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Salud C. Buñag
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INTRODUCTION

The appearance in print of the five essays contained in this issue of *Asian Studies* has been made possible, first by the conveners of the Fourth International Conference on Asian History, held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, between 5 and 10 August, 1968, and, second, by the generous initiative of Professor Josefa M. Saniel and her colleagues at the Asian Center in the University of the Philippines, who offered to set aside a whole number of the excellent journal published by that institution for early publication. As the organizer and chairman of the session at which these papers had been originally presented, I was subsequently asked to write a few prefatory lines for this issue. To all the above, but most of all to the authors who kindly responded to my invitation to participate in the panel, I should like to express my sincere thanks. Given the relative paucity of published materials on wartime Southern Asia, historians of the region will appreciate the convenience of having these five important contributions to the field appear in one short volume, thus being saved the trouble of tracking them down individually in a variety of learned journals.

To all intents and purposes, we are still in the opening, "ingathering" stages, of the historiography of this short though tremendously important era in Asian History.¹ Our areas of ignorance are still so vast, and the available resources so far flung and often in such problematically short supply, that it may take years before a reasonably comprehensive picture of Southern Asia between 1942 and 1945 will emerge. The more gratifying, then, that the number of serious studies has been slowly yet perceptibly increasing, especially so in the countries so deeply affected by the Japanese interregnum. Thus Dr. Nugroho Notokusanto's ongoing research on the anti-Japanese rebellion of the *PETA* battalion at Blitar, of which the paper here printed constitutes a tantalizingly small installment, augurs well for the study of wartime Indonesia, a field hitherto preempted by a few Western and Japanese scholars.

In fact, most of the contributors to this issue of *Asian Studies* have already authored, or are about to author, full-length studies, which, together, will immensely enrich the as yet so scanty literature. This is especially true with regard to India, whose history in the years of the "Rising Sun" Professor Lebra and Dr. Ghosh have profoundly studied from the Jap-

¹ For earlier symposia, see Josef Silverstein, ed., *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph Series #7, 1966), and Grant K. Goodman, ed., *Imperial Japan and Asia: A Reassessment* (New York: East Asian Institute, Columbia University, 1967).

anese and Indian angles, respectively, as is shown in their valuable, complementary contributions to this symposium.² Dr. Guyot's doctoral dissertation at Yale, with which I was personally associated, is to be published shortly; her present article may serve as a fine indication of the riches which her research-in-depth in Burmese sources, combined with interviews on the spot, have unearthed.³ Professor Akashi, a Japanese-born scholar now resident in the United States, here demonstrates some of the results of his equally rewarding labors, especially in the Tokugawa Papers deposited in the National Defense Agency in Tokyo, a veritable goldmine on occupied Malaya which should ere long yield fascinating new insights into Japanese policies from his pen.⁴

It would be hard to extract from the present collection any general insights, and I shall not attempt such a fruitless task.⁵ Let me, rather, make a few more or less random comments inspired by our present authors. First, as the twin articles by Lebra and Ghosh show, a truly comprehensive picture of any single situation requires intensive work in indigenous Southern Asian and Japanese—and of course also Western—sources. Since very few students of Asian history possess the requisite linguistic skills, let alone the time, to do justice to such an assignment, we are most fortunate that these two scholars, though unbeknown to each other for quite some time, have been able to accomplish so much; the absence, until now, of adequate works on the Indian National Army makes their labors the more welcome and indeed indispensable. What does clearly emerge from their studies is, that however peripheral a place India may have occupied in the eyes of Japanese policy makers, the Indian National Army and its brilliant leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, had a profound—and, as Dr. Ghosh has argued, a decisive—effect on India's ultimate independence from Britain.

Second, I am increasingly intrigued by the importance of individual Japanese in the making of Southern Asian history, of men like Colonel Suzuki Keiji who played such a dominant role in Burma, and Major

² Already published is K. K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army: Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement* (Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1969). Professor Lebra's *Japan and the Indian National Army* is scheduled for publication in late 1969 by Donald Moore Ltd. in Singapore; a Japanese translation is to appear in Tokyo shortly.

³ An earlier essay by Dr. Guyot, "The Burma Independence Army: A Political Movement in Military Garb," appeared in Silverstein, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 51-65.

⁴ On the Tokugawa Papers, see Lea E. Williams, "Some Japanese Sources on Malayan History," *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, Vol. IV #3 (September, 1963), especially pp. 102-04.

⁵ I have endeavored to present brief and highly tentative syntheses concerning the occupation of Southeast Asia in a short essay, "The Japanese Interregnum in Southeast Asia," in Goodman, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 65-79, and, somewhat more extensively, in John Bastin and Harry J. Benda, *A History of Modern Southeast Asia: Colonialism, Nationalism and Decolonization* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968 and Singapore: Federal Publishers, 1969), pp. 123-52.

Fujiwara Iwaichi, who not only loomed large in the development of the Indian National Army, but who is also prominently mentioned in connection with the Japanese invasion of Aceh in northern Sumatra.⁶ Both, if we are to believe Drs. Guyot and Lebra, were men of very considerable skill and stature, to say the least, but both also wanted to achieve more for their Southern Asian "protégé's" than higher Japanese authorities proved ultimately willing to grant. Isn't it high time for someone to devote himself (or herself) to the study of such highly individualistic policy "entrepreneurs" and the organizations (*kikan*) they headed? Included in such a study might be others, like the ubiquitous Shimizu Hitoshi of *Sendenbu* fame in wartime Djakarta.⁷

Third and last, Drs. Nugroho's essay makes me wonder whether we will ever be able to fathom the full extent, and for that matter the motivations, of the numerous rebellions directed against the occupying power in so many parts of the *Nampo*. For, though even occupation policies and practices are far from adequately documented, there appears to be literally nothing in the printed records to guide us. Lest this "hidden" but essential part of occupation history be lost forever, one would wish for concerted efforts along the lines so patiently pioneered by our Indonesian colleagues: interviewing the survivors of these rebellions as quickly as possible. How strange that the technological revolution, with its many-faceted, and often disastrous, effects on part of Southern Asia, has not yet given rise to a wide distribution of that little miracle, the cassette tape recorder, to research institutions in the region! Wish that scores of them could be made available to "catch" the fading memories of the quickly diminishing number of the actors, and sufferers, of this poignant phase in the region's modern history!⁸

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Singapore.
June, 1969.

⁶ See A. J. Piekaar, *Atjèh en de Oorlog met Japan* (Aceh and the War with Japan), (Bandung and The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1949).

⁷ For brief but perceptive comments on Shimizu, see Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "Japan: 'The Light of Asia,'" in Silverstein, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 16. Cf. also I. J. Brugmans, ed., *Nederlandsch-Indië onder Japanse bezetting* (Netherlands India under Japanese Occupation), (Franke: T. Wever, 1960), pp. 195-96.

⁸ As work on several aspects of the Second World War in Asia proceeds in different quarters, it would seem that the time has come for some coordinated efforts. We are as yet without major bibliographical surveys, and without systematized knowledge of who is working where on what country or field. Readers may therefore welcome to be told of efforts recently launched in France by a newly-created International Committee on the History of the Second World War (Comité International d'Histoire de la 2ème guerre mondiale), of which Mr. H. Michel has been appointed Secretary-General. The Committee's address is 32 rue de Leningrad, Paris VIIIe, France. It is contemplating the publication of a special issue of its *Revue d'Histoire*, to be devoted to "Japan's Greater East Asia."

THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY—MOTIVES, PROBLEMS AND SIGNIFICANCE *

KALYAN KUMAR GHOSH

ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE Indian National Army (I.N.A.)—indeed, an unprecedented event in the history of the Indian army—was the massive transfer of loyalty in which forty thousand¹ out of fifty-five thousand² Indian men and officers who surrendered to the Japanese on the fall of Singapore in 1942 repudiated their allegiance to the British Crown. The local Japanese military authorities in Southeast Asia had taken up just before the Pacific War a scheme for winning over the Indian soldiers stationed in the region. The plan was to re-employ them in auxiliary war duties during the Malayan campaign and encourage them to organize a legion. The representatives of the Indians including the P.O.W.s who met at the Singapore, Tokyo and Bangkok Conferences in the first half of 1942 favoured in principle the proposal to raise an army for achieving “complete independence of India.” The Japanese agreed in 1942 to arm only sixteen thousand Indian P.O.W.s which formed the nucleus of the I.N.A.³ Later, with the implementation of a “scheme for a total mobilization” of the resources of the Indian community in the Japanese occupied areas, the strength of the army increased. It was estimated to be forty-five thousand in 1945.⁴ Along with the Japanese forces the army campaigned without

* This paper is based on a larger study on the Indian National Army which was the author's successful Ph.D. dissertation (1965) at Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi. In the preparation of the paper I have received encouragement and valuable suggestions from Professor Harry J. Benda of Yale University and Professor Grant K. Goodman of Kansas University. I am grateful of them.

¹ A copy of the speech delivered by Mohan Singh in Indian Parliament on 18 February 1964 explaining the I.N.A. personnel's claim for arrear dues from the Government of India, All-India I.N.A. Relief and Enquiry Committee (A.I.I.N.A.-R.E.C.) Delhi. Toye corroborated the figure. He wrote: “By the end of August 1942 forty thousand Prisoners of War had signed the pledge to join the Indian National Army under Mohan Singh”. Hugh Toye, *The Springing Tiger* (London, 1959), p. 9.

² A.E. Percival, *The War in Malaya* (London, 1949), p. 276. See also the list issued on 21 February 1942 by the Imperial General Headquarters mentioning the relative strength of the British, Australian and the Indian troops taken prisoners by the Japanese army on the surrender of Singapore, which was reproduced in a publication of the Indian Independence League. Indian Independence League, *Britain Surrenders* (Bangkok, 1943), p. 2.

³ Prosecution witness Lt. D.C. Nag in the first I.N.A. court martial. Motiram, ed., *Two Historic Trials in Red Fort* (Delhi, 1946), p. 22; Major-General A.C. Chatterjee, *India's Struggle for Freedom* (Calcutta, 1947), p. 35.

⁴ Photostat copy of the personal and secret memorandum of the Commander-in-chief of the Indian army, Gen. Sir Claude Auchinleck, on the effects of the

success during 1944-5 on the Indo-Burma borders and disintegrated with the end of the World War II.

This paper takes up for discussion only three aspects of the I.N.A. It includes a study of the motives of those Indian officers who joined the I.N.A. as it sheds some light on the nature of their participation in the Greater East Asia scheme of Japan. While Japan's relations with other nationalities in Southeast Asia during the occupation are fairly known now, her policy towards the Indian community in the region and more particularly, the problems which followed from that policy have hardly drawn any scholarly attention. This forms the second part of the paper. The impact of the I.N.A. courts martial in India at the end of the war on the Indian officers in the Indian armed forces is discussed in the last part of the paper.

I. MOTIVES

The behaviour of the Indian officers who joined the I.N.A. was of crucial importance for more than one reason. They were sizeable in strength—according to one information four hundred in all⁵—and included many with good service-records. As such, their behavior could not be explained away as an instance of lack of discipline. Moreover, it had deeper implications for the ordinary ranks. As a matter of tradition in the Indian army, the focus of loyalty of an average and illiterate sepoy was his immediate higher officer on whom he depended for his welfare, advancement and future prospects. Thus, the decision of the officers to join the I.N.A. or remain out of it, was bound to influence the attitude of the larger section of the Indian P.O.W. towards the proposal for raising a liberation army. A study of the considerations which shaped the decision of the officer corps is, therefore, important.

In the years following the war, I.N.A.'s motives were reviewed mainly by two groups of officers, the British and the former I.N.A. Because of their indirect involvement with the event, the views they expressed were more or less one-sided. For the British, it was most annoying to find a large number of Indian officers, who had been taught to stand firm by their commission, joining the enemy during the war. Their attitude towards the I.N.A. was shaped by their hostility derived from the battle field.⁶ The accounts of the former I.N.A. officers, on the other

first I.N.A. court martial, circulated among the senior British officers of the Indian army. Photostat copy obtained by the writer from Sir Claude. Hereinafter referred to as Auchinleck's memorandum.

⁵ Discussion with Gen. Mohan Singh at New Delhi in February 1962.

⁶ The Commander-in-chief described in detail the attitude of the British officers in his letter to the Viceroy. See Gen. Auchinleck to Viceroy, 26 November 1945, John Connel, *Auchinleck: A Biography of Field Marchall Sir Claude Auchinleck* (London, 1959), p. 806; also Lieut. Gen. Sir Francis Tucker, *While Memory Serves* (London, 1950), pp. 51-72.

hand, put undue emphasis on patriotism. Mention must be made in this connection of the Government of India's attempt at the end of the war to categorize the I.N.A. officers as Black, Blackest, Grey and White.⁷ Purely administrative in its origin as well as purpose, this categorization ran across the various commissions of the Indian officers, as the Government sought to sort out a few officers against whom certain charges could be proved and punish them in order to uphold the discipline of the army.⁸ This attempt, however, did not intend to find out the reaction of various commissions, mainly, the King's Commissioned Officer (K.C.O.), Indian Commissioned Officer (I.C.O.) and the Viceroy's Commissioned Officer (V.C.O.).

A commission-wise study of the motive of the Indian officers appears to be more relevant because the response of each of these groups to the proposal for raising the I.N.A. had its own distinct pattern. It also indicated the different degrees of Western impact on them and the variety of responses. The fact that the I.N.A. officers brought under trial by the Indian army command after the World War II were the I.C.O. and the V.C.O., and they included no K.C.O., lends support to this approach.

This approach, too, has its own problems. It requires the individual account from a large number of officers who joined the I.N.A. to permit generalization and the means to verify it. Moreover, individual decision-making being a complex psychology process, an element of uncertainty possibly always remains in any such generalization. The writings of the former I.N.A. officers apart, it was the evidence and proceedings of the I.N.A. courts martial which presented for the first time the individual account from a large number of Indian officers explaining their own reasons for joining the I.N.A. In the first I.N.A. trial alone, for example, the Defence Counsel interviewed and obtained individual testimony from 120 officers. The Prosecution produced before the court twenty-four officers and sepoy.⁹ These accounts came from officers holding various commissions and were, therefore, fairly representative in nature. Although it is difficult to be sure as to what extent some of these accounts are worthy of credence, they often stood modified on cross-examination.

An analysis of the motives of the I.N.A. officers, drawn carefully to represent various sections, illustrate the effects of discrimination on

⁷ For the text of the communique to the press in which the Government outlined their I.N.A. policy see *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1946-8 (London), p. 7821.

⁸ Philip Mason's foreword in *Toye*, *op cit.*, pp. VIII-IX. Mason was an Additional Secretary to the War Department of the Government of India at the end of the war.

⁹ See Defense Counsel's reply to the Judge Advocate in the first I.N.A. Court martial. Motiram, ed., *op cit.*, p. 4.

the colonial forces. The attitude assumed by the Indian officers in 1942 is to be analysed in the context of their conditions in the Indian army before the surrender of Singapore. Prior to the war, strong grievances were felt by the Indian officers on account of slow Indianization, differential treatment with regard to pay and allowances and racial discrimination. In October 1939 there were only 396 Indian officers in the combatant section of the Indian army. The proportion of the British and Indian officers was 10:1.1. In January 1941 there were 596 Indian officers in the combatant section but the ratio became more uneven. It was 12:1. Although the vast expansion of the Indian army in the years following 1941 led to the commissioning of a larger number of Indian officers (the strength of the Indian officers was eight thousand, and the ratio was 4.1:1, in 1945), those who surrendered at Singapore in 1942 did not work in such a favorable situation.¹⁰ Moreover, prior to the Pacific War an ordinary sepoy used to receive as his pay twenty-five rupees while a British soldier used to get three times more every month. An Indian lieutenant used to get a monthly salary of three hundred and fifty rupees only, while British lieutenants were drawing nearly double that amount.¹¹ Indian officers came across instances of racial discrimination in India and abroad where they served.¹² These grievances, later eloquently expressed by the Indian officers themselves at the time of the I.N.A. courts martial, created among them a sense of alienation from their commission. When the military disaster at Singapore put their loyalty to a severe test, the abstract bonds of commission proved too weak in many cases.

Justifying the disloyalty to the British, a publication issued in 1943 by the Directorate of the Military Bureau of the I.N.A. mentioned these grievances in some details. It pointed out that in the Indian army the Indian officers had been given

differential treatment in the matters of their pay, allowances, clothing, rations, accommodations, service conditions, social privileges, etc., not only in India but in every theatre of war to which they had the misfortune to be posted. It is a standing disgrace that such invidious distinctions have always been kept up between the arrogant Britishers and the Indians from time immemorial, in all walks of life, more particularly so in the Indian army. In addition, the British officer gets various unofficial privileges such as, choice of stations, choice of

¹⁰ For the details regarding the Indian officer corps see Sri Nandan Prasad, *Expansion of the Armed Forces and Defence Organization, 1939-45*. Bisheswar Prasad, ed., *Official History of the Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War, India and Pakistan*; Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, 1956, p. 182.

¹¹ Statement of Capt. H. M. Arshad to the I.N.A. Defence Counsel, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.; Shah Nawaz Khan, *My Memories of I.N.A. and its Netaji* (Delhi, 1946), p. 21.

¹² For instances of racial discrimination in the Indian army before the war see Humphrey Evans, *Thimayya of India: A Soldier's Life* (New York, 1960), pp. 88, 111.

job, etc. Whatever the British officer does or does not is correct, as he is always like Caesar's wife above criticism and his defect is his recommendation because he is British.¹³

The adverse effect of these grievances on the loyalty of Indian officers was acknowledged at the end of the war by the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army. He pointed out that

the early stages of Indianization from its inception to the beginning of the late war were badly mismanaged by the British Government of India, and this prepared the ground for disloyalty when the opportunity came. There is little doubt that Indianization was at its inception looked on as a political expedient which was bound to fail militarily. There is no doubt also that many senior British officers believed and even hoped that it would fail. The policy of segregation of Indian officers into separate units, the differential treatment in respect to pay and terms of service as compared with the British officer, and the prejudice and lack of manners of some—by no means all—British officers and their wives, all went to produce a very deep and bitter feeling of racial discrimination in the minds of the most intelligent and progressive of the Indian officers, who were naturally nationalists, keen to see India standing on her own legs and not to be ruled from Whitehall forever.¹⁴

The adverse effect of these grievances on the loyalty of the different sections of Indian officers was not uniform. The officers who held King's Commission (the K.C.O.) usually came from well-to-do families. They had their education in British public schools and later in the British Military Academy at Sandhurst and were close to the British and their way of living.¹⁵ Although they felt somewhat sore about the practice of racial discrimination against them, hardly any one of them turned anti-British on that account. It is interesting to note that among the K.C.O.s, called up for evidence by the Prosecution and the Defence at the I.N.A. courts martial, only one, Lt. Col. Gill, mentioned an instance of colour-bar in an officers' club in Malaya, but none complained against slow Indianization, difference in pay and allowances.¹⁶ This also explained their attitude towards the formation of the I.N.A. in 1942. For them any co-operation with the Japanese was as much a difficult job as it was for a British officer. Of about half-a-dozen K.C.O. who surrendered at Singapore¹⁷ none whole-heartedly supported the I.N.A. Some of them expressed themselves as non-volunteers at the outset and kept out of the I.N.A.¹⁸ Others, who threw their lot with the I.N.A. did so with more

¹³ Indian Independence League Headquarters, *British Army of Occupation in India* (Singapore, 1943), p. 4.

¹⁴ Auchinleck's memorandum, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ Taker, *op. cit.*, p. 64; also Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-108.

¹⁶ Statement of Lt. Col. N. S. Gill to the Defence Counsel, first I.N.A. court martial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

¹⁷ These officers included Lt. Col. N. S. Gill, Lt. Col. J. R. Bhonsle, Major M. S. Dhillon, Major N. S. Bhagat, Capt. K. P. Dhargalkar and Capt. H. Budhwar.

¹⁸ Capt. Dhargalkar and Capt. Budhwar did not join the I.N.A. in 1942. Evidence by Capt. Dhargalkar for the Prosecution in the first I.N.A. trial, see Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 47-8. Major Bhagat also did not join the I.N.A. in

than one motive. One of them went over to the Indian army in 1942¹⁹ and two others were later removed from the I.N.A. on charges of secret connection with the British.²⁰ Although the charge against one of the latter group, Col. Gill, was not proved, his personal influence over Mohan Singh and the go-slow policy regarding the I.N.A. undoubtedly arrested the growth of the army.²¹ He later associated himself with the group of officers who were opposed to the formation of the I.N.A. Only one K.C.O., Col. Bhonsle, was in the I.N.A. in 1945. He joined the army only in 1943 and since then his role was useful for ceremonial purposes.

The adverse effect of the pre-war grievances was more acutely felt on the loyalty of the I.C.O. and other junior officers. Educated in India and commissioned from the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun, the I.C.O. had little contact with the British outside their academy. They belonged to the generation of officers who showed some awareness of the national movement which was in full swing in the country.²² It was natural for these officers to react most sharply to the existing grievances in the army. This was further indicated by the fact that later, during the I.N.A. officers' trials, some of the bitterest criticisms of the pre-war British policy of slow Indianization, differential treatment to the Indians with regard to pay and allowances came from the I.C.O. "Discriminatory treatment between the Indians and British soldiers by the champions of equality and liberty in the world was in evidence everywhere in the Indian Army", wrote Mohan Singh.²³ Statements of the I.C.O. with similar grievances can be multiplied.²⁴ Service in Malaya added new bitterness. Many Indian Officers in their statements to the

1942 as he "did not trust the Japanese at all." Later, he joined the I.N.A. but was discharged from the command of the second I.N.A. division in 1944 "for insubordination and disloyalty." Major Bhagat's statement to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. court martial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

¹⁹ This referred to Major M. S. Dhillon. See Chatterjee, *op. cit.*, p. 15; also notes received by the I.N.A. History Committee from Col. N.S. Gill. Hereinafter referred to as Gill's notes to the I.N.A.H.C.

²⁰ This referred to Col. Gill who was taken into custody by the Japanese military police in December 1942. See Gill's notes to the I.N.A.H.C. It has been already mentioned that Major Bhagat was removed from his position in 1944.

²¹ *Ibid.* This was corroborated by Capt. S. M. Hussain who was a Staff officer attached to the Indian P.O.W.s Headquarters headed by Col. Gill in 1942. See Capt S. M. Hussain's statement to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. court martial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

²² This was suggested by the occasional contacts the Indian officers established with the nationalist leaders before the war to seek their direction in their own duty. See Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 116 ff.

²³ Mohan Singh's statement before the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. court martial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

²⁴ The statement of Shah Nawaz Khan before the first I.N.A. court martial. Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 110; statements of Capt. H.M. Arshad, Capt. S. M Hussain, Capt. Eshar Qadir and Capt. Rodrigues to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. court martial; Statement of Col. Burhanuddin before his court martial A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C., *The I.N.A. Speaks* (Delhi, 1946), p 56 Hereinafter referred to as *The I.N.A. Speaks*.

I.N.A. Defence Counsel later narrated the instances when they were victims of colour-bar in the trains and clubs of Malaya before the outbreak of the war.²⁵ As the war started, they had to work against the heaviest odds — without air-support, modern military equipment like tanks, anti-tank guns, etc.²⁶ which gave birth to a general feeling among them that in defending Malaya they had been given too exacting a task.²⁷ There were complaints of discriminatory treatment against the Indian officers at that trying time and instances of lack of fighting spirit among some British officers.²⁸ The unhappy position in which the Indian and British officers were placed before and during the war in Malaya was illustrated by the “incidents” which succeeded in snapping all relations between them. Such incidents took place in the Hyderabad Regiment and the Punjab Regiment.²⁹ These incidents might not have assumed much importance, but coming as they did on the eve of Singapore, they foreshadowed the events to come. It was, however, the fall of Singapore which indicated to the junior Indian officers, as the Commander-in-chief of the Indian army later correctly assessed, “the end of all things, and certainly of the British *Raj* to whom the Army has been used for many years of war and peace to look to as its universal provider and protector. . . .”³⁰ The separate hand-over of the Indian men and officers to the Japanese at Farrar Park which followed the surrender of Singapore, held out no hopes for the former that the British could protect them much longer and past experience left little goodwill to sustain an attitude of wait and see.

All these held out possibilities that the I.C.O. would adopt an attitude more favourable for the plan of raising the I.N.A. in comparison to that of the K.C.O. But a number of most pressing factors such as the general bewilderment, the practical difficulties which followed the surrender, and uncertainty about Japanese intentions led most of them to attach various connotations to their co-operation with the Japanese. In explaining the conduct of the I.N.A. officers, undue importance has

²⁵ Statements of Capt. Mahboob Ahmed, Capt. S. M. Hussain, Capt. Arshad, Capt. Rodrigues, Capt. Bhagat, Lt. M. Riaz Khan to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. trial, I.N.A. Defence Papers, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.; Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

²⁶ Percival, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

²⁷ Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-5; Statements of Major Rawat, Lt. Riaz Khan, Capt. Arshad and Capt. Rodrigues to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. trial, I.N.A. Defence Papers.

²⁸ Shah Nawaz Khan's statement before the first I.N.A. trial, Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 104; Major Rawat's statement to the Defence Counsel, I.N.A. Defence Papers; the statement of Major Fateh Khan before his trial, *The I.N.A. Speaks*, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

²⁹ For details see Capt. S. M. Hussain's statement to the Defence Counsel, I.N.A. Defence Papers; Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-72; statement of Lt. G. S. Dhillon's statement before the first trial, Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 117.

³⁰ Auchinleck's memorandum, *op. cit.*

been placed on personal opportunism.³¹ What emerges from the testimonies of all witnesses for the Prosecution and the Defence of I.N.A. courts martial and eschewed the attention of observers, was the deep fear and suspicion in the Japanese, universally shared by them. It was this fear of the Japanese intentions which created, from the psychological point of view, a great difficulty for most of the officers to accept the I.N.A. sponsored by the former. Security of subordinate men and officers, that of the civilian population in East Asia or India, or even the desire for rendering the I.N.A. an ineffective instrument,—all these considerations sprang from the same fear. Such consideration, more than the purely patriotic objective of liberation of India proved more decisive for the overwhelming majority of officers. Similarly, those branded as “opportunists” displayed merely one type, simple and pure, of reaction of that fear. It is interesting to note that of the witnesses called up for the Prosecution and the Defence in I.N.A. courts martial only two junior officers (V.C.O.) were said to have joined the I.N.A. to escape fatigue duties of the Japanese army³² and three others (V.C.O.) barring the honourable exception of Mohan Singh claimed to have been moved by the urge of their motherland’s liberation only.³³

A large number of the I.C.O. and the V.C.O. who joined the I.N.A. in 1942 had *mixed motives*. The prevailing suspicion in the intentions of the Japanese led many officers to view the proposal of raising the I.N.A. in 1942 as a measure of defence against the misconduct of their ally. There were *some* who were moved only by such limited patriotic consideration as the security of their own men and that of the civilian Indian population in East Asia.³⁴ There were others, *more numerous*

³¹ Mason’s foreword, Toye, *op. cit.*, p. VI. S. P. Cohen speaks of “rich monetary rewards” expected by the officers for themselves and their families too for their act. Stephen P. Cohen, “Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army”, *Pacific Affairs* (Canada) Vol. XXXVI (Winter 1963-4), p. 413. It is not clear from whom, according to Cohen, they expected it. Minutes of the meetings of the Council of Action following the Bangkok Conference, in which the proposal for raising the I.N.A. was accepted, recorded that funds to pay pocket money to the I.N.A. volunteers at a minimum rate were made available by Rash Behari Bose from what he claimed to be his own savings. See the minutes of the meetings of the Council of Action from 24 June to 9 July 1942 at Bangkok, Indian Independence League Papers, National Archives of India, New Delhi. One might doubt Rash Behari’s claim. It is also doubtful if the funds were adequate to meet I.N.A.’s needs in 1942. The Japanese, however, made it clear to Subhas Bose that they would be responsible for paying only the former P.O.W.’s in the I.N.A., who formed only one third of its strength in 1944-5. See Toye, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

³² Evidence of the Prosecution witnesses Havildars Sucha Singh and Mohammad Sarwar in the first I.N.A. trial. Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 60, 64.

