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JAPAN'S ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS, 1940-1945

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JAPAN'S ROLE IN  
Southeast Asian Nationalist  
Movements  
1940 to 1945

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*Issued under the auspices of the  
International Secretariat  
Institute of Pacific Relations*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 1953

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INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS  
1 EAST 54TH ST., NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



## Preface

THE EVENTS of the Second World War were crucial to the nationalist movements of the countries of Southeast Asia. While the story of these events is not completely clear even yet, and many conclusions must remain tentative, it has seemed worthwhile to undertake a study of Japanese occupation policies in an attempt to determine their contribution to the growth of nationalist feeling and to indicate, in a general fashion, their influence on later developments.

My acknowledgments are too numerous to be listed in detail. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Professor Rupert Emerson of Harvard University for his advice, encouragement and criticism and for first arousing my interest in this area; to Professor Edwin O. Reischauer of Harvard University for his helpful comments and suggestions; to Mr. Edwin Beal and Mr. Cecil Hobbs of the Library of Congress for their help in making available much of the material used in this study; to the staff of the Treasure Room of the Harvard Law School Library who patiently guided me through the unindexed labyrinth of the Proceedings of the Military Tribunal for the Far East.

Publication of this book has been made possible by the International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations which is sponsoring it as one of its series of studies on Asian nationalism. Sponsorship of the publication, however, does not constitute an endorsement of views expressed in it. The responsibility for all opinions and viewpoints found in this book is solely my own.

*June 1, 1953*

W. H. E.



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JAPAN'S ROLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
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## Introduction

SOON AFTER the close of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, a Japanese army officer traveled from Formosa to the Philippines on an exploration and mapping mission. He returned to Japan impressed with the potentialities of the Philippine independence movement and convinced of the immediate importance of establishing Japanese influence in this area of the Pacific by extending aid to the Filipino nationalists, a point of view which found ready support from two leading exponents of Japanese expansionism with whom he consulted. One of these men, Uchida Ryōhei, who later became one of the key figures in the famous chauvinist organization, the *Kokuryūkai* (often known as the Black Dragon Society), contacted naval acquaintances with whom he discussed the role of the Philippines in Japanese policy and it was their decision that the Japanese navy must have bases of operation from the Malay peninsula to the Philippines. This line, in their opinion, must be the first line of defense to ensure the command of the Pacific and the safety of the Empire.<sup>1</sup>

How these unofficial policy makers sought to give effect to their plans for the Philippines is illustrated by their attempts to aid the Filipino revolutionaries in the struggle against both Spain and the United States. The

<sup>1</sup> The motivations of the Japanese who backed the Filipino Revolution are discussed in Kuzuu, Yoshihisa, *Tōa Senkaku Shishi Kiden* (Biographies of Pioneer East Asian Adventurers), Tokyo, 1933, Vol. I, pp. 627-46. Another account of Japanese aid to the Filipino revolutionaries, based on Filipino sources is Corpus, Enrique, "Japan and the Philippine Revolution"; *Philippine Social Science Review*, October 1934, Vol. VI, No. 4, pp. 249-299.

details of the operation will not be elaborated here. In spite of some rather complicated backstage machinations and wide popular support, Japan's contribution to the cause of the revolutionaries was small and indecisive. There was no recognition of independence or even belligerency, no armed intervention, no financial assistance by the government. Several Japanese army officers did go to the Philippines to train the Army of General Emilio Aguinaldo, the leader of the Filipino insurgent forces, and through the efforts of strategically placed individuals, the revolutionary government was able to purchase two shiploads of arms, ammunition and other military equipment. Of these, however, one was sunk in a typhoon en route to the Philippines and the other was forced, by the vigilance of the American navy, to unload its cargo on Formosa from whence it was later transferred to the Chinese revolutionary forces of Sun Yat-sen.

Although this early attempt by the Japanese to extend their influence southward by granting help to a nationalist movement produced no effective results, there are numerous interesting observations to be made concerning it. In the first place, it provided a fine illustration of the way in which Japanese expansionists and patriotic societies operated on the domestic scene to realize their aims. When Mariano Ponce, the representative of the Filipino Revolutionary Committee, arrived in Japan in 1898 he was provided by this group with introductions to men in the government, in the Army, in the newspaper world, who were interested in his cause. He was introduced into a Tokyo club before which he made a widely publicized speech stating his case; Japanese newspapers began demanding action to ensure Philippine independence and when the government declined to take any positive action, army contacts paved the way for the purchase of arms from a private munitions firm.

As a connecting link between various elements of Japanese society—the army, the bureaucracy, business, pub-



lishing and, occasionally, though not noticeably in this instance, the criminal world—the patriotic societies played a peculiarly important role in Japanese imperialism. They were a pressure group operating within and without the government and one of their functions was the mobilization of public opinion in support of their expansionist policies or against governments regarded as too “weak.” The organizations also served on occasion as advance agents of the government and undertook tasks which might have embarrassed the latter and which could be disowned officially if discovered. The charts, information and even the pretext for Japanese expansion were often their contribution.

In spite of the pressure exerted for intervention in one form or another, the Japanese government refused to become implicated for, in spite of resentment against Western intervention in the Sino-Japanese War, it had no desire to offer a direct challenge to any Western power. The Foreign Office was particularly adamant in opposing any government action for it was engaged in an effort to revise the extraterritoriality treaties and was anxious to avoid any action that might interfere with this project. Consequently, Ponce was never in any way acknowledged by the Foreign Office and proposals by military figures such as General Kawakami of the General Staff that Japanese arms be sold to Ponce, either directly or indirectly, were vetoed by the Foreign Minister. This is not to say that the government at that time or the Foreign Office were necessarily opposed to the ultimate objectives of the expansionists but they were more aware of the difficulties which pursuit of such policies would raise and of the repercussions they would have abroad.

Similar differences in approach, between those with a provincial view of the national interests of Japan and those more aware of the implications of reaction to Japanese policies abroad, were to appear during the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia during World War II.

The episode was an early attempt to create friendly bonds between Japan and nationalist forces elsewhere in Asia, and to establish Japan as the leader of an anti-Western, anti-imperialist Asia. Even some of those pressing for aid to the Filipinos most vigorously did not expect the immediate success of the Philippine Revolution, but that was not the important issue. In the words of one of these men, General Kawakami, vice-chief of the General Staff:

"Philippine independence is a goal difficult to attain. Our country is not able at this time to extend its hand to that area, but the life of the nation is eternal and since we must think of 50-100 years hence, it is important not to lose the favor of the Philippine natives. This is the point to which we must pay attention."<sup>2</sup>

Early signs of Pan-Asian sentiment appeared during the course of these events. Aguinaldo, the Philippine leader, declared to a group of Japanese who came to the island during the fighting:

"Up to now, I have trusted the white man but I have been deceived first by the Spaniards and now by the Americans, nothing remains but to draw the sword. . . . To oppose the white man and gain freedom and independence, the colonial races must join together."<sup>3</sup>

Ponce, when he arrived in Japan, was introduced to influential quarters by Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the Chinese revolutionary party, who was also in Japan at this time in search of aid for his cause.<sup>4</sup> Discouraged at the results of

<sup>2</sup> Kuzuu, *op. cit.*, p. 630.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 637.

<sup>4</sup> A useful account of Sun Yat-sen's relations with the Japanese and of the attempt by some Japanese to make use of the Chinese revolution to further Japanese influence is to be found in Jansen, Marius B., *The Japanese and the Chinese Revolutionary Movement 1895-1915*. Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Harvard University, 1950.

his efforts thus far, Sun gave his active support to the Filipinos in the hope that they, once independent, would help him, a fellow Asian, in his struggle to rejuvenate China and to rescue her from the clutches of Western imperialism. This Pan-Asian strand of Sun's thought remained after the success of his party in 1911. As late as 1924, in a speech at Kobe, he reiterated his belief that independence movements in Asia could succeed only if "all Asiatic peoples unite and stand as one."<sup>5</sup> Unity could bring success for Eastern civilization, characterized by "humanity, justice and morality," and intrinsically superior to European civilization which was "scientific, utilitarian and materialistic." He paid tribute to the inspiration of Japan's example as the first independent nation of Asia to all the other Asiatic peoples. They, like her, must learn from Europe's "military culture" for the Eastern "rule of right" could triumph only with some use of the Western "rule of might."

These sentiments have remained attractive to large numbers of Asians right down to the present day, for the overwhelming technical superiority of the West inevitably has created a reaction in Eastern thought against the incursions of Western civilization.<sup>6</sup> How to harmonize East and West? How to incorporate the material benefits of the West into Eastern culture without destroying its essence?

<sup>5</sup> Quotations from lecture by Sun Yat-sen at Kobe Girls' School, November 28, 1924. International Military Tribunal for the Far East; Defense Document 128.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see a speech at Yale by the Indonesian ambassador to the United States, Mr. Ali Sastroamidjojo, in which he spoke as follows: . . . "[the Indonesians must] be aware of the dangers to which the all-penetrating individualism of the West might easily lead, namely, materialism and an excessively competitive spirit. . . . We must therefore endeavor to utilize modern science as a stimulating force to rejuvenate our own cultural heritage typified by the spirit of 'rukun' or conciliatory spirit."

Report on Indonesia, Information Office, Republic of Indonesia, New York, January 29, 1951, Vol. II, No. 18.

Japan, alone, of all the countries of Asia seemed to have found an answer. She had withstood the onslaught of the West and had successfully turned Western weapons against the West itself as well. Particularly in the period immediately after the Russo-Japanese War she became an object of emulation for all Asia; and even after the initial enthusiasm waned, she remained, for many, the most obvious source of help in the struggle to throw off Western domination by Western means.

It was the tragedy of Japan that she became her own most ardent admirer and thus ruined whatever chance she might have had to exert a lasting influence. Her own apparent success in synthesizing East and West was proof to her of her superiority;<sup>7</sup> the other cultures of Asia had failed to find an answer and so must be inferior. The solution, obviously, was to improve them by Japanization which would impart the magic formula. This is not to say that all those who befriended national leaders and causes in Asia did so only with ulterior motives. There were men genuinely interested in a strong Asia able to withstand the encroachments of Western imperialism and who sincerely believed in the harmony of interests between Japan and the rest of Asia.<sup>8</sup> A Japanese mission to bring independence to the peoples of Asia was a concept which appealed to the idealist as well as the power politician. Ideas of mission, however, are easily perverted, the more dangerously so since the mind of the bearer is often not aware of the process taking place, and many of the militarists of the 1940's undoubtedly were convinced that they were acting in the best interests of the other Asian countries. The conjunction of ideal and interest almost inevitably culmi-

<sup>7</sup> See article by Ōkuma, Shigenobu, "Harmonization of Eastern and Western Civilization," *Dai Nippon*, Spring, 1931; Vol. 1, No. 1. The following quotation from it is typical: "The harmonization of Eastern and Western civilizations has always been and will depend on the intellectual power of the well-informed class of the Japanese nation."

<sup>8</sup> See Jansen, *op. cit.*, on this point.

nated in the notion that Asia must be forced to be free. A statement in regard to relations with China published in 1920 in a periodical of one of the expansionist societies foreshadowed the events of the 1930's.

“. . . it seems impossible to those acquainted with her [China's] situation and her movements that she will be able in the near future to guard her own territory carefully; or that she will be able to share in the welfare of the outside world, by caring properly for her people and effectively developing her natural resources. This is the reason why it is necessary for Japan to render her every assistance in order to enable her to avert the calamities hanging over her head.”<sup>9</sup>

Japan's experience in her attempt to “liberate” China from herself as well as from Western imperialism in the period after 1931 failed to shake her sense of mission. On the contrary, the idea of Japan as the center and leader of an Asia from which Western influence had been expelled had become official policy by 1940. In the words of one spokesman, Japan was the only progressive country in the East, the only one which had developed into a modern nation and, hence, was capable of withstanding the impact of Western civilization. China and India, though older cultures, had stagnated; their old forms of life were anachronistic in the present world and they must be regarded as being in only the first stages of development along the road Japan already had traveled.<sup>10</sup>

Not only the emphasis on Japan's superiority remained; the Japanese continued to overlook, or rather, to underestimate the strength of the opposition everywhere in Asia to *any* outside control regardless of the source. The national resistance put up by the Chinese had opened the

<sup>9</sup> Uchida, Ryōhei, “The Asian Review and the Kokuryūkai,” in *The Asian Review*, February, 1920, Vol. 1, No. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Ōshio, Kaneo, “Tōa Kyōeiken to Minzoku Ron” (Nationalism and the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere) in *Gaikō Jihō*, April 15, 1941, No. 873.

eyes of some Japanese to the threat which national sentiment posed to plans for the Co-Prosperity Sphere. As this same writer put it, the Chinese National Movement, which had made anti-imperialism its slogan, had been induced by the "skillful diplomacy" of the Western imperialists to direct its efforts against Japan. His assertion that it was the "mistake of advanced nationalist movements that they make their own independence their only object" summarized the problem from the Japanese point of view.<sup>11</sup> They tried to meet the problem with the arguments that national self-determination, in its traditional sense, was outmoded in the modern world, that the only truly independent countries were those which possessed all the elements of national power, and that the weak nations of the world could exist only under the protection of one of the giants; but whatever the validity of the arguments, they held little emotional appeal for the countries to which they were directed. That the Japanese used these arguments, and they did so frequently in the early phases of the war especially, is another indication of how they underestimated the force with which they were dealing. That freedom for Asia was not enough, that each national movement demanded its own freedom was a fact the full significance of which the Japanese were slow to grasp.

To charge the Japanese with miscalculation of the strength of nationalism imposes the task of indicating what their view of it was. Consequently this study first considers the plans for the political framework of the Greater East Asia-Co-Prosperity Sphere. Did they include independence for the countries of Southeast Asia and, if so, what sort of independence was envisaged? What did they indicate about the Japanese conception of the nature, strength and importance of the national movements there? Was it a realistic one which reflected a knowledge of conditions in Southeast Asia? What role was assigned to the

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

independence movements in the creation of the Co-Prosperity Sphere and how did the Japanese hope to keep them confined within proper limits in order to avoid the "excesses" of "advanced nationalism"?

These plans having been set forth, the next job is to consider what happened to them when the attempt was made to put them into effect, for the actual construction of the Co-Prosperity Sphere would provide the acid test of the Japanese conception of nationalism in Southeast Asia. If the force was, indeed, as pliable as the Japanese believed, their chances of success were excellent but what if they had miscalculated and nationalism proved to be less transigent than they had foreseen? What would be the result when the "irresistible force" of Asian nationalism met the "immovable object" of Japanese militaristic imperialism? For if the occupation would test Japanese hypotheses, it would also be a measure of the strength of the national movements. Would they be able to withstand the onslaught of the drive for Japanization or, perhaps, even force alterations in the proposed structure of the New Order? The latter eventuality would be a real testimonial to their power for the Japanese militarists were not accustomed to dealing lightly with opposition. Instances in which changes did occur will be cited in the following pages and will provide interesting examples of the type of pressure which the nationalist forces could exert on their new masters. Any government, however ruthless, must compromise with at least some of the demands of its people; how, and to what purposes, the Japanese attempted to do this can be illustrated from these instances.

In addition to a discussion of the Japanese plans for Southeast Asia and of the factors which brought about revisions in the original blueprint in some cases, this study devotes some attention to the effects which the Occupation exerted on the development of nationalism. Did it in-

crease the appetite for independence and, if so, in what way? Did Japanese military rule, as some Western observers have charged, uproot the fragile bloom of democracy in these lands and set them on a totalitarian course? Was one of the results to strengthen the forces which were welding a national union from a heterogeneous society, or did the occupation, with its dissolution of existing ties, aggravate the fissures in the old order? What was the effect on the relationship between various racial groups, an important consideration in this area? Did the Japanese deliberately pursue a "divide and rule" tactic, and is their policy to be held responsible for the violent outbursts and the general increase in racial tension since the end of the war?

These are far-reaching questions which are probably not wholly answered by the discussions in these pages. However, even though the answers must be framed in general terms and can be given only for limited areas, it has seemed worth-while to pose the questions both because of their intrinsic interest and because of the importance of this period in the development of what has been called "the new world of Southeast Asia."

This attempt to recount wartime events and to give some indication of their significance for later developments suffers from two very obvious defects. The first is my own lack of firsthand experience in any country of Southeast Asia, and, for subjects such as this one, personal observation can be of great help in distinguishing relevant from irrelevant fact, permanent from transient effect. Secondly, the documentary material covering this period is extremely sketchy. Japanese wartime accounts, of course, were trimmed to fit the pattern of the official propaganda line (only occasionally as in some of the official documents, is this veil lifted) and one must wend one's way through them warily with but few signposts by which to set fact apart from fiction. The material from the Allied side was



necessarily limited and while some is valuable, much of it was based on information too remote or too scattered to be of major importance. There are all too few documents like the periodic reports of the wartime Government of Burma from which it is possible to gather some clear ideas of the stresses and strains within the New Order.

This situation has not been altered materially since the end of the war. Western accounts frequently have been too interested in justifying Western action since 1945 and too eager to pin the blame for postwar difficulties on the Japanese Occupation to provide a balanced view of what actually happened. The Asians themselves, particularly those who played an active role under the Japanese, have been reluctant to speak up and often when they have it has been to plead a special case, to exonerate political friends or vilify political enemies. The Japanese participants, for understandable reasons, have remained completely silent up to the present, though this state of affairs may be expected to change now that the peace treaty has gone into effect.

The nature of the material makes it impossible to deal with the subject as comprehensively as one would like. It is impossible, for example, to take any problem such as that of political participation, national unity or racial minorities and trace its development in each of the occupied countries. Similarly, it is impossible to take any one country and consider events there from all possible viewpoints, local, Japanese, Western, or other.

Under the circumstances, it has been difficult to find a central thread to unite the various parts of the story. Insofar as there is one, it is provided by the account of events concerning Indonesia, for Indonesia figures in every part of the story. To limit it solely to that country, however, seemed to me unnecessarily confining, for certain subjects, such as economic policy and the relations between the Japanese administration and local leaders, are

better viewed from events in other countries. Moreover, examples drawn from other countries give added perspective, not only to the events in Indonesia, but also to the whole Japanese occupation. Circumstances alter cases, and all generalizations must be made warily, but if any general conclusions at all are to be reached some comparisons must be made. Certainly if one did not venture into such subjects until all the answers were in, very little would ever be generally known about them.

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## The Japanese Blueprint

BY THE END of the 1930's, Japan's militarist expansionists had succeeded in capturing control of the government. Their program of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere had been proclaimed in 1938 but, except in regard to China and Manchuria, it remained vague and ill-defined. The ultimate object of Japanese hegemony in Asia was clear but there was no prescribed method of expansion, no fixed timetable that had to be met, no definite form which this hegemony had to assume. Then came the outbreak of war in Europe and Japan's golden opportunity. With France defeated and England fighting for her very existence, the path to southward expansion appeared open to the Japanese—if they moved before Germany sought to extend the fruits of her conquests to the Far East. The time for decision had arrived.

In July 1940, the Cabinet formulated the basic tenets of Japanese foreign policy as follows: the construction of a New Order in East Asia, the settlement of the China Affair and, as opportunities presented themselves, "constructive and elastic measures . . . to advance the national fortunes of the Empire."<sup>1</sup> These glittering generalities required

<sup>1</sup> International Military Tribunal for the Far East [hereafter referred to as IMTFE], Exhibit 541: "Outline of Japan's Basic National Policy," July 26, 1940.

The translation of many of the IMTFE exhibits leaves much to be desired but since the original documents have not been available to me, I have not attempted to improve upon the translation.

some further definition: of what was the "new order" to consist? What constituted "constructive and elastic measures?" High level ministerial conferences in September provided some of the answers.<sup>2</sup> The Greater East Asia New Order was to comprise an area centered around Japan, China, and Manchukuo and to include the mandated islands, French Indo-China, Thailand, Malaya, Borneo, Netherlands East Indies, Australia, New Zealand and, possibly, India though at this time it was believed the latter country might have to be included in the Soviet Union's sphere of influence.<sup>3</sup>

Independence for French Indo-China and the Netherlands Indies was Japan's eventual goal but the immediate objective was confined to securing Japanese political and economic predominance in those countries.<sup>4</sup> British influence and interests in Asia were to be eliminated, to which end Japan would support anti-British demonstrations, propaganda campaigns and independence movements in Britain's possessions in Asia.

The creation of the Co-Prosperity Sphere as an economically self-sufficient area under Japanese political hegemony was, by now, an undisputed tenet of Japanese policy. This did not mean, however, that either the process by which it was to be achieved or the political form to be assumed by the component parts had to conform to any pre-arranged plan. "Taking advantage of the present situ-

<sup>2</sup> Decisions by Conference of Prime Minister, Ministers of War, Navy, and Foreign Affairs, September 4, 1940 and by Liaison Conference [representatives of cabinet and of Imperial Headquarters], September 19. IMTFE, included in document cited in Note 1.

<sup>3</sup> These conferences were concerned with the policies to be adopted during forthcoming negotiations with Italy and Germany. The area mentioned in the text represented the true extent of Japanese ambitions. For purposes of negotiation, however, Japan was to indicate that her interests were confined to the region from Burma eastward, including the Netherlands Indies, and north of New Caledonia.

<sup>4</sup> If Germany objected to this Japanese predominance, negotiators would confine themselves to securing a preferential position in regard to the supply of natural resources.

ation," is an oft-recurring phrase in the documents of this period and, while the basic objective of Japanese control was never lost from sight, subsidiary matters were subject to considerable variation. This flexibility of detail can be illustrated from a Plan for the Southern Regions prepared in the War Ministry in October, 1940.<sup>5</sup>

In French Indo-China, the independence movement was to be encouraged and the French forced out. Chiang Kai-shek, with whom the Japanese were currently trying to come to terms, was to be offered the occupation of Tongking as part of the price for a deal. Cambodia would be presented to Thailand. Characteristically, Japanese military advisers were to be appointed to various key positions in these areas. The rest of Indo-China was to become independent with the conclusion of a military and economic alliance, so arranged that the Japanese would retain "the real power" and control of strategic points.

From Burma, Chiang was to receive further booty by the transfer of areas in upper Burma to China. The remainder of the country (and the whole of it if negotiations with Chiang should fail) was to be given independence with the same type of military and economic alliance.

The approach to Malaya was to coincide with the German invasion of Britain, or failing that, with the peak of the German attack. The minimum objectives were the demilitarization of Singapore and a treaty advantageous to Japanese interests; the eventual goal was the expulsion of the British. Thailand would receive the territory formerly belonging to it, the Straits Settlements would be placed under direct Japanese rule and the rest of the country was to become a protectorate.

Once Singapore was neutralized or seized, the Netherlands East Indies could be brought into the fold of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, preferably by diplomatic means,

<sup>5</sup> IMTFE Exhibit 628, *Tentative Plan for Policy toward the Southern Region*, October 4, 1940.

but if they were unavailing, by military action. The area would declare its independence and "announce an appropriate name for itself" with the legal explanation that the Dutch government in London did not exist according to international law—an instrument which the Japanese occasionally found it convenient to invoke. The government and constitution were to be established by a committee composed of Japanese, island-born Dutch, natives and Chinese in such a ratio that the combined number of Japanese and native representatives would comprise more than half of the total. The Governor-General and high Dutch officials would be forced to resign but others would be allowed to keep their positions. There would, of course, be a protective treaty with this new state, the terms of which would place Japanese military and economic advisers in strategic positions. There is one very revealing phrase in this section of the document.

"We should, if possible, at a proper time before presenting the aforementioned requests, cause an independence movement to stir up [rise?] among the natives."<sup>6</sup>

The view, implied here, that national movements could be evoked and manipulated to suit Imperial interests characterized the official Japanese attitude during this period as we shall see soon.

Deals might fall through here, improvisations be necessary there, the time-table was very elastic, but the political outline of the Co-Prosperity Sphere was clearly evident in this document.

The completion of war plans by late 1941 made it necessary to elaborate the policies to be followed in the occupied areas. A Liaison Conference on November 20 approved the following guiding principles.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 877, *Details of the Execution of Administration in the Southern Occupied Territories*, Decisions of Liaison Conference, November 20, 1941.

1. Military administrations to be set up to restore order and secure immediate control of resources important for the war effort.

2. The maximum utilization of the existing administrative structure and a minimum of interference with social and national customs.

3. Control of transportation, communication, commercial and financial facilities by the occupation forces.

4. Guidance and control of the local population which was to be made to feel dependent on the military administration. "Natives will have to reconcile themselves to such pressure as is unavoidably involved for them in our acquisition of resources." One significant note of caution was struck: "We must avoid giving rise to any premature independence movement."

5. Enforced cooperation by the Chinese emigrants who must renounce their allegiance to the government of Chiang Kai-shek and "sympathize with" the military administration.

6. The gradual withering away of military administration and its replacement by a new organization the nature of which would be determined at a later date. These principles of general application were obviously directed at the immediate war-time situation which demanded the greatest possible aid to Japan's war machine and as little disturbance as possible on the local scene. For details of the political structure envisaged for the Co-Prosperity Sphere and for long-range objectives of Japanese policy it is necessary to look elsewhere.

The most comprehensive statement of Japanese aims and methods in Southeast Asia, and of the predominant attitude toward the national movements there, is contained in two studies prepared by the Total War Research In-

stitute at the beginning of 1942.<sup>8</sup> In view of the attention to be given to these documents it might perhaps be pertinent to say a word about this rather unusual institution which prepared them.

The Total War Research Institute was founded in the fall of 1940 to take charge of investigation and research in total warfare as well as the education and training of officials and was placed under the control of the Prime Minister.<sup>9</sup> At the proceedings before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, it was contended by the Defense that this was only an organization for the education of junior officials, that the army and navy were not particularly interested in it and that its plans were not, in any way, official.<sup>10</sup> This was maintained in face of the admission that the organization was supported by the government and that the students, all of whom were selected by the ministries and some civil organizations, were formally appointed by the Cabinet. What is important to the purposes of this thesis is that these plans set forth policies which, for the most part, were consistently followed during the occupation period. Comparison with a Foreign Ministry draft plan for administration of this area reveals almost identical terms.<sup>11</sup>

According to both plans, the Philippines were to be granted independence at an early date, though a central political body was to be established first under a Japanese governor-general (as was done). The Institute plan sheds

<sup>8</sup> Exhibit 1335, *Establishment of East Asia*, Total War Research Institute, February 18, 1942.

Exhibit 1336, *Draft of Basic Plan for Establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere*, compiled by Total War Research Institute, January 27, 1942.

<sup>9</sup> Exhibit 3030, *Statement of Iimura, Minoru, Head of Total War Research Institute, January-October, 1941.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Exhibit 1333A, *Foreign Ministry Draft-Summarized Plan for Management of the South Seas Area*, December 14, 1941. This document was concerned only with the Philippines, the Netherlands Indies and Malaya.



some light on the reasons for speedy action in this instance. The Philippine independence movement was considered to be old enough, the people sufficiently well-developed and the standard of living of the ruling classes sufficiently high to make such a project viable. Moreover, the propaganda value of Philippine independence was not overlooked.

“Independence is to be accelerated as quickly as possible without awaiting the end of the war, as it would be a means to instigate the desire for independence among the other members of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, and as we consider it a good example for the establishment of the Co-Prosperity Sphere.”<sup>12</sup>

At the time these plans were framed [January–February 1942] it was thought that Burma would be a front line area for some time, so that immediate independence was not considered practical. However, a Burmese-staffed central administrative body with a considerable amount of autonomy was to be established under Japanese control to serve as the nucleus of an independent state. Burmese anti-British sentiment was considered to be of laudable proportions and independence was regarded as justifiable, culturally and historically. For a variety of reasons, however, this independence could not be unconditional—there were resources vitally important to Japan, a generally low standard of living and the problem of the Indian minority which the Japanese were anxious to handle delicately in order not to damage their appeal to India.<sup>13</sup>

Singapore and the Straits Settlements were considered so important strategically that direct incorporation into Japanese territory was planned. In the rest of Malaya, the existing administrative structure was to be maintained as

<sup>12</sup> Exhibit 1336.

<sup>13</sup> . . . “due to . . . her [Burma’s] key political position (see the presence of Indians) in terms of schemes toward India, Burma will need some protective measures.” Exhibit 1336.

far as possible with Japanese advisers and controllers assigned to the native rulers. A new federation of states would be formed and Japan would assume a protectorate over it as well as over the component states. Control would be centered in a governor-general resident in Singapore.<sup>14</sup> A rise in the "political standard" of the Malayans was deemed a desirable goal but independence was not regarded as within the realm of possibility because of the low living standards and the lack of political development.<sup>15</sup>

In the Netherlands East Indies, all other considerations were subordinate to the economic exploitation of the area, which the Japanese regarded as their richest prize in terms of natural resources. They were determined to keep a firm grip on the islands and hoped to assume control with as little disturbance as possible of the existing administration, particularly at the lower levels. The use of some Dutch officials in the military administration was contemplated. Increased participation in the government by Indonesians was to be encouraged, Dutch influence was to be undermined and the hope of independence after the end of the war extended.<sup>16</sup> The new state, when it materialized, would take the form of an "Indonesian Federation" but the plans of the Foreign Ministry and the Institute were not in complete agreement as to the nature of this federation. The one planned by the Foreign Ministry was to be comprised of three states, based on the three districts considered capable of self-government—Java (including Bali, Madura and Lombok); Sumatra, and the Celebes (including the lesser Sundas and Moluccas). Dutch Borneo, New Guinea and Timor were declared incapable of self-government and were to be made "domin-

<sup>14</sup> Exhibit 1333-A.

<sup>15</sup> Exhibit 1336.

<sup>16</sup> Exhibit 1335.

ions" of the federated states but under actual Japanese control.<sup>17</sup>

The Institute concept of federation was considerably more Java-centered and was much less sanguine about political developments elsewhere in the archipelago.

"The area around Java has a comparatively high standard of culture and has carried on a rather intensive campaign for independence. Culturally and politically (Javanese) independence is recognized as appropriate. But the rest of the land, despite a few installations and businesses is generally an area of primitive barbarity with a small number of native tribes. This is marked in Guinea. In view of this end and of military requirements the area will, even after its independence, require considerable protection and interference."<sup>18</sup>

Developments immediately following the Japanese occupation indicate that this latter view was the more influential, for Sumatra was attached to the Singapore command for purposes of administration, while the Celebes area was placed under Naval jurisdiction which paid scant attention to political developments until very late in the war. Further differences of opinion on the question of Indonesian independence were to develop among Japanese officials as will be shown later.<sup>19</sup>

The agreements concluded between Japan and the Vichy regime in France in 1940 and 1941 by means of which the French were left in nominal control of Indo-China made that territory something of an anomaly in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Amidst the flood of propaganda for "Asia for the Asiatics," the end of domination by the white man and the reassertion of "oriental morality" stood this bastion of western imperialism protected by the "liberators of Asia," hardly an inspiring sight to nationalist hopes elsewhere in Asia. The Japanese

<sup>17</sup> Exhibit 1333A.

<sup>18</sup> Exhibit 1336.

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter II.

could not but be aware of their contradictory position but other considerations dictated this seeming sacrifice of principle. Economically and strategically, French Indo-China played a key role in Japanese plans for southern expansion; speed and precision in placing it at Japan's disposal would facilitate the fulfillment of these plans and leave the Japanese free to deal with the French at their leisure.

