.

"My newspaper (The Mainichi Shimbun) wouldn't use a photo of the two hot-blooded youths grappling with each other," he told himself. Besides, he had used up 11 films of his film packet—never mind the rightists' intervention. The last film he decided to save for the third speaker, Hayato Ikeda, Prime Minister and president of the Liberal-Democratic Party.

It was at that moment that photographer Nagao saw a youth, wearing a khaki-colored windbreaker over his student uniform, run toward the stage. The boy started climbing the stairs on the righthand side. Does he want to throw some more leaflets? Nagao was watching the boy, and so did millions of Japanese on the nationwide television hookup. Or, does the boy intend to verbally denounce the Socialist? Instead, the youth ran to the rostrum and tackled Asanuma and embraced him.

The Socialist leader, almost through with his half-an-hour-long speech, was caught off guard. Looking somewhat absent-minded, Asanuma shook off the young man, who tried to embrace him once

again. The two men were now about three feet apart.

In a split second, Nagao saw the slender white blade of a knife, about a foot long, glitter in the glistening television lights. He had his camera ready almost automatically, read his light measurement, made certain that his objects were approximately 10 feet away, pressed the shutter, and captured everything on the last film.

The Socialist chairman gasped agonizingly and collapsed onto the stage which was soon covered by a sea of blood.

Prime Minister Ikeda, who had been seated only a yard or two away, was now standing, looking blankly at a blood-stained artificial chrysanthemum. The yellow flower had just fallen from Asanuma's lapel.

A hush fell on the huge public hall for a minute or two. Then everyone was shouting. "Asanuma has been stabbed!" "The chairman is dead!"

Nagao did not stay to cover the post-mortem excitement. He raced straight back to the office. In two hours the evening edition of *The Mainichi Shimbun* was out with the chilling scene of the decisive moment splashed on its front page.

The photographer was to live to receive the Pulitzer Prize of that year, but the Socialist chairman, stabbed twice in his left chest, was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

The nation rose in strong anger and bitter grief. The Socialist Party issued an indignant statement: "Chairman Asanuma was stabbed to death by a cat's-paw of the monopolistic capitalist and conservative reactionary forces while he was advocating maintenance of the National Constitution. . . This is an open challenge by terrorists not only against our Socialist Party but also all people who are trying to maintain peace and democracy."

The Socialists' anger, though phrased as usual in deplorably stiff vocabulary, was well founded, it is needless to say.

The gory scene reminded many a Japanese of the dreadful days in the '30s when one assassination followed another. This time, too, the assassin of Asanuma was a young patriot who believed that he, and only he, loved the nation. Otoyama Yamaguchi, police found, was a 17-year-old auditor at the Daito Bunka Gakuin (Greater Asian Cultural Academy).

Hailing from Sapporo, Hokkaido, Yamaguchi had first joined the Dai Nippon Aikoku To (Greater Japan Patriotic Party) led by Bin Akao, diehard patriot, about two and a half years earlier. Breaking away from the rightist organization nearly a year later, he organized the All Asiatic Free Anti-Communist Youth League along with several comrades. Yamaguchi had been charged nine times with obstructing policemen and other activities. It was on record that he had often challenged leftists who were trying to obtain signatures from passersby.

Interrogated by the police, Yamaguchi confessed that he had been planning the assassination for three months. Had the Socialist Party won the election, he told the police, he was convinced that Japan would be seriously endangered. His thinking obviously short-circuited at that point. In order to prevent the Socialists from acquiring political power, the party chairman had to be killed. The lethal weapon with which he inflicted the fatal wound on Asanuma was a family heirloom of the Yamaguchis.

The assassin's father, Shimpei Yamaguchi, 51, happened to be a colonel with the Ground Self-Defense Force and an editor of the officers' intra-staff magazine. Asked what he thought about his son's murderous act, he replied curtly: "A son would naturally come to hate those who speak despidingly of his father's calling. Although I had no foreknowledge whatsoever of my son's criminal act, my guess is that he, having his heart repeatedly wounded by some people's insistence on 'crushing the Self-Defense Forces,' was gradually attracted by rightist thought."

The father's statement caused public consternation as the nation knelt in deep sorrow over the death of Asanuma, the Socialist symbol of the common-man image. Though not a single piece of evidence was produced as to the father's influence in the assassination, Colonel Yamaguchi's "spontaneous" petition for resignation was duly accepted by the GSDF authorities who apparently heeded the mounting public furor.

The 17-year-old assassin died three weeks later by hanging himself in a solitary cell at the Juvenile Classification Office at Nerima, Tokyo. He had written his last vow on the wall with kneaded tooth powder—"Shichisho Hokoku (Serve the Nation throughout Seven

Lives)” and “Long Live the Emperor.” His ceremonious last Waka (31-syllable traditional poem) was:

*Unswayed is the spirit of youth
In eagerness to serve the Great Emperor;
The youths of bygone and present.*

It was a pledge by Otoya Yamaguchi to identify himself with those patriotic coup instigators of the 1930s and the Kamikaze suicide squads—the young purist Japanese.

The “Asanuma Incident” was not entirely unrelated to the violent anti-Security Treaty demonstrations that had rocked Japan four months earlier. To be sure, the government of Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi undemocratically railroaded the revised Japan-U.S. Security Pact through the Diet, but it was rather the Socialist Party that scored a victory. By successfully mobilizing millions of protestors day after day, the renovationist camp flexed its muscles and, to cap it all, succeeded in blocking the state visit to Japan of the U.S. President as well as forcing Kishi to resign. In the course of staging daily mass campaigns, the Socialists were convinced of passionate support by labor unionists, students, anti-nuclear arms pacifists, professors, pastors, actors and actresses, the Bunka-jin (men of culture or opinion makers) and, above all, the nation’s Big Press.

The expression “Jitsuryoku Koshi” (literally, the exertion of physical power) came to be considered generally as a legitimate manifestation of the people’s will even if that meant snake-dancing demonstrators storming into the Diet compound. The Liberal-Democratic Party was condemned for “applying the pressure of the majority” (as they in fact did) on the minority Socialists and other renovationists. The sea of shouting marchers flooding Tokyo streets was interpreted by mass-circulation newspapers as a healthy sign of the public voice against a tyrannical government at least until President Eisenhower’s visit to Japan was canceled. Stoning the police headquarters or storming the Prime Minister’s Official Residence was seldom censured as “applying the pressure of the masses.”

The silent majority (or, upon reading newspapers of those days, one might be led to believe that they were simply the “politically yet-to-be-enlightened minority”) were watching the leftist tactics of mob

terror with increasing apprehension. Among those who saw danger in the future of Japan, the most sensitive were the rightists. Disagreeing is, of course, one thing, and assassinating the Socialist leader is another. But the rightists no doubt had inhaled the air of frenzy stirred by the leftists earlier the same year. They were seeking for a chance to counter the dangerously leftist tendency (so they thought) dominating Japan. The stage, in a way, had already been set for the blindly patriotic Yamaguchi to enter.

Since 1925 when he was elected secretary general of the then Japan Farmers and Laborers Party, Asanuma had been a staunch advocate of socialist ideology. He had been elected to the House of Representatives nine times since the end of the war.

But what made Asanuma an extremely popular Socialist leader was his boundless energy and plain way of life. Nicknamed “human locomotive,” he took pleasure in addressing one mass rally after another in quick succession. Whenever he was on a nationwide campaign tour, Numa-San (short form for Asanuma) used to deliver several vigorous speeches in one city and proceed to the next by a night train.

“Socialists, friends of the poor class, have to save the expense for hotels,” he would often explain. Asanuma lived in a modest apartment house in Tokyo and used to take a walk around the neighborhood in Yukata, informal summer Kimono. He was stout and humorous—the “people’s Asanuma-San.” The common-man image had been very well publicized.

He readily lent his unique growling voice for the Japanese dubbing of a bulldog’s dialogue in a Walt Disney animated film with animal characters.

The outspoken Socialist, however, caused a political uproar when he visited Peking in March 1959. “Chairman Mao Tse-tung’s saying, ‘East wind prevails over West wind,’ has proved to be very right,” Asanuma asserted to his Peking audience. “Today, we are seeing the worldwide force of peace and democracy encouragingly gaining power while the force of imperialism is declining rapidly. The United States is reinforcing its military investment in Taiwan, a part of China, at the same time that it continues the occupation of Okinawa. The U.S. is the common enemy of the peoples of China and Japan. The Japan Socialist

Party will combat capitalism within and American imperialism without.”

The “Asanuma statement” galvanized the nation’s political scene. Most Japanese, in fact, were incredulous. “The United States might well be the enemy of the Communist Chinese, but it certainly is not Japan’s,” one of the Tokyo dailies editorialized. “Wasn’t Chairman Asanuma so overpowered by Chinese leaders that he momentarily forgot the difference and confused the two international relations (U.S.-China and U.S.-Japan)?”

The Liberal-Democrats tried to reap the harvest from Asanuma’s “blunder.” The Socialists were shamelessly kowtowing to Peking leaders, the LDP contended. Asanuma’s rebuttal was vehement. The Liberal-Democratic Government was subordinating Japan to the United States by maintaining American military bases on Japanese soil. Isn’t holding as many as 350 military bases in Japan a sign of imperialism?—Asanuma was sticking to his guns.

On his return from Peking, Asanuma in a way fortified his Peking declaration by stating, “Personally, I found complete freedom and liberation in Communist China.”

The political antagonism escalated as the Ampo (security treaty) fever began to shoot up. It was soon nothing but mud-slinging and name-calling—far removed from a sound political debate. Rightist fanatics were often seen obstructing Asanuma’s public speeches. All the while the nation’s political temperature mounted to the boiling point in the early summer of 1960 over Prime Minister Kishi’s controversial handling of the Ampo.

And finally, as the *New York Times* observed, “The streak of violence that continues to lurk behind the facade of Japanese democracy has been revealed again in the assassination of Inejiro Asanuma, chairman of Japan’s Socialist Party and one of the leaders in the riots that forced a cancellation of President Eisenhower’s visit to Japan four months ago.”

Another *New York* newspaper, the now defunct *Herald Tribune*, was more analytical on the climate of mob violence in Japan and assassination of Asanuma:

“Would this have happened if mobs (largely directed by Mr.

Asanuma himself) had not earlier this year sought to take government policy into their own riotous hands—and if they had not at least in part succeeded? As with any hypothetical question, no unqualified answer is possible. But certainly the spirit of riot invites violence, terror and murder . . .”

Overshadowed by the climate of violence, Japan in 1960 had to face still two more challenges to democratic politics. On June 17, at the apogee of the Zengakuren rioting over the Ampo, Jotaro Kawakami, adviser to the Japan Socialist Party, was stabbed in the back inside the Diet Building by a 20-year-old factory hand. The assassination attempt by the rightist youth enraged the demonstrators who demanded the immediate resignation of the Kishi Cabinet.

But, a month later, Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi himself was stabbed six times in his left thigh as he was attending a party at the Prime Minister’s Official Residence to celebrate the election of Hayato Ikeda, his successor, as new president of the Liberal-Democratic Party. The assailant was a 65-year-old jobless rightist fanatic.

Terrorism with even more profound consequence, however, was yet to occur within four months of the assassination of the Socialist chairman. The “Shimanaka Incident” of February 1961 shocked the public and particularly the intellectual world of the nation.

Kazutaka Komori, 17-year-old ultrarightist-patriot, stormed the home of Hoji Shimanaka, president of the Chuo Koron Publishing Company, at Shinjuku, Tokyo, and fled after stabbing a maid to death and injuring Mrs. Shimanaka (the publisher was not at home).

The perpetrator, arrested early next morning, turned out to be a former member of the Greater Japan Patriotic Party. He had been heard praising Otoyama Yamaguchi, also an ex-member of the rightist organization and assassin of Asanuma. An Emperor system fanatic, Komori confessed that a novella printed in the intellectual Chuo Koron monthly magazine was such serious lese majeste that he resented it deeply.

Bin Akao, president of the Patriotic Party and Komori’s mentor, countered newspaper reporters by accusing Japan’s established journalism of conniving with Communist ideologists. “We (rightists) have no other means than through violence to cope with such a

situation because we have little financial backing," Akao declared.

The novella in question, "Furyu Mutan" (Elegant Tales of Reverie), was penned by Shichiro Fukazawa, a vagabond guitarist-novelist. His story had been a journalistic sensation ever since its publication in the December 1960 issue of the magazine, a periodical known as a reputable bastion of the nation's progressive thought.

The literary work was a sort of recollection of a dream in which "I" is standing in a line of people waiting for a bus at Shibuya, Tokyo, when a woman journalist shouts to him from a passing car, "We're heading for the Imperial Palace to cover the execution of Mitchie (Princess Michiko). Ought to make a very good gravure page!"

"I" follows the car to the Palace where he sees the Crown Prince and Princess forced to lie down among the throng of common people. Presently a man with a hatchet in his hand arrives to chop the heads of the two Imperial personages. Off go the two heads.

According to Fukazawa: "Michiko's head rolled, making a metallic noise—Sutten Korori Kara-kara-kara." Afterwards, he sees the headless body of Princess Michiko abandoned on the ground—"wrapped in golden brocade robe." A brass and bugle band is playing a Tango somewhere nearby.

He proceeds further to watch the execution of the Emperor and the Empress, argues with, later strangulates Empress Shoken, the deceased Consort to Emperor Meiji, and finally everything proves to be a 10-minute dream.

The 13-page-long "Elegant Tales" was by no standard an example of belles-lettres. Neither poignant nor humorous, it was in bad taste to say the least. But what resented the rightists most of all was the boldness with which the literary caricature broke the so-called "chrysanthemum taboo." Never before had Japanese men of letters chosen the chrysanthemum (the Imperial Family) as the subject of creative work in such an audacious manner as Fukazawa did. Nor had they dared to write a pictorial description of the beheading of the incumbent Crown Prince and Princess.

Soon protests began pouring in to the Chuo Koron. Komori, the teenage assassin, was one of many rightists who visited the publishing firm to noisily denounce its editorial policy. Under heavy pressure and

threat, the magazine's editor had to carry a full-page apology in the January issue of the Chuo Koron. The editor admitted lack of wisdom and foresight in publishing the novella "no matter what its literary merits may be" and apologized for causing widespread furor.

The apology apparently did not satisfy hard-core patriots. Komori, determined to resort to his act of "legitimate self-defense against the unpardonable sacrilege" toward the Imperial Family, set out with an intent to wreak vengeance on President Shimanaka but killed, instead, the housemaid and injured his wife.

The rightist's violence no doubt was a serious infringement on the right of free speech. But, one may naturally wonder (1) whether the Chuo Koron editor had not thought twice before deciding to put the bizarre literary work into print; (2) why the Imperial Household Agency hesitated to sue the magazine for infringing upon the human rights of the Crown Prince and Princess; and (3) why the editor so promptly abandoned his original conviction, if any, and quickly apologized without defending it in court. Those who should have acted with more responsibility remained inactive, it seems, until finally a fanatic took justice into his own hands.

Periodicals, generally speaking, are too hastily edited in Japan. Editors think more of the sale of their magazines (the trait of "economic animals"?) rather than their quality. Besides, inspired by a blind Bunka-cult, they rarely turn down the manuscripts submitted by established Bunkajin-Sensei (master men of letters) whatever their quality may be. A very irresponsible editorial policy indeed. Unavoidable eventually is the overall deterioration of journalistic standards.

Rightist terrorism cannot be condoned, needless to say. But the Chuo Koron editor should have pondered carefully if he himself would ever appreciate his name quoted in an inflammatory novel that describes not only the chopping off of his head but its metallic rolling sound. The nation's Big Press, progressive thinkers, Socialists and the Japan Association of Literary Writers and Critics vied in their denunciation of "the threat to the freedom of speech and expression." Few, however, questioned who had dug the grave for the basic freedoms.

Hardly had the tremors of the Shimanaka Incident subsided when

Shiso-no-Kagaku (Science of Thoughts), another intellectual monthly magazine issued by Chuo Koron Publishing Co., featured the sensitive Emperor system in its December 1961 issue. Fearing that such essays as "The Emperor System and I" and "Destination of Monarchy in the 20th Century" in the issue would arouse fresh furor from the rightist camp, the Chuo Koron publisher agreed with the Science of Thoughts Writers' Group not to make the magazine public. However, the Writers' Group, irate upon learning that the publisher had secretly handed a part of the magazine's galley to a certain rightist for "inspection," broke away from the famed publishing firm.

This time again, the righteous indignation of free thinkers was understandable. Few took care not to rub unnecessary salt into Shimanaka's wound. For, had the magazine been published, it would have very probably been the publisher of the periodical, not the writers, who would be assaulted by a second assassin.

Through both the Asanuma and Shimanaka Incidents, the rightist movement proved to be very much alive even after the collapse of the Japanese Empire in 1945. With the mainstream of the nation's mass-circulation journalism often dominated by naively righteous renovationism, rightists have become an indispensable weapon of the conservatives. It is no secret even today that some key rightist figures are receiving sizable monetary donations from the Liberal-Democratic leaders while others are financed by Big Business in exchange for the faithful service they render at the time of stockholders' meetings. In the course of twisting arms here and there, many of them have come to be associated or integrated with organized gangsters.

Frequently called "Hinomaru broker" (money grabber holding the Rising Sun Flag, hence fake patriots), they have developed their clandestine knack for squeezing concessions, money or/and otherwise, from any branch of establishment whenever someone makes a blunder as to the Imperial Family and its Shinto attributes—Yasukuni Shrine, for one. Their greed is in a way whetted by the hands-off policy of the Big Press. Keenly conscious of the fact that they are scorned by the nation's intellectual class, they have acquired subtle underhand technique so that they can stand securely pitted against the brainy leftists.

There are, in the meanwhile, comparatively few rightists who are

devoted to the traditional notion of "godly nation, Japan." Genuine in their motives and purist in their tactics, they resemble very much the dedicated patriots of the 1930s. This minority is not only xenophobic and anti-Communist but sometimes even anti-conservative whom they regard as irretrievably corrupt. The "action, not words" spirit of the 5.15 Incident rioters is still held dear by them, making them an extremely dangerous element in Japan's future political development.

Shichiro Fukazawa, whose "Elegant Tales" triggered the bloody Shimanaka Incident, has been a lone figure in the nation's literary circle ever since he broke the taboo of the chrysanthemum. He was a cook, farmer, and owner of a Japanese confectionery shop in turn as he kept turning out more novels. Today his stories are still loved by many but the novelist has never successfully shaken off his image as a loner.

Soka Gakkai And Komeito

As early as October 26, the Asahi Shimbun reported about a "Religious Mission by an Army-Like Organization" called Soka Gakkai (literally, Value Creation Academy). It was one of the first occasions on which the Japanese public was invited to direct its attention to this highly controversial religious group.

Although the religious body claimed an orthodox tradition of 700 years deriving directly from Nichiren (1222-1282), a militant Buddhist priest himself, the Soka Gakkai was first registered as a religious Hojin (juridical foundation) in May 1951, according to the same Tokyo daily.

Its followers, estimated then at over 150,000 households by the newspaper, were organized into units that resembled the military. They were also engaged in a most aggressive, at times high-handed, propagation of their faith.

Interviewed by an Asahi reporter, a Buddhist priest in Kita-ku, Tokyo, narrated his experience. "About 20 youths came to challenge my Shingon Sect of Buddhism," he explained. "They insisted that all the sects outside their own were those of infidels. They harassed me with many questions, such as which was greater, Nichiren or Shakyamuni. Upon my refusal to debate such nonsense, they shouted

‘Katta (we’ve won)!’ and departed.”

Also interviewed, Entei Tomomatsu, secretary-general of the All Japan Buddhist Association, stated that the Soka Gakkai was “trampling down the freedom of faith” and that he understood the sect as being tinged with a “nationalistic fascism tendency.”

One of the most outstanding characteristics of the Soka Gakkai, postwar Japan’s phenomenal group of Buddhist followers, is the vigor with which its activities are so zealously pursued—defying all signs of contempt and hostility from outside. That is how it used to be 20 years ago, judging from the above-mentioned newspaper article, and so it remains today.

Surprising indeed are its miraculously increasing number of the faithful, its fast-growing political power, its irresistible pageantry displayed at many a cultural and sports event, its magnificent head temple at the foot of Mt. Fuji that surpasses the size of St. Peter’s Cathedral, and its resourceful leader, Daisaku Ikeda, who talks with Premier Chou En-lai as well as with Secretary Henry Kissinger like intimate friends. It seems the sect has picked up momentum even from the outsiders’ derision and abuse.

The nation’s non-believers were dumbfounded when the Soka Gakkai announced that it had mustered ¥35,536,004,309 in 1965 as a fund to build the Taiseikiji Head Temple, but there were some signs indicating even then that they would be impressed by many more achievements to come from the Soka Gakkai and its political offshoot, Komeito.

Except for the sole incident toward the end of 1969 when the militant sect was publicly censured for meddling with the freedom of the press and expression, the Soka Gakkai cum Komeito has hardly known anything but victory after victory. Their vast financial might, their political influence and, above all, their very militancy today make the religious political conglomerate one of the most sensitive subjects of conversation among the nation’s otherwise nonchalant intelligentsia.

One would perhaps be treading on the safest ground by quoting a matter-of-fact description from an encyclopaedia. The *Macropaedia* (Volume X) of a recent edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines the Soka Gakkai as follows:

“From the standpoint of the political and social roles of religion, Soka-gakkai is the most important (of all the new religious cults), not only because it is the fastest growing but because it is as well the most vigorous, dogmatic, belligerent, and self-confident group in Japan. Although Soka-gakkai denies that it is an independent religious body, insisting that it is merely a lay association within a Nichiren sect (Nichiren-sho-shu), the fact is that its rapid growth, its penetration into labour unions, its recent successes in political activities (through its related Komei-to Party), and its aggressive methods of gaining converts have drawn Japanese national attention to it as one of the most important sociopolitical religious groups in present-day Japan. Statistics for 1968 show that the total membership of Nichiren-sho-shu is 15,729,636. This represents a remarkable growth, for in 1955 there were only 348,160 believers.”

And as for the Komeito:

“In 1971, the Komei Party (Komeito) meaning fair or fair play party, was the second largest opposition party, drawing its main support from the Soka-gakkai, a religious group belonging to the Nichiren Buddhist sect. Although the party was formed in 1964 under the influence of the Soka-gakkai, it has renounced any formal ties with it. The Komei Party’s major policy aim is the establishment of a welfare system and the promotion of ‘human Socialism.’”

Human Socialism, in fact, is a term dubious enough to embrace any lines of ideology that may attract the public votes. But the Soka Gakkai’s source of power, at least in the 1950s and early 60s, relied mainly on its miraculous healing power.

Any such testimonies as “What a wonderful change came when I was converted to Soka Gakkai” were quoted and made a tool as its followers pushed through with their intense Shakubuku—effort to convert heretics. A man, for instance, began to recover from a chronic disease the moment he was converted, while another suddenly found the way to repay his debt quickly.

Upon succeeding unpopular Nobusuke Kishi, Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda pledged, soon after he was elected to head the new government in the summer of 1960, to double the Japanese people’s

income in 10 years. Under the direction of the economic-minded Premier, every facet of the national economy was promptly geared to a high national growth rate—averaging 7.2 per cent a year for 10 consecutive years. The whole nation in a way started to think big, with everyone ready for his own economic take-off.

The healing power of the Soka Gakkai was especially attractive to those who were threatened, or felt they were threatened, by the national mood of growth. Unorganized members of the Japanese society—self-employed shopowners, manual laborers, taxi drivers, bar hostesses and a large number of housewives, to name only some of them—were anxious to get on the “bus to prosperity.” And they were the well from which the emerging Soka Gakkai in those years drew the most water.

As described by Noah S. Brannen, author of “Soka Gakkai: Japan’s Military Buddhists,” this was the “religion of the here and now.” Instead of dwelling too much upon the blessedness on the other side of the River Styx, Soka Gakkai missionaries dwelt on instant freedom from sickness and poverty.

Some of the early Soka Gakkai tactics were symbolic in this sense. Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly members of the fledgling Komei-Kai (Komeito was not yet in existence) devoted their effort in the last 50s toward making sure that the citizens’ human waste was properly disposed of. In those days, when most of Tokyo’s downtown homes lacked flush toilets, night soil was daily carried down the Sumida River by a fleet of disposal boats. Malpractices by the boat operators were so common, however, that residents near the river were tormented daily by stench and maggots that crawled up the river bank.

It was the Komei-Kai that picked up the complaints of the local people, the inhabitants of the densely-populated but poverty-stricken area of Tokyo. The assemblymen interviewed the harassed people and quickly launched a thorough investigation into the raw sewage disposal.

They collected evidence bit by bit, sometimes climbing down to the bottom of the unloaded boats filled with stifling smell—until, finally, they discovered a big hole cut out in the flat bottom of the disposal boats. Far from being properly disposed of, most of the human waste was simply allowed to flow into the river that runs through the heart of

Tokyo.

Never before had any assemblymen, not even Communists, cared to search the bottom of the filthy honey-bucket boat with their own eyes. The shocking “Human Excrement Flows Down the Tokyo’s Thames” made banner headlines for sure in all the metropolitan dailies.

The strategy was immediately picked up by the Soka Gakkai assemblymen in Osaka. And soon the Komei-Kai headquarters was receiving thousands of telephone calls, each reporting tiny social injustices committed by corrupt government contractors and overlooked by the opposition political parties.

The meteor-like emergency of the Soka Gakkai was a somewhat amusing social phenomenon for some years. It gradually pulled itself out of the humorous stage, however, to tackle more serious problems both in the political and social fields of the nation.

On September 9, 1967, the Asahi Shimbun reported that Soka Gakkai now has believers in 6.5 million households and was increasing its force by the rate of 160,000 households a month.

On May 3, 1968, the annual meeting of the Soka Gakkai confirmed that it enjoyed the support of 6,618,000 households.

The number seemed in no way exaggerated. For the nation had already been warily watching the innumerable folk music festivals, athletic meetings, political campaigns and pilgrimages to the head temple which were attended by tens of thousands of the Soka Gakkai faithful. Big city commuters were constantly amazed at seeing many seemingly a-religious girls poring over the Seikyo Shimbun (Sacred Teaching Newspaper) in crowded subways. Frequenters of the backstreets of Ginza discovered that some of the friendliest bars and cabarets were totally manned (or, rather, womaned) by Soka-Gakkaists.

The small discoveries in subways or on the Ginza were told and retold, and the whole nation became more and more aware of the new tide that might possibly alter the course of Japan. Among the issues in the Soka Gakkai’s published agenda the most portentous in this stage was the Kokuritsu Kaidan (National Altar).

As early as July 11, 1956, Takashi Koizumi, then director-general of the Soka Gakkai and Tokyo assemblyman, interviewed by a Nihon

Keizai reporter, stated: "It is our goal to purify the world through the faith of the Nichiren Sho Shu denomination. In order to achieve that goal, we have to liquidate all the outdated religions as well as new cults such as Risho Koseikai (archrival of Soka Gakkai, also in the Nichiren Buddhist tradition). As upholders of the one and only true faith, we are resolved to enlarge our political influence until we succeed in making the Soka Gakkai a national religion. Within 20 years to come, we shall be able to capture half of the nation's legislature, 'nationalize' Soka Gakkai's faith and establish the National Altar on top of Mt. Fuji. This (National Altar) is our sole and ultimate goal as believers of the Soka Gakkai."

For many years the Soka Gakkai seemed as though it was steadily closing in on the ultimate goal. No political party in postwar Japan was a more spectacular vote-getter than the religiously inspired Komeito. It was indeed impressive as the Soka Gakkai plunged into the nation's political sphere for the first time in April 1955, with 51 of its candidates successfully returned to local assemblies across the country.

In July 1956, three out of its six candidates were returned to the House of Councillors—a brilliant initial success in the national political forum. As if not satisfied, however, with the near million votes that had been collected, leading Soka Gakkai officials announced a rigorous intra-party self-criticism of its "failure" to return all six instead of three of its representatives.

Three years later the self-examination paid off and all the six new candidates were elected to the House of Councillors in June 1959, boosting its overall influence in the House from three to nine seats. The Komei Seiji Renmei (League of Fair Statesmen), the embryo of today's Komeito (Clean Government Party), was formed in November 1961. The expression "Komei," clean and enlightened, was obviously borrowed from the time-honored slogan of the Central Election Management Commission that had promoted a "Komei Election" since the beginning of postwar democracy. The un-copyrighted term was conveniently appropriated, it seems, by the new political party that wanted to cast a clean and enlightened image—free both from corruption and ideological slant.

The Komei Seiji Renmei saw nothing but victories until it evolved into the full-fledged Komeito political party in November 1964. The

upward trend was carried on by the Komeito still further and, by January 1967, the advocates of the so-called "Buddhist democracy" had gained a firm foothold in the nation's political arena with 25 of its 32 candidates returned to the House of Representatives.