³³ Subedar Singhara Singh’s statement before his court martial, *The I.N.A. Speaks*, p. 70; evidence of Subedar-Major Baboo Ram and Lance Naik Mohinder Singh for the Prosecution in the first I.N.A. trial, Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 76.

³⁴ Major Rawat in his testimony to the Defence Counsel in the first I.N.A. trial said that he joined the I.N.A. and persuaded the 15000 men of the Garwali Regiment to do so because the Japanese appeared to them “so mysterious that we could not know their intentions and this created all sorts of doubt in our mind

than the previous group, who visualised the I.N.A. as an instrument which would be useful not only for their country's freedom but also for protecting India from the excesses of a Japanese invasion which appeared to them imminent. Those among them who were more alert about the vulnerability of India in 1942 found the I.N.A. chiefly useful for the latter purpose.³⁵ In this group, there were some others who viewed the I.N.A. in the same light but did not ignore its usefulness in ensuring the security of the Indian P.O.W. and civilian population in East Asia.³⁶

There was yet another group of officers, mostly the I.C.O., who shared the strong suspicion of all other Indian officers in the Japanese intentions. They were also not lacking in patriotism. But they had a great deal of doubts in Mohan Singh's ability to deal effectively with the Japanese if they would double-cross the Indians which appeared to them very probable. Shah Nawaz Khan who had earlier served in the same regiment with Mohan Singh made no secret of this doubts in his statement before the I.N.A. court martial. He said: "With all due regard to Capt. Mohan Singh's sincerity and leadership which he displayed later—I had known him well for the last 10 years—he had always been an efficient, but *very* average officer. . . . I was fully convinced, knowing Mohan Singh so well that politically, at any rate, he

. . . . All my people preferred to be in the I.N.A. than to fall into the hands of the Japanese. We were experiencing quite clearly that it was on account of that movement that the Japanese treatment began to be better towards Indians. The immediate thing that we had in mind was that we shall be able to protect the Indian civilian population from the Japanese atrocities." See I.N.A. Defence Papers.

³⁵ Capt. P. K. Saghal's statement in the first I.N.A. trial represented the views of these officers. In spite of his desire to see his "motherland free from all foreign domination" he kept out of the I.N.A. in 1942 because he was "skeptical of the intention of the Japanese." He stated the circumstances which later compelled him "to revise earlier decision to keep out of the Indian National Army. . . . the Japanese forces met with the most astounding successes in every theatre of the war, and an attack on India appeared to be imminent The last Indian drafts that had arrived to reinforce Singapore consisted only of raw recruits and gave one a fair indication of the type of men available for the defence of India. Officers who came to Singapore shortly before its surrender told us that there was no modern equipment available for the army in India The information we had about the state of defence in India was by no means encouraging and the most optimist amongst us could not be sure of the ability of the British to stop the Japanese advance the question that began to agitate the mind of us, who had so far stayed away from that Army was whether it was not our duty to join that army for securing the freedom of our country—not so much from the British who could hold her no longer but from the Japanese who were bent upon invading India." See Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 113-4; see also the statements of Lt. G. S. Dhillon before the first I.N.A. trial, *ibid.*, pp. 118-9; statements of Capt. Jaswant Singh, Major Puran Singh before their courts martial. *The I.N.A. Speaks*, pp. 132-4; Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-1.

³⁶ Col. Burhanuddin's statement before his court martial illustrated the motives of these officers. He said: "Thinking on these lines I came to the conclusion that the only way I could serve my country effectively was to join and help in organizing a strong I.N.A. . . . It was therefore not only a question of liberating India, but of immediately protecting Indian lives and property in the Far East and if need be later in India." *The I.N.A. Speaks*, p. 59; also the statement of Major Fateh Khan before his court martial, *ibid.*, p. 95.

would not be able to cope with the Japanese political intrigues and we would be exploited by them for their own ends.”³⁷ This group of officers, about sixty in strength, was initially opposed to the idea of raising the I.N.A. at all and came closer to Lt. Col. N. S. Gill who was resisting the formation of the I.N.A. from within.³⁸ Thus a resistance unit came into existence in the I.N.A. Some events took place in the middle of 1942 which clearly manifested this resistance. Gill came back from the Tokyo Conference with his suspicion of the Japanese intentions strengthened. Reinforced by the support of the I.C.O.s he challenged an order of the Japanese army to abolish the P.O.W. Headquarters which had been set up after the fall of Singapore.³⁹ Shah Nawaz Kahn also mentioned that he did not only dislike Mohan Singh’s proposal that the army should take part in the Bangkok Conference (June 1942) but he openly disapproved of the method by which Mohan Singh wanted the Indian P.O.W.s to be represented in that conference.⁴⁰

In analysing the motive of the I.N.A. officers one can hardly underestimate the influence of Subhas Chandra Bose’s personality. Before he took over, the vast majority of the officers viewed the outcome of their associations with the I.N.A. with a sense of suspicion and futility. Shortly after his arrival in East Asia, the army expanded rapidly and it took the field. Whatever might be the outcome of the military campaign in which it took part, there is enough evidence to believe that he succeeded to a large measure in binding his officer corps in a spirit of real revolutionary partnership.

That Bose’s personality acquired a tremendous appeal for many Indian P.O.W.s is acknowledged on all hands. Describing his arrival in East Asia as an event of “some importance” an official despatch of the India Command referred to him as a colourful seditionist with a powerful personality who could easily influence others with his own enthusiasm.⁴¹ Testimonies of several I.N.A. officers including some of

³⁷ Shah Nawaz Khan’s statement before the first I.N.A. trial, Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 105. Emphasis original. Another I.C.O., Mahboob Ahmed corroborated this view. Discussion with Mahboob Ahmed at Kuala Lumpur in August 1963.

³⁸ N. S. Gill’s statement to the Defence Counsel of the first I.N.A. trial, I.N.A. Defence Papers.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁴¹ *Despatch of Gen. Auchinleck on the Operation in the Indo-Burma Theatre based on India (21 June–15 November 1943)* Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, Regd. File No. 601/7553/H, Government of India and Pakistan, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

At the end of the war the Commander-in-chief of the Indian army came to have an access to the views of a substantial number of I.N.A. men and officers. In spite of his strong reservation about Bose’s war-time activities his estimate of Bose’s character is noteworthy. He referred to the I.N.A. officers and wrote: “I am in no doubt myself that a great number of them, especially the leaders, believed that Subhas Chandra Bose was a genuine patriot and that they themselves were right to follow his lead. There is no doubt at all from the mass of evidence

those who later appeared as witnesses for the Prosecution as well as the Defence are in full agreement in bearing out the impact of Bose's leadership on the I.N.A. One aspect of it can be studied with reference to the officer corps who had associated themselves with the I.N.A. in 1942 but could not accept it wholeheartedly for one reason or another. Few of them had known and none had met him earlier. Many, however, acknowledged the effect of their first meeting with Bose on themselves to be decisive and instant.⁴² What led many of them thus, to dramatise the impact of Bose's leadership was possibly the relief generated by the widely-shared belief that his leadership was dependable. This was substantially corroborated by a Prosecution witness to the first I.N.A. court martial. He said: "... Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in July 1943. After that everybody thought that they had got a leader who could guide them on proper lines without being subordinated to the Japanese".⁴³ It was this confidence of the officers corps in Bose which ensured for the latter a commanding position in the army and made him the focal point of their loyalty.

Bose's ability to win over the confidence of the hesitant officers could be attributed to the great measure of success he achieved in dispelling their deep-rooted suspicion in the Japanese. No doubt, he had to work within a set pattern of objective conditions as his predecessor did, over which he had hardly any control; his success with the I.N.A. lies in charting out *its own* course. He spun with forceful arguments a broad scheme, a blue-print for India's liberation, which boldly pleaded for the acceptance of Japanese help without being apologetical about it, carefully balanced Japanese help with another scheme of total mobilization of the Indian resources in East Asia and left room for a patriotic role for his army in spite of its heavy dependence on the Japanese in

we have that Subhas Chandra Bose acquired a tremendous influence over them and that his personality had been an exceedingly strong one." See Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 803.

⁴² One officer after a brief interview with Bose recorded his impression. He said to have never met a leader so "well informed" as Bose. The latter "already knows the small place-names on the map, the climate and different conditions in the jungles, the details of the plans and methods adopted by the Japs to outwit the British Army." But what impressed the officer most was "the technical knowledge about modern warfare and modern armies which Subhas Babu showed." The entry in the officer's diary concluded: "He is a real leader of the people." V. K. Jhaveri and S. S. Batlivala, ed., *Jai Hind: The Diary of a Rebel Daughter of India* (Bombay, 1945), p. 39. The statement of Capt. Shah Nawaz Khan was also interesting. He joined the I.N.A. in 1942 with a large number of officers to offer as much resistance to the growth of the army as possible from within. He later said: "when Netaji arrived in Singapore, I watched him very keenly; I had never seen or met him before, and did not know very much about his activities in India. I heard a number of his public speeches, which had a profound effect on me. It will not be wrong to say that I was hypnotised by his speeches. He placed a true picture of India before us and for the first time in my life I saw India, through the eyes of an Indian." Statement of Shah Nawaz Khan in the first I.N.A. court martial, Motiram, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 109.

⁴³ Evidence of Lt. D. C. Nag, *ibid.*, p. 41.

many respects. This certainly made it easier for the hesitant and patriotic elements in the officer corps to identify themselves totally with the I.N.A.

Undoubtedly, when Bose took over, the army having no high morale or discipline was in a bad shape. The tremendous popularity that Bose earned so quickly among his officer corps on his arrival in East Asia was partially due to his success in tackling with reasonable satisfaction some fundamental issues which were to determine the progress of the revolution. The relationship of the military leadership with the civilian leaders, which was never happy in the initial part of the movement, was straightened and since then no problem arose regarding the civil-military relations. He succeeded in settling some outstanding operational issues, some of which had wrecked the army in 1942. He vastly improved the amenities of the army and its facilities for training and recruitment, and secured the approval of the Japanese to his plans for the expansion of the army and its active role in the future military campaign against India. All these went a long way towards restoring the officers' confidence. That Bose took over the leadership of the army after securing the promise of support from the Japanese for the satisfactory solution of these issues, and not before that, was a pointer. Moreover, a careful reader of Bose's speeches can hardly ignore his uncommon persuasive power. His speeches reveal authority, singleness of mind, personal enthusiasm and straight deductions from the study of international politics.⁴⁴ Such attributes could not but move a soldier's mind.⁴⁵

II. PROBLEMS

The I.N.A. faced a number of problems. These included such institutional question as setting up a sound decision-making body and such operational issues as the expansion of the army, deficiency in arms and ammunitions, and an arrangement under which Japanese assistance would be available. Of these, the attitude of the Government of Japan was important as the satisfactory solution of some of these problems had a great deal to do with it. In this part of the paper, therefore, the policy of the Government of Japan towards the I.N.A. for a short

⁴⁴ On one occasion Bose told his officers: "For the present I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, suffering, forced march and death. But if you follow me in life as well as in death . . . I will lead you on to the road to victory and freedom. It does not matter who among us shall live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and we shall give our all to make her free." There was surely something new in it which the men and officers of the I.N.A. had never felt before. Bose's address to the I.N.A. on 5 July 1943, Government of India, *Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose* (New Delhi, 1962), p. 184.

⁴⁵ For a detailed study of the influence of Bose's leadership, see K. K. Ghosh, "Subhas Chandra Bose and I.N.A. Leadership," in B. R. Chatterji, *Southeast Asia in Transition* (Meerut, 1965), pp. 163-76.

period of one year—1942 which was crucial in I.N.A. history—would be mentioned in briefest outlines and the problems it created, reviewed.

The Imperial General Headquarters (I.G.H.Q.) attempted to win over the nationalists of some Southeast Asian countries before their forces overran those countries. The I.G.H.Q.'s parallel efforts to enlist the help of the Indians in Southeast Asia and their encouragement to the proposal for raising the I.N.A., therefore, provoked suspicion that in doing all this Japan had a plan to invade India too. There is, however, little evidence for any intentions on her part to undertake any major plan of invasion of India at any time during the war. The published accounts of Japan's diplomatic moves to come to terms with Germany on the eve of the Pacific War which made it necessary for her to spell out the countries to be included in the Greater East Asia, lend no support to it.⁴⁶ Nor do the various plans which were formulated in advance by the Governmental agencies of Japan for the administrative and economic organization of her empire.⁴⁷ The battle order issued by the I.G.H.Q. on 15 November 1941 instructing their forces to start hostilities on 8 December permitted them to occupy in the west only "a part of Burma".⁴⁸ The chief objectives of her military operations in the northwest of Burma in early 1942 was to isolate China by cutting off "the transportation route between U.S.A. and Britain," i.e., the air ferry route between the Allied base in India and the American base in China. An attempt should be made through propaganda means to prevent the Indians from "co-operating with Britain".⁴⁹ Later, in August 1942, a plan with limited aggressive intentions to take "important areas in Northeast Assam and Chittagong" was issued by the I.G.H.Q., but it could not be implemented anyway.⁵⁰ Read with another document embodying an understanding reached seven weeks earlier between the Japanese army and the navy for co-operating mutually to perfect the defense of the occupied areas, this plan seemed to aim at destroying the Allied air-bases in the vicinity of north-

⁴⁶ A. Toynbee and V. M. Toynbee, ed., *The Initial Triumph of the Axis* (London, 1958), p. 592; also R. J. C. Butow, *Tojo and the Coming of the War* (New Jersey, 1961), p. 162.

⁴⁷ M. A. Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism and Indonesia* (The Hague, 1955), p. 83; also An outline of the Government of the Territories to be occupied in operations in the vital Southern Areas: Imperial Headquarters Army Branch, 25 November 1941, Combined Inter-Services Historical Section, India and Pakistan, Registered File No. 601/7775/4, *Translation of the Japanese Documents*, Ministry of Defence, Government of India. (Hereinafter C.I.S.H.S. File).

⁴⁸ Orders relating to the occupation of the vital Southern Areas, C.I.S.H.S. File No. 601/7775/4.

⁴⁹ English translation of the decision taken in the liaison conference of the Japanese Cabinet and the I.G.H.Q. on 10 January 1942, Decision of the Tojo Ministry from December 1941 to March 1942, War History Office, Government of Japan. Photostat copy of the document obtained from the War History office.

⁵⁰ From Gen. Sugiyama, Chief of General Staff to G.O.C. Southern Army, Count Terauchi, 22 August 1942, C.I.S.H.S. File No: 601/7775/4, *op. cit.*

ern Burma in order to ensure her security.⁵¹ There were indications that so far as India was concerned, what Japan intended to do in 1942, was little more than embarrassing the British power in India.⁵² Such an attitude, surely made hardly any room for a real fighting force.

On the eve of the Pacific War the I.G.H.Q., however, was eager to enlist the help of the Indian nationalists in Southeast Asia in their plan to undermine the British Power in Malaya and Burma by alienating the loyalty of the large number of Indian soldiers stationed in the region.⁵³ Documentary evidence suggests that the highest Japanese authorities wished to organize the Indian nationalist in East Asia for this purpose but they had no plan of raising an army for India's liberation.⁵⁴ The intelligence agency, which was assigned the task of winning over the Indians, skillfully used for its own purpose the assurance of all-out Japanese help to the Indians in the achievement of their country's independence. This explained the fact that during the greater part of 1942 the Japanese liaison agency under Col. Iwakuro received no special direction regarding the I.N.A. either from I.G.H.Q. or the Southern Army. It was virtually given a free hand in handling the Indian P.O.W.⁵⁵ As Singapore had fallen and there was no plan for a campaign against India, the liaison agency could think of no better jobs for the Indian P.O.W.s than working for the defence and reconstruction of Singapore and other places under their occupation. This explained their reluctance in 1942 to go even halfway to meet the Indian demands for making the I.N.A. a strong fighting force or accepting their control over the Indian P.O.W.s.

Soon after the fall of Singapore, Mohan Singh had to agree with 25 Army proposals for requisitioning the service of Indian anti-aircraft gunners, guards and labour parties.⁵⁶ Although for all these Mohan Singh could turn his finger towards the non-volunteers, these were the earliest indications that his authority over the Indian P.O.W.s was far from complete. Mohan Singh was all along claiming complete control over the Indian P.O.W.s.⁵⁷ It was one of the conditions he originally

⁵¹ See Army-Navy Agreement on the Defence of Southern Areas, 29 June 1942, C.I.S.H.S. File No. 601/7775/4, *op. cit.*

⁵² The heavy bombing of the Indian ports by the Japanese air force in 1942 was inspired by the intentions of not only crippling them but also to discredit the British Government in the eyes of the Indians and thus block the chances of success of the mission led by Sir Stafford Cripps to India to enlist the support of the Indian leaders for the cause of the Allied war efforts.

⁵³ Discussion with Gen. I. Fujiwara in October 1963 at Maibashi in Japan. Fujiwara who was a Major and a Staff Officer attached to the I.G.H.Q. on the eve of the Pacific War, was chosen for the task.

⁵⁴ The decision taken at the liaison conference of the Japanese Cabinet and the I.G.H.Q. on 10 January 1942 did not reveal any such intention. The decision has been already mentioned.

⁵⁵ Discussion with Major-Gen. Iwakuro in Tokyo in October 1963.

⁵⁶ Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 44-6.

⁵⁷ See the proceedings of the Tokyo Conference in March 1942, K. S. Gianî, *Indian Independence Movement in East Asia* (Lahore, 1947), p. 49; also the resolutions of the Bangkok Conference in June 1942, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

placed to the Japanese liaison agency, *Fujiwara Kikan*, and the 25 Army Headquarters for his co-operation.⁵⁸ There is no evidence, however, to show that Mohan Singh received any firm assurance from the 25 Army Headquarters but the formal proclamation of his authority over the Indian P.O.W.s by the chief of the liaison agency at the Farrar Park meeting in February 1942 raised high hopes in Mohan Singh. It was curious that an officer of comparatively lower rank was chosen to hand over fifty-five thousand Indian P.O.W.'s to Mohan Singh in spite of the presence of high-ranking officers of the 25 Army in Singapore. It also seems intriguing that Fujiwara who 'won over' fifty-five thousand Indian P.O.W.s should have received a transfer from the liaison organization soon after the meeting at Farrar Park—at the peak of his success in handling P.O.W.s. It is difficult to believe that Fujiwara could act on his own, without the approval of the 25 Army, in handing over the Indian P.O.W.s to Mohan Singh. Col. Iwakuro who succeeded Fujiwara as the chief of the liaison agency considered that the hand-over of the Indian troops at the Farrar Park meeting was nothing but a gesture of the 25 Army to win over the Indian P.O.W.s.⁵⁹ It was for him, as he later said, to take over the control of the surplus I.N.A. volunteers and non-volunteers.⁶⁰ This he did in October 1942.⁶¹

Mohan Singh's reaction was bound to be sharp. This measure removed the larger section of the Indian P.O.W.s from his control, and with it, all possibilities of raising a strong army. Soon after raising the first division of the I.N.A. in September 1942, he was asking for the Japanese consent to raise the second division.⁶² He had agreed to the proposal of the liaison agency to move a part of the first I.N.A. division to Burma with the hopes that it would help him secure the Japanese consent to raise new units.⁶³ Now that there were no chances for it, Mohan Singh declined to carry out the decision of troops movement and the matter was referred to the civilian leaders. With it, the chain of important decision regarding the I.N.A. taken individually by Mohan Singh to meet the demands of the Japanese army came to an end.⁶⁴ So also, did Mohan Singh's co-operation with the Japanese. What was equally important, the change in Mohan Singh's attitude made the proposal of troops movement an open issue between the Japanese and the Council of Action of the Indian Independence League.

⁵⁸ Discussion with Gen. Fujiwara in October 1963 in Maibashi in Japan.

⁵⁹ Discussion with Major. Gen. Iwakuro in Tokyo in October 1963.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁶² Typescript copy of the statement issued by Mohan Singh in August 1945 before surrendering himself to the Allied Forces in Sumatra, I.N.A.H.C. File.

⁶³ Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

⁶⁴ This referred to Mohan Singh's decisions to lend the Japanese army the Indian guards, anti-aircraft gunners, labour parties and to raise the I.N.A. before the League was recognized.

A genuine understanding between the important section of the civilian Indian leaders and the Japanese, never grew due to certain reasons. On the eve of the Pacific War only two prominent leaders, Pritam Singh in Thailand and Rash Behari Bose in Japan, were in touch with the Japanese and willing to make use of Japan's help in their plan for liberating India. This pro-Japanese leadership, weakened by the death of the former soon after the surrender of Singapore was handicapped by its inability to inspire confidence in other Indian leaders.⁶⁵ Some leaders of the Indian community in Thailand, Malaya and Singapore who were actually left in the field to mobilize the Indian community in 1942 were unwilling to go against the wishes of the Indian National Congress. They were cautious in accepting any military assistance from Japan and too reluctant to associate themselves with any Japanese plan of invasion of India.⁶⁶ They were hardly aware of the actual position of the I.G.H.Q. on the latter question.

Moreover, the Indian leaders' western education and past association with the constitutional movements in their countries psychologically conditioned them to view the movement as a democratic and constitutional struggle for freedom. They hardly felt it safe to explore any revolutionary means, as Japan appeared to them an undependable ally. Although the work of organizing their community was favoured for more than one reason, on more important questions at the Singapore Conference, they first looked for guidance from India.⁶⁷ When that was not forthcoming they requested the Japanese Government to make an authoritative declaration clarifying their attitude towards certain points affecting India and fulfill certain conditions to make Japanese help acceptable to them.⁶⁸

In these efforts, the Indian leaders were supported by the anti-Japanese group in the I.N.A. headed by Col. Gill. During the five months between June and November 1942, the Council of Action made several attempts to secure from the Japanese Government such a declaration. But in 1942 a tripartite Axis declaration on India's independence was out

⁶⁵ This is based on my discussions with N. Raghavan at New Delhi in April 1964 and with N. G. Gill in June 1963 at Bangkok. See also S. C. Goho's typescript note to the I.N.A.H.C., and an unpublished English translation of K. P. K. Menon, *Kazhincha Kalam* (Calicut, 1957), pp. 269-73. All of them were opposed to the selection of Rash Behari Bose as the leader of the Indian independence movement in East Asia.

⁶⁶ See the proceedings of the Tokyo Conference, Giani, *op. cit.*, 49 ff. and the resolutions of the Bangkok Conference, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

⁶⁷ Proceedings of the Singapore Conference in March 1942. See Giani *op. cit.*, 36-7. A proposal was made in this conference to send an Indian representative from East Asia to India to ascertain the opinions of the Indian leaders on these questions, but in view of the difficulty created by the war the proposal was dropped.

⁶⁸ Proceedings of the Tokyo Conference, Giani, *op. cit.*, 49 ff. and the resolutions of the Bangkok Conference, A.I.I.N.A.R.E.C.

of the question as Hitler's repeated disapproval of it is now known.⁶⁹ A unilateral declaration by Japan was to wait till a forward policy towards India could be taken up by the I.G.H.Q.⁷⁰ This made Iwakuro's position a very difficult one. Although he kept his Government informed of the demands of the Indians, it was doubtful if his reluctance to forward their memoranda to Tokyo substantially altered the situation. But the Indian leaders had little knowledge of it in 1942 and in the absence of the desired declaration their initial suspicion of the Japanese intentions was confirmed and strengthened. When the question of transportation of troops was taken up by the Council of Action Mohan Singh had the support of two more members of the Council in bringing about an impasse by resigning with them from it and prevent that body from waiting for some more time for the Japanese declaration.⁷¹

Thus, Japan's policy towards Mohan Singh backfired. The Japanese liaison agency had helped Mohan Singh during 1941-42 build up an independent army command in his relations with the civilian leaders and the Indian Independence League. It dealt with the civilian Indian leaders separately. During the Malayan campaign Japan agreed to Mohan Singh's demand to keep the army matters free from the League's control.⁷² The League was too weak to exert its control over the military leader. The liaison agency did nothing to put into effect the League's claim of exclusive control over the army, nor opposed the army leader in introducing a pledge of personal loyalty to himself among his subordinates. In fact, on the questions of requisitioning the service of the Indian labour parties, anti-aircraft gunners, guards and formally raising the I.N.A. prior to the declaration of Japan, the Japanese liaison agency dealt with Mohan Singh directly. In none of these matters, did the latter seek the approval of the League. On the last one, he acted against the known wishes of the civilian leaders.⁷³ There were two important outcomes of the liaison agency's two-pronged policy. It helped little in the emergence of a unified leadership among the Indians. When the civilian and military leaders were later confronted with the Japanese on certain important issues, they could not maintain unity among themselves. The authority which the Japanese built up for their own convenience around Mohan Singh from December 1941 became a source of considerable uneasiness for them towards the end of 1942 when the military leader defied their wishes and broke away from the League

⁶⁹ See Malcolm Muggeridge, ed., *Ciano's Diary 1939-43* (London, 1950), p. 157.

⁷⁰ This was later revealed by Col. Iwakuro in the joint meeting of the Council of Action and the *Iwakuro Kikam* on 1 December 1942. See Giani, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2.

⁷¹ See the minutes of the meetings of the Council of Action on 4 and 5, December 1942, Giani, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-9.

⁷² Discussion with Gen. Fujiwara at Maibashi in Tokyo in October 1963.