German influence with Vichy promised to provide a convenient lever with which to secure concessions. Moreover, to have removed the French at that time would have created disorder in the government and the economy that would have slowed the time-table of expansion and have caused a drain on Japan's technical and administrative personnel which she could ill afford. Nor were the Japanese optimistic about the capacity of the Annamites for self-government as will be indicated shortly.

Institute plans show, however, that this sacrifice of principle, if such one chooses to call it, was to be of only a temporary nature. For the moment the French were to be retained, subject to close scrutiny, and no independence movement would be permitted, though the French would be requested to "improve the position and welfare of the natives in general."<sup>20</sup> Eventually, however, an autonomous movement centered around the Annamites would be encouraged and developed into an independent state. Independence, of course, would not relieve the Japanese of responsibility for the welfare of the area.

"Annamite independence has a long history and has been carried on with considerable intensity, but . . . the level of the people is low as a race and their political capability [is] so weak, they do not have the capacity for full-fledged self-government. So they will need our protection for many years, though independent from a racial standpoint."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Exhibit 1335.

<sup>21</sup> Exhibit 1336.

These plans of the Institute assumed that the degree of Japanese control would vary not only with the historical, cultural and political development of each country but also with the extent of its military importance to the defense of Japan and the Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>22</sup> The more exposed an area, the greater would be the degree of Japanese control. In actual practice, almost the reverse came to be true; mounting Allied threats to organized countries brought greater, not less, freedom of action to the local national movements. This process in the Netherlands Indies will be noted in the next section; in Indo-China, Japanese reverses led to increased pressure on the French for more concessions and when these failed, to open espousal of Annamite independence.

Early in February, 1945, the Supreme War Council determined to exact greater cooperation, military and otherwise, from the French.<sup>23</sup> In the event of a French refusal, Japanese forces in Indo-China were authorized to "elevate and support the independent position of Annam" and to devise plans for joint defense; the time, and details, of recognition would be determined later.<sup>24</sup> With victories bringing Allied forces ever closer and with renewed contact with the outside world, the French regime tried to procrastinate. Consequently, on March 9, the Japanese carried out their coup d'etat, interned French troops and many officials. On the 12th, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Indo-China proclaimed the support of the Japanese army for "any endeavor to satisfy the eager desire of independence so dear to all the people of Indo-China . . . [that was] a sincere national movement in conformity with the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Greater East Asia."<sup>25</sup> What constituted a "sincere national

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Exhibit 661. *Supreme War Council Decision #6*, February 1, 1945.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Exhibit 664. *Proclamation of the Commander-in-Chief, Japanese Army [French Indo-China]*, March 12, 1945.

movement" in the eyes of the Japanese army can be seen from a statement in the History of the 38th Army (stationed in Indo-China). Declaring that Annam and the other states had proclaimed their own independence and were well on the way to realizing it with no interference from the Army in internal affairs, the account went on to say:

" . . . the Japanese Army kept their [Annamite] actions always under eye lest they should be off the rails, ridden by a mistaken idea of independence and race consciousness, and always paid minute attention not to make [let?] them repeat the same uncooperative attitude as the French regime."<sup>26</sup>

The Institute plans set forth criteria by which proper ideas of independence could be distinguished from "mistaken" ones. They provide such a clear statement of the attitude, then predominant in official circles, toward the problem of nationalism in Southeast Asia that I think it worthwhile to quote from them at some length.

"Although racial movements of an innocent nature characteristic of the races in the various districts shall be nurtured and encouraged (in case of an independent country, guidance will be given indirectly through the government), steps will be taken to abolish the influence of European and American Liberalism and Communistic ideas. Especially when independence movements are based on narrow minded racialism or what tends to be racial egoism it shall be corrected and guidance given to turn it into Oriental moralism."<sup>27</sup>

"The desires of the peoples in the Sphere for their independence shall be respected and endeavors shall be made for their fulfillment, but proper and suitable forms of government shall be decided for them in consideration of military and economic requirements and of the historical, political and cultural elements particular to each area.

<sup>26</sup> Exhibit 663. *History of the 38th Army by Headquarters of the Japanese Southern Army.*

<sup>27</sup> Exhibit 1335.

"It must also be noted that the independence of the various peoples of East Asia should be based on constructing East Asia as 'independent countries existing within the New Order of East Asia' and that *this conception differs from independence based on the idea of liberalism and national self-determination.*"<sup>28</sup>

Some indication as to the difference between this "new" concept of independence and the old, liberal variety is contained in an article written by Hashimoto, Kingoro,<sup>29</sup> president of the Dai Nippon Seinentō [Greater Japan Youth Party], one of the many "patriotic" organizations which so often served both as a sounding board and as a pressure group in regard to official policy. Hashimoto had long been associated with the radical elements in the army,<sup>30</sup> and his views may be regarded as representative of the extremist position which had been gaining strength throughout the '30's. It would be too much to say this extremist position had become the official one, but certainly its views were becoming increasingly influential in policy formation.

At present, declared Hashimoto, weak nations exist only under the protection of a strong power and the time is coming when minor countries will not be permitted an independent existence. This does not imply any infringement on the "independence" of these countries, however, for under the new dispensation, "it is true independence to maintain independence under the protection of a great power just as a child grows up freely and safely under the

<sup>28</sup> Exhibit 1336. Italics mine.

<sup>29</sup> Exhibit 675-A. Article by Hashimoto, Kingoro, in *Taiyō Dai Nippon*, January 5, 1942.

<sup>30</sup> In 1931, Hashimoto, then a Lieutenant Colonel, was one of the leaders in two army plots to stage a coup d'état, ban political parties and put an extremist army group in power. The plots were nipped in the bud by elements in the Army which felt the plans were premature. Hashimoto was in the office of the General Staff at the time of the Manchurian Incident and worked hand in glove with the Kwantung Army in carrying it through.

protection of his father." Consequently the independent nations of East Asia<sup>31</sup> would have Japanese advisers and grant Japan complete control over their military and diplomatic affairs. A Greater East Asia bank, located in Tokyo, would control financial matters. There would be no attempt to interfere with "minor details" of economic activities; Japanese advisers would plan and supervise only the "main lines of the economy." In economic planning for the area, there would be a division of labor in regard to products and industries, based on geographical, economic and "other relevant factors," the most relevant of all being the objective of "making the countries incapable of separating from Japan politically."<sup>32</sup>

Another hint as to what the new brand of independence was to entail for its recipients is provided in a telegram sent from the German Ambassador in Tokyo, Eugen Ott, to the German Foreign Office. In discussing Prime Minister Tōjō's speech to the Diet of December, 1941, and its promise of independence to those countries which cooperated with Japan (the Philippines and Burma were mentioned specifically), he says:

"According to what the military attache confidentially learned from the Army, their independence shall be formed according to Manchukuo's pattern."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The independent nations to be: Manchukuo, China, Burma (including Bengal), India, Philippines, Afghanistan, Siam, Java, and French Indo-China (for French control was to be ousted at a later date).

<sup>32</sup> Exhibit 675-A.

<sup>33</sup> Exhibit 1271. *Telegram from German Ambassador in Tokyo to German Foreign Office*, 29 January, 1942. In view of the Hashimoto article, it is interesting to note that Ott characterizes the government's program for Greater East Asia as "exceedingly moderate." Its principles, he says, are to be economic collaboration, no racial war, religious freedom, no economic exclusion, guidance and regulation of production, and, if necessary, restrictions on certain branches of production, such as sugar and rubber, in accordance with the needs of the Co-Prosperity Sphere as seen by Japan.



Tōjō in his statement to the International Military Tribunal for the Far East substantiates this view:

"We hoped for the establishment of governments which would be in accordance with the desires of the inhabitants, as was the government of Manchukuo, in line with our East Asia policy. *We also hoped to see these governments independent as was that of Manchukuo* and cooperate with them on the basis of their being members of the East Asia community and of mutual life and prosperity."<sup>34</sup>

A detailed discussion of Japanese policy in Manchukuo is not within the scope of this study but a sample of the methods of control seems pertinent here. In 1935, the Japanese Government decided to extend its influence in the economic affairs of Manchukuo and proposed a Joint Economic Committee for this purpose. Discussion of the plan in the Privy Council speaks volumes about independence in the new order.<sup>35</sup>

Councillor Arai explained the details and aims of the Committee. He pointed out that earlier agreements provided that Manchukuo should submit all diplomatic and military matters to the Japanese government for "thorough and unreserved deliberation" before any action was taken. Unfortunately there were no such arrangements in the economic field and, formally at least, Japan was obliged to leave important economic decisions to the discretion of the government of Manchukuo. "This," explained Mr. Arai, "is no way to strengthen the economic interdependent relations of our countries," and the Joint Committee was designed to fill this gap. Its task was to discuss and answer questions submitted to it by the two governments on such economic problems as export, import, and tariff

<sup>34</sup> IMTFE Proceedings, p. 36775. Italics mine.

<sup>35</sup> Exhibit 850, *Record of Meeting of Privy Council, 3 July, 1935. Re Conclusion of Agreement between Japan and Manchukuo on Establishment of a Joint Economic Committee.*

policies, development and control of important industries, investments and the founding of joint corporations. Neither government was to take action on such matters prior to submitting its plans to the Committee which was also empowered to make proposals to both concerning economic unification.

Did these provisions imply an equal status for the two governments? Mr. Arai quickly disposed of this disquieting idea. Economic problems of mutual interest which Japan could handle directly were not within the province of the Committee but were to be dealt with in "unilateral contracts binding only on the Manchukuo government."<sup>36</sup>

The agreement had yet another ingenious provision. The Joint Committee was given broad supervisory powers over joint concerns which were incorporated under the laws of one of the countries and in which more than half of the capital was supplied by the government, citizens or corporations of the other partner. This, as Mr. Arai pointed out, was really a restriction on the government of Manchukuo only since there were no corporations established under Japanese law that met this description. As a matter of fact, this provision was so ingenious that Japanese Government decided its existence in the agreement should be kept secret.<sup>37</sup>

The Joint Committee was to consist of eight members, four to represent each government, and they were to select a chairman who voted only in case of a tie.<sup>38</sup> This composition of the Committee worried Councillor Motoda.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Said Mr. Arai: "Due to the existence in the document of such one sided articles binding only Manchukuo, the authorities have decided . . . to have the point kept secret." *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> The Japanese members were to be the Chief of Staff of the Kwantung Army, the Chief of the Kwantung Bureau, the Chief Councillor in the Japanese Embassy in Manchukuo and one member especially appointed by the government.

The Manchukuo members were to be the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Industry, and Finance and the Head of General State Affairs.

What if the chairman should not be a Japanese? Would it not be better to limit his power of decision to forestall any possible action detrimental to Japan's interests?

The Foreign Minister, Mr. Hirota, set his fears at rest. He pointed out that three of the four representatives from Manchukuo were cabinet ministers and that the fourth was the Chief of General State Affairs,

"who is, and will be, a Japanese forever I am confident. Therefore, in case of a difference of opinion, it cannot be imagined that he will make any decision that will be disadvantageous to Japan."<sup>39</sup>

The whole purpose of his job was to ensure a harmony of interests between the two countries and while it was certain that he would take "proper measures" if the Manchukuo representatives failed to cooperate, his duty was "to lead Manchukuo in such a way that such fears would be unnecessary."

Foreign Minister Hirota summed up matters admirably: "The Committee may seem equal on both sides but in reality it is not."<sup>40</sup>

This is cynicism with a vengeance and is a manner of thought at one and the same time too subtle and too obtuse. It is too subtle in its attempt to construct a shell of independence which, in order to be kept a shell, demanded even further subtleties; it is too obtuse because such schemes were believed to be effective. The estimates, cited above, of the national movements in Southeast Asia indicate a confidence in their pliability that was much too optimistic. Though cynicism did not comprise the entire Japanese attitude toward independence in the Co-Prosperity Sphere, at best there was a complete identification of the interests of the other members with Imperial interests that easily lent itself to an exploitative use of independence

<sup>39</sup> Exhibit 850.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

movements. This was evident in the case of French Indo-China.

A further example of the role which the Japanese assigned to independence movements in their expansionist plans is provided by their attitude toward Indian independence.

That India eventually was to become an independent member of the Co-Prosperity Sphere was generally agreed upon in Japanese plans but, even by the outbreak of the war, it was still not decided when and how this was to be brought about. It was noted earlier that, in 1940, the Japanese were prepared to recognize Russian hegemony over India; later they believed Germany might replace Russia as the protecting power.

In his message to the German Foreign Office explaining Japanese foreign policy, Ambassador Ott noted that "great restraint" was shown toward India.<sup>41</sup> This was partly due to military considerations; General Staff plans called for an attack on Australia, and a simultaneous attack on India was regarded as too great a strain on Japanese military power. But Ott goes on to indicate further reasons for hesitation in undertaking an Indian campaign. Confidential information from the Director of the European Division of the Foreign Ministry said that the Indian Congress was opposed to Japan and that, moreover, the Indian nationalist movement could not establish an "independent, orderly state," even if the British were driven out. The Japanese did not feel competent to add the burden of the administration and control of India to their already long list of commitments.

Chatterji, in his account of the Indian Independence League and the National Army, substantiates these points.<sup>42</sup> He says that the Japanese General Staff itself was

<sup>41</sup> Exhibit 1271.

<sup>42</sup> Major General Chatterji, A. C. *India's Struggle for Freedom*, Calcutta, 1947. Reference to pp. 294 ff. Chatterji was first Finance Minister and then Foreign Minister in the Provisional Government of India, and also Governor-Designate of Liberated Territories.

split on the subject of an invasion of India. Generals Terauchi and Sugiyama opposed the move, partly on political grounds. They distrusted the attitude of the Congress leaders in India as too anti-Japanese; Nehru's stand was regarded as particularly significant in this connection. The opposing view was championed by Prime Minister Tōjō and his support was apparently the key factor in the decision to undertake an Indian campaign.<sup>43</sup> Similarly when Rash Behari Bose, the Indian nationalist who had been living in Japan since the first World War, contacted General Sugiyama at the outbreak of the war in the Pacific for the purpose of organizing an Indian independence movement in Southeast Asia, the General and some of the other members of the General Staff were not interested. They felt, says Chatterji, that the liberation was not a problem to concern them.<sup>44</sup> Tōjō, however, supported Bose and, under his influence, the General Staff hesitatingly agreed to sound out Indian sentiment in Southeast Asia about such a project.<sup>45</sup> A General Staff officer, Major Fujiwara, was appointed to contact Indian troops and civilian groups there and he played a major role in liaison work with them.

Proposals to organize an Indian National Army and Independence League endorsed by conferences of Indian representatives at Tokyo in March and again at Bangkok in June, 1942, were endorsed by the Japanese but difficulties soon arose over their implementation. How large was the I.N.A. to be? When was an invasion of India to be undertaken? What was to be the future status of India? Japanese hesitation to commit themselves to definite answers aroused division and dissatisfaction in the Indian camp that nearly led to the disintegration of the whole movement.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 294.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48 ff.

Since there was division in the high command over the position of India and since the Japanese were busy elsewhere at this time, temporizing indecision rather than Machiavellian duplicity would be a better explanation of their policy. They were prepared to make use of an Indian national movement but still were not sure to what ends it should be put.

They doubtless were wary of building up the strength of the I.N.A. at this stage. The Institute plans reflect a cautious attitude toward arming native forces in the occupied areas.<sup>47</sup> In general, native armed forces would be cut to half their pre-war level, no naval or air forces would be allowed, troops would be widely dispersed and placed under the authority of the Japanese command. The I.N.A., of course, as part of a "liberation force" was in rather different category and the Japanese made numerous concessions to its demands.<sup>48</sup> When the invasion of India did get under way, Japanese military leaders such as Marshal Terauchi, the Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Areas, and Lt. Gen. Kawabe, the Commander-in-Chief of forces in Burma, were opposed to the use of I.N.A. troops in combat on the grounds that their number was insufficient. They regarded I.N.A. troops as more valuable for purposes of propaganda. Consequently their plan was to keep Indian forces intact to stage a triumphal entry into Imphal when it was captured.<sup>49</sup>

The relationship of the Japanese to Rash Behari Bose is a further example of the way in which they befriended Asian nationalists and also, of the difficulties they encountered when the moment to capitalize on this friendship arrived. Rash Behari Bose had organized a revolu-

<sup>47</sup> Exhibit 1335.

<sup>48</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.* passim.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175. S. C. Bose objected strenuously to this plan and succeeded in getting approval for use of Indian troops in combat. They were to have their own officers and administration but would come under the field command of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief.

tionary group in India and in 1921 had attempted to assassinate the Viceroy. During the first World War he had tried to foment a rebellion among the British-Indian troops and, when his plans miscarried, had fled to Japan. There he sought the help of that patron saint of Pan-Asianism and of so many other Asian nationalists, Tōyama, Mitsuru, the leading spirit of the *Kokuryūkai*. The British demanded Bose's extradition and seemed prepared to make an issue of the matter. The moderate Okuma Government, feeling its dignity was in question, threw a cordon of guards around Tōyama's house where Bose was staying but no move was made to disturb the occupants.<sup>50</sup> To have forced an entrance to Tōyama's house would have been not only political suicide for the government due to his powerful influence but also literal suicide for some of its members—Tōyama's tactics were often anything but refined. Tōyama's protection insured Bose's undisturbed sojourn in Japan and also gave him contact with top military leaders such as General Sugiyama. Thus when the Pacific War broke out Bose had acquaintances in influential quarters, and the Japanese an ardent Indian nationalist very much in their debt. This seemed a promising symbiotic relationship but if Bose found his friends somewhat less than enthusiastic about his plans at first, they were to find him a weak reed on which to lean in their attempt to ally Indian nationalism to their cause. Bose tried hard enough to repay his debt but his long residence in Japan was a difficult handicap to overcome. For over two decades he had been outside the mainstream of developments in Indian life; an almost forgotten figure he could not even speak in the name of the Congress, to which the vast majority of Indians in Southeast Asia looked for leadership. Indeed, the very fact of his long association with the Japanese rendered him suspect in the eyes of many

<sup>50</sup> See Ogata Taketora, "Mitsuru Toyama" in *Contemporary Japan*, July 1940, Vol. IX, No. 7, p. 819.

and thereby reduced his effectiveness. Under his leadership the Indian Independence League floundered in dissension and recrimination.

It was not until the return of Subhas Chandra Bose to Asia from Germany in mid-1943 that the Japanese found an answer to the problem of effective leadership of the Indian "liberation" movement. Here was a man who, besides possessing great personal magnetism, had been president of the Congress at one time, and, though opposition by Gandhi and Nehru had forced him out of the position, he was associated with the Congress in the minds of the Indians in Southeast Asia. He commanded a sizeable and highly vocal following within India, a fact which greatly added to his usefulness to the Japanese.

He had made his way to Germany in 1941 to try to get active support for Indian independence there. The Bangkok Conference of Indian representatives in June 1942 telegraphed German General Headquarters requesting he be returned to the Far East but the Germans were uncooperative.<sup>51</sup> Another conference in April 1943 renewed the request, which the Japanese forwarded to the Germans immediately and this time, the Germans consented and Bose arrived in Penang by submarine.<sup>52</sup>

Generals Aguinaldo and Ricarte of the Philippines, who had fled to Japan after the Philippine Revolution, and who, perhaps, represented the only tangible benefit Japan reaped from the early aid to that cause, found themselves in a position similar to that of R. B. Bose, though as revolutionary heroes, they had a higher stature in the Philippine independence movement than did Bose in the Indian. They returned to the Philippines during the occupation

<sup>51</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64 ff. According to Chatterji the Germans agreed to send S. C. Bose this time because they had given up the hope of "realizing plans of coming to help revolutionary India to gain freedom" via the Red Sea and Persia, p. 67.



but their usefulness to the Japanese was limited. Aguinaldo, of course, was by now an old man and though a convenient figure for public appearances and public statements, he could not assume an active role. Ricarte served as an adviser to occupation officials but he operated more or less behind the scenes.<sup>53</sup> They provided proof of the fact that only figures more closely associated with the contemporary scene in their native countries could furnish the type of popular leadership for which the Japanese were looking.

The important role of individual leaders is an often-noted characteristic of the national movements in Asia. The figure of Gandhi was, perhaps, unique but nearly all of these countries had a few outstanding individuals who could justly claim to speak for mass followings—Nehru and Bose, as well as Gandhi, in India; Quezon and Vargas in the Philippines; Ba Maw and U Saw in Burma; Sukarno, Hatta, Dewantara in the Netherlands Indies; Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung as the rival heirs to the mantle of Sun Yat-sen in China. The key position of these individuals stemmed from the historical and political situation in which they were placed. By and large, members of the middle class in countries overwhelmingly agrarian; well-educated, amidst millions of illiterate compatriots, they sought to turn Western concepts against Western rule in the name of peoples still steeped in native tradition. They were representative of a small minority seemingly caught between the upper millstone of a Western domination which stifled the expression of their ideals and the nether millstone of popular ignorance which could not understand them. Yet the gradual extension of political consciousness brought added power to this group; it was able, so to speak, to exert pressure on the upper stone by basing itself on the strength of the lower one. In spite of the great

<sup>53</sup> See Recto, Claro M. *Three Years of Enemy Occupation The Issue of Political Collaboration in the Philippines*, Manila, 1946, *passim*.

gaps separating this intellectual group from the mass of the population, the former identified its interests with those of the latter—or got the latter to identify its interests with its own—whichever way one wishes to put it. The point is there was an identity of aims established and the leadership of the intellectual group was generally accepted. Given the low rate of literacy, political as well as educational, the absence of Western type political parties and Western forms of political participation, individual personalities capable of capturing the public imagination were in an unusually influential position.

The Japanese were aware of the importance of this group and were prepared to take special measures to secure its support. The object of propaganda, stated the Total War Research Institute plans, was the control of the intellectual class in each country.<sup>54</sup> Every effort would be made to attract influential figures to the Japanese side. Those of the educated class who were considered to have unusual ability were to be sent to Japan to study in special institutions established to provide them with “proper guidance” and fit them for “practical use” after their education was finished.<sup>55</sup>

Implementation of this educational program consisted largely in expansion of the work of the *Kokusai Gakuyūkai* [International Students Institute].<sup>56</sup> This institution had been founded in 1935, under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry to encourage foreign students to study in Japan and it was supported largely by Government subsidies and donations, the former increasing rapidly after 1940 and amounting to ¥1,258,010 by 1944. The Institute was

<sup>54</sup> Exhibit 1335. “Special methods among the ignorant are to be adopted.”

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Information presented here about the International Students Institute is obtained from: “*Foreign Students in Japan 1896-1947.*” Supreme Commander for Allied Powers, Civil Information and Education Section, Analysis and Research Division, April 20, 1948, Serial No. AR307-E-E-2.

transferred to the jurisdiction of the Greater East Asia Ministry when the latter was set up in 1942 to assume most of the functions of the Foreign Ministry in regard to countries in the Co-Prosperity Sphere. The objective of the Institute was defined in the following statement by its director:

“After the outbreak of the Chinese Incident and World War II, the international situation underwent a considerable change, and many of the hitherto oppressed peoples began to show signs of standing on their own feet. Such a state of affairs urged this association to consider it our duty and responsibility to invite intelligent young students from the nations in East Asia, educate them perfectly in a complete understanding of the Japanese spirit, supply those countries permanently with a fixed number of capable and faithful leaders who could cooperate with us in the glorious task of establishing the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and devote themselves to the development of various races.”<sup>57</sup>

The reference to a “fixed number of faithful leaders” is revealing. Presumably the supply would be varied according to the number of posts which the Japanese would be willing to let natives occupy. Control of supply also made it easier to control discipline and the Japanese were interested particularly in dependable leadership. They were most anxious to avoid the creation of an “intellectual proletariat,” a group often considered to be the fountainhead of discontent and revolution in colonial areas.<sup>58</sup> By functional education, limited to a select group, the Japanese hoped to avoid what appeared to be one of the weaknesses of Western colonialism. For example, the program set up by the Institute in 1940 and designed to provide the future leaders of Thailand and French Indo-China was to be

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Hayashi, Kyūjirō, “Glimpses of the South Seas Region” *Contemporary Japan*, October 1940. Vol. IX, No. 10. Discussing conditions in French Indo-China, he points to the difficulties which this group have posed for the French.

conducted with the intent of securing an "annual supply of a fixed number of graduates."<sup>59</sup>

Japanese plans also subscribed to the notion that travel is broadening:

" . . . it is a good idea to let the controlling or intellectual class travel in Japan and introduce them to the real situation there, thus discarding their reliance on the United States and Britain."<sup>60</sup>

This last phrase reflects Japanese awareness that this educated group with which it was going to deal was oriented toward the West. Opposed though it was to Western rule, its mode of thought, values and objectives were largely Western-inspired. This influence the Japanese proposed to drive out root and branch, for which purpose they showed a considerable respect for the power of education. Existing educational institutions would be kept and the elements, at least, of a national education would be extended to as large a number as possible. Content, rather than scope, was their greatest concern; a "new spirit" must infuse the old system. New textbooks would be supplied, new methods taught; Japanese educational leaders would occupy key posts in the educational systems of the Co-Prosperity Sphere; local teachers would be given training and "guidance" in absorbing the "new spirit"; an intensive study of Japanese would be promoted to make it the *lingua franca* of the area.<sup>61</sup>

It was recognized that there would always be those who would fail to be converted by education. They could be dealt with by more direct methods. A "clean sweep"

<sup>59</sup> Reference is to an article by Yatabe, Yasukichi in *Kokusai Gakuyū Kai Kaikō*, November 1942, quoted in "Foreign Students in Japan," cited above, p. 12. After beginning with Thailand and Indo-China the plan was to be extended to the Philippines and the Netherlands Indies. Further details about the International Students Institute will be found in Chapter III.

<sup>60</sup> Exhibit 1335.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

was to be made of those intellectuals who refused to abandon European and American sentiments and "obstinate and malicious" anti-Japanese movements, which could not be brought to see the light, would be stamped out.<sup>62</sup>

Such was the Japanese blueprint for their new Empire. The political, economic and cultural hegemony which it envisaged for the homeland threatened to smother national expression everywhere else in the Co-Prosperity Sphere, and yet an appeal to nationalism was one of the means by which the plan was to be realized. That there was a contradiction between ends sought and the means to attain them was seen by some Japanese; the example of China was too obvious to be overlooked. In spite of the ultimate contradiction between these two policies, however, it was possible for the Japanese to support both because of their estimate of the strength of nationalism in Southeast Asia. This estimate, which has been quoted above, presumed that the countries which Japan was about to occupy were in the first stages of national development and lacked even the social and economic bases to support a strong popular movement.<sup>63</sup> With this view, it was easy to subscribe to a "spigot theory" of nationalism whereby the force of the movement is turned on and off, now accelerated, now restrained according to the momentary needs of the ruling power.

Moreover, it is always possible to maintain contradictory elements in thought as long as thought does not have to be translated into action. Weaknesses of plans become most apparent upon application, and so it is to wartime developments which witnessed a growing conflict between ends and means that we now turn.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See also article by Ōshio, cited in the Introduction.

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## Some Revisions in the Blueprint

IN A SPEECH delivered on January 22, 1942 to the House of Representatives of the 79th Diet, Prime Minister Tōjō held out the promise of independence to the Philippines and Burma in return for their cooperation as members of the Co-Prosperity Sphere. In regard to the Netherlands Indies, which were still under attack by Japanese forces, he was more equivocal. After warning that continued resistance to Japan would lead to a crushing defeat, he went on to say that if the inhabitants showed an "understanding" of Japan's intentions and a willingness to cooperate, "we will not hesitate to extend them our assistance, with full understanding, for the benefit of their welfare and progress."<sup>1</sup>

In part, this non-committal approach was due to military considerations. With fighting still going on and with the possibility that the islands might be a front line area for some time, a political decision seemed neither urgent nor even desirable. In part, the lack of a clear cut statement of policy at this time was caused by indecision and disagreement among Japanese officialdom.

To outside observers, Japanese policy has often presented an appearance of unity and singleness of purpose;

<sup>1</sup> A transcript of this speech is to be found in the *Japan Yearbook 1943-44*, Tokyo, Japan, 1943, p. 183 ff.

all parts of the governmental machinery seemed to mesh together smoothly to effect long range plans on which all parties were agreed. Upon closer inspection this apparent unity very often turns out to be a welter of various opinions, conflicting interests and organizational jealousies; what seemed Machiavellian scheming is shown to be the result of wavering and indecision. Even the extension of military dictatorship failed to alter this situation entirely. Although the military was able to silence all opposition, and to extinguish a great deal, the unified voice with which it appeared to speak was deceptive. The war itself by no means brought an end to this state of affairs for divided councils, and particularly organizational rivalry, plagued Japanese policy throughout. The most dramatic and far-reaching rivalry during the period under consideration here was that between the Army and Navy, for they constituted the most important centers of power in wartime Japan. Their quarrels ranged from broad problems of policy to questions of minute detail, from whether to launch an attack against the Western Powers to how to utilize materials. These divisions within Japanese official circles were not always and everywhere present; obviously a great deal of agreement on objectives and methods of attaining them was necessary but it is certainly true that they affected policy prior to the war and served to seriously hamper the war effort.<sup>2</sup>

A concrete example of these features of Japanese policy can be found in the story of their occupation of the Netherlands Indies. There was general agreement that the territory should be a part of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, closely bound to Japan economically and militarily. The Foreign

<sup>2</sup> For example, the Army controlled 85% of the oil resources, but the Navy controlled the tankers. "But for this," said one admiral, "the Army would undoubtedly have left the Navy without oil." Cohen, Jerome B., *Japan's Economy in War and Reconstruction*, Minneapolis, 1949, p. 141. See also Kase, Toshikazu, *Journey to the Missouri*, New Haven, 1950, and Feis, Herbert, *The Road to Pearl Harbor*, Princeton, 1950.

Office, as well as the military, was interested in establishing Japan's preeminent position there. Both agreed in principle that a nominally independent Indonesian Federation was a desirable political objective but there was a considerable difference of opinion over the question of timing.<sup>3</sup> The Foreign Office maintained that independence should be granted at once. The military, charged with the actual administration and concerned with problems of strategy, was hesitant and divided within itself. Its chief interest in the area, for the moment at least, was economic—how to exploit the resources of the Indies for war purposes in the quickest and most effective way. Might not independence, or even intensified nationalist activity, interfere with its plans? Such considerations led the Supreme Command and the General Headquarters of the Southern Army, Singapore, to oppose independence strongly.<sup>4</sup> The Army command in Java was more inclined to favor encouragement of the nationalists, if not outright independence. The Navy, as will be shown later, remained vigorously opposed to the idea of independence until late in the war, considerably after the central Army authorities had swung over to the side of those favoring it.

There was, in Japanese policy, another factor, less tangible perhaps than the division of official opinion but one which should be taken into account. The Japanese military mind was not distinguished by its range of vision or the depth of its comprehension of social forces. Certainly the estimate of the national movements in Asia, cited in the previous chapter, speaks little for their knowledge or understanding of the areas with which they were concerned. Nor was the military mentality, particularly as exhibited in the lower ranks, one that was apt to learn quickly from

<sup>3</sup> See Exhibit 1335, and Exhibit 1344, *Course of Events Leading Up to Decision on Political Control and Revision of East Indies in Second World War*. Foreign Office document, undated.

<sup>4</sup> Exhibit 1344.



experience. Provincial, arrogant, bigoted, this group was not one which could be expected to deal intelligently and understandingly with other peoples.