The impressive victories in both Houses apparently emboldened the leaders of Soka Gakkai and Komeito. President Daisaku Ikeda of the former, in replying to a Mainichi interviewer a few days after the January 1967 election, stated, among other things, that the Komeito as a political party would naturally struggle for the nation's political leadership and that, through its tentative role as the third party, it would strive to fulfill its program (to assume the political helm of Japan) by 1987.

Yoshikatsu Takeiri, Chairman of the Komeito, further amplified Ikeda's statement at the extraordinary convention of the party in July of the same year. By 1977, Takeiri vowed, the party would have 140 seats in the House of Representatives and the Komeito would be the nation's second most powerful party.

In the meanwhile, Soka Gakkai set for itself the goal of converting 10 million households to the faith by 1979. If nothing goes against the grand design, we will be seeing the Gohonzon altar in at least one household out of every 2.5 in four years' time. To convince the doubting Thomases, the following table of the ballots cast for the Komei and the number of House of Councillors seats that went to the party will speak for itself.

Date of Election	Votes (National Constituency)	Komeito's seats (Upper House)
July 8, 1956	991,539	3
June 2, 1959	2,486,801	9
July 1, 1962	4,124,269*	15
July 4, 1965	5,097,682**	20
July 7, 1968	6,656,771	24
June 27, 1971	5,626,292	23
July 7, 1974	6,360,419	24

* Komei Seiji Renmei
 ** Komeito (also in subsequent elections)

In parallel with the Komeito's uncontested showing, the fear that the nation's politics might soon be dominated by people who believed in the militant propagation of their faith and its mysterious healing power alarmed many a Japanese. And much of the fear came from the Soka Gakkai's doctrine of the National Altar. The ambition to elevate any teaching to the status of a national religion naturally impressed many as a downright infringement of the freedom of faith.

Most of the accusations directed against the Soka Gakkai, such as "new fascism" or "iconoclastic fanaticism," also derived its energy from this idea of the National Altar. It was really a very unpopular idea and much of the wary feeling toward the religious group still persists even after President Daisaku Ikeda formally declared an end to the pristine dream.

"True, we once talked about the National Altar," Ikeda admitted in his address to the Soka Gakkai's annual convention on May 3, 1970. "The very word 'National,' however, has tended to leave a weird impression on the people, as if we were aiming at establishing the sacred place through political influence and at the sacrifice of other religions.

"Our altar, on the contrary, need not be a national one. We shall never use the expression 'National Altar' again. Nor do we have any intention in the future of raising a national altar through resolution in the Diet. Such a move would be clearly against the spirit of the Constitution of Japan.

"Political campaigning by the Soka Gakkai believers should not be misunderstood henceforward as a means to establish the altar. Our effort will be wholly devoted to the promotion of the welfare of the public. Politics has nothing to do with our religious activities." As clearly as that.

What prompted President Ikeda's denial was perhaps the possibility that the issue might eventually prove fatal both to the Soka Gakkai and Komeito. Through this issue that drew national attention toward the end of 1969, the politico-religious organization impressed the Japanese public as being highly sensitive to criticism from the outside.

Coming as a bombshell was a book called "Soka Gakkai o Kiru" (Anatomy of the Soka Gakkai), an expose penned by Hirotatsu

Fujiwara, a popular political professor and journalist. No sooner had the publication of the "Anatomy" been announced in the autumn of 1969 than various kinds of pressure began to be exerted by Soka Gakkai-Komeito quarters.

Few newspaper publishers agreed to carry an advertisement of Fujiwara's book and fewer bookstores volunteered to sell it—all because of intimidation by Soka Gakkai believers, according to Fujiwara. Telephone protestors began harassing the professor, many in the middle of the night and early in the morning.

One night in September, two visitors called at Fujiwara's home, one a Komeito Metropolitan Assemblyman and the other a high-ranking official of the Soka Gakkai. The three talked for one hour and 45 minutes, during which the two visitors did their best to discourage the host from publishing the book. The visitors pleaded and coaxed the professor to alter "some of the distorted descriptions about our religion" in the book, one even suggesting that Fujiwara write another book encouraging President Ikeda of the Soka Gakkai to enter politics. "In that case," he hinted, "your book (on President Ikeda) would certainly sell more than a million copies." Fujiwara staunchly turned down the suggestions, reminding them of the Article in the Constitution that guarantees the freedom of the press. Neither of the visitors unfortunately knew that their conversation was being tape-recorded.

Quite unexpectedly, the role of freedom fighter was assumed by the Japan Communist Party. A Communist Dietman exposed the clandestine pressure on the professor during a TV debate and the Communist Party organ "Akahata" (Red Flag) immediately launched an intense campaign against the Komeito, "a suppressor of the free press."

Chairman Takeiri of the Komeito took a firm stand and countered that the party had never once done anything to impede the publication of the controversial book, escalating the issue into a bitter political showdown.

Making the matter even more complicated, Fujiwara came out and admitted that he had been invited to a plush Akasaka teahouse by Kakuei Tanaka, then Secretary-General of the Liberal-Democratic Party (later Prime Minister). Tanaka used a very subtle underhand technique, the professor disclosed, in an attempt to dissuade Fujiwara

from putting the book on sale.

"I'm talking to you at the request of Komeito's Takeiri," Tanaka said to him casually, according to Fujiwara. "Hirotsu-san (Tanaka was calling the professor by his first name in a show of friendliness), don't be too obstinate. Have some mercy on Komeito, won't you?"

The LDP Secretary-General even suggested letting the Komeito buy a hundred thousand copies of Fujiwara's book for the purpose of keeping them away from the public eye.

The professor noticed that there were six Zabuton (sitting cushions) in the room. Had he conceded to Tanaka's request, Fujiwara explained, those Zabuton would probably have been occupied by Komeito leaders who were obviously waiting in the adjacent room—waiting for a happy Sake party of "reconciliation and forgetting everything."

The professor's disclosure and subsequent publication of the secretly recorded tape in the Weekly Asahi touched off a political uproar. Journalistic barrages were exchanged between the "Akahata" and the organs of both the Soka Gakkai and Komeito.

Authors of other books that challenged the hitherto unchallengeable sanctity of the Soka Gakkai were eventually invited to the Diet and asked to testify.

Kunio Naito, a Mainichi reporter and author of "Komeito Unmasked," testified that the galleys of his book were reviewed secretly by Soka Gakkai officials without his knowledge.

Gradually all the irregularities committed by the Soka Gakkai-Komeito came into the open until Junya Yano, Secretary-General of Komeito, conceded that there had been "some contacts" between the members of Soka Gakkai-Komeito and bookstore proprietors and that those contacts were of a nature "easily prone to be misunderstood."

The alleged infringement on the freedom of the press left an indelible mark on the politico-religious group. And it forced President Ikeda to explicitly proclaim "Seikyo Bunri" (separation of religion from politics) in May 1970.

The political setback, however, seems to have had little effect on the ever-increasing dynamism of the Soka Gakkai. Portraits of President Daisaku Ikeda keep flooding various Soka Gakkai publications. His books, "Human Revolution," "Family Revolution"

et al are selling by the millions.

Besides, there is now every indication that Soka Gakkai (generally known abroad as Nichiren Shoshu—Orthodox Sect of Nichiren Buddhism) is attracting converts, hundreds of thousands of them, in America, Europe and other corners of the world. Voices such as "the whole Gakkai is wonderful, isn't it!" are reflected in many letters addressed to the editor of the English language "Seikyo Times."

They are pouring in from Gothenburg, Sweden ("After evening Gongyo, everybody's spirits were flying and that gave rise to several songs and a cheer"); Siena, Italy ("I am trying to propagate Nichiren Shoshu in Italy, even though it is quite difficult because of the Catholic tradition here"); Malaysia ("After two months of chanting, I automatically stopped gambling and I don't feel the urge to gamble any more"); and many other cities.

With the magnetic president leading the vast throng of followers and with its initial zeal for propagation preserved intact, the Soka Gakkai seems today to be happily treading the path to ever greater glory. In one of the most dramatic turns of events, Ikeda consented to personally meet Kenji Miyamoto, powerful Chairman of the Japan Communist Party in the summer of 1975 to bury their long-standing enmity. And, during their very "friendly discourse" recorded and published as a series of lengthy articles by the Mainichi Shimbun, the two big figures chatted and laughed for four hours like bosom friends. The Soka Gakkai had, furthermore, concluded a 10-year "coexistence" agreement with the JCP in November 1974, without the knowledge of the Komeito leaders. Yet to be seen, however, is whether the reconciliation of the two giant organizations, both of them fortified by their respective ideologies, would benefit the future of the Soka Gakkai.

As far as the fundamental characteristic of the giant religious body is concerned, it may perhaps have helped many a Japanese to find a kind of social collectivity and organizational entity to which they can comfortably belong—in the days when the Emperor cult and strictly totalitarian social system have collapsed since the end of the war in 1945. The whole operation, after all, is "very Japanese."

Brundage-San Said It In Japanese

For two days it had been somber, at times even drizzling. But on this felicitous day the brisk autumn sky formed a vast blue canopy over Tokyo. The air was clear and the benign sun was warming the backs of 75,000 spectators representing many nations as they rose from their seats to hear His Majesty the Emperor declare the opening of the 18th Olympic Games of the modern era.

The year, 1964, was the auspicious year that marked the 70th anniversary of the restoration of the modern Olympic Games by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the "Father of the Modern Olympic Games."

Seven thousand amateur athletes were participating in the once-in-four-years competition hosted for the first time in the Orient. The day, October 10, had been long awaited not only by the residents of the world's largest metropolis but by the 100 million nationals of the then world's fastest prospering nation.

Never before had the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games been rehearsed and re-rehearsed to such minute detail as it was in Tokyo so that everything—hoisting of the flags, opening speeches, athletes' march-in and the entry of the torch bearer—was flawlessly carried out exactly to the second. As on many other important occasions, the Japanese wanted to do everything perfectly according to the program.

For more than a year before the opening ceremony, a big signboard had been put up in the Ginza, announcing daily "how many days were left" until the Big Day. Many streets in Tokyo meanwhile were dug up to give way to smoothly paved modern highways, many houses and office buildings were demolished to lift the face of the host city. Yes, the Gaijin (literally "outsiders," usually denoting Westerners) were coming from all over the world. Japan, as in the case of many individual Japanese, was determined to do its best to make the brief stay of the guests memorable.

Olga Connolly, for one, was impressed by the miraculous surgery Tokyo had successfully gone through. The Czechoslovakian gold medalist in Melbourne for the women's discus throw, who now represented the United States after her Iron-Curtain-defying marriage to Harold Connolly, an American hammer thrower, had some doubts when a Japanese friend assured her "Everything will be perfect a year

from now" at the time she visited Tokyo in the previous year. A year later, however, she was saying, "I tell you—we were surprised when we saw the highway construction in Tokyo almost finished with traffic swiftly moving, with those interesting tunnels so well lighted and dividing into various directions." She was right when she entertained doubts and so was she again when surprised by Tokyo's magical metamorphosis. Many native Japanese, too, doubted and were surprised—in exactly the same way.

The Japanese Government had been resolved to do all it could to impress the world that "nothing is impossible for the Japanese"—especially when the whole nation strives to attain a goal, whether it be the Olympic Games or an economic miracle, by uniting all its national might in regimented oneness.

Once before the Japanese capital had been scheduled to host the Olympic Games. That was in 1940 when Japanese expansionism was at its height. The occasion was expected to bolster the self-confidence of many a Japanese in the days when Japan had half the Far East under its military surveillance. The sports event, as in the case of the Fuehrer in 1936, would have been one of the strategically political opportunities for the Japanese leaders to show off their leadership, had not the Games been canceled because of the outbreak of war in Europe. Japan, in a way, was compelled to put off the chance for self-glorification for 24 years.

Now in 1964 it was again the time when many Japanese were eager to throw out their chest. After going through the wartime and the postwar ups and downs, the nation had emerged as one of the leading powers of the world—as far as economy was concerned. No longer was Japanese merchandise merely cheap copies of those from the advanced countries in the West. Spearheaded by transistor radios and optical apparatus, the "made-in-Japan's" had already begun representing some of the world's most sophisticated technological know-how. The economy had recovered beautifully; why not show off the physical capability of the Japanese race?

Japan's sports strategists had by no means been sitting back idly. Using some subtle backstage maneuvers, they succeeded, for instance, in persuading the International Olympic Committee to admit

Judo as one of the contested events. In another newly-enlisted event, volleyball, Japan's hard-hitting distaff players were strongly favored to clinch a gold medal before their home audience. It would probably be the second time in 28 years for Japanese women to capture an Olympic title, the last having been Hideko Maehata, gold medalist in the women's 200 meter breaststroke swimming event at Berlin. Prearrangements were made, so to speak, to ensure Japan's winning as many medals as possible. The opening ceremony, therefore, was all the more welcome to those present in the National Stadium as well as to the millions who sat before their TV set to watch the grand festival.

They came marching in—row after row of athletes in their fancy blazers of white, off-white, sky blue, navy blue, pink or crimson coats, pants, and skirts. From their breast pockets the Cuban Olympians produced small silk Rising Sun flags which they waved as they marched before the royal box and the spectators' ovation reverberated through the huge main stand. The applause grew even louder when African youths clad in traditional costumes began coming in. "What is Chad?" "Where is that country?" "Where in the world could Cameroun be?"—many were asking with nobody at hand knowing the answer. Never once in the country's history had the Far Eastern nation hosted such diversified guests of so many nationalities as the Japanese saw marching in on that great autumn day.

Up into the azure sky flew five Air Self-Defense Force jets, skywriting the Olympic interlocking rings high above. Up, too, went 10,000 five-colored balloons and away flew numerous homing pigeons, with a few unwilling birds trotting down the track to the cheers of the spectators. Then entered the drum and fife corps of Tokyo primary school children escorting the Mayor of Rome, the site of the previous Olympic Games.

The Japanese delegation, last of the 94 national teams, marched in, with the waves of applause crescendoing to a new height, their rigidly composed behavior presenting a decided contrast to the more relaxed gaits of the foreign athletes. The Japanese youths were, according to one Tokyo sports editor, a "bright new beacon for the young people of Japan who have passed through a troubled period of postwar suffering." A sense of national oneness, indeed.

The most unexpected event on that sunny Saturday afternoon was

during the introduction of His Majesty the Emperor to the vast throng by International Olympic Committee president Avery Brundage of the United States. In a bit strange but understandable Japanese, Brundage, the stubborn guardian of amateurism in sports, uttered his first Japanese sentences in public as the spectators and TV viewers held their breath to listen. Upon being asked later how many times he had practiced the introduction in Japanese, he smiled and held up three fingers. Thirty times, perhaps?

The festive mood was at its climax when Yoshinori Sakai came running into the stadium with the burning torch in his left hand. The 19-year-old Waseda University freshman was the anchor runner of the Olympic torch relay that had traveled 26,000 kilometers all the way from Olympia, Greece, to the site of the Games by air and over land and sea. A thunder of cheers echoed from a far corner of the stadium and the applause moved horizontally as the beautifully proportioned athlete ran at a quick, ground-eating pace, circling about three quarters of the reddish clay track and up 230 steps to the Olympic flame cauldron.

There had been doubts expressed by some Americans about naming Sakai as the ceremonious last runner of the torch relay. Professor Edward Seidensticker, a well-known Japanologist, was among those who voiced their suspicion as to whether the choice was political. The Waseda athlete, in fact, was born only 37 miles away from Hiroshima on the very day of the world's first atom bombing on August 6, 1945. There is no doubt that the officials of Japan's Olympic Committee took his date of birth into consideration. It is dubious, however, that they intended any subtle political significance. The devastated city of Hiroshima in the nostalgic memory of many a Japanese was nothing but the ground from which postwar Japan had to build its own economy. In any case, what was behind the nomination of Sakai was givenscant attention by the Japanese press.

"Attending the opening ceremony, I felt greatly relieved," commented Bunroku Shishi, humorist novelist, as he penned his impression of the grand day for Tokyo Shimbun. "Because I was overwhelmed by the thought that Japan had finally regained its national competency to the stage where it could manage to host such an ostentatious show. It was, nevertheless, somewhat like a poor family throwing a wedding party at the Imperial Hotel."

Japan's national pride soared to the zenith when the "Wonder Girls of the Orient" captured the gold medal in the final match of the women's volleyball contest. The Japanese sextet received the ball, set it, then sent it smashing into the opposite side of the court in a beautiful maneuver, trouncing the strong Russian girls in three straight sets. The moment when one of the Russian spikers' finger touched the top of the net (a losing point) and the end of the game was announced, the victorious girls hugged each other and wept with tears of joy. Weeping also were the television announcer, its commentator and the whole nation that sat glued to their TV sets to watch the three-hour game on the nationwide hookup.

"I could almost visually see fulfilled their sense of responsibility that had hovered above the heads of the weeping girls," Sawako Ariyoshi, leading woman author, penned in the *Asahi Shimbun* in an uncharacteristic (for her) outburst of emotion. "For they have striven for so many years just for this moment. The immense obligation they must have felt that they owed to the whole nation and their equally strong will that they would by all means win through the matches. . . Thank you, Mr. Daimatsu!" Hirofumi Daimatsu was the hard driving coach of the Japanese sextet, known for his severe, almost cruel, principle of training.

Daimatsu, once a platoon commander of the Imperial Army during the grueling battle at Imphal in easternmost India, had been famous for 11 years in being extremely relentless, almost to a sadistic degree, toward his feminine disciples during daily practice. The girl volleyballers had to toil through the Spartan training—regardless of their physical condition, physiology and monthly hygiene. A setter of the team had only one evening's leave when her father died and a spiker was simply commanded to continue her practice after her fractured rib was bandaged on the spot.

Hard training coupled with spiritualism à la Daimatsu won wide public support when it proved successful during the Olympic Games. His book "Ore ni Tsuite Koi! (Come With Me All the Way)" sold close to a million copies. He was later invited by Premier Chou En-lai to coach China's women volleyballers, an invitation he accepted with all his zeal. When the Chinese Prime Minister protested, however, that the stern Japanese coach should not spank the buttocks of Chinese athletes, Daimatsu retorted, "I'm spanking them with all my affection

and encouragement. I am the one whom you have relegated to train them. Or, do you want to take over?" When Chou apologized and suggested compromisingly that Daimatsu perhaps might abstain from beating the girls before his eyes, the coach's answer was quite as curt as the first one. "Whenever I spank them, Mr. Prime Minister, you'd better close your eyes." Daimatsu was subsequently elected a member of the House of Councillors and served for six years until 1975.

There were also memorable moments of glory for foreign participants in the Tokyo Olympic Games. Blonde 22-year-old Czech secretary Vera Caslavská fascinated the Japanese audience not only by her shapely figure but also by the dazzling agility and preciseness with which she won the women's gymnastics test. Pole vaulter Fred Hansen of the United States fought one of the greatest and most dramatic duels in Olympic history when he endured a grueling competition of more than nine hours until Wolfgang Reinhardt, his competitor from Germany, finally touched the barrier and dropped it at the record Olympic height of 5.10 meters. And the phenomenal Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia ran through half a million flag-waving spectators in his chalk-white sneakers (he was barefooted in Rome) to clinch the gold medal in the marathon for the second straight time in two Olympic games.

But for the Japanese nation, the feats by the foreigners paled before the dramatic volleyball victory. For the whole operation after all was psychological. The Japanese had for many years been goading themselves along the path toward becoming a great world power. Where "catching up with and overtaking" advanced countries was the national goal, well-nigh to an obsession, one success overshadowed all the failures in other events and coach Daimatsu was the idol of the year.

Japan's insatiable "Ichiban (number one)" megalomania saw another outlet when Shinkansen bullet trains went into service on October 1, 1964, ten days before the opening of the Olympic Games. The long-awaited "dream express" covered the 515-kilometer stretch between the nation's two largest cities—Tokyo and Osaka—in three hours and ten minutes. Streaking along at the speed of more than 50 meters in one second (210 kilometers per hour), the ivory white and blue Shinkansen was an entirely Japanese product, rails, rolling

stocks, and all. Everything was genuinely "Nippon" and the trains were the fastest in the world. Now, that was something every Japanese could and should be proud of.

The Japanese National Railways had for sure climbed all the way from a handicapped starting line. The railroad made its debut in Japan as late as October 1872 when Emperor Meiji rode in the inaugural train between Shimbashi, Tokyo, and Yokohama, amid cheers of thousands of his subjects who lined the 29-kilometer distance. The people were astonished to find the new moving object not drawn by horses but emitting some strangely hissing steam. Few in Japan knew at that time that, in far-off America, transcontinental trains had already gone into operation in May 1869, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

Japanese railways in the earlier years were totally under the guidance of foreign engineers, mostly from England. Although the Japanese railwaymen had gradually begun taking over from their Sensei (teachers), they had to work through painful years of mapping, construction and maintenance of the railroad network that finally came to cover many a remote corner of the mountainous four islands. By 1960 the Japanese National Railways were able to operate special express trains that covered the Tokaido (Tokyo-Osaka) route in six hours and a half. That, however, was as fast as they could make with the conventional Tokaido Line. The nation, meanwhile, was demanding more speed.

With a rapidly growing population and the Japanese industries concentrated in the "Tokaido Megalopolis" that stretches along Japan's Pacific coast from Tokyo to the Keihanshin (Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe) area, a faster means of transportation was imperative. However, the number of trains operated on the old Tokaido Line totaled 120 passenger trains and 60 to 80 freight trains one way daily. The saturation point had to be broken by constructing a totally new train system that was the Shinkansen.

The plan for the new line was made official as early as in July 1958. The narrow gauge was abandoned, it was announced, for a wider one that allowed more speed. Longer welded rails were adopted for smoother travel. New streamlined coaches were designed and manufactured. Tunnels were dug, bridges built. All train movements were controlled by a centralized control system using computers and other electronic gadgets. The new line was mapped so that it had no

level crossings along its entire length. Fences were built along the tracks. A special law was passed to punish any trespasser stepping onto the railbed. The new superexpress was named "Hikari" and the slower express "Kodama." They stood for "Light" and "Echo."

Everything was perfectly planned and materialized exactly according to plan and the dream of the JNR finally came true in 1964. But few had expected that the Shinkansen would be a "calamity" for the nation's salaried class. Before the Shinkansen was introduced, a Shutcho (business trip) meant a sizable bonanza to many company employes. A "sarari (salary)-man," for instance, who was told to make a business trip from Tokyo to Osaka, had been able to take a second class Tokaido train while his traveling expenses could be reported as first class. In exchange for a little inconvenience he could handsomely pocket the balance out of his expenses. In addition to that, he could perhaps stay in a less expensive hotel than his allowance prescribed and pocket that balance too. But, alas, after the coming of the Shinkansen, business trips became business and no more. Many two-day trips were reduced to a one-day round-trip—canceling the margin on hotel fares. And, with the rapid and comfortable Shinkansen, few companies allowed their employes to travel in first class.

Adding to the convenience of millions of people and to the woe of the poor sarari-man class, the Shinkansen service was extended to Okayama in March 1972 and later to Hakata in Kyushu in March 1975. During the ten years since the initial Tokyo-Osaka line was opened, the number of passengers utilizing the Shinkansen exceeded 800 million. The aggregate distance covered by its trains is approximately 307 million kilometers, equivalent to over 400 round trips between the earth and the moon. Although Japan has never orbited a single Japanese astronaut in space, the new train system perhaps helped the Japanese justify its self-esteem, the pride that might not have been attained by no less than space exploration. Also impressive is the fact that the Shinkansen has never had a single passenger casualty up to now. Swishing past the foot of Mt. Fuji and hissing along the scenic Inland Sea coast, the blue and white "Lights" and "Echoes" will certainly continue as a living example of Japan's "Ichiban" (Number One) for some more years to come.

Among international dignitaries eager to travel by Shinkansen was Queen Elizabeth II who traveled from Nagoya to Tokyo in May 1975. As the British monarch arrived at Nagoya Station, she insisted on ignoring the exactly-mapped-to-the-second schedule and going up to the platform three minutes earlier so that she could watch the Shinkansen train roll in to the station. Japanese officials bowed, of course, to the Royal wish but they were very flurried, according to one Japanese daily. As in the case of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, the Japanese tend to adhere faithfully to the rehearsed and re-rehearsed plan. Any spontaneity is very often upsetting for them.

The two weeks that Tokyo was busy hoisting flags and playing national anthems for the Olympic victors proved to be one of the most crucial periods in contemporary international politics. One was the court revolution inside the Kremlin that resulted in the downfall of Nikita Khrushchev. Another was China's explosive entry into the world's nuclear club.

The first explanation for the switch in power in the Russian capital was that its premier and chief of the party had asked to be relieved of his duties "in view of his advanced age (he was 70) and deterioration of his health." The retirement, however, soon turned out to be a unilateral ouster as more detailed information began arriving from Moscow. Such news as the ouster of editor Alexei Adzhubei of the *Izvestia*, Khrushchev's son-in-law, spoke for itself. It was, in fact, the end of the 11-year rule by the sanguine Communist who not only enraged the free world by his shoe-banging appearance before the U.N. General Assembly but dared to break the world Communist monolith by sacrificing Russia's greatest ally, the People's Republic of China.

Khrushchev's arch enemies in Peking, on the contrary, had reason to celebrate when they detonated China's first atomic bomb on October 16, 1964, the day the Russian leader was stripped of his power. In their belated message of congratulations on the success of Russia's launching of the world's first passenger space ship, the Chinese leaders were boastful enough to state, not without a certain sarcastic note, "This (the atomic bomb test) is a major achievement of the Chinese people in their struggle to increase their national defense capability and oppose the U.S. imperialist policy of nuclear blackmail

and nuclear threats." China's increased defense potentialities, however, helped more to antagonize the two Communist giants than unite them against "paper tiger America."

Plunged into deep dismay was Japan's camp of progressive thought. Many staunch pro-Chinese thinkers had predicted that the Communist nation would never contaminate the atmosphere with the deadly fallout. As at the time of the initial split of the two Communist superpowers, they were compelled to face squarely the cold realities of international power politics. Some diehard Sinophiles modified their argument and began explaining that China's nuclear weapons were of a purely defensive nature.

In painful throes, too, was Japan's conservative camp. For the curtain had barely fallen on the Olympic Games when a panel of doctors announced that Hayato Ikeda, then Prime Minister of Japan, was infected with an incurable cancer of the throat. Ikeda, steadfast promoter of the nation's economic take-off, announced his intention to resign from his post. He died ten months later in August 1965.

Various factions within the Liberal-Democratic Party instantly plunged into a bitter battle to grasp the helm of the nation. But even during the days of ugly political struggle some Japanese were nostalgic and remembered that day—that unforgettable day in October when the cream of the world's youths marched into the sun-drenched National Stadium in Tokyo.

The Trio Who Ruled Postwar Japan

"Prime Minister Sato wept bitterly. All he could do was cry like a child who had lost his father, clinging to ex-Prime Minister Yoshida's body. . . . Recently Yoshida-san had asked Sato-san, 'How long have you been Prime Minister now?' 'Three years, sir. I've learned to do my job at my own pace.' Yoshida-san cautioned, 'The job of a Prime Minister is very demanding. It was rather easy for me because of the special circumstances under the Occupation. It's not good to stay on the job too long.' It was Yoshida-san's final advice to Prime Minister Sato, his beloved disciple."

In these words, an item in the *Mainichi Shimbun* dated October 22, 1967, described Sato's tearful midnight meeting with his political mentor who lay dead in his villa in Oiso, Kanagawa Prefecture.

Sato had sped to the Yoshida residence with his wife Hiroko from Haneda where they had just returned from a tour of Southeast Asia. Yoshida died while Sato was visiting the Malacanang Palace in Manila. Sato immediately instructed Acting Prime Minister Takeo Miki to arrange a State Funeral for Yoshida and, with a heavy heart, left for Saigon on the final leg of his trip. He met with Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky briefly, cut short his scheduled overnight stay in Saigon to a bare three hours and took off from Tan Son Nhut Airport for a hurried flight back to Tokyo.

On October 31, Sato paid a moving eulogy to Yoshida in the first postwar State Funeral at the Nippon Budokan Hall.

With the turn of fortune's wheel, it was Sato who was mourned in a National Funeral at the same Nippon Budokan Hall on June 16, 1975, with Prime Minister Miki serving as chairman of the funeral committee.

Sato's death marked the end of an era which was opened by Yoshida and which was carried to its zenith by his two loyal proteges—Hayato Ikeda, who died on August 13, 1965, and Sato. Political pros refer to the Yoshida-Ikeda-Sato line as the "mainstream" of the nation's ruling conservative party. In general terms, the mainstream has been identified with a policy of the closest collaboration with the United States on the basis of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

Japan has had 27 prime ministers in the half century of turbulence of the Showa Era—15 up to the end of World War II and 12 to date in the three postwar decades. In the rough and tumble world of politics, holding the reins of government for seven years and eight months on end, as Sato did, is quite a performance by Japanese standards, or for that matter, by the standards of most parliamentary democracies. Yoshida had been Prime Minister for seven years and one month and Ikeda, whose life was cut short by cancer, four years and four months. The three "mainstream" prime ministers administered Japan for 19 out of the 30 postwar years.

