

HOW U. S. RUNS DEFEATED JAPAN: EMPHASIS ON NATIONAL REFORM

Planning a Change From Semifeudal
Dictatorship to Democracy

TWO NEW FREEDOMS FOR JAPAN . . .



FREEDOM FROM FEAR, FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

. . . will democracy "take" in the absence of a long-range occupation policy?

Immediate job of feeding and providing work for a people ruined by war

A new era for Japan, born of U. S. policy and enforced by U. S. troops, is now taking definite shape. It is intended to be an era in which 70,000,000 Japanese will have neither desire nor opportunity for anything but peace.

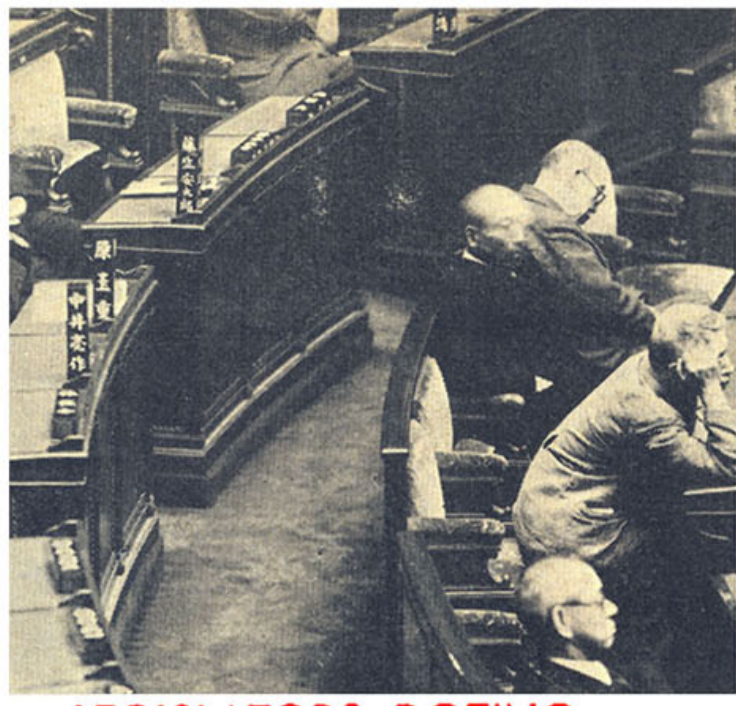
It is also to be an era marked by a revolutionary change, overnight, from a semi-feudal dictatorship with an emperor-god to a modern democracy that may have room for an Emperor but not for an emperor-god. This revolutionary change already has been decreed in specific orders issued by the Supreme Allied Commander, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, to the Japanese Emperor and Government. All that remains is for the Japanese, under the watchful eye of American and perhaps other Allied troops, to translate General MacArthur's orders into a new way of life.

The immediate problem in Japan, however, is to get that country operating again. Since V-J Day, five months ago, the Japanese have done little to rebuild their smashed cities and start up their wrecked industries. As things stand:

Food is scarce. City people are down to 1,300 calories a day, below the official German diet of 1,550 calories and far below the U. S. level of 3,500 calories. To meager rice rations, city Japanese may soon add fish meal mixed with leaves, roots, and ground silkworms.

Houses are scarce. Some 2,000,000 homes, 15 per cent of the total, were destroyed by Allied bombing. The homeless do what they can with fragments of sheet steel and tar paper, or sleep in subways, or seek refuge with relatives on farms.

DEFEATED JAPAN



LEGISLATORS DOZING



SOLDIER SLEEPING

... peace is a revolutionary idea to 70,000,000 Japanese

Clothes are scarce. Kept on short rations during the war, millions of Japanese civilians now are down to pieces of castoff uniforms supplemented by ancient kimonos.

Heat is scarce in a climate where winter winds are high and winter temperatures stay between 15 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Coal production is only about 30 per cent of capacity.

In part because of these scarcities, industry is running at only 25 per cent of capacity. Railroads have had to curtail operations. Inflation, usual product of scarcity, has advanced to the point where Japanese officials last week had to deny rumors of a national bank moratorium. And unemployment, swelled by an advance guard of 850,000 returning soldiers and civilians of the 7,000,000 ultimately to be repatriated, now stands at about 5,000,000. This figure represents about one third of Japan's prewar employment in commerce and industry.

