

Building a New Japan Introduction

The contributions of MISers to the war against Japan did not cease with the end of hostilities, but continued for many years during the Occupation of that defeated nation. During the war; the Japanese had been the enemy, to be opposed with all the vigor and fury of an aroused America. Now, however, with the return to peace, the task of MISers was to help restore and rebuild the Japanese nation, to ensure the establishment of a free and democratic society, and to create a new bond of friendship between the United States and Japan after nearly four years of bitter conflict.

For the Nisei MISers, coming to the land of their parents under these circumstances was a particularly strange experience, arousing a variety of thoughts and emotions, but somehow completing the long odyssey from the original language school at the Presidio of San Francisco to the Dai Ichi building across the moat from Japan's imperial palace. The Hakuji MISers had also completed a journey, and they too felt a sense of wonder and gratification as they joined the great effort to create a new Japan.

The personal testimonies that follow can only hint at some of the myriad activities in which the MIS men now found themselves engaged. Peter Okada compares his arrival in Yokohama in full battle gear with his subsequent assignments to more peaceful endeavors. Ulrich Straus' initial assignment to ATIS lead to a strange encounter with repatriated Japanese diplomats (on which Allen Meyer has an interesting comment) and a stint at the Tokyo war crimes trial. By contrast, Joseph Kurata did counter-intelligence work in the field, while Allen Meyer began his Occupation duties with a year's stint at ATIS. The concluding account, by Faubion Bowers, describes his role as aide-de-camp to General MacArthur, with some interesting observations about the American shogun.
In the Occupation of Japan - Peter K. Okada

Our comrades who preceded us in the war with Japan engaged primarily in battle intelligence. They participated in "winning the war." Because of military strategy and the related action and drama, it was the more colorful and sensational phase of MIS action compared to the phase which followed. This involved "winning the peace" during the Occupation of Japan. This is the unheralded part of the belated MIS story.

It is said that our predecessors shortened the war in the the Pacific. I would speculate that we who were a part of the Occupation abbreviated what could have been a difficult and prolonged recovery. I'm certain we assisted in the smooth transition to democracy.

Very much like the different tasks that our early fellow grads participated in, the Occupation performers found themselves at many levels and in diverse assignments.

For openers, they were on the USS Missouri during the surrender ceremony; and they were major players at the war crimes trials and at Sugamo prison where war criminals were incarcerated.

Our members were in positions of status, such as interpreters for ranking generals with authority, including the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, General Douglas MacArthur. We were also involved at all levels of the Army-at General Headquarters (GHQ); with the Eighth Army under General Robert L. Eichelburger; and at intelligence headquarters under Major General Charles A. Willoughby. The latter included such lower echelons as the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) and the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD), both of which monitored and prevented Communism from infiltrating and making serious inroads into Japan. Our members were also involved with the Reparations Mission, which assisted in making restitution to countries Japan had invaded. Many of us served in Military Government, and the list goes on and on. With the limited time available, I would like to briefly describe my experiences during the period from October 1945 to May 1951.

My long dream and ambition, and my reason for enlisting in the Army MIS, were realized when I set foot in Yokohama in October 1945. We landed with steel helmets, full field packs, and mounted bayonets, and marched to Sakuragi-cho station where we boarded trains for Tokyo.

Curiosity seekers who lined the road were mainly kids and seniors with looks of bewilderment. They probably thought we were turn-coats, but it wasn't long before they learned otherwise from the media.

We were billeted at ATIS Headquarters or in the NYK Building. My maiden assignment was with a team consisting of about 25 men on TDY with the 2nd Marine Division stationed at the great naval base in Sasebo, Kyushu. The late Itay Kaneko and I were assigned to a labor battalion consisting of about 75 men and women whose task it was to dispose of ammunition, pre-formed gun powder; and Zero fighter engines after rendering them unusable. The Japanese had cached the engines in various caves in the hillsides of the base. We dumped the ammo in the bay and burned 60 tons of picric acid gun powder daily. The melted down engines provided raw material for the early start of one of the industries making aluminum foot lockers for the GIs.

Then in the spring of 1946, I was transferred to the 108th Military Government Team, which underwent a number of name changes, first to Osaka Military Government Team, then to Osaka Civil Affairs, and lastly, as some adjacent local teams were deactivated, to Kinki Civil Affairs Region.

I was to remain with the unit with each successive change until General MacArthur was relieved of his command in April 1951. It was undoubtedly the most interesting and rewarding experience of my life -- so much so that the

satisfaction I got from playing the role of a bridge between Japan and the U.S. later launched my lifelong business career between the two countries.