When Sato died on June 3, all newspapers paid tribute to him as the man who had led the "longest going administration." And Sato had on

his cap another feather—the Nobel Peace Prize. The laurel awarded him in December 1974 for his pursuit of a non-nuclear policy ranks him with some of the most celebrated names in the 20th Century—Jean Henri Dunant, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Albert Schweitzer, Dag Hammarskjold and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sato had staked, with success, his political fate on winning the reversion of Okinawa from a quarter-century of U.S. rule. He was no great orator and his replies to Diet interpellators were often so roundabout that their tempers ran high. But Sato made one clearcut and long-remembered remark when he said in Naha on August 19, 1965: "Not until Okinawa returns to our fatherland will our postwar trauma be over."

During the same trip, Sato dropped his official mask of self-confidence edged with arrogance and wept unabashedly when he stood before the monument for 223 Okinawan student-nurses who committed mass suicide when the Battle of Okinawa was lost.

His friends would often go out of their way to stress that Sato was a man easily moved to tears—the mark of a gentle and responsive heart—that belied his handsome and masculine face that he enjoyed having compared to that of the late Kabuki actor Ichikawa Danjuro.

Sato's own evaluation of his achievements was topped by the reversion of Okinawa, "a peaceful return of a lost territory without precedent in history." Others cited were the signing of the Japan-Republic of Korea Basic Treaty on June 22, 1965; automatic extension on June 22, 1970, of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed 10 years before by his brother Nobusuke Kishi; enactment of special legislation in August 1969 to restore calm on university campuses rocked by the student revolt; and attainment of high economic growth.

Even with all these achievements plus the Nobel Peace Prize, Sato did not quite acquire the aura and popularity of his mentor Yoshida whose mantle as a latterday "Genro" (senior statesman) he apparently tried to wear.

To the extent that Ikeda and Sato measured up to Yoshida's trust—and they did so admirably—they were simply following the line set by their mentor. Their job was to promote Japan's progress and stability by maintaining and expanding Japanese-American relations.

Sato's near obsession with Okinawa's reversion was to fulfill Yoshida's plea at the San Francisco Peace Treaty Conference in 1951. Said Yoshida: "I cannot but hope that the administration of the Ryukyus and the Bonins (Ogasawara) will be put back into Japanese hands in the not distant future with the establishment of world security, especially the security of Asia."

It was to the credit of Yoshida's stature and acumen that he had groomed Ikeda and Sato, completely unknown political qualities, as his most trusted proteges and successors. Ikeda, who had specialized in taxation during his bureaucratic career, was given the vital post of Finance Minister as a freshman in the Diet in 1949. Sato, who quit as Vice Transport Minister in 1948, was named Chief Cabinet Secretary in 1949 when he was not even a member of the Diet.

True, it was a time when seasoned politicians were in extremely short supply. Most of them had been purged by the Occupation authorities. Yoshida himself became Prime Minister and president of the then Japan Liberal Party because of the abrupt purge of President Ichiro Hatoyama on the eve of his expected nomination as Prime Minister in the Diet in January 1946. But both Ikeda and Sato proved worthy of Yoshida's trust and served him with great loyalty. With Yoshida's blessing, they quickly built up their powerful bases in the political, business and bureaucratic worlds before the depurged prewar veterans had time to recoup.

Yoshida's favoritism toward Ikeda and Sato was such that when they faced arrest in the notorious shipbuilding scandal in early 1954, Yoshida had Justice Minister Ken Inukai use his prerogative to prevent their arrest. It was misdirected favoritism which eventually dug the grave for the Yoshida Cabinet and which tarnished the reputation of Party Secretary General Sato who was subsequently indicted on charges of violation of the political donation control law.

Yoshida, Ikeda and Sato shared many traits in common as well as differences in style and taste. But they were bound by ties, as between a venerated teacher and trusted pupils.

Yoshida, whose dry sense of humor made him popular, was at times a picture of arrogance, true to his nickname "One Man." A cigar in his mouth whether he was in Western or Japanese attire, he was capable of sudden outbursts. At one time when he was cross, he poured

a glass of water at news cameramen. He made a costly slip of the tongue on February 28, 1953, when he uttered a clearly audible "Bakayaro!" (SOB) to a Socialist interpellator in the Diet.

Two days later the House of Representatives voted for his impeachment and followed up by passing a non-confidence motion against the Yoshida Cabinet. Instead of resigning, Yoshida picked up the gauntlet and dissolved the House for a new general election.

Slips of the tongue were by no means Yoshida's monopoly. Ikeda, given to brusque and straightforward utterances, was voted out as Minister of International Trade and Industry for his remark that the bankruptcy or even suicide of five or ten operators of small and medium enterprises couldn't be helped under the Occupation-directed tax policy he was pursuing.

Sato, who had been Ikeda's classmate in the Fifth Higher School in Kumamoto, was not marked by the intellectual brilliance that distinguished his two elder brothers—Ichiro Sato who had the highest mark in the history of the Naval Academy and Nobusuke Kishi who graduated cum laude from the law department of the University of Tokyo. But he was more expansive than Kishi, less brusque and rugged than Ikeda, and had a flair for backstage maneuvering and for quickly grasping the shifting loyalties and alignments of fellow politicians.

Ikeda and Sato, both born to Sake brewers, were studied in contrast, according to Shigeru Hori, a veteran Liberal-Democrat who had been close to both of them and to Yoshida. "When drinking, Mr. Ikeda was far more fun, making a lot of noise. In contrast, there's no way of knowing whether Mr. Sato was enjoying himself."

In his recently published book, Hori recalls that whenever he went to see Yoshida at his Oiso residence, Yoshida would say to him, "It's your responsibility to see that Ikeda and Sato do not fight." Hori would assure him there was no worry "as long as you live."

When Hori paid a New Year's call on the old man in 1964, Yoshida told him he thought it was about time Ikeda stepped down. "Ikeda is still young and I think he should take a rest. I am thinking of Sato as his successor and Sato should give his job back to Ikeda before things get clumsy."

Despite Hori's assurance, Sato broke temporarily with Ikeda in July 1964 when he challenged Ikeda's bid for a third term as president

of the Liberal-Democratic Party. Sato lost, however, 242 to 160.

But luck was on Sato's side, as it had been on his brother Kishi's side when the latter lost 258 to 251 to Tanzan Ishibashi in the 1956 party presidential election, only to have the job coming into his hands two months later due to Ishibashi's illness.

Exactly two months after he defeated Sato in the party presidential election, the coarse-voiced Ikeda was hospitalized for what proved to be cancer of the throat. The invalid Prime Minister obtained special permission from his doctors and made his last public appearance with his wife in the Royal Box in the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympic Games on October 10, 1964. On November 9, Ikeda resigned as president of the party and prime minister, nominating Sato as his successor.

Thus began the Sato age which was to last until June 17, 1972. When he stepped down, Sato left the succession race wide open, triggering a bitter four-way competition among Kakuei Tanaka, Takeo Fukuda, Masayoshi Ohira and Takeo Miki.

On the strength of the agreement on Okinawa's reversion with President Lyndon Johnson in November 1969, Sato brought his Liberal-Democratic Party back into power with an impressive 303 seats in the House of Representatives in the December election. A Mainichi Shimbun poll gave Sato a high popularity rate of 40 per cent. Then his credibility began going downhill.

The biggest jolt to Sato came on July 15, 1971, when President Nixon made the bombshell announcement that he was going to visit Peking. Sato, who had all along been pursuing a pro-American policy, supporting its involvement in the Vietnam War, found himself in an embarrassing situation. The "Nixon Shock" was followed a month later by the far-reaching U.S. dollar-defending policy which hurled the postwar monetary institution into chaos.

The world was clearly in a flux. But Sato's China policy remained unchanged. When the United Nations convened in September 1971 for a crucial China debate, Sato committed Japan to co-sponsor a resolution making Taiwan's expulsion a substantive matter requiring a two-thirds majority. On October 26, the U.N. voted overwhelmingly in favor of Peking's admission. Sato lived up to Yoshida's pledge of support for the Taiwan regime largely out of moral obligation to

Chiang Kai-shek, but the U.N. action spelled the collapse of Japan's China policy.

Sato's political style was popularly known as "Machi no Seiji" or "politics of waiting." Neither Sato nor his supporters ever defined it. Its essence probably was biding his time patiently for the right time before making up his mind and translating his decision into action.

Herman Kahn once told a Mainichi reporter that he set a high value on Sato's strategy. When the nation's college campuses were being rocked, Sato did not act hastily. Instead, he waited quietly and patiently for the parents of the radicals, then their professors, and finally the opposition parties to denounce the extremists until they found themselves isolated. Kahn's theory was it was a higher brand of politics to avert a potential crisis quietly than to deal with it with fanfare.

Was the American futurologist correct? Maybe or maybe not. If Sato's approach was that of a political pro, it was not fully understood or appreciated by men in the street. His strategy probably worked as long as he had time for waiting. But when things moved swiftly as in the last stage of his administration, people looked more for his initiative and leadership than for his patience and waiting.

After the national euphoria generated by EXPO'70 gave way to growing public concern over burgeoning inflation and environmental disruption—the other side of the vaunted high growth policy—public support for Sato began sliding at an accelerated tempo.

The "Nixon Shock," the "dollar shock" and Peking's entry into the U.N. added to the popular disillusionment with the way Sato ran the country. A Mainichi Shimbun poll conducted in April 1972 put the popular support rate for the Sato Cabinet at 19 per cent, the lowest ever for any postwar Cabinet.

On June 17, 1972, Sato announced his decision to step down. After his tearful farewell address to fellow Liberal-Democrats, Sato went to the press conference hall of his official residence.

"Where's TV? Where's NHK?" Sato demanded, dumbfounding newspaper reporters. "Television carries me directly to the people without distortion. I get distorted in print. I hate biased newspapers. Where's TV? You reporters, please make room for television."

When newspaper reporters protested, Sato flew into a rage. Banging on the table, he roared, "If you don't understand me, never

mind. Get out of here!"

The reporters filed out of the room. With the spacious room cluttered with empty chairs, Sato put on a smile for the TV cameras and began, "My dear people..." It was the clumsy finis of Sato as Prime Minister.

Feminine Power Unshackled

"Why is it necessary for me to teach so many girl students?" Professor Yasutaka Teruoka asked somewhat wistfully. "The girls come to this college (Waseda University) in flocks, leisurely search for something to giggle over during my class and eventually pass through the school life to become housewives. College education today is simply designated to be kind of an 'accessorie' for those fashionable brides at whose wedding party their attendance at some famous college is related boastfully to the attending guests."

A tinge of male chauvinism, no doubt. But the aged professor of Japanese literature was speaking in all sincerity. He is one of the finest scholars of Ihara-Saikaku, a down-to-earth realism novelist ("The Tale of an Amorous Man") of the late 17th Century Osaka. In the year when Teruoka bared the foregoing opinion, the girl students in Japanese colleges, especially in liberal arts schools, were fast outnumbering their male counterparts. It was 1961, a year after the boisterous Ampo (Security Treaty) struggles rocked the nation's campuses.

The dissatisfied scholar, in fact, was worrying about the future of Japan. "The nation's colleges are rapidly becoming like so many brides' schools. It is certainly a waste of taxes for the government to set aside huge sums for higher education if the majority of college students are only preparing to get married and work for nothing more," Teruoka observed.

His essay, titled "Coeds Will Ruin the Nation," was the cause of nationwide consternation when it appeared in one of the Tokyo weeklies.

"We teachers are, so to speak, imparting our learning onto a vast number of coeds," he deplored. "And the result of our teaching, once

imparted to them, would never start recycling in our society because most recipients of the education would begin forgetting it once they are married and become mothers."

He also posed a question as to whether higher learning would help increase the amount of happiness for housewives and mothers.

Education in prewar Japan was largely monopolized by the male half of the nation. Except for a few women's colleges, there were no openings for Japanese womenfolk to obtain higher education. It was exclusively the men who were educated and given opportunities to utilize the fruits of the education. For it was the men, and only men, who had the prerogative of handling national affairs. Women were prescribed to adhere strictly to the traditional "Three Obeisances": obey parents when little, obey the husband when married, and finally obey their sons when they became old.

Heavily influenced by such inflexible Confucian thought, the subjugation of women helped the rigid family system of Japan to persist — one of the most important stabilizing factors of the prewar Japanese society.

Since 1945 things have become totally different. "To the disgust and distress of many Japanese men," it has been pointed out, "equality of the sexes was forced on Japanese society by ignorant U.S. military gallantry." Compulsory education was extended from six to nine years for both boys and girls. Virtually all the universities and colleges went coeducational. And soon the campuses were flooded with coeds, particularly the department of literature.

In 1962, a year after Teruoka's article, a Mainichi Shimbun survey showed that 89 out of 100 literature students at Gakushuin University (former Peers' School) were female. The figure was 86 at Aoyama Gakuin, 78 at Seijo, 64 at St. Paul's (Rikkyo) and 11 even at the prestigious Tokyo University. Academic domination by males, in short, was fast tumbling down the hill.

Not quite as fast as in the case of educational institutions was the speed of change in the overall social system of postwar Japan. The job opportunities for women remained more or less limited—far below the level required necessary to absorb all the distaff college graduates. Many coeds, therefore, attended school without much hope of securing career jobs. College life to them was almost equal to killing time before getting married—"a super-comfortable career with a monthly

paycheck (handed over by the husband), three free meals and a refreshing nap in the afternoon," according to one sardonic male commentator.

Quite unexpectedly, the chauvinistic professor found a number of supporters among housewives. Yuriko Ota of Kyoto, one-time English literature major and mother of a four-year-old son, confided in a letter to the *Mainichi Shimbun*: "Since my marriage, most of my daily hours have been taken up by miscellaneous family concerns. I am sometimes led to wonder why I should have gone through four years of higher learning."

Mrs. Eiko Takagi of Tokyo was even more critical of her academic background. "I have been tormented by my own vain pride that I am a college graduate," she lamented. "Higher education, instead of bringing me happiness, has made me rather unhappy. I have a certificate to teach in primary school and junior high school, but could it be anything more than a piece of paper now that I am a wife and mother?"

Yasuko Higa, 28, of Amagasaki, Hyogo Prefecture, looked back at her college days and concluded, "At the junior college that I attended, 90 per cent of my classmates were enrolled there simply because they wanted to get a diploma, believed to be the surest way to locate a good husband. I often felt guilty toward those working girls who could only afford receiving high school education, for most of our attention in college was devoted to finding attractive boyfriends."

The so-called theory that "Coeds Will Ruin the Nation" by Teruoka naturally became the target of a fierce verbal barrage from among the career women of the country. "The bigotry of male chauvinists" came under intense fire from, for instance, Mrs. Hiroko Hatano of Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture. "Men are jealously guarding their citadel of traditional male supremacy," countered Mrs. Hatano, 30, an office employe. "Aren't the professors transmitting their noble learning to those men who are employed by business firms or government, those who start forgetting their education the moment they embark on their unexciting career?"

Many other similar voices condemned the Japanese men for clamping a social chastity belt on the nation's women. Where society itself is made for the men to control, there is hardly space for women to

show their capabilities, they protested.

The postwar Japanese society, nonetheless, was undergoing a drastic change, slowly but steadily. The rapidly expanding economy began demanding a larger work force and the number of working women started to increase. Concentration of the population in urban areas and the housing shortage steadily helped the traditional family system to disintegrate. By the second half of the 1960s, the majority of Japanese families had broken into the small "nuclear family"—husband, wife and a single child. Meanwhile, many old folks are left in the sparsely populated countryside to tend their farmland. Despite Professor Teruoka's anxiety, the changing social system is unmistakably modifying itself so that it can absorb the increased number of educated women.

By far the most womanized occupational field is that of school teaching. Women became the majority in the teachers' rooms of primary schools across the country in 1969 and the percentage has been widening ever since. In the nation's 24,592 primary schools, 209,000 teachers were women against 184,000 men, according to an Education Ministry survey in the autumn of 1973. The aggregate number of women engaged in teaching children of the compulsory education age (primary and junior high schools) was 274,500 in the same survey. There were 263 woman principals of the nation's public and private schools.

Some people expressed audible alarm that Japanese education might become excessively feminine if the tendency were to continue. It is ironically the mothers who hold the strongest preference for men teachers. Such conversation as "How lucky my son is. He is not in the class of a woman teacher this year" or "My son's case is the worst. His teacher is newly married. She will soon become pregnant, I'm sure" is often overheard exchanged in many *Danchi* (housing complexes) throughout the country. Mothers know well that married woman teachers will take so many days off, once they become pregnant, and single ones tend to relinquish their career when they find a good husband.

Most disastrous was the case of Class Three of the second grade at Katsuhara Public School in Himeji City, west of Kobe. Mrs. "O," who had been assigned to the class at the beginning of the new school year

(April) 1972, began taking a "pregnancy leave" two months later. Her job was temporarily relieved by a home economics teacher for 10 days until Miss "B," a hasty replacement appointed by the Municipal Educational Commission, arrived. Several weeks later Miss "E" of the first grade announced that she was quitting to get married. Although another substitute teacher, Miss "C," was assigned in her place, it proved that "C" Sensei (teacher) was too inexperienced to take care of the first grade children. The principal, therefore, had to barter Miss "C" with Miss "B." Mrs. "O" came back to her class in late September, only to tender her resignation three days later because, she explained, she was unable to locate a good nurse for her newborn baby. The vacancy had to be filled by Miss "D," a fresh graduate from a teachers' college. All in all, the children of Class Three of the second grade had six different teachers in half a year.

There are, needless to say, countless schools where women teachers have proved to be quite as efficient as their male counterparts. Although women teachers are occasionally "notorious" for their emotionalism as well as for their inability to teach boys how to play baseball, parents seem to have become resigned to the fact that elementary education cannot be anything but womanly. The traditional yearning for "stern education" nevertheless had to go through a period of painful adjustment before the nation's fathers accepted a sort of compromise to the realities of postwar education.

Not without a faint ironical allusion to the days of the Bluestockings, the common sigh of the Japanese menfolk after 1945 has been: "The two things that have become very strong after the war are socks and women." With more than 53 per cent of the Japanese children entrusted to female hands, men can in fact do little more than grumble. And, through education that they both receive and give, women are positively gaining more say in the modern Japanese community.

The fast-rising woman power has also affected the social and political climate of Japan. In striking contrast to the prewar days when "things solid, heavy and hard to approach" were appreciated, the new era that dawned in 1945 was marked by things and attitudes that are "flexible, easygoing, handy and readily absorbed and learned." Bank facades are no longer adorned with imposing steps and

thick pillars. Awe-inspiring clock towers are disappearing from new university buildings. And, by the second half of the 50s, many weekly magazines started circulating with the purpose of feeding their readers with easily understandable paraphrased news stories. The biggest role, in this sense, was played by television broadcasts which, according to one commentator on audio-visual journalism, "pulled down everything to the level of terebi (television) and its mass viewers."

The people's voting attitude has also changed drastically. Pompous politicians are rapidly fading out of fashion. Instead of aloof and authoritative characters, the mass voters have become more and more attracted to friendly common-man figures. Tokyo's gubernatorial candidate Ryokichi Minobe especially marked the coming of the new type of vote getters. Since he proved extremely successful in April 1967 with 2,166,600 votes, every seeker for political office began smiling. Governor Minobe, with no political background whatsoever but well-known for his gentle and disarming Minobe-sumairu (smile), humiliated his competitor, Akira Hatano, by collecting more than 3,600,000 popular votes in his second contest in April 1972. Ex-Metropolitan Police Chief Hatano, though strongly backed by the leading Liberal-Democratic Party, was put to shame with less than 2 million votes—the widest election margin ever recorded in Tokyo. Minobe edged Shintaro Ishihara, popular novelist turned politician, in his third victory in April 1975, thanks to the support from many women's organizations.

Politics has become somewhat similar to a hair-do or a new women's fashion. What counts is rather the image that a candidate casts on voters than the political platforms he declares. It's not that the national "womanization" tendency is good or bad, but a multitude of men as well as women in Japan have been transformed into a sort of gentle lamb, led hither and thither at the bidding of subtle manipulators.

The Japan Communist Party is perhaps the political party most sensitive to the changing public mood. At its Sixth National Consultative Meeting in July 1955, the party leaders declared a dramatic switch from their traditional "armed revolution" tactics to a more peaceful line. There were many other reasons that compelled the party

to make a historic switch of lines, but it paid off handsomely anyway. No sooner had the party abandoned its "ultra-leftist adventurism," which was best represented by violent mass rallies and hurling of Kaenbin (Molotov cocktails) in the early 50s, than the popular support for the party began mounting steadily. The party's official translation of "dictatorship of the proletariat," an inevitable step that Communists aim to attain in the course of their revolution, was cleverly changed from prohibitive "Dokusai" (despotism) to "Shikken" (regency) with a more compromising connotation. Today no one can find a group of laborers showing their sinewy arms in Communist propaganda posters. Their election campaign posters nowadays invariably feature a pretty girl looking up at the blue sky with immaculate Mt. Fuji in the background.

The once insatiably expansion-oriented Japanese Big Business has also been compelled to promise more family happiness for their employees. And the employees, known for their industry and obedient perseverance for decades, soon began turning to "small happiness" within their families. The principles of "My-home-ism" have gradually permeated the minds of ions of Japan's office workers. "GHQ," as Douglas MacArthur's general headquarters was once known, became a call to "go home quickly" the moment work hours are over. With the advent of the booming 60s, an office worker-husband of a nuclear family shuttling daily between his glass and steel office and a small two-room concrete apartment house built by the Japan Housing Corporation became the stereotype of the nation's working class. With fatherly care, his omnipotent office managers would give him a cash wedding gift, his child's entry-to-primary-school gift, health insurance, housing loan and even a modest auto loan so that he could afford to buy a small Toyota or Nissan car.

By the mid-50s "Instant Ramen (instant-cooked noodles)" had come to stay as one of the standard items of the Japanese diet and the easily cooked and served food, coupled with the introduction of electric refrigerators and washing machines, took a considerable burden off the shoulders of Japanese wives—though to the woe of many mothers-in-law. Immediately Japan plunged headlong into a wild "reja (leisure) boom."

Once "leisure" was in, everything was "reja." Bulky sweaters

became "reja sweater," folding chairs "reja chairs" and women's summer dresses were hastily renamed "reja doresu." The boom was enormously contagious and swallowed millions of Japanese almost to the degree of a craze. To many youths, "reja" was synonymous with a "toraberu (travel) boom." As the expanding Japanese industry was in constant need of manpower and the initial paycheck for new employees was indispensably fattening year after year, the resourcefulness of the young Japanese multiplied. Soon curious-minded youths began visiting not only Kyoto, Kanazawa and Nagasaki, popular sightseeing spots within the Islands, but Guam, Honolulu, Bangkok and many other cities everywhere in the world.

Older people, too, took to the road as the nation's technological development began supplying them with more and more manpower-saving devices in every facet of the people's lives.

An owner of a coal mine in Ibaraki Prefecture hit upon a brilliant idea upon being forced to close down his deficit-ridden mining site. Making use of the mineral water gushing from the bottom of coalpits, he built a large warm-water swimming pool inside a huge glass and steel shed and named it "Hawaiian Center." Former employees of the coal mine learned how to play the Hawaiian guitar and their daughters were given intensive lessons in hula dancing. The "instant Hawaii," only three hours by train from Tokyo, was a phenomenal success. It proved to be one of the most prosperous "reja" centers of the country. The "reja guide," Japan Travel Bureau's travel information desks all over Japan, was promptly advising people to go and join the ring of Polynesian dancers under the transplanted coconut trees.

In the fast-emerging mass consumption society of Japan, provincialism began disappearing largely due to the message conveyed by the nationwide television network. Children even in the remotest countryside are today singing commercial songs composed and broadcast from Tokyo, while their mothers have long forgotten provincial nursery rhymes. The television message has also helped standardize the people's taste in food, clothes and every other aspect of daily life. A year-long serialized historical drama broadcast annually on the popular NHK television, for instance, invariably ignited a travel boom to a certain locality in Japan. The drama's background, Nagano in one year and Nara in another, never failed to attract countless tourists who flooded the historic sites just to make sure that

"everything is just the same as on the TV screen."

Eager to cater to the changing taste of young tourists, many Ryokan, traditional Japanese inns, have given way to modernized hotels with private rooms, flush toilet and private bath. Mixed bathing, a congenial custom formerly observed at many hot-springs, has become regrettably outmoded. In accordance with the transformation of Ryokan to hotels, even a number of Tera, Buddhist temples, which were once inexpensive lodging houses for young travelers, have entered the business of running "Tera-tel"—a combination of Tera with hotels. "Instant boom" has also begun seeping into the hotel business. To accommodate those lovers who fall into "instant love," numberless love hotels mushroomed. Such sophisticated innovations as an electrically vibrating bed, necessary furniture in these hotels, quickly found new customers among Southeast Asian and American hotel managers.

Modernization of the people's life has undeniably affected the "modern Japanese language." With a vigor paralleling that of their ancestors in the Fourth Century who began borrowing from classic Chinese, the contemporary Japanese went straight ahead with unabashed Japanization of western phrases. As the nation's Masu Komi (mass communication media), for example, report about a group of unionists who go on Suto (strike) asking for Be-A (base-up of their salary scale), the leftist supporters go out to the streets in Demo (demonstration). Soon Pato Ka (police patrol cars) are heading for the scene to disperse the rioters. The Infure (inflation), of course, is behind all the labor turmoil. Kakuei Tanaka, ex-Prime Minister of Japan whose language knows no way to differentiate "bass" from "bath" or "bus," and who had never studied English, once explained, "I will take the most appropriate course after carefully studying all the melits and demelits of the proposed government plan." Though many traditionalists among linguists deplore the deterioration of the "genuine Japanese language," nobody seems to be able to place a gag on the vast and unending inflow of foreign phrases.

The standardized people's life and taste, combined with characteristic susceptibility to a "boom," have made Japan a country equipped with a highly standardized view of the world. Although the renovationist camp appears to be firmly pitched against the conservative government, a national consensus is attained to a surprising

degree whenever there is an emotional upsurge of a boom. Most typical in this sense would be the China Boom that coincided with the Cultural Revolution in 1966 and is today still sweeping the country nine years later.

With Big Business keeping an ambitious eye on a potential market of 800 million people and with the renovationist camp being enthused by ideological fervor, many Japanese have refused to see anything but puritanical righteousness in the People's Republic of China for several years. Japanese correspondents in Peking vied in their eulogy of the Chinese society ruled by a handful of stoic leaders. Backyard furnaces, barefoot doctors, anti-Japanese-imperialist revolutionary operas and the whole proletarian socialist struggle were just wonderful. All the reporters who belonged to the Big Press were instructed by their editors to be extremely cautious whenever they penned stories about China.

One Peking correspondent of the most trusted Tokyo daily had never doubted that Marshal Lin Piao, once the closest friend of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, would turn his vicious back toward his beloved comrade. When some weekly media in Japan began exposing "certain weird rumors inside China" about the fate of Lin Piao, he not only asserted the undestructive closeness of the Mao-Lin comradeship but journalistically lashed the "irresponsible reporting" that alleged Lin was a rebel. A reporter from another daily, who had penned stories about "Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi" in the days when Liu was the Communist nation's head of state and later "The Age of Lin Piao" when Lin was the heir-apparent to the Chairman, quickly criticized himself and still remains as an expert on current Chinese affairs. For many years it has been a strict taboo for all the Japanese journalists to write anything that might even slightly harm the feelings of the people in the Asian continent.

As late as in September 1974, a Japanese reporter, in describing his first direct air-trip to Peking, concluded his impression with: "Watching the thoroughly unostentatious and kind way in which the Chinese stewardesses served us, I could not help having a certain sense of safety and confidence (in the Chinese airline)."

America, on the contrary, has never been the subject of a boom save perhaps in 1960 and 1961, the years of the Kennedy Boom. When youthful John F. Kennedy was elected the President of the United

States, quite a few Japanese were more elated than the average American voters. A Ginza bar offered free drinks to customers who were 43 years old. Many Japanese politicians, who happened to be in their forties, started claiming, "I am the Kennedy of Japan." For the rest of the time, however, the United States has been in a constant anti-boom. It may be partly due to a certain Oedipus complex. Postwar Japan has been overzealous to marry a mother-in-law called "prosperity." The father, therefore, is destined to remain as an object of hatred.

With its traditional family system reduced to so many "nuclear families," its stern education replaced by a soft and flexible approach, its people made prey to the oligopolizing mass media, Japan seems to be destined to become quite a different Japan—different from what it used to be. Most of its people, in the meanwhile, appear to be striving to build a happy home life, perhaps as happy a one as featured in the television commercials of life insurance companies.