Bogged down by problems of unemployment, inflation, and want, a shaky Japanese Cabinet has turned for help to General MacArthur. The General has indicated a disposition to help where a case for help is proved. But he has put first emphasis on the long-range, revolutionary program for converting Japan from a warlike dictatorship to a peaceful democracy.

Occupation orders. In a series of carefully timed steps, Gen. MacArthur has:

Abolished Japan's Army and Navy;

Grounded all Japanese planes and pilots, military and civilian;

Marked for destruction all plants that manufacture planes, munitions, implements of war;

Frozen all Japanese external trade, including shipping, subject to operation by special permit;

Seized the 21 biggest banks and the 15 biggest family trusts for possible liquidation or reorganization with wider ownership;

Dispersed the secret police, abolished "thought control," and banned all secret, militaristic, expansionist societies.

General MacArthur took these actions to clear the ground for the basic revolution. With equal speed the General has handed down the decrees that form the backbone of the revolution. These decrees, which four Japanese cabinets and the Japanese Diet have endeavored to digest and act upon since last September, affect the economy, the state, the church, the individual, and the Emperor.

The Japanese economy, under the new U. S. decrees, no longer would be an economy in which a few powerful families controlled the bulk of finance, industry, and trade, with labor doomed to endless poverty and farmers chained to serfdom. Stiff war-profits taxes and a steep capital levy are counted on to bust the trusts. Labor is to be encouraged to organize. On the land, a system of tenure 10 centuries old is to be modernized. Absentee ownership is to end. Generous credit, reclamation of new lands, division of larger estates, and stabilized farm prices are to encourage Japanese farmers—70 per cent of them tenants—to become independent landowners.

DEFEATED JAPAN

The state is expected to match the economy in reform. Ultimate goal, plainly written in U.S. policy, though not embodied in specific decrees, is a government whose powers are vested in the people, rather than in the Emperor. As a starter, the Japanese Diet is instructed to hold new elections this spring, so the people may vote for candidates friendly to democracy. The upper house in the Diet, occupied by representatives of wealth and nobility, no longer is to have veto power. No candidate for election to either house, nor in fact any Government official, may hold office if he was a member of societies that supported Japanese aggression before and during the war.

The national church, which supported Japanese aggression by glorifying Japan's warrior ancestors, no longer may receive financial or political support from the state. There is to be complete separation of church and state. Individual Japanese may continue to worship the national religion, Shinto, but Shinto propaganda glorifying the Emperor and the Japanese people as of divine origin no longer will be permitted.

The individual Japanese is to have such freedom as he never has known before. General MacArthur has ordered the Japanese Government to provide for freedom of speech, of press, of assembly, and of worship. "Thought control" by the secret police is to be a thing of the past. Political parties, including a Communist Party, may organize. Universal suffrage is to be allowed, which means that women may have the vote for the first time. Press and radio are to be free of Government influence and financing.

An emperor may or may not fit this new democratic Japan. That is for the people to decide. All moves to transfer power from the Emperor to the people, however, have the blessing of U.S. policy. In any case, the Emperor no longer is to be considered a god. Emperor Hirohito himself settled that on New Year's Day by renouncing any claim to divine origin.

But progress in this Japanese revolution is currently overshadowed by the struggle for food, clothing, and shelter. A request for almost 3,000,000 tons of food, some of it to come from the United States, is pending in Washington. A request for 1,000,000 bales of cotton also is under consideration. Approval of both, at least in part, is expected. If some of Japan's immediate raw material needs can be met, Japanese industry and labor may go back to work.

Attention then will turn back to long-range U.S. occupation policy. There is a question whether all members of the new Far Eastern Commission will go along with this policy. It is assumed that U.S. occupation forces, now 200,000 strong in Japan and Korea, may not need to stay in Japan more than two or three years. If this force is withdrawn within that time, making U.S. supervision over Japan a matter of remote control, there is then the final question whether the drastic Japanese revolution will "take."

In the absence of U.S. or Allied troops, the Japanese military clique and the 15 family trusts would emerge from obscurity. The same military and economic interests that have ruled Japan for the last 80 years would be in the saddle again. In that event, General MacArthur's directives for a revolution in Japan will have only the force of government by press release.