The institution through which the Supreme Commander, General MacArthur, guided and revived the people and the bankrupt economy of Japan was largely the Military Government. He issued orders to the prime minister, whose cabinet rubber stamped and sent them on to the governors of the prefectures, who in turn sent them to mayors of cities and chiefs of towns and villages.

Copies of these orders were sent to all the local Military Government teams and our job was to observe and report to GHQ as to how these decrees were being implemented at the grass roots level.

My initial job at MG was to set up an Interpreter Translator Section for the team. Later, I turned down a field commission, and remained as a civilian promoted to the Education Section with rank equivalent to my military counterpart. Then I served as chief of the Information Section, and finally as chief of the Agriculture and Forestry Section in the Economics Division.

The early period of the Occupation involved a number of negative instructions from GHQ. For example, while serving with the Education Section, my work included calling on schools unannounced with a long check list to see if the "Kamidana" or God Shelf in each class room had been taken down; that the "Goshin'ei" or photograph of the Emperor and Empress had been removed from the auditorium; that martial arts weapons had been turned over to the local police; that the "Hoanden" or shrine on the school grounds containing the imperial portraits had been destroyed; and so on.

As the Occupation proceeded, things turned positive and the return of Japan to the family of nations had begun about the time I returned in 1951 to the states to complete my education.

Then one day years later in 1991, when returning from one of my trips to Japan, I was shocked and surprised to receive an invitation from the Commissioner of the American Football Association in Japan inviting me to be honored at half time during one of the games in Osaka.

I was astounded to learn that most of the rudiments of football I had taught to students at two high schools, Toyonaka and Ikeda, during off duty hours when I had been in the Education Section had taken root and had blossomed to become part of the regular sports curriculum in 120 high schools in the Kinki and Tokyo regions. Graduates of these programs have served as a source of supply for rookies on 220 college teams and 91 company club teams throughout Japan. I discovered that the intricate rules of the game were understood and that winning teams from Osaka and Tokyo were participating in the annual playoffs with the finalists receiving the Peter Okada Trophy, a gift I had given years ago and had long forgotten.

So, in June 1992, we were met by a delegation when we arrived at the Osaka train station. My eldest daughter and two grandsons, who were vacationing in Japan at the time, joined us in being wined and dined for several days. Later, I was honored at mid-field ceremonies with players lining both side lines of Nishinomiya Bowl -- as the father of American football in Japan!

I question whether this little episode is of substantial significance. Whatever the degree of significance, I feel very humble when I realize that unconsciously I made a very small contribution, and left a very tiny footprint, as a member of the MIS during the early and heady days in the aftermath of a tragic war.

Preparations for a Diplomatic Career-In the Occupation - Ulrich Straus

I got into Army's Japanese language program at the tail end of the war solely because of my BIJ (Born In Japan) status, having lived in Tokyo for 7 and a half years up to the fall of 1940. Actually, aside from having an ear for the language, my Japanese skills were minimal at best. I should, of course, have spoken it rather well, but in those days kids at the American School in Japan did not take Japanese seriously; French, Spanish and Latin, yes, but not Japanese. Also, during that long-ago prewar era, my social life was focused on my schoolmates at the American School, not kids in the neighborhood, a matter of considerable regret later on when I was wrestling with the finer points of Japanese grammar. Joining the Occupation in January 1946, I was assigned to ATIS, where, if memory serves, I reported to a Capt. Sakamoto. Our job was to translate some of the voluminous correspondence MacArthur was receiving from the Japanese public. One stands out. It was a plea from a claimant to the Chrysanthemum Throne for support in his endeavor to supplant Hirohito, based on various shenanigans that supposedly occurred back around the Kamakura Era some six or seven hundred years ago. Another notable translation project came to us courtesy of one of the intelligence units. Enclosed in at least two imposing envelopes was a book that was deemed of a possibly subversive nature. It turned out to be Lonin's On Imperialism. I think we persuaded the powers that be that it had already been translated into all the major languages of the world and that no further action was required.

During my stint at ATIS occurred another unusual episode, which Allen Meyers recently mentioned to me because he too had taken part in it. A number of Japanese language speakers were ordered to the port of Uraga to process a group of Japanese diplomats, journalists and others being repatriated from Axis and neutral European capitals, and their baggage. SCAP suspected that as the war was drawing to a close, the respective Japanese embassies were distributing remaining government funds to their employees instead of turning it over to the Allies for use as payment for Occupation expenses. My particular job, then, was to try and determine what properly belonged to the diplomats and what should return to the state to be confiscated as reparations. For example, one or two Leicas or Swiss watches were OK, but not 10 or 20. Aside from uncovering

ingenious ways of bringing in dollar bills, e.g. by putting them into used toothpaste tubes, it was most instructive to come upon genuine European pornographic pictures which we generously allowed the diplomats to keep. Stashing the loot into armored cars, we then roared back to Tokyo where it was deposited in the vaults of the Bank of Japan. I have no idea what might eventually have happened to those hauls, but for a barely 19-year-old, those wild rides still stick in the mind while much more important events undoubtedly have slipped away.