The military organization in Java, unfamiliar with the local scene and not provided with any detailed instructions by Tokyo, chose to temporize. Policy during the first year of the occupation was characterized by a Japanese officer as one of "wait and see"—would cooperation with the nationalists prove feasible; what measures might military developments demand?<sup>5</sup> While waiting, the Army authorities thought it desirable to put a moratorium on overt political activities. Existing organizations and public meetings were banned, and by an ordinance of March 20, 1942, it was prohibited to "discuss, engage in activities, encourage or make propaganda concerning the organization and structure of the government."<sup>6</sup> As a result of this latter order, there were arrests of some nationalists, largely those who had been associated with programs favoring cooperation with the Dutch and so were considered unreliable by the Japanese. The AAA Movement,<sup>7</sup> founded in March, augured an attempt to make Indonesia a province of Japan, linguistically and culturally speaking.

On the other hand, there was evidence to indicate that these actions did not imply irrevocable opposition to political action by the Indonesians. A Foreign Office report

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Exhibit 1351, *The Testimony of Klass A. deWeerd*. Mr. deWeerd was born in the Netherlands and, after obtaining a law degree from the University of Leiden, entered the practice of law in the Netherlands East Indies in 1929. In 1941, he was mobilized in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army and was interned until September 1945. While interned, he served as camp translator of Malayan newspapers. His work also gave him the opportunity to listen secretly to radio broadcasts and brought him into contact with new arrivals in camp. He kept notes on the material assembled in this way and buried them in the camp from which they were recovered after the end of the war. DeWeerd helped prepare the phase of the case dealing with the Japanese Occupation in the proceedings before the IMTFE.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> For more on the AAA Movement see the following chapter.

states that even at this early date the Army command in Java favored encouragement to the nationalists;<sup>8</sup> and, even though some nationalist figures were imprisoned, in July the Army returned Sukarno and Mohammed Hatta to Java from the islands to which the Dutch had exiled them.

The chief political adviser to the Army during the opening phase of the occupation of Java was Count Kodama, Hideo, and his views indicate a sympathetic attitude toward Javanese political development, albeit one shot through with paternalistic colonialism. In an article written in September 1943 when measures to give Indonesians more representatives in the Military Administration had been announced, he speaks of the "long felt desires of the Indonesians for political participation," which, he intimates, have been fulfilled by the proposed measures.<sup>9</sup> The intellectuals, who constitute the leadership of the country, he points out, are very alert politically and were active in political parties even under the Dutch regime. The educational level of the mass of the people is deplorably low, a fact which he attributes, of course, to Dutch policy which shaped all measures, educational, political and economic, with an eye to Dutch benefits exclusively. Like many other Japanese, and Westerners too, for that matter, Kodama blames an abundant tropical nature for the leisurely life and carefree, "don't-worry-about-tomorrow" attitude which the people have developed, but he finds its effects are offset by other influences. The family system he judges to have remained intact, a strong spirit of neighborly cooperation exists and the influence of Mohammedanism prevents drunken excesses. The ordinary natives are very obedient, and given education and good leadership, they should be able to "improve their condi-

<sup>8</sup> Exhibit 1344.

<sup>9</sup> Article from *Osaka Asahi*, September 7, 1943.

tions a great deal and develop as a progressive people." Given political participation, he says, they will cooperate fully in the war effort.

The objective implicit in this view is not so much repression as careful tutelage. The problem may be seen as one of containing national sentiment within the desired channels and harnessing it to Japanese requirements. How this could be best accomplished was a subject of debate at the highest level in Tokyo.

In January 1943, a decision of the Liaison Conference stipulated that preparations for the independence of Burma and the Philippines should be undertaken but action in regard to other areas was postponed.<sup>10</sup> The question of the future of the Netherlands Indies was not taken up until the following May 31st when a meeting of the Imperial Conference produced sharp differences of opinion on the subject.<sup>11</sup> Prime Minister Tōjō, strongly backed by the Foreign Office, favored a grant of independence. Representatives of the Supreme Command were vociferously opposed on the grounds that direct Japanese control and a curb on the policy of "racial liberation" were necessary to secure the resources needed in the war effort. They, and others, also felt that a grant of independence to the Indies would weaken the hand of Japan in the event that peace negotiations should be undertaken, whereas acquisition of the territory would improve her bargaining position. In Tōjō's words, the conference reached an "impasse" which was broken only when he backed down.<sup>12</sup> The reason which he gave for yielding was that continued opposition might delay the independence of Burma and the Philippines, but it would seem reasonable to presume that the desire to avoid a showdown with the Supreme Com-

<sup>10</sup> Exhibit 1344.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Testimony of Tōjō, Hideki, IMTFE, pp. 36, 399 ff.

mand on an issue such as this also influenced his decision.

The conference decided to incorporate the Netherlands Indies into the territory of Japan and to allow "political participation of the natives according to their abilities."<sup>13</sup> This decision was kept a secret, according to an official report, because of the realization that it would provide valuable ammunition to Allied propaganda.<sup>14</sup> Tōjō's testimony to the Military Tribunal for the Far East gave another, not contradictory, explanation. In his view the decision was not unalterable and was not designed to keep the Indies as permanent Japanese territory.

"... it became necessary to retain the Dutch East Indies temporarily under present military administration to enable us to reconsider the matter . . . altering the above decision at a time appropriate. This was the reason why the decision was kept strictly secret, and the granting of participation in administrative affairs withheld even from the commanders on the spot."<sup>15</sup>

The anomalous administrative procedure of not communicating a decision to the men who must implement it was ended about two weeks later when Tōjō, in a speech to the Diet, promised "participation in politics within this year to Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and the Celebes, according to their cultural conditions."<sup>16</sup>

This promise was implemented the following August when, with considerable fanfare, a Central Advisory Council and regional councils were announced and Indonesians appointed as advisers to departments of the Military Administration. Although it maintained that these measures represented the "fulfillment of long-felt desires" of the In-

<sup>13</sup> Exhibit 1344.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Testimony of Tōjō, IMTFE, p. 36, 774.

<sup>16</sup> Transcript of speech in *Japan Yearbook 1943-44*, pp. 200-202.

donesians, the local command apparently realized they fell far short of actual nationalist demands. Though no official protest was made, the Military Administration in Java was dissatisfied with the decision of May 31,<sup>17</sup> and at the beginning of 1944, the Supreme Councillor of the Administration, Hayashi, Hisajiro, chief of the Justice Department, went to Tokyo with the approval of the commander-in-chief to plead the cause of independence. Foreign Minister Shigemitsu gave his support to the effort but their moves to have the earlier decision altered brought no immediate results.<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, Sukarno, Hatta and Dewantara, the three leading figures in the Indonesian nationalist movement had gone to Japan in November 1943. Ostensibly, the purpose of their trip was to convey their gratitude for the political measures undertaken earlier. In fact, Sukarno, who acted as the leader of the party, took the opportunity to press Tōjō for a grant of independence. This, naturally put the Prime Minister in a difficult position since, while favorably disposed himself, he would hardly want to expose the disagreement in Japanese policy. He confined himself to evasive replies which turned Sukarno away disappointed.<sup>19</sup>

It was not until September 1944 that a definite reversal of the decision to incorporate the islands into Japanese territory was brought about by the pressure of events. The loss of the Marianas, particularly Saipan, in the summer of 1944, struck at what the Japanese considered to be

<sup>17</sup> Exhibit 1344.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* For the Japanese, the visit was part of their general program to impress the national leaders and cement their relations with them. Significantly, it came immediately after the Greater East Asia Conference at which Indonesia was not represented since it was not an independent state.

their inner core of defense and immensely increased the problems of transportation and supply between Japan and the southern areas. As a result, the central Army authorities were impressed by the need to strengthen the position of the local garrisons. In regard to the Netherlands Indies, this meant acceptance of the view of the Occupation Army commanders that the rise of national feeling made a definite commitment to independence necessary if native cooperation was to be secured.<sup>20</sup> But, though the Army authorities in Tokyo now favored independence, the Navy remained adamant in its opposition. Representatives of the ministries concerned met on September 2, 1944 and proposed a course of action, the key points of which the Navy refused to accept. It was proposed, for example, that the territory to be made independent include all the former Netherlands Indies except New Guinea. Following the proposal are the words "Navy's approval reserved."<sup>21</sup> Similar reservations were made in regard to proposals to "strengthen and expand" political participation by the people, to give them political training, to have the inhabitants undertake the study of problems connected with independence and to permit the use of the Indonesian flag and Indonesian national songs.

In view of this continued division of opinion among the Japanese military, Prime Minister Koiso, Kuniaki, who succeeded Tōjō in July 1944, was forced to remain vague in the promise of Indonesian independence which he made in a speech to the 85th session of the Diet on September 7, 1944.

"As to the East Indies, Japan permitted the inhabitants to par-

<sup>20</sup> Exhibit 1344.

<sup>21</sup> Exhibit 1348. *Policy in Regard to the Independence of the East Indies (proposed by competent officials of Ministries concerned), September 2, 1944.* The document's statement of policy was: "To announce that the East Indies shall be made independent in the future in order to win the confidence of the people, and simultaneously to elucidate the Greater East Asia policy to the world."

ticipate in politics according to their wish. The inhabitants throughout the East Indies have continuously endeavored to carry out the Greater East Asia war, recognizing the real intention of Japan. They have also been cooperating remarkably with the military government there. In view of these facts we declare here that we intend to recognize their independence in the future in order to ensure the eternal happiness of the East Indian race."<sup>22</sup>

The vagueness of this promise laid the Japanese Government open to the charge of hypocrisy and deceit, for it could be interpreted as an attempt to purchase Indonesian cooperation by a cheap phrase. The record indicates, however, that this view is a bit too simplified. The carrot was kept dangling out of the horse's reach not so much out of calculated design as out of lack of agreement as to how and when it should be made available.

The Navy's objections were overcome by the events which followed almost immediately. The battle of the Philippine Sea broke the back of the Japanese Navy and sent its remnants scurrying to home waters where they remained until the last-ditch sortie during the Okinawa campaign. The Navy's loss of interest in Indonesia as a result of this defeat removed the last high level opposition to independence and in July 1945 the Supreme Advisory Council voted to recognize the independence of Indonesia as soon as possible "in order to contribute towards the complete prosecution of the Greater East Asia War."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Exhibit 277. *Speech of Premier Koiso to 85th Session of the Diet.* Koiso, Kuniaki, succeeded Tōjō as Prime Minister in July 1944. There was an interesting sidelight to the fact that it was Koiso who made the announcement of independence. He had been named as head of the Economic Mission to the Indies in 1940 but was declared persona non grata by the East Indies Government because of his public statement about the "oppressive Dutch regime towards the natives of the Indies." He was replaced by Kobayashi. See von Mook, H. J., *The Netherlands Indies and Japan*, London, 1944, p. 39.

<sup>23</sup> Exhibit 1350. *Decision of the Supreme War Plans Council No. 27, 17 July 1945, re Measures for East Indies Independence.*

Although this was less than a month before Japan's surrender, there is no indication in the record of the decision that an imminent end to hostilities was contemplated. On the contrary, it pointed to a prolonged period of resistance during which isolated Japanese forces would be dependent, in large measure, on the cooperation and good will of the Indonesians.

"Through the policy concerned with independence efforts shall be made to promote the race consciousness of the people, and to make them contribute toward the complete prosecution of the war."<sup>24</sup>

There was a clear attempt to court nationalist sentiment in the provisions of the decision. The precise date for independence was to be determined as quickly as possible and announced by the Independence Preparatory Commission, which had been set up earlier, because the Japanese were anxious to dissociate themselves, publicly, from the actual declaration.<sup>25</sup> The decision also stated that the "polity, political system, name of the country and the scope and powers of the citizens shall be established by public opinion."<sup>26</sup>

This development of the Japanese attitude toward Indonesian independence has been sketched above in outline because it illustrates two points. In the first place, it is an example of their utilitarian approach to the nationalist movements with which they came in contact. The correlation between the decline of military fortunes and the

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Exhibit 1349. *Measures for Netherlands East Indies Independence. Data for Foreign Minister's Explanation, 17 July 1945.* The object of having the Preparatory Committee make the announcement was to "make the independence of the new nation seem, as much as possible, like the national organization based on the voluntary initiative of the people of the East Indies and not based on our supervision and suggestions."

<sup>26</sup> Exhibit 1350.



development of the pro-independence attitude is too close to be coincidental and, moreover, the importance of concessions to the nationalists as a minimum price for their cooperation is explicit in the above and other statements.<sup>27</sup> It is significant, too, that the pressure for concessions within the military organization came first from the Army in Java, which was charged with the administration of the most politically articulate area in Indonesia, and was most strongly opposed by the Navy, administering the Celebes where nationalist forces were much less powerful. In order to "use" the national movements to further their own aims, the Japanese, ultimately, were placed in the position in which they, in turn, would be used by the nationalists who were in an increasingly more favorable bargaining position as the war progressed.

In the second place, this outline of Japanese policy indicates a considerable difference of opinion among the Japanese as to method and timing if not of ultimate intent. These differences were another point of leverage for the nationalists in their attempt to pry concessions from their rulers. Had the Japanese been united in opposition to independence, for example, concessions would have come far more grudgingly and slowly. As it was, there were several points within the hierarchy where the nationalist view received a sympathetic hearing.

This conflict of opinions was basically one between the military, or strategic, and political points of view, and was one by no means confined to Indonesia but appeared in

<sup>27</sup> See Exhibit 1349. "Especially, at this moment when the enemy's counter-offensive is already about to extend to a corner of the East Indies, it will be imminent [sic] from the necessity of seeking a more positive cooperation from the native inhabitants, to further materialize the statement made last year and to decide clearly the time for independence and announce it at home and abroad, thereby clarifying the Empire's true intentions towards the complete adjustment of Independence for Greater East Asia."

various forms throughout the Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>28</sup> In Java, which was not nominally independent, the Occupation Army, charged with the economic and military exploitation of the area, soon found itself adopting a viewpoint more influenced by the political factor. It was over-ridden, on military and strategic grounds, by the area command and the Supreme Command in Tokyo but had its supporters in the Foreign Office, the East Asia Ministry and in Prime Minister Tōjō himself. In the countries nominally independent there was a slightly different pattern, but that the generalization is still valid may be shown from the following examples.

From 1931 on, a predominant issue, if not the predominant one, in Japanese politics was the problem of what to do about China. "Solutions of the China Problem" followed one another in rapid succession as cabinet after cabinet foundered on the reef of disagreement, discouragement and indecision. The olive branch was alternated with the mailed fist or both were extended simultaneously as the Japanese evinced increasing desperation in attempts to extricate themselves from a situation that was requiring a far greater national effort than had been foreseen. Finally in March 1940, they set up the National Government of China at Nanking under the leadership of Wang Ching-

<sup>28</sup> Lieutenant General Mutō, long a member of the War Ministry, has given a fine statement of this difference in attitude as it was found within the Army itself. Although concerned with domestic politics, his words apply to problems of the occupation as well. The General Staff, he says, "being primarily responsible for military operations and questions of high command, have the winning of war uppermost in their minds and, since they have little or no direct contact with the general public, are prone to place primordial importance on armament and military preparedness." On the other hand, the War Ministry, which carries out the plans of the General Staff, must negotiate with other groups and organizations. "This brings them in direct contact with public opinion, and the rights and privileges as well as the desires of the general public must be constantly kept in mind." Quoted in Reel, A. Frank, *The Case of General Yamashita*, Chicago, 1949, pp. 59-60.

wei, a former luminary of the Kuomintang and long-time friend and confidant of Sun Yat-sen.

Without becoming involved in the details of the negotiation that led up to the establishment of the Wang regime or of the developments which followed, a brief recital of Wang's negotiations with Japanese officials at the time the government was set up will show how he used the strength of Chinese national feeling as a lever to secure concessions from the Japanese.

In June 1939, Wang went to Japan to discuss with Japanese officials the terms under which the new government was to be set up. His demands included the following points: 1) the new government was to be called the National Government; 2) it must be based on the San Min Chu I The Three People's Principles—Democracy, Nationalism, People's Livelihood—as proclaimed by Sun Yat-sen; 3) the national flag of China, the so-called sun-in-the-blue-sky flag, must be recognized; 4) the Council which the Japanese had set up in central China to control local affairs, the Renovation Government, must be abolished under the new central government.<sup>29</sup>

General Itagaki, Seishiro, the Minister of War, with whom Wang carried on his principal negotiations demurred on several points. The third principle of the People's Welfare, he maintained, smacked of Communism but Wang insisted on its retention and carried the point with the argument that it could be given an anti-Communist and pro-Japanese content. Itagaki also questioned the use of the national flag on the grounds that it had become a symbol of anti-Japanism and would surely provoke the Japanese military. Again Wang was adamant though he admitted some form of distinction might be allowed. After his conversations with Wang, Itagaki summoned the

<sup>29</sup> Document 1282. *Statement on Wang Ching-wei by Kagesa, Sadaaki*. Kagesa, as chief of the Military Affairs Section of the Military Affairs Bureau in the War Ministry, carried on negotiations with Wang and served as his chief military adviser 1940-42.

staff officers serving in China to Tokyo and informed them of the proposed terms. As he had predicted, they vehemently opposed Wang's demands, particularly the use of the flag and the dissolution of the Renovation Government. In spite of their dissent Itagaki insisted that Wang's view must be granted and the officers acquiesced.<sup>30</sup>

In his conversations with Itagaki, Wang is quoted as saying that the "unity and strength of China are prerequisites" and as maintaining the view that China needed a strong central government in which the Kuomintang should continue to play the leading role.<sup>31</sup> He further elaborated his stand in an interview with Prince Konoye:

"The reason why I insisted on sticking to the name of the National Government and the Sun-in-the-Blue-Sky Flag is not a mere question of form, but because I sincerely wish to clear off this kind of fear and suspicion that China will be overrun by Japan from the Chinese people's minds and make them feel at ease."<sup>32</sup>

Sometime later, Wang reiterated his view even more vigorously in an article entitled "National Consciousness and the New Order in East Asia."<sup>33</sup> The resistance of the Chinese people against Japan makes impossible any military solution of the Incident. A solution can be brought about only by an understanding arising from a new educational policy, stressing good neighborliness, for the Chinese and Japanese abandonment of their contempt for China.

"Whatever attempt Japan may make to overpower China by

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* It would be, of course, a Kuomintang redirected towards friendship with Japan.

<sup>32</sup> Doc. 1442. *Wang Interview with Konoye.*

<sup>33</sup> Wang Ching-wei, "National Consciousness and the New Order in East Asia," *Contemporary Japan*, Vol. IX, No. 9, September, 1940.

military force, she cannot hope to subdue the national consciousness of the Chinese people.”

If China is not allowed to attain independence and freedom as a modern state, the New Order will mean only the extermination of national consciousness, which is, Wang implies, a contradiction in terms for there can be no love of East Asia without love of one's own country. But Japan's pledge of sovereignty and her promise to end special concessions prove her good faith, says Wang. The Chinese must now come to see the meaning of the New Order or their nationalism will become only a “narrow and egoistic means for excluding peoples other than their own.” National consciousness, which must never be belittled or abused, should be cultivated and guided:

“Education must aim at remoulding the minds of youth, at directing the national consciousness to conform with the spirit of the new order in East Asia.”

If Wang believed he was holding out for something more than matters of form, the Japanese were intent on confining concessions to just that. Although the Army command in China opposed any concessions, the War Minister as we have seen was more pliable.<sup>34</sup> The Foreign Office similarly was willing to grant Wang's requests for retention of the labels “Kuomintang” and “San Min Chu I” so long as the labels covered the proper contents. It was less impressed with form than the Army commanders. In June 1939 when negotiations with Wang were underway, the Foreign Office expressed the view that

“Though we should make Wang yield to the essentials of our policy, he shall be given an impression of a hopeful future and

<sup>34</sup> Doc. 1282. “I observed,” said Kagesa, “that the War Minister was especially careful in the choice of his words so as to avoid giving any impression to Wang of interference in the internal policy of China.”

absolute faith by making [letting?] him carry out his wishes freely on other points.<sup>35</sup>

Actually the Japanese went further than this in their attempt to create a semblance of independence for the new government. It was given broader fiscal powers, property occupied by the Japanese Army was in many instances returned to the Chinese, Chinese were given a larger share of capital investment in joint economic enterprises, the Japanese promised not to interfere in domestic administration and the opinions of Japanese advisers were not to be binding. There was, of course, a considerable gap between promise and performance in respect to these rights of the new government but that they were not entirely meaningless is indicated by the fact that the Japanese advisers to the Wang regime were accused of being "too passive" and that the government became unpopular among certain groups in Japan where it was regarded as being anti-Japanese and Wang was even seen as an agent of Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>36</sup>

To Japan's misfortune, however, the "essentials" of her policy undermined any possible benefit the concessions might have entailed. Military gains only hardened Chinese resistance which nourished guerilla activity which, in turn, imperiled even the military gains. In their search for a solution, the Japanese tried further appeasement to woo Chinese support. In 1943, they announced with much fanfare the return of concessions to the Chinese and the end of extraterritoriality—measures that under different circumstances and auspices might have brought a great deal of popular support. They sought to improve the prestige of the National Government by further broadening its

<sup>35</sup> Doc. 1519-K. *A Plan for Guidance of Wang's Movement, Foreign Ministry, 6 June 1939*. Essentials included a policy of "separate rule and national unification"—meaning separate administrative areas were to be maintained under the nominal control of the central government, and a "new relationship between Japan and China."

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Doc. 1282.

taxation and financial powers, by giving the Chinese an increased role in economic developments and by strengthening the central government in its relations with the local administration.<sup>37</sup> The latter point, in conjunction with accompanying provisions,<sup>38</sup> indicated that the Japanese were beginning to realize the futility of their attempt to rule China through a series of localized administrations and were prepared to make some conciliatory gesture to the pressure for a centralized government with real authority. These concessions proved of little effect on a Chinese nationalist sentiment which regarded them as more insincere promises or, at best, a poor imitation of the unity and equality demanded. The gulf between Chinese nationalism and Japanese objectives was fixed.

In Indonesia, the Japanese ruled directly; in China they attempted to create a regime that would serve as a counter-attraction to a government actively opposing them. In Burma, after August 1943, they were working with a nominally independent government which could make some claims to be representative of nationalist aspirations. In spite of the differences in these situations and though the question of Burmese independence was not the source of a protracted intra-governmental struggle as in the case of Indonesia, the same split between military and political viewpoints is apparent.

Even before Burma's independence was declared, Ba Maw,<sup>39</sup> the chairman of the Burmese Central Administration, flew to Singapore to meet with Prime Minister Tōjō

<sup>37</sup> Doc. 1293. *Concrete Plan for Fundamental Policy in Dealing with China for Accomplishment of Greater East Asia War. Cabinet Decision, 4 January 1943.*

<sup>38</sup> This plan also included decisions to leave personnel matters of provincial and local governments to the central government, and to allow closer relations between the central government and the governments of North China and Mongolia.

<sup>39</sup> A pre-war political leader, Ba Maw was also the first prime minister of Burma after it was separated from India in 1937.

and remonstrate with him about the activities of the Japanese Army in Burma.<sup>40</sup> Tōjō promised to issue strict instructions to Japanese forces to "respect the opinions of the natives and to take a true, fatherly attitude toward them," a phrase that, in itself, tells much about the official Japanese attitude toward the other members of the Co-Prosperity Sphere. It was Japanese policy, said Yamamoto, Kumaichi, the Vice-Minister of the Greater East Asia Ministry, to let Ba Maw voice his complaints "even after independence" and this he proceeded to do, castigating the "undue and great interference" of the Japanese Army in Burmese affairs and the economic monopoly enjoyed by Japanese firms.<sup>41</sup>

Tōjō's order presumably reached field commanders but tension between Burmese officials and army authorities persisted. General Kimura, Heitaro, appointed commander-in-chief in Burma in September 1944 seems to have made a genuine effort to correct some of the abuses of the military and to work with the Burmese government. In conferences with him, members of the Burmese cabinet complained at length about the shortcomings of Japanese policy.<sup>42</sup> They pointed out to Kimura that the sufferings which the war imposed on the life of the Burmese people made them opposed to any further fighting. They gave detailed accounts of the oppression of the people by lower-ranking Japanese officers and civilians, many of whom were said to be of questionable character, and complained that restrictions on the activities of the Government indicated the Japanese had little confidence in it. Kimura proved a sympathetic audience and promised quick action

<sup>40</sup> Testimony of Yamamoto, Kumaichi to IMTFE, pp. 17918-19. Yamamoto was Vice-Minister of the Greater East Asia Ministry.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17948, 46.

<sup>42</sup> For an account of these conferences see Doc. 1870—*Statement of Shimizu, Hisanaga*. From August 1943 to October 1945, Shimizu was Senior Secretary to the Japanese Embassy in Burma and concurrently Consul General at Rangoon.



to remedy the situation as far as possible. Though he was no doubt biased, to one Japanese participant in these conferences, the Burmese ministers appeared well pleased with the talks. He reported of Major General Aung San, the Minister of National Defense and later Prime Minister of Burma that:

“. . . he was so much pleased that he remarked that if they had been given such an opportunity a year before, there would never have arisen such discontentments (sic) between the two countries as were complained of.”<sup>43</sup>

Since the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, founded by Aung San the preceding August, continued its activities and since this conference was held only a few months before the revolt of the Burmese Defense Army, the cabinet members no doubt were exhibiting more satisfaction than they really felt. In any event, Kimura's efforts failed to achieve the harmony he sought whether because it was too late or because his orders were not properly executed. That the latter is a factor which must be taken into consideration is evident from the universal complaints about lower ranking officers. Tokyo and area commanders could issue directives but it was the junior officers who had to give them effect in more direct contact with the people and it was the common experience within the Co-Prosperity Sphere that this group aroused the greatest antagonism among the local population. Chatterji, in his history of the Indian National Army, speaks of junior Japanese officers who “lost the spirit of cooperative faith and fellow feeling towards the soldiers of the Indian National Army” and he states that the behavior of the lower grade officers was responsible for alienating the Naga and Chin peoples of Burma.<sup>44</sup> That a similar situation existed in the Philip-

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-2. In speaking of the revolt of the Burmese Army, Chatterji says they allowed themselves to be dominated by Japanese military officers who treated them as inferiors (p. 256).

piners is to be gathered from the account of the occupation by the Foreign Minister of the war-time Republic and from General Yamashita's experience in the last phase of the war.<sup>45</sup>

Although it was not uniformly true, in general, the upper levels of the Japanese official hierarchy gave a more sympathetic hearing to the nationalists than did the lower. It was not by mere accident that both Ba Maw and President Laurel of the Philippines independently urged that measures be taken to ensure direct liaison between their governments and central authorities in Tokyo.<sup>46</sup> This brings us back to a point made previously, that there was often a difference of opinions between those who saw policy strictly in military terms and those who were aware that political considerations cannot be entirely disregarded even in military planning. For the nationalist forces in Asia this meant that there were, in the supposedly monolithic structure of the Japanese administration, interstices where they could exert pressure. How Wang Ching-wei used the argument that failure to grant nationalist demands would defeat Japanese efforts to secure local cooperation and support was indicated above. Others also found the argument useful.

In a document prepared by the Burmese Government during the war there is the same insistence on the importance of providing proof to the Burmese people that their independence is genuine.

"The Burmese understand independence to be primarily the concrete right and power to administer their own affairs in their own way and with their own authority. Where they see this right with their own eyes they see independence. . . .

<sup>45</sup> Recto, Claro M., *op. cit.*; Reel, *op. cit.* For further details on Yamashita, see below.

<sup>46</sup> See Testimony of Yamamoto, Kumaichi, IMTFE Proceedings, pp. 17910 ff. These views were expressed to Tōjō during his tour of the Southern areas in 1943 when he was accompanied by Yamamoto.

Burmese national independence must be made as real and visible as possible by leaving everything in Burma to the Burmese Government and people."<sup>47</sup>

It was admitted that a certain amount of interference was unavoidable because of military operations but the importance of prior consultation with the Burmese Government was stressed.

"The Burmese Government and its officers should be put in a position to convince the people that they are not just tools but have real power and prestige."<sup>48</sup>

This was really to the long-run advantage of the Japanese, it was argued, for the greater appearance of independence would mean less friction and more whole-hearted cooperation. Four measures were proposed as essential in this regard.

1. No Japanese should, directly or indirectly, mix in Burmese political affairs or parties.
2. The Japanese should not poll Burmese public opinion in a way apt to sow distrust of any member of the government.
3. The Japanese should recognize members of the Burmese Government as holding a rank equivalent to some specified military rank for purposes of negotiation.
4. The Japanese, where possible, should employ only those Burmese supplied by the Government and, at all times, should consult the Government to prevent "the wrong kind of Burmese from being employed."<sup>49</sup>

These proposals gave a good indication as to where the shoe was pinching, and complaints about interference, inferior status and failure to operate "through channels"

<sup>47</sup> From "Second Review of the Working of the New Order Plan," June 7, 1944, in *Burma's New Order Plan*, Rangoon, 1944, pp. 32-33.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

were common in the independent countries. The Indians, for example, complained of attempts to bypass the Provisional Government of Azad Hind in the matter of employing Indians and S. C. Bose persuaded the Japanese to agree to recruit all Indians through the Provisional Government.<sup>50</sup> The reason advanced by the Indians for the protest was that these people employed directly by the Japanese were self-seeking adventurers, of whom some were charged with committing atrocities against British-Indian troops.

It would seem that there were other, even more fundamental, grounds for opposition to this practice. Direct contact between the Japanese and the local populations always constituted a threat to these governments. In the first place, it impaired their prestige with their own people who might come to regard them as mere figureheads. More seriously, it would undermine their very *raison d'être* as far as the Japanese were concerned. Their best bargaining points were their usefulness to the Japanese in recruiting personnel for a variety of posts and in securing popular adherence to occupation policies. A threat to their utility struck at the very basis of their power position. Moreover, there was always the danger of an alternative government. What if these "irregulars" should persuade the Japanese to install them as the "real" national government in return for more "sincere cooperation," which might be translated as fewer demands for concessions?

According to one member of the war-time Philippine Government, such a move was undertaken by two Filipinos in conjunction with a group of junior Japanese officers and officials.<sup>51</sup> The two men concerned, Ricarte and Ramos, stood close to the Japanese, the former because of his long residence in Japan, the latter because of his association with them before the war, but for this very reason

<sup>50</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>51</sup> Recto, *op. cit.*, pp. 56 ff.

appear to have been mistrusted by other Filipino leaders. How far the plot developed is not clear but in December 1944 the formation of a new Filipino mass organization was started by the Japanese under the leadership of these two. At the inauguration ceremonies for this organization, the Makapili, Ramos declared that it would be independent of the Republic and subject only to the authority of the Japanese commander-in-chief. President Laurel, angered by this challenge to Republican authority, expressed himself vigorously.

"There is only one Republic of the Philippines, to which we owe allegiance and which we must defend with our sinews and our blood. This Republic is the one of which I happen to be the President.

"As long as I hold and exercise the authority, I cannot permit any organization, political in character, by individual Filipinos or groups of Filipinos, to exist unless that organization is subject to the authority and control of that Republic."<sup>52</sup>

However justified Laurel's indignation, it was a bit ironic in view of the circumstances under which he himself had come into power. When Quezon left the Philippines with the Americans he appointed Jorge Vargas, his executive secretary, as Mayor of Greater Manila to preserve law and order. He continued to be the leading political figure during the early stages of the Occupation as the Japanese made him the head of the Executive Commission which they established as the central administrative organization for liaison with the military. By the time preparations for independence were started in 1943, however, Laurel had moved into the most prominent position and Vargas was shoved into the background. The reasons for Vargas' fall are made explicit in an interesting article by a Japanese administrative official in the southern area.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>53</sup> Lt. Kuroda, Akahiko, "First Hand Observations on Military Administration in the Southern Areas," *Nanyō*, Vol. 29, No. 2, February 1943.