⁷³ Discussion with N. Raghavan in New Delhi in April 1964.

with the army.⁷⁴ The Japanese liaison agency's policy toward the Indians took a somersault, and soon it had to stand by the League and the civilian leaders in an effort to pull down the independent command which it created around Mohan Singh.⁷⁵

III. SIGNIFICANCE

Certain fond beliefs of the Indian army authorities received some rude shocks during the Second World War. The British had marked out certain Indian nationalities as "martial races". The mighty British Indian army was almost exclusively drawn from these races and their trust in the loyalty of these elements remained more or less intact. World War II, by pouring into the army the educated and technically equipped recruits on an unprecedented scale, greatly modified the importance of the martial races. The events related to the I.N.A. revolt, however, proved more disconcerting for those who believed that loyalty of some of these races to the *Raj* was 'traditional' and therefore to be taken for granted. The I.N.A., indeed, highlighted certain contradictions in the pre-war British policy towards the Indian army. To appease the nationalist demand in the early decades of this century the British adopted a policy of gradual Indianization of the army. Though pursued by the army authorities with definite reservations before the war,⁷⁶ the policy was responsible for increasing each year the strength of the Indian officers. The testimonies of the I.N.A. officers indicated that a sense of grievance originated among these officers over their pay, allowance and promotion. The British seemed to have taken little notice of this unwelcome outcome of their policy. However assured they might have felt about the loyalty of the colonial forces, the discriminatory treatment meted out to the latter created a loophole which undermined the loyalty of many when it was put to test during a severe military crisis. The desperate measure of throwing away their loyalty by many Indian P.O.W.s underlined this basic truths. If such grievances existed in the colonial forces, a third power might feel tempted to exploit them in its own interest. Here was a lesson for the colonial powers.

The I.N.A. had a more tangible contribution to the cause of the Indian nationalists and this could be found in the aftermath of its officers' trials in India during 1945-6. Although it was doubtful if the I.N.A. leaders foresaw such developments earlier, the trials created a widespread revolutionary anti-British sentiment in India. A consensus

⁷⁴ From Mohan Singh to Rash Behari Bose, 13 December 1942, Indian Independence League Papers.

⁷⁵ See the minutes of the meeting on 7 December 1942 attended by Col. Iwakuro, the President of the Council of Action and N. Raghavan, Sopan (Pseud.), *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: His Life and Work* (Bombay, 1946), pp. 206-10.

⁷⁶ Auchinleck's memorandum, *op. cit.*

of opinion arose among almost all the political parties in India which condemned the Government's policy of trying certain I.N.A. officers by court martial. These parties (apart from the C.P.I. which did not approve of the I.N.A.), in spite of their divergent political views, found some reasons to support the I.N.A. In assuming a major responsibility in the defence of the I.N.A. officers without regard to their religious beliefs, the Indian National Congress sought to vindicate its own secular character which had been seriously challenged by the claim of the Muslim League at the Simla Conference (May-June 1945) to be the only representative of the Muslim interest in the country. The Muslim League, first reticent on the Government's I.N.A. policy, soon went against it for in any other position its main rival, Congress alone would be in the field to make political capital out of the I.N.A.'s popularity throughout the country. The Socialist leaders, some of whom had gone underground during the war to organize anti-British activities felt no qualms of conscience in either approving of the violent means adopted by the I.N.A. or its exploitation for the country's freedom the difficulties of the ruling power. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Akali Dal resisted the trial in order to protect their own communal interest involved in it.

All these parties together created a solid anti-British front on the question of the I.N.A. court martial. The nationalist press and the eleven thousand I.N.A. soldiers who had been released by the army authorities after preliminary interrogation before the trials commenced, carried far and wide the tales of the I.N.A.'s heroism, independence and sacrifice for the country's freedom and helped create a violent anti-British mood among the people which quickly transcended all communal barriers. Twice during the trials it caused serious explosion of anti-British riots in the cities of India and on both occasions it left the Government little choice but to modify its announced I.N.A. policy. The riots embarrassed the government since a resort to violence against the established authorities in the country by the two principal communities in a body was an eventuality which the British would have never liked. What was more significant, the revolutionary impact of the I.N.A. trial succeeded for the first time in many years in removing the traditional barrier between the Indian officers in the British Indian army and the main current of Indian nationalism.

The war left the Indian officers alert and sensitive. The grievances of the pre-war officers found quick response among those who were recruited during the war. It was the latter group which constituted the vast majority of the Indian officer corps in 1945 (7604 out of 8000)⁷⁷ and was politically conscious. Many of them encountered the I.N.A. in the battlefield, and came in closer contact with its officers and the

⁷⁷ Srinandan Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

workers of the Indian Independence League at the end of the war. There seems to be little doubt about the propaganda among the Indian forces by the nationalist elements (and photographs of the I.N.A. and the speeches of its Supreme Commander were reprinted in bulk for secret circulation), although it may be difficult to know how extensive the campaign was. It is interesting to note that when requested by the writer of this paper to comment on the reports of the nationalist propaganda among the Indian armed forces in Southeast Asia, the war-time Commander-in-chief of the Indian army could not "recall any reports of fraternization" but he admitted that "it is obvious that many of the ex-I.N.A. soldiers must have met relatives and friends in the 14th Army" (the British force which received the I.N.A.'s surrender in Burma and other Southeast Asian countries).⁷⁸ That was what actually happened, according to the sources on the spot.⁷⁹ The I.N.A. in its defeat had retained something of its military excellence which impressed the advance units of the 14th army.⁸⁰ Concerning the over-all impact of these contacts a British officer observed: "In the eleven months which had... elapsed since the first contacts of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force with the mass of the I.N.A. in Rangoon, there had been widespread fraternization... Its result was political consciousness which the Indian Servicemen had never before possessed."⁸¹ This new consciousness led them to react more sharply not only to the existing grievances in the Service but to the pressing political issues of the post-war years.

At the end of the war, the loyalty of the Indian officers was subjected to a great strain. The post-war plan of the Government for swift and substantial reduction of the armed forces⁸² created a sense of tremendous insecurity in them. Moreover, the Indian army was viewed by some nationalists as an instrument of British imperialism and in the hey-day of the I.N.A.'s popularity the Indian officers surely came under the popular stricture.⁸³ In the light of the newly acquired political consciousness, these developments were bound to have some reactions in their mind.

⁷⁸ Sir Claude Auchinleck's reply to the writer's questionnaire.

⁷⁹ Discussions with U. C. Sharma and Pandit Raghunath Sharma at Bangkok in July 1963. The former was the General Secretary of the Bangkok branch of the Indian Independence League and the latter was for some time its Chairman.

⁸⁰ See Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

⁸¹ Toye, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

⁸² The plan aimed at demobilizing by April 1947 in all 1,553,167 men from the three Services. Snandan Prasad, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-11.

⁸³ This was illustrated by many contemporary incidents, one of which is mentioned here. The leader of the European group in the Central Assembly of India supported the Government's attitude towards the I.N.A. prisoners and said: "Do you think it would have been a good thing or a bad thing if the whole of the Indian Army had followed the example of the I.N.A. and joined the Japanese?" Immediately there were cries of "They never joined the Japanese" and "we would have admired the Indian Army if they joined the I.N.A." *Hindu*, 12 February 1946, p. 4. See also Brigadier Rajendra Singh, *Far East in Ferment* (Delhi, 1961), p. 28.

Were they on the right side in the tussle between the nationalists and the ruling power? Should they want to clear themselves of the popular suspicion, the issue of the I.N.A. officers' trial, on which the nationalists—by and large—and the ruling power were sharply divided, offered them an opportunity.

As the first I.N.A. trial commenced on 5 November (1945), the pro-I.N.A. sentiment of the Indian officers and their dislike for the Government's I.N.A. policy began to find expression in many ways. The Royal Indian Air Force (R.I.A.F.) stationed at Calcutta came out openly against the trial. During the first court martial they sent their subscription "for the defence of brave and patriotic sons of India forming the I.N.A." In a message to the Bengal Congress Committee the R.I.A.F. not only praised "the noble ideal" of the I.N.A. but described its violent methods and alliance with Britain's enemy power during the war as "commendable and inspiring." The R.I.A.F. recorded their "strongest protest against the autocratic action of the Government of India and, in effect, that of the British Government in trying these brightest jewels of India."⁸⁴

It will not be wrong to assume that the highest authorities of the armed forces were alert about the nationalists' glorification of the I.N.A. and its probable effect on the morale of the Indian officers. On 1 January 1946 the Commander-in-chief issued a confidential note to all the commanding officers of the Royal Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Army. He referred to the political agitation in the country over the trial, deplored the attempts made in the nationalist press to draw the Indian men and officers into it and cautioned the commanding officers that the "months ahead . . . will inevitably be a period of strain and upheaval."⁸⁵ He suggested some concrete measures to be taken in the armed forces to encounter the nationalists' propaganda.⁸⁶

In spite of these precautionary measures many secret decisions of the army authorities regarding the I.N.A. officers were divulged to the public during 1945-6. The officer commanding the Eastern Command, Lt. Gen. Toker, mentioned one such incident in his command which was "the beginning of many exposures of secret military information" about the I.N.A.⁸⁷ These exposures clearly suggested where the sympathy of some responsible Indian officers in the army headquarters lay.

⁸⁴ *Hindustan Standard*, 11 November 1945, p. 5.

⁸⁵ Copy of the note from Gen. Auchinleck to all the Commanding Officers of the R.I.N., I.A., and the R.I.A.F. The I.N.A. files of the Janmabhoomi Press, Bombay.

⁸⁶ For the details of these measures see the copy of the Political Propaganda on behalf of the I.N.A.—possibility of counter measures, extract from G.H.Q.(1) A.G.'s Branch, Simla. The I.N.A. files of the Janmabhoomi Press, Bombay.

⁸⁷ Toker, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

“It was alarming for the future,” wrote Toker, “for the only person who could have got at them was some Indian officer employed on the staff.”⁸⁸

As all the required official records of the armed forces are not available, it is difficult to know the exact strength of the Indian officers who were opposed to the official I.N.A. policy. The account of Lt. Gen. Toker, however, suggested a grim picture. He wrote: “. . . the I.N.A. affairs was threatening to tumble down the whole edifice of the Indian army. . . .”⁸⁹ According to him, of the pre-war officers (in all 396 in 1939) the Sandhurst graduates due to their English education and close contacts with British way of living, “held precisely the same view as the British officers.” But they were not many in number.⁹⁰ The pre-war Indian commissioned officers who exceeded the Sandhurst graduates by 1939 formed together with the war-time recruits the overwhelming majority (over seven thousand and six hundred)) of the Indian officer corps (eight thousand) in 1945. The contact this section had with the British outside their academy was little and these officers viewed the I.N.A. officers as “patriots” who deserved to be “treated leniently” by the British.⁹¹ Assuming that Toker’s analysis of the attitude of the various sections of the Indian officers towards the Government’s I.N.A. policy was correct, approximately seventy-six out of every eighty Indian officers were against the prosecution of the I.N.A. officers.

The above suggestion was placed by the writer to the war-time Commander-in-chief, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck for his comment as well his opinion on the actual strength of the pro-I.N.A. section of the I.N.A. officers. In response, he sent a document—a memorandum circulated by him in 1946 among the senior British officers explaining his decision to commute the sentence passed by the first court martial on three officers—which, he wrote, “conclusively answers this question as far as I was concerned.”⁹² Some remarks on the readjustment of the Commander-in-chief’s attitude towards the I.N.A. officers after the trials commenced will serve as an introduction to the document. When he decided for “public” trial in 1945, he probably presumed that his firm action would not only be approved by the British officers but also by the loyal Indian officers in general. As the trials proceeded the Special Organization set up by him in the army headquarters gave him its findings

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹⁰ Ever since the system of commissioning the Indian officers was introduced in the twenties, 8-10 seats were reserved every year for the Indians in the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst till 1928 when the number of seats was increased to 20.

Since 1932 when the Indian Military Academy was established at Dehra Dun as many as sixty cadets used to be trained up each year. Srinandan Prasad, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-6.

⁹¹ Toker, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-5.

⁹² From Gen. Auchinleck to the writer.

about the real feelings of the Indian officers on the trial issue. The Commander-in-chief was quick to recognize the new force; many senior British officers found it hard to do so. During the trial he reported to the Viceroy: "I do not think any senior British officer to-day knows what is the real feeling among the Indian ranks regarding the 'I.N.A.' . . . there is a growing feeling of sympathy for the 'I.N.A.' and an increasing tendency to disregard the brutalities committed by some of its members as well as the foreswearing by all of them of original allegiance."⁹³ Later, in his memorandum to the Senior British officers he wrote: "Except for a few recovered prisoners of war who have suffered much at the hands of fellow countrymen who joined the so-called 'I.N.A.' *the vast majority, almost without exception, however much they may like and respect the British, are glad and relieved because of the result of the trial . . . all are sure that any attempt to force the sentence would have led to chaos in the country at large and probably to mutiny and dissension in the army culminating in its dissolution . . .*"⁹⁴

Following the strike of the Royal Air Force, the Royal Indian Air Force (R.I.A.F.) went on strike.⁹⁵ It put forward various demands and expressed its sympathy for the I.N.A.⁹⁶ The consequences of the event could be disconcerting in the army but for the timely step-down in the face of pro-I.N.A. sentiment . . . the Indian officers by the Commander-in-chief who commuted the sentence passed by the first court martial on the three I.N.A. officers. But a dangerous explosion took place in the Royal Indian Navy (R.I.N.) in February 1946. The details of the mutiny and the different political versions of it can be found elsewhere.⁹⁷ Here its basic features will be mentioned very briefly and an attempt will be made to assess the role of the political factor in it.

The mutiny involved almost the entire navy. Seventy-eight ships of various descriptions stationed in Bombay, Karachi, Madras, Calcutta, Cochin, Vizagapatam, Mandapam and the Andamans as well as most of the naval shore establishments joined the mutiny. Only ten ships and two shore establishments remained unaffected.⁹⁸ The mutiny was short-lived—lasting for seven days in Calcutta, six days in Bombay, two days

⁹³ From Gen. Auchinleck to the Viceroy, 29 November 1945. Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 806.

⁹⁴ Auchinleck's memorandum.

⁹⁵ According to the press report 5,200 airmen took part in the strike. *Bombay Chronicle*, 19 February 1946, p. 5.

⁹⁶ Toker, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

⁹⁷ For the details of the events leading to the mutiny and the happenings connected with it see Government of India, *The Gazette of India, Extraordinary*, 21 January 1947 (Delhi); *Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1946-48*, p. 8745; N. N. Mitra, ed., *The Indian Annual Register: An Annual Digest of Public Affairs in India* (Calcutta) I (1946), p. 328. For a typical British officer's version of the incidents see Toker, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-5; for a communist version of the events see R. Palme Dutt, *India To-Day* (Bombay, 1949), pp. 536-42.

⁹⁸ *Gazette of India, op. cit.*, p. 117.

in Karachi and one day in Madras. In Bombay and Karachi there was an exchange of fire between the ratings and the military, but elsewhere the mutineers were non-violent. The real danger arising out of the mutiny was underlined by the warning of the naval authorities "to put down the mutiny even at the cost of the navy."⁹⁹ Strong naval reinforcements were swiftly despatched to meet the emergency.¹⁰⁰

There were various grievances among the Indian ratings at the end of the war. These grievances were serious enough to cause repeated unrest in the Service during the war. But that the mutiny differed from the earlier disorders by assuming for the first time a political complexion which none of the war-time mutinies had, was largely due to the I.N.A. trial and its aftermath.

The quarterly reports on the morale of the ratings of the R.I.N. since July 1945 suggested a change in the traditional apathetic attitude of the ratings towards the contemporary political issues. The report of the quarter ending in July mentioned no political influence at work among the ratings.¹⁰¹ Even at the end of September the attitude of the Indian ratings did not substantially change. They were "either indifferent to politics or interested in it in a healthy way."¹⁰² The first I.N.A. court martial and the subsequent political agitation in the country brought about a change in the attitude of the ratings. The report on their morale in December 1945 pointed out: "... ratings politically conscious; keenly aware of relative lack of amenities for themselves and their families compared to those provided in foreign navies;... some ratings influenced by I.N.A. propaganda and sympathetic to I.N.A."¹⁰³ An officer who visited the ratings and their officers in Bombay and Karachi during December 1945 and February 1946 confirmed the pro-I.N.A. feelings among the ratings.¹⁰⁴ The report prepared by another officer on his visit to Bombay naval establishments mentioned: "All ratings and officers sympathetic to independence movement in the country, Muslim ratings keenly interested in Pakistan; Hindu ratings pro-Congress; opinion about the I.N.A. divided but majority in favour of trials being abandoned."¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Vice-Admiral Godfrey's warning to the ratings. The Admiral deplored that a "state of open mutiny prevails" in Bombay. *Times of India (Bombay)*, 22 February 1946, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ The Press quoted a spokesman of the General Headquarters in Delhi to say that strong naval, military and air reinforcements were on their way to Bombay, Poona and Karachi. *Times of India*, 22 February 1946, p. 7. This was confirmed by the British Prime Minister Attlee in the House of Commons. *Parliamentary Debates*, 419 (1945-6) cols. 1310 and 1441.

¹⁰¹ *Gazette of India, op. cit.*, p. 133.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

The actual events of the mutiny left little doubt about its political complexion. The demands put forward by the ratings for immediate redress included the release of the I.N.A. prisoners and abandonment of their trials,¹⁰⁶ they renamed the navy as the Indian National Navy;¹⁰⁷ contacted the Socialist leaders;¹⁰⁸ burnt the foreign flags and flew the flag of the Congress and the Muslim League.¹⁰⁹

Soon after the mutiny, a Commission was appointed by the Government of India to enquire into its causes. The Commission pointed out various causes of discontent among the ratings. Some of the evidence which the Commission took into account, most notably that of Rear Admiral Rattray, maintained that "the causes of the mutiny are to be found in politics and political influence."¹¹⁰ The Commission was not in complete agreement with this view. It, however, held political influence as a "contributory cause of the mutiny."¹¹¹ It summarised the factors which "contributed to the spread of subversive propaganda among the ratings and gave the mutiny a political complexion." These, according to the Commission, were: 'majority of ratings politically conscious, ratings' contact with the I.N.A., the *Azad Hind* literature in Singapore, Malaya and Burma, free access to political meetings, inflammatory articles in the press, discussions of the I.N.A. trials, R.A.F. and R.I.A.F. 'strikes', Commander King incident which accentuated existing racial feeling, exploitation of the existing discontent and unrest in the Service by some individuals in the Service holding anti-British views."¹¹²

The British press in India and Britain was, however, more emphatic on the role of political influence on the mutiny. The *Times of India* editorially observed: "As a result of the extravagant glorification of the I.N.A. following the trials in Delhi, there was released throughout India a flood of comment which had inevitable sequel in mutinies and alarming outbreaks of civil violence in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi and elsewhere. . . ."¹¹³ A similar view was expressed by the *Times*. It wrote: "In the case of the naval mutinies, the trouble seems to be in the main political. It was scarcely to be expected that, the ratings, in such a large centre of political activities as Bombay, would not become affected to some extent, by the prevailing racial tension. . . ."¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁶ *Bombay Chronicle*, 20 and 21 February, p. 5; *Times of India*, 21 February 1946, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷ Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 285.

¹⁰⁸ For the role of the left-wing elements in the mutiny see Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 287; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom* (Calcutta, 1959), p. 131 and Attlee in the House of Commons, H.O.C., *op. cit.*, col. 1442

¹⁰⁹ Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 285.

¹¹⁰ The two other witnesses, namely Ahmed Brohi and the Naval Officer of Bombay supported Admiral Rattray's view. *Gazette of India*, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹¹³ *Times of India*, 20 February 1946, p. 6.

¹¹⁴ *Times* (London) 21 February 1946, p. 3.

In the tense atmosphere existing in the country as a result of the disturbances in the first half of February 1946 the naval mutiny had quick repercussions. Between 21 and 24 February there was furious mass rioting in Bombay following the strike called in support of the revolting ratings.¹¹⁵ There was similar rioting in Calcutta, Madura and Madras,¹¹⁶ and its repercussions were felt among the armed forces too. There were strikes by the Indian soldiers stationed at Jabbalpur on 27 February and the R.I.A.F. at Bombay and Madras between 22 and 25 February 1946.¹¹⁷ There were some important features of these disturbances. These were in sympathy of the I.N.A. and the naval mutiny. Moreover, the civil disturbances were anti-foreign in nature. The Government and the European properties were singled out for attack.¹¹⁸ In the places of their occurrence, these disturbances assumed serious proportions and had to be brought under control by reinforced police and military forces.¹¹⁹

The I.N.A. courts martial were significant for more than one reason. A large section of the Indian officer corps not only showed keen interest in the trials but supported the popular demand for the release of the I.N.A. officers. The trials therefore, initiated the Indian officers in nationalists' politics and drew them closer to the nationalist position. In this sense the trials helped "nationalize" the officer corps. The revolutionary aftermath of the trials threw an interesting side-light on the Congress policy. It was the support which the I.N.A. officers received from the Congress party that helped create a tremendous popularity for them in the country in the initial period after the war. But as the I.N.A. sentiments took a revolutionary turn, the Congress disassociated itself from the new force which was largely its own creation. This was evident as the Congress condemned the civilian unrest in February 1946 and withdrew its support from the mutiny of R.I.N. ratings.¹²⁰ The

¹¹⁵ The strike was called by the communists and the leftist elements in the Congress Party. But Congress officially disapproved of the strike. The mass demonstration in sympathy with the revolting ratings soon took to rioting. The communists mobilized six hundred thousand mill workers of the city who struck. The minimum casualty figures quoted by the Government were 187 killed and 1002 wounded. According to the non-Government sources 270 were killed and 1300 injured. The *Times of India* wrote from Bombay that the "mass rising" which was "in sympathy of the naval mutiny" was "unparalleled in the city's history." *Times of India*, 23 February 1946, p. 1; 25 February 1946; *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1946-8, pp. 4745, 8745; Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 313.

¹¹⁶ Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 310.

¹¹⁷ Press communique issued by E. S. Hyde, District Magistrate of Jabbalpur, *Ibid.*, p. 328, 318.

¹¹⁸ *Times of India*, 23 February 1946, p. 1; *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1946-8, p. 8745.

¹¹⁹ *Times of India*, 23 February 1946, p. 1.

¹²⁰ Sardar Patel condemned the mass demonstration in Bombay during the civil disorder as "unjustifiable." Nehru also deplored the mutiny. On 22 February 1946 Sardar strongly advised the ratings "to lay down arms and to go through the formality of surrender" Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 297. The President of the Indian National Congress, Azad communicated to the Bombay Provincial Congress as

“nationalization” of the Indian officer corps at a time when a large number of them were facing demobilization and the Indian Civil Service was tottering on its feet under the pressure of the difficult post-war situations and the absence of fresh recruits during the war,¹²¹ was an event of great consequence. It infused a new initiative in the post-war British policy towards India. During and immediately after the war, it was officially declared by the British Government that their withdrawal from India would await the prior settlement of the communal question. Faced with a new situation, British policy came to attach highest priority to the question of transfer of power in India and took immediate measure for this purpose. The swift despatch of the Cabinet Mission underlined the urgency.

well as Sardar Patel who was in Bombay that “the steps taken by the naval officers were wrong and they should go back to work.” He gave the same instruction to Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali who tried to secure the support of the Congress for the ratings. Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 131. In March 1946 the Congress Working Committee stated in a resolution that the events related to the mutiny were “an obstacle in the way of Congress” Mitra, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 124, 314, 317.

¹²¹ H. O. C., vol. 416, cols. 1429-30; also Francis Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers* (London, 1961), pp. 208-9.

JAPANESE POLICY AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

JOYCE LEBRA

1. POLICY MAKERS IN TOKYO

STEPHEN F. COHEN STATES IN AN ARTICLE IN *PACIFIC AFFAIRS* titled "Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army," "Little is known about the maneuvering and influence of the Japanese upon the creation and organization of the INA during the period Bose was its Commander."¹ This paper attempts to illuminate this phase of Japan's southward push during the Pacific War, focusing on Japanese policy. Actually Mr. Cohen's remarks apply equally well to the first INA commanded by General Mohan Singh. I must at this point acknowledge my debt to Dr. K. K. Ghosh who preceded me in the study of the INA and who since Mr. Cohen wrote has helped to dispel our ignorance.

Japan's wartime aims in India were never as clearly defined as in Southeast Asia. India was not embraced in the grand design for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Greater East Asia would sweep through Southeast Asia westward to the Indo-Burma border. Everywhere in Asia Western colonial rule would be driven out and independence movements encouraged. Asia for Asians became the goal and shibboleth. The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere would comprise an economically self-sufficient entity under Japanese tutelage. Both diplomatic and military means would be employed to realize the blueprint. Japan would guide Southeast Asia, but Japanese military administration would respect existing local organization and customs. By late 1941 control of resources necessary for the war effort became a focal point of the plan.²

Still, India bordered the Western perimeter of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. And Japan was at war with the colonial power occupying India; England must be expelled from India. As Japan wished to see England purged from Asia so also Indian nationalists aspired to free India. Japan had to reckon with India for the mutual advantage of both Japan and India.

What agencies or individuals in Tokyo would do the reckoning? The Foreign Ministry was one obvious possibility. Japan had no ambassador in India under England, but there were consuls in major Indian

¹ Vol. XXXVI, No. 4, winter 1963-64, pp. 411-429.

² Essentials of Policy Regarding the Administration of the Occupied Areas in the Southern Regions, Liaison Conference, Nov. 20, 1941, in Nobutaka Ike, *Japan's Decision for War*, Stanford University Press, 1967, pp. 251-253.

cities. In April, 1941, for example, Consul General Okazaki in Calcutta, in a secret communique to Foreign Minister Matsuoka, described the independence movement of the Forward Bloc, a radical party in Bengal. Okazaki suggested establishing contact with this left-wing party in India and also with its leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, currently in exile in Berlin. Going even further, Okazaki suggested, "We should secretly transport large quantities of weapons and substantially increase the actual strength of the Forward Block."³ While Okasaki felt the movement would burgeon into a genuinely popular revolt, Japan should do her part by establishing contact with Bose and aiding his party. This early Japanese notice of Bose preceded by several months Major Fujiwara's remarks about Bose to the 8th Section, Second Bureau, IGHQ. But Okasaki's suggestions were not followed.

From Ambassador General Oshima Hiroshi in Berlin also came communiqués regarding the Indian revolutionary Bose and his desire to go to East Asia. By late 1941 Bose had already begun to visit Ambassador Oshima and military attaché Yamamoto Bin in Berlin with plans for military cooperation with Japan against England in Asia. The Foreign Ministry, then, learned of the presence of Bose in Berlin and of his political significance from sources both in India and in Germany. The Foreign Ministry, however, refrained from any positive proposal regarding India or Bose during 1941. And when war erupted, the initiative obviously lay with the military rather than the Foreign Ministry.

From within the cabinet Prime Minister Tojo made several declarations of policy toward India in early 1942. These pronouncements were articulated in speeches before the Diet. They represented official policy aims toward India. The statements were made during the four-month interval from January through April, and the timing of the pronouncements suggested that by late March or early April the fundamental lines of Japan's India policy had already been drawn.⁴ Measures were later adopted to implement some of these policy goals. Announcements made by Tojo during 1943 and 1944 were designed to realize earlier decisions.