Probably my most fascinating experience during the Occupation took place at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), also known as the Tojo Trials. One of the most important and sweeping charges against some of the defendants was that of conspiracy to commit aggression in a conspiracy with Germany and Italy. U.S. Forces in Europe had seized intact the German Foreign Office files containing exchanges of telegrams with the German Embassy in Tokyo as well as memoranda of conversations between the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin with the German leaders. This included such tidbits as Himmler informing Ambassador Oshima about various German plots to assassinate Stalin; our Soviet colleagues at the time thought this was really good stuff. Together with a few other officers knowledgeable in German, who were mostly British Navy types, I wrote summaries of these documents for review by the Prosecution Staff. Later on, I had a small unit of Germans and Japanese who translated the needed documents into the official languages of the Court-English and Japanese. My job was to ensure that the two translations were accurate, agreed with one another, and to testify to that fact.

When the IMTFE job came to an end, I switched over to G-2 Operations where I did some writing for our section's contribution to SCAP's Daily Intelligence Summary. We covered daily events in the area of Japanese politics, the economy, the media and society in general. It was not all that sexy since the Occupation authorities, whose existence, incidentally, we were never supposed to mention in the articles, were the real movers and shakers of Japan at that time. But, still, it was fascinating to get something of a birds-eye view of Japan's reconstruction.

When I reflect back on those early years, it is clear to me that my Japanese language training and these two early experiences with international relations and Japanese politics whetted interests that I then pursued at the university and later in the Foreign Service where about half of a 30 year career was devoted to the U.S.-Japan relationship and brought me great satisfaction. And I'm not through yet. Since retiring from the Foreign Service I've been teaching courses at universities in the Washington area dealing with one or another aspect of Japan. I brief businessmen who are posted to Japan. For a couple of years I ran the State Department's Japanese Language Program here in town. And I just got back from a two week trip to Japan where I made

arrangements for an observation and study tour for a group of prominent District of Columbia citizens which I will be leading in December.

Additional Comment by Allen Meyer

What Rick didn't mention about the Uraga incident was the belligerent attitude of the diplomats toward the seven Nisei and myself stationed there. Before Rick and his group arrived, we needed 1st Cavalry Division help to force open the trunks and other hiding places, where the diplomats had squirreled away what turned out to be a treasure trove of material-all the time assuring them that most of what they had would be returned to them. Rick's group left with the obvious goodies of tangible value to be deposited in the Bank of Japan vaults. The eight of us returned to our billet to pore over the rest of the material until the wee hours of the next morning. After removing other significant documents and diaries, we returned to their barracks that morning to give back to them items of no diplomatic or war crimes value.

The kind of verbal abuse and profanity to which the eight of us were then subjected was language far too coarse for our sensei (teachers) at Snelling to have been willing to teach us. Thanks, Rick!

Counter Intelligence in Occupied Japan - Joseph Y. Kurata

I was with the first group of Nisei selected to undergo special agent training at the Counter Intelligence School at Camp Ritchie, Maryland in May 1945. Approximately 50 Nisei were in the initial class and we had been selected from over 3,000 Nisei who were at Fort Meade, Maryland being processed to join the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion in Europe. The defeat of Germany in May 1945 changed the direction of our military destination from the European theater to the Pacific theater and, for myself and other Nisei, to entry into the secretive world of counter intelligence.

We were placed in an accelerated counter intelligence course and introduced to a whole list of new (to us) intelligence terms which were intriguing but also carried a sense of foreboding. We learned the use of such words as "safehouse," "mail drop," "informant," "clandestine meeting," "double agent," "vetting," "bugging," "subversion," "espionage," "surreptitious entry," etc. None of the Nisei in the first Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) class had gone to the MIS Language School but most of us had a fair speaking knowledge of Japanese. We completed CIC training at the end of July 1945 and were being processed for overseas shipment to the Philippines for deployment when the war ended in the Pacific in mid-August 1945.

In early September the War Department issued orders to ship the first contingent of Nisei CIC agents consisting of about 85 men directly to Japan from the states. Upon arrival in Yokohama, we were transported to Camp Zama and

subsequently were assigned to various CIC units throughout Japan. A CIC unit was established in the capital city of every prefecture and one or more Nisei CIC agents were assigned to each unit to provide language support. The mission of the CIC was to detect, neutralize and counter any subversive and espionage activities directed against the U.S. and friendly forces in Japan. As directed by General Douglas MacArthur, CIC agents were to function as the eyes and ears of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) in the Far East. In carrying out its mission, CIC units relied on maintaining close liaison with every echelon of the Japanese government and especially with law enforcement agencies. Daily contacts between the CIC and Japanese officials were carried out by Nisei CIC agents to obtain maximum cooperation, understanding, and productive results. From personal experience and overall knowledge of CIC operations during the Occupation, I can say that the Nisei's role in and contributions to counter intelligence were major factors in the successful accomplishment of the CIC mission in Japan. The ethnic background of, and basic knowledge of the culture and customs of the Japanese people held by, the Nisei played major roles in gaining the confidence, respect, and cooperation of the Japanese.