When the Japanese arrived in the Philippines, says the author, they found everyone, from Quezon down, very excited about independence, a state of mind he attributes largely to American promises. Military headquarters was deluged with politicians and businessmen, each pleading his own case and each "shouting" that he was the man the Japanese were looking for. The administration set up under Vargas acted "as if under the illusion it was an independent government." It failed to cooperate "sincerely," it carried out its own propaganda campaign with the people, sought to gain power through grandstand plays and "took action entirely opposed to plans and intentions of military headquarters." Thus fell Vargas. One is reminded of the observations of another Japanese on the Philippine independence movement written a year before Pearl Harbor.

"The Philippine Independents are indeed enthusiastic in political aspirations and sincere in racial consciousness, but *their ideology has not yet advanced to such an extent as to advocate the 'Asia for Asiatics' principle*, because their aim is nothing beyond 'the Philippines for the Filipinos.'"<sup>54</sup>

To return to the complaints of the Burmese, the Review of the New Order Plan held that government officials should be given every facility to get complete war information. How can they be expected to make the public understand the situation if they themselves are not able to understand it?

"Leaders who have to accept responsibility for maintaining the war among their people must be made to feel that they are trusted by their allies."<sup>55</sup>

There was a plea for more news and less censorship. The Burmese, it pointed out, were used to widescale coverage

<sup>54</sup> Asako, Sueoki, "Philippine Commonwealth and the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," *Gaikō Jihō*, January 1, 1941. Quoted in *Contemporary Opinions on Current Topics*, May 8, 1941.

<sup>55</sup> *Burma's New Order Plan*, p. 45.

of the news—both good and bad. “One cannot close one’s eyes to the psychological difference between the people of Japan and Burma due to past training.”<sup>56</sup> There was a broad hint that Japanese propaganda was too blatant and one sided to be effective. The people must hear for themselves that political liberties are restricted in every country now as the only way to survive in a total war if they are to put up with restrictions themselves. They must be told that:

“. . . since Burma is now independent, our present political restrictions will only last for the period of the war, whereas if the British were to retake Burma she would lose her independence and her political restrictions would be much severer.”<sup>57</sup>

There were appeals to end restrictions on radio, film and foreign news service, to allow local mass news meetings, more papers and a wider dissemination of news on the ground these measures would help secure the cooperation of the local populace. More paper and printing materials were required, the Report continued, for the publicity work that would have to be done if the people were to be psychologically prepared for the remaining years of the war. Only Japan could supply these materials, it noted, and so far “we have had very little of them from Japan or any other outside source.”<sup>58</sup> “This collective war must be fought collectively on every front,” the Report added in a subtle jibe at continued Japanese entreaties for familial cooperation in the common effort.

Japanese attempts to organize the Co-Prosperity Sphere into an economic unit centered around Japan were the source of a great deal of friction with the occupied areas. It was noted above that part of the effort to win Chinese

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

support in 1943 involved giving the Chinese a greater voice in economic affairs. There were parallel developments in Southeast Asia as may be witnessed by the example of Burma.

In general, the Japanese planned to dominate the economies of the occupied areas through a system of controlled monopolies. Business firms followed close behind the entry of the Japanese flag but all had to obtain prior permission from the Army. It was governmental policy to allow only a few firms, sometimes only one, in each of the main trade lines in each country and to apportion the Co-Prosperity Sphere among several companies.<sup>59</sup> Although it was, at first, somewhat averse to allowing one firm to have a complete monopoly in any field, Army policy eventually fostered such a development, largely because it was deemed easier to deal with one central authority rather than with several.<sup>60</sup> Japanese banks were allotted various portions of the Co-Prosperity Sphere and Japanese firms were compelled to transact their business with the bank assigned to its area. The banks, in turn, had to report to Tokyo and in this way an instrument of control over the firms was provided. Enemy property was confiscated for the benefit of the Japanese not the local inhabitants and there was a rapid growth of "joint companies," a common device in China, where local concerns were forced to accept Japanese partners. Local businessmen who had hoped that the expulsion of Westerners would secure economic control in their own hands were quickly disappointed.

Efforts on the part of the local governments to remedy

<sup>59</sup> See Exhibit 1332. *Outline of Economic Counter Plans for the Southern Area, Sixth Committee, December 12, 1941*. "Throughout the Southern Area, the same variety of resources shall be divided and shared by two or more entrepreneurs, so as to avoid the evil of having one firm monopolize one variety." See also, *Japanese Use of Burmese Industry*, Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 2753, Washington, November 1945.

<sup>60</sup> See *Japanese Use of Burmese Industry*.



this state of affairs were soon forthcoming. Ba Maw was quick to complain about the destruction of the state forests by a Japanese monopoly and of monopolies in agriculture and industry.<sup>61</sup> The Philippine Government lodged complaints with Tokyo about the confiscation of Filipino commercial enterprises, Japanese domination of mines, forests, and sugar and textile mills.<sup>62</sup> Less than three months after the declaration of Burmese independence, the Burmese Government was moving to secure the use of former enemy property.<sup>63</sup> It was aware that this would create an argument with the Japanese but persisted nonetheless because the property was essential to effect a program of land distribution. The burden of the argument was that such a program was necessary to give the people a personal stake in the new state which, otherwise, might lose their support.

“So far, we have used for this purpose the threat to our newly won independence by our old enemies who are preparing to attack and conquer us again. But this is not enough. We must create a more material stake.”<sup>64</sup>

The protests of the government were of some effect for the Japanese did proceed to turn some of the seized property over to it. Moreover, in Burma there was a progressive development of Army control over Japanese businesses in the interests of the local government. Companies were forced to limit their profits to six percent and the Army restrained the use of “allowances” and similar devices to cut profits. The government eventually won the right to tax Japanese companies but this proved to be a Pyrrhic victory for firms working for the Army were exempted, and this eventually included nearly all of them. After independ-

<sup>61</sup> Testimony of Yamamoto, Kumaichi, pp. 17946 ff.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> See *Burma's New Order Plan*, p. 23 ff. “First Review of the Working of the New Order Plan,” October 26, 1943.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

ence was granted, there was some genuine effort to give some measure of economic control to the Burmese and to grant Burmese requests for increased training of native personnel in all economic fields. However it was reported that it was often "Burmese inefficiency which caused the Army to keep or retake control."<sup>65</sup>

This increase of Army control over business, which by the end of the war had developed to the point where Japanese companies were hardly more than army agents and company officials appeared in army uniforms, was not, of course, inspired by concern for the public welfare. Japanese interests were the only considerations but in this instance, again, differing viewpoints of what constituted these interests afforded limited scope to the pressures of the local governments. The business firms were concerned with profits, a consideration of only minor importance to the Army. The latter had to deal with the local population, secure its support and prevent discontent from interfering with the conduct of a war; as in Indonesia, where the Army was directly responsible for administration, "military" considerations had to be expanded to include "political" factors.

This conflict between military and business interests had occurred earlier, during the development of Manchukuo.<sup>66</sup> There, the Kwantung Army, many of whose officers were

<sup>65</sup> The foregoing paragraph is based on material in *Japanese Use of Burmese Industry*. According to this document, the Japanese turned over the distribution of rice in the Shan States to the Burmese with the result that it disappeared en route, and, as a consequence of giving them control of bus transportation, the busses didn't run at all, let alone on time.

<sup>66</sup> The following two paragraphs are based largely on Jones, F. C., *Manchuria Since 1931*, London, 1949, Chapter VIII, and Allen, G. C., *A Short Economic History of Modern Japan, 1867-1937*, London, 1946, Chapter X. For a treatment of relations between the military and the Zaibatsu during the war, see Bisson, T. A., *Japan's War Economy*, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1945. This book deals largely with domestic developments and stresses the harmony of interest between the two groups. Bisson admits, however, the paramount interests of the Army in the Co-Prosperty Sphere, pp. 82-88.

identified with the "young radical" group noted for its anti-capitalist sentiments, sought to exclude the old, established firms, particularly the so-called "old Zaibatsu," from any direct participation in economic activity. The Army, rather, established special companies, each responsible for one particular industry and in each of which the Government of Manchukuo was a heavy investor. Industry control and planning were in the hands of the Manchukuo Government, and through it, of the Headquarters of the Kwantung Army. The chief instrument of economic development which the Army used was the South Manchurian Railway, and significantly, of the half of its shares not government owned, only one Zaibatsu firm held any significant amount. Of the enterprises undertaken by SMR, many were unprofitable for they were dictated solely by the political and strategic interests of the Kwantung Army.

Even after 1937, when the need for capital led the Army to seek new investors, it did not turn to the old Zaibatsu, of whom it was still suspicious, but to the "new Zaibatsu." The latter were better suited to the needs of the Army because ownership was not concentrated in the hands of a few families as was the case with the older firms and because they included the type of industries, particularly metallurgy and chemicals, which the Army was most anxious to develop. Here too, however, the relationship was not always happy for business interests concerned with "efficient and profitable management had frequent feuds with Army theorists and bureaucratic state planners."<sup>67</sup> The hostility which existed between these two groups should not be exaggerated; they often worked hand in glove in carrying out policies mutually advantageous. Suspicion was never completely allayed, however, and even though the Army sought the help of business in exploiting

<sup>67</sup> Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 150. "Nissan" (Nippon Sangyo Kaisha) was the principal firm in the economic development of Manchuria after 1937.

and developing the newly won territory, it insisted on its authority to supervise and control. The equation of Japanese imperialism with the expansion of its financial and capitalistic interests is not one that stands up under close scrutiny.

Many of the grievances of the Burmese Government against the Japanese were echoed in the Philippines. In June 1944, the Foreign Minister of the Philippine Government, Claro M. Recto, addressed a letter to the Japanese Ambassador in Manila, Murata, Shōzō, in which the abuses mentioned and the arguments advanced for their correction are similar to those found in the Report of the Burmese Government.<sup>68</sup>

The bad effects which Japanese discrimination, arrogance and cruelty are having on the Filipinos, the letter states, is not offset by donations of clothing and medicine, the use of a national flag or even the return of public properties. The hardships of everyday life outweigh all other considerations. The unnecessary cruelty meted out for even minor offenses, and continued after independence was declared, has violated the Filipino sense of racial and national pride and makes cooperation difficult. The problem now, Recto says, is to convince the people of the reality of Philippine independence, for while such a conviction is lacking, there will be no faith in the government.

"It becomes an increasingly difficult task for the Filipino leaders to convince their people of the noble intentions of Japan in waging the present war and of the sincerity of the pronouncements of the Japanese leaders that Japan came to the Philippines not as conqueror but as liberator."

Although the Japanese were welcomed with hopes for a new regime, the initial enthusiasm has dampened with "disappointment after disappointment." In spite of inde-

<sup>68</sup> This letter is reprinted in Recto, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-125, dated June 20, 1944. The quotations which follow are taken from it.

pendence, the towns in the provinces are still governed actually by military commanders, people are punished without consulting local authorities and the Japanese consider themselves above Filipino law. The only mark of independence is the display of the flag. Since the Philippine Government receives little consideration from the Japanese, it can enjoy but scant respect from the people who do not even bring it their complaints because of the all too apparent futility of any such action. The letter closes with a stirring appeal for real independence and a recognition of the depth of national feeling in the Philippines.

“The Filipino must be given a real stake in the war. He must be given something concrete to fight for—his land, his home, his honor, his freedom and independence, the sovereignty of his Republic—something that will invest with living substance such high principles as Asia for the Asiatics or such large ideals as the establishment of the Co-Prosperity Sphere. . . . They must be made to feel that this country belongs to them, that they are the masters in their own land, that the independence which they have proclaimed and which Japan has recognized is real and authentic.”

Even had there been the will on the part of the Japanese to meet the conditions Recto desired, time was lacking. General Yamashita, Tomoyuki, who assumed command of civilian affairs in the Philippines in November 1944 issued orders to “handle the Filipinos carefully, to cooperate with them and to get as much cooperation as possible from the Filipino people.”<sup>69</sup> But by this time the Americans already had landed in the Islands. Furthermore, there was the problem, noted earlier, that the attitudes of commanding officers were not always shared by subordinates. When, for example, Laurel took advantage of Yamashita’s offer to consult with him on problems of Japanese-Filipino relations to complain of the oppressiveness of the military

<sup>69</sup> Reel, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

police, the Kempeitai, the General gave a warning to the head of the organization but without effect. Renewed complaints by Laurel led to the man's eventual recall at the request of Yamashita, a process that required much time and was accomplished too late.<sup>70</sup>

The Kempeitai, about whom there were complaints everywhere in the occupied areas, were led to particularly cruel measures in the Philippines by the persistent and widespread guerrilla activities. The Japanese were never able to break out of the vicious circle in which oppression fed resistance, and the Philippines were regarded as the "problem child" of Southeast Asia. General Mutō, who served in Sumatra as well as the Philippines, declared that the resistance encountered in the latter far surpassed that encountered elsewhere in the colonial areas where the native population was "acquiescent if not cooperative."<sup>71</sup>

The foregoing words of Recto and a statement by the Burmese Government, which will be cited below, are fine examples of the arguments used by the nationalists in dealing with the Japanese. They fell far short of accomplishing the basic aims of those who advanced them, and yet it is the purport of this chapter that they had their effect, however limited. Those who saw nationalism as an ally of Japanese expansion found that no alliance can be completely one-sided. Even the view of nationalism as an instrument of Japanese power entailed some accommodation. To use an instrument effectively one must understand something of its nature; the extent of the accommodations and the time at which to make them are not entirely at the discretion of the user. There was a sense in which the Japanese were the instrument of national forces.

This implies the view that there was not always automatic and unquestioning acquiescence to Japanese demands among those groups who have been called "collab-

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 156-7.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

orationist," another point which this chapter has tried to maintain. Is it reasonable, for example, to classify the following statement as that of a "puppet"?

"In Burma, and indeed in India too, a definite kind of mass political outlook has been created by the circumstances in which the long struggle against British rule was carried on. It is fanatically nationalist and it insists upon the right of self-determination above everything else. For instance, it expressed itself in the slogans of Burma for the Burmese and India for the Indians. This means . . . that, in accordance with their passion for self-determination, the Burmese attach the greatest importance to the right to decide and act for themselves. . . . The result in the past has been that the only way in which the Burmans and the Indians as well, have been made to do a thing well has been by making them do it with their free consent and in their own way. That has been the most dynamic political fact in Burma and in India in the past."<sup>72</sup>

One may question the personal motivation and the methods of many of those who worked with the Japanese during the war but the strength of nationalist aspirations which they represented must not be overlooked. Without a recognition of this strength, of the demand for independence, the desire to "run our own country in our own way" and the determination to pursue these objectives by every means, one misses the chief significance of the "puppet governments" for our own day.

<sup>72</sup> *Burma's New Order Plan*. "Final Memorandum," of June 1944, pp. 75-76.

## The Development of Political Participation in Indonesia

IN THE JAPANESE PLAN for the Southern Areas, political considerations, quite understandably, were subordinated to military and economic needs and were regarded as contingent upon the restoration of "peace and order."<sup>1</sup> During the war, this viewpoint was restated as follows by a Japanese official:

"For the military administration, the most important thing is winning the war and all its efforts go into this. The greatest of the present efforts towards winning the war is economic construction. Political and cultural considerations can not weigh very heavily with the present military administration in the Southern Areas."<sup>2</sup>

Basically, there was no change in this priority of aims during the war but the sharp distinction among them, implied in the foregoing statement, became increasingly blurred. As the war progressed, there was less and less emphasis on economic construction, except as it related directly to the war, and more and more attention to political considerations as part of the strategy of defense. The

<sup>1</sup> Exhibit 1334 and Exhibit 1332. *Outline of Economic Plans for the Southern Area*. Sixth Committee, December 12, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> Kuroda, *op. cit.*



story of the extension of political activity in Southeast Asia during the occupation is, in part, the story of the growth of Japanese awareness of the fact that politics would not wait for peace and order to be restored.

A case study in this development can be provided in an outline of the extension of participation in governmental work by Indonesians during the occupation. Particular attention is paid to events in Java since they set the pattern for developments elsewhere in the country.

In accordance with the general principles laid down for occupation government,<sup>3</sup> the Military Administration as set up on Java in August 1942 showed no very striking formal changes from the administrative structure of the Dutch regime except at the very top level. There, the Governor-General, the Government-Secretariat, the cabinet, the Council of State for the Indies and the Volksraad all disappeared from the scene. The reins of all authority, executive, legislative, judicial, administrative, in the new setup were held by the Chief of the Military Administration and the Japanese Commander-in-Chief for Java who were the local links in a chain of command that ran through the headquarters of the Supreme Commander of the Southern Areas to Tokyo. The key body in the Military Administration was the General Affairs Bureau, which was the policy-making agency and which supervised the whole administrative structure. This bureau [Sōmubu] and the Propaganda Bureau [Sendenbu] were the only really new departments; the other seven departments in the administration followed the pattern of the former regime with only slight modifications. These departments were as follows: Internal Affairs [Naimubu], which now included Public Health and Education and Labor, formerly independent departments; Finance [Zaimubu]; Justice [Shihōbu]; Police [Keimubu], which was formerly under the

<sup>3</sup> See Exhibit 1335. The intent was to use existing administrative structure as much as possible.

Interior Department; Public Works [Kōtsūbu]; Audit [Kaikei Kantokubu]; and Industry [Sangyōbu]. Independent bureaus, of which the most important was the Religious Affairs Bureau [Shūmubu], were added later.

Similarly, in the field of local administration, there was no revolutionary change in structure. The former provinces of West, Central and East Java were abolished and the top, and most important, unit became the Shū [province] which corresponded to the former Residencies and of which there were seventeen. The four sultanates in central Java were continued with their current rulers and Batavia, renamed Jakarta, became a Special Municipality. Below the Shū, the Japanese administrative pattern of prefecture, sub-prefecture, district, village and city was instituted and provincial, regional and municipal councils were eliminated. The head of the Shū, the counter-part of the former Resident, was the most important figure in local administration for he had the power to issue ordinances supplementing those of higher authorities and regulations on subjects not yet covered. His powers of appointment and dismissal gave him greater authority over his subordinates than the Resident had enjoyed but on the other hand, he was more directly dependent on the central administration.<sup>4</sup>

This skeletal outline of the Military Administration is not intended as an introduction to a study of Japanese administrative procedures but has been included as a background to a discussion of political developments in Indonesia. This is the basic administrative structure which prevailed throughout the occupation, for the later introduction of central and local advisory councils did not prove to be a radical departure from it. In so far as the Indonesians made their way upward in governmental positions, it was within this framework.

Throughout 1942, political activity by the Indonesians

<sup>4</sup> This sketch is based on material presented in Exhibit 1351.

was confined within narrow limits. It was noted in the previous chapter that one of the first actions by the Japanese had been to ban political parties and even political meetings and propaganda.<sup>5</sup> Far from emphasizing Indonesian political development, the first great propaganda campaign undertaken by the Japanese was an attempt to Japanize Java. The so-called "AAA Movement,"<sup>6</sup> launched in April 1942 under the slogan "Japan the Saviour of Asia, Japan the Leader of Asia, Japan the Light of Asia," bore down heavily on the theme of Japan as the saviour of the Asiatic peoples from Western influences which had corrupted the Eastern soul. The AAA Movement was short-lived for it failed to create any mass enthusiasm and it fell particularly flat among the intellectual group whom the Japanese were most anxious to attract.<sup>7</sup>

Even before the Movement came to a halt, the Japanese were scanning the ranks of the nationalists for men who would be effective popular leaders and who would be willing to work with them.

The Japanese believed they had found their answer in the persons of Sukarno, Hatta, Dewantara and Mas Mansur who were informally associated as the "Ampat Serangkai," or "Four Leaf Clover." These four men enjoyed great popularity and could be expected to command wide-scale support. Sukarno, whom the Japanese returned to Java from the exile to which he had been sentenced by the Dutch, was the founder of the Nationalist Party, the PNI, and was known to the Japanese as a leader of the group which approved non-cooperation with the Dutch. Mohammed Hatta, who also had been living in exile, was influential among youth groups and had been chairman of the Indonesian National Education Party. In some Japa-

<sup>5</sup> See order of March 20, 1942, cited in previous chapter.

<sup>6</sup> So-called because the letter "A" in Asia was printed in large, colored letters on the propaganda posters of the Movement.

<sup>7</sup> Sjahrir, Soetan, *Out of Exile*. Translated with an introduction by Charles Wolf, Jr., New York, 1949, p. 246.

nese circles he was regarded as a particularly valuable asset for he was credited, mistakenly, with being a prominent Moslem leader. On the other hand, both he and Sukarno were classified as Communists by some Japanese who were suffering from that disease, since become even more prevalent, which leads its victims to see Red in every deviation from their own brand of orthodoxy.<sup>8</sup> The "communist tint" did not interfere with the hopes of the Japanese about the usefulness of these men, however. Their main requirements were a willingness to work with them and ardent anti-Dutch sentiments, and they congratulated themselves on securing the support of two such important figures. Dewantara, an educational leader, had founded the Taman Siswa, or national schools, as a protest against Dutch-dominated education, and was highly respected in Indonesian circles. Mansur was important as a representative of Moslem political views.

These four men constituted an impressive array and the Japanese could justly congratulate themselves on their good fortune if their support really had been gained. But for what purposes was this support extended? Were the ultimate objectives of the two parties in any way compatible? Without launching into a detailed analysis of the motivations of these men, it can be safely asserted that their main concern was to carry on the fight for independence or, as Sjahrir expressed it, "to give the nationalist struggle a broader legal scope" and to press the Japanese for political concessions.<sup>9</sup> The formation of a united nationalist movement which would include all groups was of particular concern to Sukarno, for example.<sup>10</sup>

The Japanese, for their part, were interested primarily in securing Indonesian cooperation in the war effort and preferred to avoid political questions. Their position was

<sup>8</sup> See *Program in Java*, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup> Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

clearly expressed in two articles which appeared in *Ajia Raya*, the leading Malay newspaper in Java, in September 1942.<sup>11</sup> One of these articles was attributed to Sukarno, the other to Dewantara but whether or not these men were the actual authors I have not been able to determine. In general, style and content would seem to indicate Japanese authorship of the articles to which the Indonesian leaders perhaps only attached their names; again, how willingly they did so would be impossible for me to say. It might be pointed out here that there was a decided shift in the tone of speeches and statements attributed to Indonesian leaders in Japanese announcements after 1944. Not only was the content of nationalist sentiment higher, but form and expression bore less of the Japanese imprint and appeared more spontaneous.<sup>12</sup>

The article ascribed to Sukarno contained the theme noted earlier—the Japanese have been sacrificing their lives in the struggle to expel the Dutch, how can the Indonesians ask for more? As soon as the Japanese established themselves, the Indonesians flocked in with complaints, entreaties, requests for personal favors. “We Indonesians are asking for things without making the sacrifices”; from now on there must be greater sacrifices, only then would they be entitled to make demands on the Japanese.

The article appearing over Dewantara’s name also stressed the idea that demands could only come when the war to emancipate Asia from the white man had been won. “The glory of Japan is at the same time the glory of In-

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in “Senryō go no Indonesia Jin no Genron,” *loc. cit.*

<sup>12</sup> For example, a speech by Sukarno in the spring of 1945 declared that the war was leading “inevitably” to permanent independence which was the will of God. There was no mention of a Japanese victory in the speech, nor was it said to be necessary to independence which would triumph due to its inherent virtue. *Foreign Broadcast Intercept Service, Radio Report of the Far East*, Federal Communications Commission, No. 71, May 4, 1945. [Hereafter referred to as *F.C.C. Radio Report.*]

onesia . . . and we must offer everything we have to the Japanese army." It was admitted that they had not yet attained the state for which they had been striving but "we must recognize we are in a war." There was also a hint that new ideals were called for. As a member of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, the system of government might differ from the one that was sought when "we were under the rule of white men and in the position of slaves." The new system must put the welfare of the fatherland first and, whatever it is, it will be better than the situation under the Dutch.

As long as the Japanese maintained this attitude, the nationalists could expect to make little progress. They did secure one important concession, however, when, in December 1942, the Military Administration in Java acceded to Sukarno's wish to form a broad nationalist movement. The actual organization, Putera, was not set up until the following March, however, as approval from Tokyo had to be obtained.<sup>13</sup>

One other political organization was formed during this period but it was not one that played a very important role. This was the Committee for the Study of Former Customs and Political Systems which was set up in November. Its purpose was declared to be to "survey and study the customs and the former governmental systems of the country, and to contribute towards the administration of Java."<sup>14</sup> Its membership was composed of ten Indonesians, including the four leaders, and nine Japanese and was divided into two committees of welfare and survey which supposedly transmitted pertinent information to the Military Administration.<sup>15</sup> The committee was dissolved the

<sup>13</sup> Exhibit 1351. "Putera" was derived from Pusat Tenaga Rakyat, "center of the people's spiritual power."

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. *Program in Java*, p. 61.

<sup>15</sup> *Program in Java*, *loc. cit.*

following October when the Central Advisory Council was established.

During this period there was little change in the position of the Indonesians in the government service. At the outset of the occupation, the Japanese assumed that "loyal officials" would be respected and that all Javanese administrative personnel would be retained.<sup>16</sup> Some Dutch officials in the lower ranks were kept at first but only for a few months. In general, the removal of the Dutch did not mean immediate advancement for the Indonesians, or if so, only temporarily, for the Japanese furnished most of the replacements. Typical was the announcement by the Sumatra Administration that the Dutch administrative system had been found suitable with only minor changes but with the former officials completely replaced by "experienced Japanese officials."<sup>17</sup> Key positions down through the provincial, or former residency, level were held by them, below that Indonesian personnel prevailed almost entirely.<sup>18</sup> Such appointments of Indonesians as were announced did not involve any large numbers or important posts. One was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court and 60 members were added to the judicial branch of Batavia (Jakarta) Provincial court. Some 100 others were named to governmental posts, mostly at the provincial level in May 1942.<sup>19</sup>

It was significant that Tokyo approval for the launching of the Putera movement came through in March 1943 for it was just at this period that the central authorities de-

<sup>16</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, March 22, 24, 1942.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, May 11, 1942. Sumatra at this time was under the administration of Singapore. According to official Japanese figures of September 1, 1945, 23,242 Japanese nationals were employed by the Military Administration of Java. Exhibit 1351.

<sup>18</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>19</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, April 28, May 1, 1942. The judge appointed was Raden Supomo, later a Minister of Justice under the Republic.

cided to open a new phase of occupation policy. In March, Burmese representatives were summoned to Tokyo and instructed to proceed as quickly as possible with their plans for setting up an independent government.<sup>20</sup> Similar instructions were given to the Filipinos about the same time and in June 1943, Tōjō in a speech to the Diet promised measures that would give other peoples greater participation in their governments. He referred to Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Celebes but singled out Java for special attention.

"It is our intention to go further and, in pursuance of the aspirations of the natives, to take measures step by step envisaging the participation of the native populations in government to the extent commensurate with the degree of their ability, in the course of the year. In particular, we intend to realize this state of affairs as early as possible in Djawa in view of the advanced conditions of the island and in response to the desire of the people there."<sup>21</sup>

The reasons behind this policy development were the obvious military ones. By the beginning of 1943, Japanese expansion had reached its outer limits and allied counter-attacks were making themselves felt. The shift from an offensive to a defensive strategy entailed a new role for Japan's latest acquisitions; they were no longer stepping stones but the outer perimeter of defense. Since the problem was how to consolidate and protect gains already made, political considerations took on added importance.

The decision to allow Indonesians an increased share in government, it was pointed out in the previous chapter, was taken in May when the proponents of independence in the Imperial Conference were defeated. The promise, announced in Tōjō's Diet speech, was repeated by the

<sup>20</sup> The Liaison Conference decision to give Burma and the Philippines independence was taken January 4, 1943. Decision on other areas was postponed. Exhibit 1344.

<sup>21</sup> *Japan Year Book* 1943-44, p. 202.



Prime Minister during his visit to Java while on a tour of the Southern Regions in the summer of 1943 but only in vague terms.<sup>22</sup> The first concrete steps to carry out this promise were announced in Java on September 5, 1943. There were two main developments. An advisory system was introduced whereby Indonesians were appointed as advisers to the various departments of the government, advisory councils established and vice-governors appointed in eight of the provinces. Two types of councils were set up in Java; local councils, of which there was one in each province and one for the Special Municipality of Jakarta, and a Central Advisory Council for all Java. The local councils were composed of 10–30 members, of whom one half were appointed by the governors and one half elected by the village headmen. In general, their function was to answer questions posed for them by the governor and to furnish suggestions on subjects referred to them.<sup>23</sup> Similar local councils were founded in Sumatra, Borneo, Malaya at the same time and in the Celebes a few months later, but the Central Advisory Council was confined to Java for the time being. This, said the Japanese, was because the more advanced character of the people of Java warranted a more “centralized and complex” form of political participation.<sup>24</sup>

The Central Advisory Council of Java as it was set up by the order of September 5 was composed of 43 members, 23 of whom were appointed by the commander-in-chief of

<sup>22</sup> In a speech before a rally at Gambir Park in Jakarta on July 7, Tōjō repeated the usual platitudes about the end of imperialism and the construction of a new order. Java occupied an important position in the war and its efforts had an important influence on wartime developments, he said. It was his intention that the people of Java should take over the management of political affairs, he added. *Osaka Asahi*, July 13, 1943.

<sup>23</sup> *Osaka Asahi*, September 7, 1943. Cf. Exhibit 1351.

<sup>24</sup> See an article written by Harada, the Chief Counsellor of the Java Administration, in the *Osaka Asahi*, October 5, 1943. In Malaya, he said, it was clear that the natives were not qualified for such activity and the local councils would be headed by Japanese Mayors and Governors.

Java, 18 elected by the local councils and 2 appointed by the Sultanates. The purpose of reserving so many appointments to the commander-in-chief was not only to ensure a safely pro-Japanese majority, that could have been accomplished by other means, but also to provide representation for such special groups as the Japanese felt it expedient to include, such as the Chinese and representatives of religious organizations. To so choose members that "public opinion would be given as wide a representation as possible" was an avowed aim of the whole advisory council program.<sup>25</sup> The list of appointments to the Central Council issued later in September read like a Who's Who of Javanese public life and included 3 Chinese, Moslem leaders such as Agus Salim and Mansur as well as the leading political figures such as Sukarno, who was chosen chairman, Hatta, Dewantara and Subardjo.<sup>26</sup> Japanese were carefully excluded from membership, except in the local councils where Japanese served as chairmen, and, in general, the appointment of administrative officials was discouraged in order to get the "voice of the native inhabitants reflected as much as possible in the Military Administration."<sup>27</sup> The administration also considered it good policy to adopt several of the proposals put forward by the councils in order to secure their general cooperation,<sup>28</sup> in other words, give the natives a bit more rope to lead them more easily.