Major policy decisions on India also emanated from Liaison Conferences and Imperial Conferences. Liaison Conferences included important members of both the cabinet and military high command, including the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff and Vice-Chiefs of Staff. The Liaison Conferences were inaugurated by cabinet order in the late 1937 to provide liaison between the Cabinet and military on crucial policy questions. For a time conferences

³ Gaimusho, Indo Mondai [India Problem], Secret Communique from Okasaki to Matsuoka, nos. 11975, 11978, 11979, Apr. 30-31, 1941.

⁴ Interviews with Col. Ozeki, formerly of the 8th Section, IGHQ, on July 15, 1967, Hashima, Gifu Prefecture, and Lt. Gen. Arisue, former chief, Second Bureau, IGHQ, on Aug. 19, 1967, Tokyo.

lapsed, but they were resumed in November 1940 and thereafter continued until 1944.⁵ A major decision reached at a Liaison Conference was not final until ratified at an Imperial Conference, i.e., the Liaison Conference plus the Emperor and President of the Privy Council. This Imperial ratification in effect made the decision irrevocable.

Still another government agency directly under the Prime Minister's office was concerned with Japanese policy in Asia. This was the Total War Research Institute, created in 1940 to do research on total war and to train officials. This agency was the brain child of two generals: Lt. Gen. Tatsumi Eichi, Section Chief in the European and American Section, IGHQ, and Lt. Gen. Iimura Minoru, Chief of Staff of the Kanto Garrison in Manchuria. Gen. Iimura was appointed director of the Institute in January 1941 and remained in that post until October of the same year. Gen. Tatsumi, former military attache in London, envisaged an agency on the same pattern as the Royal National War Institute in England. Topics for study by the Institute were selected at the discretion of Gen. Iimura, though the choice reflected the concerns of the military which he represented. Iimura reported directly to the Prime Minister, at that time Konoe. During August, 1941 (following discussion by the Army and Navy), the Institute held a map maneuver on the problem of what would happen should Japan advance South in search of oil. The study postulated Soviet entry into the war; the conclusion was that Japan's material strength would be deficient, and the cabinet and Planning Board would be impelled to resign. Bureau chiefs of several cabinet ministries participated, and many top-ranking military officers observed the maneuver, including War Minister Tojo.⁶

The Institute also autonomously devised plans for the independence of Asian nations from Western colonial rule and their incorporation into the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The Total War Research Institute drew up a Draft Plan for the Establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere on January 27, 1942. This plan envisaged a Greater, Smaller and Inner Sphere; India was to be included within the Greater Sphere, or sphere of influence.⁷ Policies recommended by the Institute were later implemented by military administration in Southeast Asia, though Iimura testified at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal that the military had no special interest in the Institute.⁸ There was, however, no separate focus on India in the studies and maneuvers of the Total War Research Institute during 1941. A Greater

⁵ Ike, *op. cit.*, p. xvi.

⁶ Correspondence with Lt. Gen. Iimura, Aug. 21, 1967, Japan.

⁷ International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Exhibit 1336.

⁸ International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Exhibit 3030, Iimura testimony.

Willard H. Elsbee, *Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements*, Harvard University Press, 1953, p. 20.

East Asia Military was also created during the war to handle problems relating to the rest of Asia; no records of this ministry are extant.

Besides these agencies General Staff Headquarters of course had a direct concern with India policy during the war. Army Chief of General Staff Sugiyama Gen took a special interest in India, derived from his two-year assignment in India as military attaché. Sugiyama, like Tojo and Shigemitsu, developed a special sympathy for Subhas Chandra Bose. Under the Second Bureau (Intelligence) of IGHQ, headed by Lt. Gen. Arisue, was the 8th Section, whose purview included India. The 8th Section was the official repository of intelligence on India. From among staff officers of the 8th Section Major Fujiwara was selected to establish liaison with and encourage the Indian independence movement in South-east Asia. Fujiwara was dismayed by the lack of information on India available in IGHQ at the time of his assignment in October 1941. Within the 8th Section Lt. Col. Ozeki was assigned to deal with the Fujiwara Kikan and its successor organizations, the Iwakuro Kikan and Hikari Kikan in the field. 8th Section chiefs, for example Col. Nagai Yatsuji, were at times called on to deal with the Indian National Army or with Bose. Civilian specialists on India — on whom there were very few in Japan — were also consulted by the 8th Section during the war.

These were the major official sources in Tokyo from which policy decisions on India emanated during the war. There were others who influenced India policy, several of them private individuals. Notable among these was Toyama Mitsuru, the renowned patriotic society leader, who had contacts with Indian revolutionaries, such as Rash Behari Bose. Toyama advocated Pan-Asianism in all its varieties, starting soon after the turn of the century. He went beyond the ideology of Pan-Asianism to actively protect revolutionaries from all parts of Asia.

Another constant factor affecting Japan's project was the traditional ideology of the Japanese Army. The Army traditionally was oriented northward, toward Soviet Russia and North China, rather than Southward. The north was always the major legitimate concern of the Army, the direction from which Japan had to be on guard. Assignment of the best officers in the 'thirties to Manchuria and North China, especially to the Kwantung Army and the Kanto Garrison, reflected this orientation. This was true through most of 1941. "In Manchuria there were many superior officers, but in the South Fujiwara was a single player," observed Ishikawa Yoshiaki, interpreter for the Kikan throughout the war.⁹

2. ISSUES AND POLICIES

The first hypothesis to emerge regarding Japanese policy toward India is that Japan at no time planned a major invasion of India or

⁹ Interview, July 13, 1966, Tokyo.

actual incorporation of India into the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, contrary to the suspicions of many Indians in the independence movement. There were, however, several indications of more limited concern with India in late 1941 and early 1942. Decisions reached in Liaison Conferences and speeches in the Diet by Prime Minister Tojo revealed this concern.

On November 15, 1941, an Imperial Conference decision, the "Plan for Acceleration of the End of the War with America," called among other things for "1) separation of Australia and India from Britain, and 2) stimulation of the Indian independence movement."¹⁰

One problem concerning policy toward India was the estimate of the Gaimusho that the Indian National Congress was opposed to Japan. A corollary of this was the postulate that, even if the Indian independence movement should succeed, it would be difficult for Indian revolutionaries to establish a stable, orderly state. Nor would it be possible for Japan to control a nation of four hundred million in addition to her other commitments in Southeast Asia.¹¹ On the other hand, it lay within the realm of feasibility for Japan to launch a vast propaganda effort to encourage Indian disaffection from Britain.

Tojo declared in the Diet early in 1942 "Within the liberation of India there can be no real mutual prosperity in Greater East Asia," and further, in April, "It has been decided to strike a decisive blow against British power and military establishment in India."¹² This constituted a general policy statement rather than a directive to the Operations Bureau of IGHO; Tojo gave no suggestion of its tactical or even strategic implementation. Tojo mentioned India in Diet speeches on January 17, February 12, February 14, March 11-12, and April 4. Repeatedly he called on Indians to take advantage of the war to rise against British power and establish an India for Indians. Tojo also stated he hoped India would cooperate in the "establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." This pronouncement too was never alluded to again, either generally or in further explanation.

At several points it was conceivable that a Japanese invasion of India might have succeeded had it been planned. The optimum time was in the spring and summer of 1942, following Japanese successes in Malaya and Burma, when Japanese air, sea and land power could not have been checked by the British. But Japan passed up the opportunity. Japan made no concerted attempt to establish a base in Ceylon or Calcutta, though Ceylon had been mentioned in Tokyo as a desirable base.

¹⁰ Ike, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

¹¹ Secret document signed Ott, Tokyo, Jan. 7, 1942. IMFTE Exhibit 1271.

¹² Tojo speech in the Diet, early 1942, in the Boeicho Senshishitsu [Defense Agency, War History Library]; Tojo speech on military activities in India; Imperial Conference Decision, Apr. 4, 1942 in Boeicho Senshishitsu.

Two years later, when Japan mounted a military offensive into the borders of India, it was with the limited objective of "securing strategic areas near Imphal and in Northeast India for the defense of Burma."¹³ An auxiliary objective was to disrupt the air routes between Chungking and India. This was clearly not envisioned as a full-scale invasion of India. India remained a peripheral interest for Japan in terms of 1) the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and 2) the major theaters of the war. Nevertheless, the attention of Tokyo had been drawn to India at the close of 1941, even before the outbreak of war. One of the reasons Tojo took notice was the policy recommendations of the young Major Fujiwara, who had been sent to Bangkok on an intelligence mission late in 1941.

Another major tenet of Japanese policy, this toward the INA, was that Japan would use and support the INA chiefly for propaganda purposes, particularly to foster anti-British sentiment. All major Japanese policy decisions regarding the INA point toward this goal. Beginning with the Fujiwara mission in 1941 (and a brief assignment for Fujiwara in late 1940), and continuing with the expanded propaganda functions of the Kikan under Col. Iwakuro, the major Japanese thrust was to encourage the proliferation of Indian intelligence activities throughout Southeast Asia. Under both Fujiwara, and still more under Iwakuro, training centers and liaison facilities were developed to expand propaganda and sabotage missions behind enemy lines.

Yet another Japanese objective was a corollary to the above, namely: even during the Imphal campaign and the actions in Burma, the Japanese Army was reluctant to see the INA evolve into a large fighting force, partly because of the problems of equipping such an army, partly out of questions about possible actions of such an army once the Indian border was crossed, and partly because of doubts about whether an Indian army would constitute a military asset to Japan. During the Imphal campaign Japan conceived of the INA as a series of guerrilla fighting units and special forces which would perform intelligence functions. Shah Nawaz Khan alleges that General Terauchi, commander of the Southern Army, told Bose unequivocally that Japan did not want large formations of the INA at the front. Shah Nawaz was particularly skeptical of Japanese motives, and charged further not only Japanese inability to supply arms and provisions during military campaigns, but also reluctance.¹⁴

¹³ Instructions from Imperial Army Headquarters, Tokyo to General Kawabe in Burma, Jan. 7, 1944 in Historical Section, Defense Ministry, Government of India, New Delhi. Also quoted in Barker, A. J., *The March on Delhi*, London, 1963, p. 246.

¹⁴ Durlab Singh ed., quotes from Shah Nawaz Khan's diary in *Formation and Growth of the Indian National Army, Lahore*, 1946, p. 46. Shah Nawaz, *My Memories of I.N.A. and its Netaji*, Delhi, 1946, p. 125.

Several steps taken by Japan, recounted below, also support the hypothesis that Japan was primarily interested in using the INA for propaganda purposes. These include the Japanese recognition of the Free India Provisional Government, the transfer of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to FIPG, and the sending of a diplomatic representative to the Free India Provisional Government. In all these instances Japan conceded the form but not the substance of Bose's demands. The concessions were designed to create the impression abroad, and with Bose, that Japan was dealing with a large, independent government and Army.

Another problem which beset Japan's India policy throughout the war was a time disjunction between three factors: 1) military intelligence in the field and its evaluation and response in Tokyo, 2) policy planning by IGHQ, and 3) tactical implementation of policy at the operational level. Part of this delay was attributable to normal processing of proposals and policies through a bureaucratic establishment, even during wartime. For example, the decision to invite Bose from Berlin to Tokyo to evaluate his utility from the standpoint of Japanese policy was reached on April 17, 1942, jointly by the War, Navy and Foreign Ministries.¹⁵ Bose did not actually reach Tokyo until the end of May, 1943. Apart from normal bureaucratic delays, part of the time lag was created by the German Foreign Ministry's reluctance to release a potentially valuable bargaining instrument in dealing with the British. Part of the delay was also occasioned by the presence in Tokyo of another Indian revolutionary, Rash Behari Bose, who many felt was the logical leader to work through.

Another case in point was the planning of the offensive into Northeast India and its execution. In the fall of 1942, and even earlier, Tojo and IGHQ contemplated a military thrust into Northeast India, "Operation 21" as it was then called. But in 1942-53 there were too many obstacles to the idea—inadequate supply lines, British deterrent strength in the Akyab sector through early 1943, a shortage of trained Indian troops for a joint Campaign, not to mention events in the Pacific. Consequently, the plan for an Indian offensive was postponed to early 1944. In 1944, however, despite the rationale for the campaign, the above obstacles were even more acute and it was not possible for Japan to succeed.

Regarding this disjunction of time factors, it should be noted that Bose's role in the timing of most aspects of the Japan-INA cooperation was minimal. The timing of Subhas Chandra Bose's arrival in East Asia was not of his own choice. For over a year before he arrived in Asia he had been pressing Japanese Ambassador Oshima and Col. Yamamoto, military attaché in Berlin, to arrange his transportation to Asia. Bose

¹⁵ Renraku Kaigi Kettei, Apr. 17, 1942 [Liaison Conference Decision] in Boeicho Senshishitsu.

was similarly unhappy about the timing of the Imphal campaign, but again his expressions of urgency carried little weight in Tokyo. Bose would have had Japan push across the border soon after his arrival in the summer of 1943. But because of the above reasons and because India remained for Japan a peripheral concern in the deployment of her resources for a total war, other considerations overrode the logic of not postponing the campaign. In other respects, however, Bose did make a difference in Tokyo, particularly with Tojo, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, and Chief of Staff Sugiyama.

To summarize, then, Japan had several objectives in cooperating with the INA: to encourage anti-British sentiment in Southeast Asia, within the British-Indian Army and within India; to develop an intelligence network to implement this aim; to defend Burma and the western border of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and to support and assist the FIPG and INA, within certain limitations, to achieve these aims. These were both political and military objectives. There was a distinction made between the political aims, which fell within the purview of the Second Bureau, Intelligence, and the military problems, which fell within the scope of the First Bureau, Operations, in IGHQ. The first Bureau was the more powerful of the two in any conflict.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND TRANSPORTATION IN THE FIELD

The organization in Southeast Asia for implementing Japanese policy toward the Indian National Army was a liaison agency under the aegis of Southern Army Headquarters. Formed in October, 1941, it predated the formation of the first INA by two months.

On October 1, 1941, Major Fujiwara Iwaichi was sent from the 8th Section, Second Bureau, IGHQ on an intelligence mission to Bangkok, where he contacted the Japanese military attache. Fujiwara's instructions from Chief of Staff General Sugiyama directed him to maintain liaison with the Indian independence movement and with Malaysians and Chinese in Thailand and Malaya. Fujiwara was to encourage the cooperation and friendship of all these groups with the Japanese. It was a formidable task for a thirty-three year old major, a staff of five commissioned officers, and a Hindi-speaking interpreter. It called for considerable initiative, imagination and finesse. Fujiwara reported directly to the military attaché in Bangkok, ultimately to the 25th Army and the Southern Army.

Fujiwara began work with groups of Indians in Bangkok. There was already an Indian organization printing and distributing propaganda leaflets among Indian officers and men of the British Indian Army, before the Pacific war broke out. In Fujiwara's early contacts with these Indians, mostly Sikhs, he was impressed by their revolutionary fervor

for independence from British rule. If all Indians in Southeast Asia felt like the Sikhs in Bangkok, perhaps they could all be united in a single vast movement which could cooperate with the Japanese and at the same time for independence from the British.

Inspiration for the organization of the INA grew out of talks between Fujiwara and two Sikhs: Pritam Singh, a priest and teacher in Bangkok who headed the Indian Independent League (later the IIL), and Mohan Singh, a Captain in the British Indian Army who was one of the first Indians to surrender to the Japanese. The three determined to contact all Indians in the British Indian Army—both POWs and those still in the Army—and persuade them to volunteer for the Indian National Army, which would fight for India's freedom. This was the bold design which Fujiwara and his staff in the F Kikan worked for in Malaya and Thailand. Other than this work, Fujiwara's operation also embraced a Sumatra project, a Malay Youth League project, and an overseas Chinese project, all designed to secure good will of local inhabitants toward the Japanese and to encourage independence from colonial rule. Fujiwara worked with energy, enthusiasm, sympathy, and despatch, making friends for Japan wherever he went.

Fujiwara's encounter in the jungles of Perak state, Malaya, with a trapped battalion of the British Indian Army enabled him to meet Captain Mohan Singh, the ranking Indian officer. Fujiwara and Mohan Singh took an immediate liking to each other. Fujiwara convinced Mohan Singh he would be treated as a friend, not as a prisoner. In conversations with Mohan Singh, Fujiwara pointed to several historic ties between Japan and India and suggested the Pacific War was a chance for Indians to rise and fight for Indian freedom with Japanese help. This was the genesis of the Indian National Army. Mohan Singh was further convinced of Japanese sincerity in conversations with General Yamashita of the 25th Army. Mohan Singh and Fujiwara talked for two days about the form cooperation would take. From Mohan Singh Fujiwara first heard the name of Subhas Chandra Bose, whom Mohan Singh asked the Japanese to bring to Asia from Berlin. By January 1, 1942, Japanese—INA cooperation was assured. Mohan Singh began training propaganda units to work beside those already operating under Pritam Singh's direction.

On January 8 Fujiwara was visited by Lt. Col. Ozeki from the 8th Section, IGHQ, Tokyo, who had come to discuss with Fujiwara the progress of his mission. To Ozeki Fujiwara made his first proposal regarding Japanese policy toward India and the Indian National Army. It was a bold, broadly conceived plan including the following points: 1) Japanese encouragement of the Indian independence movement to cut India adrift from England, 2) clarification of Japan's basic policy toward India and the Indian independence movement, 3) a unified policy in

Tokyo toward India, 4) expansion of the work of the Fujiwara Kikan to all areas of Asia, including a direct appeal to India, 5) world-wide scope to Japan's Indian policy, including inviting Bose to Asia, 6) Japanese assistance to both the civilian Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army of ex-POWs, 7) personal proof to Indians in occupied areas of the ideals of the New Order in East Asia, and 8) re-organization and expansion of the Fujiwara Kikan to accomplish these objectives.¹⁶ Through Col. Ozeki Fujiwara's imaginative suggestions came to the attention of IGHQ, which two weeks later sent two generals from IGHQ to visit Fujiwara and inspect the progress of his work on the spot. Fujiwara was elated that his ideas were getting a hearing in Tokyo. In spite of this high level notice of Fujiwara, however, he felt there was always a gap between his views of the INA and the views of Tokyo, even within the 8th Section, his own unit. Nevertheless, Fujiwara explained to Generals Tanaka and Tominaga his plan for the formation of an Indian revolutionary army of one hundred thousand men. He mentioned too the Indian request to bring Subhas Chandra Bose to Asia to unite all Indians there. Clearly an organization of the size of the F Kikan could not implement all Fujiwara's ideas; his staff, now twelve men, was already terribly overworked. But Fujiwara succeeded in making Tokyo take note of India and the INA.

With Japanese success at Singapore on February 15, Fujiwara accepted the surrender of some 50,000 Indian troops. About half of this number was persuaded to volunteer for the INA when Fujiwara and Mohan Singh addressed the assemblage of POWs. Many would not volunteer; they were detained in separate camps, but many of them later joined the INA when Bose arrived in Singapore. Again Tokyo was forced to watch this burgeoning of the INA and Indian independence movement, and to give support. Invitations were sent from Tokyo to the IIL and INA to send representatives to a conference of Indians from Southeast Asia in Tokyo.

In Tokyo in early March Fujiwara visited IGHQ but was dismayed to find that his proposal regarding policy toward India and the INA had been given a much more Machiavellian tinge than he intended. Fujiwara spent three days discussing with IGHQ staff officers the need for genuine sympathy and sincerity in dealing with the Indian independence movement. At the end of the discussions he felt he had made some headway in affecting the thinking in Tokyo, but there was a gap which remained between Fujiwara and IGHQ.

One result of Fujiwara's policy suggestions was that his own mission was ended; the F Kikan was greatly expanded and he himself was

¹⁶ Fujiwara Iwaichi, *F Kikancho no Shuki*, Jieitai, Tokyo, 1959, pp. 134-135. Fujiwara Iwaichi, *F Kikan*, Tokyo, 1966, pp. 183-186.

transferred to another assignment. But for the duration of the war he kept close track of the INA he had helped create. Fujiwara had proven the wisdom of the Japanese Army policy of entrusting important missions requiring much individual initiative to officers of field grade rank. His mission had proven a success in several other ways. He had established the sincerity and credibility of Japanese aid to the Indian independence movement.

As a consequence of Fujiwara's mission several developments occurred in Tokyo as well: he had drawn the attention of Tokyo to India and the INA; the INA had been formed with Fujiwara as midwife; IGHQ decided to expand the Kikan to handle the many functions which Fujiwara had suggested; a Liaison Conference on April 17 decided to invite Subhas Chandra Bose to Asia from Berlin to evaluate his usefulness for Japanese purposes. This was an imposing record of achievement for Fujiwara's five-month mission in Southeast Asia.

With Fujiwara's successor, Col. Iwakuro and the Iwakuro Kikan, there were several changes in Japanese policy and its implementation. In late March when Iwakuro arrived in Southeast Asia the Kikan was reorganized with some two hundred and fifty members, a far cry from the handful of men with which Fujiwara began the operation six months earlier. Several of the staff were prominent politicians, including two Diet members. A few months later the number of members had risen to five hundred. The Kikan was organized into six departments, with the emphasis on intelligence and political activities. Headquarters was in Bangkok, and the Kikan had branches in Rangoon, Saigon, Singapore, Penang and Hongkong.

Col. Iwakuro was an officer whose principal experience had been in intelligence and special mission projects. He had founded the Army Intelligence School, the Rikugun Nakano Gakko. He had also played an active role in the Japanese-American peace negotiations in Washington during 1941. His political power and reputation in the Army were such that Tojo was anxious not to have Iwakuro remain in Tokyo; this was one of the reasons for Iwakuro's selection as Fujiwara's successor in Southeast Asia. And Iwakuro outranked Fujiwara. Clearly IGHQ had accepted at least some of Fujiwara's suggestions.

Iwakuro was immediately plagued by several problems. One of the most vexing, which Fujiwara had worried about but not able to resolve—was the split between Indian residents in Southeast Asia and the Indian leadership in Tokyo. The mutual suspicion and hostility grew until it caused a crisis in the leadership of the whole independence movement in Southeast Asia. The crisis, personified in a struggle between Rash Behari Bose from Tokyo and Mohan Singh, partly caused the dissolution of the first INA and incarceration of Mohan Singh. Fujiwara was no

more able to avert the crisis than Iwakuro. Iwakuro was working closely with Rash Behari Bose, but Mohan Singh was unwilling to compromise with the Japanese. Since Fujiwara's replacement by Iwakuro, Mohan Singh had become increasingly suspicious of Japanese motives and sincerity. In Mohan Singh's eyes Bose was nothing more than a Japanese puppet.

Under Iwakuro the training schools for intelligence activities expanded and turned out graduates, some of whom were sent into India by Iwakuro. Penang was a special center for training in propaganda and espionage. This stress on propaganda and espionage for Japanese objectives was not quite to Fujiwara's liking; Iwakuro, however, was an expert at it.

Both Fujiwara and Iwakuro had received only very general instructions from Tokyo. This gave them both much room to maneuver but also not as much support as they needed from Tokyo. The most serious problem Iwakuro faced, and one that underlay the others, was the ambiguity of his role and uncertainty in Tokyo itself about how far Japan should go in support of Indian independence. Fujiwara had urged full and sincere support of the movement, but IGHQ had many reservations, some of them based on practical problems of material support. For Iwakuro the limits of Tokyo's support of the INA-IIL were not clear. His instructions left him latitude for interpretation and exercise of his own political acumen. Iwakuro was working from an IGHQ attitude of grudging and limited support, but this still left the problem of determining the limits. In general Iwakuro read the mood in Tokyo well. The one point that was clear, about which Tokyo would not quibble, was that the India project was part of a secret war in which the weapons of intelligence and espionage played the key role. Political propaganda and secret diplomacy were an old story to Iwakuro. These were the areas where he had proven his versatile talents, which he made good use of in the Kikan. But the IIL, INA, and especially Mohan Singh continually plagued Iwakuro with specific requests, constantly pushing the limits of Japan's willingness or capacity to commit herself. This fundamental problem of defining Japan's policy limits persisted under Iwakuro and ultimately led to dissolution of the first INA. It was not until the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose that Tokyo was forced to reevaluate and redefine the limits of its policy toward the Indian independence movement.

With the arrival in Asia of Subhas Chandra Bose in June 1943 Japanese policy toward the INA underwent reevaluation and change. In part the shifts reflected the changed military situation and the planning and execution of the Imphal campaign in particular, and in part the changes resulted from the personal impact of Bose on both Japanese

and Indian leadership. Tojofi who at first refused to meet Bose and was only persuaded to after two weeks by Shigemitsu, became sympathetic to both Bose and the independence movement as a result of the meeting. Bose's charismatic personality also had an impact on Sugiyama and Shigemitsu.

As a result of Bose's arrival in Asia the Kikan was reorganized, first briefly under Col. Yamamoto Bin who had known Bose in Berlin, then under Lt. Gen. Isoda Saburo. Bose's complaints about Yamamoto's lack of understanding were partly responsible for Yamamoto's replacement by Isoda. General Isoda was a higher-ranking officer than either Iwakuro or Yamamoto, reflecting the increased military emphasis put on the work of liaison in 1944. Isoda was also a benign, mild-mannered man, whose appointment was calculated to placate Bose's impatient demands for action in India. But Bose remained dissatisfied at having to deal with the Hikari Kikan, and he would have preferred to deal directly with the Japanese Army and Government.

Another result of Bose's arrival in Asia was to give added impetus to the forces pushing for the Imphal campaign. While there were several military factors behind the rationale of undertaking the Imphal campaign in 1944, the strategists also took into consideration the political factor of the Indian independence movement as well as the crisis in morale in Japan.

During the planning of the Imphal strategy and the waging of the campaign Japanese military objectives regarding the INA were consistent. Japanese commanders, including Terauchi of the Southern Army, Kawabe of the New Burma Area Army and Mutaguchi of the 15th Army all insisted that the INA be used primarily for guerrilla fighting and for special services, i.e., intelligence duty. Bose, on the other hand insisted that the INA be used as a single unit and that the INA unit spearhead the offensive into India. For Bose the first drop of blood shed on Indian soil had to be Indian. A compromise was reached, with the INA remaining ultimately under Japanese command throughout the offensive but fighting in Indian units directly under Indian officers. Throughout 1944 and 1945 Isoda accompanied Bose and assumed charge of liaison between him and the Japanese military command. It was a frustrating job, for Bose's demands were insatiable. For Bose there was the single goal of liberation of India throughout the combined action of the INA and Japanese forces while for Japan Imphal was a limited holding operation subordinate to the high-priority campaigns in the Pacific. Bose requested increasing support in military supplies, while Japanese capacity to support her campaigns steadily diminished. The two positions could never basically be reconciled, and the differences caused constant daily friction during this military phase of the coopera-

tion. Though some in IGHQ in Tokyo questioned the prospects of the Imphal campaign from the outset, for Bose there could be no hesitation; this was the springboard into India. Once the INA crossed the borders into India, Bose expected all India to rise in revolt against the British.