My first observation of the Japanese was when we were being transported by truck from Yokohama harbor to Camp Zama. Enroute we saw only a few children and elderly Japanese in some of the villages. When we saw the children we would toss candies and snacks towards them from our slow moving trucks. Invariably the elderly Japanese men would caution the children to not pick up the items because they would be harmed. We could understand the warning to the children, although the Japanese were not aware that we were Nisei and understood the language. They appeared surprised when some of us spoke in Japanese to the children to enjoy the candies, and we would show them that it was safe by eating some ourselves. This initial experience indicated the prevailing distrust of Americans during the early part of the Occupation. I encountered several instances where Nisei were mistaken for American Indians. Many of the Japanese were not aware of the emigration of their people to the United States during the turn of the century.

One aggravating experience which I encountered on numerous occasions as an interpreter for Caucasian Army officers was their lack of understanding of the need for patience in communicating with the Japanese. The American manner of confrontation and direct responses in discussion with the Japanese would invariably result in misunderstandings and incorrect information. I would often be required to take the officer aside and explain the Japanese reluctance to give a positive "yes" or "no" reply. The way in which to obtain the necessary information and satisfactory results was to allow the person to answer given questions in their customary manner. Often this led to lengthy interviews which would displease the Caucasian officers and cause tension between me and the officer. Similar situations were probably experienced by many other Nisei, especially during the early years of the Occupation.

The Nisei assigned to CIC units were on constant call around the clock because usually there were only two or three Nisei with each CIC unit, which normally had a total of 12 to 15 personnel. CIC units had the responsibility of investigating any and all incidents of newsworthy or intelligence interest and sending immediate spot reports to SCAP through intelligence channels. The Nisei agents would be the ones to investigate and collect the pertinent information from the local people or through the Japanese police agencies. Invariably Japanese language knowledge was required to get the job done. Also in many instances, contacts with local people had to be accomplished inconspicuously, and we would dress accordingly to meet with our sources of information. In the recruitment of and clandestine meetings with confidential sources (informants) during many years of CIC operations in Japan, I frequented numerous bars, eating establishments, train stations, street corners, and parks, mostly after dark. I recruited and handled two informants who were Japan Communist Party officials, and for many years was able to obtain secret party documents. I would meet the informant clandestinely at night, pick up the documents, take them to a safehouse for copying, and then return them to the informant at another pre-designated meeting place that same night. This operation continued for almost two years when the operation was compromised and had to be terminated.

The Nisei in CIC were required to sacrifice a lot of their personal time and family life, and many times to sacrifice financially, in their conscientious effort to establish and maintain close liaison and cooperation with Japanese police officials. The Nisei expended numerous after-duty hours at eating and drinking establishment with police officials, as was the custom with Japanese men. Many times it would be after midnight before they returned home. Yet many were ready for duty the next day at the regular time. Japanese officials were very generous in defraying the cost of after-hours socializing. However, I always felt that I was obligated to carry my share of the expenses and would usually pay at least half of the night's cost. This, I'm certain, derives from my cultural upbringing. I was able to receive reimbursement for about half of my expenses, but the rest came out of my own pocket. This type of semi-official socializing was done regularly by many of the Nisei in CIC with the overall benefit of the organization kept in the forefront. The value of these sacrifices and contributions of the Nisei remains unspoken and forgotten.

I remember my first operational experience in Japan shortly after my assignment to the CIC office in Yokohama. I was to go with then Major Jack Cannon as an interpreter to investigate several houses in the Honmoku area of Yokohama formerly occupied by "White" Russians. I was just out of training from the U.S. with no "combat" experience and very apprehensive about my duties and involvement in the operation. When we approached the first house, a Japanese guard was present but permitted us entry upon checking our CIC credentials. Both of us were armed with .45 caliber Army revolvers and Major Cannon carried a satchel containing a quantity of plastic "C" explosive. Our task was to look for documents of intelligence interest. When our search located a large safe hidden

in the basement, Major Cannon proceeded to blow open the safe by placing the plastic "C" around the door knob and inserting a fuse cord. I was standing back watching Major Cannon going about his business like a movie style gangster, scared but fascinated. The detonation blew the door open, but evidently someone had emptied the safe. This was my introduction to Major Cannon, who became infamous after leaving CIC and establishing the Japan Special Operations Branch (1SOB)) under G-2, GHQ, Far East Command.