This extra "bit of rope," as it were, was, of course, to be carefully controlled but the Japanese, characteristically, preferred to exercise it indirectly. The real center of power in the Central Council could be detected easily in the very

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, September 7, 1943. Instructions to provincial governors in Sumatra, for example, were to appoint men "of good reputation and members of religious and other organizations." *Program in Sumatra*, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup> For a complete list of members appointed see *Program in Java*, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> *Osaka Asahi*, September 7, 1943.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

first announcement of the institution. To the council there was attached a Secretariat which was staffed by several "experienced and skilled Japanese," whose duties were to be those of "assistance and guidance."<sup>29</sup> Actual supervision and direction of the council was carried on by this office which provided the questions, and many of the answers as well, with which the members were to deal. The same function was performed in the local councils by a Japanese secretary attached to the office of the provincial governor.<sup>30</sup>

At the same time that the councils were instituted the Japanese made several appointments of Indonesians to posts in the central and local governments. To implement the advisory system, seven Indonesians were named to posts in departments of the Military Administration. Sukarno was appointed to the General Affairs Department, Dewantara to the Education Bureau, Raden Supomo to Justice and Dr. Yamin to the Propaganda Department. An Indonesian was named head of the Religious Affairs Bureau and others received posts in the Departments of Industry and of Public Works. Two Javanese provincial governors were appointed, Indonesian advisers named to the provincial governments, and some received positions in the departments of provincial administration.<sup>31</sup>

This brief listing of the positions which were opened to Indonesians indicates the limited extent of the trial which the Administration was offering. No post of real power was involved, even the two native governors were assigned Japanese vice-governors to ensure proper cooperation. In the months which followed little progress was made in the field of political participation. On the contrary, the dissolution of Putera represented something of a setback to the nationalists for it had become the main instrument of

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>31</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, October 7, November 11, 1943.

their activities. Although the Japanese maintained it was replaced by the Hōkōkai (Patriotic Service Association) because of its failure to extend its work into the villages, the more basic reason appears to have been that they considered it too nationalistic. They were taking no chances with "bourgeois nationalism" at this stage of events.

However much the Military Administration in Java may have wanted to placate Indonesian sentiment by further political concessions, and as was shown in the previous chapter this was the general tenor of its representations to the Tokyo Government, it did not take the initiative. The signal for the next development in Indonesia's political status came from Tokyo and was inspired more by outside events than by internal pressure.

The loss of Saipan in June 1944 was a severe shock to the Japanese and for some, was the harbinger of inevitable defeat.<sup>32</sup> It was the occasion for the fall of the Tōjō cabinet and its replacement by one headed by General Koiso, who was recalled from Korea, although the cabinet shift did not weaken perceptibly the hold of the Army over the government, at least in any immediate sense. The decision to grant independence to Indonesia, taken soon after the new cabinet assumed office, was occasioned, as indicated in the foregoing chapter, by a change in the views of the Army central staff more than by any shift of forces within the government, although greater weight was now given to the views of the Foreign Office.<sup>33</sup> The appearance of American forces on what had been regarded as an impregnable base led to redoubled efforts to strengthen the defense of other areas where attack seemed imminent. If a grant of independence would help in the defense of Indonesia by securing the cooperation of the native population, the Army was prepared to take that step. What their motives were may be gathered from the statement

<sup>32</sup> See Kase, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter III; also Exhibit 1344.

of the commander-in-chief of Java in his announcement of Koiso's speech promising independence in September 1944. Suppose, he said, the final victory is not won, then there would be no Greater East Asia and without the latter, "as a matter of course," there could be no independence for Indonesia. It therefore behooved all Indonesians to devote themselves to the effort of ensuring a Japanese victory.<sup>34</sup>

As far as political participation was concerned, the policy as adopted in Tokyo stated that "premature enforcement" of independence was to be avoided and that the "political ability" of the people had to be first taken into account.<sup>35</sup> Specific mention was made only of Java where measures leading toward independence were to begin at once. There was to be no radical change in the Military Administration but participation of the people in government was to be "still further strengthened and expanded" and they were to receive political training.<sup>36</sup>

Further instructions issued by the Chief of Staff of the Seventh Area Army on September 7th repeated this general wording of the announcement on political participation but added some instructions which throw a good bit of light on the motives and attitudes of the Japanese at this period.<sup>37</sup> It specified the use of nationalist slogans, songs, flags, speeches and even outlined plans for the celebration of the promise of independence in order to arouse national sentiment to a new pitch of intensity.

"... especially during the execution of the war, this [national consciousness] must be utilized to strengthen defense, cooperate with the Military Government, and to make Japan and Java one and inseparable."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Exhibit 1351.

<sup>35</sup> Exhibit 1348.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Exhibit 1352.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

It is interesting to see that the Japanese authorities apparently felt there was no contradiction between this firing of national sentiment and continued effort at Japанизation. Measures to popularize the Japanese language, the adoption of Japanese institutions and the "infusion of Japanese culture" were called for, not in the interests of colonial subjugation, which was disavowed, but "to guide and instruct the natives—like parents and elder brothers and sisters." There was to be no haughty and arrogant talk or action, no matter how provoking the "instability of the Indonesian character" might be, there must be only stern guidance, not hostility.

"We naturally anticipate confusion accompanying the shifts and changes of power, but it is absolutely forbidden to meddle in these; we must guide them by standing aloof."<sup>39</sup>

Standing aloof had its limits, of course. These laissez-faire injunctions were followed almost immediately by a warning to keep a wary eye on the officers and men of the Volunteer Defense Army. "[We] must not let them feel they form an independent army."<sup>40</sup> This would have been a direct and potent threat to the core of Japanese control—an expression of "bourgeois nationalism" they were anxious to avoid and against which warning had been given at the outset of the war.

The action on the part of the Military Administration of Java to carry out the order to give Indonesians a greater role in government followed closely that part of the instructions which stated that there should be no great changes in the structure and work of the administration. In November, the commander-in-chief announced the creation of the posts of provincial vice-governor which were to be filled by experienced local personnel and late in the month, eleven such appointments were an-

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Exhibit 1353.

nounced.<sup>41</sup> The seven leading Indonesian advisers to the Military Administration were named to a Permanent Council of Advisers which would serve as a fact-finding and advisory body to the administration when the Central Council was not in session. Provision was made for the training of young Indonesian officials, "the central guiding power of the people,"<sup>42</sup> and the number of representatives in the Central Council was slightly increased.

Of more significance than these minor changes in the structure of the administration was the shift in personnel which occurred during the latter part of 1944. In May the Military Administration of Java proclaimed its dissatisfaction with the distressingly large number of native officials, and "senior government officials" were named specifically, who lacked "sincerity," and who had not cast off "the easygoing way of the government officials of the former Netherlands administrative period."<sup>43</sup> To remedy this sad situation the Japanese authorities systematically combed the ranks of appointed native officials to weed out those not sufficiently imbued with the spirit of the New Order. The replacements for these old-line officials represented an entirely different generation. They were, for the most part, younger men who had distinguished themselves in such wartime organizations as the Hōkōkai. Several were Mohammedan political figures and were products of the numerous religious courses which the Japanese had sponsored.<sup>44</sup> The characteristics which brought them to their new positions were quite different from those required of one entering the pre-war administrative regime. Whether pro-Japanese or not, they were nationalists of a determined and extremist brand and led by men who had

<sup>41</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, November 9, 27, 1944. Cf. *Program in Java*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>42</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, November 9, 1944.

<sup>43</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 7. Cf. F.C.C. Radio Report, No. 45, May 11, 1944.

<sup>44</sup> Exhibit 1351.

been exiled by the government which gave the "old guard" their positions. Forceful, ambitious, determined, they were the counterpart in administration of similar groups who had worked their way into prominent positions in military and youth groups. The successful struggle for Indonesian independence owed much to these men.

During this period there was no marked change in the work of the Central Council which was concerned primarily with mobilization for the war effort. In a speech delivered to a session of the Council which met just after the announcement of Koiso's speech, Hatta discussed the work of the organization.<sup>45</sup> In the past, he said, it had been concerned chiefly with "better discipline and increased physical and spiritual training, and to production increase and defense." The people should understand that this work had been only the prerequisite to prepare them for forthcoming independence. But had the time arrived when enough of the prerequisites had been met to allow the Council to deal directly with matters pertaining to independence? The answer, his speech clearly implied, was "no" for he proceeded to speak of the promise of independence as "payable" only with total mobilization. If Indonesia failed to provide that, its "national aim of independence will evaporate into the thin air."<sup>46</sup>

It is clear from the material presented in the preceding chapter that the Java command made a choice between these alternatives sooner than did the Central Command in Tokyo or the area commands in Saigon and Singapore. For some time it had been pressing for independence. As far as it was concerned, the delay in implementing independence was due less to a fear of the consequences than

<sup>45</sup> Speech reported in F.C.C. Radio Report No. 54, September 15, 1944.

<sup>46</sup> Hatta, who was strongly anti-Fascist in outlook, doubtless was of the opinion that the promise would remain "thin air" as long as the Japanese were in control. For his general attitude, see Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, *passim*.



to lack of authority from higher commands to proceed with the task.

On March 6, 1945, the commander-in-chief for Java announced that three further steps would be taken to realize Indonesian independence. First, a committee of inquiry into preparations for independence would be set up; secondly, a National Training Institute would be founded;<sup>47</sup> and, thirdly, public opinion regarding independence would be "stimulated." The committee of inquiry, in the words of the order, was to be

"... an instrument for the achievement of cooperation between the officials and people of Java in the study of preparatory problems for independence."<sup>48</sup>

Before it could become a flesh and blood organization, however, the Java Administration had to win the approval of the Area Command at Singapore. As a result of prodding by the former, the Seventh Area Army held a conference of all the heads of the General Affairs Departments under its command at Singapore on April 30. The representative from Java described the extent to which the national consciousness of the Indonesians had been aroused and stressed the fact that the confidence of the population could only be won if the promise of independence were fulfilled.<sup>49</sup> After further exchanges and meetings, the Singapore Command gave its permission and the Committee for the Study of Preparation for Independence [Dokuritsu Chōsa Jumbi Iin] was instituted on May 28. The committee was composed of about 60 members, appointed by the Military Administration, and was chaired by Dr. Radjiman Wediodiningrat. Seven Japanese met

<sup>47</sup> For further description of this Institute, see below.

<sup>48</sup> *Shōnan Shimbum*, March 6, 1945. "The three measures," he said, "are the embodiment of the feeling of confidence the Japanese forces have toward the peoples of Java, who under their direction, have enthusiastically cooperated with them for three years." *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Exhibit 1351.

with it as "special members" and one of them served as vice-chairman.<sup>50</sup> It had no power to make decisions but discussed such matters as the principles to be incorporated in a constitution, defense and economic problems. Resolutions adopted by the Committee and presented to the Commander-in-Chief expressed disapproval of Allied landings in Morotai, Halmahera and the neighboring islands; declared the firm opposition of the Indonesian people to a "mandate," which, it said, the Allies were planning for all of Asia; such a form of rule, the Committee held, was for uncivilized, not free, peoples; and it reiterated the determination of the Indonesians to "fight to the death" for their independence at the side of the Japanese.<sup>51</sup>

After its second session, July 10-16, the Committee was outmoded by the rapid course of events. The decision of the Supreme War Council of July 7 to the effect that the Indies should be given their independence as soon as possible and that a committee to prepare independence should be established had provided that the details of this arrangement should be worked out by the Headquarters of the Southern Area Army at Saigon.<sup>52</sup> As usual, the latter tended to drag its feet and was considering independence only in terms of mid-1946, but after another conference of the chiefs of the General Affairs Departments at Singapore on July 30 the date was moved forward to the following spring. A few days later, telegraphic orders from Tokyo instructed Marshal Terauchi in Saigon to speed up preparations for the new state so that it could be launched in September.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, on August 7, Terauchi issued the decree establishing a Committee for the Preparation of Independence [Dokuritsu Jumbi Iin]

<sup>50</sup> The vice-chairman was a Japanese national, who was also governor of Cheribon. Overdijkink, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>52</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

which was to "accelerate all measures concerning the final preparations for the installation of the government of an independent Indonesia."<sup>54</sup> Two days later, Sukarno, Hatta and Wediodiningrat were flown to Terauchi's Headquarters to receive the imperial decree directly from him. The main points of the decree were as follows:

1. A Committee for the Preparation of Independence was to be established.

2. The territory of the new state was to include all of the former Netherlands East Indies.

3. The date upon which independence was to be proclaimed in any territory would be decided at the discretion of the Japanese Government, as soon as preparations were completed.

4. The new government first would be instituted on that island where preparations were first completed and would be extended to other areas as they became ready.

5. All Japanese military demands were to be met.

6. Sukarno was appointed chairman of the Committee which was to include representatives of areas outside Java and the members of which were to be appointed on nomination by the local Japanese military commanders.<sup>55</sup>

The delegation arrived back in Jakarta on the 14th and committee representatives from the other areas were flown there for the first meeting of the Committee which was scheduled for the 19th. The surrender of the Japanese on the 14th, however, speeded up developments and the Committee was summoned on the 15th and informed of the surrender. News of Japan's capitulation did not reach the public until the 21st, hence the reference to this period as the "stolen week."

The events surrounding the declaration of independence on August 17 and, indeed, the whole period from the surrender until the Allied landings remain shrouded in con-

<sup>54</sup> Quote from Terauchi's proclamation of August 7, 1945. *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

fusion and conflicting testimony. There was disagreement and indecision among Indonesian groups over the best course of action to be followed and there appears to be no full account of developments within the nationalist camp during this period.<sup>56</sup> The Japanese, quite understandably, have remained silent about developments during the Occupation in general and many of their activities remain obscure. No attempt will be made here to unravel the tangled skein of events during this final period. One point, however, should be made. The charge that the Japanese devoted their final efforts to strengthening the hand of the returning Western powers gives a false impression of what happened. There were some Japanese who gave assistance to the new government and there were many instances in which they connived in or countenanced the seizure of stores of arms by the nationalists. On the other hand, there were also instances in which fighting broke out between the two parties over the control of weapons and military positions. In the cities where the Japanese retained some vestige of control, the nationalists were not able to entrench themselves so strongly. The top command apparently tried to carry out Allied instructions but apathy, confusion and despair, which accompanied the defeat, make it impossible to speak of any "policy."<sup>57</sup>

During the closing stages of the war, there was a

<sup>56</sup> The best account of events from the Indonesian standpoint is to be found in *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* by George McT. Kahin who was kind enough to lend me the manuscript copy of sections of the book relevant to this study. He notes the difficulty of forming a completely coherent story from the information he gathered from the various groups involved. See also Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, pp. 254 ff.

<sup>57</sup> In French Indo-China the Japanese were willing to turn the administration back to Admiral Decoux, the Governor-General until 1945, upon his request but they received instructions from the Provisional French Government, via Mountbatten's command, to maintain the status quo until the arrival of Allied troops. See Admiral Decoux, *À La Barre de l'Indochine, Histoire de Mon Gouvernement Général (1940-1945)*, Paris, 1948, p. 131, footnote (1).

marked increase in the number of administrative posts held by Indonesians. Executive positions in both the central and local administrations were given to them and, in general, they assumed all posts not directly connected with the war effort.<sup>58</sup> In Sumatra and the Celebes there was a corresponding increase in political participation although the general level of activity remained well below that of Java. Central and provincial councils, an advisory system and training institutes for government personnel were established and there was a steady increase in the number of Indonesians appointed to posts within the government and in public organizations.<sup>59</sup>

That this marked trend toward increased political participation by the Indonesians was not an isolated phenomenon can be illustrated from the events which occurred in French Indo-China during this same period. When the Japanese replaced the French Administration on March 9, 1945, they were anxious to avoid any economic or administrative dislocation which might interfere with military security for they believed an invasion of the country was possible at any moment. They were willing, therefore, to maintain the French in the lower brackets of the administration and announced that they would protect all officials "without distinction" who would work with them.<sup>60</sup> Some Frenchmen remained at their posts for a brief time but after a month or so they began to disappear rapidly from the scene. By mid-April, for example, it was announced that all posts formerly held by Frenchmen in the administration of Cambodia had been taken over by Cambodians.<sup>61</sup>

The Japanese themselves assumed only a few positions

<sup>58</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, July 18, 1945.

<sup>59</sup> *Program in Sumatra*, p. 1. *Shōnan Shimbun*, February 22, May 30, 1945.

<sup>60</sup> Proclamation of the commander-in-chief of the Japanese Army in French Indo-China quoted in Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>61</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, April 14, 1945.

at the very top of the administrative structure. The commander-in-chief acted as Governor-General and the ambassador stepped into the role of Supreme Adviser with the supervision of all general affairs under his direction. Other members of the Japanese diplomatic mission were named as advisers to the governments of Annam, Cambodia, Laos, Cochin-China and Tonkin, two were appointed as the mayors of Saigon and Hanoi and a Japanese was placed in charge of the police administration.<sup>62</sup> Below this level all posts were assumed by local personnel who thus secured more advanced positions than they had ever held under the French. As was the case in Indonesia, not only were the positions held of higher rank, an increasing number were held by men whose views of independence had been characterized as "extremist" by the former regime. One of the first acts of the Japanese after March 9 was to release Indo-Chinese political prisoners of whom there were eight to ten thousand, mostly Annamites.<sup>63</sup> Many of these men assumed posts under the new administration and hence were in a position of influence and authority not only under the Japanese but also, of even greater importance, during the critical period after the surrender.

So much for the story of the development of political participation during the occupation. What is its significance? At first glance the answer would appear to be that it has little, if any. Until late in the war, very few important positions were in local hands. Native administrators were advisers without nominal power, or, if they had

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, March 15, 1945.

<sup>63</sup> Mus, Paul, *Le Viet Nam Chez Lui*, Paris, 1946, pp. 14-15. Mus, who was in Indo-China at the time of the coup and again at the close of the war, cites the case of a youth, imprisoned by the French for political activity in 1941, who became a provincial chief of police after his release by the Japanese and devoted his efforts to the extermination of pro-French elements.

titular authority, were assigned Japanese counterparts who circumscribed their exercise of power. The experience gained in actual governing would seem to be negligible since independence, innovation, initiative in policy formulation were not virtues encouraged by the Military Administration. Yet this is not the whole story.

There are two points to be made here. The story, as it has been unfolded in regard to Indonesia, is another illustration of the way in which the nationalists could use the Japanese to further their own ends. Slow, tortuous, imperfect though the method was, it was not entirely fruitless.

Of greater importance is the effect which this experience had on the people involved. The value which it had for them has been vouched for by the Indonesians themselves. The following testimony by Hatta is impressive in this respect:

"While under the Japanese, we laid plans for achieving our independence and when on August 17 the last Japanese surrendered and were unable to act effectively, we declared our independence.

"There was no hindrance from the Japanese, the *reason being that all posts—with the exception of few at the top—were in our hands*. Then our civil servants and other officials declared they would take orders only from the Republic of Indonesia. . . .

"The Dutch, who describe themselves as a democratic people, are blaming the Japanese 'for not making Indonesian independence impossible.' Indeed, the Dutch should be covered with shame in that *the Japanese went further in recognizing Indonesian independence than do the democratic Dutch.*"<sup>64</sup>

Moreover a mere recital of positions held is not the true measure of the power wielded by Indonesians in adminis-

<sup>64</sup> From an article in "The Hindu," quoted in Ubani, Durrani and Moein, *Indonesian Struggle for Independence*, Bombay, 1946, p. 188.

trative positions. The lack of trained Japanese personnel with a knowledge of local conditions meant that many posts were filled by men without the ability to meet the requirements of the job, a fact that gave Indonesian civil servants a wider latitude of action than appeared possible from surface indications. This situation was described as follows by one Indonesian:

"Due to Japanese incapacity, almost all civil administrations were run by Indonesians themselves. The Japanese acted only as supervisors and didn't fully understand what they were supervising."<sup>65</sup>

This is probably a bit overstated but the general tenor of the remark is borne out by Sjahrir who says that the experienced Indonesian administrators were contemptuous of their inept superiors.

"If the barbarians had been able to replace the old colonial authority, why had that authority been necessary at all? Why instead hadn't they handled the affairs of government themselves?"<sup>66</sup>

The technical training in administration afforded by the Japanese may have been of minor consequence but the psychological effect of the occupation in terms of a new confidence and an increased demand for power was very important. Nor was this effect one that became evident only after a long period of time. Paul Mus has contrasted his own escape from Hanoi in March 1945 to the reception given the French who returned to Indo-China scarcely six months later.<sup>67</sup> Whereas he was given every possible help by the Indo-Chinese, the latter were met by an almost universal and violent hostility. In March there was no great hostility to the French, it was rather, says Mus, the "instant when their eyes were opened" and the

<sup>65</sup> Suparas, "The Youth Movement," in *Merdeka*, Indonesian Information Bureau, New Delhi, India, No. 2, December 15, 1947.

<sup>66</sup> Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

<sup>67</sup> Mus, *op. cit.*, p. 11.



feeling of dependence lost. They realized that this was the moment to assert themselves, to make their own attempt at operating modern institutions.<sup>68</sup> Six months later the French were would-be conquerors, a challenge to all the gains which had been made. They, and the Dutch, would experience the old truth that the desire for self-government feeds upon itself and once acquired, can never be sated by half-portions; that power, once gained, is seldom relinquished without a struggle.

### *The Training of Political Leaders*

Before leaving this discussion of the gradual rise of native personnel within the governmental structure, a word should be said about Japanese efforts to capture the loyalty of this group. They hoped to attract prominent and influential men into the service of the government for this would make their own task easier, but it also made it very important that the political reliability of these officials be ensured. Even at the lower levels of the bureaucracy they were anxious to have men sympathetic with their aims and purged of Western influence. In view of this concern for orthodoxy, it is not surprising to find that the training courses they instituted were indoctrination centers rather than places at which technical competence in government administration was taught.

Securing effective nationalist leadership did not present a problem to the Japanese occupation authorities for in

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23. Indicative of the new attitude was the following proclamation posted in Hanoi by the Committee of National Safety on August 18, 1945.

"The Annamites know how to respect their liberty and consolidate their independence. They will not hold against you all the crimes you have committed heretofore in their territory. They will leave you in peace until you embark for France. The only condition is that you repress your ambition, check your tendency to dominate them as before. Do not keep the air of the conqueror, you have lost all the battles. And if you are authorized to remain here, it is as the vanquished that you must bear yourself and act." Quoted in Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

Indonesia, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, a broad segment of the nationalist movement proved to be willing to assume an active role. Sukarno, Dewantara, Hatta and even Agus Salim occupied various public positions under the military administration. Sukarno's preeminent role was the result not only of his standing in the movement but also of the impression which he created on the Japanese. This impression has been described by one Japanese who was present at a meeting which Sukarno addressed shortly after he had been returned from exile.<sup>69</sup> He completely dominated the stage, said the eyewitness, and spoke for forty minutes to an audience whose enthusiasm steadily mounted. His oratorical gifts immediately captivated the representatives of the Military Administration who were present and who agreed that "there was no one in Japan who could match him in eloquence."

The emphasis which the Japanese placed on the importance of leadership in the national movements was not misplaced, particularly in the context of Southeast Asia, as has been indicated previously. Their own particular problem was not how to attract good leaders but how to hold and control them; how to ensure compliance with their own directives and prevent the emergence of "bourgeois"—the wrong kind—of nationalism; how to root out Western influence. They saw the problem, quite correctly, as one of "control of the intellectual class," by propaganda, by education, by force if necessary.<sup>70</sup>

The Japanese were much impressed with the potentialities of education as a means of achieving their goal. In the words of a member of the Military Administration of Singapore:

<sup>69</sup> Speech of Suzuki, Bunshiro, appearing in the *Osaka Asahi*, November 14, 1943. According to this account, one of the main themes of the speech was that Japan's war was Java's war and that, through it, the people of Java could be restored to the status of human beings.

<sup>70</sup> Exhibit 1335.

"The most profound of all means available to propaganda is education. This can be shaped and altered at will to suit the policy to be propagandized. From early childhood the child's mind can be made to assimilate teachings which are conducive to the creation of a feeling of loyalty and to the awakening of a national consciousness."<sup>71</sup>

In view of this attitude it is not surprising to find that the Japanese established special schools for the training of "political leaders." This was, in effect, training for service in the government and from its graduates the occupation authorities hoped to secure "reliable" native officials for political affairs. These schools, which were established in all of the occupied territories, varied in length of training and in general objectives. Some were very short and were intended for those already engaged in government work. For example, district heads in Java were brought to Jakarta for three weeks of study during which time they were given "complete courses" in Japanese history and language, oriental history and the development of the Greater East Asia War in order that they might be "qualified as leaders in their respective districts."<sup>72</sup> Others, such as a special training institute in Jakarta, gave year courses not only in such subjects as language and history but also in military and defense training and agriculture.

The Moslems drew special attention. A permanent training institute was set up at Jakarta to give three week courses to kiais and ulamas who were brought there from all parts of Java. A course of this length was of little value in leadership training as such but it was useful to Japanese purpose in two respects. In the first place, it enabled them to pick out those who were willing to cooperate and who were promising propagandists. Moreover it provided a method of checking on the effectiveness of their

<sup>71</sup> From an article by T. Fujimori of the Propaganda Department in the *Shōnan Shimbun*, September 5, 1942.

<sup>72</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 33.

own propaganda among the people because of the rapid turnover and the important position of the kiais and ulamas in the Indonesian community.<sup>73</sup>

In 1944, Shock Brigades, Hizbullah, were organized among Moslem Youth (17-25), largely the pupils of Moslem schools, and a special training center was set up for the leaders of the organization. The purpose of Hizbullah was two-fold. It was a military organization, trained as a reserve for the Home Defense Army and it was also a religious organization for part of its assignment was to act as a "religious vanguard" to

" . . . propagate Mohammedan doctrine and lead others in accomplishing the Moslem's duty to exert full energy for the protection of religion as well as of Indonesian Mohammedans, thus contributing to the successful construction of a new world order in conformity with Allah's will."<sup>74</sup>

The most ambitious of the institutions was the National Foundation Training Institute established in Java in April 1945 when plans for Indonesian independence were being accelerated. Its purpose was to train the men

" . . . upon whose shoulders will rest the responsibility of conducting the affairs of Indonesia . . . [for] whether Indonesia after independence will become a . . . great state depends entirely upon the quality of the personnel it has in its service."<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>74</sup> *F.C.C. Radio Report*, No. 61, December 22, 1944.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, March 6, 1945. For an account of a most unusual school reference is made to Kahin's manuscript already cited. *Astrama Indonesia Merdeka* (Dormitory of Free Indonesia) was founded in 1944 by a group of Japanese Naval officers, headed by a Vice-Admiral Maeda. Its declared objective was to train leaders for an independent Indonesia and all leading nationalists were invited to give lectures. The course had a decidedly Marxist tinge and a well-known Indonesian communist was chosen as head of the school. In the opinion of many Indonesians the naval officers involved were communists with a "strong international bias." Why, if this was so, the Military Administration permitted their activities, or what the motivation was if they were only simulating Marxism remain subjects of speculation.

Most common were three to six months' courses for native officials and promising students. Such was the one conducted by the Sumatra Military Administration which provided classes in "spiritual education, Greater East Asia history, military administration, military training, increased production, Japanese language and other educational training."<sup>76</sup> Members were nominated by the heads of administrative departments or by nominating officials of the administration and after three months of classes were sent out to local districts to gain firsthand experience. At Macassar, the Navy Administration established a special middle school for some 80 students whom it characterized as the "ablest of the native youth of the region under Navy control and the able sons of influential men of the capital and of the island."<sup>77</sup> As the result of their training they were to become the "leaders of the native inhabitants."

Character, not scholastic ability, the Japanese maintained, was the chief concern of this training and in this, the curriculum certainly bears them out. What type of "character" they were trying to develop, what they hoped the training would accomplish, was summarized by a Filipino official in a speech to the students of the Government Training Institute of the Philippines.<sup>78</sup> There must be, he said, a study of Japanese language and culture, a point which he apparently felt required no further explanation. The Spartan routine, which even restricted contact with the outside world, was designed to instill a spirit of discipline and a sense of self-sacrifice for the common good. Exercise and military drill would develop the capacity and endurance for hard work. The course in the culture of the Philippines was essential to

<sup>76</sup> *Program in Sumatra*, p. 55.

<sup>77</sup> *Program in the Celebes*, p. 71.

<sup>78</sup> Speech by Antonio de la Alas printed in "Voice of the New Philippines," III, February, 1943.

“. . . excavate the cultural gems of the Filipinos as found in their original racial characteristics and pure Filipino traditions, unaffected by the impact of Occidental civilization.”

There must be a new concept of public duty, he continued, for public office entails “duties and responsibilities rather than powers and prerogatives.” Government officials must set an example for their people by thinking less of individual welfare and more of community well-being.

To those students who distinguished themselves in these courses or who otherwise attracted the attention of the Military Administration was held out the prospect of further study in Japan, for just as the Japanese brought prominent Southeast Asian representatives to Japan to impress them with the “real situation,” so they determined to mold the minds of the “future leaders” by exposing them to Japanese culture at its source. The development of the International Students Institute and its program to provide a “dependable leadership” for Southeast Asia was mentioned in the opening chapter. The Institute itself was not an educational institution but acted as a clearing house for foreign students, providing them with living facilities, aid and advice and conducting language classes for their orientation. In 1941 many of the foreign students returned home upon the advice of the Japanese. Of those who remained about 200 came from the countries of Southeast Asia (principally Thailand) but this number was more than doubled by the arrival of students during the war.<sup>79</sup>

These students were chosen directly by the Military

<sup>79</sup> The number of foreign students who came to Japan during the war, as reported by the Foreign Ministry, was as follows:

Burma	47	Celebes	11
Philippines	51	Borneo	9
Java	44	Ceram	3
Sumatra	16	Siam	12
Malaya	12	French Indo-China	7

*Foreign Students in Japan*, p. 22, Table 4. The account which follows is based on information contained in this report.

Administration or in collaboration with the local government where such existed. Having been promised wide facilities for study, they were disappointed to find the number and type of schools available to them so limited that they were forced to take what was offered. Moreover they were not permitted to enter laboratories or factories and so were denied the technical knowledge and experience which many were anxious to acquire. Nor were they particularly impressed by the courses of instruction in which Japanese history occupied a major role. The history taught was characterized by the students as "largely mythology designed to strengthen pro-Japanese propaganda by representing the Japanese as a chosen people, and therefore historically destined to leadership in Asia."<sup>80</sup>

The students of the various national groups maintained cordial relations with each other and with the civilian population, insofar as they had contact with it, but there was a great deal of friction with the administration of the Institute and particularly with the police. Difficulties with the administration grew out of the irritations connected with rationing, the military discipline under which the students were forced to live, and the close supervision of their programs which often took little account of their own wishes. Friction with both the Military and Thought Control Police was constant and more serious. The scrutiny under which they were held by the police, mail censorship, room searches, restrictions on meetings were sources of irritation which occasionally led to the arrest and beating of students in spite of attempts by the Institute to smooth over difficulties.<sup>81</sup> Natural curiosity and

<sup>80</sup> From "Replies to Questionnaires Submitted to Foreign Student Groups." *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18. A reply to the questionnaire submitted to Mongolian and Manchurian students stated: "according to my experience, the content of Japanese history courses was quite like a novel."

<sup>81</sup> According to the report of one Foreign Office member, the Filipino students were the most discontented and were most frequently in difficulty with the police. This was attributed to the fact that they were the "most advanced" of the students from Southeast Asia. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

a desire to "see for themselves" led many of the students to break the regulations confining them to a limited area and to try to travel about the country on their own—an attempt at self-education that created more trouble with the authorities.