Professor Teruoka has somewhat modified his opinion since he penned "Coeds Will Ruin the Nation" 14 years ago. "I admit the realities of today," he grumly observed in a recent issue of the Weekly Asahi. "It is no longer a realistic attitude to draw a line between boy students and coeds. Nowadays, some boys indeed look like girls, while some coeds look like boys. I still hold that girls come to college with a less definite purpose about how to make use of the fruits of their education. But many boys nowadays are quite as aimless as the girls."

Yen In International Limelight

"The government is now prepared to join the negotiations on multilateral revaluation of currencies, acting in concert with other countries," Finance Minister Mikio Mizuta announced in Tokyo on August 28, 1971.

The announcement was made 13 days after the dramatic declaration on August 16 (Japan time) by U.S. President Richard Nixon of the eight-point measure to defend the U.S. dollar, including suspension of the dollar's convertibility with gold and 10 per cent import surcharge.

1945:	July 27	Bretton Woods Agreements take effect.
1948:	Jan. 1	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) takes effect.
1950:	June 25	Korean War breaks out.
1952:	June 25	Japan joins International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank.
1960:	July 1	Free Yen account is created.
1964:	Sept. 7	IMF General Meeting is held in Tokyo.
1967:	Nov. 22-24	Gold rush takes place.
1971:	June 4	8-point program for the defense of yen is decided.
	Aug. 16	Nixon shock: convertibility of dollar into gold is suspended.
	Aug. 28	Yen floated.
	Dec. 19	Yen rate is revalued upward to ¥308 to the dollar, following the conclusion of the Smithsonian agreement.
1973:	Feb. 12	Dollar parity is reduced 10 per cent.
	Feb. 14	Yen floated.
	Mid-May	Gold price surpasses \$100 per ounce.
	June 16	The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raises the posted price of crude oil by 70 per cent.
	Nov.	Yen rate drops to ¥285 to \$1.
1974:	Jan. 4	Bank of Japan's intervention point in the exchange rate is raised to ¥300.

Mizuta's announcement had an extra significant impact on the Japanese economy as it meant the departure of the Japanese yen from the fixed exchange rate of ¥360 to the dollar which had lasted for more than 20 years.

And it was all the more so because the postwar history of the Japanese economy had been marked by the all-out struggle of the entire nation to abide by the fixed exchange rate of the yen, as Toshihiko Yoshino, former director of the Bank of Japan, puts it.

Immediately after Nixon's announcement, major foreign ex-

change markets in Europe and bullion markets in London and Zurich were closed, but the financial authorities of the Japanese government kept the Tokyo exchange market open, to the astonishment of the world, in the hope of further defending the yen's fixed rate.

Finance Ministry officials declared that the suspension of the dollar-gold convertibility was a natural development and not a surprise, and pledged observation of an eight-point yen-defense measure, including promotion of import liberalization and liberalization of foreign investments in Japan. The nation's financial authorities desired that these measures were enough to prevent revaluation of the yen, which would have been detrimental to Japanese exports.

But things did not turn out as simply as the authorities imagined. Dollars began flooding the Tokyo exchange market in the form of advance payments for exports. On August 27, which became the last day of the defensive operation, more than \$1,200 million was invested in yen speculation, increasing Japan's foreign exchange reserves to \$12,500 million, the world's second biggest following West Germany.

The exchange rate of ¥360 to the dollar had governed the behavior of Japanese businessmen and financial authorities for more than 20 years as indisputable rule. Consequently, the impact of the flotation and the revaluation that followed was immense since the fixed rate had been taken for granted for so long a span of time. Nevertheless, exactly how that figure, the rate of ¥360 to the dollar, was decided still remains unclear.

The single and fixed exchange rate was introduced in April 1949 by the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers in the form of a memorandum to the Japanese Government.

The rate was not at all based on the voluntary judgment of the Japanese side. The decision was made at the initiative of the United States as was the case with the Japanese Constitution.

Before the implementation of the ¥360-to-the dollar rate, multiple rates existed, regulating Japan's foreign trade. For instance, in August 1948, the yen's exchange rates averaged ¥112 to the dollar for imports and ¥331 for exports.

In extreme cases, a Japanese trader paid a mere ¥9 to \$1 for the import of waste skins, while the yen was quoted at ¥1,078 to the dollar for the export of X-ray films.

The secrecy which shrouded the decision on the ¥360-to-the dollar rate was revealed to a large extent when Toshihiko Yoshino, the then director of the Bank of Japan, obtained in January 1971 a copy of the report compiled by the mission headed by Dr. Ralph Young, who came to Japan on May 20, 1948, with the aim of ascertaining the possibility of establishing a single exchange rate for the yen. The first part of the report was compiled in Tokyo on June 12.

Yoshino confides that he withheld immediate disclosure of this report as he feared that, if made public, the report would unnecessarily stimulate the view in favor of an upward revaluation of the Japanese currency as discussions over a change in the exchange rate of the Japanese currency were becoming rife at that time.

The "Nixon shock" of August 15, 1971, made Yoshino believe that it would be advisable for him to keep the contents of the report out of sight for a longer period, because the Young mission recommended in its report the creation of a single exchange rate at around ¥300.

The Young report was thus stored for more than 12 months by Yoshino after he obtained them from Dr. Young, and was made public following the release of the report from the file of the confidential documents of the American Government in March 1972.

The Young mission blamed the lack of a single exchange rate for the rise of inflation in Japan. It is true that government-subsidized irregular trade activities were causing an excessive amount of liquidity, enhancing the inflationary trend even if imports surpassed exports. Below-cost exports and imports were being carried out, with dependence on government subsidies.

According to Yoshino, it is not known how GHQ reached the conclusion to set the yen's exchange rate at ¥360 to the dollar, ¥30 higher than the highest advisable limit of ¥330 to the dollar as recommended by Dr. Young, but he believes that the standard set was reasonable when the progress of inflation which took place after the date of the recommendation is taken into account.

Yoshino believes that if it had not been for the Korean War, which earned Japan an extra-huge inflow of dollars, the fixed rate of ¥360 to the dollar would have been changed.

The float on August 28, 1971, created a clear distinction between "losers" and "gainers" in foreign exchange. The shipbuilding industry emerged as the biggest loser since the industry held foreign currency

credits, worth ¥250,000 million, to be paid on a long-term instalment basis.

Although the nation's shipbuilders had begun to conclude yen-based contracts even before the float in anticipation of the yen revaluation. It was not until September 1974 that these shipbuilders liquidated all their exchange losses.

Small and medium sized manufacturers of export items such as tableware, textiles and toys also encountered great difficulties due to the U.S. import surcharge and the yen float. Domestically they had to face competition from the up and coming manufacturers of the developing countries who started to benefit from the preferential tariffs forming a part of the eight-point yen-defense measures introduced on August 1.

Victims of the float were not confined to the industrial sectors. The most decisive hardships were suffered by the residents of Okinawa, numbering close to one million.

They had firmly believed in the reiterated pledge of the then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato that a revaluation of the yen would not be carried out before the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese administration.

They had expected that their holdings in dollars, accumulated under American rule, would be exchanged into yen at the rate of ¥360 to the dollar after the reversion.

Their expectations met a complete betrayal. The residents of Okinawa had to sit idly by and watch the cave-in of their savings, which amounted to \$885.2 million in the form of bank deposits. They also suffered from the increase in the prices of fresh foods imported from the mainland due to the float.

Amid the mounting cries of the residents of Okinawa seeking assistance to offset the losses, the Japanese Government decided to extend a mere ¥1,100 million for the rescue—¥1,000 million for partly offsetting the increase in import prices and ¥100 million as a subsidy to Okinawan students studying in the Japanese mainland so that they might exchange their dollars at the old rate of ¥360 to the dollar.

At the outset, the loss of the Okinawans remained relatively small as the increase rate of the value of the yen was confined to a little over 6 per cent, thanks to the intervention by the Bank of Japan in the

foreign exchange market.

But before Okinawa's reversion to Japan on May 15, 1972, the yen had been revalued by 16.88 per cent as the Smithsonian system of multilateral currency revaluations was agreed upon in Washington toward the end of 1971, and the Okinawans experienced even greater damage.

Meanwhile, the major foreign exchange banks and big trading firms had lost no time in obtaining hit-and-run gains from the flotation.

According to a document produced in the Diet, the 14 major foreign exchange banks and 10 big trading firms were believed to have acquired profits amounting to ¥80,000 million through speculation in yen between August 16, the day of the "Nixon shock," and August 27, the day before the yen went floating for the first time after the war.

The document said that during that period, these banks sold \$3,490 million in net worth in the foreign exchange market, while the trading firms accepted advance dollar payments for exports worth \$884 million.

Despite a denial by the Finance Ministry, speculation in yen is believed to have taken place, as seen from the volume of the sales of dollars at the Tokyo foreign exchange market which soared to seven to eight times per day in the wake of the Nixon shock. Before the shock took place, the volume of the sales of dollars had been around \$50 million.

The funds, which enabled the foreign exchange banks to make net sales of \$3,490 million, were partly recruited from foreign banks. Such borrowings were estimated to have totaled \$1,095 million. Their own funds involved in the pre-float transactions were said to have amounted to \$11,000 million.

The result: the Bank of Japan's heavy purchase of dollars, the value of which was destined to decline following the yen float.

Even if the sales of dollars had been carried out to offset the exchange loss but not to engage in yen speculation, as the Finance Ministry insisted, it is certain that only the major banks and big trading firms could avoid losses by making use of the easing of restrictions on the conversion of the yen to foreign currencies implemented just before the float.

The net sales of dollars by banks, other than the 14 major foreign

exchange banks, amounted to only \$405 million. The receipt of advance payments for exports totaled \$165 million for the trading firms outside the 10 big trading firms.

With these violent developments, the yen was pulled out of its 22-year-long seclusion and pitted against the world's key currencies in the very midst of the international currency upheaval.

The yen, however, was not given free rein. The Bank of Japan intervened in foreign exchange transactions so that the yen's value would not climb too high.

The yen was floating at around ¥320 to the dollar immediately before the exchange rate was raised by 16.88 per cent (¥308 to the dollar) at the conference of finance ministers of the "Big 10" advanced countries in Washington, toward the end of 1971.

The insistence of the Japanese financial authorities on curbing the increase in the international value of the yen was based on the fear that the upward revaluation of the yen might inflict irreparable damage on Japan's exports and consequently impair the entire economy of Japan.

Gradually, their all-out efforts bore fruit, with the yen becoming undervalued and inviting the continuous flow of dollars which later formed the basis of the growth of the Japanese economy.

(Takashi Ihara, the then director of the Financial Bureau of the Ministry of Finance and now—as of 1975—president of the Bank of Yokohama believes that the justifiable rate of the yen would have been in the neighborhood of ¥400 to the dollar at the time the ¥360-to-the-dollar rate was first adopted. According to the research division of the Nomura Research Institute, the yen was overvalued until 1957, stayed equal—¥360-to-the-dollar rate until 1964, and became undervalued thereafter).

Despite the yen's flotation, foreign exchange reserves continued to pile up. In August 1971, the month of the flotation, Japan's reserves rose by \$4,000 million over the previous month to total \$12,514 million.

By the end of the year, the amount reached \$15,235 million and Japan was compelled to accept the upward revaluation of 16.88 per cent, or ¥308 to the dollar, in December. The figure included the 10 per cent devaluation of the U.S. currency.

Even after this large-scale revaluation, the reserves continued to rise, reaching a dazzling \$19,067 million in February, and the yen had

to undergo a second flotation in that month.

The continuous increase in the foreign exchange reserves in defiance of the flotation and the consequent upward revaluation of the yen showed, in a sense, the enhanced competitiveness of Japanese industries, including those of small and medium size.

"We made too much fuss," recalls a spokesman for the Japan Export Metal Flatware Industry Association, located in Tsubame, Niigata, the international hub of metal flatware, in his observation 12 months after the revaluation.

"At that time, the entire town was thrown into confusion. The revaluation seemed to pose the problem of the life or death of the town's 70,000 residents," he said, adding that though the exports to the United States dropped some 9 per cent, the total volume of exports were showing a slight increase.

He further remarked that the exchange rate of the yen in the export contracts stood at 270 to the dollar, and even if the exchange rate were raised by 10 per cent from the ¥308-to-the-dollar level, "we could have withstood it," he said.

The substantial expansion of foreign exchange reserves could not have been achieved without a big surplus in trade with the United States, inviting a Japan-U.S. trade war and culminating in part in the second flotation of the yen's value on February 14, 1973.

After the Smithsonian agreement, the United States had been demanding that Japan confine its trade surplus with the United States within \$2,000 million during 1972. Japan responded. In the Hawaii conference in that year, Japan offered emergency measures to reduce the surplus: the purchase of enriched uranium, worth \$320 million; aircraft for commercial use, \$320 million; and agricultural products for additional storage, \$50 million.

Besides, the government set forth in October Phase Three of the yen-defense program, including the trade control ordinance. But Japan's exports showed no palpable sign of decrease, and the trade balance with the United States yielded a surplus of \$4,000 million, bigger than the 1971 surplus.

On February 13, 1973, the United States resorted to a 10 per cent devaluation of the dollar and the yen went floating. Immediately after the flotation, the Bank of Japan acted to support the dollar to keep the value of the yen at ¥271 to the dollar.

But the yen proved stronger, rising to the level of ¥260 to the dollar from that month and hit a peak of ¥254 in September 1973. The level of ¥260 was maintained until it suffered a sudden depression to ¥285 due to the oil crisis, at the beginning of November 1973.

At the same time, the affluence of foreign exchange reserves was not entirely welcome on the domestic front. It created an excessive liquidity which sparked off the inflationary trend.

Wholesale prices showed a sudden rise of 3.6 per cent in 1970. Though the increase rate declined slightly in 1972, it soared by around 10 per cent in 1973.

Even after the Smithsonian agreement, the Bank of Japan continued to purchase dollars in an effort to support the dollar rate. As a result, the excess of payments in the government foreign exchange account rose to ¥4,400,000 million in 1971 and ¥1,700,000 million in 1972, with the combined total surpassing ¥6,000,000 million.

From around the middle of 1972, Japanese industries had been conducting trade at the rate of ¥270-¥280 to the dollar, and by selling the earned dollars to the Bank of Japan at a rate of ¥301 to the dollar, they earned an extra ¥20 per dollar.

The liquidity on hand—cash and deposits—of trading firms was estimated to have amounted to ¥2,600,000 million, as of March 1973.

With these funds, trading firms made massive investments in all available fields, starting with land, and extending to securities, lumber, wool, raw silk, soybeans, rice, and others. The hoarding of these items by trading firms surfaced as a serious social problem.

The “strong yen” in the international scene made a sharp contrast with the “weak yen” on the domestic front.

Flush with dollars, Japanese sightseers swarmed around the world, and their “money is might” behavior was frowned upon. The massive Japanese purchase of paintings and artistic items on the world market was blamed for the soaring of the prices of these items. The complaints also included the buying of racehorses from Britain. Even German castles were put on sale at a Tokyo department store.

CHAPTER VI

Frustrations Of An Economic Giant

Yukio Mishima's Last Ritual

If news were to be evaluated for its shock and psychological impact on its recipients, the “Mishima Incident” perhaps is second to none as the most surprising news item of postwar Japan. For Yukio Mishima, 45, a prolific novelist whose name had often been mentioned as a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Literature, was the last person any Japanese could imagine as putting an end to his own life in despair.

He was married and had two children. He was rich and lived comfortably in his exotic rococo house with a figure of Apollo in the midst of its spacious garden. He had many fans and followers. The first three published books of his recent tetralogy, “The Sea of Fertility,” were selling very well. He was healthy and adept in Karate and ancient sword play. He acted in films and performed many times on the stage. He was featured in the New York Times Magazine and numerous other overseas publications. He was an established writer and there was

every indication that he would stay as such for many more years to come. Many were the friends who heard him break out into his characteristically hearty laughter, "Ha, ha, ha, ha. . ."

The same man, however, acted as if he were a desperate assassin of the 1930s on that particular day—November 25, 1970. Following a well-prepared timetable, a small band of rightists led by Mishima blitzed the Eastern Army Headquarters of the Ground Self-Defense Force at Ichigaya, Tokyo, and gagged and bound its commander, General Kanetoshi Mashita. Next Mishima delivered a spirited speech to some 1,000 troops summoned at his request. Then he slashed his abdomen with a dagger a moment before one of his lieutenants lopped off his head with a full-length Samurai sword—in strict accordance with the traditional Harakiri rules. The man who beheaded Mishima also committed Seppuku and was himself beheaded by a colleague.

Even before the novelist had concluded his balcony speech, press and network helicopters were hovering over the site, relaying what was going on down below through a nationwide emergency hookup.

"But, why?" The nation was totally puzzled. "What made such an eminent personality as Mishima commit an act like this?" When asked how he assessed the incident, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato had to give an ambiguous reply, "I cannot explain it. I mean, he must have been temporarily insane." But was this true?

Mishima's invasion of the GSDF headquarters was far from the act of a madman. On the contrary, it was a premeditated and carefully planned military swoop. The whole maneuver had been thoroughly mapped out and rehearsed by Mishima and four of his young Tate-no-Kai (Shield Society) followers. And the novelist even went so far as to warn a journalist friend one day before the "day of shock."

A Mainichi reporter received a call from Mishima at 2 p.m. on the previous day. "Would you please do me a favor? I'd appreciate it if you would come to a certain place in Tokyo at 11 o'clock tomorrow morning." The novelist was extremely polite but he had been so on many previous occasions. "Forgive me for not telling you right now what I want to show you tomorrow. I assure you, though, that it is nothing frivolous. Let me disclose to you where the 'certain place' is at 10 tomorrow morning. Ah, one more thing! Could you bring along your camera and an armband of the Mainichi Shimbun?"

At 10 a.m. sharp in the sunny winter morning, Mishima called again. "Would you mind coming to the Ichigaya Kaikan (public hall) at eleven? The hall is right next to the GSDF compound at Ichigaya. There you'll be met by either Kurata or Tanaka of the Shield Society who will direct you to where I'll be."

The Mainichi reporter arrived at the public hall 15 minutes before the appointed hour. He saw there about 30 members of the Shield Society, a small private army that had been organized and financed by the famed author, but was told that "neither Kurata nor Tanaka was in."

Fifteen minutes later a young man in yellow-brown uniform with two rows of brass buttons approached the reporter. "My name is Tanaka, sir," the private army member saluted the bewildered reporter. "Pardon me for having told you a lie. My instruction was to hand you this letter from Mishima Taicho (troop commander) at exactly 11 o'clock. Therefore, I had to hide my identity. Please understand."

This was typically Mishima. Precise to the minutest detail.

The reporter opened the letter. It was Mishima's handwriting—a clean script with every character faithful to the authentic calligraphy.

"Dear Sir: It is not for a show-off purpose that I have asked you to come all the way to Ichigaya today," the novelist wrote. "A certain incident is going to take place within the SDF compound and the chances are that the army officials would try to cover up what will happen there. I request you, for the sake of our friendship, to give your kind help in reporting the truth.

"From the rooftop of the Ichigaya hall you will very soon notice some commotion in the army camp. The moment you see it, come straight into the compound after putting your armband on, and the 'incident' will unfold before your eyes. The whole affair, however, is nothing but a humble act committed by myself and my followers. Please don't expect a sensational story from my action.

"Enclosed is the manifesto, which is also the gist of the speech I am going to deliver to the soldiers at Ichigaya. In the manifesto you will find all that I have in mind, also the content of my appeal to the SDF troops. My motives and intentions are in it, too. Try to keep the paper and the enclosed photos away from the police, for they may

attempt to confiscate them. It is my sincere and earnest hope that you will kindly publish the manifesto in its entirety—not merely excerpts!

“My ‘action’ may be foiled in the midst of its course. In such a case, I beseech you to forget the whole matter and return this letter, manifesto and photos to me. One more thing. Never, never place a telephone call to my wife.

“Very many people will misunderstand what I am about to do. Whatever the people say of me, I wish you would stay unswerved in your firm trust in me, for my action springs from pure patriotism and nothing else. Pardon me once more for imposing on our friendship. I am looking forward to your kind help so that my fellow Japanese will understand my genuine motivation.—Yukio Mishima. P.S.—I am having the same letter as this handed to Mr. Munekatsu Date of NHK Television.”

The manifesto was composed in the most fiery language. It spoke of the feeling of close affinity that the novelist and his Shield Society held toward the Self-Defense Forces, “an army which should be accorded the highest honors and reputation.” Then it burst into a fit of intense patriotism: “Throughout its modern history, Japan has never enjoyed such economic prosperity on an unprecedented scale as in this postwar period. . . this has led to neglect of the very foundation of the state and the people have lost their spirit, being concerned more and more with trifling matters. Japan has been pushed into a hypocritical condition and, subsequently forced into spiritual lethargy.”

The document then called the soldiers’ attention to the “Peace Constitution” and expounded that “the existence of the SDF is unquestionably unconstitutional” and “it is our supreme responsibility to make the SDF a true national military force through the revision of the Constitution.” It lamented the impasse within the “illegitimate” army, then asked, “Where has the traditional Samurai spirit gone? The present Self-Defense Forces are full of self-deception. Has the spirit of the SDF grown rotten?”

The novelist-patriot was asking the soldiers to rise in a coup d’etat to demand the revision of the Constitution.

Finally, the manifesto declared: “Now we will show you the higher value of the true human spirit. That is neither liberty nor democracy. . . It is, instead, the ‘true and real Japan.’ We die to protest

against the Constitution which has mutilated the time-honored tradition of our beloved country, Japan. Is there anyone who agrees with our opinion? If there is, let us die together.”

“But what does he mean by ‘let us die together’?” As the Mainichi reporter pondered, he heard the siren of police patrol cars speeding up the path to the GSDF Eastern Headquarters. The reporter and Mr. Date of the NHK ran up the slope to the top of the hill where the headquarters building was located.

There were already approximately 100 soldiers standing before the balcony adjacent to the office of the commander of the Eastern Army. “Our commander has been taken hostage,” one of them explained. “The order is ‘Everyone out to the parade ground.’ But we don’t know why,” said another.

Soon the people on the parade ground saw Mishima standing on the parapet at the end of the spacious balcony. He was looking down at the gathering crowd which had swollen to more than 1,000 in a matter of minutes. Clad in the Shield Society uniform, the novelist was wearing a headband on which was written the traditional slogan, “Seven Lives to Serve the Nation,” the words cherished by the wartime Kamikaze suicide squads. Mishima began to speak.

His speech was largely in line with the manifesto, the Mainichi reporter observed. The only difference was the shouting and heckling from among the soldiers gathered some 10 meters below. As Mishima began, “We have dreamed of discovering a picture of the true Japan in the life of Jieitai (Self-Defense Forces), a young man from the crowd retorted, “Shut up, you fool!” Other soldiers joined in the chorus—“Stop acting as a hero!” “We don’t follow you. Come down here!”—and many more similar barbs were uttered.

Mishima, in the meanwhile, remained unyielding. “Be silent. Listen! I say, listen to me!” he shouted back. “I’m speaking from my heart. This is a Bushi (warrior) speaking to warriors. Don’t you understand?”

His speech, however, failed to stir up a sympathetic reaction from the crowd.

Press helicopters kept closing in, drowning out Mishima’s voice with the ear-splitting noise of their rotors. “You, you soliders of the Jieitai, are you content with your status as an illegitimate child of the

Constitution? Rise! Rise now! Or we'll lose forever the chance to reinstate the Samurai tradition in Japan!" he went on shouting. Nonetheless, more and more insults and obscenities were hurled at him.

Mishima's posture as he stood at the end of the balcony, with his hands on the hips, reminded one of the last scene of "Runaway Horses," the second book of a tetralogy "The Sea of Fertility." The hero of the novel, rightist-assassin Isao Inuma, is described as standing at the edge of a cliff commanding the predawn sea. Inuma has just assassinated an economic magnate who had, though unconsciously, committed an act of blasphemy to the revered Shinto god of Ise. The young patriot is about to put an end to his own life according to the ancient rituals of Harakiri. For a few minutes before his death the pure-minded youth looks down at the ocean where the dark water keeps rolling and rolling.

Mishima perhaps was facing a similar scene, the Mainichi reporter thought as he looked toward the concrete and steel jungle of central Tokyo in the distance and the heckling soldiers close before him. The Japanese version of skyscrapers, the symbol of the nation's economic prosperity, which Mishima had so vehemently denounced, might be giving him an impression now of the broad expanse of the predawn ocean. The shouts and insults of the troopers might be like the meaningless murmur of the waves.

Moreover, the reporter realized, Mishima's language bore a striking resemblance to the written declaration of the young army officers of the 2.26 Incident in 1936, those perpetrators of the abortive coup who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the "restoration of the pure Japan."

Likewise, the way Mishima invited the troopers to "rise now" reminded him of the assassins, also Imperial Army officers, of the 5.15 Incident in 1932. When Prime Minister Inukai tried to reason with them, a leader of the band of intruders cried back, "Talking is useless. Shoot!" The principle of "no words, but action" had always been the shibboleth of the Japanese rightists. They had constantly placed "pure action" before "gabbing about intricate logic," obviously the preference of the Samurai spirit to democracy.

Mishima stared at the jeering crowd for the last time. "All right," he said, "I've come to the full realization that you will never, never in your life, rise to demand the revision of the Peace Constitution. I'll pray for the long life of His Majesty the Emperor now before I conclude this speech of mine." He shouted, "Tenno Heika Banzai" (Long Live the Emperor) three times and disappeared into a room behind the balcony.

Although few on the parade ground knew at that time, the novelist and his four followers had arrived earlier at the GSDF camp on the pretext that they wanted to have an interview with General Mashita, Commander of the Eastern Region of the GSDF. Halfway during the friendly conversation, however, Mishima signaled to the Shield Society members and they sprang to their feet to bind and gag their host. They barricaded the general's office, fought back the aides-de-camp who attempted to rescue their commander and demanded that all the troops be summoned to the parade ground immediately. During Mishima's speech, two youths stood by the barricade made of desks and chairs, one with a dagger pointed at the gagged general, while the fourth, Masakatsu (Hissho) Morita, stood close behind his mentor-commander Mishima.

After concluding his speech, Mishima returned to the general's office and, stripping off his coat, slashed his abdomen in accordance with the traditional Samurai custom. Morita died in the same manner. The remaining three youths unbound General Mashita and returned him to the hands of the waiting officers.

Left in the office were two heads lopped off from their torsos. Soon the heads were set upright, side by side, as if they were a couple of Japanese tombstones.

The three Shield Society youths surrendered to the police and were arrested on the spot for aiding suicide and on other charges. They later pleaded guilty in a surprisingly frank manner and, as the chief judge asked them about their motives, turned the courtroom into a propaganda forum for their patriotic rightist thought.

Why did Mishima kill himself? Why in such a dramatic manner?

To those questions, hundreds of people began giving hundreds of answers the moment the extraordinary incident became known to the public. Some insisted that Mishima tried to pep up the GSDF soliders

but failed, while others argued that he had foreseen the ineffectiveness of his own speech and that the novelist simply wanted to leave a lasting impression on the nation's rightist camp—lasting and strong so that they would one day rise to counter the leftist revolutionaries. Still others insisted that his death was purely “an aesthetic death” that had nothing to do with politics.

Many of Mishima's friends both in and out of Japan were at a momentary loss how to explain the suicide by the brilliant author. In *Newsweek* magazine, one of a number of overseas periodicals that featured cover stories on the inexplicable death, Arthur Miller confessed that he was unable to think of any justifiable motive. “It was a sad, incomprehensible act,” the American playwright said. “Except, perhaps, he may just have come to the end of himself—no more Mishima left. And he knew it and had the grace of doing what a hero should.”

Edwin O. Reischauer revealed a somewhat anthropological insight in the same magazine: “(The) Japanese have this fetish for suicide and tragedy; they find both fascinating the way Americans are fascinated by gun duels in Westerns, and because of that I suspect they will make a great deal of his death.”

The view of Donald Keene, an expert on Japanese literature and one of the closest friends of the deceased, was in a more sympathetic tone: “Mishima was an aesthetic philosopher. His suicide was governed by aesthetic, not political, reasons. . . . The protagonist in his film, ‘Patriotism,’ sees the act of suicide as one of great joy and happiness. I think Mishima's death had the same meaning and spirit.”

The death of Yukio Mishima, in fact, meant the departure of one of the few Renaissance men in contemporary literature. For one can hardly find a substitute who will fill the gap vacated by the author of such fascinating novels as “Confessions of a Mask,” “The Temple of the Golden Pavilion,” “After the Banquet,” “The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea,” such plays as “Five Modern Noh Plays” and “Madame de Sade,” and such penetrating essays as “Sun and Steel” and “On the Defense of Culture.” The persistent probe into the mystery of Mishima's death has developed into a sort of Mishimaology, producing countless books not only in Japan but overseas.