I still reminisce about the compromise of a special informant and wonder if my inexperience as a CIC agent at the time led to his downfall. I had personally befriended this man when he was a small town newspaper reporter and was just getting started during the postwar period in Japan. Eventually he was able to start publishing a local newspaper. I was able to influence him to have his paper express leftist views and support labor causes and even some of the propaganda of the Japan Communist Party (1CP). After frequent urging on my part, he finally agreed to join the Communist Party and infiltrate the JCP's higher echelon. Eventually he succeeded in having access to the prefectural headquarters of the JCP where he was able to obtain important documents for CIC. Prior to the development of this new informant, I had recourse to another source of unknown reliability at the prefectural level JCP. This informant was a die-hard Communist Party member whom I had coerced by threatening to have the Japanese police arrest his wife for involvement in unlawful demonstrations. The JCP informant had initially agreed to covertly pass us secret party documents and information for six months, and he had been completing his part of the agreement for about four months. However, we were not able to check on the veracity of the information obtained from him. With the new newspaper informant, we were able to check on the reliability of the JCP informant. The documents provided by the two sources appeared to be authentic and we could therefore increase our confidence in the reliability of the JCP source.

This two-source operation was going smoothly for several months when a very critical piece of information regarding an important scheduled JCP meeting was reported by the JCP informant. I contacted our newspaper informant to ascertain the veracity of this report on the important meeting at the first opportunity. Several days later near midnight I received a frantic phone call from the newspaper informant stating that his life, and possibly his family's, could be in danger. We agreed to meet immediately at the safehouse with our unit commander also in attendance. He revealed at the midnight meeting that he had attended a JCP headquarters meeting earlier that night where he had queried another party official about a possible important JCP policy meeting in the near future. The party official demanded to know where the informant had heard about the highly secret meeting. The newspaperman gave an evasive reply which did not satisfy the official, who then ordered him to wait while he conferred with the meeting chairman about the leakage. The informant give the excuse that he needed to go to the restroom, made his escape from the building, and called me from the first available public phone. The informant was frightened and shaking

and stated that the Communists would probably kill him and harm his family if they knew that he was a spy for the Americans. The decision was made to evacuate his whole family that very night with all their personal belongings to another area in Japan. The move was carried out that night within two hours utilizing CIC unit vehicles and train transportation all arranged by CIC Nisei personnel. Arrangements were also made for the CIC unit in the targeted area of evacuation to assist the family in their relocation and livelihood. For a long time afterwards, I felt personally responsible for the unexpected turmoil and hardship forced upon the man and his family, and I did make several contacts with a counterpart in the relocated area to inquire about the welfare of the family. Being a Nisei sometimes had the disadvantage of becoming personally and emotionally involved in the performance of duties in Japan.

Facets of Military Government in Postwar Japan - Allen H. Meyer

When we disembarked near Tokyo, we spent a few days at Camp Zama for shots and general orientation. As the linguists had been given training in area studies, history and culture, the orientation was rather simplistic and, at times, conflicting, even for the 20-year old, like myself, who had been immersed in language study for over two years. Many of us were initially assigned to billet at the NYK Building in Tokyo, as members of ATIS (the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section). The building, the formidable former headquarters of the leading shipping company, was located at the corner of an intersection of considerable activity. On one side, we overlooked the Emperor's Palace grounds; on the other was the two-block street leading to the partially bombed-out main Tokyo railroad station.

We lived and worked in the NYK, which most translators and interpreters considered their interim home between assignments. Also living there were some Japanese linguists of the armed forces of England, Australia, China, the Netherlands and Russia. The latter, trained in a language school in Vladivostok, could converse with us only in Japanese, but we were all on good terms before the Cold War set in, and they were then moved out.

My initial assignment was that of a translator of daily newspapers and periodicals. My team, one of perhaps 20-30 groups working on the vast unpartitioned first floor, consisted of six Japanese nationals and myself; they translated the daily periodicals of Tokyo, while I worked on magazines and supervision of their translations. We were mainly concerned with treatment of matters such as possible war criminals (whose actions might be undemocratic), breaking up the zaibatsu, the role of women and labor and management. This was prior to the obvious retention by the Soviets in Manchuria and Siberia of Japanese nationals, and the glow of an early pleasant rapport with Russia resulted in a paucity of periodical or newspaper comments on this subject. My job, in supervision, was to make certain that the translations by the Japanese nationals were accurate, and to highlight translations which might be contrary to

the MacArthur policy on particular subjects. After the translations, the material was sent upstairs for dissemination to appropriate Army agencies and for summarization.