Bose did not finally turn his back on Japanese aid for the liberation of India until the Japanese surrender in 1945. He turned then toward Soviet Russia and a plan to liberate India from the north with Soviet aid. In pursuit of this goal Bose was flying to Manchuria when his plane crashed on August 18, 1945 in Taiwan, killing him.

The INA in the Imphal campaign had come a long way since the discussions between Fujiwara, Mohan Singh and Pritam Singh in the jungles of central Malaya in late 1941. And Japan had come to view the cooperation with the INA as of considerable political if not military significance. Bose's personal bargaining power with the Japanese was part of the difference. There was sensitivity in Tokyo to Indian opinion, which was regarded as unfavorable toward Japan. Bose's leadership was seen as an entering wedge with Indian opinion. But in general Tokyo's objectives toward India and the INA remained limited. Some form of limited political-military alliance in Southeast Asia was natural and logical, but for IGHQ there were always the requisites of a total war in which Japan's resources had proven insufficient.

It was in part the men in the Kikan, and particularly the ideals of Fujiwara, that determined not only the implementation but also the formulation of Japan's policy toward the INA.

4. PUPPET OR REVOLUTIONARY ARMY?

Was the INA a puppet or a genuine revolutionary army? The question is at least partly subjective. Though the subordination of the INA to Japanese military command is unquestionable, the issue has several other dimensions. Was the INA an independent army in Japanese intent, in international law, and in INA aspiration? This poses some of the implications of the question.

First, the problem of Japanese intent is itself complex. There was no single Japanese view of either India or the INA. Policy was formulated and implemented at several different levels, and at each level it was colored and transformed by the biases, experiences, personalities and political predilections of the men in charge. Japanese policy did not develop as an ideal analytical model on the desk of a single staff officer in Tokyo. There were many agencies and men who, in implementing policy in turn created and transformed it. The Fujiwara Kikan was a case in point. Assigned originally on a small-scale intelligence mission to Bangkok, Fujiwara became the midwife of the INA. His

proposals regarding Japan's policy toward India and the INA got a hearing eventually by Tojo and Sugiyama. Fujiwara brought India and the INA to the attention of Tokyo, which had not previously looked much west of Burma on the map.

Japanese policy also evolved chronologically throughout the war through the pressure of factors external to the INA. Japanese attitudes were affected at any given moment by the course of the war and the dictates of military necessity. The Iwakuro Kikan differed in character from the Fujiwara Kikan and the Hikari Kikan in turn differed from the Iwakuro organization. It was not only the men on both sides who spelled the difference. Fujiwara in 1944 would have been forced to play his role somewhat differently from the way he played it in late 1941-early 1942, regardless of his idealism and genuine sympathy for Indian independence.

Second, were the FIPG and INA independent from the standpoint of international law? Here too the answer is mixed. This question was a focal point in the court martial of INA officers on charges of treason in Delhi at the end of the war. If the Free India Provisional Government and its army were not independent but subordinate to Japan and the Japanese Army, then the Indians who led and participated in the FIPG and INA were legally traitors to the British. If, on the other hand, the FIPG and INA were legally independent of the Japanese, then the officers could not be convicted as traitors, because they were leaders of an independent government in exile and revolutionary army. These were the arguments of the prosecution and defense.

Japanese intent as well as Indian aspirations are relevant here. Three separate Japanese actions toward the FIPG throw some light on Japan's wartime objectives regarding the independence of the FIPG. Two days after the announcement of the formation of the FIPG on October 21, 1943, the Japanese Government proclaimed its recognition of the nascent Indian government. But this was recognition of a provisional government, which in the opinion of several generals in IGHQ, did not constitute full recognition.¹⁷

A second action immediately followed the first. It was the announcement by Tojo on November 6, 1943, of the transfer of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the FIPG. The announcement was timed to coincide with the Greater East Asia Conference in Tokyo. The FIPG now had a recognized government and territory, at least formally. The Islands had great political and symbolic significance as former places of exile for Indian political prisoners of the British. What happened in fact? Though an Indian commissioner was sent to the Islands by the

¹⁷ Gaimusho [Foreign Ministry], Ajiya Kyoku [Asia Office], *Subhas Chandra Bose to Nihon*, [Subhas Chandra Bose and Japan], Tokyo, 1956, p. 124.

FIPG, in reality civil and military control of the Islands remained under the Japanese Navy. The impatience of Bose and his commissioner had no effect on the reality of the situation.

A third action was the appointment of a Japanese diplomatic envoy to the FIPG. This was a step much sought by Bose in 1944. He was frustrated at having to deal with all military and political matters through liaison officers of the Hikari Kikan. He preferred to deal directly with the Japanese Government in political matters and with the Japanese Army in military problems. Accordingly, an experienced diplomat, Mr. Hachiya Teruo, was appointed minister to the FIPG in February, 1945. What was the case in actuality? Mr. Hachiya arrived in Rangoon and sought an audience with Bose. Foreign Minister Chatterji asked for Hachiya's credentials, but he had none. He was not a regularly accredited diplomatic envoy any more than the FIPG was a fully recognized government. Bose refused to see Hachiya until such time as he was able to present his credentials. This was the third time the Japanese Government attempted to satisfy the requests of the FIPG by tongue-in-cheek actions which partly in form but not in substance recognized the independent status of the FIPG.

At the INA trial in Delhi after the war several Japanese witnesses were called. Contrary to the above indications of Japanese intent, Japanese witnesses unanimously testified that the INA was an independent military arm of an independent government in exile. The Japanese stand in 1946, however, was a separate phenomenon from Japanese aims during the war. In 1946 Japanese witnesses had no desire to see leaders of the Indian independence movement convicted by British colonial power. Japanese sympathy was still with the INA in the choice between Indian independence fighters and the former common British enemy.

Was the INA then a genuine revolutionary army? This question hinges partly on the subjective emotions of the officers and men of the INA. No one can dispute the character of Bose as a revolutionary in every sense of the word. From early school days he harbored a hatred of British rule which became accentuated rather than softened during his years in British universities. His refusal to accept a post in the ICS which he won through examination was a significant step in the metamorphosis of Bose the revolutionary. For Bose there could be no cooperation with the imperialist power. His conviction that the only way to rid India of British rule was to expel it by force was the decisive step in the formulation of Bose's revolutionary faith. But Indian revolutionary strength had to be supplemented by foreign power, and Bose turned to Italy, Germany, Japan, and finally Soviet Russia in search of outside help. Even Gandhi and Nehru, who broke with Bose earlier over

the issue of the use of violence against the British, conceded during the INA trial that Bose was a true patriot.

Mohan Singh, co-founder with Fujiwara of the first INA in December, 1941, was a revolutionary of a different order. A younger man than Bose, Mohan Singh was a professional soldier in the British-Indian Army. Until his meeting with Fujiwara in the jungles of central Malaya, Mohan Singh had rarely had a political thought. Fujiwara was the catalyst—an effective one—through which Mohan Singh began to articulate his accumulated unconscious hostilities toward the British. Of course independence was preferable to British rule! And here was chance to fight for India rather than for British India! Mohan Singh became a revolutionary under Fujiwara's eyes, a revolutionary unwilling to compromise with the Japanese when other Indians advised caution and moderation. Not even Fujiwara could persuade Mohan Singh to cooperate, and in late December 1942, one year after the creation of the INA, Mohan Singh was jailed by the Japanese, and remained in detention for the remainder of the war.

Here, then, were two Indian revolutionaries of different molds but the same goal. What of the other officers of the INA? Most of them, including even Mohan Singh, felt a conflict of loyalty when first confronted with the prospect of fighting Britain for independence, in cooperation with the Japanese. They were all professional soldiers, many of them from families with traditions of long and loyal service to the British Indian Army. Training and experience could not be disavowed overnight.

There were other reasons the history of revolt within the British Army was brief and unsuccessful. Despite Army policies which discriminated against Indian officers and men, there were also measures regularly employed to discourage possible disaffection, for the loyalty of the Army was the ultimate sanction for British rule in India. Only after the loyalty of the Army and Navy came into serious question in 1946 did the British finally decide to withdraw from India.

In many cases it was several months before Indian officers were able to resolve their emotional conflicts and volunteer their services for the INA. Some felt this was the only way to protect Indian lives and property. Others were convinced by the arrival of Bose in Asia. Once converted, they fought valiantly for Indian independence, and many refused to retreat when ordered to do so during the Imphal campaign. Shah Nawaz Khan and P. K. Sahgal were officers of this caliber. Shah Nawaz was especially apprehensive that the Japanese might come to replace the British in India, and was continually on guard against this eventuality.

There was also some professionalism and even opportunism among some of the officers and men. As volunteers for the INA they received better treatment than as POWs of the Japanese. In Singapore conditions in the barracks and mess were better, and they were still able to fight as INA volunteers. Among these were men who deserted to the British when the odds turned against the INA. The material inducement were attractive, irresistible for many. "They never fought the British in India. Why consider them great patriots just because they joined the Japanese in Southeast Asia?" one Indian critic asks.¹⁸

Among the JCO's (Junior Commissioned Officers) the feeling was that they were better patriots than the senior officers. They were more sincere in the fight for Indian freedom than the senior officers, many of whom were closer to the British and had divided loyalties. No doubt junior officers and enlisted men have in every army felt themselves more sincere and hard-fighting than their superiors.

When they fought their way beyond Burma across the border to Imphal, almost to a man the INA was eager to push on homeward. Even in Burma the genuine hope for freedom within the INA ranks impressed some Japanese observers. "There was some professionalism, yes, but everyone in the INA was fighting for freedom for India," one Japanese correspondent in Burma observed.¹⁹

These were the motivations of the motley group that was the INA, partly civilian in background, partly military. At the borders of India they all wanted to see India free, but they varied in their willingness to fight and sacrifice for the goal. The answer to the original question is therefore mixed. For many staff officers in IGHQ, particularly in the Operations Bureau, and for some staff officers in the field, the INA was a puppet army to be used for propaganda functions according to Japanese requirements. For others, like Sugiyama and Arisue, the INA was a revolutionary army so far as the Indians were concerned, but it had to be subordinated to Japanese military and political objectives. For still others, mostly young men in the field who were idealists like Fujiwara, the INA was a genuine revolutionary army, which should receive real and sympathetic support from Japan in its fight for independence from British colonial oppression.

And from the Indian standpoint, we have the account of officers and men of the INA. Bose was a revolutionary who stands alone, with the possible exception of Mohan Singh. Many other officers were beset by severe conflicts of loyalty, though once their conflicts were resolved these men fought doggedly for Indian freedom. Most of the INA were men who agreed to volunteer when it was suggested by Fujiwara, partly

¹⁸ Interview with Kusum Nair, Jan. 25, 1966, New Delhi.

¹⁹ Interview with Maruyama Shizuo, July 28, 1967, Tokyo.

because their friends were joining and it seemed the thing to do. And some of the men volunteered frankly for reasons of expediency.

The logic of geography in Southeast Asia and the common enemy, Britain, made some form of cooperation between Japan and the Indian independence movement natural. Although Japan's wartime policy toward India and the INA was a peripheral concern, it was one which drew her into ever-increasing involvement. As events of the war continually tested the limits of Japan's objectives, the objectives themselves were affected.

Japan's interest in the Indian independence movement began as a small-scale intelligence mission in Thailand and Malaya, developed into a complex propaganda and espionage network designed to foster anti-British sentiment, and finally burgeoned into limited support of and cooperation with a government in exile and revolutionary army. Despite the military defeat of Japan, and with it the INA, popular support for the INA finally precipitated British withdrawal from India.²⁰

²⁰ For a discussion on this point see Kalyan Kumar Ghosh, *History of the Indian National Army*. Ph.D. dissertation, Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi, 1966.

THE USES OF BUDDHISM IN WARTIME BURMA

By DOROTHY GUYOT

WORLD WAR II HAS FORMED AN EPISODE IN BURMESE HISTORY OF unprecedented change. Short term changes—the precipitate defeat of the British or the destruction of the world rice market—materially affected Burma for the next ten years. Other irreversible changes, such as the mobilization of youth, the sudden availability of guns, the birth of the Communist Party, have shaped Burmese politics ever since the war. It is remarkable that an episode which recast the fundamentals of political and economic life should have left Buddhism unchanged. The combined efforts of Japanese militarists and Burmese nationalists to utilize Buddhism for their own ends merely rippled the surface of the religion, as wind upon water. When the storm of war had passed, Buddhism flowed back to its accustomed tranquility.

At the center of Burmese Buddhism are the monks, or *pongyis*. These men have dedicated themselves to seeking the transcendent goal of all moral development, nirvana. They serve the lay community first as living examples of the way to escape worldly suffering and second by providing opportunity for each layman to build his own store of merit through performing good deeds on their behalf. Since a *pongyi* is not a shepherd to a flock, he is not directly involved in the suffering which a war brings. In times of social upheaval the monkhood, or *sangha*, continues to hold open its door to all who wish to escape the turmoil but does not confront the disruptors. By thus sheltering men, the *sangha* shelters itself from change.

Since the British overthrow of the Burmese monarchy, the *sangha* had changed less than any other institution. Even during the Japanese occupation life in the monastery continued much as in peace time. There was neither a great influx of men seeking refuge in monastic life, nor was there a great exodus of young monks to join nationalist politics. The number of *pongyis* during the war probably hovered near the last accurate count of 65,000 made in the 1931 census.¹ The critical shortages of

¹ India, Census Commissioner, *Census of India*, Vol. 11, *Burma Report*, pp. 170-171 also enumerates 25,000 *koyins* and mendicants in Divisional Burma. Since the 1941 census data was lost, there is no base for evaluating the wartime estimates. The Minister of Religion, Bandoola U Sein, referred without supporting data during a 1962 interview to the 100,000 wartime *pongyis*. The number often given in wartime newspapers was 80,000, see for instance *Myinma Alin*, May 18, 1944, p. 2. My impression of the relatively stable size of the *sangha* between 1941 and 1945 is drawn from countrywide interviews with *pongyis* and villagers.

clothing and all imported items suffered by the general population were hardly felt in the monasteries since the *pongyis* practiced their traditional discipline of limiting their wants and the people were as generous as possible. Only the few months of the Japanese invasion campaign disrupted monastic life when thousands of townspeople sought shelter in the monasteries of Upper Burma. When the battlefield swept north, everyone including *pongyis* fled the path of the British, Chinese, and Japanese armies. Some of the retreating Chinese, reduced to a rabble, regarded the yellow robe as a target not a refuge.²

When the Japanese army had conquered Burma it expected to recast overnight the British colonial order. The *sangha*, as the most prestigious body in the country, could have been instrumental in rallying the population to their cause. Accordingly, the Japanese administrators and the Burmese nationalists whom they had installed tried to draw *pongyis* into secular affairs. They succeeded only when the new activity fitted a role which monks had previously assumed. Thus monks presided over rallies to promote cooperation with Japan, just as they had formerly presided at mass meetings to denounce British rule. However, *pongyis* resisted most pleas for cooperation since these acts required great departures from their former roles.

The Japanese differed from the British in their successful prevention of *pongyi* activity contrary to their interests. The lack of *pongyi* agitation against the Japanese is but part of the larger picture of military rule terrifying to political dissidents. The British, on the contrary, tolerated large scale religious and secular agitation during the 1920's and 1930's. The Japanese were marginally more successful than the British in organizing the *sangha*. They brought about a formalistic amalgamation of all Buddhist sects. British policy had first opposed strong centralization of the *sangha* for fear that it would prove a rallying point for political opposition. Within thirty years the British reversed themselves, hoping vainly to increase the power of the ecclesiastical hierarchy so that it could control the political *pongyis*. In periods of unrest both foreign rulers solicited help in calming the people from the *sayadaws*, heads of individual monasteries. Although the Aletawya Sayadaw performed this role for both British and Japanese, more *pongyis* apparently came to Japanese aid than to British. In the substantive realm the British tried and failed in the course of several decades to introduce a modern curriculum into the monastic schools. Japanese policy during their three years was not so ambitious. They unsuccessfully sought to use *pongyis* on an ad hoc basis in various of their

² Interviews with Burmese eye witnesses, corroborated by foreign observers. Jack Belden, *Retreat with Stilwell* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943), p. 233, Maurice Collis, *Last and First in Burma* (London: Faber and Faver, 1956) p. 156, and Paul Geren, *Burma Diary* (New York: Harpers and Brothers, 1943), p. 23.

health campaigns. In sum, the *sangha* continued to be the Burmese social organization most resistant to foreign influence.

ORGANIZING THE SANGHA

Three temporary associations.—The first Japanese impulse in utilizing *pongyis* was to organize them. During the invasion campaign between March and June, 1942 three different Japanese officers each founded an association of Burmese monks. The Japanese presumed that once in formal organizations the monks could be mobilized for general propaganda work, teaching, or special health campaigns. Each of the *pongyi* associations was supposed to promote understanding between Burmese and Japanese through their common Buddhist faith. However, the three short-lived organizations ignored each other as each sought to build an exclusive membership.

Probably the least inclined to cooperate with the others was the Buddhist Monkhood Association [*botha batha thathana asiayone*] established by Col. Suzuki Keiji. This dynamic colonel had already made his mark on Burmese history by founding the Burma Independence Army. Assisting him was the monk Nagai of the ultra-nationalist Nichiren sect, who had made friends in Rangoon several years before the war. The Association's headquarters in Rangoon was composed of twenty monastery heads. Among them was the Thadu Sayadaw, U Pyinnyathami, whose prewar *pongyi* organization had been involved in the 1938 riots. The Buddhist Monkhood Association was tied to the *Thakin* political movement through the prewar political activities of some of its members and through the support of Thakin Kodaw Hmine.³

Suzuki's organization was not acceptable to army headquarters in Rangoon because Suzuki himself was continually flouting his superiors' command by engaging in multifarious projects for Burmese independence. Some Japanese officers sponsored a rival *sangha* organization in Rangoon, the Burma Buddhist Association for National Improvement. Headed by an English speaking monk, it also claimed to unite all *pongyis*.

In Mandalay, the monastic center of Upper Burma, Major Kobayashi founded the Burma Buddhist League, persuading U Wisaya, the Nyaungyan Sayadaw to head it. The Nyaungyan Sayadaw had also participated in the prewar nationalist movement, and had been jailed for political activity during the last year of British rule. During the war he continued

³ Japan, Rikugun, Biruma Homengun [Army, Burma Area Army]. *Biruma Gunseishi* [History of Military Administration in Burma] (Tokyo: Gunmu-kyoku at the request of Mori no. 7900 Butai, September, 1943), p. 133 and Sugii Mitsuru, "Minami Kikan Gaishie" [Unauthorized History of the Minami Organ] Unpublished, [1944] ch. 21. An English translation is in the Defense Services Historical Research Institute (DSHRI) catalog no. DR 950 jii (a). Col. Suzuki has a photograph of himself with the *sayadaws* of the association.

his political involvement by becoming a prominent leader of the Maha Sangha Association. The Japanese army made exaggerated claims for membership in Burma Buddhist league, in actuality describing its aims not its accomplishments.⁴

The lack of cooperation and the rivalry among the *pongyi* organizations soon became intolerable to Japanese military administrators. Their distaste for the laxity of Burmese monastic organization was compounded by their need for tighter reins in anticipation of their grant of independence to Burma.⁵ Premier Tojo's instructions for Burmese independence demanded a concentration of authority in one Burmese Head of State.⁶ In Japan itself wartime obsession with control through centralized organization had forced every religious sect to choose a leader who was responsible to the government for the acts of his people. Then the government forced Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity into a single amalgam, the Great Japan Wartime Religious Patriotic Association, controlled and subsidized by the Ministry of Education.⁷

The lack of a strong Burmese government to impose control upon religious figures presented a dilemma to the Japanese administrators. The Japanese army could not impose restraints upon the *pongyis* without alienating Buddhist laymen, and yet some of the *pongyi* activities had taken an anti-Japanese turn. Burmese punishment of such treasonous acts was belated and haphazard. In one case which gained newspaper coverage the Burmese administration arrested a *pongyi* on the charges of attempting to overthrow the government, supporting criminals, and making hammer and sickle badges. Only afterwards the Buddhist Monkhood Association expelled this monk, who was a namesake of the famous U Ottama, charging him with theft and sale of association property.⁸

If discipline by ecclesiastic superiors and imprisonment by the Burmese administration could have been regularized, the Japanese could have dealt with hostile *pongyis* at arm's length. To bolster the weak Burmese efforts, the Japanese military administration tried exhortation. Col. Iso-mura, chief of the vital General Affairs Department, addressed the *sangha* on December 9, 1942. He advised them that their burden was much

⁴ Radio broadcasts in several languages of the region, significantly excluding Burmese, claimed a 1942 membership of 60,000 for the Burma Buddhist League, 2000 of whom were supposedly receiving special training for instilling "oriental ideas." Burma, Intelligence Bureau, *Burma during the Japanese Occupation* (Simla: Government of India Press), 1943, p. 28. No further information came to light on the training.

⁵ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 133.

⁶ Fuwa Hiroshi, *Nampo-gun Sakusen-shi* [History of the Operations of the Southern Regional Army] Tokyo: Government Printing, 1955, pp. 3103-3105, citing the Plan of Guidance for Burmese Independence, March 10, 1943.

⁷ William K. Bunce, ed., *Religions in Japan: Buddhism, Shinto, Christianity*, (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, Co., 1966), pp. 33-43.

⁸ Order of U Pyinnyathami, Thadu Sayadaw, printed in *Bama Khit*, December 13, 1942. Apparently U Ottama was not also expelled from the *sangha*.

heavier than the tasks of even the Imperial Army. Their duty was to become the leaders of the Burmese people by preaching the goals of the Greater East Asia War. However, if they gave the people incorrect guidance, they would cause the people to suffer for one hundred years and would destroy Greater East Asia.⁹

Undoubtedly, exhortation alone was personally unsatisfactory to Col. Isomura, a wily and aggressive militarist who two years later approved a plot to assassinate Dr. Ba Maw, the Burmese Head of State.¹⁰ By April 1943 the military administration was actively promoting the amalgamation of all *pongyi* associations into a single, controlled association. The Japanese had returned to their original impulse to organize Burmese monks.

Cleavages within the sangha.—To unify the sangha three-cross-cutting cleavages had to be overcome, regional, political, and sectarian. Most worrisome to the Japanese military administration was the division between Upper and Lower Burma which it had inadvertently reinforced through the creation of rival *pongyi* associations.¹¹ This cleavage developed after the British annexation of Lower Burma in 1852 when the colonial government denied the authority of the prelate [*thathanabaing*] at the Mandalay court over monks in British territory. Despite the British annexation of Upper Burma thirty years later, the *thathanabaing* never regained authority over *pongyis* in Lower Burma.¹²

The most complicated divisions were among *pongyis* who had become partisans of political parties. Since the 1920's when U Ottama led fellow *pongyis* into grass roots politics, most political parties vied for *pongyi* support. Even the secular *Thakins* numbered *pongyis* among their members. In November, 1942 when Burmese politicians copied their Japanese mentors to form a single official party, all prewar parties dissolved themselves. All politically active *pongyis* were supposed to affiliate with the new Dobama-Sinyetha party. A separate section of the party was formed for monks alone, since Burmese believe it essential for monks to remain physically apart from laymen. Despite the busy activities of the ordinary party members in dispensing propaganda and scarce commodities, the *pongyi* branch apparently existed only on paper.¹³ Clearly, if *pongyis* were to be utilized politically, they needed fresh organization.

⁹ *Bama Khit*, December 10, 1942.

¹⁰ Interview with the Japanese principal in the affair. Nu, *Burma under the Japanese: Pictures and Portraits* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1954), contains an excellent character sketch of the colonel.

¹¹ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 133.

¹² The best history of British religious policy is Donald E. Smith, *Religion and Politics in Burma* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 43-57.

¹³ On the Dobama-Sinyetha Party see my dissertation, *The Political Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Burma* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, International Relations, Yale University, 1966), pp. 278-286.

The most basic cleavage, the one which the Japanese underestimated, was between the majority Thudama sect and the smaller stricter sects founded under the last Burmese kings. The Shwegyin, with an estimated membership of 11,000, the Dwaya with 3,000, and the Kan were reform sects condemning the relatively lax and worldly ways of the Thudama.¹⁴ They refused to mingle with the Thudama, and so far as is known never participated in politics before the war.

The Maha Sangha Association.—The opening fanfare in the campaign to unite the *sangha* was the Burmese government's proclamation of the Maha Sangha Association in April 1943. This new organization was neither blatantly political nor involved with laymen, the two drawbacks of the Dobama-Sinyetha section for *pongyis*. Furthermore, it apparently was initiated without Japanese prompting, in sharp contrast to the associations of the previous year.

The Maha Sangha was thus compatible with the Burmese view that *pongyis* must dwell apart from mundane society. *Pongyis* are not regarded as men engaged in a particular occupation, but as a special type of mankind, as basic and distinct as men and women. Burmese cannot conceive of their society functioning without *pongyis*. Nor can they comprehend a Buddhism, such as Japan's, where the monks enter secular life even to the earthy pleasures of marriage. The 227 rules of conduct for monks as laid down in the Vinaya Pitaka specify the austerity of their lives far beyond the highest expectations for laymen. Burmese tradition has added further barriers between monk and layman, such as a deferential language for the laymen to employ in addressing monks. The separateness but dependence of the laymen upon the monks has been aptly fashioned into an analogy by Paul Mus—society is a compass which is meaningless without the *sangha* as magnetic pole.¹⁵

The Maha Sangha Association began inauspiciously, for the publicity revealed it to be a government scheme for the *pongyis*, not an independent effort of their own. Newspapers announcing that every district, town, and village should form branches to complement the central organization omitted naming any religious leaders, the crucial factor in attaining support. Traditionally, the *sangha* has been wary of government interference and also slow to accept new organization. Without the prestige of outstanding *sayadaws* behind the Maha Sangha it appeared still-born.

¹⁴ In the late 1950's when *pongyis* totaled about 100,000 E. M. Mendelson made the above estimate, "Buddhism and Politics in Burma", *New Society*, Vol. 1, no. 38 (January 20, 1963), p. 9.

¹⁵ Lectures at Yale University, autumn 1958. The best description of public roles for village monks is Manning Nash, *The Golden Road to Modernity* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), pp. 104-156. To date no studies exist of the personal relationships between Burmese monks and the laymen they teach, counsel, and cure.