The inner self of the deceased author was dissected and analyzed. Exposed and scanned were his enthusiastic narcissism, passion for spilled blood, and his leaning toward homosexuality. His narcissistic displays were represented, among many other cases, by posing as Saint Sebastian for a famous Japanese photographer—with arrows inserted in his naked body and hands tightly cuffed. His curious rapture with blood was most obvious in his novella, “Patriotism,” in which he narrates the way a young army officer slashes his stomach and the entrails, gushing out from inside the body, “wriggled around like so many animals in a sea of blood.” His inclination toward homosexuality is exhibited in many of his novels including “Forbidden Colors” and the author's close friendship with Nakamura-Utaemon and Akihiro Maruyama (renamed Miwa today), two outstanding female impersonators.

There are many more facets, however, that should be covered before one can know this complex personality of Mishima well. His passionate love of beautiful muscles, well-proportioned masculine bodies and martial arts led him to the fatal involvement with the Self-Defense Forces. Then too, there was this liking for kitsch that he held toward things grotesque and tasteless. He used to take immense pleasure, for instance, in shouldering a portable Shinto shrine—hardly an intellectual exercise befitting the gifted author. No wonder, indeed, that many foreigners have come to conclude that he was “Japan Inexplicable” incarnate, an example of a Nipponese Demon. Many Japanese, meanwhile, are awkwardly split in their appraisal of the “myriad-minded” Mishima.

Had he been disappointed because he did not receive the Nobel Prize for Literature? When the coveted prize went to Yasunari Kawabata two years earlier, Mishima was one of the first well-wishers who visited the elderly novelist. Mishima addressed him, “Sensei (my master), congratulations!” There was not the slightest note of jealousy in his warm gesture, and yet, the personal disappointment that he felt could not be entirely concealed.

Before Mishima turned 40, he had already been talked about for a Nobel Prize. There was no denying that he passionately longed and struggled for it. Indeed, he was quite as qualified as Kawabata. He was not only original and productive but also representative of genuine Japanese tradition, both its elegant profile and the reverse side—a

dark passion for the sword. However, the honor for Kawabata nipped his chance and the period of frustration coincided with his plunge into political activities, including the founding of the Shield Society, a group of some 80 rightist students.

Mishima's death ignited curious repercussions among two extremist groups in Japanese politics. Osamu Takita, an ultraleftist ideologist, bowed his head and groaned, "Alas, our camp lacks fellows with Mishima's guts." As for the ultrarightist groups, the phrase "Let's Follow Mishima" promptly became a common shibboleth. Mishima's annual death day memorial, named "Yukoku-Ki (Anniversary of Patriotism)," has become a kind of get-together for many a thinker with a rightist slant.

There are some signs that Mishima loved to pose as a patriot rather than really believing in rightist thought. In "The Sea of Fertility," for example, Dr. Keene points out that the writer caricatured a rightist figure as one without any noble ideals about Japan and the Japanese. Although one can contemplate Mishima's death in any way he wishes, the whole affair may have a more personal overtone than commonly believed. Nevertheless, when seen from a sociological or historical angle, the controversial death represented an accusing finger pointed at the nation's economic prosperity coupled with spiritual deterioration.

Two years after their friend's death, two of Mishima's friends (Donald Keene and the Mainichi reporter to whom the novelist entrusted his last letter) made a short "memorial trip" to a Buddhist nunnery in Nara. The Enshoji Monastery, they knew, is the scene of the closing chapter of the deceased author's last work, "Decay of the Angel," the final book of the tetralogy "The Sea of Fertility."

A male attendant of the ancient nunnery told them that the famed novelist paid his first visit to the Buddhist institution on a snowy February 26 in 1965. Instantly the visitors realized that the day was the memorial day of the 2.26 Incident. And the first of Mishima's series of four novels was titled "Spring Snow" which, in its turn, reminded them of the powdery snow that carpeted Tokyo on that tragic day in 1936 when a group of patriotic army officers attempted a coup in their earnest hope to restore the "genuine Japan."

The two visitors sat on the veranda of the nunnery, looking at the

beautiful garden and thinking of Mishima and "Decay of the Angel." In the closing chapter of the novel, an aged protagonist meets an abbess who confesses that she has lost all memory of her erstwhile lover and his anguish. "Has he really existed?" she innocently asks. The aged man at that moment comes to realize that "Life is nothing but a puff of breath breathed on a lacquer tray."

One of the two travelers to the Nara temple, if the readers will kindly pardon the indulgence in personal reflection, was the writer of this article.

Berkeley, Quartier Latin And Tokyo

They moved in at dawn, knifing through barricades that shielded the main entrance of the mock-Gothic Yasuda Auditorium on the Tokyo University campus. The barricades—palisades of iron pipes, steel panels, drum cans, desks and chairs—were so sturdily fabricated that police had to use power saws, blow-torches and sledge-hammers to batter and burn them down.

Then, under a deluge of stones, rocks and ignited Mototov cocktails, the frontline squad of the riot police sprinted toward a band of 23 diehard radical students who had holed themselves atop the auditorium's clock tower—the symbol of the nation's most prestigious university from which seven of Japan's 12 postwar Prime Ministers had graduated.

Police helicopters clattered overhead, spraying tear gas on the helmeted and towel-masked student strikers who had been entrenched atop the auditorium building in a violent confrontation with university officials and law-enforcement authorities. The militant students were demanding that the university administration practices, which they claimed were "antiquated," be overhauled and "ivory-towered" professors promptly purged from the university.

The police siege continued for more than 10 hours before all of the 631 striking student leaders were jailed. The mass arrest brought a violent end to the bitter, year-long Todai (Tokyo University) struggle. It was shortly after 5.30 p.m. on January 19, 1969.

Thousands of miles away, on the same day, about 15,000 young Americans, mostly university students, marched up Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., to protest Richard M. Nixon's assumption of the Presidency, denouncing him as a "promoter" of the Vietnam War.

In Paris, also the same day, downtowners were stunned to watch the breathtaking aerial acrobatic act of a fire station ranger who spacewalked at the end of a rope hung from a helicopter to remove a large Viet Cong flag raised atop the center pinnacle of the Notre Dame Cathedral by a student activist.

The incidents in Tokyo, Washington and Paris were the product of the trend of the times—a violent upheaval by young revolutionaries who triggered a worldwide chain reaction of student turmoil aimed at toppling established political and social systems.

The worldwide storm of student radicalism in the late-60s swept across university campuses, bringing about the upheaval of militant activists who belonged to the multi-factioned New Left.

Since the student revolt was then an international phenomenon, the techniques of the Japanese radical students' street demonstrations were much the same as those of student demonstrators in other countries.

Left-wing activists in Tokyo copied the tactics of the "barricade struggle" of the Quartier Latin students in Paris or at Berkeley in California. They frequently attempted to "liberate" student towns by erecting makeshift barricades during clashes with police—mainly in Tokyo's Kanda district where universities are concentrated.

Japanese translations of books authored by world-renowned revolutionary gurus like Che Guevara, Herbert Marcuse, Rosa Luxemburg and Mao Tse-tung were widely read by Japanese campus activists.

While scrawls of red aerosol paint on university campus walls in the United States and European countries screamed Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh" or "Che Guevara Lives Forever," revolutionary graffiti on Japanese university buildings demanded "Yankee Go Home," "Stop the Vietnam War" or "Down With (Prime Minister) Sato!"

Activists of New Left factions in Japan picked the major political and academic issues of the day as prime targets of their anti-

establishment struggles.

Student struggles extended over a wide range. They demanded better cafeteria food or attempted to block tuition raises. Militant student vanguards clashed head-on with riot police on the streets in an attempt to topple the government or to drive U.S. Forces out of Japan by denouncing the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in 1970.

Like anti-establishment activists in some other countries, student radicals in Japan were also multi-factioned. Zengakuren (which literally means All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associations) had been formed in September 1948 with a membership of about 300,000 at 145 universities and colleges across the nation. But, it was only around 1950 that members of the radical student federation acted under unified leadership.

The Zengakuren split into a myriad of small factions, especially after the anti-Japan-U.S. Security Treaty struggle in 1960. In the mid-1960s, police estimated that there were five major organizations and 21 medium-small groups of militant student activists.

The three most militant factions were then known as Sampa Zengakuren (three-faction alliance). They were Chukaku-ha (Middle Core Faction), Shagakudo (Japan Socialist Student League) and Shaseido (Japan Socialist Youth League). Kakumaru-ha (Revolutionary Marxist Faction) was also known for its militant street demonstration struggles.

The Sampa and other New Left factions were opposed to the campaign policy of the Japan Communist Party (JCP), denouncing JCP activists as "weak-kneed" and "doomed to failure."

The main target of the activist campaigns in the mid- and late-60s was the Japanese Government's "involvement" in the Vietnam War. The political dissenters charged that the government "allowed" the U.S. Forces to use bases in Japan (mainly Okinawa) in connection with the Vietnam War.

The activists demanded that the government stop letting the U.S. Forces use bases in Okinawa and Iwakuni in western Japan for B-52 bombers or Phantom jet fighters, or build "field hospitals" at Army bases in the Kanto Plain area and use Japanese bases to accommodate servicemen from Vietnam on rest and recreation programs.

The anger of radical students exploded when the government announced that the 75,000-ton U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Enterprise* would visit the U.S. naval base in Sasebo City, Nagasaki Prefecture, on January 18, 1968. Riding on the Japanese people's "nuclear allergy" and the fact that a nuclear-powered warship would call at a port city in the prefecture once hit by an atomic bomb, radicals declared that they would fight to the last ditch to obstruct the *Enterprise's* visit to Sasebo.

Almost everyday, student activists held anti-*Enterprise* rallies in Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, Kobe and other cities. Clashes between student activists and riot policemen were repeated in these cities almost daily.

On January 15, the National Police Agency set up a special headquarters in Sasebo City and massed about 6,500 policemen in northern Kyushu to control student demonstrations.

Shocked by the prompt concentration of a large number of student activists and unionists (about 20,000) in and around Sasebo City, the Japan Socialist Party issued a special appeal to demonstrators for "reason and moderation" in their movement against the visit of the *Enterprise*.

Militant students of the Sampa factions, however, ignored the JSP appeal and engaged repeatedly in bloody clashes with riot policemen on the streets near the Sasebo base. After a one-day delay, the *Enterprise* entered the base and left for Vietnamese waters five days later.

Promptly after the departure of the *Enterprise*, Prime Minister Eisaku Sato announced that future American proposals for the visit of the nuclear aircraft carrier would be accepted. He admitted, however, that the government had failed to seek public cooperation and understanding of the issue.

The anti-military struggle of militant activists intensified in the Tokyo area also. In March 1968, about 10,000 students, unionists and ordinary citizens held a rally in front of Camp Oji in Tokyo to demand prompt removal of a U.S. Army field hospital there for servicemen wounded in the Vietnam War. More than 630 persons were arrested in clashes with police. One person was killed in one of the violent clashes on April 1.

The largest anti-establishment demonstration in the late-60s occurred in Tokyo's Shinjuku on October 21, 1968, the annually-observed International Anti-War Day.

It began when an estimated 6,000 members of various New Left factions of Zengakuren staged demonstrations around Shinjuku terminal station in the evening in an attempt to block the passage of Japanese National Railways oil tank cars chartered by the U.S. military for hauling jet fuel from Yokohama to Yokota Air Base in the western suburb of Tokyo.

Some excited demonstrators seized the station trucks, blocking railway traffic for hours, while some students set cars on fire and occupied the entire Shinjuku Station compound in a wild melee. About 3,000 riot policemen were called in to restore order. They teargassed the demonstrators and trained water cannons on students. Spectators snowballed and their number swelled up to around 60,000 by 6 p.m.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department applied the anti-riot clause against rioting students for the first time in 16 years. The MPD called up all available policemen in the Shinjuku area—even those off-duty—and sent some 12,000 to the scene of the riot. More than 500 activists were arrested.

In the meantime, the same day, a total of 210 militant students who demanded immediate dissolution of the Self-Defense Forces were arrested after they clashed with police in front of the Defense Agency in Roppongi, Tokyo.

The antiwar sentiment among youths also produced a unique phenomenon. Every Saturday evening in early 1969, guitar-toting campaigners of the Beheiren, a New Left organization named Japan Committee for Peace in Vietnam, held what they called "people's folk song rallies" in the underground concourse of the west exit of Shinjuku Station. Antiwar songs were sung by some 7,000 to 10,000 people who jammed the underground plaza. The folk song rally fad spread to Osaka, but it soon faded when police banned it, charging that the presence of a crowd would block pedestrian traffic.

Prior to the outburst of student radicalism in the late 1960s, the Okinawa struggle had already been kicked off by political dissenters. Radicals demanded "immediate, unconditional and complete" return of Okinawa which was under U.S. control. The immediate target of the

Okinawa struggle was to topple the Sato government.

Sato, who staked his political fate on the reversion of Okinawa, promised the nation that the status of U.S. Forces which would remain in Okinawa after reversion would be similar to those in other areas of Japan (i.e. non-nuclear armed).

Demonstrations spearheaded by militant activists across the nation were aimed at the terms of the reversion treaty which would allow American troops to remain in Okinawa after the strategically-important fortress island was returned to Japanese rule.

The activists designated April 28 as Okinawa Day and staged rallies and demonstration marches on and around that day to demand reversion of an Okinawa "without bases." Okinawa had been under U.S. administration since April 28, 1952 when the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty entered into force.

A large Okinawa struggle campaign was staged on October 8, 1967. About 2,500 radical students rallied around Tokyo International Airport in an attempt to block Prime Minister Sato's departure on a visit to Southeast Asia.

Groups of radicals clashed with riot policemen on three bridges around the airport. In one bloody clash, Hiroaki Yamazaki, a Kyoto University student who belonged to the Chukaku faction, died. On that day, police arrested more than 300 students. Some 700 students and policemen were injured.

Then on November 12 of the same year, the Okinawa struggle climaxed in a violent street demonstration by some 7,000 students and unionists who rallied to protest Sato's visit to the United States.

Charging that Sato's visit to Washington would virtually strengthen Japan's military ties with the United States, the activists carried out a series of bloody clashes with police in shopping centers around Kamata Station near Haneda Airport.

In their campaign, radicals theorized that residents in Okinawa would not be able to lead a "peaceful life" if American military bases remained there. The activists demanded that Okinawa be "liberated," not merely returned to Japanese rule.

The Okinawa struggle dragged on and even while the signing of the reversion treaty took place simultaneously in Tokyo and Washington on June 17, 1971, about 90,000 demonstrators held protest rallies throughout Japan.

In Tokyo's Meiji Park, an ultraradical splinter group tossed a home-made bomb against riot policemen. Thirty-seven frontline policemen were injured, most of them seriously. It was the first time that radicals used a bomb during a clash with police.

While fighting their own version of the Okinawa reversion struggle, student radicals also zeroed in on other targets to promote their anti-establishment campaign.

The 1969 case at Todai was one noteworthy example. The Tokyo University struggle was initiated in a protest against punishment of medical students who tried the university hospital director kangaroo-court style over the treatment of the mandatory intern system. It promptly spread from the university's School of Medicine and developed into a campus-wide struggle to protest the conventional administration setup at the university.

What the Todai students attacked in particular were the "antiquated" school administration system, "outdated" lectures and "remote" professors who rarely mixed with students for serious political discussions.

To demand a large share of authority, militant students continued to strike for more than six months before they finally gave in to police in the dramatic final skirmish on January 19, 1969.

The damage caused by the Todai struggle was extensive. The Education Ministry and Todai authorities decided promptly after the fall of Yasuda Hall to cancel entrance examinations for the incoming class. The university was virtually crippled for years and the traditional reputation of Todai as the nation's most prestigious institution of higher education suffered.

The students demanded that the university give them the right of direct participation in the university's administration system, but their demand was not fully accepted. It seemed that students fought not to achieve academic reforms, but to attempt to topple the traditional order of the Japanese society in general.

The wind of student radicalism that swept across the urban areas of the nation drifted next to the small Kanto Plain city of Narita, Chiba Prefecture, some 55 kilometers northeast of Tokyo.

What was staged there was the Narita Airport struggle—the stubborn resistance of a student-farmer alliance against the con-

struction of a giant jetport formally designated as New Tokyo International Airport.

In July 1966, the Cabinet decided to build a futuristic airport in Narita City—a small, wind-swept suburban city which produces little other than peanuts. The government formed the New Tokyo International Airport Corporation and commissioned it to purchase land, build the airport and operate it.

The government then stressed that it is necessary to build a new jetport because the Tokyo International Airport at Haneda is overcrowded. Student radicals, however, charged that the new jumbo airport would be used for military purposes at the discretion of the government.

Narita farmers were strenuously opposed to selling off their personally-owned land handed down to them through generations. Militant students promptly declared that they would support the farmers in their fight against airport authorities. In amazingly well-coordinated action, leaders of various radical groups set up regional action strongholds in and around Narita City, determined to fight to the last ditch. The farmers and their families also stood up with students to spurn the attempts by airport corporation officials to purchase farmers' land by the luring bait of wads of yen.

To help airport authorities expropriate farmland, thousands of riot policemen in full-scale street combat uniforms were called in twice in February and September in 1971.

The bloodiest incident in the Narita struggle occurred on September 16, 1971, when three policemen mobilized from Kanagawa Prefecture were ambushed and slain by student guerrillas near the airport construction site. It marked the first case in Japan's postwar history in which as many as three police officers on duty were killed in any single criminal or security incident.

The three ill-fated officers, according to eyewitness accounts, were assaulted on a dirt road by helmeted radicals who battered the policemen with bamboo sticks and nail-studded wooden sticks. One died with a ruptured heart and two of fractured skulls. The three were among some 5,000 riot policemen mobilized on that day to control some 3,000 demonstrators.

Even in 1975, a contingent of student activists continues to hold their "Protestors' Towers" standing near the end of the airport's 4,000-

meter main runway. The existence of the towers is one of the factors preventing the opening of Narita Airport.

What apparently shocked and frightened the Japanese masses more deeply than the Narita bloodbath in 1971 was a series of explosions of home-made bombs triggered by ultraradical activists.

Two large blasts occurred successively in Tokyo in the latter half of December—one killing the wife of a high-ranking Tokyo police officer and the other shattering a downtown police box in Tokyo's Shinjuku, injuring a patrolman and 11 pedestrians on Christmas Eve.

A bomb which killed Mrs. Tamiko Tsuchida, 47, wife of Police Superintendent Kuniyasu Tsuchida, then chief of the Metropolitan Police Department's Police Administration Division (MPD's No. 3 post), on December 18 was contained in a parcel disguised as a year-end gift. The terrorists' bomb also injured Tsuchida's fourth son Kyoshiro, 13.

Superintendent Tsuchida, who later became the top commander of the MPD, issued a statement directed at terrorists: "Never do such a thing again if you have any conscience!" Tsuchida's plea was ignored by terrorists and bomb blasts on a larger scale occurred in and around Tokyo thereafter, killing a score of persons and injuring hundreds more. Shortly after Tsuchida assumed the MPD's top post in 1975, a special squad of detectives arrested a batch of suspected bombers.

Another major bomb blast in 1971 occurred in front of a police box in Tokyo's Shinjuku district on December 24. This time the bomb was planted in an abandoned Christmas tree pot. The blast crippled a patrolman and injured 11 pedestrians, including three women. There were about 40 home-made bomb explosions across the nation in 1971, killing one person and injuring about 50 others in all.

The radical activists continued to stage violent street fights against police. The public reacted with anger to the "senseless" action of radicals in burning down the Mastumoto-ro restaurant in Tokyo's Hibiya Park in autumn of the same year.

The students were not quite happy, either. The number of inter-factional fights (called "Uchi Geba" in Japanese)—meaning "internal gewalt (violence in German)" among radicals sharply increased. In many cases, activists were killed in Uchi Geba fights which were

waged among activists to clinch the leadership of the anti-establishment struggle.

The student revolt had certainly reverberated throughout the nation. Parents were shocked to find their own sons and daughters appearing among anti-police demonstrators, as they watched scenes of clashes frequently telecast live. Some ordinary citizens, on the other hand, publicly declared that they supported student activists psychologically.

But, there was a limit to which the impact of revolt could penetrate the hearts of the Japanese masses. The majority of the nation was fully aware of the danger of "playing with revolution." For one thing, the masses knew that successful revolutions in world history have generally been closely linked to severe economic and political dislocations.

The Japanese economy was then in robust shape and the people living under the stable political and social setup regarded the revolution advocated by radicals as nothing but a game of rhetoric.

First, Cats Went Mad

Everything in Minamata City (pop: 50,000) in Kyushu's Kumamoto Prefecture was typical of a small yet peaceful Japanese local city where people are affable and friendly, satisfied with their modest life.

Some 40 per cent of the city's working people were employes of the Minamata Plant of the Chisso Corp., one of the nation's leading polyvinyl chloride manufacturers, which the local residents called simply "the Plant" or "the Company" with a certain amount of pride and affection.

The fishermen, who accounted for a very small portion of the population, had nothing to complain about their catch from the Sea of Yatsushiro, known more romantically as the Sea of Shiranui ("sea of mysterious flame") for its abundant noctilucae that illuminate the sea water at night.

Given all this plus the view of the city's rolling green hills and scenic inlets, a casual visitor would have included in a description of Minamata such suitable words as peacefulness, calmness and goodwill

among its people. But, without anyone's knowledge, Minamata was racing blindly toward disaster—and when the calamity struck, the entire city was plunged into a maelstrom in which despair, hostility and human egotism became the chief characteristics.

An ominous sign appeared in the early 1950s when scores of the city's pet cats began acting crazily. On the embankment and on the wharf along the Bay of Minamata, the cats staggered, danced violently, and then dove into the sea and died.

"First, they staggered like a drunk and then started circling around, dancing like a madman," recall those who have seen the "death dance" of the cats. "In the end, they plunged into the sea and never came up again."

The people of Minamata were baffled at the sight. None of them were aware then that what had struck the cats would soon strike some of them as well.

One winter day of 1953, a young girl named Toyoko Mizoguchi fell ill and showed symptoms that could not be found in any of the medical books. During the next several years, scores of other Minamata citizens, young and old, but mostly fishermen and their families, became bedridden with what was believed to be the same sickness from which the girl suffered.

The symptoms they developed were identical: First, they felt numbness in the hands and legs. Gradually they became unable either to grip anything or walk. Then they found it extremely difficult to talk, see and hear. In due course, they lost the sense of taste and become incapable of swallowing food. When they died, the end came in a violent fit of convulsions. Some survived, but were disabled for the rest of their life.

When the bizarre sickness spread in the city, the people were appalled. There was the chilling memory of the mad cats and their dance. Was it not the same fit of convulsions that had driven the cats to what appeared to be a "dance of death?"

There was a foundation for such a theory. When the convulsions begin, a patient's legs move "automatically," as an old woman who contracted the sickness in 1955 once put it, as if they had a will of their own. She said:

"I try to stop, but I can't. My legs move forward against my will. I

somehow manage to turn around but, with my legs not following as they should, I soon fall flat on my back. As soon as my back hits the ground, my body, in another stroke of convulsions, 'automatically' jumps up. Then I find myself running and leaping, totally against my will. If this should happen to a cat, it would appear as if the cat were dancing—and that's for sure."

The physical and mental torment of the ailing and their next of kin was unendurable torture. As the sick persons writhed in the agony of tormenting convulsions, their bedside relatives simply wept without knowing what to do.

"It is an anguish that one could expect only in Hell," once said a 57-year-old woman in recalling how the eerie illness struck her son, daughter (who eventually died at the age of 29) and herself. She added:

"In the hospital, I wondered which one of us would be the first to die. I was already as good as dead. I could hardly hear, talk or eat.

"But I was able faintly to see my son and daughter writhing unconscious on their beds near mine. Whenever a fit of convulsions struck them, they stretched out their arms and legs, as if to hug something in the air, and 'danced' violently on their back.

"Gradually, I became inclined to think that we were already dead and already in Hell. I couldn't believe that this kind of thing could happen in this world of ours. Already in Hell, I kept thinking, that's where we were now."

The social impact of the sickness—which the people of Minamata began to call the "cat dance disease" or "Minamata disease"—was awesome. Not surprisingly, many believed that the illness was an epidemic, and healthy Minamatans made it a point not to mingle with the ailing people.

To make things worse, local physicians somehow concluded that the "cat dance disease" was an epidemic and advised the city officials to disinfect the areas where the sickness broke out. As a result, a form of social ostracism cropped up. Hostility grew between the ailing and the non-ailing—and Minamata was shrouded by a thick pall of gloom.

"We were really discomfited by this epidemic announcement," recalled Mrs. Yoshimitsu Tanaka, whose daughter, Jitsuko, 21, had contracted the bizarre sickness.

"After the announcement, shop attendants would not accept

money directly from my hand. They told me to lay the money on the counter. And as I watched, they collected the money with a long stick, saying aloud that the coins had to be boiled for sterilization. They know I was listening. Then they would tell me not come to their shop again."

In 1956, scholars of Kumamoto University formed a Minamata Disease Medical Research Team and embarked on an extensive on-the-spot research on the sickness. Studying the illness in terms of internal medicine, pediatrics, pathology, neurology, bacteriology, forensic medicine and sanitation, the team lifted one thick layer after another of the mystery surrounding the sickness. Slowly but steadily, the true nature of the "cat dance disease" was exposed.

It was discovered that the sickness was concentrated in the districts where people lived mainly on fish. There was no sign of contagion and it appeared that the ailment had little to do with age and sex. The team also learned of a conspicuous trend in the family concentration of patients, particularly among fishermen's families. And, it seemed, the fishing season had a lot to do with the outbreak of the sickness.

Toward the end of the year, the theory of infection by bacteria or viruses was almost totally dismissed. The researchers began to believe that the sickness was a result of poisoning caused by some heavy metallic material which had been taken into human bodies through fish and shellfish.

After a series of painstaking efforts to pinpoint what metallic material had caused the bizarre sickness, the research team arrived at the conclusion in June 1959 that organic mercury was to blame. The team then announced that the fish caught in the Bay of Minamata was found to be carrying a large amount of mercury originally contained in the waste water discharged into the sea by what was the pride of the city: the Minamata Plant of the Chisso Corporation.

The conclusion sent shockwaves among the Minamatans. The fish retailers cooperative of the city promptly announced that it would no longer purchase fish caught in the sea along the Bay of Minamata. The citizens stopped eating fish, switching to beef and chicken.

What made the research team's conclusion even more shocking and sensational was the fact that it pointed an accusing finger at "the

Plant" as the "culprit" who had caused the calamity in the city. To the majority of the Minamatans, this was a painful conclusion—for it was "the Plant" that made Minamata grow large and prosperous as a city.

Since it was constructed in 1908, the Minamata Plant of the Chisso Corp. (capital: ¥7,813 million; head office: Tokyo) had always been the city's largest and most active business enterprise contributing enormously to the city's finance. Just how important "the Plant" was to Minamata can be gauged by the following fact: Of the city's tax revenue totaling ¥210 million in 1961, some ¥115 million was from Chisso's Minamata Plant.

Admittedly, the Minamatans had felt that they were greatly indebted to "the Plant" for the development of their city. Now, they had to face the cold and painful fact that, because of the poisonous chemical compound dumped into the sea by "the Plant," some 400 of their fellow citizens had fallen victim to an eerie disease and nearly 70 of them had died in extreme agony.

The victims of the sickness and the fishermen justly sought compensation from "the Plant." But many Minamatans gave them dirty looks, criticizing them for attempting to drive "the Plant" out of the city.

In December 1959, Chisso reluctantly agreed to pay an indemnity of ¥100 million for polluting the sea and thus depriving the fishermen of the means to earn a living. But, by any standard, the sum was too small to be shared by some 4,000 fishermen who deserved indemnity. Chisso also agreed to pay an annual compensation of ¥100,000 for an adult patient of the "Minamata disease," ¥30,000 for a juvenile sufferer, and ¥300,000, plus ¥20,000 as funeral expenses, for death caused by the sickness.

In offering this, Chisso requested that the patients and fishermen renounce all rights to claim further compensation in the future—even if a later survey were to hold Chisso, from a legal standpoint of view, to be totally responsible for the outbreak of the cursed sickness.

The sum of compensation that Chisso offered was small and the request that it made was humiliating to the victims of the polluted sea. But the claimants were too poor not to accept what was offered. "We would have turned down the offer, if only the central or local governments had given us financial aid for livelihood," said one claimant. "Most of us were heavily in debt. With no prospect of governmental

aid, we simply could not resist the offer of cash."

In a sense, Minamata was Japan in microcosm: the life of a private individual was to be ignored before the national goal of "economic growth"—and business enterprises had no compunction about destroying and polluting the nation's environment.

But, beneath the surface, the nation's pursuit of high growth was steadily taking its toll in many parts of the nation, just as it had already done in Minamata. And when the shady side of the growth became all too visible, the Japanese were appalled, rather belatedly, at the thought that they were trading their own lives for material prosperity.