What direct impact this work had on the Occupation is specifically unknown to me. Generally, however; our initial concerns with moves toward democracy were satisfactory. I do recall our highlighting material which was not directly, but could become, critical of the Occupation, and finding retractions or explanatory comments a few days later in the same newspaper.

The nationals with whom I worked knew as well as I the direction we were taking, and when I highlighted for them contrasts with what I knew of Stateside democracy, they clearly understood their role. We were instructed not to fraternize with our female translators, which made sense, both because of possible favoritism, as well as out of respect for SCAP's (at times) ambiguous position on fraternization. This left us in a somewhat ambivalent position. The six Japanese were as intrigued by the nuances of their translations as they were by my periodic corrections. Whenever a discussion would begin with one, all work would stop in my team, and frequently neighboring teams would join in. It was a learning process for both sides and was healthy at all levels. One insight on, for example, anti-trust laws in the U.S. as a model for breaking up the zaibatsu might lead to 10 minutes of discussion at our desks; but the following day, at breaks, they would come back with comments on the same subject resulting in interim discussions with friends and family. Our learning process obviously expanded in many directions, and the usual consensus was favorable to whatever insights the Americans were bringing to Japan.

One exception was in the area of women's rights. An article might appear about what was said at a meeting fostering equal rights for women. A particular word in the article might carry with it a derogatory inference. We had to highlight this for our superiors, but the discussion involved an explanation of the way Americans viewed it. The men on the teams were more vocal, and the female team members were generally silent -- but this was early in the Occupation.

On another level, Toa Remmei (East Asian League), one of the larger militant groups, closed its doors late in August, but saw fit to issue one last publication. In one blurb, given only minor space in the newspapers, the suggestion was made that the Japanese, now in abject defeat, should emulate the Jews as a role model! They had proven themselves the more formidable, for they had beaten (or, at least, survived) Hitler and other persecutors before him. Although my team was familiar with Hitler, none had ever encountered a Jew, and only one of the men was vaguely familiar with the various side issues (for example, Jacob Schiff's assistance to Japan in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, the introduction of anti-Semitic literature by contact with the White Russians in post-WWI Siberia and Manchuria, the attempts of the Nazis to eradicate the few thousand Jews living in Japanese-held territories and the resistance of the Japanese

government to these efforts). This led to ongoing discussions about racial differences, contrasting the homogeneous structure of society in Japan with that of the melting-pot of America, and brought up such topics as treatment of minorities in Japan (including Koreans, Burakumin and foreigners, generally). A translator in my position could have little impact on the Occupation, but I would like to think that the mutual learning process with my team of literate nationals caused, at the least, a ripple in their immediate contacts. Even after assignment to other tasks and locations, I visited them and was greeted as a returning friend. During April 1946, I was assigned "upstairs" to work on daily "Summaries" of the political, economic and social highlights translated on the first floor. Another language officer (a college professor in civilian life) and I would review the tomes of translations of the previous day, beginning about 6:30 A.M., using a breakfast break for decisions as to the areas to highlight and return to dictate our daily "Summaries." Once our "Summaries" were completed, they would be typed and hand-delivered to GHQ. Our work was done until 6:30 the next morning, affording us ample time to wander around Tokyo, exercising our verbal skills in the language.

Again, what impact this had on the Occupation is rather uncertain to me, but would depend upon how these subjects were handled by the recipients of the "Summaries." It certainly clarified what the Japanese were reading in their own media.

During this period, Colonel Sidney Mashbir, and later, Colonel Austin, would call upon those living at the NYK to perform emergency tasks unrelated to our work. On one occasion, I was sent to the Dai-Ichi Building, to substitute in the night-shift for Major Faubion Bowers, Gen. MacArthur's aide-de-camp and a most proficient linguist. The only visitors had come with complaints concerning land reform, having just arrived by train from southern Honshu, and fortunately I was able to direct them to the appropriate office a few hours later. Our proximity to Tokyo's main railroad station resulted in a few emergencies, when the Military Police were confronted with fights among what we would now call the "homeless," and they were in need of interpreters to calm the disturbances. The eki (station), although partially bombed out, afforded a haven for many whose own shelters had been destroyed. The Japanese police were prone to treat them more rudely (general) for a dinner meeting at the Home Ministry than we, but, without interpreters, our own MPs were unable to restore calm, coupled with our not wishing to allow the Japanese police to lose face.