From another quarter, the Japanese administration viewed it as yet another rival to the dormant *pongyi* associations it had sponsored the preceding year.¹⁶ As a fresh start it apparently urged Dr. Ba Maw to appoint a three-man committee to meet with three Japanese civilians to discuss steps for uniting the *sangha*. The three Burmese laymen were Bandoola U Sein, shortly to become the first Minister of Religion, Thakin Kodaw Hmine, patron of the Thakin party and of the Buddhist Monkhood Association, and Saya Lin, of Rangoon College, the only layman to receive a religious title in colonial Burma. Their Japanese counterparts were well chosen to allay fears of military interference, for not one officer was among them. Tagami Tatsuo, a mild-mannered professional educator, was head of the Educational Affairs Department of the Military Administration. Assisting him were Takahashi from the Military Administration's government department and Nagai, the same Nichiren monk who had helped found the Buddhist Monkhood Association.¹⁷ This joint committee selected two prominent Thudama *sayadaws* to initiate discussions, the Nyaungyan Sayadaw who headed the Burma Buddhist League and the Gadagyi Sayadaw of Rangoon.¹⁸ However, the Nyaungyan Sayadaw procrastinated over traveling to Rangoon, intimating that he preferred Upper Burma for a meeting place. Meanwhile, the over eager Burmese government gave public approval to a plan which would have capped the Maha Sangha with a Board of Chief State Sayadaws.¹⁹ At the end of May representatives from the rival Japanese organizations for Upper and Lower Burma met in Sagaing, across the river from Mandalay. On June 1 they formally agreed to merge their organizations.

Once the prominent *sayadaws* had agreed, the government plan for a national organization could be implemented. *Sayadaws* in the districts began selecting elders from among themselves to serve as links between the ordinary *pongyis* and the executive of the Maha Sangha. At best, nominations were haphazard. Some districts never named one *sayadaw*, while busy Shwebo named twenty-five instead of the required ten.²⁰ The unevenness of response reflected the difficulty of communication, the degree of interest of local *pongyis* as well as differential application of Japanese pressure.

An instance of Japanese pressure on the Shwegyin sect occurred in Moulmein. A young *sayadaw* of this strict sect, U Yaywada, refused persistent urging from a Burmese layman sent by a Japanese administrator. Gravely concerned over this improper pressure, U Yaywada hastened the length of the country to consult with the heads of the Shwegyin sect.

¹⁶ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 134.

¹⁷ *Greater Asia*, August 2, 1943.

¹⁸ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 134.

¹⁹ *Myinma Alin*, May 18, 1943, cited in Burma, Intelligence Bureau, *Burma during the Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, p. 141.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 112 and 141.

By the time he had arrived in Mandalay the direct urging of a Japanese officer had already persuaded the venerable Abyarama Sayadaw, U Egga, to join discussions with the Thudama. However, the Sishin Sayadaw of Sagaing firmly refused personal pleas and letters from Thudama *pongyis*.

The basic Shwegyin fear of merger was that once their tight organization cracked, their discipline would fall to the lax level prevailing among the Thudama. At the time of King Mindon the Shwegyin sect had broken from the body of the *sangha* over this very issue of monastic discipline. They thus belonged to the Burmese religious tradition of schism over rules of conduct not over articles of faith.²¹ Shwegyin *sayadaws* feared that if their sect merged with the Thudama ten times its size, their *pongyis* would also break the Vinaya code by attending dramas, riding trishaws and leaving a shoulder bare while on their rounds for alms. Some Shwegyin members even believed that the Maha Sangha Association was a Thudama plot to gain power over the Shwegyin. One *pongyi* raised practical objections to merger, but phrased them in the following philosophic terms.

Since no man has *atta* [permanent self], no man has *ana* [power over others]. Hence no monastery has power over any other monastery. Before the Shwegyin sect could join the Maha Sangha each monastery would have to agree. However, the unsettled wartime conditions prevent convening a conference of *sayadaws*.²²

This line of reasoning clearly portrays the autonomy of the individual monastery, but it underestimated the determination of the Japanese army and the Burmese government. Just such a conference opened in Rangoon on June 25th to set the seal of ecclesiastic approval on the Maha Sangha organization.²³ For a week the conference of *sayadaws* aired their objections to the manner of creating and organizing the Maha Sangha. Japanese officials remained in the background but Nagai attended the conference as a fellow monk to persuade the Burmese of the necessity for unity. On July 2nd the conference reached an accord. Twenty *sayadaws* evenly divided between Upper and Lower Burma agreed to become the Chief State Sayadaws, responsible for the Maha Sangha Association. The seven points which the conference endorsed would have changed the character of the *sangha* if they had been implemented.²⁴

1. All *pongyis* are responsible to the Buddha, and thus should be united in one organization.

²¹ James Scott, *The Burman: His Life and Notions* (reprinted, New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1963), pp. 129-142, and Smith, pp. 29-31.

²² Interview with U Yaywada.

²³ Details of the conference were supplied in 1962 by U Kaythara, the Man Kyaung Sayadaw of the Shwegyin sect.

²⁴ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 135 gives the official Japanese translation of the agreement.

2. All powers of Buddhism should be realized to the fullest extent.
3. The *sangha* should cooperate forever in maintaining Burma's independence.
4. The *sangha* should cooperate to establish the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.
5. The *sangha* will work to increase friendly relations between Burma and Japan.
6. All *pongyis* should cooperate fully with the Burmese government in all matters.
7. The twenty association members selected as the executive committee will write the by-laws of the Maha Sangha Organization.

ABSENCE OF CHANGE FROM THE TOP

The agreement is obviously a compromise between the traditional insulation of the *sangha* from secular affairs and the driving desire of the Japanese army and Burmese government to involve *pongyis* in active support of the war. In the end, tradition won, for the organization never gained significant cooperation from the vast majority of the *pongyis*.

Lack of unity.—The Shwegyin, Dwaya, and Kan sects found the first article objectionable. Only one Shwegyin sayadaw, U Kaythara of the Man Kyaung, attended the conference. He went specifically as an individual not a sect representative and declined to become one of the Chief State Sayadaws. In the districts a few Shwegyin *pongyis* did join the Maha Sangha, but after the war their sect required them to renounce all connection with it at a conference in Taunggyi.

Naturally the wartime propaganda ignored the boycott of the small sects. Even the official, classified Japanese administrative report falsely asserted that all Buddhist sects were united for the first time in Burmese history.²⁵ In reality, only the Thudama sect adhered to the Maha Sangha, and their new unity began on paper alone.

The ninety year jealousy between the two branches of the Thudama sect in which Upper Burma was unable to assert its traditional authority over Lower Burma, made Upper Burma *sayadaws* restive over Rangoon becoming the seat of the Maha Sangha Organization. The war's disruption of transportation helped the Mandalay *sayadaws* resist domination by Lower Burma. By at least May of 1944 Upper Burma had gained a separate regional headquarters in Mandalay, composed of the *sayadaws* originally in the central executive.²⁶

The Maha Sangha declaration did not even deal with the important dimension of unity, the degree of central authority over the local monas-

²⁵ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 134.

²⁶ *Myinma Alin*, May 18, 1944, p. 2.

teries. In traditional Burma a hierarchy capped by the *thathanabaing* had settled all internal disputes and relied upon special commissioners appointed by the king to enforce their decisions.²⁷ Under the British the power of the ecclesiastic authorities atrophied until by 1935 the Rangoon High Court denied any legal authority to the Buddhist hierarchy and in 1938 the Governor failed to appoint a new *thathanabaing* on the death of the incumbent.²⁸ During the 1930's the only remaining links between the autonomous monasteries were the personal ties between a learned *sayadaw* and his former pupils who themselves had become *sayadaws*. Thus within a limited geographic region an elderly *sayadaw* might have secured the allegiance of most younger *sayadaws* on the strength of his former tutelage and his current reputation for learning. This charismatic style of authority was buttressed only by the traditional prestige that certain major monasteries automatically imparted to their *sayadaws*. A *sayadaw's* ultimate sanction against a recalcitrant *pongyi* was to eject him from his monastery, but the *pongyi* could always find a more compatible home. This looseness permitted many men who did not adhere to the Vinaya code to live within the order. The increasing number of *pongyis* in large towns who lived in a loose style was generally viewed with alarm. A *thakin* satirized the immoral life in a novel, *Tot Pongyi*.²⁹ The epithet, which simply means modern, is used to this day. The increased occurrence of *pongyi* offenses resulted perhaps in part from the increasing attractiveness of modern secular life, but the vices themselves were not modern, ranging as they did from theater going to fornication.

Within the *sangha* the tension was not resolved between the disgrace of unseemly behavior by the few and the basic assumption that each *pongyi* is ultimately and totally responsible only to himself for his conduct. The Maha Sangha agreement did not even attempt to restore the ecclesiastic courts which had had the power to disrobe immoral monks. In fact the agreement produced no binding authority whatsoever. The twenty independently powerful *sayadaws* authorized to draft the association's by-laws apparently never completed their minimal task. What a disappointment to the Japanese, whose own quarrelsome religious sects had each submitted to a single undisputed leader confirmed in office by a government official.

Political affairs.—The principle that the *sangha* should cooperate to maintain the independence of Burma had its fatherhood in the political preaching of U Ottama and its ancestry in the national sentiment that to be Burmese is to be Buddhist. U Ottama's message had been that as

²⁷ The only detailed picture, which probably exaggerates the effectiveness of the system, is in Smith, pp. 12-20.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-57.

²⁹ When Thakin Thein Pe's novel was published in 1935 it caused such furor among the *sangha* that the government banned it, Smith, p. 208.

long as Burma was dominated by an alien ruler, Buddhism was endangered. Hence, the *sangha*, whose concern was the well being of Buddhism, was obliged to enter politics to restore Burma to a Buddhist government. U Ottama's appraisal was culturally accurate as well as politically effective. Since Burmese Buddhism is so loosely organized, it needs a Buddhist state to provide the underpinnings of its authority.³⁰ Thus, for twenty years prior to the war, the politically minded minority of the *sangha* had espoused politics for the sake of Burmese independence. The jubilant political current which swept the country during the British retreat may also have penetrated the monasteries, multiplying the minority of monks who thirsted for national independence. Among the *sayadaws* who attended the Maha Sangha conference were those who had been most active in nationalist politics before the war. The other *sayadaws* at the conference who had kept out of the prewar headlines may have found a new duty to protect Buddhism through protecting a Buddhist oriented state.

The innovation in the Maha Sangha agreement was the creation of a duty for the *sangha* to cooperate with the government in *all* matters. Historically the obligation had been the reverse: it was the king's duty to cooperate with the *sangha* to advance Buddhism. In keeping with their personal striving for nirvana the vast majority of *pongyis* have ignored government. Entrance into political affairs has occurred only in crisis periods, when *pongyis* aligned themselves *against* the government.³¹ The revolutionary attempt to enlist *pongyis* on the side of government failed in wartime Burma. By October 1943 the Burmese Head of State was learning that simply creating a *pongyi* association did not accomplish tasks.

The *Sangha* Organization . . . has already been very successfully organized. It now remains to use it for State purposes.³²

Japanese disappointments.—The most interesting feature of the pallid Maha Sangha charter is its omissions. In the pledge to promote friendship between Burma and Japan it made no reference to the Japanese as fellow Buddhists. During their first year in Burma, the Japanese had repeatedly stressed their common religion, through speeches and acts of merit at Burmese pagodas. It would be surprising if the Japanese administrators assisting at the birth of the Maha Sangha had not requested a declaration of religious fellowship. Probably the *sayadaws* declined to

³⁰ Sarkisyanz, *Buddhist Backgrounds of the Burmese Revolution* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965), see esp. chs. 17 and 27 of this seminal work.

³¹ Sarkisyanz, p. 95, Winston L. King, *In the Hope of Nibbana* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 179-180, and Smith, chs. 1 and 3.

³² Dr. Ba Maw, *Burma's New Order Plan* (Rangoon, State Printing, 1944), p. 20.

recognize Japanese Buddhism because they shared the view of the Burmese layman: Japanese Buddhism is at best a highly corrupted form of the Buddha's teachings, and at worst not Buddhism at all.

The pragmatic Burmese judged Japanese Buddhism by the practices of the Japanese before them. Their first grievance was that Japanese soldiers committed innumerable sacrilegious acts against Buddhist property and *pongyis*. The least serious offense common to all armies in Burma was bivouacking at monasteries, which generally were the most substantial buildings of an area. Sixty years before, the British army had also requisitioned monasteries during their campaign. During World War II even the fledgling Burmese army had requisitioned a monastery as a military hospital.³³ With the first disappointed realization that the Japanese were more conquerors than liberators, horror stories quickly circulated of their defilement of Buddha images and *pongyi* robes. After the campaign, when Japanese commanders could devote more attention to their soldiers' relations with the local population, sacrilege ceased. The memory, however, lingered.

The Burmese correctly believed the Japanese to place a lower value than they did on every member of the *sangha*. During the campaign Japanese officers had singled out the conspicuous *pongyis* to demand all manner of services from collecting guns to disposing of dead bodies. Whenever possible Burmese laymen intervened to assume these tasks themselves rather than see their *pongyis* thus defiled. During the course of the war some Japanese suggested that *pongyis* were economically unproductive. Burmese resented their applying this wholly inferior standard to men of paramount spiritual worth. Burmese vehemently opposed the twin correctives that individual Japanese occasionally voiced: reduce the number of monks or set them to work.

Beyond misunderstanding Burmese Buddhism the Japanese practiced an impure religion, according to Burmese notions. Burmese considered the daily Emperor worship by Japanese soldiers in conflict with the pre-eminence of the Buddha. They considered the public ceremonies to worship the spirits of the war dead as superstition alien to Buddhism.³⁴ Burmese failed to reflect that these practices might be no more anti-Buddhist than their own propitiation of the *nats*. Historically Burmese have been so immersed in their own religious tradition that they have had no interest in Mahayana Buddhism or any other religion.³⁵

³³ Interview with the sayadaw of the Sinyandone monastery, five miles west of Pyinmana.

³⁴ U Kyaw Min, *The Burma We Love* (Calcutta: Inamullah Khan, India Book House, 1945), p. 107 and Rev. U On Kin, *Burma under the Japanese* (Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House, 1947), p. 19. On December 1 and 9, 1942 large bi-national ceremonies were held at the Shwedagon in honor of the slain. *Bama Khit*, December 2 and 9, 1942.

³⁵ Winston King, *A Thousand Lives Away: Buddhism in Contemporary Burma* (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1964), pp. 53-56.

The aspect of Japanese Buddhism that most strongly confirmed their low opinion of it was the unseemly behavior of Japanese monks who accompanied the troops. Burmese laymen have not yet tired of joking over sights such as a monk riding a girl's bicycle or wearing a woman's sarong around his head. It was beyond belief that a Japanese monk could be married. *Pongyis* in particular were distressed that some Japanese monks were warriors. They were deeply offended at the presumption of these warrior-monks in expecting to partake food with them.

The other great omission of the Maha Sangha Conference was to declare holy the war then raging. The Japanese preoccupation was victory; the Commander-in-Chief had set the tone.

Total victory shall be established as the goal for every aspect of administration. In order to achieve victory in war, requests from the Japanese Army shall be given absolute priority.⁸⁶

Following defeats in the Pacific, the propaganda department of the army in Burma redoubled efforts to promote an enduring fighting spirit among the Burmese.⁸⁷

From the Japanese point of view the convention of *sayadaws* was the ideal body to endorse the war since it claimed to represent the whole *sangha*. In Japan, religious organizations had long been the subservient handmaidens of the state. The Japanese religions preached total dedication of their members to the war effort, raised collections for the purchase of fighter planes, even modified their rituals to incorporate the Imperial Way.⁸⁸ The futile Japanese attempts to wring a war declaration from the *sayadaws* illustrates the supreme power of the *sangha* in resisting external direction.

In their first step, Japanese military administrators had persuaded leading *sayadaws* to form a national association. To keep the *sayadaws* in good humor they pried from the army railway monopoly comfortable accommodations for the journey to Rangoon. Japanese officials greeted the *sayadaws* on their arrival at the Rangoon station. The Nyaungyan Sayadaw, as head of the Burma Buddhist League, received solicitous attention. A succession of Japanese officers called upon him to inquire into the accomplishments and personal histories of himself and the three Upper Burma *sayadaws* who had accompanied him. The Japanese praised Burmese Buddhism and deplored the sacrilege of the Anglo-Americans. They urged the *sayadaws* to cooperate with their own government in fighting

⁸⁶ Japan, *Military Administration*, Appendix 20. Directives of the Burma Area Army, August 1, 1942.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85. The Japanese Premier even stipulated that a formal declaration of war from the Burmese government was a *quid pro quo* for independence. Premier Tojo's Letter of Instruction to Dr. Ba Maw, March 22, 1943 (English translation), Yale collection, serial no. 1.

⁸⁸ *Bunce*, pp. 37-43.

the British. When these arguments for declaring support of the war failed to move the *sayadaws* of Upper Burma, the Japanese convened several joint meetings between *sayadaws* of Upper and Lower Burma. This too failed to evoke a commitment.

The Nyaungyan Sayadaw, one of the staunchest in refusing to endorse the war, once proffered his arm in illustration. To amazed Japanese officers he explained that his religious vows forbid his striking the mosquito which had landed there. Blowing it off he concluded that *pongyis* who must respect the lives of even lowly pests could never countenance the slaughter of men.³⁹

The Japanese did not admit their failure to obtain religious sanction for the war in their official administrative history written immediately after the attempt, but the failure did rankle. After the conference a Japanese monk took up residence in the Shwegyin Man Kyaung and often pestered the *sayadaw* as to why he had refused to declare war. It is very doubtful that afterwards the Maha Sangha Association ever declared the war a holy war, as has been asserted by some historians.⁴⁰

Like every other organization linked to the regime, the Maha Sangha cried its support more shrilly as the war turned against the Japanese. However, its February, 1945 pronouncement seemed mild in the context of Dr. Ba Maw's New Year's message extolling the *kamikaze* spirit and calling upon Burmese "to throw everything we have into the present battle till the scales are securely turned to our side and East Asia is liberated forever."⁴¹

Our Burmese religious devotees were defeated in three wars, and for more than one hundred years the moon of Buddhism was hidden behind clouds while English culture penetrated everywhere. During those hundred years the English were the enemies of religion and of Burma using every means to destroy Buddhism. However, since Burma has become independent the government has been doing everything to promote Buddhism. Now *pongyis* who have escaped from Myitkyina [where the English have reconquered] have reported to our executive council. We eighty thousand *pongyis* must support the Burmese government and the Japanese in order to keep our independence. We must defend Buddhism.⁴²

³⁹ This account is based entirely upon the memory of U Kaythara, the Man Kyaung Sayadaw of the Shwegyin sect who accompanied the Nyaungyan Sayadaw to Rangoon. Bandoola U Sein, the minister of religion, confirmed without details that the Japanese had approached the *sayadaws* for a declaration in support of the war.

⁴⁰ Cecil Hobbs, "The Political Importance of the Buddhist Priesthood in Burma," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. XXI (1956), pp. 586-590 and Fred von der Mehden, *Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia: Burma, Indonesia, the Philippines* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963) give no citation but their source is probably the uneven intelligence report of the Burma government-in-exile, Vol. 2, p. 141.

⁴¹ *Greater Asia*, January 1, 1945.

⁴² Ma-ha san-gha qahpwe, jou'ji:ei. htou'pyan cei-nya-je' [Bulletin of the Maha Sangha Executive Council] February 19, 1945. 2 p. 20,000 copies published. From the archives of the Defence Services Historical Research Institute, DR 1456 iii (c).

UTILIZATION OF PONGYIS

The Japanese army may never have recognized the irony of its efforts to organize the *sangha*. Their purpose had been to centralize religious authority in an executive committee which would transmit Japanese wishes to the body of the *sangha* and thence to the laity. They failed not only to establish a central religious authority, but to obtain the subservience of the very inefficient body which they promoted. The Japanese were able to employ individual *pongyis* and *sayadaws* in their various projects precisely because the *sangha* had no leadership which could refuse on behalf of its members. While the Chief State Sayadaws had refused to tie their cause explicitly to the Japanese, they could not prevent individual *sayadaws* from fervent endorsement of the war. U Mala, the Zeyasein Sayadaw of Pyinmana, who had been politically prominent since the mid 1930's as chief spiritual adviser to Dr. Ba Maw, made commitments which the Japanese would probably have preferred from the Maha Sangha as a body.

We never pass a day without praying for an early and complete victory in the Greater East Asia War. We will continue to extend our cooperation for the common cause. Fortunately, Nippon is a Buddhist country and the Nipponese have a deep understanding with us [and] also have evinced keen interest and deep respect for our monasteries, pagodas, and priests. We feel thankful for this. With this deep understanding between us I am sure that the ties binding the two countries will be further strengthened and bring us nearer to the goal of victory.⁴³

Buddhism was merely one of the Japanese irons on the fire. Japanese officers approached Catholic priests and Baptist preachers during the invasion to explain that the Japanese were also Christians. The military administration officially adopted a policy of tolerance toward all religions in Burma, but it never relied upon religion as the primary means of reaching the people. That privilege was reserved for the unfortunate Burmese government. The secondary sources of Japanese persuasion were the mass organizations, particularly the political party, the National Service Organization, and the Civil Defense Corps. *Pongyis* ran a poor third and Christians trailed behind.

Two other organizations vied for support from among the autonomous *pongyis*. The Burmese government was particularly eager to use *pongyis* to ensure itself a wide popular base. The highly Westernized Head of State fully recognized the hold of Buddhism over the popular imagination, having consciously employed Buddhist symbols during his prewar political career. The Maha Sangha Association served to link Dr. Ba Maw's wartime regime with the pre-colonial Burmese tradition.

⁴³ *Greater Asia*, March 13, 1945, p. 2.

He never desired more from the *pongyis* than staunch verbal support. For the overwhelming tasks of running the war torn country, the government called instead upon its mass organizations.

The third force which attracted some *pongyis* to its cause was the anti-Japanese resistance. During the last year of the war the resistance gathered enthusiastic support on a verbal level among young Burmese. Since this loose coalition was led by secularly oriented socialists and communists, it never offered more than a highly peripheral role to *pongyis*.

Japanese attempts to use pongyis.—The Japanese army began its conquest of Burma in ignorance of the Burmese people. Insofar as officers gave a thought to social affairs they naively believed that monks would form a bridge between themselves and the “newly liberated” people. The Japanese officers who founded the three *pongyi* organizations during the campaign each believed he was inspiring Burmese-Japanese friendship. However, these organization apparently rendered no significant assistance in pacification. Rather, a handful of individual *pongyis* toured the disrupted areas to restore order. For example, the Yahanbone Sayadaw, of a young and politically oriented faction of the Thudama toured four Upper Burma districts from June through August, 1942. He went at the request of a Japanese officer who had given him six certificates written in Japanese which allowed him to pass all military checkpoints. Beyond that the *sayadaw* was on his own, traveling in a car provided by a former pupil. One of the chief difficulties he resolved was the equitable division of irrigation water during this rice planting and transplanting season. He persuaded by calling out the township officer, headman, or any responsible layman and urging them to do their work properly. The preaching of a *sayadaw* so encouraged villagers that they put to rights their disrupted affairs.

How many other *pongyis* provided leadership during the troubled change of regime is not known. This seeking and solving of social problems was a new role for *pongyis*, created in crisis. The sense of social responsibility exhibited by the Yahanbone Sayadaw ran counter to the prevailing ethic that a *pongyi's* overriding responsibility is to detach himself from the inevitable suffering of the world. The more common form of *pongyi* participation during the first months of Japanese rule was coerced. Japanese officers obliged *pongyis* to name local men who could perform whatever task the Japanese had in mind, be it procuring chickens or burying bodies. In Moulmein, at the beginning of the invasion the army jailed a monk, holding him responsible as local leader for the theft of arms by townspeople.⁴⁴ Probably Japanese officers seized

⁴⁴ Information on the Japanese use of *pongyis* in the districts is drawn from interviews with the Yahanbone Sayadaw, June 14, 1962 and with U Pandita of Moulmein, May 1, 1962.

upon *pongyis* as local leaders because the people showed them such deference and because their saffron robes made them conspicuous. At first the Japanese failed to realize that the physical symbols which rendered monks conspicuous to them symbolized to the Burmese the total separation of the *pongyi's* life from the layman's.

The impromptu Japanese demands upon *pongyis* had ended by the time the Burmese government was established in August, 1942. Thereafter, the Japanese confined their attempts to gain *pongyi* backing to matters where genuine popular support was essential. Public health was such a case. Had the Japanese succeeded in convincing the *pongyis* of the need to change popular health habits, the *pongyis* would have converted the whole population. In limited areas the Burmese government of the 1950's successfully employed this mode of persuasion. For instance, in some rural areas government health assistants have used *pongyis* to supervise school children in taking their weekly malaria suppressing pill. The Japanese, on the contrary, were far too bold in pushing *pongyis* into new roles. The result was popular indignation.

Immediately after their campaign, Japanese soldiers began inoculating any Burmese who passed major checkpoints, such as railway stations. Although inoculation was essential to halt the spread of cholera and smallpox, Burmese resented being grabbed and jabbed. Japanese officers in Mandalay, where conditions were the worst, then organized a class of *pongyis* to teach them inoculation techniques. A number of *pongyis* who felt sympathetic to the new government of Dr. Ba Maw attended, received a completion certificate in Japanese, and actually went into practice. Other *pongyis*, however, deeply resented the Japanese for prodding any of their order into this mundane task. They were appalled at the necessity to come into bodily contact with women, for of all worldly ways, physical contact with women is the most likely to undo a monk's spiritual progress. Resentment within the *sangha* continued, and after the Burmese government appointed a Minister of Religion in August 1943, *pongyis* brought their complaint to him. Bandoola U Sein in turn raised the issue with Japanese Army headquarters in Rangoon, and apparently the practice was finally stopped.⁴⁵

The rat extermination campaign aroused greater outrage in laity and *sangha* alike. Most Burmese shelter even pestilent rats under the Buddhist injunction against taking life. The Japanese military administration mounted a campaign in the hot season of 1943, issuing rat traps to residents of major towns and requiring delivery of a quota of dead rats. In Rangoon the Japanese persuaded the Aletawya Sayadaw, a founding member of the Maha Sangha, and some other *pongyis* to preach in

⁴⁵ Bandoola U Sein, interviewed August 9, 1962 and also by Fred von der Mehden, p. 152.

the campaign. The Aletawya Sayadaw apparently urged the people to catch rats so that Burma would become a disease-free paradise like Japan and so Buddhism would be realized.⁴⁶ In Mandalay, the military administration approached the *sangha* to convey to the people the necessity for killing rats. Mandalay *pongyis* immediately protested that the Japanese had no respect for the Sangha or Buddhism. They and other conservative *pongyis* were heard by Dr. Ba Maw, who carried the complaint to the Japanese Commander-in-Chief. The army then resigned itself to combatting rats with its own resources rather than relying upon the Burmese.⁴⁷

A new duty more in keeping with the *sangha's* traditional role of teacher was teaching the Japanese language. The military administrators especially welcomed *pongyis* into their language classes and rejoiced when some graduates opened a school of their own.⁴⁸ A further illustration of the small ways in which *pongyis* helped the Japanese army was in connection with the greatest project that the Burmese undertook for the Japanese—the Burma-Thailand railway. As the Burmese government whipped up an enthusiastic recruitment drive, a few *pongyis* went quietly and apparently on their own volition to the railway site to minister to the needs of the conscript laborers.⁴⁹

The Burmese government's use of pongyis.—In contrast to the specific tasks which the Japanese army required of *pongyis*, the Burmese government basically desired the *sangha's* blessings in order to prove its legitimacy. Dr. Ba Maw's use of religious symbols and ceremony was part of his appeal to tradition, linking his regime with the reign of ancient kings. The modern equivalent of the ancient tie between King and Buddhism, the declaration of Buddhism as the state religion, was apparently not considered during the war by Dr. Ba Maw. The devout Buddhist Prime Minister Nu achieved that union only in 1961.