The discrepancy between the treatment of these students and the objectives of developing leadership is obvious. Even in terms of the distorted idea of "dependable leadership," Japanese policy was self-defeating for it inspired revulsion, not imitation. What the men who controlled this program lacked most of all was imagination. They were incapable of seeing that restrictions and censorship could only undermine their purpose; that some direct contact with the Japanese people might instill more of the "Japanese spirit" than endless lectures, that first-hand experience with Japanese technical achievements, well advanced over anything with which these students were familiar, would say more for Japanese superiority than years of study of fictionalized history. Spoon-fed education and stifling, paternalistic care only alienated these youths who regarded themselves as free agents and who were anxious to find their own answers. Aid, advice, the opportunity to study and, perhaps, imitate Japanese examples were welcome. Less appreciated was the Japanese attempt to take them by the hand and propel them along the path of knowledge, an attempt which evidenced a gross misconception of the problem.



## National Unity

ONE OF THE MOST distinctive features of the new states which have emerged in Southeast Asia since the war has been the appearance of divisions within the nationalist forces. Independence, which brought with it the disappearance of the common enemy, set in motion numerous centrifugal forces which, on occasion, have threatened to overwhelm the new governments. This process has been most noticeable in Burma which at one point seemed to be on the verge of disintegration, but the emergence of Pakistan and a series of revolts in Indonesia prove it was not a localized one. To many Western observers, these internal conflicts were a vindication of the view that these lands were not yet prepared to govern themselves, but were, rather, a mass of conflicting groups which provided excellent opportunities to those interested in fishing in troubled waters. In some instances, the desire of these observers for self-vindication doubtless caused them to exaggerate the difficulties of the situation, but it is certainly true that these states could ill afford to waste their energies in such internecine struggles.

That these states have not dissolved under the weight of the problems confronting them has been due to the importance of another factor counterbalancing the forces of disintegration, the desire for national unity. This drive

for unification, with its centralization and consolidation of governmental power recurs with such regularity in the history of national states that it might be called a "law of national development." Once statehood is attained, there is an accelerated effort to realize the slogans of "one nation," "one people," "one language." Attempts to impose unity and conformity inevitably impinge upon regional, religious, racial and social groups which, in reaction to this influence, often espouse the cause of autonomy or even self-determination. The result is a tension between two opposing forces which creates additional instability within the state. Although the forces of unification have the upper hand at the moment—witness the end of the princely states in India, the rapid metamorphosis of the United States of Indonesia into the Republic, the gradual decline in the number of competing groups in Burma—the issue cannot be said to be definitely settled everywhere.

Because of the importance of this problem in the development of these states, it would seem worthwhile to examine Japanese policy during the occupation in regard to it, again, with particular reference to Indonesia. What effect, if any, did it have on the forces of centralization as opposed to those of decentralization?

It was common during the war to charge the Japanese with "divide and rule" tactics in the occupied countries, and there is much to justify this view. In China, particularly, the Japanese tried to ensure their control by setting up an elaborate number of decentralized governments, a system they termed an administrative formula based on the principle of "cooperation among separate regimes."<sup>1</sup> The whole Manchukuo project was part of their attempt to digest China bit by bit, in this instance by playing on regional and racial sentiments. Moreover, within Manchukuo itself it was their intent to avoid centralized ad-

<sup>1</sup> See Doc. 2178C. *Principles for the Adjustment of the New Relations between Japan and China*, Privy Council Decision, November 30, 1938.

ministration and to "respect traditional local autonomy."<sup>2</sup>

It can be said that the Japanese approached the administration of the occupied areas predisposed toward a policy of decentralization. Certainly their approach to the problem in Indonesia at the outset of the occupation represented liberal interpretation of the general rule that: "an absolutely uniform system of administration shall not be adopted for the unification of the peoples whose historical, cultural and particularly living conditions vary to a notable extent."<sup>3</sup> The Japanese appraisal of conditions in Indonesia, cited in Chapter I, shows them so impressed by the disparity between Java and the other areas that, while they contemplated an eventual Indonesian Federation, they expected little in the nature of a national movement outside of Java.<sup>4</sup> A Japanese account, written in 1942, of conditions in Indonesia stressed this same point.<sup>5</sup> Only Java could claim anything like a homogeneous society, the author maintained; elsewhere there were only diverse groups with not even a common culture. There was no such thing as a united people which could be called "the Indonesian people" and since there was no feeling of being one, united people there was as yet no nationalism which included the whole area. With this basic outlook, the administrative divisions of Indonesia seemed admirably designed to foster separation or, at least, to prevent, the formation of a truly unified national movement. In spite of this, it will be maintained here that the Japanese made some direct contributions to the unity of the nationalist movement and to the centralization of power within it. What these were and how they came about provide the substance of what follows.

<sup>2</sup> Exhibit 233. *Cabinet Decision*, 8 August 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Exhibit 1336.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter I.

<sup>5</sup> See article by Hirano, Yoshitaro, "Ran In Tōji no Kihon Seisaku" [Basic Policies of the Government of the Netherland Indies] in *Taiheiyō*, Vol. 5, No. 2, February 1942.

For purposes of administration, the Japanese divided Indonesia into three separate units. Java and Madura were occupied by the 16th Army with headquarters at Jakarta; Sumatra, under the 25th Army, was combined with Malaya to form a single administration with headquarters at Singapore. Both of these armies were part of the command of the 7th Area Army, also based on Singapore, and it, in turn, was under the Southern Area Army Command of Marshal Terauchi whose headquarters were at Saigon, Indo-China. The Celebes, Borneo and all the islands east of the line running north and south from Bali to the Macassar Straits were under Navy jurisdiction which had its headquarters at Macassar. The obstructions which this division placed in the path of those seeking to build a unified Indonesia are easily imagined. The proverbially poor liaison between the Army and Navy kept relations between their respective areas at a minimum, and while Tokyo directives theoretically ensured a unified policy, the attitudes adopted by the services toward independence and political activity by the Indonesians were quite different.

The joint administration of Sumatra and Malaya was not undertaken out of Machiavellian designs to dismember Indonesia but for reasons of defense and economic policy.<sup>6</sup> The arrangement made a great deal of sense, and not only from the Japanese viewpoint. Sumatra's location is such that Singapore, rather than Jakarta, enjoys a more central position in relation to it, and the fact that the former city was regarded as a strategic and commercial center for the whole South Seas area reinforced the logic of the Japanese plan. After all, political boundaries in Southeast Asia were, and are, more the result of expediency, compromise and chance than of economic or racial considerations.

Having undertaken the move for economic and strategic

<sup>6</sup> See article by Sunada, Shigemasa, "Marei Oyobi Sumatora Saichiku no Kōsō" [Plans for the Reconstruction of Malaya and Sumatra] in *Nanyō*, Vol. 28, No. 7, July 1942.

reasons, the Japanese devoted some effort to giving it a political foundation. They stressed the anthropological and linguistic ties between Sumatra and Malaya, ties which, they pointed out, had been severed by Dutch and English imperialist activities.<sup>7</sup> It was claimed that the economies of the two areas supplemented each other, that unification in such a field as transportation would provide more efficient service and that the old rivalry over Singapore would end now that it would serve as a common center for both.<sup>8</sup> There was also an appeal to the local pride of Sumatra. No longer would they be the victims of the Dutch system which made Java the center of administration and concealed the "characteristic superiority of Sumatra."<sup>9</sup>

Whatever grievances the Sumatrans may have had under the former administration, the new structure failed to arouse any marked enthusiasm among them. One good reason for this was the fact that the new combination had little practical effect on either partner. There were reports of Sumatran officials being trained in Singapore and of conferences of Moslem leaders and government officials,<sup>10</sup> but, in general, the American intelligence estimate that there was no more contact between Sumatra and Malaya under Japanese administration than previously was an accurate assessment.<sup>11</sup> The subject gradually disappeared from news reports and in 1944 Sumatra was made a separate military administration. The Indonesians in Malaya, in the meanwhile, identified themselves with Indonesia

<sup>7</sup> See the report of an interview with the Sultan of Deli in *Tōkyō Asahi*, March 15, 1942. Quoted in *Shin Aija*, Vol. 4, No. 9, September 1942.

<sup>8</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, March 4, 1943.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, March 27, 1943.

<sup>10</sup> *Program in Sumatra*, p. 8 ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Japanese Administration in Malaya*, Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis 2072, pp. 2-3.

and were given the opportunity to express their pro-Indonesian sentiments.<sup>12</sup>

Although Koiso's promise of independence in September 1944 was vague concerning the area which it included, it has been shown that this was due to Navy opposition which involved only their area of administration. Sumatra was definitely regarded as forming a part of the new state, but it was not at all certain that it would be included at the outset and there was no decision as to whether or not a federated form of government would be adopted. Instructions were given to the local Army commands not to allow discussion of the date of the grant of independence, the area included or the form of government to be adopted.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the same instructions said that national consciousness *must* be aroused to the greatest possible extent. Nationalistic speeches and activities, including the use of the national flag, national songs and terms, were to be encouraged. In short, the ensuing propaganda campaign carried on by Indonesian nationalists would be conducted in terms of Indonesian independence—not Javanese or Sumatran. Newspapers throughout Java took up the slogan, popularized by Hatta, "one nation, one country, one language" and there was a renewed emphasis on the rise of the Indonesian language as a means of promoting national unity.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For example, see the following quote by Abdul Samid Ismail, editor of a Malayan paper in Singapore, issued after Koiso's promise of Indonesian independence in 1944.

"When the actual granting of independence to the East Indies takes place, it will really be the crowning event in the long history of the bitter struggle which *we Indonesians* have waged relentlessly against the Dutch. . . . From now on *we Indonesians* will redouble our efforts to give concrete proof we are worthy of the independence for which we have struggled."

*Shōnan Shimbun*, September 10, 1944. (Italics mine)

<sup>13</sup> Exhibit 1352. *Notification Regarding Measures Ensuing from the Proclamation of Admission of the Independence of The East Indies*—Chief of Staff of the 7th Area Army, September 7, 1944.

<sup>14</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 4.

When, in 1945, the Military Administration of Sumatra announced that it was taking measures to extend participation in administrative affairs to Sumatrans, the move was hailed in Java as an important step toward complete independence.<sup>15</sup> This announcement was followed by the establishment of a Sumatran Central Advisory Council whose chairman, Mohammed Sjafei, a Sumatran nationalist leader, declared that it would help mold "the thoughts of Indonesians as a whole" and consolidate Indonesians as a united nation.<sup>16</sup>

In 1945, the Japanese allowed Sukarno and Hatta to carry the appeal for independence and national unity outside of Java. In June, Hatta toured Borneo and returned with the report that the independence movement was active and that the people there, particularly the upper and middle classes, were thoroughly "race conscious." As the result of this fact, he said, they were giving full cooperation to the Japanese and were preparing for Indonesian independence. A short time previously Sukarno had made a similar tour of the Celebes during which he urged the people to "concentrate all efforts in behalf of victory and independence" and to "arm themselves fully" in order to carry the war through to a successful conclusion in cooperation with the Japanese.<sup>17</sup> He stressed the point that the Indonesian independence movement was a united one and that the objectives of the Naval Administration in its plan for independence were his also. On his return, Sukarno said that he and Hatta had "thoroughly imbued" the people with the idea of independence during their tour and had stressed the importance of cooperation with the Japanese to "lay the foundation for forthcoming independence." There can only be one Indonesian race, Sukarno said, and efforts would be pursued to strengthen

<sup>15</sup> See *Shōnan Shimbun*, January 6, 1945.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, March 28, 1945.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 72, May 18, 1945.

the "unbreakable bond" between Java and other islands of the Indies.<sup>18</sup>

Contact between the areas of administration was not limited to these particular tours. There was some exchange of official personnel or, more specifically, a shifting of officials of the Java Administration to other areas, which made the isolation of each administration less complete than it seemed. This movement was most marked between Java and Sumatra after the latter was detached from Singapore, when a sizeable group of Indonesian officials attached to the Java Administration was transferred to Sumatra.<sup>19</sup> The Navy was more aloof in areas under its jurisdiction but in early 1944, Dr. Ratulangie, who had had a semi-official position in Jakarta, went to the Celebes to "organize Indonesians for closer collaboration with the Japanese."<sup>20</sup> There he traveled throughout the Navy zone, lecturing, organizing Youth, Defense and Labor Groups, and directing the program to increase production.

Such mobility as existed was possible only through the cooperation of the Java Military Administration, of course, and this brings us back to a point made earlier, namely, the importance of differences of opinion and indecision among Japanese authorities. While the date of Indonesian independence and the area to be included remained undecided in Tokyo, the Java Administration was pressing for a declaration of independence to cover all of Indonesia. In May 1945, Marshal Terauchi's Headquarters requested the views of local headquarters on independence and Java replied immediately urging independence for the whole territory within a year but Singapore Headquarters, Seventh Area Army hedged on these issues and maintained

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 77, July 13, 1945.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, June 14, 1944.

<sup>20</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 85. Ratulangie was one of the representatives of the Celebes on the Independence Preparation Committee in August 1945 and was later named Republican Governor for that area.



that the time was still not ripe.<sup>21</sup> At a meeting of the chiefs of staff in Singapore shortly thereafter, however, Java was permitted to proceed with plans to convene a committee to plan independence but the scope of the committee's activities was limited to Java alone.<sup>22</sup>

The decision that all of Indonesia should be proclaimed independent at the same time was not made finally until July 17 at a meeting of the Supreme War Council. The mainstays of this action were outlined before the Council by the Foreign Minister, and his statement is a significant commentary on the relationship of the Japanese to the development of nationalism in Indonesia.<sup>23</sup>

To leave the promise of independence in a continued state of uncertainty, he pointed out, would only give rise to doubts about Japan's sincerity. Consequently it was important to reach a definite decision immediately and carry it out by autumn at the very latest "in view of the war situation and the international situation." He recognized the disparity in development between Java, already "qualified" for independence, and the other islands which had not yet advanced to this state. To deduce from this, however, that only Java should be granted independence would be a great mistake and defeat Japan's aims.

"The so-called separatists, who have advocated independence for the East Indies in the past, regarded the Dutch East Indies as one body and desired to get independence for the whole area. To grant independence only to Java separately, at this time, *will disappoint the Indonesians* and we regret that it will not only reduce the effect by half but . . . it may give rise to suspicion that the Empire itself might harbour territorial ambitions in the rest of the areas. So it is regarded best to make

<sup>21</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Exhibit 1349. *Measures for Netherlands East Indies Independence: Data for Foreign Minister's Explanation, July 17, 1945.*

it clear that the area to be granted independence is the former Dutch Indies entirely."<sup>24</sup>

Not only should all of the Indies be included, they must be included from the outset. The method of granting independence to advanced areas [Java and Sumatra] first and allowing others to accede as they completed preparations was rejected on the grounds that it would give rise to misunderstanding among "Indonesian separatists who regard the Dutch Indies as one body" and to legal difficulties. Since Java was in the most advanced position, the Independence Preparatory Committee should be established there for the sake of convenience but the committee should prepare for the independence of all Indonesia and representatives of other areas should participate in it.

The exact nature of the decisions reached by the Supreme War Council was not disclosed to Indonesian leaders until Sukarno, Hatta and Wediodiningrat were flown to meet Marshal Terauchi at Saigon. That they had been concerned over the extent of area to be made independent was evidenced in a statement issued at a press conference held by Sukarno and Hatta after their return to Jakarta.

"It was emphatically inferred by the commander-in-chief at Saigon that when the Central Administration was formed the independence of the whole of Indonesia would be proclaimed immediately. . . . Before the trip to Saigon, the delegation feared that the Indonesian territory under the jurisdiction of the Japanese Navy might not be included but this apprehension disappeared after the statement at Saigon. The provisions of the statement had reference to the whole territory."<sup>25</sup>

The local military commanders then proceeded to nomi-

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* This would not be extended to Malaya or North Borneo, he said. Such a move was held to be "inappropriate and unnecessary" because of their "entirely separate existence in their historical traditions." (*Italics mine*)

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Overdijkink, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

nate representatives from their areas—3 were nominated from Sumatra, 5 from the Navy Zone—and they were flown to Jakarta to meet with Independence Preparatory Committee.<sup>26</sup> This represented a greater effort than had been called for in Tokyo's instructions which had indicated representatives from areas other than Java could be selected from people already residing there, due to the difficulties of transportation.<sup>27</sup>

The scope of activity afforded to nationalist leaders who were spokesmen of unity, the decision to grant independence to all of Indonesia simultaneously and measures to implement this decision were helpful to the cause of unification, but they were hardly crucial factors in its development. They were effect rather than cause. What they represented was not so much an attempt on the part of the Japanese to create a unified nationalist movement as a recognition by them of a unity that already existed. This is made clear in the explanation of the Government's policy which is quoted above. "To grant independence to Java separately . . . would reduce the effect by half" and would lead to "misunderstanding." What sort of "effect" were they hoping to achieve? The answer is readily apparent. The Japanese situation was desperate, transportation lines were cut between Indonesia and Japan and both faced the threat of invasion. The only hope of survival for the troops in Indonesia lay in the all-out cooperation of the local population.<sup>28</sup> This, it was increasingly apparent to them, could be secured only by meeting the demands

<sup>26</sup> The three representatives from Sumatra met the delegation from Saigon at Singapore and flew back to Jakarta with them. Of the 5 delegates from the Navy Zone, 2 were from Celebes, 1 from Borneo, 1 from Lesser Sundas, and 1 from the Moluccas.

<sup>27</sup> Exhibit 1349.

<sup>28</sup> "Especially, at this moment when the enemy's counter-offensive is already about to extend to a corner of the East Indies, it will be necessary to seek a more positive cooperation from the native inhabitants, to further materialize the statement made last year and to decide clearly the time for independence. . . ." *Ibid.*

of the nationalists for unity as well as independence. The situation was not without its irony—nationalism, which was to have been an instrument of Japanese policy, turned out to be its forger.

Although there were still some Japanese who felt that Indonesia was not yet ready for independence,<sup>29</sup> there had been a considerable revision in Japanese thinking in the short space of three years. Whereas in 1942, it had been maintained that there was no such thing as an "Indonesian people" or even a truly Indonesian nationalism, three years of direct contact indicated the inadequacy of this assessment. One of the developments between 1942 and 1945 was the "education" of the Japanese Military Administration on this topic.

In addition to this "education," there were, within Indonesian society, developments which had repercussions on the nationalist movement and which contributed to the process of unification. Of these, two will be discussed here—the rising importance of the Indonesian language, and the weakening of regional and class differences.

Throughout history, the development of national feeling has been closely related to language. Herder, one of the fathers of modern nationalism, had held that to understand the character and nature of a people, one must study its language, and this view continued in the modern era in the form of the belief that language was the distinguishing feature of a nationality and hence, that language frontiers were desirable nation-state frontiers. This equation of linguistic and national boundaries proved incapable of realization in Europe; it made even less sense in Southeast Asia where such a course would lead to a bewildering proliferation of tiny states. It might be said that one of the characteristics of national movements in Southeast Asia has been that they have not developed out of any one native language. Paradoxically,

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* and 1351.

the unifying force, linguistically, was that of the imperial powers, English, French or Dutch. As a symbol of the position of the imperial powers, these languages provided a common object of opposition and inspired attempts to rehabilitate a native language. On the other hand, in spite of this reaction against the Western languages, they often provided the most effective means of communication among local inhabitants who spoke varying dialects if not different languages. The process in Southeast Asia clearly has been that of the state creating a national language, rather than that whereby the national language forms the basis of the state. At the same time, the development of a national language has been of considerable importance not only as a symbol but also as an agent in the diffusion of national sentiment among a wider segment of the population and in the growth of centralization.

Characteristically, the process neither began with the Japanese nor represented their original intentions. Their aim was to make Japanese the *lingua franca* of Asia and they regarded the language program as the necessary first step in their plan to bring the blessings of Japanese civilization to the less advanced peoples of Asia. They appreciated that this goal was not one which could be realized in a short space of time and they recognized, too, that it would be more effective to make the knowledge of Japanese advantageous in terms of opportunities for advancement than to implant it by decree.<sup>30</sup>

Their first step in Indonesia was to ban the use of Dutch and other Western languages, which they regarded as symbols of Western influence, for official and public purposes. Indonesian and Japanese replaced Dutch as the official language—a change which, in effect, meant Indonesian since Japanese was practically unknown. Even

<sup>30</sup> Statement by Nagata, Hidejiro, adviser to the Southern Military Administration, issued after a tour of Java in July 1942. *Program in Java*, p. 284.

Indonesian was unfamiliar enough and many teachers and government officials found themselves studying and using it for the first time.<sup>31</sup>

The study of Japanese was pressed on several fronts, by mass communication media, by special Japanese language training courses and by training in primary and secondary schools where it was made a compulsory subject. In spite of these efforts, however, there was little intensive development because of the superficial nature of the training courses, which were usually only two weeks or a month in duration, and because the groups toward whom the program was chiefly directed, teachers and government officials, spearheaded the movement to develop a national language.

In the meantime, Indonesian was developing intensively as well as extensively. "Speak your own language! Speak the Indonesian language!" became the popular slogan and special courses in addition to the national schools were instrumental in spreading its use.<sup>32</sup> One of the activities of the Java Central Council was to sponsor a course in Indonesian for young men entering the government service, and such training schools as the Malay Language Perfection Institute at Bandung gave half-year language courses.<sup>33</sup> The military organizations, as well as the schools, were useful vehicles in spreading the language, and a Malay edition of the code and drill regulations of the Defense Army opened up a virtually new field to the language. An important contribution of this period was the work of the Indonesian Language Commission set up by the Japanese, at the suggestion of the Indonesians, in October 1944.<sup>34</sup> Composed of political leaders such as

<sup>31</sup> Alisjahbana, Takdir, "The Indonesian Language—By-Product of Nationalism" in *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, December 1949.

<sup>32</sup> Ubani, B. A., "The Indonesian Language" in *Merdeka*, Indonesian Information Bureau, New Delhi, India, No. 2, December 15, 1947.

<sup>33</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 272.

<sup>34</sup> Alisjahbana, *op. cit.*

Sukarno and Hatta as well as literary figures, the commission added to the language several thousand new terms, many of them in the technical field in which all the languages of this area are weak.

Perhaps the greatest boost which the Japanese gave the Indonesian language lay in the increased use of mass communication media. In the newspaper field, the disappearance of the Dutch press led to a sharp rise in the circulation of the Indonesian press, from 40,000 to at least 68,000, and the number of papers increased to the point where most towns of any size had an Indonesian paper.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the newspapers there were several Indonesian periodicals, two of the most important being "Peradjurit" [Warrior], published for the members of the Home Defense Army, and "Sinar" [Light], published by the Religious Affairs Department for the Moslem Kiais.<sup>36</sup>

Even more effective than the press in a country where over 90 percent of the population was illiterate was the use of the radio. Anxious to reach the greatest possible number of people in their propaganda campaigns, the Japanese relied heavily on it to make contact with the local population. For example, in 1944 the Communications Bureau of the Sumatra Military Administration began the task of providing radios for publicity purposes for every town and village throughout the island and announced that its goal was one radio for every three thousand inhabitants.<sup>37</sup> Public radio stands were set up in schools, parks and at "every important crossroads of the towns," so that a large audience, much of it hitherto untapped, was brought within

<sup>35</sup> "The Press Under the Japanese," *Merdeka*, May 15, 1947. At the Greater East Asia Newspaper Conference in Tokyo in November 1943, Indonesian representatives noted the improved situation but said that the number of papers was still small in relation to the population and the demand for them. *Osaka Asahi*, November 17, 1943.

<sup>36</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 78.

<sup>37</sup> *Program in Sumatra*, p. 15.

the reach of the Japanese.<sup>38</sup> As with the newspapers, Indonesian was the chief language employed, though regional dialects were not neglected. In 1944, for example, the Surabaya radio station began daily programs in Madurese. Three hours in length, these programs consisted of news, lectures, music and occasional speeches by prominent Madurese. The Japanese proudly hailed this as the "first regular radio program in that language in history."<sup>39</sup>

While the press and radio served in this way as vehicles for the expansion of the Indonesian language, they were even more important in conveying the nationalist message to a wider audience than had been reached before once the Japanese permitted the theme of independence to be sounded. Not only was the audience reached wider; it was given standardized material, for the Propaganda Department was a strongly centralizing influence. Moreover, the Department, with headquarters in Jakarta, was in direct contact with the core of the nationalist movement which was most insistent on the need for national unity. Speeches and statements by Sukarno, Hatta, Dewantara and other leaders were not confined to a small area of Java but were spread throughout Indonesia.

There were numerous other ways by which the propaganda campaign was brought directly to the local level. There were, for example, "oral publicity" courses in which young Indonesians were trained in the substance and technique of propaganda in Jakarta and then sent out to all parts of Java to "enlighten the masses regarding the aims

<sup>38</sup> One Indonesian writer has illustrated the pervasiveness of the radio programs in noting how the popular songs, encouraged by the Japanese, swept over the whole archipelago. The Number 1 song hit of the islands, "Bengawa Solo," he says, was sung by the people of Borneo and the Dyak headhunters, "as if it had always been their cradlesong." Sularko, "Music" in *Merdeka*, January 31, 1948.

<sup>39</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 82. Several of the newspapers also carried supplements in certain dialects.



of the Military Administration.”<sup>40</sup> Traveling theatrical groups which toured the islands portraying stories and skits provided by the Propaganda Department proved to be a very effective means of communication with the people and thanks to the support provided by the Military Administration, the theater made marked progress, at least in its technical aspects, during the occupation.<sup>41</sup>

The effort by the Japanese to “penetrate into the remotest backwaters of the islands”<sup>42</sup> was symptomatic of another process that was going on during the war—the breakdown of provincial isolation and traditional ways of life. Here again, the process long ante-dated the war. It was, in fact, part and parcel of Westernization in all these countries. New methods of doing things, new ways of getting places, new fields of study, opened up very different vistas for some people and indirectly affected the lives of many more. This erosion of the traditional society by forces introduced from outside was going on steadily, albeit slowly, before the war and was taking place in Indonesia as elsewhere in spite of the rather elaborate attempts on the part of the Dutch to protect the old order.

The war dealt a severe blow to this old society. Its impact was most direct in countries like Burma where extensive military campaigns, coupled with the scorched earth policy, adopted by both sides, literally uprooted thousands of people. Indonesia escaped the worst of this kind of violence but not the dislocations that the war inevitably entailed. The defeat of the Dutch, the disappearance of the symbols of the old order, were in themselves important in this respect. The impact of the war was particularly sharp in the economic field. The severing

<sup>40</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, October 26, 1944. A report from Sumatra at the time of Koiso's promise of independence said that “shouts of joy rent the air as autos with amplifiers and posters proceeded from town to town telling of the Japanese promise.” *Ibid.*, September 10, 1944.

<sup>41</sup> Sularko, “Literature,” in *Merdeka*, January 15, 1948.

<sup>42</sup> Phrase from Alisjahbana, *op. cit.*

of the usual trade connections and the internment of nearly all Westerners, on whom so much of the economic life had been dependent, upset the plantation economy as well as the business world. Before the Japanese could effect a reorganization by the use of imported Japanese technicians and a reorientation of the economy [for example, the increase of cotton production and the decline of sugar], the shipping crisis wreaked even more havoc. There was no way to export the staples (oil, rubber, sugar) or to import such necessities as textiles. The resulting unemployment and poverty produced wide scale migration and broke established patterns of behavior.

These developments, doubtless, were more fundamental to the breakdown of the old provincialism and in clearing the ground for a new unity than any specific measures adopted by the Japanese. Certain features of their regime, however, even though secondary to these more fundamental developments, were important in the building of a stronger unity.

The totalitarian zeal for organization, which found a ready soil in well-ordered Japanese society, produced a welter of organizations in all the occupied areas, the Philippines and Burma as well as those countries administered directly. Of all these organizations which grouped people in terms of race, religion, sex, age, sports, culture, those which are particularly relevant in this instance are the Neighborhood Associations, the Hōkōkai [Patriotic Service Organization], the youth groups and the military groups.

The Neighborhood Associations [Tonari Gumi] introduced throughout the Co-Prosperity Sphere in 1944 were modeled after the organizations of the same name which played an important part in Japanese life. All communities were divided into groups of twenty households—a Kumi—and these, in turn, formed part of a higher unit. The leader of the Kumi, appointed by the higher echelon, in addition

to his executive duties, was trained by the Japanese in the task of explaining to the members of his unit the aims of the Japanese and the immediate measures which they involved for the every-day life of the population. Directives to guide him in this job were provided by the propaganda service.<sup>43</sup> Besides its role as the basic link in the "transmission belt" by means of which the Military Administration sought to explain its regulations to the people and to generate support for itself, the Kumi were supposed to assume such civic duties as fire protection, air raid defense and police support. In the rural areas, their role in increasing food production was emphasized, and they were also made the agent for distribution of food and other supplies—an effective means of securing universal participation.

When the Japanese ordered the dissolution of Putera and replaced it by the Hōkōkai, the Kumi became the lowest unit in this mass organization which absorbed all others into itself. The Hōkōkai was regarded by the Japanese as an intermediary organ of the Military Administration for the purpose of transmitting instructions to the peoples and securing their cooperation. Intended as a mass movement, the Hōkōkai was concerned with such diverse subjects as sanitation instruction and character development, the elimination of Western influences and the "cultivation of the spirit of thrift."<sup>44</sup> Brigades were formed for labor service in the factories and on the land, for all kinds of defense work, to aid in the introduction of new techniques and new crops. It cannot be said that all this activity made the Hōkōkai or Kumi any more popular (both quickly disappeared after the Japanese surrender) but they did leave their impact for never before had the distance from central authorities to village communities seemed so short.

<sup>43</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>44</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 87.

In Java, "Shock Brigades" were formed in every community as the vanguard to guide the activities of the Hōkōkai. To provide leadership for these Brigades, the Japanese selected persons with promising qualifications from all over Java and gave them a short training course at Jakarta after which they were sent out to organize local units.<sup>45</sup> In a speech delivered to them and to the provincial chiefs of the Brigades in September 1944, Sukarno, who served as chief of all the Shock Brigades, referred to them as "the motive power of Java's total war efforts which are a prerequisite for translating Indonesian independence into reality" and the Director-General of the Military Administration declared they were responsible for "leading the masses to victory and independence."<sup>46</sup> In all of their various activities, the Hōkōkai and the Brigades did not lose sight of nationalist objectives. Their code included the following articles:

1. "We will firmly adhere to the principles for the union of the whole Indonesian race into a single nation with a single language.
2. "We will offer our all for the realization and maintenance of independence for Indonesia.
3. "We will defend with glory and honor our national flag of the red and white sun and our national song, Indonesia Raya."<sup>47</sup>

Such training and organizations were important not only as centralizing influences; they provided a meeting ground for men of varied social and geographical background for, in making selections, the Japanese were mainly concerned with reliability and effectiveness rather than origin. While it is true that these various training programs were too short to act as really effective "melting pots," such groups

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91. Village "Shock Brigades" had about 50 members, districts and provinces, larger units.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

as the Home Defense Army and the Youth Organizations did important services in this respect.