Not long after the bizarre sickness in Minamata gained nationwide public attention, residents along a river named Agano in Niigata Prefecture fell ill in 1964 and developed symptoms identical to those of the "Minamata disease."

A survey soon disclosed that this was in fact another outbreak of the "Minamata disease." Only this time, the people were poisoned by organic mercury discharged into the river from a plant of the Showa Denko K.K., one of the nation's major chemical firms.

And while the "Minamata disease" patients were writhing in the agony of tormenting convulsions in Minamata in the south and in Niigata in the north, thousands of the residents of Yokkaichi City in central Japan were suffering—scores of them fatally—from serious cases of what came to be known as "Yokkaichi asthma."

What caused the deadly asthma was apparent: the gigantic petrochemical complex which the city had been so glad to invite to its community in an ardent hope for municipal prosperity.

The complex did make the city economically brisk, but it was at the cost of chronically foul-smelling air and sulfur dioxide that drifted, 24 hours a day, from numerous smoke-stacks and trapped many of its citizens in the throttling grip of "Yokkaichi asthma."

The environment, it seemed, was being destroyed and polluted all over the country, causing a series of grotesque sicknesses to break out. In Toyama Prefecture, too, cadmium discharged from a mine of the Mitsubishi Mining & Smelting Co. contaminated the water of Jinzu River in Fuchu Town and eroded human bones, particularly of women.

This was called the “ouch-ouch disease,” because the afflicted women groaned under the pain of cracking bones and kept uttering, “Itai (ouch)! Itai!” The extraordinary sickness had a horrifying characteristic: just a mild touch on an afflicted woman, and her bones break with a snap at the spot where she is touched.

The plight of the “Kogaibyō Kanja,” or the patients of sicknesses caused by polluted environment, had long remained miserable and unheeded, because of corporate greed, bureaucratic apathy—and the marked ignorance and indifference on the part of the general public toward their environment being destroyed and polluted.

But, with the number of ailing persons increasing at an alarming rate, groups of ecologists and social crusaders began a series of campaigns to give both moral and financial aid to the patients engaged in drawn-out court battles for compensation from the polluters. And, before the mounting cries for the protection of environment, the leaders of the nation’s business world became painfully aware that the days were gone when they could pursue corporate interest at any cost—even at the cost of human lives.

In fact, in the trials of the nation’s “four largest” pollution-disease cases—Minamata, Niigata, Yokkaichi and Toyama—the claimants invariably scored a victory.

Of the pollutant enterprises that were sued, it was perhaps the Chisso Corp. that was dealt the heaviest blow: In March 1973, the Kumamoto District Court ruled that Chisso was totally responsible for the outbreak of the “Minamata disease” and ordered it to pay a staggering ¥937 million to 138 plaintiffs.

But can monetary compensation solve all the problems of the patients? In Minamata even today, the patients carefully try not to be seen by others who give them dirty looks for having done “harm” to “the Plant” that has contributed so largely toward the development of their city.

Saga Of Jungle Stragglers

By the beginning of the 1970s, most Japanese had transformed themselves into peace-oriented, family-centered and comfort-seeking individuals, riding on the crest of the nation’s sustained economic growth. With the war a quarter of a century behind them, nearly 40 per cent of the people belonged to the generation which had no memories of the war.

From time to time, elderly folks deplored the lack of discipline, sense of loyalty, self-sacrifice and perseverance of the postwar generation, but their feeble protests either went unheeded or met with a faint sneer from youngsters.

But the war continued to be a fact of life for at least four former Japanese soldiers. Two of them, Hiroo Onoda and Kinshichi Kozuka, had been heard of now and then in the jungle of Lubang Island, the Philippines, but their whereabouts remained a mystery. The two others, Shoichi Yokoi, hiding out in Guam which was becoming a popular destination for Japanese honeymooning couples, and Taiwanese Teruo Nakamura (Lee Kuang-huei) holding out on Indonesia’s Morotai Island, had long since been considered killed in action.

Three of them came back to life and civilization by the end of 1974 to set many a Japanese and foreigner pondering as to what sustained them during their long ordeal.

Was it their loyalty to the Emperor? Was it their sense of mission and honor? Was it the shame of being captured alive by an enemy, the height of humiliation for the Emperor’s soldiers? Or was it just fear or instinct for survival?

The returnees evoked widespread admiration for their astonishing endurance and sympathy for their loss of the prime of life in the jungles where they had been kept running, hiding and living at the barest subsistence level without knowing that the war, for which they suffered, had long since been lost. But a sizable segment of the people, particularly of the postwar generation reared with new standards of value, questioned the very wisdom of the virtues that the stragglers—and for that matter, many of the prewar generation—had held so dear.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, who had become his

country's most decorated soldier in the guerrilla war against the Japanese forces, pardoned Onoda's harassing activities in Lubang and praised him as "a brave and gallant soldier" and "the highest symbol of the Japanese soldier." A reader of the Mainichi Daily News, however, questioned Onoda's leadership and judgment as an officer.

"March 4, 1944—Lands on Guam to engage in the defense of the island."

"January 24, 1972—Discovered at Talofoto, Guam Island."

The 27 years and 10 months that elapsed between the two dates are left blank in the 19 lines of biographical data that Shoichi Yokoi provided for his book, "Asu e no Michi" (The Road to Tomorrow), an account of his long and lonely life in the jungle of Guam Island.

The next entry in Yokoi's biodata is: "February 2, 1972—Return to Tokyo from Guam Island. Immediately placed in the National First Tokyo Hospital."

Early that afternoon, the 56-year-old former Army sergeant, aided by a Red Cross nurse, walked cautiously down a special Japan Air Lines jet which had brought him back home from Guam after a flight of three and a half hours. A cheering crowd of some 5,000 turned out to give the haggard soldier a hero's welcome. Yokoi repeatedly wiped away tears with a towel as he sat uncomfortably in a wheelchair and was helped past a line of relatives and officials.

"I have come home alive, with a sense of shame," Yokoi told reporters at an airport hotel press conference. He was nervous, and fitful—a mental frame of mind that was only to be expected of a man who had led the life of a fugitive in constant fear of being discovered and, as he expressed, of being killed.

What did the war mean to him? "Why did Japan lose the war? Japan lacked the capacity to fight the war. There weren't enough weapons and planes. There was enough fighting spirit."

And true to the creed of Emperor's soldiers, Yokoi said proudly: "The rifle which I received from His Majesty I have brought home with me. But I am ashamed that I did not serve the Emperor adequately."

Making a silent homecoming with Yokoi were the ashes of his two comrades in hiding—Mikio Shichi and Satoru Nakabatake.

Americans landed on Guam (renamed Omiya Island after its capture three days after Pearl Harbor) on July 21, 1944, after heavy sea and aerial bombardment against the Japanese defenses. On the night of August 10, Lt. Gen. Eiryo Obata, commander of the 20,000-strong garrison, cabled his farewell message to the Imperial General Headquarters, pledging himself and all surviving men to make a final counterattack and die in honor (Gyokusai).

The actual fact is that several hundred soldiers did not join in the "Gyokusai" assault due to lack of communications with headquarters. Yokoi found himself with six men as he separated from his platoon commander who had disbanded his unit to ensure greater maneuverability to stay alive. But most survivors were hungry, wounded or undernourished refugees rather than fighting men. Many died of thirst, hunger or wounds. Others eventually surrendered. Yokoi and his group continued to roam in the jungle, clinging to the faint hope that someday their comrades of the Imperial Army would come back and rescue them.

As months followed months, the seven became separated, largely over the division of food, but Shichi and Nakabatake remained with Yokoi. In the daytime the stragglers hid in bushes. After dusk they would roam for nuts, breadfruit, mangoes, papaya, shrimps, snails, rats and frogs, and then grab a few hours of uneasy sleep in makeshift cottages and later in caves.

Toward the end of 1948, when Yokoi returned from a lone food-gathering mission, he found a message from his comrades saying they were going their own way but that they would come to see him from time to time. Yokoi met with his estranged fellow stragglers occasionally, helping each other build cottages and dig caves in a strange sort of comradeship. In early 1964, Yokoi went over to their cave and found both dead, apparently of starvation.

A tailor by profession, Yokoi displayed his skill in making clothes from the fibers of a tree. "It took me about a month to prepare the fibers, three to four months weaving them into lengths of cloth, and another month sewing it into a suit."

After the death of his comrades, Yokoi lived eight long years in and around the sanctuary of his cave dug on the side of a slope, a cave four meters deep and six meters long with the entrance covered with

bamboo.

One evening in July 1972—actually January 24, 1972, for Yokoi's calendar based on the lunar movement resulted in a difference of six months in the 28 years—he slipped out of his cave to set a trap for shrimp in a stream nearby. Carrying five bamboo traps on his back and two in his hands, Yokoi waded downstream until he reached the bend of the river. He left the stream to take a shortcut and pushed his way through a dense growth of reeds. When he negotiated the growth, he found himself face to face with two armed islanders. There were several more nearby.

"I jumped on one of the armed islanders to try to grab his gun, but I was quickly overwhelmed." That was the end of Yokoi's solitary life away from civilization. His discovery electrified the Japanese, but both his mother and his stepfather had long since died in Nagoya.

On the afternoon of March 12, 1974 a crowd even bigger than that which had greeted Yokoi awaited at Tokyo International Airport to get a glimpse of another war straggler, former Army 2nd Lt. Hiroo Onoda. Wearing a dark suit, the 51-year-old former intelligence officer stepped briskly down the special JAL plane which had flown him from Manila.

Onoda's ramrod straight back, his searching eyes, his accurate choice of words and his stoicism were in marked contrast with Yokoi. Onoda just said hello to his aged parents, who for their part did not betray tears in public. His only visible emotional reaction came when a reporter asked him if he had not thought of coming out of the jungle at the time when Corporal Kinshichi Kozuka died a year and a half before.

"That is not true," Onoda said in a miff. "You can't imagine the chagrin at having your comrade you had lived with 27 or 28 years killed. Isn't it part of man's nature, a natural feeling, that the spirit of seeking revenge becomes stronger?"

Onoda had been a fighting man throughout his life in Lubang where he arrived on New Year's Eve of 1944 with a wad of military notes amounting to ¥5,000, which was a big sum at the time. Two months before, four American divisions under the command of General MacArthur had landed on Leyte to begin the Battle of the

Philippines.

On the eve of his departure from Manila, Onoda and four other intelligence officers who had attended a crash training program at the Army Intelligence School reported to Lt. Gen. Shizuo Yokoyama, commander of the Eighth Division. "No Gyokusai is allowed, never," the commander told the officers. "Stick it out three years, five years. We'll never fail to pick you up. As long as you are alive, do your utmost. I repeat, I shall never permit Gyokusai."

Yokoyama was Onoda's immediate superior officer. But Onoda's assignment to the Eighth Division had been ordered by Major Yoshimi Taniguchi, chief of the Army Intelligence sub-group in Manila.

On March 9, 1974—17 days after his dramatic encounter with Norio Suzuki, a 24-year-old wandering camper from Chiba east of Tokyo—Taniguchi was back in Lubang. In a strange ceremony witnessed only by Suzuki, Onoda saluted Taniguchi and stood at attention with his rifle at his side as his wartime superior read a terse order relieving him of all his duties. Throughout the night, Onoda gave Taniguchi an interminable report on his mission, inside a tent pitched in a clearing of the jungle.

The island near the mouth of Manila Bay was overrun by American forces in a four-day battle which began on February 28, 1945. The Japanese garrison made up of about 200 Army and Navy men suffered heavy losses. The survivors became scattered and by April 1946 all but four had surrendered.

Remaining with Onoda with a pledge to fight it out to the bitter end were Corporal Shoichi Shimada, Private First Class Kinshichi Kozuka and Pfc. Yuichi Akazu. The last mentioned, who had been physically the weakest, "deserted" in September 1949.

Unlike their Guam counterparts, the Lubang stragglers were not mere squatters. They staked out the jungles in the central part of the island as their "sphere of influence" and harassed natives in typical hit-and-run guerrilla warfare to secure food and supplies.

On May 7, 1954 Shimada was killed in a shootout with the Philippine Rangers. His death resulted in the dispatch of a search mission. Onoda's eldest brother Toshio, a medical doctor, and Kozuka's younger brother Fukuji made a 20-day search in vain.

With reports on the harassing stragglers coming in off and on, the

Japanese government sent three search missions between March 1958 and October 1959. After the third mission ended in failure, the government announced that Onoda and Kozuka had been dead, as of May 8, 1954—the day after Shimada was killed. Both Onoda and Kozuka thus officially “died twice.”

But the two soldiers were as alive as ever, moving from one place to another in a more or less fixed pattern. “Whenever we had the time we cleaned our rifles,” as Onoda recalls in his book, “Waga Lubang To no Sanjunen Senso” (“No Surrender: My Thirty-Year-War”). They would sally out of their “territory” and burn piles of harvested rice to scare natives away from their sphere of influence.

It was in one of their raids on farmers at work that they seized a two-band Toshiba transistor radio. They picked up newscasts from Peking, Tokyo, Australia and London. Through the radio Onoda and Kozuka learned of the Tokyo Olympic Games, the inauguration of the Shinkansen bullet train, and EXPO’70 in Osaka. They also picked up newspapers and magazines left for them by search groups. The stragglers’ reaction was that all the information was “the same old enemy trick to sap our fighting spirit.”

On October 19, 1972—October 13 according to Onoda’s own calendar which was only six days amiss in 29 years—Onoda and Kozuka went on another mission to burn harvested rice. Kozuka went over to a pile of rice straws to set them on fire when two bullets cut him down. With Kozuka’s rifle in hand, Onoda ran down the slope into a bush, shouting to himself, “Damn it! I’ll keep firing, firing, firing as long as I am alive.”

Three days later, Dr. Onoda was back in Lubang for the third time and was later joined by another brother, Tadao, a former Army officer who had emigrated to Brazil after the end of the war. The two brothers pleaded with Onoda to come out “like an officer.” Onoda was within hearing distance and sat amused as he listened to his brothers.

Onoda’s reasoning went like this: “With the United States taking a beating in Vietnam, Japan is trying to win the Philippines over to our side. The Philippines is also shifting its pro-American stance to a pro-Japanese one. The Japanese intelligence has sent in the so-called search party in an effort to gain a foothold in Lubang where I have

been holding out. If I go out in response to their appeal, I may spoil the show and the ‘search party’ will have to return to Japan without achieving its purpose. Deep in my heart I was cheering to the search party. ‘I’ll stay out of sight so that you can survey the island thoroughly.’ ”

For Onoda, the “come out” appeal from his brothers was a “don’t come out” plea.

In April 1973, Onoda’s 86-year-old father Tanejiro flew to Lubang and made repeated appeals to his son “to make up your mind if you are going to stay or come out.” No response. He left behind in a cottage—which had by then come to be known as the Onoda Villa—a 17-syllable Haiku poem: “Not even an echo came back in the stillness of the summer mountains.” The straggler read the poem toward the end of the month. With the senior Onoda’s return home, the Japanese government called off all search efforts which had cost nearly ¥90 million.

By then, Onoda admits, there had been a delicate change in his hostility to the Philippines. He was aware that the Filipinos had given full honors to his fallen comrade at his funeral. Why this friendly gesture after killing him? “For the first time since coming to the island, I found myself at the greatest turning point.” His decision was to avoid unnecessary trouble with the natives and to wait until the “next communications” from Japan.

In his encounter with camper Suzuki, Onoda reiterated that he would not come out unless he was given a specific order from his superior. Many praised him for abiding by an order like every good soldier should. But some questioned if Onoda did not ask for the appearance of his wartime superior to absolve himself of his “guilt” in harassing the Lubang islanders.

Shortly before the discovery of Taiwanese Lee Kuang-huei on Morotai Island on December 26, 1974, a Japanese psychologist speaking at an academic meeting theorized that both Yokoi and Onoda were of the “typical introversive type” and that their common trait might stand in the way of their “rehabilitation.” The latter observation seems to have been ill-founded, for both appear to have adjusted well to their suddenly changed and new environment.

A few months after his return, Yokoi married an attractive

woman. He surprised the nation by running as an independent in the House of Councillors election in July 1974. He failed to win a seat in the legislature but put up a good campaign by collecting 262,746 votes.

Onoda, who enjoyed being kissed by and dancing with Brazilian *senhoritas*, went to the United States to promote his own book. In April 1975 he said "sayonara" to his aged parents to join his brother Tadao in Brazil where he purchased a 500-hectare cattle ranch near Campo Grande in Mato Grosso.

Lee Kuang-huei is reported happy with his wife after her second husband voluntarily gave her up when the "dead man" came home alive.

Yokoi, Onoda and Lee cannot recapture the years wasted in the jungles. But they have every right to live happily for the rest of their lives if only to make up for the long blank in the noontime of their lives. Their names will remain as a symbol of great endurance and willpower—and the futility of war.

Yellow Mercenaries In Tel Aviv

Zvi Rimon looked past the police cordon into the arrival lounge of Lod Airport and gasped. A sea of blood. This was no exaggeration. It was a thick sea of human blood in which luggage, hats, a child's doll and various other items were floating. He didn't have to be told where the shots had come from, for the bags, pairs of glasses, cameras and many other belongings of the murdered passengers were scattered in concentric circles denoting how the victims had desperately tried to escape from the massacre.

Never before in his career as a reporter for *Yediot Achronot*, a Hebrew language Tel Aviv newspaper, had he ever been assigned to cover such a gory incident as he was seeing now.

The dead and the wounded had been carried away from the scene of tragedy, but outside the airport building, some dozens of people, lucky survivors of the shootout, were crying in tears, "The Japanese did it! Damn it, the Japanese..."

Reporter Rimon could hardly believe his ears. What has Japan got to do with the Middle East?

Then he heard the police shout, "Get out of there! Clear the way!"

He turned back and saw the border police escorting a handcuffed Oriental into the airport building and then to the police headquarters inside the building. The young man (it must have been the Japanese!) was wearing a shirt stained with blood. But, Rimon was perplexed.

It was several hours after his initial shock before the Israeli journalist was finally able to piece together what had actually happened during that fatal night—May 30, 1972. Three Japanese "Red Army" terrorists launched a surprise attack on a "strategic stronghold of American imperialism," i.e., Lod Airport. They had arrived from Rome by an Air France plane, went through quarantine and immigration formalities, received their checked baggage, took out automatic rifles and then began shooting indiscriminately at the people who stood close around them. They were subdued in a matter of five minutes with two of the three killed either by return fire or by shots from their colleagues.

The lone survivor, the one escorted by the police, was holding a passport bearing the name of Daisuke Namba, the would-be assassin of the then Regent Hirohito in December 1923.

Renowned chemist Aaron Katzir, a brother of the present President of Israel, and 25 others were slain and 72 injured but many of the victims were, quite ironically, not the Jews whom the Oriental terrorists had aimed to liquidate but innocent pilgrims from Puerto Rico.

Soon the survivor's passport was found to be a fake one and the holder's identity made clear. He was one Kozo Okamoto, 24, a student of Kagoshima University and son of a schoolteacher in Kumamoto Prefecture who had devoted his 40-year career to primary education.

Questioned by the press, the aged ex-teacher sat squarely on the Tatami floor of his modest home, bowed low and apologized, "I beseech capital punishment for my son. I even wish I could kill myself in atonement to the victims. I'm deeply ashamed of my son's atrocious act which has shown that my life has been a complete failure. The education I have given to my children and to countless students—it has been totally in the wrong."

From Beirut came another shocking news. The Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine acknowledged its complete

responsibility for "the brave operation launched by one of its special groups in our occupied land." The Japanese group, the announcement said, was called the "Squad of Martyr Patrick Uргуuello." And the whole operation had been jointly carried out by the PFLP and the Red Army of Japan.

Answering a telephone call from Mainichi, the PFLP's spokesman Gassan Kanafani stated, "The purpose of the shooting was to fight for the liberation of the people of Palestine. We fight against American imperialism and also against Israelis... All revolutionaries in the world have one goal. We fight against a common enemy using revolutionary violence."

Kanafani was killed 40 days after this statement when a planted bomb exploded in his car. The day of his death coincided with the first session of the Israeli Defense Forces' military tribunal handling Okamoto's case.

The Japanese public, however, was not fully convinced by the Kanafani statement. The Middle East, psychologically speaking, is so far away from Japan (the "Oil Shock" of 1973 was yet to come) that few could comprehend the inevitability, if any, of Japanese leftists cooperating with Arab extremist organizations.

One explanation was attempted by psychoanalyst Shigeta Saito: "The Japanese have a very hysterical nature and they are easily excited... They (young Japanese) have become less and less capable of controlling themselves under diminishing pressure from above."

But the necessary link was still missing. Why the Middle East? Failing to fill the gap, many concluded that Kozo Okamoto and his comrades were perhaps insane.

What made the people all the more convinced of the youths' insanity was the extraordinary nature of their attack. Lod Airport was one of the most heavily guarded posts in Israel. Opening fire inside the airport itself was a venture that would not yield even one chance in a thousand of survival. Death was predestined, so to speak. Okamoto was captured alive by sheer chance—running out to the tarmac, he fought with an unarmed Israeli employe of a Scandinavian airline and was overpowered.

These youths had made no attempt to take hostages. Never in their tactical plans had they arranged a safe exit from the "enemy land."

Besides, they must have been well aware that they could never inflict a serious blow on the Israeli defense by murdering civilian passengers. Death was their aim. For them, the "fruits" of the attack were incidental. Their code of conduct, in short, was amazingly similar to that of the Kamikaze suicide squad.

The world was shocked, all the more so by the unconventional aspect of the Lod assault. The passion for self-destruction had obviously led the three Japanese youths to Tel Aviv where they could have achieved little more than dying in "enemy" crossfire. But they did something—for the cause of the Arabs—which the Arabs had never been able to do. Aside from killing civilians and aside from killing so many Puerto Ricans who were wholly unconnected with the Middle East conflict, the trio fought their "ideal battle" exactly as they had planned. For them, spiritual self-fulfillment was attained. There is no need to say that they committed an unpardonable act. They believed in a distorted notion of heroism, no doubt. But they also believed in a certain "nobility of failure," a phrase coined by Japanologist Ivan Morris.

Prisoner Okamoto's attitude, too, was uniquely Japanese. After his arrest, he kept insisting that he be shot immediately. Next, he flatly refused to be defended. The judges had to toil till the accused reluctantly consented to accept a lawyer. Finally, on the last day of the military tribunal, Okamoto stood in the dock and proudly expounded his naive ideology.

"We, the three Red Army soldiers, dreamed of becoming the three stars of the constellation Orion on our death in action," Okamoto explained. "I am ignorant of what foreigners believe in the life after death, but I have always been wishing to become a star. Some of those whom I killed, I presume, would also be transformed to so many celestial bodies. It gave me some consolation to imagine that we could twinkle together in the same dark of the night."

The rest of his declaration was an ill-digested mass of anti-capitalist, revolutionary sentiments expressed in barbarous, sometimes incomprehensible Japanese. When he referred to the Six-Day War of June 1967, he repeatedly used a phrase, "Rokugatsu Senso" (Sixth Month, hence June, War), revealing a surprising lack of knowledge about the Middle East. He had undoubtedly been resolved

to sacrifice his life for the cause of something he didn't know too much about.

Moments before the chief judge began reading the sentence, the defense lawyer stood up to challenge the court with a final effort, "Your Honor, it has not been substantially verified to my knowledge that the defendant is over 18 years of age. Israeli law forbids a verdict of capital punishment to a juvenile defendant. I ask for Your Honor's kind deliberation."

No sooner had he sat down, however, than Okamoto rose to deliver coup de grace to his Jewish attorney. "Sir," the Japanese said. "I was born in Kumamoto, Japan, in 1947. I am 24 years old. No less." Okamoto was asking for a death sentence. The lawyer sat back and sighed.

The punishment for Okamoto was eventually life imprisonment. He has since been confined in a prison in central Israel. A few privileged Japanese who have been allowed to visit him there have invariably reported a significant change in Okamoto's thinking. He is reportedly perusing the Old and the New Testaments and there are even some signs that he has ideas about discarding his old fanaticism to become a sort of Zionist.

This ideological about-face is not quite unthinkable, for the trio participated in the operation of the Palestinian movement apparently out of what was for them purely spiritual motives. The manifestations of their radical beliefs indeed could have been rightist as well as leftist. Kozo Okamoto, for instance, is said to have loved the last Waka poem composed by patriotic Yoshida-Shoin:

*Though my body decay in the plains of Musashi,
Forever unperished will be my soul;
The pure spirit of Japan.*

Yoshida-Shoin (1830-1859) was an idealist-patriot-educator who attempted, but failed, to sneak out of Japan aboard an American steamship in his search for higher learning. He was imprisoned by the Tokugawa isolationist government and executed five years later. His fiery Japanism ideology left an enormous influence on his followers who lived in the turbulent decade of the 1860s and thereafter.

Among the contemporaries who idolized the tragic figure was Yukio Mishima, novelist and leader of the patriotic Shield Society, Mishima died on the memorial day of Yoshida-Shoin's execution.

Another figure who influenced the Tel Aviv trio was Osamu Takita, a unique personality often described as "the only man in Japan who can point out the path to the real revolution" or "the mentor who can impart to youthful leftists the courage to die."

A teaching assistant of Kyoto University, Takita went underground in the beginning of 1972 in connection with the murder of a GSDF soldier and remains at large, as of this writing. His book, "Narazumono no Boryoku Sengen" (The Violent Statement of an Outlaw) won immediate acclaim among leftist-oriented students when it was published in early 1971. The young theorist of armed guerrilla warfare (his graduation thesis was on Rosa Luxemburg) was the one who lamented the lack of leftists with "Mishima's guts."

Two of the Lod Airport terrorists were from the university in the ancient city of Kyoto and associated with a New Left sect, Kyoto Partisan Action Group. The group, first organized by Takita, was a vanguard of "desecified radicalism," which meant that they rejected all established left-wing ideologies for militant activities. Out of incessant mergers and splits of many similar ultraleftist factions there finally emerged the Red Army (Sekigun-ha), the most dreaded group of the violent revolutionaries.

The Red Army students had sent the first shockwave across the nation when nine of its members hijacked the Japan Air Lines' Boeing 727 "Yodo" en route to Fukuoka in western Japan on March 31, 1970. Shortly after the tri-jet took off from Tokyo, the youthful hijackers, wielding Samurai swords, tied all the passengers to their respective seats and demanded that the plane be flown to Pyongyang, North Korea. The pirated plane landed at Fukuoka for refueling and after the hijackers released 23 women, children and old men among the passengers, it continued on to the North Korean capital.

After crossing the 38th Parallel on the Korean Peninsula, however, the JAL jet received emergency radio communications from the ground calling, "This is Pyongyang. Pyongyang here." The transmission later proved to have been emitted under South Korean government instructions. The Japanese government was collaborating

with its Korean counterpart, the Republic of Korea, so that the air piracy case might be solved by the two friendly nations.

The scheme didn't work and the hijackers soon found out that they had landed at Kimpo Airport in the outskirts of Seoul instead of Pyongyang. Grueling negotiations for the release of 106 passengers, including two Americans, and the crew ensued.

It took an exasperating 76 hours before the radical student pirates finally consented to let the hostages go in exchange for Parliamentary Vice Transport Minister Shinjiro Yamamura who volunteered to become a "substitute hostage" to solve the deadlocks. The negotiations were televised throughout from Fukuoka to Kimpo, and then to Tokyo where the plane and its crew returned safe from Pyongyang after spending 83½ hours under the control of the hijackers. Yamamura and the crew members who endured the ordeal were instantly made heroes, while the nine youths who disembarked from the "Yodo" at Pyongyang quickly became converts to the thought of North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung.

Nobody, however, predicted at that time that a kid brother of one of the nine air pirates, Takeshi Okamoto, a student of Kyoto University, would go to Tel Aviv two years later to launch another extremist attack against innocent people. The third of the Okamoto brothers had been arrested earlier when he played an active role in the fierce rally to bar Prime Minister Eisaku Sato from visiting the United States.

By early 1972 the ultraleftist organization had been shattered to pieces under diligent police surveillance. The Red Army, therefore, joined its forces with another radical faction, Keihin Ampo Kyoto (Tokyo-Yokohama Anti-Security Treaty Joint Struggle Committee), and unleashed another dramatic assault in February of that year.

The scene was the fashionable summer resort of Karuizawa—although the drama was played in the midst of winter. Five armed radicals of the United Red Army took over the "Asama Sanso" villa that belonged to Kawai Musical Instruments Mfg. Company, held the beautiful 31-year-old wife of the janitor hostage and challenged the police. More than 1,500 police surrounded the three-storied villa and tried to persuade the terrorists to surrender. The five radicals, including two minors, spurned any form of compromise and held out for an amazing ten days.