The wartime relationship between Buddhism and the state was mutually advantageous, the religion gaining protection, the government, legitimacy. The various ways that the government protected Buddhism from Japanese exactions will be covered in the next section. Here, in discussing how the government utilized the *sangha* for propaganda purposes, it is important to recognize that the wartime government did not narrowly exploit the *sangha* as did the Japanese army. Dr. Ba Maw sought only their general blessing in order to overcome the stigma of his initial installation as a Japanese puppet. He desired the *sangha* to place his gov-

⁴⁶ *Greater Asia*, May 16, 1943.

⁴⁷ Interview with Takano Genshin, chief of the secretariat in the military administration and Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 83.

⁴⁸ Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 120 and interviews with Takano Genshin and U Kuthala, Yahanbyo *pongyi* in Mandalay.

⁴⁹ *Greater Asia*, June 27, 1943 and interviews with two *sayadaws* and a sweat army laborer.

ernment in the legitimate succession of Burmese rulers which had been interrupted by British colonialism.

It was no chance occurrence that the Minister of Religion was also the Minister of Propaganda. The Burmese government consistently sought *pongyi* cooperation in the realm of mass persuasion, and never once made the Japanese mistake of expecting them to perform any physical work. The government regarded the Maha Sangha organization as the ideal instrument for *pongyi* propaganda work. However, the wartime regime could not duplicate the effective political preaching of the 1920's when *pongyis* inspired village *wunthanu* organizations to resist government demands. Despite its national organization on paper the Maha Sangha did not have active village *pongyis* to carry messages to the villagers. As a whole the Ba Maw government failed to reach the population through the personal contact of organization membership.⁵⁰ Instead it relied upon the inappropriate means of the mass media under conditions where newspaper and radio hardly reached beyond the capital city.

Within the Maha Sangha the brunt of the propaganda work thus fell to the executive committee members living in Rangoon. These Chief State Sayadaws presided over rallies at the Shwedagon, attended government functions, and issued statements which the ministry printed, all in support of the "independent" Burmese government. When the government honored the Chief State Sayadaws as in the ceremony of March, 1944, in reality the *sayadaws* honored the government since their prestige was secure. Dr. Ba Maw invited the *sayadaws* to the great peacock room of his residence, entered to the accompaniment of royal drum music, and presented them certificates for meritorious service to Burma.⁵¹

Even the government honors to a martyred *pongyi* redounded to the glory of the government. On October 2, 1943 Dr. Ba Maw dedicated a statue of U Wisara at the head of one of Rangoon's major avenues. The cabinet, the Japanese ambassador, and ranking Japanese army officers attended, but the crowd was reported at only six thousand, including three hundred *pongyis*.⁵² Was the government making a token claim to independence from Japan by honoring U Wisara who had fasted to death in a colonial prison? The logical choice of martyr would have been U Ottama, who had studied years in Japan and India before leading the first mass campaign against Britain.

The Maha Sangha executive committee continued to issue pleas in support of the wartime government even when all could see that it would disintegrate the moment the Japanese army was defeated in

⁵⁰ For a timely analysis of organization as medium and message see Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1967).

⁵¹ *Greater Asia*, March 30, 1944.

⁵² *Bama Khit*, October 3, 1943 filed in the DSHRI as DR 75 iii (c), and *Greater Asia*, October 5, 1943.

Burma. Perhaps some of the *Sayadaws* felt morally obliged to continue supporting a losing cause, as did top leaders in the East Asia Youth League. Possibly some shared the opinion of Dr. Ba Maw and his Minister of Religion that all gains would be lost if the British reconquered. Most likely, the inertia of the organization kept it on the Japanese side to the end. Some individuals among the Chief State Sayadaws had quit by 1945, perhaps as many as half the original twenty. They were replaced by as many other *sayadaws* to keep the original geographic balance.⁵³

Pongyis in the resistance.—A handful of *pongyis* joined the anti-Japanese resistance, playing a smaller part than they had in the Saya San rebellion or in the Third Anglo-Burmese war. Local resistance organizers welcomed any assistance they offered in recruiting or collecting donations. The national leadership, however, had a strictly secular outlook which excluded *pongyis* from the political arena. The Anti-Fascist Manifesto of 1944, setting the goals of the resistance, declared,

The state should be neutral on religious questions. Religion should not be used as a means to exploit the masses as is being done by the Japanese.⁵⁴

Resistance propaganda did not single out religious grievances as a cause of hatred against the Japanese. The Burmese army order detailing the wrongs committed by the Japanese stressed the physical suffering of the people and the national loss of independence. Buddhism received only a phrase which it shared with Islam and Christianity.⁵⁵ Even the *sangha* received no special attention in resistance literature. When the movement claimed support from every quarter, the *sangha* were mentioned in the same breath as the communist party.⁵⁶

Members of the Yahanbyu, or Young Monks Association, within the Thudama sect seem to have had more ties to the independence movement than other monks. U Kuthula, the secretary-general of the Yahanbyu, helped prepare for the resistance in the Mandalay area by accompanying Burmese Army officers in soliciting funds for arms purchase. Although he wore trousers on these rounds, his status as a *pongyi* made refusal

⁵³ Further research on the personnel and activities of the Chief State Sayadaws would provide considerable insight into the political attitudes of the more prestigious *sayadaws*. Unfortunately, the two available lists of Chief State Sayadaws are not easily comparable, since both proper name and monastery are not given. Japan, *Military Administration*, pp. 135-6 gives the list of July, 1943. The February 19, 1945 Bulletin of the Maha Sangha gives the other list, DR 1456 iii (c).

⁵⁴ Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, *From Fascist Bondage to New Democracy: The New Burma in the New World* (Rangoon: Nay Win Kyi Press, [1946], p. 14.

⁵⁵ DR 28 iii (d) Order number 1 from the Burma National Army to all Officers Non-Commissioned officers, and privates [undated], mimeograph, 12 p. A similar version is DR 111 iii (d) from Thakin Zaw Tin of Toungoo.

⁵⁶ DR 112 iii (d) *Hpetsit taithpay pyithu lutlatyay aphwejoke* [Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League], [April (?), 1945].

next to impossible.⁵⁷ When fighting broke out in March, 1945 U Kuthala actually fled Mandalay with the Burmese garrison. He lived with the troops in the nearby hills until the leader, Bo Ba Htu, died, and then returned to Mandalay with his ashes.⁵⁸ In postwar Burma U Kuthala has been proud to be the only *pongyi* to hold a gun license.

Since the communist party was the best organized civilian resistance group, a few *pongyis* even recruited for it. One Arakanese *pongyi*, U Seinda, joined the communist party, and followed Thakin Soe underground after the split. Although still claiming to be a *pongyi*, he fought against the Burmese government until he surrendered in the mid-1950's. Another *pongyi* who had worked for the party during the war, U Thuzada of Pyinmana, quit after the resistance. He continued his social concern by founding an orphanage where he taught a trade to his one hundred boys.

The exceptional participation of these monks was weakly echoed by a minority of the *sangha* who provided food and shelter to resistance fighters during the three months before they were provisioned by the British army. This support hardly exceeded the monastic tradition of providing shelter to every army which sought it.

The subsidiary and individual role which *pongyis* played in the resistance did not entitle them to a voice in the postwar independence movement. Only the core of the resistance, the army, the communists, and the socialists, became significant figures on the political stage of independent Burma. Particularly important in minimizing the political role of *pongyis* was General Aung San's firm personal opposition to their participation in politics.

THE PROTECTION OF BUDDHISM

Throughout Burmese history the issue which time and again drew *pongyis* into the political arena was the protection of Buddhism. Protection and propagation of the faith was also one of the prime responsibilities of Burmese kings. In colonial times even laymen felt the need to protect their religion from the encroachments of the Christian colonizing power. They were proud that after a century of Christian missionary work only a handful of ethnic Burmese had been lost to Buddhism. During the turmoil of World War II Buddhism seemed in great danger, as did the whole social fabric. Each side in the conflict claimed to be the true protector of Buddhism.

The Japanese claims.—A running counterpoint to the all-pervasive Japanese theme that they were fellow Asians was their claim as fellow Buddhists. From the lowest Japanese private to the Commander-in-Chief,

⁵⁷ Interview with a Mandalay lawyer, U Ba Thin, who was approached by U Kuthala.

⁵⁸ Interview with U Kuthala.

all were supposed to show deference to Burmese Buddhism. Rangoon headquarters forbid all soldiers to wear boots while visiting pagodas, thus attempting to gain Burmese confidence in a matter which had become the first political issue between the Burmese and the British.⁵⁹ Whenever a religious holiday was celebrated at the nation's greatest pagoda, the Shwedagon, newspapers pointedly observed that Japanese soldiers gathered to do homage together with the Burmese.⁶⁰ Japanese officers rivalled the Pharisees in the conspicuous manner of their donations. A gift of fifty kyats from a Japanese Major in Mandalay, as well as 500,000 kyats from the government in Tokyo received thorough newspaper coverage.⁶¹

The Japanese used every opportunity to contrast their piety with the sacrilege of the British. Their propaganda hammered upon British destruction of religious buildings. All the large Japanese religious donations were to rebuild pagodas leveled by the bombs of the "brutal British." The fact that military administrators actually believed they were strengthening Burmese Buddhism only made them more self-righteous.⁶²

After one of the early bombing raids the government newspaper reported older monks choked with sorrow over the ruins of a pagoda and monastery. The young monks, steeling themselves to avenge the death of their brothers, told the reporter to seek permission from the Japanese Commander-in-Chief that they might join the Japanese air force.⁶³ Such colorful and spontaneous outpouring of faith in the Japanese protectors dried up after the first year of the war. The Japanese then conceived of a grandiose project to reinforce their protective image. They would erect in Japan a replica of the Botataung pagoda destroyed in a British air raid on the Rangoon docks. For weeks Burmese newspapers featured stories and pictures of the proposed pagoda. The Japanese believed they would further cement their bonds with the Burmese by observing the custom of enshrining priceless relics deep in the interior of the new pagoda. They sought these relics in Burma with the full support of Dr. Ba Maw, who had no Buddhist roots of his own. His Christian brother ceremoniously took to Japan more than two hundred relics including the reputed remains of the Buddha's cremated body which had been worshipped by former Burmese kings. The May, 1944 ceremonies in Tokyo and the gratitude of the Japanese ambassador to Burma were fully reported in the Burmese press.⁶⁴

Instead of gratitude for enshrining the relics, the Japanese earned hatred for stealing them. Had the Burmese still believed in the Japanese,

⁵⁹ Interview with Colonel Nasu Yoshio, Director of the Military Administration.

⁶⁰ See for instance, *Bama Khit*, November 24, 1942, p. 3.

⁶¹ *Bama Khit*, December 1, 1942 and *Greater Asia*, August 8, 1944.

⁶² Japan, *Military Administration*, p. 133.

⁶³ *Bama Khit*, December 29, 1942.

⁶⁴ Burma, Intelligence Bureau, vol. 2, p. 133 *Greater Asia*, June 8, 1944.

they conceivably might have entrusted the safety of the relics to Japanese protection. However, their deepening hostility to the Japan army made them regard the Japanese as the despoilers of Burma's finest treasures. Word of mouth spread the shocking tale to upcountry towns where twenty years later the act was still so resented that it was spontaneously recalled as one of Japan's worst crimes against Burma. Dr. Ba Maw shared the opprobrium for surrendering the irreplaceable relics.⁶⁵

The British claims.—The British position was the mirror image of the Japanese. Their propaganda promised to protect Buddhism from the ravishes of the Japanese. A leaflet apparently dropped from British planes was more vituperative than the Japanese had been.

The dirty beasts tell *pongyis* and *sayadaws* to eat an evening meal. They order *pongyis* to work for them on the battlefield. They recognize neither religious buildings nor religious leaders. They wrap their horses' legs in religious robes. They destroy, scatter, burn. . . . Why are people so indifferent to these Japanese ogres?⁶⁶

Burmese citizens protecting Buddhism.—The competitive defamation by Japanese and British confirmed the Burmese view that these imperialists were cynically exploiting religion. The British had corroded Buddhism under the guise of religious neutrality, while the Japanese had subordinated Buddhism to their war effort. To the Burmese their Buddhism was as unique as their national identity, and the most important element in their sense of identity. If Buddhism were to be protected, it would be by the Burmese themselves.

The typical hero story of the wartime which Burmese most enjoy recounting concerns some individual act of merit to save Buddhism from defilement. When all the world was fleeing Rangoon, as ordered by the evacuating British governor, the pagoda trustees remained to keep watch at the Shwedagon. On the eve of the Burma campaign, a highly placed Japanese officer asked one of the thirty comrades then in Tokyo how much the Shwedagon was worth. He recorded with shame that under any other circumstances he would not have named a price for the priceless, but that he had replied fifty million rupees because he feared that the Japanese would bomb it.⁶⁷ Laymen also protect the person of *pongyis* by hiding them from the wrathful retreating Chinese army. When Japanese soldiers commanded *pongyis* to do menial work, laymen quickly substituted themselves to save the *pongyis* from degradation.

On the rare occasions when laymen failed, *pongyis* had to act to protect Buddhism. When Mandalay burned in March, 1942 the trustees of

⁶⁵ Interviews in small towns confirmed the wartime judgment of U Tin Tut that this propaganda stunt would backfire, *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁶⁶ DR 58 iii (a) *Thangadawmya Ahnososa* [Note to Arouse the Sanghal], [undated].

⁶⁷ Thakin Tun Oke, *Kyunnoke Sunsakhan* [*My Adventures*] (Rangoon: Doba-ma Printing Company, 1943.)

the Mahamuni pagoda fled. They abandoned an image of the Buddha so richly covered by the gold leaf of thousands of devotees that the features were entirely obliterated. Yahanbyu *pongyis* stood guard over the priceless statue until order was restored.⁶⁸ A month before the British recapture of Mandalay, widespread, but unconfirmed rumors depicted *pongyis* joining laymen to beat back Japanese soldiers attempting to strip the image.⁶⁹

The government as protector of Buddhism.—The head of the wartime government eagerly revived the role of promoting Buddhism which had lain vacant since the last king was deposed. Dr. Ba Maw stepped into the royal role of donating to pagodas on behalf of the whole nation. He justified the formation of the Maha Sangha as in accordance with royal custom of the past and for the welfare of Buddhism. He introduced the modern equivalent of the royal religious commissioners in the form of a Ministry of Religion. Most important in the daily business of government, he frequently intervened to protest Japanese actions detrimental to Buddhism. In each case what was good from a Buddhist viewpoint was also good politics. Dr. Ba Maw saw his responsibility to protect all peoples of Burma from Japanese exactions while at the same time cajoling them into support for the Japanese war. Whenever possible, he used religion to enhance the support for his government. Just as he had relied upon *pongyi* support for his prewar popularity, so he tried to assume the role of Buddhist king in order to solidify Buddhist sentiment behind his regime.

Dr. Ba Maw's use of Buddhism was opportunistic in that he used religion to serve his higher goal of a strong Burmese state. In this difficult matter of assessing the motives of a shrewd politician, Dr. Ba Maw can best be understood in comparison with the postwar politician who made most use of Buddhism, U Nu. Dr. Ba Maw came from a Christian family, and took his schooling as a boarding student at St. Paul's, the Catholic boys' school of Rangoon. After years of study in Europe, he passed the British bar and received a Ph.D. from Bordeaux. U Nu's parents were small town traders who sold religious articles, and educated him in national schools. His higher education was at Rangoon College. Whereas Dr. Ba Maw's only writing on Buddhism has been analytical, a thesis comparing the mysticism of Joan of Arc to Buddhist mysticism, U Nu's writing is always laden with religious exhortations. Dr. Ba Maw's basic outlook is secular and eclectic, embracing all of world history.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Interviews with the Yahanbone Sayadaw, the Minister of Religion, and the Mandalay Sub-District Officer, U Thaug Tint.

⁶⁹ *Greater Asia*, February 10, 1945.

⁷⁰ Both his wartime pronouncements and his well-aged memoirs attest to his secular and sweeping outlook. See his speech printed as the introduction to *Thadingyut Kyaungpaityay Khit Thit Pyinnya Thinda* [Modern Education Course

Dr. Ba Maw is a foreigner to U Nu's Buddhist cosmology which places history in ethical perspective.⁷¹ In fact U Nu's basic purpose in promoting a welfare state was to provide an environment where people could easily engage in Buddhist acts of merit. Dr. Ba Maw's New Order Plan, on the contrary, places a strong and independent state as the sole political objective, making no reference to religion. These two skillful politicians differed most in their attitude toward *pongyis* in politics. U Nu consistently maintained the orthodox view that *pongyis* were above politics, while Dr. Ba Maw prided himself in his political manipulation of *pongyis*.

The Head of State was of course the chief patron of Buddhism. He often donated to pagodas which had been damaged in bombing raids, an ideal circumstance to emphasize that Britain was the true enemy of Burma. He made his largest donation, 150,000 rupees, in August, 1943, immediately after the Japanese grant of independence.⁷² His occasional visits to the Shwedagon were ceremonies in which he vowed to protect Buddhism. The government even convened a special rally on August 17, 1944 which condemned an alleged British scheme to steal the relics from the Shwedagon and approved a list of damaged religious buildings so that reparations could be collected when the war was won.⁷³

It is interesting to note that the two greatest ceremonies of wartime Burma were not religious. There was the independence ceremony, which was nationalist and modern. The declaration of independence even omitted reference to religion. The only Buddhist moments in the day of ceremony were when Dr. Ba Maw swore to protect the three gems, the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, as had the Burmese kings. The most elaborate ceremony of the war, planting the victory earth, had no religious overtones, but was a curious *pastiche* of ancient and modern national lore. Soil from Shwebo, the home of the founder of the last dynasty, was carried in a golden box, under a royal white umbrella to Rangoon where it then bequeathed the spirit of Burmese independence to the wartime government. Since the ceremony took place early in the war, the government was able to invest considerable time and effort in a ceremony to give psychological unity to the nation.⁷⁴ The fact that Buddhism did not figure in this ceremony provides a sharp contrast with U Nu's nation building in postwar Burma. U Nu erected a pagoda, a mandatory act of piety for Burmese kings, and convened the Sixth Buddhist Synod, an act performed by only exceptionally devout kings. Dr. Ba Maw did not even build a sand pagoda

during the Thadingyut School Holidays] (Rangoon: Government Printing, 1943), pp. i-vii, and *Breakthrough in Burma: Memoirs of a Revolution, 1939-1946* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

⁷¹ Sarkisyanz, ch. 27.

⁷² *Greater Asia*, August 15, 1943.

⁷³ DR 91 iii (c), *Myinma Alin*, August 19, 1944, p. 2.

⁷⁴ See Nu, *Burma under the Japanese*, pp. 44-46 and *Bama Khit*, November 19 and 20, December 9, 12, and 13, 1942.

da, which Burmese kings and U Nu built in quantity when the country was endangered. Dr. Ba Maw apparently never thought of the ultimate in protection, making Buddhism the state religion.

A wartime innovation applauded by devout Buddhists was the government's creation of a Ministry of Religion. The ministry opened the day Burma declared independence, but the postwar government waited two years after independence from Britain to reestablish the ministry. The ministry institutionalized the state support essential to Buddhism which had been denied by the British.⁷⁵ The colonial government's own department of ecclesiastic affairs was linked to the Church of England. The Saya San rebellion played upon the fears arising from the popular misconception that the British meant to exercise exclusive control over Buddhism, not merely over the irrelevant Church of England.

The Ministry of Religion became the rightful home of the official examination in the Buddhist texts by which monks obtained certificates of ability. This royal institution had been revived by the British, but inappropriately housed in the Ministry of Education.⁷⁶ The ministry held at least two examinations during the war despite the disrupted state of affairs.⁷⁷

The Minister of Religion worked closely with the Maha Sangha, receiving complaints from the *sayadaws* and publicizing their pronouncements. In 1944 the department appointed two deputy directors, dividing their jurisdiction between Upper and Lower Burma just as the Maha Sangha had done.⁷⁸ On the recommendation of the Chief State Sayadaws the minister also issued passes to *pongyis*, averaging one to a township. These passes were supposed to protect *pongyis* on propaganda tours from Japanese harassment and provide them assistance from the Burmese district administrators. It is not known how many *pongyis* toured or whether the passes were ever honored.

The most significant protection which the government afforded Buddhism was its protests against Japanese incursions. Three officials shared the thankless tasks, Dr. Ba Maw as Head of State, Bandoola U Sein as Minister of Religion, and U Tun Aung, as Minister of War Cooperation. Four religious issues were among the complaints to the Japanese Commander-in-Chief. The rat campaign of 1943 was discussed above under uses of Buddhism. In 1944 the government attempted to prevent cattle slaughter and the desecration of a Rangoon cemetery. The last and proudest act was saving the Shwedagon pagoda.

⁷⁵ Sarkinsyanz, chs. 16-18.

⁷⁶ Smith, pp. 66-71.

⁷⁷ *Bama Khit*, November 14, 1942 and *Greater Asia*, December 21, 1944.

⁷⁸ DR 91 iii (c), *Myinma Alin*, March 23, 1944.

To curb excessive cattle slaughter for Japanese consumption the government passed legislation. Shortly it used the same technique to protect economic and social rights of Burmese, but also with limited success. The act prohibited slaughter of any cattle less than ten years old, so that the livestock essential for farm and transportation work could be maintained. The added benefit was that the *sangha* considered this law in keeping with the Buddhist precept against killing. The Maha Sangha association praised the government, and preached that the people should abstain from eating meat. The Minister of Religion claimed that the Maha Sangha organization was successful in convincing holders of slaughter house licenses to give them up as acts of merit.⁷⁹ For six months the Burmese government thus restricted cattle slaughter, but then had to cut the heart from the law in yielding to Japanese pressure. The amendment excluded from the protection of the law any cattle slaughtered for the Japanese army.

Burmese ministers further protected Buddhism by convincing the Japanese army not to run a new road out of Rangoon through the Kyan-daw cemetery and two monasteries. The Minister of Religion understood the Japanese intention in building this new road was to use it as a decoy for British bombers and thus maintain the major artery, Prome Road. His telling argument in dissuading the Japanese apparently was that the people would be so enflamed over the destruction of the religious grounds that they would render ineffective any camouflage of Prome Road.⁸⁰

The greatest religious act of Dr. Ba Maw's career was attempting to save the Shwedagon pagoda from destruction.⁸¹ Apparently a Japanese plan for the defense of Rangoon called for using Shwedagon hill for a system of bunkers and a half dozen monasteries as ammunition dumps. After much discussion on the Burmese side, Dr. Ba Maw protested to the Commander-in-Chief, but in vain. Then in November, 1944 Ba Maw accepted an invitation to Tokyo to promote the *kamikaze* campaign. There he brought his case personally to the attention of the highest authorities. Field Marshal Sugiyama heard him attentively, and replied after two days that the Japanese army would do its utmost to spare Rangoon and the Shwedagon. However, he warned that if the Allies sus-

⁷⁹ This account is based upon Bandoola U Sein, *Kyunnoké Atwinyay* [Our Internal Affairs], vol. 2 (Rangoon: Thiri Zeyon Pon Press, 1946), pp. 97-100. Unfortunately the first volume of these fascinating memoirs has not yet come to light. The law is number 3 of 1305 B. E., printed in Burma, *Ordinances* (Rangoon: Government Printing, 1944).

⁸⁰ Bandoola U Sein, vol. 2, pp. 64-65.

⁸¹ This account is based upon Burmese sources alone. Dr. Ba Maw, *Break-through in Burma*, pp. 372-380, and Bandoola U Sein, vol. 2, pp. 131-141 for a more colorful version. The official Japanese military histories edited by Fuwa Hiroshi, *Biruma Sakusen-shi* [History of the War Operations in Burma] and *Nampo-gun Sakusen-shi* [History of the Operations of the Southern Regional Army] (Tokyo: Government Printing, 1955), neglect this phase of the campaign.

pected that Rangoon would not be held, Japan would fight there. From the Burmese point of view at least, the protection of Buddhism was a powerful argument in changing the Japanese tactics for retreat.

THE GLACIAL PACE OF CHANGE IN BUDDHISM

The Japanese occupation did not destroy a long-standing pattern in Buddhism as it did in economics and politics. This lack of change in the *sangha* during the cataclysmic three years was not for want of effort by Burmese and Japanese alike. Rather the lack of immediate change was due to Buddhism's long time horizon of 2,500 years historically, and countless ages, worlds without beginning or end in cosmic terms. Whatever new features can be found in the Buddhism of independent Burma are either the fruition of long term change begun under British colonial rule, or the reaction to that one hundred year foreign interlude.

In attempting to employ the *sangha* in government activities the Japanese received a firm rebuff. On the verbal level they were more successful, since the Maha Sangha charter provided that all *pongyis* should cooperate with the Japanese-backed government. The victory was hollow because the Maha Sangha supported government policies it approved on religious grounds, such as the ban on cattle slaughter but otherwise consistently gave less support to the government than did the non-clerical organizations, such as the National Service Organization and the Dobama party.

The tradition of *sangha* involvement in politics had been at the top of the order when the *thathanabaing* advised the king on religious matters, interceded with him in criminal cases, or even criticised his overweening pride. These traditional forms of peaceful protest were not available to the *sangha* during the Japanese occupation since the "monarch" was neither sovereign nor strictly Buddhist. Apparently *pongyis* never attempted to use their powers of moral suasion on the foreign authorities, maintaining the same distance from the Buddhist Japanese as from the Christian English.

Individual *pongyis* did not enter into the resistance against the Japanese in the numbers or with the vigor that they had in previous uprisings against the British. So little is known of *pongyi* participation in the Third Anglo-Burmese War or in the Saya San rebellion that any number of factors might account for the difference. Was the duration of the anti-British uprisings crucial, with *pongyis* entering only after the initial stage? The resistance, lasting two months, may not have provided time for *pongyis* to become sufficiently aroused to leave the monastery. In the earlier uprisings did the lay leaders, each at the head of his own band, actively

seek *pongyi* recruits? If so, what a contrast to the desire of the central resistance leader to exclude *pongyis* from politics. A factor which probably weighs as heavily as any is that despite all grievances against the Japanese, *pongyis* saw them as fellow Buddhists. *Pongyis* probably considered them less threatening to Theravada Buddhism than the totally alien British. A final factor is that the lack of *pongyi* leadership in the resistance may be part of a long term trend in which laymen are displacing *pongyis* from leadership across the board. To determine this point, longitudinal studies should be made of the informal influence of *pongyis* as well as the degree and quality of their political involvement.