I will not deal in depth with "grass roots" personal relationships developed early in the Occupation. The nature of my work afforded us considerable free time, and travel throughout Honshu was easy, by jeep or by train. The railways were always crowded with people going and coming from rural areas where they could buy food at less than urban black market prices. Trains often had a separate car for service personnel, but we usually rode in the other cars to afford us opportunities to talk to the Japanese. After the initial shock of a gaijin (foreigner)

able to converse with them, conversation was fluid in subjects ranging from coin collecting to the future of the world. It usually ended up with their use of words such as "chaos," "anarchy," "confusion," "exploitation," "democratization"-all of which appeared with regularity in the newspapers and periodicals we encountered in our daily work. The degree of literacy for which Japan is known was evident then as well.

During the late spring, 1946, I had my initial encounter with the issue of repatriation. I was requested to join Robert Fair (then a 1st lieutenant, who retired as a general) for a dinner meeting at the Home Ministry Office. The Ministry of Welfare had handled well the general problem of repatriation, but the trickle of personnel being returned from Soviet or Red Chinese regions made this a concern of the Home Ministry. Those attending the meeting included former high-ranking military personnel who, with the Home Ministry, were concerned with communist indoctrination the Japanese were receiving, coupled with the impact it would have when they ultimately returned. I was told to study background material, and, some weeks later, I was sent to Uraga to work in repatriation of non-Red returnees. My job was to learn the general route of repatriation as practiced by the Ministry of Welfare and to send periodic reports that would enable ATIS to determine the composition of teams of linguists to be sent to various ports when these people began to return in greater numbers. There was only limited mention of this issue in the media, because little was known by the Japanese; however, there was an abundance of letters to the editor, beseeching help to get these people back. We would read about discussions at the Far East Council meetings, covered by the media, but only frustration confronted the Japanese and GHQ.

I should mention one other type of work to which I was exposed: elections of public officials, the following spring, while I was immersed in port work at Hako date. GHQ was in need of linguist "poll-watchers" in remote rural areas of Hokkaido. As ships coming from Karafuto were sporadic, and the next one was not due for a few weeks, my team and I were ordered to Rumoi Prefecture for the April 1947 elections. With all due apologies to people from Rumoi, I must comment that wherever we went on our patrols in that prefecture, we were told that this was their first encounter with Americans (even 19 months after the surrender). From Hakodate, it is easy to take a train to Sapporo, where they gave us two jeeps, for two teams of three linguists each, and two non-linguists (with arms, but intended to act as our drivers) and loaded us all on a train headed northwest toward the body of water that fronts on Siberia. The jeeps were of little value, except in Rumoi City or Horonobe, because most of the non-urban region, even in April, was covered with quite a few feet of snow.

Although there had been elections in 1946, the results were unsatisfactory: low turnout, election of officials purged later that same year, election of Communists who wanted Hokkaido given to Russia for occupation, and a small turnout by women and other disenfranchised. Therefore, the 1947 elections were the first

relatively democratic ones (fostered by SCAP as a means of throwing out the old guard), and were clearly an important element in the democratization process.

Intoxicated by MacArthur - Faubion Bowers

I am often asked what it was like to work closely with Douglas MacArthur. I was his aide-de-camp. Actually, my official title was Assistant Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief. MacArthur never hired anyone and never fired anyone. The people around him just sort of drifted into their jobs. Once, when he was complaining to me about how the press always gunned for him -- "It's only me and Patton they pick on" he moaned -- I suggested very timidly that, "Perhaps, sir, it's the people around you that cause a critical press. He answered unequivocally, "Major, if it's right at the top, it's right at the bottom."

For the two years I was near MacArthur, I was absolutely intoxicated by him. He had a grandeur, a greatness, a magnificence that doesn't exist anymore. There was a de Gaulle, Churchill, Smuts, Nehru, Stalin and MacArthur, that kind of bigger-than-life, old-fashioned razzmatazz belonging to a past era, another century. Certainly MacArthur belonged to the 19th Century, instead of the 20th. All that invoking of "the Almighty," the grandiloquent vocabulary ("I would be recreant in my duty not to run for the Presidency"), the fulsome references to his "adored wife" (they didn't sleep in the same bed, and she always called him "General," even in private) and his public exaggerations regarding his son, whom he saw only briefly in the mornings and who was asleep by the time he got home in the evenings, were just that, exaggerations. The one and only time the General ever visited a hospital during his 6½ years in Japan was not to visit the wounded but to spend 10 minutes with little Arthur, who had broken his arm. I got my adjutant's job with MacArthur because I had set up the Embassy in Tokyo exactly as it had been when Ambassador Grew was in pre-War residence. The Grews had stored all their furniture and treasures in the basement of the Embassy, there not being room for them when they were repatriated on the S.S. Gripsholm while the war was under way. The Japanese wanted to keep MacArthur in Yokohama at the Grand Hotel, since the Potsdam Declaration stated that we Allies would only occupy "points" in Japan until a democratic, freely-elected government was established. MacArthur wanted none of that and wanted his presence felt in Tokyo, the heartbeat of Japan. Incidentally, the Embassy was not far from the Imperial Palace, and the office we found for him, one of the few undamaged buildings of Marunouchi, the Dai-Ichi Insurance Building, overlooked the Palace.