The Youth Corps [Seinen dan] was set up in 1943 on a vertical basis much like that of the Hōkōkai, although in some instances, sections were formed in the larger factories. Young men, 14–25, were eligible to volunteer—or to be drafted if volunteers did not appear in requisite numbers.<sup>48</sup> A central training camp for youth leaders was opened at Jakarta and each province had a training center for local instructors. Training in the corps heavily emphasized military drill and physical education with Japanese language and music thrown in for good measure.<sup>49</sup> Besides their military training, the members of the corps were often organized into labor battalions for both industrial and agricultural work, and they were the chief source of manpower for the Home Defense Army. The latter, established by the Japanese in October, 1943, upon the request of the Indonesians, was a military unit with its own officers and distinct from the Japanese army although under the command of the Japanese commander-in-chief.<sup>50</sup> The officers themselves were trained in special three months' courses by Japanese instructors who staffed the centers. The Army was organized on the basis of one battalion (about one thousand men) per province, a goal which was attained by the end of the war, and was assigned various types of guard duty.<sup>51</sup>

The effect of the Army as a unifying agent by providing a common experience to different social groups was described as follows by a Japanese training officer assigned to it:

“Since the Army is made up of volunteers from all walks of life, it has resulted in the unification of the Indonesian social

<sup>48</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>49</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 103.

<sup>50</sup> They were not to be used outside of Java.

<sup>51</sup> Exhibit 1351.

strata towards the realization of its ideals. In fact, the Indonesian race has never seen such a huge comprehensive system to promote its own racial well-being."<sup>52</sup>

One of Japan's expressed aims was to "assist and direct the spread of national education and instruction of the young."<sup>53</sup> Perhaps due to their own experience with compulsory education which seemed to have been so successful in the production of literate but pliable patriots and which was credited by many for Japan's rapid modernization, the Japanese had a great deal of faith in education, at least limited doses of it, as an effective instrument in realizing their program.

One of the first acts of the Japanese was to close all schools in the occupied areas to cleanse them of Western influences and to prepare a Japanization program. In Java, several schools were reopened by the end of 1942 with revised textbooks in Indonesian, with Indonesian the standard language of instruction (Japanese was a required subject) and with Dutch teachers expelled. Unlike the Dutch system which contained a great variety of schools, public and private, the new one was comprised of standardized national schools for which tuition was free and with a uniform curriculum that laid a heavy stress on Japanese subjects and physical training.<sup>54</sup> In 1943, military training courses were introduced in the system at all levels. Besides the national schools, which were of primary and secondary level, there were several technical and normal

<sup>52</sup> Quoted in *Shōnan Shimbun*, October 11, 1944. He added that the promise of independence had inspired the members of the army "to be worthy forerunners of a full-fledged modern, independent East Indies Army." *Ibid.* A Sumatra Defense Army was founded simultaneously with the one on Java and youth organizations there and in the Celebes paralleled those on the central island.

<sup>53</sup> Exhibit 1335. The importance which the Japanese attached to education has been noted above in Chapter III.

<sup>54</sup> *Program in Java*, 272 ff., Exhibit 1351.

schools; the latter were particularly crowded for it was necessary to train replacements hurriedly for the Dutch teachers of whom there had been a high percentage in the old system. Private Mohammedan schools were permitted in 1943 and were given a government subsidy, but only after they had been reorganized to meet Japanese specifications.<sup>55</sup> Non-Indonesian students were not encouraged in the national school system until 1944, prior to which time Chinese and Arabs were admitted only if room was available, and it usually was not. The Eurasians, or Indos, were barred entirely until 1944 when they were put directly into the national schools at first. Because of the language difficulty, however, the Japanese were forced to provide separate schools with the standard curriculum and which were envisaged as "feeder" schools where the Indos would learn enough Indonesian to enable them to enter the regular system.

Standardization and centralization were characteristic of Japanese policy in education as in other fields. Like the youth and military organization, too, the educational system provided a certain leveling influence. The closing of many of the private schools and the reduced standard of living forced most of the formerly well-to-do Indonesians to send their children to the national schools. On the other hand, the end of tuition fees and Japanese efforts to reduce the rate of illiteracy brought education to some who had not been reached before. Just how many is difficult to determine as Japanese statistics on the subject vary widely,<sup>56</sup> but it is safe to say that their claim that the

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273.

<sup>56</sup> For example, attendance at primary schools in Java was listed at 1,200,000 in August 1943—*Program in Java*, p. 273. But the figure announced for 1944 was 1,000,000 which was represented as an *increase* over the previous year. *Ibid.*, p. 274. Another figure released in 1944 gave attendance at national schools as 650,000 and at middle schools as 117,000. *Ibid.*, p. 275. In the area of Celebes, Borneo, and Ceram, the Japanese claimed 400,000 students as compared to less than 350,000 under the Dutch. *Shōnan Shimbum*, April 19, 1944.

campaign against illiteracy had "revolutionized the cultural world of Java within the space of two years" has to be taken with numerous grains of salt.<sup>57</sup> Although the results were magnified and the literacy attained largely nominal—it might be said that the goal was ability to read Japanese propaganda not education—the campaign was pushed with considerable vigor. Such Indonesian organizations as Putera and the Neighborhood Associations sought to provide classes and teachers for illiterates and the Culture Centers, set up in Java, conducted courses in adult education which proved to be popular.<sup>58</sup> These courses, as well as the regular educational system, stressed local history and literature, ancient and contemporary, and while Japanese studies were inevitable, after 1944 the nationalist content was emphasized increasingly.

Whatever the exact statistics about education during the occupation might be, the record would appear to bear out the appraisal of an Indonesian observer to the effect that the educational level was lower than under the Dutch but that literacy increased because of the greater opportunity for poorer children to go to school.<sup>59</sup> The observation of this same writer about the effects of the occupation on the children of Indonesia may be taken as a summary of developments discussed in this chapter.

"The fate of the children was materially worse than during Dutch rule, though there was a bright side of the picture. For the Japanese rule brought about unity, a feeling of militancy and patriotism among the children and the youth in general . . . this constituted a contribution to paving the way for making the establishment of the Indonesian Republic possible."<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The Japanese once claimed that the literacy rate had risen from 7 to 34 per cent by 1944. *Program in Java*, p. 275.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 292. The adult courses were called Public Knowledge Courses, and were "designed to enlighten the people in eastern culture."

<sup>59</sup> Mukardjo, A., "The Children Problem in Indonesia," *Merdeka*, May 25, 1949.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*



## National Minorities

A PART OF THE PROBLEM of national unity which, because of its importance and complexity, is deserving of special treatment is the position of national minorities. In the context of Southeast Asia, "national minorities" mean primarily the Chinese and, in some areas as Burma and Malaya, the Indians. Large communities of these peoples have grown up throughout Southeast Asia in part as the result of natural immigration, in part due to the policy of the colonial powers of importing a labor supply. The melting pot has worked only indifferently with the result that these communities have not been absorbed into the political and social life of the countries but, on the contrary, have maintained strong ties with their homeland. The Chinese, in particular, have remained a "racial island" with their own schools, social organizations and their close political affinity to China.

The national and cultural barriers which separate these minorities from the local populations have been reinforced by lines of economic class. There are many Chinese and Indian laborers and farmers in Southeast Asia but the Chinese everywhere and the Indians, most notably in Burma, have been identified most prominently with entrepreneurial positions and it is with the label of "middle men" that they have been tagged. As the link between

native producers and colonial firms, as bankers, money lenders and as retailers, their position of direct contact with the native population has been precisely the one most apt to produce friction between the two groups.

The growth of nationalism in Southeast Asia has made the position of these Chinese and Indian minorities even more difficult. There is, in nationalism, an element of exclusiveness which is suspicious of the "foreign" and which makes the role of minorities in any national movement a difficult one. To this has been added a further complication in areas which are, or have been, in a colonial status. Economically, it was more profitable for this group to tailor its cloth to fit the colonial pattern. Moreover, the very physical, as well as economic, existence of the minorities seemed to require at least a tacit alliance with the colonial power. Dislike and distrust, occasionally bursting forth into violence, on the part of the native population led the minorities to rely on the colonial government for protection. In the eyes of the nationalists they became, to lapse into Marxist jargon, the "running dogs of imperialism" who must be ousted with their masters. Although economic ties drew the minorities to the side of the colonial powers, they did not afford any firm basis for an identification of political interests. The barriers here were too wide and many.

The strongest political ties of the Chinese and Indians led back to their respective lands of origin. This may be explained partly by the native and Western rejection of them abroad; it was also partly a result of the fact that the center of their family, racial and cultural associations was still China, or India as the case might be. Many of them were overseas solely in the interests of accumulating a fortune and then returning to their native land. They regarded themselves as "transients" in the country of their residence, and even many of those who stayed on shared this attitude. For the politically articulate members of

this group, the significant events were those occurring in China and India; the sources of leadership and inspiration were the Kuomintang and the National Congress; the national heroes were Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, Gandhi and Nehru. Before and after 1911, Sun Yat-sen had found the Overseas Chinese a fruitful source of spiritual and financial help in his republican cause. The rise of the nationalist tide everywhere in Asia since that time had, if anything, strengthened the identification of the minorities with their homeland by 1940.

How did the Japanese propose to deal with the problem posed by these groups in the countries which they occupied? There were, broadly speaking, three policies from which they might choose. They could (a) use the standard "divide and rule" technique of exacerbating local hostility toward the minorities; (b) attempt to fuse them with the local nationalists in the interests of unity; or (c) maintain the identity of interests which the minorities felt with their homeland and, at the same time, direct it toward a pro-Japanese regime. This latter course proved to be the most effective in relations with the Indians but successive frustrations in the attempts to find a satisfactory solution in regard to the Chinese led the Japanese to try all three of these policies at various times and in different places.

### *The Chinese*

Japanese concern with the attitude of the Overseas Chinese did not begin in 1941 but arose from their attempts to settle the "China Incident."<sup>1</sup> Economically and politi-

<sup>1</sup> See Doc. 2178. *Essential Points of Administration with the Development of Military Operations in South China. Decision of War, Navy and Foreign Ministers*, October 28, 1938. "Economic reconstruction to be conducted mainly by Chinese themselves, the Japanese to confine new construction with its capital and materials to what is specially essential such as the promotion of foreign trade and the work of the Overseas Chinese.

"The Overseas Chinese shall be guided towards an attitude in line with political and other measures so they will support our South China policy."

cally, this group was of considerable importance to China for each year sizeable amounts of money were sent back to families in China and contributed to funds to aid the National Government. It was the hope of some Japanese that the Overseas Chinese could be won over to their cause and that, thanks to the political influence which their economic contribution made possible, they could bring their mainland brothers to see the light of Japan's "true intentions."

As Japanese plans for expansion southward materialized, the Overseas Chinese became an even more direct concern. Economically, as the Japanese were aware, their important position and their capital could render valuable assistance to the plans for the Co-Prosperity Sphere if only they would cooperate.<sup>2</sup> Politically, their anti-Japanese activities, which had been intensifying as the fighting continued, posed a threat to the stability of the New Order and afforded a dangerous focal point of opposition.

Prior to 1942 the Japanese tried to work both directly and through the colonial governments to counter this growing hostility which had manifested itself in widespread boycotts. In the negotiations with the Netherlands East Indies Government in 1940-41, for example, the Japanese objectives were to secure the repression of anti-Japanese activities and the opportunity to sponsor their own propaganda among the Chinese who, they charged, were permitted to carry on anti-Japanese boycotts and propaganda while their own work was severely restricted.

"The Dutch Indies authorities banned publication of a Japanese paper when it printed an article supporting Wang, on grounds it instigated the feelings of the Chinese in the Dutch Indies, and also prohibited the import of papers from occupied

<sup>2</sup> Exhibit 1332. ". . . credit and trading systems of both Chinese and native merchants in the locality shall be utilized to the fullest extent. . . ." See Exhibit 877. The potential aid in securing a settlement with China was not lost from sight. Also Exhibit 1335. ". . . make them cooperate in the present war, especially in helping to settle the China incident."

China on grounds of their anti-Chiang tendency. This discriminating attitude . . . can be said to be pro-Chinese and anti-Japanese, so we shall demand stricter supervision."<sup>3</sup>

At the same time, the Japanese had their own agents working among the Chinese in the Indies.<sup>4</sup> These activities, under the control of the local branch of the East Asia Bureau, ran the gamut from such propaganda work as the founding of a Chinese newspaper to blunt forms of blackmail on those with connections in Occupied China. The results obtained were quite the reverse of what was intended for the resistance of the Chinese was only stifened, as the Japanese consul-general in Batavia admitted.<sup>5</sup> The continued failure of Japanese efforts led this diplomat to try another tactic and he requested Tokyo that there be sent to the Netherlands Indies influential Chinese

" . . . in whom the Nanking Government [Wang Ching-wei] has much confidence and who can command large numbers of followers among the Chinese here . . . to spread the doctrine that Chinese and Japanese are one, as well as set up organizations to influence Chinese opinion."<sup>6</sup>

The use of the Wang Ching-wei regime as the basis on which an effective appeal could be made to the Overseas Chinese was, at this period, a fond hope of many Japanese.<sup>7</sup> There were other grounds for optimism, particularly,

<sup>3</sup> Exhibit 1311. *Demands of August 14, 1940, against the Netherlands East Indies.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ten Years of Japanese Burrowing in the Netherlands East Indies.* Official Report of the Netherlands East Indies Government on Japanese Subversive Activities in the Archipelago during the Last Decade. Netherlands Information Bureau, New York (no date) pp. 33 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Document #15 B. *Telegram of Ishizawa (Consul General in Batavia) to Tokyo*, September 2, 1941.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* Ishizawa stressed the point that these men should avoid all connections with the Japanese in the Indies.

<sup>7</sup> See Ōtsuki, Shigeru, "Chinese in South Seas Turning to Cooperate with Japan." *Nippon oyobi Nipponjin*, February 1940. Translated in *Contemporary Opinions on Current Topics*, Japanese Information Bureau, Tokyo, March 7, 1940.

the belief that the Chinese "sense of reality," their habit of accommodating themselves to new situations, would induce them to mount the Japanese wave of the future,<sup>8</sup> but it is the former which is more pertinent here. The Wang Government was their alternative to the Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-shek which their propaganda characterized as a "pawn of Anglo-Saxon imperialism." To check the growing anti-Japanese boycott by the Overseas Chinese and the considerable flow of financial assistance from them to the Chungking Government, some such move was mandatory. The attempt to make the Wang regime the focal point of the loyalty of the Overseas Chinese was the tribute which the Japanese paid to their China-centric national feeling.

The limitations of this approach soon became apparent, however. Overseas Chinese, for the most part, maintained their allegiance to Chungking and their firmly anti-Japanese attitude so that one Japanese official commented that nothing short of a "fundamental solution" of the whole Chinese affair—by which he meant the complete extinction of the Chungking Government—would enable the Japanese to carry out their policy.<sup>9</sup>

The failure of the Wang Government to evoke any enthusiastic response in Southeast Asia sharply curtailed its usefulness to the Japanese there. It had a few supporters among the wealthier groups<sup>10</sup> and some paid lip

<sup>8</sup> The argument ran that the war in Europe so weakened the position of the Western powers in Asia that the whole colonial order, in which the Overseas Chinese had such an important economic stake, was threatened. Consequently, these Chinese, "having a deep insight," were beginning to realize the "real situation with the conclusion that they must rely on Japanese goods in order to survive it." *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Ide, Kiwata, "New Japanese Policy Toward Chinese Settlers in the South Seas," *Taiheiyō*, May 1941. Translated in *Contemporary Opinions on Current Topics*, May 8, 1941.

Ide was an official of the South Manchurian Railway and a member of the East Asia Economic Investigation Institute.

<sup>10</sup> See Exhibit 1351 and *Shōnan Shimbun*, July 11, 1942.

service to it but it was never able to play a prominent role in Japanese propaganda appeals in the area. It is significant that Wang in his address to the Greater East Asia Assembly in 1943 failed to mention any connection between his own regime and the Overseas Chinese but stressed, rather, the evils of the Chungking Government and the advantages of cooperation with the local administration.<sup>11</sup>

Both of these latter themes developed early in the Occupation. Of the fundamental policies for the occupied areas announced by the War Office, one was to the effect that local Chinese merchants were to be invited to extend voluntary cooperation.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, one of the first editions of a paper published in Singapore called for the elimination of "treacherous Chinese elements" which were cooperating with the British and spying on the Japanese.<sup>13</sup> The paper promised that there would be no discrimination against anyone who cooperated with the administration "whether Chinese or not," and this promise was later expanded into a direct appeal for cooperation among all racial groups as an essential of Japanese policy.

"Nippon not only desires, but insists upon, interracial harmony in all territories within the sphere of her influence, as a means of developing to the fullest extent all the resources of each country and of creating in the minds of the people that spirit of national consciousness and patriotism which will bind together the different units of the Empire.

"The old system of administration in Malaya, with its care-

<sup>11</sup> *Japan Year Book 1943-44*, pp. 1055-58.

"Well treated by the respective governments, they [Overseas Chinese] are actively engaged, shoulder to shoulder with the local peoples in developing communication facilities and natural resources at great pains and by the sweat of their brows. It should go a long way not only to unite the local peoples with them, but also to hasten the awakening of the East Asiatic peoples."

<sup>12</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, April 13, 1942.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, February 23, 1942.

fully fostered policies of preferential treatment to some and oppressive restrictions to others resulted in political pariahdom as the fate of all."<sup>14</sup>

Performance lagged badly behind this noble statement of objectives. Even in Indonesia, where the Japanese professed themselves pleasantly surprised by the cooperation gratuitously offered by the Chinese, there were early reports of the seizure of "Chungking agents" and "Chungking merchants" who had engaged in anti-Japanese activities.<sup>15</sup> While they maintained that a "sweeping change" had come over the Indonesian Chinese hitherto hostile to Japan, they pointedly declared that under the new economic dispensation, the most important place would be given to the welfare of the natives who previously had been deprived of the benefits of the resources of their land.<sup>16</sup>

Everywhere the Chinese became the lowest social class, if one excludes Westerners who were interned soon after the Occupation began. They were subjected to a rigorous screening process and to the sharpest scrutiny by the Japanese secret police. The Overseas Chinese Associations formed in each of the occupied areas were instruments of supervision and control as well as collection agencies for contributions which were, in effect, levied on the Chinese communities. The nature of the "contributions" was made quite clear by a Japanese military administration official who stated bluntly that they represented "appropriately large sums" which were assessed by the military administration upon the Chinese associations.<sup>17</sup> Economically, the official noted, the Chinese have been subjected to heavy pressure including the expropriation of their businesses,

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, April 25, 1942.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, March 31 and May 18, 1942.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, March 19, 1942.

<sup>17</sup> Kuroda, *op. cit.*



particularly those of a small and medium scale.<sup>18</sup> In general, the policy toward the Overseas Chinese, said this source, was marked by extreme severity, particularly against those who maintained their "pre-war attitude." This severity and the general mistrust in which the Chinese were held by the occupation authorities made them a group apart. Organized into separate groups, barred from political, defense and youth organizations, they were consigned to the very "pariahdom" from which the Japanese professedly wished to extract them.

In Indonesia, however, in the latter part of 1943 and increasingly during 1944 the Japanese began to sponsor measures to implement their policy of "cooperation." There are numerous reasons which might be advanced in explanation of this line of development. The dissolution of the exclusively Indonesian organization, Putera, as too nationalistic and its replacement, in 1943-44, by the all-inclusive Hōkōkai very probably was, in part, an attempt to temper Indonesian nationalism by diluting the movement with other racial groups. This, however, is not a wholly satisfactory explanation for the effort to realize cooperation continued apace with the renewed emphasis on nationalism later in the war.

More important, it would seem to me, was the desire of the Japanese, noted in the preceding chapter, to create national unity in the interests of a more effective prosecution of the war and to provide increased strength in the event of an Allied invasion. The Chinese, as an important economic group which, also, possessed a much higher lit-

<sup>18</sup> Some of the enterprises were given directly to Japanese nationals; in others, ownership was transferred to Japanese, who often remained in Japan while the former owners remained as operators. *Ibid.* Native merchants, encouraged by the Japanese, also profited from the anti-Chinese measures. The Chinese in Indonesia have complained of the unfair economic advantage taken of them by the Indonesians during the war. See Purcell, Victor, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, London, 1951, p. 553.

eracy rate than the general population,<sup>19</sup> could be of considerable value. A policy of integration also might serve to blunt Chinese opposition and prevent it from becoming the core of an anti-Japanese movement.<sup>20</sup> The fact that other racial groups, such as the Eurasians (Indos) and Arabs, were included in the new effort would indicate that it was not just another tactic to deal with recalcitrant Chinese.

The idea of an appeal to the Indonesian Chinese on the basis of loyalty to Indonesia rather than to China had occurred to at least one Japanese agent working among them in the period prior to the war. Yoshizumi, Tomegoro, editor of prewar "Tōindō Nippo," the Japanese-owned paper in the East Indies, was an active figure in work among the Chinese residents. In a letter to another Japanese agent who had been sent to the Indies from Amoy to do "missionary" work among the Chinese, Yoshizumi expressed strong disagreement with the general approach of Japanese propaganda. The Overseas Chinese in Indonesia, he said, have their natural means of existence there and, while they have sentimental ties with China, such slogans as "Peace between China and Japan" do not really affect their lives. They have become fused with the Netherlands East Indies and their interests are considerably different from the Chinese born in China.

"We Japanese have, in promoting the New Order, labored too much under the solution of the incident. As a matter of course, the solution of the China incident is for us the most pressing problem. But do we not risk missing our object if we pay too much attention to this? Especially in the Netherlands Indies,

<sup>19</sup> According to the 1930 census, the last general one taken, 29% of the Chinese population was literate (for Java the figure was 34%). This figure compared to one of less than 10% for the total population. Cator, W. J., *The Economic Position of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies*, Oxford, 1936.

<sup>20</sup> Purcell indicates this was the chief cause of the shift in Japanese policy. Purcell, *op. cit.*, p. 552.

the raising of the banner, "Solution of the Incident," is a gesture which may impress the Japanese but certainly not the Chinese."<sup>21</sup>

"Asia for the Asiatics" and anti-Dutch slogans would be more effective, he maintained, for the Chinese want to be a part of the local community.

". . . we are astounded at the force of the current among them to become East Indians before anything else. . . .

"Let us make use of the common fate of Indonesians and Chinese and arouse their enthusiasm for the construction of a new Asia. Starting from the point that Indonesians and Chinese are both East Asiatics we must establish contact with them."<sup>22</sup>

The accuracy of Yoshizumi's analysis may be questioned. Cator, in his study of the Chinese in the East Indies, reached quite a different conclusion about their political allegiance.<sup>23</sup> Nor was the slogan "Asia for the Asiatics" especially apt in view of events in China which, in spite of Yoshizumi, remained a matter of concern to the Chinese residents of Indonesia. Otherwise how to account for the persistent and increasing anti-Japanese hostility about which his compatriots so bitterly complained?

In spite of these criticisms, Yoshizumi's argument was not without foundation. Compared to Malaya, for example, the Chinese were a much smaller percentage of the

<sup>21</sup> A copy of the letter, which fell into the hands of the Dutch, is to be found in *Ten Years of Burrowing*, p. 93 ff. The letter is undated but presumably was written sometime in 1940. In February 1941 the East Indies Government forced Yoshizumi's recall because of his activities. In December 1941, Dutch authorities found him on the island of Bangka, this time disguised as a native. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> "It appears that the Chinese colonials often show a marked disinclination to cooperate for the political unity of the Netherlands Indies, tending rather in an opposite direction at times." Cator, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

Cf. Purcell, Victor, *The Position of the Chinese in Southeast Asia*, International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1950. Purcell notes that the appeal of Chinese nationalistic schools in Indonesia increased, during the prewar years even among those Chinese born in the islands, p. 67.

population, were spread over a wider area and a larger proportion of them were native born, factors which made it easier for them to become a part of the native scene.<sup>24</sup> Although Yoshizumi's goal of fusing the Chinese with the Indonesians remained remote from reality, the Japanese policy of attempting to enlist Chinese cooperation was not altogether barren.

Their first move was to secure, in August 1943, the organization of a Chinese Residents Association which was led by Chinese of pro-Wang Ching-wei sympathies. At about the same time they began easing the educational ban against Chinese and permitted the opening of a few private Chinese schools although with a carefully supervised curriculum. Chinese eventually were allowed to enter teacher training institutes and certain of the specialized schools.<sup>25</sup> In December 1943 travel restrictions on the Chinese in Java were removed and in the following May Chinese and Eurasians were exempted from the payment of the resident registration fee previously imposed. In October 1944 a special Chinese auxiliary police corps, the Keibōtai, was established in each province as a Chinese counterpart of the Village Guards (Keibōdan) which was comprised entirely of Indonesians. Like the latter, it was Japanese trained and led.<sup>26</sup> Simultaneously Chinese were allowed to volunteer for the Home Defense Army. In November the first Chinese volunteers for the Sumatra Volunteer Army were accepted, ostensibly because the "authorities were obliged to yield before repeated pleas made by Chinese youths to serve."<sup>27</sup> However, since drafts were sometimes necessary to fill assigned

<sup>24</sup> According to 1930 census there were 1,233,000 Chinese in Indonesia out of a total population of 60,727,000. Of these, 582,000 lived on Java and Madura. For details on the population, racial mixture and dispersion of the Chinese in Indonesia see Purcell, *The Position of the Chinese in Southeast Asia*, pp. 38-42.

<sup>25</sup> See *Program in Sumatra*, p. 54 and *Program in Java*, p. 65.

<sup>26</sup> *Program in Java*, pp. 65, 67.

<sup>27</sup> *Shōnan Shimbum*, November 10, 1944.

quotas, the pressure was apparently somewhat short of overwhelming.<sup>28</sup>

In the political field, the Chinese were given their first recognition when the Central Advisory Council was set up in September 1943. Three Chinese representatives sat on the Council, including Wang Chang-hui, the head of the Chinese Residents Association and titular leader of the Chinese community, who was one of the twenty-three local leaders appointed by the Military Administration. Representatives of the Chinese were also placed on the municipal councils which were founded at the same time. One of the members of the Committee for the Preparation of Independence also was a Chinese.<sup>29</sup>

In summary, Japanese policy cannot be accused of deliberately fostering racial antagonism but rather sought to mitigate its effects. This is not to say, however, that improved relations between Chinese and Indonesians resulted from their actions. The Japanese encroachments on Chinese businesses, for example, encouraged Indonesian reprisals against the unpopular "Chinese middleman" who was not likely to be given much protection by the occupation authorities, and the overwhelming emphasis of the nationalists on Indonesian development often conflicted with the anti-Japanese sentiments of the bulk of the Chinese. In spite of these points of friction, however, the tension between Indonesians and Chinese seems not to have become acute until the outbreak of fighting between the former and the Dutch.<sup>30</sup> Certainly in comparison with

<sup>28</sup> Exhibit 1351.

<sup>29</sup> Yap Thwan Bing: *Overdijkink*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>30</sup> See Purcell, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-8.

*Merdeka*, in the issue of August 29, 1947, maintained, in what was something of an overstatement, that "Prior to the outbreak of the present colonial war, there was complete understanding between the two peoples and even now where the enemy has not yet set foot, the Chinese are living in a peaceful atmosphere."

The *Straits Times* reported on October 15, 1945, that the Indonesians were "obviously seeking to promote relations with the Chinese population."

Malaya, the divisive effects of the occupation were much less severe.

In Malaya, the explosive potentialities of the situation were infinitely greater. Not only were the Chinese the largest single racial group, the percentage of those born in China was somewhat higher than in Indonesia.<sup>31</sup> Ties with China were particularly strong and the incentive for assimilation considerably less. The Malays, numerically and economically inferior to the Overseas Chinese, were increasingly apprehensive about their position.

One of the first acts of the Japanese after taking over Singapore was to conduct a brutal purge of the Chinese community in which those suspected of anti-Japanese and pro-Chungking sentiment were imprisoned or summarily disposed of.<sup>32</sup> The cruelty which accompanied this purge surpassed any measures taken against the Chinese in Indonesia and it was but an extreme example of the course which Japanese policy followed in regard to the Malayan Chinese. One scans the pages of the leading war-time paper in Singapore, the *Shōnan Shimbun*, practically in vain for a good word for the Chinese. In May 1942, it was reported that the donations by the Overseas Chinese Association were satisfactory "as a whole,"<sup>33</sup> but by the next month there were complaints about the spirit of the monetary gifts of the Chinese, which, it was charged, represented only an attempt to atone for anti-Japanese activities.<sup>34</sup> Later both Chinese and Eurasians were castigated

<sup>31</sup> As of the 1930 census, the difference between the two was quite marked. Less than 1/3 of the Chinese of Malaya were locally born, in Java, 79% of them were locally born but in the outer provinces the figure was only 48% and was even lower for Sumatra alone. By 1947, 2/3 of the Chinese of Malaya were locally born. Figures taken from Purcell and Cator.

<sup>32</sup> See Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 369.

<sup>33</sup> *Shōnan Shimbun*, May 4, 1942.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, June 27, 1942. The article is entitled "\$50 Million Gift or Bribe?"

for their "lack of good leaders."<sup>35</sup> The Overseas Chinese Association was attacked for its failure to keep law and order among the Chinese, to prevent black marketing and to carry out the duties assigned it by the administration. Its leaders, the Japanese complained, had no control over the community and they forced the appointment of new ones.<sup>36</sup> Again, late in 1943, however, the chief of the Propaganda Bureau of the Malayan Military Administration was inveighing against the shortcomings of the Chinese Association.<sup>37</sup> The Association, he declared, had been set up to control all the Chinese in Malaya but it was falling down badly on the job and its members, instead of exhibiting the proper amount of public spiritedness, were interested only in securing benefits for themselves. Another reorganization is called for, he said, so that the organization can be more effective on the local level. Not only the organization but the Overseas Chinese themselves were chided for the "regrettable characteristics" displayed in their actions. "The bandits, gang robbers, spies and other undesirable elements now trying to disturb the peace and order in Malaya are mostly Overseas Chinese," the article said.<sup>38</sup>

Insofar as this list of "undesirables" was meant as a euphemism for guerrillas it was substantially correct for guerrilla activity in Malaya was all but exclusively the work of the Chinese as has been shown clearly by Spencer Chapman in his fascinating account of his life with the guerrillas in Malaya during the war.<sup>39</sup> The Chinese in Malaya seem to have been almost unanimous in their stand against the Japanese. Even the more wealthy group, which in some areas "accommodated" itself to the New

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, August 18, 1942.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, June 20, 1942.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, November 2, 1943.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Chapman, F. Spencer, *The Jungle is Neutral*, London, 1949.

Order, was driven by the cruelty of Japanese policies to give support and subsidies to the guerrillas.<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, there were relatively few Malays (or Malayan Indians) among the guerrilla forces. It is significant that the British did not feel they could trust the Malays in resistance activities either at the beginning or toward the close of the war.<sup>41</sup> The Japanese, on the contrary, found the Malays valuable as informants, guides, guards and for general police work.

The resulting situation was virtual civil war. In retaliation for guerrilla raids, Japanese-led Malay (and Indian) units attacked Chinese communities which were held responsible for the activities of the guerrillas. As counter-retaliation and to obtain supplies, the guerrillas attacked Malay communities. So the vicious circle developed throughout the war and culminated in several murderous outbursts just after the surrender. The reversal of roles which occurred just at that time was signified by an article in one of the first issues of the postwar *Straits Times*. The Singapore Chinese, it said, were giving "invaluable help" to British authorities in locating Japanese collaborators in Singapore, and the authorities have expressed their highest appreciation of the behavior of the Chinese during the occupation. Mention of the Malays was conspicuous by its absence.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

"It seemed that the Chinese throughout Malaya, especially in the country districts, were filled with a most bitter hatred of the Japanese and yet felt themselves impotent to do anything about it except to support the guerrillas, which they were prepared to do to the limit." *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>41</sup> According to Chapman, pre-surrender plans for organizing the resistance called for the arming and training of 3500 Chinese to aid in the invasion. An organization of Malays was planned but its activities would be confined to collecting information as Malays were considered too poor security risks to be used in fighting. *Ibid.*, p. 412.