The final confrontation came on February 28, 1972, when the riot

police squad tightened the noose around the hillside villa. "This is our ultimatum, Come out of your redoubt! We give you 10 minutes to surrender," the police commander demanded over a bullhorn. The radicals refused to surrender. Then the police launched their assault. Water guns poured tons of chilling water into the villa and teargas bombs filled the air with stinging fumes.

The extremists countered by firing pointblank at the police. Two riot troopers were killed and 28 others were injured. The dramatic showdown lasted for ten hours in all until 6 p.m. that day when the police arrested all the terrorists and rescued the woman hostage. The whole operation was televised live throughout the day, with millions of Japanese riveted before their television sets.

Until the "Asama Sanso" Incident, the nation's Big Press had often shown a curious form of sympathy toward "genuinely motivated" revolutionaries. Even when three policemen were brutally slain by student guerrillas during the Narita Airport struggle in September 1971, some of the major newspapers reported that the troopers "died" instead of being "murdered." The drama in Karuizawa, however, changed the psychological tide in favor of the nation's law enforcement officers.

Questioning of the arrested United Red Army (URA) members led the police soon to the most macabre mass murder in the nation's criminal history.

Tsuneo Mori, 27, leading a remnant of the URA cohorts in a desperate run from the police, fled to successive makeshift hideouts in the mountainous area not far from Karuizawa. There, starving slowly and in sub-zero temperature, Mori and his followers became suspicious of each other, organized "military trials" and soon began butchering comrades. Mori and his female co-leader, Hiroko Nagata, 27, were always the presiding judges. Some were accused of disloyalty to the party while others were condemned for improperly showing personal feelings toward female comrades. They were invariably found guilty and sentenced to death. With hands and feet tied, many were simply left outdoors in the sub-freezing temperature to die.

One girl, eight months pregnant, was bound to a tree where she froze to death in the chilling cedar forest. In one case, two younger brothers knifed their elder brother to death simply to show their

loyalty to the revolutionary organization. In another case, a wife had to hide her feeling as she watched her husband die in a hysterical lynching. Still in another, every member was commanded to stab, with a small weapon, an ice pick or a climber's knife, the victim who shrieked and whimpered till the end.

In the course of the series of brutal executions that took place over a period of some two months, 14 "soldiers" including five girls were slain and 16 alive (six girls) were arrested. All the dead were stripped of their clothes and buried in the mountain forest.

As the murdered bodies were recovered from the forest one by one and the goriest confession of the arrested was reported, the nation panicked and experienced excruciating moments. The only bright news in the most bizarre case was the safe recovery of a three-month-old baby girl Raira (named after Arab activist Leila Khalid) whose father was killed and mother put in jail. Upon hearing the news of the rescue, more than 200 local residents surrounded the police station—some holding warmed bottles of milk.

The tradition of bloody intra-party struggle has been carried over by the ultraleftist factions to this day. At the time of this writing, two extremist parties in particular were pitched against each other. The two, Kakumaru-ha (Revolutionary Marxist Faction) and Chukaku-ha (Middle Core Faction), have never ceased attacking and killing each other's members with the result that scores of youths have been slain.

The Red Army's initial operational plan, even before the hijacking of the JAL plane, was a surprise assault on the Prime Minister's official residence in November 1969. The plot was fortunately discovered and crushed by the police only a day before the attack. Among the 25 central figures who drew up the bold plan was one Fusako Shigenobu. She has since illegally migrated to the Middle East and worked as a rearguard at the time of the Lod Airport massacre.

Shigenobu is still at large today, probably somewhere in Lebanon. She was instrumental as the Japanese radicals in Europe conferred in Paris to discuss tactics to attack the French Embassy in The Hague in September 1974.

Among the trio who actually took over the French diplomatic mission was Junzo Okudaira, younger brother of Takeshi Okudaira who organized and led the Kamikaze squad at Tel Aviv. Okudaira

again "surfaced" as he, together with four other terrorists, seized the U.S. and Swedish embassies in Kuala Lumpur in August 1975, demanded and won the release of five comrades held in Japanese prisons. The whole operation, police suspect, was masterminded by the same nurse-turned-revolutionary Fusako Shigenobu.

Japanese terrorists are today notorious for their bloodthirsty behavior. It is perhaps because they care so little about their own life in the desperate execution of radical missions. There is always this inexplicable passion for self-liquidation noticeable among the young Japanese rebels.

In May 1975 when police arrested a group of anarchists, the interrogators were "impressed" by the strenuous way the young political nihilists had saved every yen out of their meager salaries. Eight men and women endured near starvation to buy as much nitroglycerin as possible, so that they could effectively bomb the towering headquarters of the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in August 1974.

The New Left splinters of Japan may be a sickly offshoot of this prosperous society. But, regardless of their perennial schisms and intra-party enmities, they remain as one of the most dangerous enemies not only of Japan but of the world.

Kozo Okamoto once proudly declared during his trial in Israel: "Each one of you (common citizens) has to take one of two sides. Those who are ready for revolution, we accept as our comrades. To those who are not willing to join us, we declare that we will treat them as our enemies."

Abduction In Broad Daylight

The incident took place in broad daylight on August 9, 1973 at a plush hotel in downtown Tokyo. The time was about 1.30 p.m. The persons involved were a group of five unidentified men and Kim Dae Jung, a political foe and vociferous critic of President Park Chung Hee of the Republic of Korea. The case: kidnaping.

It was at around 2.40 p.m. the same day that the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department received an emergency call saying that the 47-year-old South Korean politician in de facto exile had been spirited away about an hour earlier from the Hotel Grand Palace by a group of five men, apparently Koreans.

The call was from one of Kim's aides, who said that the incident took place when Kim walked out from a 22nd floor room of the hotel after talking and dining together with two politicians from his home country—Yang Il Dong, president of the Democratic Unification Party, whom Kim came to the hotel to meet, and Kim Kyong In, a Korean parliamentarian.

"Five men emerged from two rooms on the same floor," the aide told the Japanese police, "and forcibly took Mr. Kim into Room 2210." Two of the five then stood on guard in front of Room 2210 and, saying that a "talk" was under way inside, they barred others from approaching.

Strangely enough, no one could tell when and how Kim Dae Jung was taken out from the room—and out from the hotel itself. According to Kim Kyong In, a relative of kidnaped Kim, it was about 2 p.m. when he unlocked Room 2210 with a passkey supplied by the hotel. He found the room already empty, except for two rucksacks, several pieces of rope, a hand-gun magazine with six rounds of ammunition, and a phial half filled with what was believed to be an anesthetic.

The next morning, the police conducted their second on-the-spot search in four 22nd floor rooms, including Room 2212 where Kim Dae Jung had talked with Yang and Kim, and collected fingerprints in Room 2210.

The police learned that the first floor entrance and garages in the second and third basement floors provide the only outlet to the outside from the 22nd floor, and that the basement parking lots could be reached via an elevator located in front of Room 2210.

None of the hotel employees, however, reported seeing Kim and his kidnapers leaving through the front door, leading the police to tentatively conclude that Kim was carried to either of the two parking lots by the elevator after having been anesthetized in Room 2210.

But this was all that the police could theorize. Who the kidnapers were and where Kim was taken from the parking lot remained a total enigma. From the outset, in fact, the case was shrouded with a thick

pall of mystery. Even to Kim's close friends, his behavior on August 9 was somewhat puzzling.

Since he came to Japan on July 10 from the United States where he engaged in a series of anti-Park campaigns, Kim had always been accompanied by several bodyguards. And whenever he went out, he had made it a point to use his own car that he purchased on July 18.

But on that particular day, Kim went to meet Yang Il Dong at the Hotel Grand Palace by taxi, accompanied by no more than one bodyguard. "On that day of all days," said Cho Hal Chun, Kim's close friend and chief secretary of the Korean Institute for Democracy and Unification, "Kim went out by taxi with only one bodyguard, whom he instructed to wait in the first floor lobby while he was talking with Yang in a 22nd floor room."

More enigmatic was how Kim's abductors had learned of the meeting between Kim and Yang at the latter's room. According to Cho, the meeting was a secret shared only by a few people, including himself. But the fact was that the kidnapers had booked Room 2210, just next door to Yang's room, two days before the kidnaping took place.

When Kim's abduction hit the headlines, it sent a shockwave across Japan and set off a spate of speculation. The prevailing theory among the Japanese was that Kim was kidnaped by a group of "professionals," perhaps members of the KCIA—(South) Korean Central Intelligence Agency. The incident was a reminder of the fact that in West Germany in 1967, KCIA agents acted on their own and seized 17 South Korean students critical of the Park regime and shipped them back home without German authorization. The students were eventually sent back to West Germany to continue their study—but it was only after Seoul faced the sternest protest from Bonn.

It seemed that Kim Dae Jung, too, had "every reason" to be caught and shipped home. Ever since he was elected to the National Assembly in 1961, Kim had always been a bitter critic of Park and his administration. In 1971, Kim ran in the presidential election on the opposition New Democratic Party ticket and, calling for a detente with the North, devoted his energy to blocking Park's third straight bid for the presidency.

Though he lost the race by a margin of a bare 950,000 votes, his

appeal created a “boom” for him and to his party. In the National Assembly election that came a month later, the New Democratic Party more than doubled its strength, winning 89 seats in the 204-seat legislature.

When martial law was proclaimed in South Korea in October 1972, Kim slipped out of Seoul and came to Japan in what was a virtual self-exile. But he did not cease to be a pain in Park’s neck. Mainly in the United States and in Japan, Kim conducted a series of anti-Park campaigns. In the foreword of his autobiography written in Japanese and published in Japan, Kim said: “Now that all opposition criticism is suppressed in the Republic of Korea following the proclamation of martial law by President Park, I consider it my duty to act abroad as spokesman for the (Korean) people.”

When Kim’s abduction was reported, South Korean authorities vehemently denied having anything to do with his mysterious disappearance. It was hinted that the kidnaping of Kim was planned and staged by none other than Kim himself to put the blame on Park—or else it was a premeditated plot carried out by North Korean agents.

Through Japanese Ambassador Torao Ushiroku, South Korean Vice Foreign Minister Yun Sunk Hun requested on August 10 that the Japanese Government conduct a thorough investigation into the case and make every effort to protect Kim’s safety. Likewise in Tokyo, ROK Ambassador Lee Ho asked the Japanese Government to do all in its power to find Kim and secure his safety.

Then came the startling news from Seoul on August 13: Kim Dae Jung returned to his home in the South Korean capital in a state of extreme fatigue. When he staggered home about 10.20 p.m., his hair was unkempt, his unshaven face swollen and bruised. Meeting the press the same night at his home, Kim told newsmen how he was kidnaped and smuggled out of Japan. His account turned out to be a story of the worst horrors that could have happened to a dissenting politician in exile abroad.

Just as the Japanese police had correctly theorized, Kim was anesthetized in Room 2210 and carried to one of the hotel’s underground parking lots by elevator. But thenceforth, Kim’s abductors totally outsmarted the Japanese police: they chose the sea route to smuggle Kim out to Korea, instead of taking the air route which was

under heavy police vigilance.

From the parking lot, Kim, beaten up and blindfolded, was taken for a five- or six-hour drive to what he believed was Osaka. There he was bound up, gagged and once again blindfolded—and next taken out for another drive of about an hour to “a beach” where the abductors put him aboard a small boat.

Kim first thought the kidnapers would throw him into the sea to drown him. A Catholic, Kim made the sign of a cross and was heavily struck in the face by one of the men who spotted him doing it.

The boat moved to a ship berthed in the offing, to which Kim was transferred. Chills ran down his spine when he overheard his abductors murmur, “. . . then, he will be eaten up by sharks.”

On the ship, Kim prayed to Jesus Christ. Kim prayed, asking that He save him, just this once. After at least 10 hours’ sail, the ship arrived at a Korean port. Kim learned it was the morning of August 11, but he had no idea about the name of the port. The kidnapers confined him to a two-story house—and identified themselves for the first time. “We are,” said one of them, “members of the ‘Society of Patriotic Youths to Save the Nation.’ ”

On the evening of August 13, the abductors said they would release him. They drove Kim to the neighborhood of his home and freed him. As had been ordered earlier, Kim stood still for three minutes and then rang the doorbell of his home.

The Japanese heard the news of Kim’s forced return home with a certain amount of shock. Not believing in the existence of the “Society of Patriotic Youths to Save the Nation,” the major newspapers ran lengthy conjectures on who the kidnapers really were. In the Diet, the opposition grilled administration officials, arguing that behind the case lay intimate, often too intimate, Japan-ROK government relations stained with corruption over Japan’s financial aid to South Korea. The government leaders, on their part, were worried about the possibility that the incident could prove to be a telling blow to the honeymooning between the government of Kakuei Tanaka and that of Park Chung Hee.

The focal point at issue was whether or not South Korea’s government organs—such as KCIA—were involved in the kidnaping of Kim. If the abduction had been carried out by agents of government organs,

then South Korea would have to take the blame for committing a serious breach of international rule: infringement of Japan's sovereignty.

From the beginning, the ROK Government was adamant in denying its involvement in the case. On August 17, ROK Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil summoned Japanese Ambassador Ushiroku and told him that some South Koreans had in fact been involved in the abduction of Kim Dae Jung.

The South Korean Premier added, however, that neither he nor President Park had known about it. Then he firmly rejected Japan's request to allow Kim to revisit Japan for questioning by the Japanese police—on the ground that Kim would be subjected to investigation in Seoul by Korean authorities.

But as investigations progressed in Japan, it became almost undeniable that Kim's abduction was the act of KCIA agents. On August 23, the Japanese Government said, in carefully chosen words, that it was possible that KCIA operatives might have been involved in Kim's case. Prime Minister Tanaka suggested the next day that Japan would take a strong diplomatic stance toward the ROK if it became clear that Japan's sovereignty had been infringed by the South Korean Government's involvement in the case.

Answering a Socialist interpellator at a Diet session, International Trade and Industry Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone also hinted the same day that, if the ROK were proved to have violated Japan's sovereignty, Japan might have second thoughts about its financial aid to South Korea.

Nevertheless, just how seriously they meant it remained to be seen. For it was everyone's knowledge that in past years, Japan and South Korea had already become too deeply committed to each other economically to make a sudden aboutface.

In fact, in the economic relations between Japan and the ROK, one country's shortcomings often proved to be the other's boon. Japan, light years ahead of Korea economically, had plenty of money, but its business world was becoming plagued by soaring labor costs and mounting cries for clean environment. Korea, on the other hand, lacked money and industrial knowhow, but had an abundant supply of cheap labor and inexpensive tracts of land.

Thus, the investment Japan made in South Korea since 1956 in the name of "economic cooperation" had amounted to more than \$1,200 million. Korea had expected that about one-half of its loans from foreign countries, which would add up to some \$10,000 million over the next 10 years, would be coming from Japan.

The Japan-ROK honeymoon was hopelessly beclouded, however, when the (Japanese) National Police Agency made it public on September 6 that one of the fingerprints collected in Room 2210 of the Hotel Grand Palace matched that of Kim Kong Woon, first secretary at the ROK Embassy in Tokyo, who had already returned to Seoul.

Through the Japanese Foreign Ministry, the police agency requested the appearance of the diplomat Kim before Japanese investigators for questioning, but the South Korean Government flatly turned this down.

As he rejected a second such request from the Japanese police, Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yong Shik told Japanese Ambassador Ushiroku that investigations undertaken by the Korean side had disclosed that the first secretary had no connection whatsoever with the kidnaping case. The Foreign Minister reiterated that the ROK Government had no intention at all of surrendering diplomat Kim to the Japanese police.

The outright refusal dismayed the Japanese Government leaders who had been groping for means to settle the case without causing much damage to the Japan-ROK relationship.

In the face of the stiff attitude of South Korea, the Japanese Government seemed to have grossly forgotten its earlier "harsh diplomatic stance."

"Even if the Korean first secretary had in fact played a role in the abduction," said Japanese Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira, "it cannot be said that South Korea infringed on Japan's sovereignty—unless it is proved that the diplomat acted on the instruction of his government."

Then Ohira dropped the hint that Japan's face would be saved and thus it would not go too deep into the case, if the ROK would only admit the secretary's involvement in the kidnaping case "even in roundabout phrases."

Ignoring all this, Seoul stayed put—and for good reason. If Seoul admitted the diplomat's involvement in the case, it was to admit that

the ROK had violated Japan's sovereignty.

In this way, everything surrounding Kim's kidnaping case became stalemated, with neither Tokyo nor Seoul taking the initiative to break the ice. Things began to move only after Nobusuke Kishi, ex-Prime Minister of Japan and the nation's foremost South Korea lobbyist, went to Seoul toward the end of September to attend the convention of the Asian Parliamentary Union (APU). It was widely believed that, on this occasion, Kishi had a talk with President Park on Kim's case. The content of their talk was not known, but at the end of October, Seoul moved out of its way and informed Tokyo that Kim Dong Woon was dismissed in disgrace because, according to Seoul, "suspicion arose with regard to his involvement in the abduction case."

All these political movements were a reflection of the highly delicate relationship between Japan and its geographically closest neighbor.

From medieval days to modern times, Japan and Korea had been involved in a long series of political and spiritual entanglements. In the 16th Century, Korea was devastated by the Japanese invasion ordered by warlord Toyotomi-Hideyoshi. And, from 1910 to 1945, Korea was annexed by Japan and ruled as a colony, until it was finally liberated only as a result of Japan's defeat in the Pacific War.

Japan ruled its colony as a police state, while forcibly exporting a vast quantity of the Korean rice crop to supplement Japan's supply. As Japan's plans for the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" unfolded, Koreans were subjected to a total effort to blot out their language and culture in favor of a merger with those of Japan.

Lack of investment and employment in Korea drove a considerable number of Koreans before the war to Japan where there were job openings, mainly at factories. During World War II, although Korea was in no way in the hostilities, more Koreans, men and women, were forced to move to Japan to work for its expanded war industries.

When the war ended in 1945, Japan found that it had more than two million Korean residents. Most of them returned home immediately after the war, but some 600,000 Koreans are still living today in Japan. There is an ideological schism, with some of them belonging to the pro-Seoul Korean Residents Union in Japan and others to the pro-Pyongyang General Association of Korean Residents in Japan.

Born out of this historical background was an intense Korean

legacy of animosity justly growing out of centuries of generally hostile contacts with Japan. More than anything else, this has made the postwar relations between Japan and ROK so delicate and difficult.

In recent days, too, a series of incidents, besides the Kim Dae Jung case, complicated Japan's relations with the ROK. In April 1974, South Korean authorities arrested two Japanese students in Seoul on an espionage charge.

The two—Yoshiharu Hayakawa, 37, a graduate student at Seoul University, and Masaki Tachikawa, 27, a student at Waseda University in Tokyo—were indicted and sentenced in July to 20 years in prison for, according to the Korean authorities, having instigated anti-Park Korean students engaged in subversive activities.

Then, on August 15 the same year, a 22-year-old Korean named Mun Se Kwang, born and raised in Japan, gave almost a mortal blow to the Japanese-Korean relationship.

With a handgun he had stolen at a police station in Osaka, Mun went to Seoul and fired several shots at President Park while he was addressing the nation in the downtown National Theater on the 29th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule. The bullets failed to hit the President but fatally injured the Korean First Lady.

The incidents, particularly the latter, ired South Koreans. Seoul charged that behind both cases was the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan—and demanded that the Japanese Government crack down on the pro-Pyongyang organization with its headquarters in Tokyo. Some of the Korean people, on their part, mobbed the Japanese Embassy in Seoul.

The angry Korean voices over the assassination attempt by a "Japanese with Korean nationality" subsided after Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka attended the funeral service of Mrs. Park in a "gesture of sincere apology." In what was an apparent "political settlement" of the case, Hayakawa and Tachikawa were released in February 1975 for the sake of the "everlasting friendship between Japan and the ROK."

After all, no matter how often political and psychological troubles crop up between them, in the present political chart of the world, Japan and the ROK are anti-Communist twins, with the United States

as their father. As a matter of fact, after World War II came to an end in 1945, America's anti-Communist defense perimeter in north Asia has been deployed along a geographical triangle formed by Japan, the ROK and Taiwan.

The Korean War (1950-1953) might not have ended as it actually did, if Japan had not been existing as America's anti-Communist military foothold. An Asian version of Dunkirk was narrowly averted only after all the U.S. Forces stationed in Japan were thrown into the battlegrounds in Korea.

If it is to be taken for granted that Japan and the ROK are major Asian economic partners linked by an anti-Communist fraternity, all the postwar entanglements appear, at least from the global point of political views, to be no more than a storm in a teacup.

The kidnaping of Kim Dae Jung is hardly an exception. On July 31, 1975, Japanese Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa announced that the kidnaping case was virtually "closed" with the announced dismissal of Kim Dong Woon from an official South Korean governmental post.

Without referring to the focal question of whether South Korea had "infringed" upon Japan's sovereignty, Miyazawa said that the case should be settled so that "no frictions would be left between the two governments in order to promote people-to-people friendship."

His announcement indicated just one more "political settlement" of an entanglement, this time paving the way for the opening of the suspended Eighth Regular Japan-ROK Ministerial Conference, in which talks will be held for the resumption of Japan's economic aid to its "closest neighbor."

Oil Crisis To 'Fragile Superstate'

The decade of the 1970s dawned with promises of continuing high economic growth for Japan and of more money and more comforts for its 100 million people. As they celebrated the turn of the year, millions looked forward to Asia's first world exposition scheduled to open on March 14 at the Senri Hills north of Osaka, Japan's second largest city.

With the successful Tokyo Olympic Games of 1964 still fresh in

their memory, the Japanese flattered themselves that once again they would host a great international event many times more costly and glamorous than the Olympics. EXPO'70 was destined to be the most ambitious peacetime undertaking in their history.

The theme of the exposition, "Progress and Harmony for Mankind," also captured their imagination. Drunk with their nation's impressive economic achievements during the "golden decade of the '60s," most Japanese chose to close their eyes from the writing on the wall—a steady erosion of their environment as a result of their vigorous industrial activities and consumption that had brought about their "economic miracle."

On the chilly morning of March 14, 1970, Emperor Hirohito declared EXPO'70 open from the Royal Box under the gigantic translucent roof shielding Festival Plaza. Participating in the fair were 77 countries, a new record in the history of world fairs which began with the Great London Exposition of 1851.

"Bampaku," as EXPO'70 was called, promptly triggered a movement of the Japanese people on a scale unknown before. Rain or shine, hundreds of thousands of people, young and old, converged on the Senri Hills daily from every corner of the country. They stood wide-eyed before rows of foreign and domestic pavilions that had turned the once barren stretch of thick underbush into a glittering "futuristic city."

In fact, the 330-hectare fair grounds were thick with pavilions of all sizes, shapes and colors—the fulfilment of future-oriented architects. The U.S. Pavilion roofed with a huge pneumatic dome was virtually underground. In contrast, the Soviet Pavilion dominated the skyline with its hammer and sickle emblem perched on a tower which soared to a height of 110 meters. The Swiss Pavilion was a radiant tree with its branches incandescent with 32,000 electric bulbs. Most Asian, African and Latin American pavilions featured their striking native style. No fewer than 30 domestic pavilions vied for visitors' attention with glittering structures, eye-catching displays and colorful hand-outs and pamphlets.

From abroad, kings and queens, princes and princesses and heads of state and government came in an unbroken stream to attend National Day ceremonies and attractions in honor of the foreign

countries participating. The "Bampaku" boom swept the length and width of the country.

With the patience, curiosity and discipline that appalled many foreign pavilion managers and hostesses, Japanese visitors waited long hours in a pouring rain or scorching sun, walked briskly through displays and pavilions and greedily collected armfuls of pamphlets and handouts. Children literally mobbed charming foreign hostesses by pumping their hands and insisting on their autographs. Adults swarmed to international bazaars and souvenir shops.

"Our people would be more rational. They would ask themselves before standing in the queue if a wait of two or three hours is worth while," observed a European pavilion manager. Another foreigner who had lived in Japan for many years saw in the "insatiable curiosity" of Japanese visitors the other side of their "insular complex." But a good many foreigners saw in it the source of the energy and vigor of the Japanese people.

The "Bampaku boom" took on a frenzied tone when the schools closed for summer holidays. Throughout August, the daily visitor turnout topped half a million. On September 5, eight days before the closure of the 183-day fair, the turnout reached a staggering 835,832. Thousands couldn't get home and simply spent the night by stretching themselves on the fair grounds. The next day the EXPO Association was forced to close the gates for evening visitors as attendance threatened to hit the incredible—and dangerous—figure of one million.

The unexpectedly large attendance—64,218,770 paid visitors including some 1,600,000 foreigners—brought the EXPO Association a profit amounting to a whopping ¥10 billion (about \$33 million). Expo67 in Montreal, Canada, ended up ¥19,700 million in the red.

Within three months of the end of the extravaganza, all but two pavilions had been torn down. All that remains of the "futuristic city" are the Tower of the Sun, the Grand Roof over Festival Plaza, the Japanese Government Pavilion, Steel Pavilion and EXPO Museum plus the EXPO Tower and recreation facilities at Expoland.

During the daytime, children in the neighborhood and excursionists still come to the EXPO site to enjoy rides on jet coasters and strolling in Japanese Garden. After sundown, utter darkness and silence rule what was once a glittering "city of the future."

The oil crisis which hit the world three years after the end of EXPO'70 came as a brutal reminder to the Japanese that their daily lives, to say nothing of their future, depend so precariously on petroleum which they had taken so much for granted.

The oil crisis, which started with a crippling Arab oil embargo and sharp rises in petroleum prices in late 1973, shattered the image of an economic power that the Japanese had optimistically considered as representing their nation. Many people were painfully reminded now of the vulnerability of their small and resources-scarce land to any form of "blackmail" by foreign countries blessed with abundant natural resources. The crisis was a sudden assault upon the Japanese who had been dazed by their country's ability in having achieved the second largest GNP in the free world and earning an abundant amount of foreign currency reserves until then. These barometers indicative of Japan's economic power nose-dived. The Arab embargo came as a bone-crushing shock to the Japanese.

Big businesses reacted to the rapid oil price spiral by shifting the increased cost burden onto the consumer. Smaller businesses followed suit. As a result, the prices of goods soared at the steepest pace, and Japan's chronic inflation turned worse.

The government and industry were, moreover, alarmed by a possible Arab boycott of oil shipments to Japan. Under the situation, the rumor spread that many manufacturing companies would be forced to cut back their production activities, resulting in a shortage of daily necessities. Corporate irresponsibility became rampant. Many companies, one after another, began cornering basic materials and goods without any thought of the effect that this would have on society, and made large profits by capitalizing on the oil crisis.

Buffeted by the double punch of a commodity shortage and runaway inflation, the majority of housewives were uneasy and desperately made the rounds of supermarkets to buy or hoard items which they feared would be in short supply or whose prices would skyrocket.

People's apprehensions about the future mounted. At the same time, public criticism was directed against the unscrupulous firms for their cornering practices and against the government for weak leadership in coping with the oil crisis.

Japan's economic mechanism went out of order. The entire Japanese archipelago plunged into utter confusion. Japan proved to be a "fragile blossom" as had been prophesied by Dr. Z. K. Brzezinski, a professor at Columbia University.

An unending series of social disorders was reported. In Osaka, for example, an aged woman suffered a broken bone in a stampede of housewives struggling to obtain a limited supply of toilet paper. In Toyokawa City, Aichi Prefecture, a random joke by a high school girl about a credit bank triggered a massive run on the bank. In another example, a Tokyo taxi driver, apparently irritated by the curtailed supply of fuel, slugged it out with a passenger who refused to tip him.

The ordeal resulting from the oil shock lasted until around the spring of 1974, when various measures belatedly taken by the government to tranquilize the state of confusion began to take effect. But the after-effects of the crisis are felt even today in every aspect of Japanese life.

Conservation of energy is being widely practiced at households and industrial plants. Stagflation brought about by the oil crunch overshadows the future course of the Japanese economy. Many believe that they cannot go on a buying spree any longer and must adopt an austere lifestyle.

The Japanese began to fear an oil shortage, as political developments in the Middle East deteriorated toward the fourth Mideast war. There was no doubt that, in such a case, the Arab nations would use crude oil as a weapon to win the war.

When 10 Arab petroleum exporting countries decided on a 5 per cent reduction of oil production immediately after the outbreak of the fourth war on October 6, 1973, the Japanese Government had no idea how to cope with the predictable Arab oil strategy and was only waiting for Dr. Henry Kissinger's new shuttle diplomacy to lead Israel and the Arab states to a disengagement.

The Arab decision was followed by a further 5 per cent production cut in each succeeding month. In line with this trend, Exxon, Mobil and other international oil majors gave notice to Japan on October 25 of that year that they would reduce their oil supplies to Japan by 10 per cent in order to meet oil shortages in Western countries. These developments added to the serious nature of the situation, because

about 70 per cent of Japan's total oil imports were handled by the oil majors. In 1972, the import of crude oil totaled 246 million kiloliters.