Brigadier General Bonner Fellers, one of the best men around MacArthur, and the only one who had ever been to Japan or knew anything about the Japanese, was the Military Secretary to the C-in-C. He simply kept me on, since the Embassy had pleased MacArthur when he inspected it on September 7, 1945 and raised the American Flag over Tokyo. Fellers arranged for me to live at the Embassy and to ride to and from the office every day with MacArthur in his rather

battered car, the best the Japanese could come up with until MacArthur's pre-war car from the Philippines could be located and sent up to Japan. Fellers said I should carry arms, in case of an attack on MacArthur, and said, "Don't ask the Old Man about whether you should bear arms or not when you're with him. He'll say, 'No, no fuss,' but it's best to play safe." At first, I carried my carbine and laid it on the floor of the car, but then, as I saw that that rather irritated MacArthur, I stopped and carried a small pistol in my pocket. The driver, Sergeant Crotzer, drove at an interminably slow pace. It was as if we were in a funeral cortege. Anyone could have taken a potshot at us. So, one day when I said to the General, "Don't you think Crotzer drives too slowly, Sir?" He said, "No matter, no fuss."

Two things astounded me, as I look back on my service near the "Old Man." In all my time with him, he never once asked me a single question about Japan. He had been in Japan for a week when he was an aide to his father, who was traveling through Asia and reporting to the War Department on the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904. He knew nothing about Japan. He once volunteered, one rainy October morning, as Crotzer was moseying us along at his undertaker's pace, "I always felt there was something nefarious about the Japanese, when I was first here." Fortunately, I was spared his infamous comment that "the Japanese have the mentality of 12 year-olds." He said that long after I had vanished from his employ. He did ask me one question: When the Japanese held their first election in 1946, and Katayama became Prime Minister, I rushed into the General's office (I had the little cubbyhole next to his large room at the Dai-Ichi) and said, "Tetsu Katayama is Prime Minister. He's the first Christian and Socialist ever in Japanese history..." MacArthur interrupted me and said, "Does he speak English?" His only question ever. "No," I had to say. During MacArthur's entire time in Japan, he met only 60 Japanese. None of them was below the rank of Supreme Court Justice. When the Occupation banned Kabuki, the great classical theatre of Japan, I was determined to get MacArthur to overrule that absurd ruling made arbitrarily by some snot-nosed underlings in the Civil Information and Education Department and the Censorship Detachment of SCAP. He said, "What's Kabuki? Oh yes, when Queson and I passed through here in 1936 they took us to one of those things. I couldn't make head nor tails of it." I think that was the only time MacArthur was ever in a theatre.

He was a strange man, as I now know. He hated anyone over him, hated all Presidents, was incapable of taking orders, could charm the birds from the trees when he wanted to, and that was when Senators and Congressmen, and even Eisenhower, the Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, came out to Japan. He usually got his way with them and, if they threatened to contravene what he wanted to do in Japan, he would threaten back, "Do that and blood will flow in the streets," a favorite expression of his. Everyone close to him -- no one was really close-worshipped him. They were a strange lot. Tony Storey, his airplane pilot, once went to the Philippines on business and sent him a card that crossed my desk: "To him who walks and talks with God," it read. Larry Bunker, who took over my

job, became the Executive Secretary of the John Birch Society, and even my beloved Bonner Fellers headed a reactionary, right-wing group in Washington called "Stop the Gold Flow."

As for the rest, they have receded into anonymity. No longer reflecting the luster of MacArthur, they didn't shine anymore.

MacArthur always roused controversy. He brought it all on himself, and then whimpered that everyone was out to get him. His was a nature where pride was mortgaged to vanity. The Japanese liked him, because he kept himself aloof. The Emperor liked him, because he was deferential, excessively polite. MacArthur -- a man who delighted in humiliating or trying to humiliate his superiors -- was extraordinarily affable to Hirohito, the first time he came to call at the Embassy, September 26, 1945, when I was as terrified of his Japanese as he was scared of my Japanese. After the famous meeting, when the Emperor offered himself, his life, to free all the men in Sugamo Prison, MacArthur was terribly moved. He said to Jean, his wife, and me, "I was brought up in a republic, a democracy, but to see a man once so high now brought down so low, pains me, grieves me." And both Jean and I knew that he was actually speaking of himself. If defeat in war had humbled Hirohito, it took little Truman, with the stroke of a pen, to bring down the mighty, self-consumed MacArthur, who had deliberately insulted the President on Wake Island in 1951.