Purcell points out that there was a Malay resistance force but he does not cite its strength or effectiveness, which, from Chapman's first-hand testimony, do not seem to have been of much moment. *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 372.

<sup>42</sup> *Straits Times*, September 14, 1945



That increased hostility between Chinese and Malays resulted from the Japanese occupation is evident, that this was entirely the result of deliberate Japanese policy is less certain. The interests of the Japanese in maintaining racial harmony for reasons of economic development and of defense was as pertinent to Malaya as elsewhere. But circumstances alter cases and the very numerical strength and economic power of the Chinese in Malaya posed a special problem for Japanese. Their calculation that harsh measures, at the outset, would frighten the Chinese into cooperation badly misfired; cruelty only stiffened Chinese resistance which inspired still more brutal methods of repression in an increasingly vicious circle. There was a fundamental difference in attitude toward the occupation between the Chinese, who resisted, and the Malays, who were generally cooperative, and this difference appeared even before the Japanese completed the conquest of Malaya. This, in a sense, set limits to what the Japanese could do—given their way of trying to achieve cooperation, at least—the core of Chinese resistance was intransigent and Malay cooperation naturally made them a chosen instrument of the Japanese. It was in the virtual Chinese monopoly of the resistance movement that the dynamite lay. Had there been significant groups of both Chinese and Malays in the resistance, and among the collaborators as well, the bitterness which came in the wake of the occupation would not have had such a pronounced racial tinge.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> In British Borneo, for example, the Chinese were the leaders and most active section of the guerrillas but were not the only group to carry on resistance activities. The Dayaks, though prone to be more cooperative with the Japanese than were the Chinese, provided some representatives and support to the resistance. This has been offered as an explanation of the fact that the postwar situation has been much less explosive there than in Malaya. See Harrison, Tom, "The Chinese in Borneo, 1942-46," *International Affairs*, London, Vol. XXVI, No. 3, July 1950.

*The Indians*

In respect to the Indian population of Southeast Asia, Japan was in a much better tactical position than with the Chinese. Whereas they were the invaders of China, they could pose as the would-be liberators of India and in the course of the war they were never called upon for the fulfillment of their promise. They were the enemy of India's main enemy, England, and for many Indians, obsessed with the problem of throwing off British rule, any enemy of England's was welcome as an ally. After 1942, India, as an outpost of Western imperialism in Southeast Asia, offered a tempting and juicy target to Japanese propaganda, a convenient symbol for all that Japan claimed to be fighting against. Moreover, in Subhas Chandra Bose they found a popular leader who could inspire an enthusiasm far beyond that evoked by Wang Ching-wei as head of the Nanking Government.

These favorable circumstances contrived to facilitate a Japanese appeal to the Indians that stressed India as the focal point of their political activity, a realistic approach in view of the important influence, noted above, of the Congress on the politically articulate Indians abroad. War-time developments within India, the civil disobedience campaign, the imprisonment of the Congress leaders, the famine in Bengal and the resulting unrest, were welcome grist to the Japanese propaganda mill which sought to use the Indians in the occupied areas as a magnet for their brothers in India and, in this way, encourage resistance to the British and smooth the path of a Japanese invasion.

The National Congress, it was pointed out earlier,<sup>44</sup> was not trusted completely by the Japanese and its stand during the war certainly was not what they would have wished it to be. Circumstances were such as to prevent an outspoken anti-Japanese stand on the part of the Congress,

<sup>44</sup> See Chapter I.

however. There was, in the first place, indecision and equivocation in this matter on the part of some of the Congress leaders. This was due not to pro-Japanese sentiment, which Nehru has claimed was almost non-existent,<sup>45</sup> but to the desire for neutrality, a belief in inevitable British defeat which would make it necessary for India to deal with Japan, and a constitutional aversion to any action that appeared pro-British. Gandhi, himself, inclined to the view that the presence of the British in India was an invitation to Japanese invasion and that British defeat was inevitable although he warned against relying on any Japanese aid in ousting the British as a "remedy worse than the disease."<sup>46</sup>

His program which called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from India, for Indian neutrality in the war, and for a policy of non-cooperation in the face of any invasion, provoked a debate within the Working Committee of the Congress.<sup>47</sup> Those who approved it did so on the grounds of the impending defeat of the British, the desire for neutrality, the ability of India to defend herself. Implicit in their arguments was the notion that independence must take precedence over all other considerations. Leaders like Nehru and Rajagopalachari opposed the program with the argument that it played into the hands of Japan. The end result would be to line up passively with the Axis and the unconscious assumption of the program, said Nehru, was that Japan and Germany would win the war, a view with which he did not agree.<sup>48</sup>

The position of the Congress finally was summed up in

<sup>45</sup> Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, New York, 1946, p. 478.

<sup>46</sup> *India*. Statement published by the Government of India on the Congress Party's Responsibility for the Disturbances in India 1942-43. *Cmd.* 6430, London 1943, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> For text of his program see *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

He said, among other things, that India had no quarrel with Japan and that "if India were free her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan."

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

the Wardha Resolution prepared by the Working Committee in July 1942.<sup>49</sup> The Committee expressed itself as concerned over the growing satisfaction at Japanese successes and the tendency to accept aggression passively. It favored resistance to aggression and the avoidance of any action that would embarrass the Allied Powers in the prosecution of the war; even the stationing of Allied troops in India would be permitted. This, however, *must* be consequent to a grant of independence and the end of all political control.

From the standpoint of Bose and the League, the greatest significance of the Congress stand was not the underlying tone of sympathy for the Allies which was present but the insistence on the primacy of Indian independence. The British refusal to consider such a step in wartime and the imprisonment of Congress leaders in the civil disobedience campaign resulting from this refusal meant that the League could avoid any open break with the Congress. Bose carefully refrained from giving his movement the appearance of rivalry with the Congress; they were, rather, two branches which used somewhat different methods to reach the same objective.

His technique can be illustrated from a radio speech beamed to India and addressed specifically to Gandhi.<sup>50</sup> "For the Indians outside of India," he says, "you are the creator of the present awakening in our country." All Indian nationals "have one goal, one desire in life." Their differences are only "internal" and do not affect their appreciation of Gandhi's achievements.

Bose then goes to the heart of the methodological conflict: the British will never leave until *forcibly* ejected and to accomplish this India must have outside help. "All revolutions have succeeded only with outside help." He is now convinced of the sincerity of Japanese efforts to help

<sup>49</sup> For text of Resolution see *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Radio speech of July 6, 1944, quoted in Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 217 ff.

India because of the "new consciousness" which has been aroused by the war. Japan, he continues, would be only too happy if the Indians would liberate themselves by their own efforts but since armed struggle is inevitable they will gladly provide the necessary aid.<sup>51</sup>

The strongly nationalist line adopted by the Indian leaders in the occupied areas was encouraged by the Japanese who provided them with propaganda facilities. Thanks to Japanese intercession with Indian newspaper proprietors, the League secured printing presses and supplies of paper in sufficient quantity to put out five papers in Malaya, two in English, two in Hindustani and one in Tamil.<sup>52</sup> Broadcasting stations in Singapore, Bangkok and later one in Tokyo, which had special arrangements for an American program, were made available. Propaganda activities were carried out in accordance with directions from the Publicity and Propaganda Department of the League (later of the Azad Hind Government) at Singapore to all local branches of the League. Following its instructions, Gandhi's birthday was the occasion for celebrations in Indian communities throughout the Co-Prosperity Sphere and after the establishment of the Provisional Government, the twenty-first of each month was celebrated as Provisional Government of Free India Day with appropriate patriotic displays. On the military side, training centers were set up in Singapore, Bangkok, Hongkong and Shanghai for Indian National Army volunteers who came from all parts of Southeast Asia.

From its inception, the League had stressed the idea

<sup>51</sup> In a speech before the Imperial Rule Assistance Association in Tokyo in June 1943, Bose held that Gandhi's disobedience movement had accomplished substantially nothing. "Complete independence for India can only be realized by carrying on strife by force of arms." *References to Activities of Indians in Japan and Occupied Areas*. Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch #2702A, November 16, 1944, p. 5. Hereafter referred to as *Activities of Indians*.

<sup>52</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

that it spoke for all the Indian communities in Southeast Asia. Representatives from all countries were present at the founding conference at Bangkok at which time the area was divided into zones each of which was to be represented at all future conferences by a specific number of delegates allotted on the basis of the Indian population and economic importance of the zone.<sup>53</sup> When S. C. Bose assumed the leadership of the movement, the conferences became less important but, by the same token, centralization increased and ties between the branches and League headquarters, now run by the Provisional Government, were strengthened. Bose himself traveled widely and established personal contact with League branches everywhere—thanks, of course, to Japanese cooperation. A sample of his speeches on these tours may be found in a radio address delivered just after a trip through Indonesia. He particularly noted, he said, that the people of Sumatra and Java had no desire to return to the former regime. To them, the past was

“ . . . a chapter of servitude, humiliation and exploitation which they would like to forget once and for all. What is particularly gratifying to me, as an Indian, is that my countrymen in these parts are politically wide awake and determined to play their part in the coming struggle for India's freedom.”<sup>54</sup>

This last sentence is an interesting contrast to the utterance of Wang Ching-wei at the Greater East Asia conference, cited previously, in which he spoke of cooperation with the local population. In general, the work of the League was not directed to attaching, in a political sense, the Indians abroad to the land in which they were residing. They formed, as it were, an *imperium in imperio*.

<sup>53</sup> The zones were Burma, Malaya, Java-Bali, Philippines, Sumatra, Siam, French Indo-China, Hongkong-Macao-Canton, Borneo, Shanghai-Nanking-Manchuria, Japan. Malaya and Burma were allotted the largest number, 14 each. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>54</sup> *Program in Java*, p. 54.

What was the reaction of political elements in other countries to the vigorous campaign carried on by the League? In Indonesia and the Philippines the Indian population was not of sufficient size for League activities to be of much concern. Nor were the numbers in French Indo-China of any great significance but here the situation was complicated by the attitude of the French administration which opposed the formation of a League there out of fear of its effect on the nationalist sentiments of the Annamites.<sup>55</sup> Consequently the Japanese advised the Indians to continue the Indian Association which had been formed in Saigon and Hanoi after the Japanese Occupation. This ingenious solution enabled the Japanese to maintain a formally correct position with the French without actually stifling the work of the Indians. On the other hand, they backed a visit by Bose to Saigon in 1944 much to the annoyance of the French and when the French were deposed in 1945, branches of the League were quick to make an appearance.<sup>56</sup>

Numerically and economically the Indians were most important in Malaya and Burma. In the former, however, the Japanese maintained complete control of the governmental structure and there was no well organized political movement among the Malays. Such was not the case in Burma where there was a separate Burmese administration after 1943 and where anti-Indian sentiment had fed the springs of nationalism. One might expect that the Japanese would be plagued by bitterness and tension between the Burmese and Indians but difficulties seem to have been less than might have been anticipated.

During the confusion which ensued with the Japanese invasion, there were spontaneous and widespread attacks,

<sup>55</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* Chatterji himself went to Saigon to organize the work of the League there and says that, while there he wrote a pamphlet discussing Indian aid to the Annamite national movement, p. 282.

which in the Irrawaddy Delta area became massacres, on the Indians by the population and by the Burma Independence Army which accompanied the Japanese. It was the Japanese themselves who restored order and provided the Indians with necessary protection.<sup>57</sup> Their reasons for such action are plain enough. The Indians in Burma, like the Chinese elsewhere in Southeast Asia, were an important economic group to whom the Japanese looked for help in building a new economic order. Perhaps even more important, was their desire to pose as liberators of India, in which role they would appear ludicrous if they countenanced the slaughter of Indians in Burma. It might be noted that the Japanese derived some benefit from the general confusion caused by the British retreat from Burma and by these disturbances for they resulted in a wide-scale migration of Indians back to India, a movement which helped reduce the tension between the two groups. The exodus of Indians was quite satisfactory to the Burmese; and since many of them were closely connected with the British, many, for example, were in the civil service, their loss was no cause for regret on the part of the Indian Independence League.

The preparations for Burmese independence during the summer of 1943 coincided with the revival in the fortunes of the League which followed Bose's arrival in Malaya in June of that year. When Ba Maw came to Singapore in July to consult with Tōjō during the latter's tour of the Southern Areas, he met Bose and the two discussed the position of Burma in regard to the Indian independence movement. Ba Maw promised his support and invited Bose to attend the inauguration of the new Government of Burma.<sup>58</sup> Bose accepted and on the trip secured Ba Maw's agreement to allow the Headquarters of the Pro-

<sup>57</sup> *Burma During the Japanese Occupation*—Intelligence Bureau, Government of Burma, Simla, October 1943, p. 23.

<sup>58</sup> See *Activities of Indians*, p. 28. See also Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ff.



visional Government of India to be moved to Burma where they were set up at Rangoon in December 1943.

Bose's work and the transfer of governmental headquarters to Burma inaugurated the League there and the number of its branches rose to one hundred.<sup>59</sup> National schools, modeled on those already set up in Malaya, were started to teach Hindustani, Indian national history and physical training to adults as well as children. The special children's organization, Bal Sena, for those aged 6-16, was organized widely in Burma. This group, which emphasized physical training and military drill, was reported to have been an effective propaganda agency in work among Indian adults.<sup>60</sup>

One of the early steps of the Burmese Government was the announcement that Indians who were British subjects would not be considered as enemy nationals but as a friendly people.<sup>61</sup> The measure reflected the general amiability which prevailed between Burmese and Indian leaders. Aung San, then Burmese Defense Minister, when asked by newsmen about Burmese cooperation with the Indian Government, about to set up headquarters in Rangoon, recalled that he had met Bose at a conference in India in 1940 and said the meeting would be one of "old friends."<sup>62</sup> India and Burma have suffered together under British oppression, he continued, and Burma's independence is not complete until India has obtained hers.

"Her neighbor's oppression is Burma's oppression. If I were a military commander, and not merely a defense minister, I

<sup>59</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172. Its aims were (1) character building through the spirit of Service, Faith, Unity (2) love of motherland (3) sense of discipline.

<sup>61</sup> *Activities of Indians*, p. 20.

This was a reaffirmation of the principle that "cooperating" Indians were not enemies, in force since the beginning of the Military Administration.

<sup>62</sup> *Osaka Asahi*, December 18, 1943.

would take up a sword and begin the march on India with the Indian Army."<sup>63</sup>

A short time later, in an official welcome to Bose, Aung San declared that India must fight for her own freedom but that in so doing she could count on the sympathy and support of all of East Asia.<sup>64</sup> This same view was stressed by Ba Maw at the Greater East Asia conference.

"I have often said that there cannot be a free Burma without a free India. I will go further now and boldly declare that there cannot be a free Asia without a free India. . . . Indian independence is an integral part of Asiatic independence and, therefore, India's struggle is Asia's struggle, our struggle, our war."<sup>65</sup>

In his introduction of S. C. Bose to the Conference, Ba Maw elaborated on the reason for this identity of interests. Burma is well qualified to speak on the Indian question, he held, for the two countries have followed the "same hard, bitter road against the same enemy." It was with Indian wealth and Indian manpower that Britain conquered and ruled Burma:

"That is why you will understand me when I say that if we wish to destroy that predatory empire, if we wish to destroy anti-Asiatic powers, we must burn them out, drive them out of their Asiatic stronghold, and that stronghold is India."<sup>66</sup>

That good feeling was not confined to top level circles was proved by the events which followed the revolt of the Burmese Defense Army, led by Aung San, in the spring

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Activities of Indians*, p. 21.

<sup>65</sup> *Japan Yearbook 1943-44*, p. 1070.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1072-73. Ogawa, Gotaro, Chief Adviser to the Burmese Government, in a statement made in Japan at this time praised both men for the improvement in Burmese-Indian relations and quoted Ba Maw as giving Bose the credit for making cooperation possible. Both, said Ogawa, are "men of action based on zeal and willpower." *Activities of Indians*, p. 21.

of 1945. At that time the Army turned on the Japanese and killed many of the Japanese officers attached to it but it never took any action against Indian troops. On the contrary, the Indians were given a helping hand with food and transportation by the Defense Army, and they, in turn, refused to accede to Japanese requests that they attack the Burmese.<sup>67</sup>

### *The Karens*

The Burmese leaders were willing that the Indian population of Burma should be treated as a group apart and should fasten their political aspirations on India rather than on Burma. It was an entirely different matter with the Karens, however, for they were regarded as an integral part of Burma.

Relations between the Burmese and Karens had never been particularly cordial. There were numerous sources of tension: different racial stock; different temperament; the Burmese were Buddhist, many of the leading Karens were Christian; the Burmese were anti-British, the Karens were more favorably disposed toward British rule as a protection against Burmese domination. The Karens provided a large share of the men serving in military units and the police force; as a consequence, their role in suppressing Burmese uprisings was not one designed to promote harmony.

The traditional fear and suspicion of Burmese domination held by the outnumbered Karens were enhanced by the violent developments during the Japanese invasion in early 1942.<sup>68</sup> The Burma Independence Army which attempted to set up its own administration in the wake of the Japanese advance undertook a mass persecution of the Karens in the Delta region and, among other things,

<sup>67</sup> Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 256 ff.

<sup>68</sup> See *Burma During the Japanese Occupation*, *passim*. The Burma Independence Army was abolished when the Japanese set up the Burmese Executive Administration in June 1942.

shot Saw Pe Tha, one of the Karen leaders. These excesses led the Karens to attempt to set up a state of their own. Although in many areas the Japanese established their own administrative committees to restore a semblance of order out of the chaos created by the violence of the BIA, they seem not to have interfered in this area and the Burmese successfully crushed this attempt at secession.

In August 1943, Tokyo announced that conferences between Ba Maw and Karen leaders had settled the difficulties between them, that there was to be no further discrimination against the Karens and that the latter had agreed to cooperate with Ba Maw.<sup>69</sup> The Burmese Government was less complacent at this time, however. In the first review of the New Order Plan, October 1943, there were complaints that the Japanese Military Police had recently set up Karen associations in the Delta districts.<sup>70</sup> The associations, said the Government, could only serve to perpetuate the old communal set-up. "It is important that action be taken quickly to abolish these organizations," it continued, for the Karen, and Shan, states *must* be a part of Burma. "The Japanese have been informed of our views on this," concluded the review.

For its own part, the Burmese Government took several steps to bind the Karens to itself. Several Karen leaders were brought into the administration. U Hle Pe was made a member of the cabinet as Minister of Forests and was given the task of liaison with the Central Karen Board, in matters concerning Karen affairs. A prominent Karen, Sir San C. Po, a former Senator under the British administration, served on the committee to prepare independence and became a member of the Privy Council.

Later reviews of the New Order Plan do not contain any further complaints against Japanese interference with the Karens and the Government itself intensified its drive for

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>70</sup> *Burma's New Order Plan*, p. 18 ff.

national unity. U Hle Pe in an address before a Karen youth group graduating from a social service training school said:

"Now that Burma is Mahabama<sup>71</sup> all Karen youths should endeavor to nurture the spirit of self-sacrifice and work for the common good of the country. They must discard old ideas and throw in their lot in the task of rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country."<sup>72</sup>

The slogan adopted by the Government, "one blood, one voice, one leader" was symptomatic of this drive of which the aim, as expressed by Ba Maw, was

". . . the unification of all peoples of a greater new Burma without regard to political, social or sectional differences . . . a greater Burmese nation arising from a common melting pot for the native races of Burma."<sup>73</sup>

A sense of the urgent necessity of national unity, a characteristic noted in Indonesian national leaders, is prominent in the thought of all the nationalist leaders in Southeast Asia. Basically, this can be attributed to a "natural law" of national development, for the pressure to achieve centralization and standardization and to extend the culture of the dominant nationality to minority groups within national boundaries, is a universal characteristic of nationalism. There is, on the part of these leaders, an extraordinary intensity of feeling on this subject. This is due in part to the racial map of Southeast Asia, the crazy-quilt pattern of which poses an immediate and complex problem to the new governments. These leaders also feel that

<sup>71</sup> The Mahabama Asiayone (Greater Burma Association) was established in 1944 as an all-inclusive political organization.

<sup>72</sup> F.C.C. Radio Report No. 53, September 1, 1944. Thakin Nu the Director of Mahabama, was quoted as follows:

"Its object is to unite the Shan and Chin peoples. Anything which might suggest discrimination has been done away with. All the races of Burma are included in the program of the federation which is to secure the people's cooperation in the war effort." *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

they are working under a tremendous pressure of time. Trying to introduce large parts of the twentieth century machine world to peoples still living in the age of the ox-cart, they must attempt to span the development of centuries in the course of a few decades. To do this, they feel that centralized control, simplified, standardized methods and efficiency are required. Convinced, as a result of the struggle for independence, that unity is the source of strength and born into a world which crowds in upon them on every hand, the new nations of Southeast Asia naturally are concerned to present a united front to the world and to obliterate regional and racial differences which they regard as a source of weakness.

It is these considerations which are the basis of the increased tension and the apparent disintegration that have marked developments in Southeast Asia since the war. The activities of the governments impinge on minority groups in a new and forceful way, thus stimulating a more violent reaction. Gone is the colonial power which often acted as a buffer for the minorities and encouraged their separateness from the majority. What was more natural than that these minorities should, in their reaction, seize upon national self-determination as a protective weapon? For nationalism is highly contagious; if it is good for Burmese, why not for Karens; if for Javanese, why not for the Amboinese? Almost inevitably, the minorities have sought to immunize themselves against the dominant majority through nationalism.

If the Japanese are to bear any part of the blame for the civil strife which has plagued Southeast Asia since the war, it does not stem from any diabolic artfulness in setting group against group but, in their contributions, direct and indirect, to the flames of nationalism.

## Conclusion

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE FALL of Singapore, an Indian member of the Malayan civil service declared that "although his reason utterly rebelled against it, his sympathies instinctively ranged themselves with the Japanese in their fight against Anglo-America."<sup>1</sup> Similar sentiments, often less mixed, were widespread among Asians. In many instances the entry of Japanese soldiers assumed the air of a triumphal procession. At the very least, they were greeted with indifference on the part of the local population, and only the Chinese communities can be said to have offered anything approaching active resistance.

Anti-Westernism, the basic cause of this reaction to Japanese victory, provided the Japanese with their most effective propaganda weapon. They used it unsparingly and often with telling results, but with diminishing returns. As the Report of the Government of Burma indicated,<sup>2</sup> the old slogans about British imperialism became badly frayed from constant use as answers to new problems. The evils of the past did not entirely erase those of the present which had to be dealt with in different terms. That the Japanese failed to meet the challenge of these

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Fisher, Charles A., "The Concept of Asian Unity" in *Asian Horizon*, Autumn, 1948, Vol. 1, No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See *Burma's New Order Plan*, p. 23.

new problems can be illustrated by the contrast between the welcome accorded their arrival in Southeast Asia and the conditions under which they departed. In the Philippines they were beset by guerrillas everywhere, in Burma they were under attack by a Burmese army, officered and manned by their recent collaborators, in Indo-China and Indonesia they found safety only in numbers. Even if there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm for the white man's return, scarcely a hand was lifted in support of the Japanese. They clearly had failed to identify the interests of the Southeast Asians with their own.

There are many reasons which can be given for this failure—two of the most obvious are the cruelty meted out to the native population, and the privation due to the economic dislocations which accompanied the war. This study has been concerned with a rather different cause of their failure, namely their inability to capture the loyalty of the national movements with which they came in contact. In many instances they received considerable support from nationalist parties and succeeded in attracting the cooperation, sometimes nominal, but often active, of nationalist leaders who spurned (and were spurned by) the previous colonial regimes. There never developed, however, a real unity of interests between the two parties, there was no overwhelming despair on the part of the Asians at Japan's defeat, no feeling that they must have Japanese support to stand on their feet.

The idea of linking forces with the national movements was a sound one. It was by no means original with the Japanese but the circumstances under which they launched their effort gave them a unique opportunity. They fumbled it, and one basic cause was their own faulty conception of the national movements in Asia. The view came dangerously close to being one according to which the "native blokes" were given a few trappings of authority, rather as playthings to keep them amused while the



Japanese devoted themselves to essential matters. This is perhaps, an oversimplified statement of their view for there was some awareness that the problem was more complex than this;<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the parts of their program discussed here show that it is by no means unfair. The idea of Japanese superiority was implicit in their estimates of the national movements, cited in the opening chapters; it was borne out in all their actions during the occupation. The notion of guidance was always that of leading a little child by the hand, there was no inkling of a relationship in which mutual problems would be discussed on equal terms. The process by which one nation transmits to another the fruits of its own experience is an exceedingly complex one, particularly if some respect is paid to elements of the old society of the recipient; perhaps there is no very satisfactory method, but it is certainly true that the Japanese violated most of the rudimentary principles of such a relationship. They saw what a useful instrument nationalism could be in their plans for a Co-Prosperity Sphere, but they failed to draw all the necessary consequences from this realization, for if nationalism was a force strong enough to be of use to them, it would require more consideration than they were prepared to give. No second rate status but some measure of real equality, not the mere trappings of power but authority actually exercised were the minimum requirements which they would have had to meet.

This study has tried to show, in some detail in the case of Indonesia, the gradual awakening of the Japanese to the fact that nationalism was a stronger and more developed force than they had imagined and demanded greater concessions than they had anticipated. They gave ground grudgingly and, like the colonial powers a few years previously, came close to meeting the demands of

<sup>3</sup> See Ōshio, *op. cit.*

the nationalists only when defeat was staring them in the face.

If the Japanese found nationalism a less pliable instrument than they had anticipated, the nationalists found that Japanese promises far outstripped performance. Each seeking to use the other as an instrument in his own plan, was disappointed, and yet each reaped some benefit from the association. There is no question but that the acquiescence of the great part of the people and the active cooperation of many of the leaders made Japan's occupation task much simpler and, at the same time, provided a fine weapon in the propaganda war. On the other hand, this period saw a marked development in the nationalist movements everywhere in Southeast Asia. Japanese policy was responsible for this only in part, in part it was the result of the general situation, but these movements were certainly more powerful in 1945 than they had been in 1941.

As illustrations, two important developments which occurred during the occupation of Indonesia have been considered in this study—the increased role of the native population in administrative affairs, and the strengthening of the forces of national unity. The Japanese, having at first assumed practically all of the important administrative positions themselves, gradually gave ground before Indonesian pressure for a greater hand in administering their own affairs. Particularly through the system of appointing Japanese advisers, they tried to maintain actual authority in their own hands while nominally giving it to the Indonesians. In this they were not altogether successful for the pressure of events, especially in the closing stages of the war, brought positions of real power into the hands of the Indonesians and, moreover, the divorce between real and nominal authority was often not as complete as they intended. Probably too much cannot be made of the technical experience gained by the Indonesians as a

result but they did receive a psychological filip which strengthened their determination to resist the return of colonial rule at the end of the war.

Just as the pressure of events forced the Japanese to make concessions in the field of administration, so it led them to pay more heed to the aspiration for national unity. From 1944 onward in particular, they geared their organizational and propaganda facilities to the task of fostering national unity. As the Allied counter-attack gained momentum it became more and more urgent for Japan to win the active support of the local population if she were to hold her conquests. This situation enhanced the bargaining power of the nationalists. The story of events in Indonesia shows the widened latitude given nationalists spokesmen, the heightened effectiveness of their work due to the facilities of communication and transportation provided by the Japanese, and the increased audience which they were able to reach. Under the occupation the movement was centralized as it never had been before the war, and under the leadership of men determined to unite all of the Indies under one government. The organizations sponsored by the occupation authorities, both civilian and military, were a more effective means of carrying on nationalistic work at the local level than anything previously known. Not only was a new audience tapped but new cadres were being trained and, at the same time, there was a uniformity in program and propaganda that helped break down the isolation of the villages from central authority. The educational system, as it functioned during the occupation, was another instrument of centralization and unification. All of these developments, in conjunction with the overthrow of the old colonial system and the disruption of life occasioned by the war, were catalytic agents in the dissolution of the old order; they were paving the way for the construction of a modern state.

The drive for national unity which has accompanied the achievement of independence has aggravated the condition of the national minorities in Southeast Asia. This study has surveyed Japanese policy in regard to some of these minorities in an effort to determine the extent to which it can be held responsible for this development. In general, it has been concluded that the Japanese made no principle of a "divide and rule" policy, although there were certain exceptions involving the Chinese who constituted a special problem for the occupation authorities. Even in regard to the Chinese, moreover, the effort to secure a united national effort in the latter part of the war induced Japanese policy to stress the unity rather than the separateness of all the national groups.

One question raised in the Introduction has not been considered. Did the Japanese occupation give totalitarian forces the upper hand over a nascent democracy? No answer will be attempted here but it should be noted that, although the Japanese gave encouragement to extremist and militaristic elements, there were anti-democratic forces in the colonial regimes and in the native societies which provided as good a model for totalitarian development as did the occupation.

Except in French Indo-China, political independence is no longer the key issue in the countries of Southeast Asia. Other problems now occupy the center of the stage but nationalism remains the most important single element in these lands and that party, democratic or otherwise, which can unite its own program with it stands the greatest chance of success.

For the West, however well-intentioned its motives and circumspect its conduct, there is a special problem. Nationalism in Southeast Asia retains its strong flavor of anti-imperialism which in its most frequent and powerful mani-

festations, is equated with anti-Westernism.<sup>4</sup> The West is not likely to duplicate the Japanese mistake of underestimating the strength of nationalism but it must constantly remain aware of the limitations which this strength imposes on both the range and effectiveness of its actions.

<sup>4</sup> No great reservoir of resentment against the Japanese seems to remain except among the Chinese and, perhaps to some extent, among the Filipinos. Nehru, for example, in a speech before the Asian Relations Conference stated that Japan was unrepresented there "for reasons which are beyond Japanese control or ours." See *Asian Relations* (Being a Report of the Proceedings and Documentation of the First Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, March-April 1947) New Delhi, 1948, p. 68.

# Bibliography

## I. INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL FOR THE FAR EAST

The records of the *International Military Tribunal for the Far East*, the documents presented before it, its proceedings, judgment and decisions, have provided much of the most interesting material in this study. The following are Exhibit numbers of documents introduced as evidence before the tribunal which have been quoted directly or which are generally relevant to the subject.

142	528	871	1314	2586	3605
164	541	876	1317	2587	3636
166	628	877	1326A	2589	3658
167	641	878	1331	2591	3660
197	653	1029	1332	2598	3671A
215	661	1114	1333A	2607	3673
217	663	1169	1334	2610	3674
222	675A	1176	1335	3025	3675
272	678	1271	1336	3026	3676
277	679	1273	1338A	3030	3679
290	680	1275	1344	3086	3682
445	682	1281	1346	3089	3683
476	740	1291	1348	3092	3719
517	850	1300	1349	3217	3719A
518	861	1305	1350	3404	3720
519	865	1306	1351	3457	3720A
520	868	1310	1352	3499A	3731
527	869A	1311	1353		

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 Murata, Shōzō  
 Ogoshi, Kenji  
 Tōjō, Hideki  
 Yamamoto, Kumaichi  
 Yuzawa, Michio

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