Despite the situation, many government officials were trying to act as though things were really not so bad. They were of the view that the oil squeeze against countries supporting Israel would come to a halt once the war ended. Their optimism went so far as to believe that the Arabs would designate Japan as a friendly nation.

When Kissinger visited Japan on November 14, 1973 after his tour of Middle East countries and China, Kakuei Tanaka, then Prime Minister, and other top government officials tried hard to make him understand Japan's anxiety in regard to oil shortages and sound him out on the possibility of a negotiated settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict. After their meetings with the U.S. Secretary of State, the government leaders appeared somewhat frustrated by Kissinger who was noncommittal about how to counter the Arab oil strategy.

Commenting on the Japanese leaders, many critics and foreign correspondents in Japan ridiculed their constant failure to face up to troubles while expecting others to come up with a solution.

Bernard Krisher, Tokyo bureau chief of Newsweek magazine, wrote: "What Japan needs most of all to avoid any real or imagined perils is a degree of sympathy and assurance from the U.S., a renewed sense of American leadership and dependability—and this at a time when Washington is, on the contrary, encouraging the Japanese to stand more on their own feet." This biting comment gave the government a good chance to think twice about the fact that Japan is subservient to the United States in its foreign policy and does not pay proper attention to the mounting nationalism in the Arab region as well as in other developing parts of the world.

For the Japanese, another shock came on November 18, 1973 when the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) announced its withdrawal of a planned oil supply cutback for many European countries but did not apply the relaxation to the United States, the Netherlands and Japan.

The tough Arab attitude toward Japan prompted the government to work out a new and more positive Arab policy in disregard of any American reaction.

The new policy emphasized the following points—(1) to support the

Arab call for an Israeli pullout from occupied Arab territories, and (2) to expand Japan's assistance for economic development projects in the Arab countries. Surprisingly, all the opposition parties, which are always critical of the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP), made no objection to the policy.

Carrying the new Arab policy as a "gift," Takeo Miki, who was Vice Prime Minister at that time, flew to the Middle East as a special envoy in mid-December 1973. He pleaded with sheiks and heads of the oil-rich Arab states for a stable supply of crude oil to Japan.

On the other hand, Yasuhiro Nakasone, who was serving as Minister of International Trade and Industry, visited Iran and Iraq in January 1974 to promote economic relations with the two countries. The largest fruit of his trip was Iraq's agreement to supply 160 million tons of crude oil to Japan over a 10-year period in return for Japan's \$1 billion plant exports to the country.

The same month, M. Belaid Abdesselam, Algerian Power and Industry Minister, and Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Ahmed Zaki Yamani came to Japan, seeking better understanding between the Arab states and Japan. The oil-hungry Japanese welcomed their visits with a feeling of relief and learned from them that the Arab countries were desiring Japanese technology for their economic development programs.

Japan's new Arab policy was set in motion and kicked off an Arab boom. Many trading companies, which are especially sensitive to money talks, began to rush to the Arab market.

After about a month of gloom and fear of oil shortages triggered by the Mideast war, the government launched a national campaign of energy consumption which called for, among others, a 10 per cent cutback of oil and electricity supply. In line with the campaign, major television networks agreed to end telecast hours at 12 midnight from January 1974. The Ginza, the nation's busiest thoroughfare, was browned out at night. The number of elevators in use was reduced in many buildings. Offices were asked to cooperate in having room temperatures maintained at 20 degrees C. despite the arrival of winter. The government repeated its pleas to motorists to save gasoline by refraining from going out on Sunday and holiday drives. Governmental organizations began practicing retrenchment by limiting the use of paper and other materials.

To make the energy conservation campaign penetrate throughout the country, the government came up with a bill to stabilize oil supply and demand in an emergency. The legislation, enacted in December 1973, is designed initially to place restrictions on oil consumption and finally allocate petroleum to industries and households.

As the conservation campaign spread, ironically enough, even those who had been optimistic about the future prospects despite the crisis, turned serious upon learning that things were really so bad.

In fact, life was becoming tougher. The repercussions of the crisis seemed endless. Commercial transactions could not be called free trade any more.

The main concern of buyers is whether they can obtain enough supplies. The position of sellers is overwhelmingly strong and consumers have no choice but to accept the prices arbitrarily set by sellers without protest.

The wholesale price index in December 1973 soared 7.1 per cent in comparison with the previous month. This was a 2.3-fold rise from a year earlier. Wholesale prices in Japan had been stable so far, but among advanced countries, Japan experienced the steepest rise in such prices the same month. Consumer prices kept skyrocketing too. In January 1974, for example, Tokyo's consumer prices registered an annual increase rate of 20.4 per cent, the highest in 23 years. Items, whose price boosts were the most conspicuous, were kerosene and liquefied propane gas.

With voices growing among the public calling for more effective government efforts to tide over the panicky situation, the government found a good pretext for strengthening its controls on the national economy—much to the detriment of business circles. Prime Minister Tanaka considered the stabilization of prices as the most necessary step to calm the people's anger at his economic policy which fanned inflation. Along this line, the government sought legislation for stabilizing the people's livelihood by expanding government restrictions to wider areas of economic activities.

Under the legislation enacted in later December 1973, the government decided to set standard prices for many items, whose price increases were remarkable. Those selling the designated items beyond the standard prices unreasonably were subjected to surcharges.

The government measure was not as effective as hoped for. For example, the government set the price of kerosene for home heaters at ¥380 a can (18 liters), but there were complaints that many oil dealers were selling it at around ¥500 or more. When probed by government agents, these dealers gave the excuse that the price increases resulted from increased personnel and delivery costs. It was very difficult for the government to levy surcharges on them.

Within the government, therefore, there were some opinions calling for an overall curb on demand to arrest rampant inflation. Tanaka, architect of the grandiose project for remodeling the Japanese archipelago, however, showed a negative attitude toward adopting such control.

Despite his reluctance, Tanaka was forced to change his expansionary economic policy after the sudden death of Finance Minister Kiichi Aichi, his most trusted economic adviser. Tanaka named his chief domestic rival, Takeo Fukuda, as Aichi's successor in the belief that continuing rivalry with Fukuda would make it more difficult for the LDP-ruled government to overcome the crisis. Fukuda is a conservative Dietman whom Tanaka narrowly defeated for the premiership in 1972.

Fukuda, who is versed in economic affairs because of his long service in the Finance Ministry, appeared on television and requested the public to "bear the hardships for six months." He confidently said, "The government intends to check inflation and abate social disorders. To do so, not only a tight money policy but also curbs on people's consumption and government spending are necessary."

As recommended by Fukuda, the policy of curbing total demand was carried out. Furthermore, the government froze prices for 159 items of consumer goods and about 40 items of basic materials, such as steel, aluminum, paper and petroleum products.

The price freeze gave industrial circles the heebie-jeebies, and at the same time created anxiety among many people who thought that an income policy designed to freeze wages, corporate profits and dividends might be introduced. The dazzling "flower" of the nation's high economic growth era, symbolized by the happy and boisterous EXPO barely three years before, seemed to have withered abruptly as the oil crisis hit Japan with devastating effect.

The price freeze and the cut in oil supply were removed gradually after the Arabs lifted the oil embargo and eased their oil production cutbacks. But the demand control remained.

One year after the oil crisis, the yearly increase ratio of consumer prices declined to below 15 per cent as the government pledged. On the other hand, unemployment and bankruptcies increased. Whether the overall demand control is effective in a fight against stagflation is open to debate.

Who should be censured as the main culprit for having caused the panic of goods shortages and rampant inflation? Vice Minister of International Trade and Industry Eimei Yamashita snapped, "The petroleum industry is the origin of evils."

Apart from the question as to who indirectly helped the industry conduct the wrongdoings, what Yamashita said was right in retrospect. Of course, blame falls not only on leaders of the oil industry but also on many others—even thoughtless consumers who hoarded toilet paper, detergents, etc. just because others did. The industry, which overly cut oil supplies despite the unexpected rise in oil imports and jacked up the prices of petroleum products, came under bitter criticism. Hirota Mitsuda, chairman of the Petroleum Association of Japan, was forced to resign.

According to statistics compiled by the Finance Ministry, Japan imported about 25 million kiloliters of crude oil in December 1973. This amount represented an 11 per cent increase over the previous month, or more than the 21 million kiloliters estimated by the government for the month. The increase was partly due to the fact that the Arabs did not implement to the letter what they had decided on the cut in oil supplies at the OAPEC meetings. Another reason is that domestic petroleum firms and trading houses bought more Indonesian and Iranian oil than usual through direct deals or spot transactions.

True, one mammoth tanker after another arrived in Tokyo Bay from the Persian Gulf. But their unloading was held up until the reserve tanks at oil refineries became empty. Very few had an inkling of what the scene meant, until newspapers reported on such tankers.

What aroused the resentment of many people and built up their distrust in the petroleum industry was the finding that a section chief of General Sekiyu Kaisha, Ltd. distributed instructions to sales managers of the company, in which he called the energy crisis "a

golden opportunity for making profits." The written instructions were disclosed by a legislator in the Diet. The section chief gave details on oil supply cuts and wrote that the company would notify the managers verbally about oil prices increases—a method designed not to leave evidence. The instructions said, "Stop oil supplies to gas stations or other retailers which tipped off the mass media and MITI (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) about our company's plan for increasing prices." Critics charged that many companies in almost all industries resorted, more or less, to the same tactics as General Sekiyu and increased inventories without meeting the demand adequately.

The shortages were obviously artificial. In fact, the output of consumer goods was on the increase even at the peak of the oil crisis. There were not a few consumers who witnessed manufacturers and distributors limiting sales or storing goods in warehouses at inconspicuous sites. Government probes into "suspicious" warehouses turned up stockpiles of detergents and many other items in short supply. This fact infuriated the consumers who had to hustle to obtain these items by standing in long queues at supermarkets.

The swift spread of corporate moves to raise prices and restrain business competition, as seen in the crisis, served to spotlight the economic state of oligopoly in Japan. In other words, the Japanese economy was found to be in the grip of a few big businesses.

The situation has given rise to voices calling for splitting up the market-dominating firms. When the presidents of 23 powerful companies were summoned to a special Diet committee in late February 1974, they were accused of exploiting the oil crisis to earn excess profits. Some of the presidents were quick to make ritual apologies and humbly promised to refund the excess profits. But others were vehement in denying charges of immoral practices.

The Diet debate, which came at an awkward time for Tanaka's ruling party traditionally allied with big businesses, was aired on television. The TV viewers were impressed by the sight of the beleaguered presidents being denounced by some opposition parliamentarians as "economic villains." The image of the business tycoons, who had formerly been regarded as heroes for their contributions to Japan's rise to affluence, was shattered.

The oil crisis led to a "minus" growth of the economy in 1974 for the first time in Japan's postwar history. Another high growth is not expected in the foreseeable future.

Japan's annual imports of crude oil, iron ore, coal and other raw materials now account for one-third of the total world trade in natural resources. This means that Japan is the largest importer of natural resources.

The prices of not only oil but also other primary products keep soaring against the background of growing economic nationalism in the countries rich in such resources.

If some "pipelines" for importing the raw materials were to be cut off due to the nationalistic movements, another crisis might sweep through this country. In such case, a similar state of confusion would be unavoidable unless business ethics and people's inflationary psychology are put under control. How to obtain the stable supply of natural resources without any friction with the producer countries is an old and yet new problem for the Japanese.

A Watergate For Kakuei Tanaka

On the morning of July 5, 1972, Kakuei Tanaka, 54, the Minister of International Trade and Industry, appeared tense as he stepped into Tokyo's Hibiya Public Hall to attend the 27th extraordinary national convention of the Liberal-Democratic Party scheduled for 10 a.m.

The day was to be the longest day for Tanaka, the son of a farmer in a small Niigata village who had entered political life at the age of 28. The convention was to elect the new president of the nation's ruling political party. Tanaka was one of the four candidates for the post. If elected, he would automatically become Japan's Prime Minister to succeed outgoing Eisaku Sato, who had headed the majority party and thus had occupied the nation's highest office for the past seven years and eight months.

Tanaka, known and often frowned upon for his Machiavellian maneuvering, had done all he could to prepare for that day. Though he vociferously denied it, it had been an open secret that he had spent a colossal amount of money for vote-buying. A rumor also had it that he

had promised Cabinet posts to leading party members who voted for him.

Even though scandals had often cropped up in LDP's presidential elections, the contest this time seemed, simply because of Tanaka's direct involvement in it, to have been even more scandal-prone from the outset.

Yet, all this was simply taken as a matter of course in Tanaka's logic. He had the philosophy typical of a self-made man: Get whatever you want, whatsoever be the means. His close friends recall that when he was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1947, Tanaka openly declared that he would some day become Prime Minister. When the time did come for him to have a try to achieve this goal, it was hardly surprising if his philosophy was to resort to every possible maneuver that would block his rivals from standing in his way.

At 12.40 p.m., it became clear that Tanaka's three rival candidates—Takeo Fukuda, Masayoshi Ohira and Takeo Miki—had lost the race. Tanaka came out of the public hall as the sixth president of the LDP—and drove off to the Prime Minister's Official Residence which, after procedural nomination at both Houses of the Diet the next day, he was to occupy as Japan's 40th Prime Minister.

Tanaka's ascent to Japan's highest position of authority was significant in many ways for the nation and for the public. His emergence put an end to a successive line of bureaucrat-turned Prime Ministers under whom Japan had been led and guided for more than 15 years. Ever since Nobusuke Kishi took over the reins of government in March 1957, the premiership had been continuously assumed by one-time elite government officials, right up to the days of Eisaku Sato, Kishi's younger brother.

Indeed, the personal background of Tanaka was strikingly different from that of the preceding prime ministers. Almost all of his predecessors were well-educated and came from more or less distinguished families, but Tanaka was the son of a farmer and his formal schooling had stopped with the sixth grade of primary school.

When Tanaka assumed the premiership, the nation's major newspapers showed a generally favorable attitude toward him. He was likened to Toyotomi-Hideyoshi, a 16th Century Japanese warlord of

obscure origin who achieved the unification of the nation and was finally appointed as Kampaku (Chief Councillor to the Emperor).

In fact, Toyotomi-Hideyoshi and Kakuei Tanaka seemed to have many things in common. Both were born to very poor families and were amazingly bright when young. They were ambitious and both left home in their mid-teens in search of a sure way to success: military career in the case of Toyotomi-Hideyoshi and, in Tanaka's case, money.

Tanaka was indeed a bright pupil at the elementary school in a small village named Futada in snowy Niigata Prefecture. But he could not go to higher school because of his father's financial reverses after failing in cattle trading. At the age of 15, Tanaka left home for Tokyo where he worked as an errand boy in the daytime to support himself and studied civil engineering at night.

Tanaka's adolescence was admittedly far removed from that of his political colleagues—or, rather, rivals. When Takeo Fukuda, Masayoshi Ohira and Yasuhiro Nakasone were studying law, politics, literature and philosophy at the nation's most prestigious universities, Tanaka, attending an obscure night school, was thrusting the tip of a pointed pencil into the ball of a finger to shake off the drowsiness resulting from hard daytime toil.

When Fukuda and others embarked upon the career of a promising bureaucrat after passing highly competitive examinations to qualify as elite government officials, Tanaka was a nameless construction contractor who bowed deeply before bureaucrats in order to obtain government orders.

Through their life in respectable schools, the elite had made many friends who associated among themselves without thinking of gain or loss. Tanaka's life was entirely different. But, through the experience of his hard days, Tanaka had learned one truth of life: everything could be bought with money—even at times a man's heart.

A hardworking man, Tanaka was already the president of a construction firm at the age of 19. He was barely 27 years old when he became rich enough to make sizable monetary donations to politicians in return for "benefits" for his business.

Likewise, in only 11 years after entering political life himself, Tanaka became the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications in the Cabinet of Nobusuke Kishi. Since then, Tanaka gained experience in

almost all the important government and LDP posts, including Secretary General of the party, which he served for five terms under Eisaku Sato.

Without doubt, the combination of his having been born to a poor family and his natural brilliance that enabled his quick rise in the political world was an integral factor in forming his personality.

Both as a man and as a politician, Tanaka had many contradictory traits. He was raw, rash and impetuous, yet he could be prudent and scrupulous. He was a stickler for the old-fashioned Japanese sentiment of "Giri-ninjo" (obligation and humanity) and yet he honored logics and dialectics. His political dealings were pragmatic but he was also a romanticist bordering on childishness.

The aura of Tanaka's contradicting yet strong personality was quite fresh to the eyes of the Japanese who had long been accustomed to the marked "bureaucratic coolness" of past prime ministers.

Newspapers dubbed him a "computerized bulldozer" for his vitality and energy, coupled with his talent for figures. The public hailed him as a "commoner premier." Even Tanaka's critics admitted that he possessed an air of "irresistible human charm."

Tanaka's popularity among the public was at its highest when, in September 1972, he paid a six-day visit to China, met Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Prime Minister Chou En-lai and signed a joint communique that put an end to more than three decades of a "technical" state of war between the two Asian powers.

But if the public meant, by the word "commoner," someone like themselves, a plain and average Japanese, Tanaka was already too rich to be called just that. He was living in a stately mansion built on about 10,000 square meters of land in Tokyo's Mejiro. Within the premises were a thick grove and a large pond where scores of colorful "fancy carp"—some of them costing more than ¥3 million each—swam freely. Moreover, he possessed four vast tracts of land in Karuizawa in Nagano Prefecture, one of the nation's most popular summer resorts. One estimate held that Tanaka's property in Mejiro alone was worth a mind-boggling ¥1.5 billion.

How had he been able to purchase these tracts of land costing billions of yen? Was he in fact so rich in his own right? These questions might have been overlooked if Tanaka had remained in the category of

rank and file politicians. But now that he was the Prime Minister, it seemed certain that his wealth would be subjected to public scrutiny sooner or later. And, ironically enough, Kakuei Tanaka had to step down from the seat of power in 1974 because of his money—the money which had led him to the very same position of authority two years earlier.

Two freelance journalists—Takashi Tachibana, 34, and Takaya Kodama, 37 (who died of cancer soon afterwards)—first challenged Tanaka over his wealth in the November 1974 issue of the *Bungei Shunju* monthly magazine (circulation: some 700,000).

Titled "An Anatomy of Kakuei Tanaka: His Money and His Men," and "Melancholic Queen of Etsuzankai," their 120,000-word twin investigative features exposed in minute detail the role of money in Japan's politics and shed light on Kakuei Tanaka and his Liberal-Democratic Party, a gigantic money-devouring political machine. The articles were sensational. They staggered Japan just as Richard M. Nixon's Watergate rocked the United States.

Tachibana began his "An Anatomy of Kakuei Tanaka" by writing that according to a "well-believed rumor," Tanaka spent ¥3 billion to ¥5 billion in 1972 to "buy" the support of eligible LDP members in the party's presidential election in July.

Posing a question as to whether the "investment" of such a colossal sum for the post of the party president would really pay off, Tachibana next pointed out that the LDP receives "political donations" from the nation's business world amounting every year to ¥90 billion, a good part of which is placed at the free disposal of the party president.

The amount of the donations might sound staggering to most people but, according to Tachibana, it was a sum none too spectacular for the LDP.

Tachibana's article pointed out that every rank and file LDP Dietman needed somewhere between ¥30 million and ¥50 million a year to carry on his "daily political activities"—activities, that is, to keep himself known to the people of his constituency. At present, the article added, the LDP had more than 400 Dietmen on its roster, meaning that the party consumes at least ¥20 billion every year just to "keep 'em going."

It goes without saying that in any given year, the funds for "daily political activities" are far from what the party needs to maintain the position of a majority party.

Take 1972, for example, when a total of 339 LDP candidates ran for the House of Representatives in a general election held toward the year-end. At that time, the unanimous opinion among campaign strategists was that if a candidate could spend ¥200 million for his campaign, he would be elected.

For the LDP, an average ¥200 million for each of its 339 candidates adds up to well over ¥60 billion. Besides, the year 1972 saw seven by-elections, seven gubernatorial and 10 mayoral elections—a series of costly political activities which the party had to finance to keep their men "alive."

When all these are taken into account, Tachibana wrote, it is apparent that the LDP simply could not have made out in 1972 with a fund of "only" ¥90 billion. According to him, the LDP, to keep itself operational, must have had another flow of money which he called "backstage money" as against the officially registered ¥90 billion that he referred to as "surface money."

Tachibana then turned to Tanaka himself and cited a seemingly endless string of examples in which Tanaka was sketched as a sort of "genius" in collecting money both for the party and himself.

In one example, Tanaka, using the power of his office, solved a financial problem of the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries—and accepted a sizable "political donation" for the party. In another instance, Tanaka gained a nine-digit profit for himself by having tracts of land sold and resold among companies of dubious nature which in reality were owned by none other than himself. And in still another example, Tanaka, again using his political power, helped his "bosom chum" Kenji Osano, an economic tycoon, solve a problem in return for taking over a shaky company.

In this way, scandals were exposed one after another and the much-rumored plutocracy of Kakuei Tanaka was mercilessly brought to light.

Meanwhile, Takaya Kodama, in his "Melancholic Queen" story, narrated the life story of one Aki Sato, a mysteriously powerful female financier of the Etsuzankai, the headquarters of Tanaka's political faction.

Kodama's article stated that the twice-divorced ex-cabaret hostess handled the entire flow—in and out—of billions of yen, most of which was used to bribe, sometimes even to intimidate, numberless politicians and generally to lubricate the conservative political machine.

Kodama then described how Miss Sato, 46, became, after her encounter with Tanaka, powerful at Etsuzankai, handling all the money of the LDP's largest faction. According to Kodama, even big-name LDP Dietmen would stand at attention in the presence of "Mama Sato."

One Dietman, Kodama's story stated, once suggested to her that she run for the House of Councillors. "You are 100 per cent sure to be elected," the Dietman is quoted as flattering Mama Sato, "because all of us will go all out to assist you."

When the magazine carrying the twin features was published, its social impact was tremendous. Not only opposition party members but also young Turks of the LDP itself vehemently demanded that Tanaka clarify once and for all what the magazine articles had reported. Understandably, public support of the Tanaka Administration plummeted and the popularity of Tanaka, the "commoner premier," faded fast.

At first, Tanaka attempted a counterattack. But, as the newspapers began to join, somewhat belatedly, in anti-Tanaka campaigns and with accusing voices in and out of the Diet growing louder, Tanaka seemed to be totally helpless and incapable of turning the tide.

Moreover, after Tanaka took over the premiership, the price of land started to rise, deepening the runaway inflation. The public had begun to suspect that the spiral might be a result of what Tanaka had proposed in his much-publicized book, "Building a New Japan—A Plan for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago."

In the book, written and published shortly before he became Prime Minister, Tanaka had outlined a drastic plan to remove excessive industry and population from the Tokyo-Nagoya-Osaka Pacific coast area and to develop industries in sparsely populated districts on the Japan Sea side.

This, said Tanaka in his book, could be achieved by constructing networks of "bullet train" lines and highways across the country. The

plan itself was well-thought out and seemed flawless, but it had a side-effect: big business began to buy up land for speculation. As a result, individual Japanese found it even more difficult to buy even small pieces of land to build modest homes.

Toward the end of November 1974, it became all too clear that Tanaka was losing—perhaps for the first time in the 56 years of his life. By then, no one desired, it seemed, to back the wrong horse.

Pointing an accusing finger at him, all the Japanese seemed to have totally forgotten how, only two years before, they had welcomed the emergence of a “commoner premier.” The same leaders of the nation’s business circles who had contributed sizable “political donations” to him were now paying no heed. The same newspapermen who had jubilantly likened him to a latter-day Toyotomi-Hideyoshi were now talking aloud that Tanaka was, after all, no more than power-hungry greed incarnate.

With his official announcement of resignation on November 26, Kakuei Tanaka stepped down from his post. Thus ended the “Kaku-san (Tanaka’s nickname) boom.”

The collapse of the boom was illustrative of the fragile nature of any seat of power. What had ousted Prime Minister Tanaka were only twin articles written about him by two hitherto nameless journalists whose survey was precipitated by one simple and primitive doubt: Why is Mr. Tanaka so rich?

Epilogue

Now that we have scanned the years of Showa—1926 to the present—we may perhaps be able to leap a bit forward into the future as in the case of a broad jumper who first steps back before dashing along the dirt runway toward the takeoff plank and into the air.

The safest prediction undoubtedly is that Japan in the foreseeable future would be essentially very much like Japan in the past years of Showa. An unexciting prophesy, indeed. But, how can an athlete jump in any direction other than the course he has hitherto run in order to gather momentum? A spider, too, just doesn’t change the pattern of the web it has been spinning.

The 110-million residents of this Far Eastern archipelago are, according to consumer scientists, still living in the frenzy of the “Three C’s,” as of this writing—car, cooler (air-conditioner) and color television set. For some time to come, the majority of the Japanese will keep on buying bigger passenger cars, more powerful air coolers, and television sets with a wider screen. Meanwhile, the painful sense of frustration, noticeable in every highly developed society, will continue mounting, for it is always true that the more you possess, the more will you desire.

There still is that omnipresent headache of overpopulation that has tormented the Japanese since the 1930s when Manchuria became the first target of Japanese expansionists. The state of overcrowdedness today is best represented by commuter trains that enter and leave Shinjuku Station, Tokyo, at around 8.40 every morning. The nation’s population is still increasing at the rate of 1,300,000 a year. Although it is highly unlikely that Japan will ever turn to expansionism again, many Japanese are frustrated by the thought of having a “less ratio of air to breathe.”

Quite ironically the housing shortage, coupled with over-

population, is something that has encouraged the working force of Japan to work even harder. In order to build his own modest home with three tiny bedrooms in a hard-won lot of 50 tsubo (approximately 200 square yards), millions of Japanese men have devoted themselves fully to their jobs. The miraculous growth of the Gross National Product was, in a sense, little more than an automatic byproduct of that arduous labor. Where there is frustration, there has always been the hope for a better life.

As far as politics are concerned, leftist parties seem to have a far better chance than their conservative counterparts. The nation's intellectuals lean overwhelmingly toward the leftist camp. The translated version of Friedrich Engels' "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" (1878) has been among the best-selling books for decades. Many educated Japanese men and women today hold a firm belief in such theoretical ideas as "economic developments lead to inevitable social evolutions," "labor is sold like a commodity" and "the working class is the final victor."

What is more, the people's emotions are easily stirred by the promises offered by the leftists. An anti-corruption, anti-privileged, anti-Emperor-cult or anti-Anglo-Saxon platform seldom fails to attract mass support. Strangely enough, these were once the lines advocated by rightist Ikki Kita, fiery ideologist executed in connection with the 2.26 Incident in 1936.

While many would doubt the capability of the Japan Socialist Party to become a future occupant of Nagatacho (the Prime Minister's official residence), the ever-growing number of voters pin their hope on the Japan Communist Party led by some of the most competent as well as realistic political figures. Quite ironically again, the JCP is today a staunch defender of "love Japan-ism," sometimes running the risk of alienating itself from both the Chinese and Russian comrade parties.

Regardless of the sort of political idea that will dominate the political arena of Japan tomorrow, the people's code of conduct is likely to remain largely unchanged. Millions, many millions, of Japanese will placidly go on working very hard, saving for the future and preferring, in their serious pursuit of life, to remain in the mainstream. The strong herd-instinct of the Japanese people seldom permits them to dare escape the benign discipline of organizations.

Working hard and sticking together are, in fact, integral elements of the Japanese culture.

Foreign observers, it may be safe to assume, will never cease to be fascinated by the behavior of the Japanese people, for it is featured by a large number of interesting paradoxes. The Japanese, once known as creators of beautiful architecture, gardens, literature and many other objects of art, are also noted today for their earthly zeal to destroy and discard time-honored traditions. The average Japanese these days is hardly likely to attend a tea ceremony, not even once in a year. He will not often see Kabuki, never perhaps the Noh theater, nor even wear a Kimono. But, somewhere in the depth of his mind, he believes that he understands the real essence of Japanese culture which, he is also firmly convinced, is totally incomprehensible to Westerners.

The modern-day Japanese are busy building skyscrapers, expressways and a bullet train network. They seem to be determined to advance along the path to prosperity, making use of all technological innovations. But, somewhere in the depth of their hearts, they believe that this world is naught but "a dew-drop on a leaf of grass." There may be many different opinions as to whether or not their belief, this belief in "Japaneseness," is incongruous. But few would deny the existence of contradictions in the Japanese way of thinking.

The Japanese are serious people. They rarely laugh at themselves. Obsessed, therefore, with some ideas that are fantastic and entertaining little doubt about them in their overseriousness, the Japanese have often surprised the non-Japanese. Many Japanese individuals will no doubt continue surprising the rest of the world—as some of their younger breed did in Kuala Lumpur lately. The one thing that can be said, however, is that their behavior will probably be similar, more or less, to the precedents that have been set during the past 50 years of Showa.

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