The persistence of Burmese Buddhism unchanged in any important respect by the Japanese occupation may be an example of a general phenomenon that religion changes more slowly than other spheres of life. Burmese conceive of their religion as changeless, identical with the Buddhism that Gotama Buddha preached. The intellectual endeavors of the *pongyis* are still bounded by textual commentaries dating from the sixth century.⁸² A *pongyi's* moral worth is still judged as he circumscribes his actions in strict accordance with the ancient Vinaya Pitāka. The war period itself was a particularly inopportune time for change, since through its very stability a religion affords shelter to the storm tossed. The major religious innovation of the period, the reorganization of the *sangha* into the Maha Sangha, was initiated by government. This impetus for change from outside the *sangha* was in the tradition by which kings had reformed the order, not the *sayadaws* themselves. However, this reform did not take hold, failing to outlast the reign which had initiated it.

In postwar Burma the new status of Buddhism can in no way be attributed to the Japanese occupation, but was a reaction to a century of British domination. As in traditional Burma the initiative for religious change came from the ruler. U Nu restored the sacred foundation to the Burmese state and elevated religious goals as the ultimate goals of the state.⁸³ Perhaps the climate of independence was ripe for a revival of Buddhist underpinnings for the state, but U Nu himself contributed immensely to this climate. His genuine piety expressed in meditation, political speeches in the style of religious exhortation, and innumerable acts of merit making, convinced ordinary people of his exceptional sanctity. They honored him with the faith that he was a future Buddha, thus placing their new ruler in the best tradition of Burmese kings.

A national tragedy had brought U Nu to the Premiership when the cabinet including the architect of independence was assassinated. Had Aung San been Prime Minister it is doubtful if the state would have gained its sacral character. He had shared the view of some Burmese

⁸² Sarkisyanz, p. 218,

⁸³ See Sarkisyanz, especially chs. 25-25.

Communists that *pongyis* were an economic drain on society. In a war-time speech he had regretted that Burma had so many *pongyis* since they neither worked nor reproduced children. He concluded,

The surplus *pongyis* and nuns must be told to leave the order so that the population problem will be solved.⁸⁴

After the war Aung San muted his criticism, but continued to insist on the strict separation of religion from affairs of state.

The people's acceptance of U Nu as the protector of Buddhism enabled him to create a new religious role for the state, which popular rejection had denied Dr. Ba Maw. However, U Nu, like Dr. Ba Maw before him was unable to prod *pongyis* into new social responsibilities. He could not interest more than a handful in social service work among the laity. His state religion bill did provide that government schools could be housed in monasteries. This might in time have opened monasteries to modern educational thought had not the army coup swept away the constitution, including the state religion amendment.

U Nu did initiate an organization of *sayadaws* in 1955, the All Burma Presiding Monks' Association. His purpose had been to secure *sayadaw* support for the Sixth Buddhist Synod. This organization came into conflict with the Yahanbyu Association, the young monks' association which had survived the war and independence still headed by the same individual who had founded it in 1938. After the split in the ruling AFPFL party the Presiding Monks supported U Nu's faction, while the Yahanbyu supported the other. This situation obviously drew no inspiration from the wartime Maha Sangha. Research into the character of *pongyi* politics is necessary to determine whether the 1958 configuration of *pongyi* factions backing separate political parties is in the same pattern as the *pongyi* factions and parties immediately before the war.

Plus ça change.—After the Burmese army took over the government in 1958 it utilized a technique for gaining popularity that had been well-worn during the Japanese occupation. The army became the protector of Buddhism. The Psychological Warfare Department prepared an illustrated pamphlet, *Dhammantaraya* [Buddhism in Danger], portraying the menace of Communism. The surge of popular wrath against the Burmese Communists brought thousands of *pongyis* and laymen together in mass meetings to denounce these desecrators. Ironically the army was showing its virtue in defending Buddhism at a time when the Communists had never been weaker. Of course the army had not previously taken the reigns of government and thus had not felt so strongly the need for widespread popular support.

⁸⁴ Address, printed in the *Modern Education Course during the Thadingyut Holidays*, 1942, vol. 2, p. 104.

Buddhism remains the firmest foundation for any government of Burma. Future governments will have to handle *pongyis* with utmost tact, as did the Japanese. As the World War II recedes into the past, the political upheaval of those years can be better seen in Buddhist perspective—but one of the countless changes in this world of impermanence.

JAPANESE MILITARY ADMINISTRATION IN MALAYA—ITS
FORMATION AND EVOLUTION IN REFERENCE TO SULTANS,
THE ISLAMIC RELIGION, AND THE MOSLEM-
MALAYS, 1941-1945

by

YOJI AKASHI

ONE OF THE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS FOR THE JAPANESE MILITARY in the administration of occupied Malaya was the treatment of sultans and of the Islamic religion. Questions confronting the military were: (1) what should be the status of sultans as the heads of the Islamic religion and their political position in relation to the Malays; (2) how much power should they be allowed to retain as spiritual leaders of the sultanates; (3) how should they be persuaded to give up their authority and how induced to cooperate with the Japanese in order to win the confidence of the people of Japan through their prestige and power; and (4) how should the Islamic religion and its related tradition be treated. These questions were vital to the Japanese military if Japan wanted to remain the overlord of Malaya. They were more so as the war protracted, since Japan relied increasingly on Malays for the acquisition of resources vital to her national defense; and sultans offered, at least in the transitional period of the occupation years, a convenient utility value to the military for pacifying and winning the indigenous Malay Muslims. The importance of sultans in Malay society is seen in the following quotation.

The key political relationship of the contemporary Malaysian is with the sultanate. This relationship takes two forms. First, a Malaysian is a citizen of the country by virtue of being a subject of the sultan, and all his prerogatives as a citizen originate from this relationship. This is more than a mere formality since there usually is a strong bond of an earlier feudal relationship. There is a keen popular interest in the pomp and ceremony associated with the sultanate and in the general well-being of the ruler. The second form of the relationship is derived from the role of sultan as the protector of the Moslem establishment in each state. As protector of the state religion the sultan is linked to the Malaysian people of his state through imams, the religious ritual officials in the mosques, and through the *kadi*, the local Moslem functionaries. This link is not personal, but it is nonetheless of basic importance.¹

¹ Norton Ginsburg and Chester F. Roberts, Jr., *Malaya* (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1958), p. 216.

This was the basic politico-religious relationship that existed between the sultans and the Malays in traditional Malay society before World War II.

The question of the treatment of the sultanate and religion weighed heavily on the minds of Japanese military planners in their preparations for occupation. But Japan's interest in the Islamic religion was of relatively recent history, dating back to the mid-1920's.² Further, this interest was largely confined to the geographical territory of the Middle East almost until the outbreak of the Pacific War. The earliest evidence of the Japanese military's concern for the sultan and Islamic religion in Southeast Asia was seen in a document prepared by a three man study group organized by the First Bureau (Operation) of the Army General Staff.³ This draft, *Principles of the Administration of Occupied Southern Areas*, was drawn up in March, 1941. According to this plan, "Malaya is to be placed under Japanese rule [as part of the Japanese Empire] and Malay states are to be guided by a supervisory military administration." "Sultans are to be left alone," it stated, "as the nominal rulers under the supervision of a military government, which shall be replaced by an advisory system once public order has been restored. Strict measures must be taken to respect the freedom of religion and belief as well as customs [in order to win the hearts of the local inhabitants]."

This draft became the basis for *Outlines on the Conduct of Military Administration*, which was formulated by the Headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces (SEF) on November 3, 1941, and for *Principles Governing the Administration of Occupied Southern Areas*, which was adopted on December 20, 1941, at the Liaison Conference between the Imperial Headquarters and the Government.⁴ The section relative to sultans and religion in the former document was almost a carbon copy of

² Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945* (The Hague and Bandung, The Netherlands and Indonesia: W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1958), pp. 103-104.

³ Japan, Sambo Honbu Dai 1-bu Kenkyu-han, *Nampo sakusen ni okeru senryochi tochi yokoan*, (March, 1941), n.p. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo.

The study group was headed by Col. Obata Nobuyoshi, who became chief of staff of the Imperial Guard Division for the occupation of Northern Sumatra in February, 1942. The other two members were Lt. Col. Nishimura Otoji and Lt. Col. Tofuku. Lt. Col. Nishimura drafted the section on Malaya and he became chief of the General Affairs Department, Military Administration in Java, in 1944.

The draft was kept in a locked safe in the First Bureau until the Fall of 1941.

⁴ Japan, Nampogun Soshireibu, *Nampu gunsei shikko keikaku (an)*, November 3, 1941, n.p. Marked "Military Secret". Mimeo. Japan, Daihonei-Seifu Renrakukaigi, *Nampo senryochi gyosei jissai yoryo*, November 20, 1941. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo. The English translation of the document is found in Harry J. Benda, James K. Irikura, Koichi Kishi, *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents* (New Haven, Conn.: Southeast Asian Studies, Yale University, 1965), pp. 1-3.

See Introduction to *Nampo sakusen ni okeru senryochi tochi yokoan* for the document became the reference for the basic instrument of military administration in the Southern region.

the March draft, recognizing the utility value of the sultans for the pacification and restoration of public order as well as for getting popular support of the people. The sultan's religious position, and the indigenous customs based on religion should be respected for the sake of stabilizing public feeling and of inducing the people to cooperate with Japan's policy.⁵ This position was still immutable in March, 1942, by which time most of the Southeast Asian territories except the Philippines had fallen into Japanese hands, because the higher military circles reaffirmed the policy in March in a top classified position paper, *Fundamental Principle Relative to the Execution of the Military Government of Occupied Areas*.⁶ One note of interest in the document is that the military, for the first time, stated succinctly that the Philippines, the Netherlands Indies, and Malaya were to remain the "permanent possessions" of Japan.⁷ Such was the official policy of the Imperial General Staff and the Headquarters of the SEF in relation to sultans and religion in Malaya.

Malaya was assigned to the Twenty-Fifth Army under the command of Lt. General Yamashita Tomoyuki. Its military administrative matters were entrusted to Maj. General Manaki Keishin, deputy Chief of Staff of the invading army and concurrently chief of the military administration, but the real command of the administration was wielded by Col. Watanabe Wataru, deputy chief, who was given authority to formulate and execute administrative policies by General Yamashita.⁸ Before his departure for Saïgon on November 25, Watanabe had conversations with several knowledgeable persons on the sultan question, religion, and nationality. Among them were the Rev. Otani Kozui, the spiritual head of the *Jodo Shin* (True Western Paradise) Sect of Buddhism; Marquis Tokugawa Yoshichika, a well known tiger hunter in Malaya and a good friend

⁵ Japan, Nampogun Soshireibum *Nampo gunsei shikko keikaku (an)*, n.p.

⁶ Japan, Sambo Honbu?, *Senryochigunsei jissshi ni kansuru kisoyoryo*, March 1942, n.p. Marked, "Top Secret." Mimeo.

⁷ This position relative to the Philippines changed in January, 1943, when Premier Tojo announced that the Philippines was to gain independence. An undated Army document, possibly prepared no later than June, 1942, *Gunsei shido hosaku*, stated that the Philippines and Burma would be expected to gain independence in the future.

⁸ Interview with Col. Watanabe Wataru, July 9, 1966. Watanabe's military career was unique in the sense that he never commanded a field army until 1945. Instead, he spent most of the 1930's in China and in the political arena. He served as chief of the *Tokumu Kikan* (Special Agency) at Peking and Tsinan from 1937 to 1938 and was a political officer attached to the North China Liaison Office of the China Development Board, or *Koain*, from 1939 to early 1941, when he became a member of the Total War Institute. It was in his China years that Watanabe was acquainted with General Yamashita, working with him and becoming his trusted follower. See his unpublished memoirs, *Daitoa Senso ni okeru Nampo gunsei no kaiko*, in his possession. The memoirs were written in a post war year (1948) based on his diary, *Nichi-Bei-Ei Eenso sanko nishhi*, (unpublished) 5 vols. also in his possession.

of the Sultan of Johore;⁹ and Nakayama Tadanao, who wrote a treatise, *Policies Suited for the Southern Region*, at Watanabe's request.¹⁰

It is worthwhile to pause briefly to examine Watanabe's philosophy of military administration,¹¹ because he left an indelible imprint upon the first phase of the administration from February, 1942, to March, 1943. He held the view that it was necessary to "coerce the natives with resolution at the beginning of occupation in order to meet the requirements of military operation." It was not desirable, he insisted, to commence a military administration with "a claptrap policy by giving them rosy promises and sympathy. That they had been subjugated to British rule for so long was God's punishment. They must be made to examine themselves and to show their penitence." He concluded:

The fundamental principle of my policy to indigenous people is to make them aware of their past mistakes; they must atone and cleanse themselves of the past stains. They must be taught to endure hardship together with the rest of the Asiatic peoples for the construction of Greater Asia. This nationality policy was the essence that I derived from ten years of my political experience in China.

It seemed that Watanabe arrived at this conclusion because he had serious misgivings about the outcome of the war for Japan¹² and his thought was set on the principle that even a small concession to native autonomy would hamper military operation, particularly in the acquisition of war material and supplies, as it had happened in China. Watanabe must have learned a lesson in north China that the empty promise of autonomy would not only inhibit military operation but also would restrict the freedom of maneuverability in dealing with sultans and the indigenous. Therefore, he was convinced that it was not a good policy to promise natives, in advance, a paradise and a comfortable material life under Japanese rule as long as the war continued.

⁹ Interview with Col. Watanabe, July 9, 1966. The Rev. Otani just returned from a trip to Southeast Asia. Marquis Tokugawa had made a number of tiger hunting trips to Malaya. These trips were said to cover up his objective of collecting intelligence for the military. See Nakayama Tadanao, *Namyo ni tekisuru seiji*, March, 1942, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰ The identity of Nakamaya remains obscure. Judging from the context of the treatise, he appeared to be a man of various interests and a man who was well versed in astronomy, geography, and medicine. He had been to China a few times. Watanabe apparently invited Nakayama to become his staff member but Nakayama declined it on the ground that he disliked western oriented bureaucrats and capitalistic industrialists who had been selected by the Army to staff the Malaya Military Administration. Instead, he wrote the treatise and dedicated it to Watanabe. Some of Nakayama's ideas, i.e. the harsh treatment of the Chinese, may have strengthened Watanabe's own conviction.

¹¹ Watanabe Wataru, *Daitoa Senso ni okeru gunsei no kaiko*, pp. 12-13, 27-29, 36. Hereafter *Watanabe Memoirs*.

¹² Watanabe Wataru, *Nichi-Bei-Ei Senso sanko nisshi*, December 8, 1941. Hereafter *Watanabe Nisshi*.

With this frame of mind, Watanabe found that the *Principle Governing the Military Administration of Occupied Southern Areas* fell short of his expectation. "I could not find in the document," he wrote, "the principle for the construction of the Great East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, nor the guiding spirit for the administration of Southern region." As for the policy toward sultans, he ridiculed it, saying that a policy to "give them due respect and to use them for achieving our objectives is absurd."¹³ Dissatisfied with the established policy of the General Staff, he set out to organize his own ideas for the military administration after having consulted with the Rev. Otani, Marquis Tokugawa, and Nakayama mentioned above. The Rev. Otani proposed as a remedial measure to create an "independent Malaya under a constitutional monarchical government" apparently in place of the sultanate. "The monarch was to be nominated by ten electors for the tenure of seven years. The first head of the state, however, was to be named by the Japanese government."¹⁴ Watanabe declined to incorporate the proposal into the scheme of his plan for the sultans because he and his superiors in the central Army authority were not prepared to go to such an extent in dealing with sultans. And it was incompatible, to say the least, with the established principles set by the Imperial Headquarters-Government conference. Marquis Tokugawa came up with the idea of creating "princely states loyal to Japan, recognizing her suzerainty." "Strategic sultanates such as Johore may be incorporated into the Japanese Empire." Japan, the Marquis recommended, would "conduct foreign relations of those kingdoms and appoint a governor general for a federation of the Malay principalities." Finally, he advised the military to respect the position and prestige of sultans.¹⁵

In the midst of preparations in Tokyo, General Suzuki Sosaku, Chief of Staff of the Twenty-Fifth Army, summoned Watanabe to proceed to Saigon where he arrived in late November. In the words of Watanabe, the training of personnel, indoctrination, and formulation of the military administrative policy had hardly started when the invasion took place in the early morning hours of December 8, 1941.¹⁶ Consequently, the Twenty-Fifth Army was not accompanied with personnel in charge of sultans and religion, in contrast to the Sixteenth Army whose military administration department had organized, prior to the landing of Java in March, 1942, a religious department staffed with a number of Javanese Islamic followers.¹⁷ For one thing, Watanabe did not have sufficient time in which

¹³ *Watanabe Memoirs*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴ Otani kozui, *Marei hanto zengo hoan*, n.d. Mimeo. Marked "Top Secret."

¹⁵ Tokugawa Yoshichika, *Nampo shokoku no juritsu mokuhyo*, n.d. Mimeo. Marked "Top Secret."

¹⁶ *Watanabe Memoirs*, pp. 26, 28.

¹⁷ Waseda daigaku Okuma kinen shakai kagaku kenkyujo, ed., *Indoneshiya ni okeru Nippon gunsei no kenkyu* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya Shoten, 1959), p. 225. Hereafter Waseda. Okuma Kenkyojo, *Indoneshiya ni okeru Nippon no gunsei*.

to conceive policies and their ramifications for the vast and complicated operation of their military administration. It is moreover doubtful whether he would have given more thought to the sultan and religious affairs even if he were given time for preparations. My two conversations with Watanabe and reading of his diary and memoirs failed to elicit from him that he had entertained some concrete ideas in dealing with sultans and religion prior to the invasion.

It is necessary here to discuss the sultan operation of the *F Kikan*, a special agency organized to assist the Indian Independent League, since its sultan operation smoothed the way for winning the support of the native Malays to the Japanese side during the Nippon Army's military drive. The *F Kikan* was under the command of the Headquarters of the SEF and its sultan operation followed along the line of the Army's central authorities, i.e. sultans were important for the winning of the confidence of the people and for the maintenance of security and peace.¹⁸ Major Fujiwara Iwaichi, the leader of the *F Kikan*, was a romantic idealist. He took a conciliatory policy toward sultans and put Lt. Nakamiya in charge of the Sultan operation. Nakamiya was assisted by Shiba, the former Japanese proprietor of a general store in Alor Star, Kedah, who was said to be on good terms with the Sultan of Kedah.¹⁹ There was one complication for the *F Kikan* in having adopted the conciliatory measure. The *F Kikan* had already solicited assistance for the Malay Operation from remaining members of the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (KMM), many of whose leaders had been arrested by the British authorities simultaneous with the outbreak of the war. The KMM was a Malay youth nationalist movement formed by a group of indigenous intellectuals. Members of this group were opposed to the feudal structure of the sultanate²⁰ and others just wanted changes in the stagnant Malay society. Fearing that the Japanese policy of supporting the two incompatible parties might engender distrust in the sincerity of Japanese intention to liberate the Malays and thus creating an unnecessary friction, Fujiwara conferred with the rank-and-file of the K.M.M. who had joined the *F Kikan* in southern Thailand. He managed on the night of December 4 to win them over to his side, nipping in the bud the danger of a split among the Malays themselves.²¹ At this time, the armada of the Nippon Army was sailing southward through the South China Sea approaching landing points in southern Thailand and northern Malaya.

¹⁸ Maruyama Shizuo. *Nakano gakko Takumu kikan'in no shuki* (Tokyo: Heiwa Shobo, 1948), p. 90.

¹⁹ Fujiwara Iwaichi, *F. Kikan* (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 1966), p. 84.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 85 [f. William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1967)], p. 222.

²¹ Fujiwara, *F. Kikan*, p. 85.

The Japanese troops landed at several places a few hours earlier than the Pearl Harbor attack and advanced rapidly southward. On December 14, the Japanese occupied Alor Star and the city's peace was immediately restored. In Alor Star the F Kikan's first opportunity to deal with a sultan presented itself when Lt. Makamiya "rescued" family members of the Sultan of Kedah, who had been hiding to escape from the looting of natives and Japanese soldiers.²² The Sultan's family were brought back to Alor Star from Sungei Patani where they had taken refuge.²³ Fujiwara himself disciplined two Japanese soldiers whom he caught looting the property of the Sultan of Kedah.²⁴ These two incidents made a deep impression upon Tengku Rahman, the eldest son of the Sultan of Kedah whom Fujiwara met on December 20 at Kulim. After expressing his gratitude to Fujiwara for having rescued and protected his family, property and natives, Tengku Rahman offered his voluntary service to appeal from the Penang Radio Station to his fellow Malays to assist the Japanese troops.²⁵ It is difficult to probe into his motive as to why he offered his service on his own volition.²⁶ One may surmise that it was a mixture of

²² The detail of the rescue operation is described by Lt. Nakamiya who commanded the operation. See his article, "Sarutan Kyushitsu," in *Nippon no Himitsusen*, a special issue of *Shukan Yomiuri* (December 1956), pp. 81-84. For Tengku Abdul Rahman's account of the escape and rescue operation, see Harry Miller, *Prince and Premier: A Biography of Tengku Abdul Rahman* (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1959), pp. 59-63. Rahman's version did not mention his encounter with Nakamiya and subsequent negotiations with Nakamiya and Shiba, at the end of which he succeeded in persuading court advisors and agreed to cooperate with the Japanese military.

²³ Fujiwara's version on this score differed from Harry Miller's. According to Miller as told by Tengku Rahman, the family of the Sultan of Kedah fled Alor Star by the urging of the highest Malay authorities in Alor Star.

Abdul Rahman, who felt that his father should stay in the capital for the sake of maintaining the morale of his subject, "kidnapped" his father who was on his way to Penang. The young prince then secluded his father in the village of Siddim, where he remained until the Sultan was brought to Kulim on December 10. Then "he signed an agreement with the Japanese Governor." Harry Miller, *Prince and Premier: A Biography of Tengku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj First Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya*. (London: George G. Harrap & Co.), pp. 59-63.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 122, 123. Fujiwara reported the incident to a superior officer of the two looting soldiers. The officer told Fujiwara later that the two soldiers had committed suicide to atone for their unbecoming and dishonorable conduct. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

Fujiwara told me in an interview that this stern and immediate discipline made a lasting impression on Tengku Rahman, who is today the Prime Minister of Malaysia. Interview with Fujiwara, August 17, 1966.

Prince Tengku Rahman cooperated with the Japanese during the occupation years. He became a District Officer in Kedah. He also became well acquainted with Kubata Shun, Governor of Perak (March 1942 — April 1943). Rahman invited Kubata to Malaya in 1960 as his personal guest, and he also held a reception for Japanese who had participated in the Malaya Military Administration, when he made a state visit to Japan in 1963. Interview with Kubata Shun, August 30, 1966.

²⁵ Fujiwara, *F. Kikan*, pp. 140, 151; Interview with Fujiwara, August 17, 1966, Nakamiya, *Nippon no Himitsusen*, p. 84.

²⁶ There is no mention of Tengku Rahman's offer in *Prince and Premier*. The author attempted to see Prime Minister Rahman in August, 1968 but was not able to see him for clarifying the point.

his political acumen and patriotism to his own people. For, in the first place, the Japanese were not his enemies but they were ready, Fujiwara in particular, to accept any indigenous leader as one of them in order to expedite the military operations. Abdul Rahman was, it seems, just as in a good bargaining position as the Japanese in extracting a concession from the Japanese, namely the protection of property and lives. He had seen the destruction of the war during his journey from Kulim to Alor Star and must have been convinced that his first duty as a senior royal member of the Sultanate was to guarantee the safety of property and lives of his peoples. Under the circumstances, cooperation with the Japanese was the only recourse to achieve this end. It was not so much a case of collaboration as it was of political expediency combined with patriotism to his people. Abdul Rahman was not certainly a willing tool of the Japanese overlord during the occupation years. His speech urging his countrymen to cooperate with the Japanese and to fight against the British, according to Fujiwara, was one of the decisive factors in winning the indigenous inhabitants in Malaya and Sumatra to the Japanese side during the Malayan operation.²⁷

As F Kikan members were getting support from natives and Indians, Col. Watanabe accompanied by his hastily organized administrative personnel of sixty officers and civilians joined Yamashita's headquarters at the front. Soon after the fall of Taiping on December 23, he drew up plans for military administration at Taiping. In making plans, he was assisted by Takase Toru with whom he had become acquainted in Tokyo.²⁸

Takase, who had worked for the *Tokumu Kikan* in Hankow, China, became an indispensable member of Watanabe's staff and in fact, Watanabe called him his "chief of staff."²⁹ So came into being what may be called the Watanabe-Takase team for military administration, which lasted until October, 1942.

Meanwhile, the meager knowledge of the staff of the Twenty-Fifth Army and of the Headquarters of the SEF about the actual situation of Malaya under wartime conditions and the sultans' ability to restore order proved to be far from adequate and impractical.³⁰ On December 31,

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

²⁸ *Watanabe Memoirs*, p. 25; Interview with Takase Toru, August 30, 1966.

Takase was introduced to Watanabe through Lt. Col. Tsuji Masanobu, a staff officer in charge of operation, Twenty-Fifth Army. Takase was not a novice in Malayan affairs. During 1940, he was in Malaya for the investigation of overseas Chinese affairs. The result of his intelligence work was a report on the Chinese in Malaya, which was submitted to and approved by the Army Chief of Staff. He was prominent in coercing the Chinese to "donate" fifty million yen to the Japanese military as a token of their atonement of their past sins in resisting the Japanese. Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down* (Singapore: Jitts & Co., 1946), pp. 72-73.

²⁹ Interview with Watanabe, July 9, 1966.

³⁰ Interview with Mahaki Keishin, July 10, 1966.

General Tsukada Osamu, Chief of Staff of the SEF, sent a cable to the Vice Minister of the Army, observing the lack of the political leadership of sultans. He requested the Vice Minister to arrange the recruitment of more administrative personnel both civilian and military.³¹ In order to press the demand, the Headquarters of the SEF dispatched Col. Watanabe to Tokyo. During his stay in Tokyo, Watanabe conferred with the central Army authorities on short and long term problems of military administration. One of the urgent questions he discussed was the question of the sultans. Watanabe was dissatisfied with the political ineptitude of sultans, and he wanted someone who could persuade them to relinquish their political power to the Japanese military.³² As pointed out earlier, the general principle governing the treatment of a sultan was to leave him as the nominal religious head of his state, somewhat comparable to the British practice with the sultans in pre-war years and to the Japanese dealing with the Emperor of Manchukuo.³³ But Watanabe had wanted to strip sultans of all their political power, reducing them to the status of newly acquired subjects (*Shimph no tami*) of the Japanese Empire. To fulfill this objective, Watanabe requested on December 23 that Col. Ishii Akiho appropriate one million yen as discretionary funds (*kimitsuhi*); that is, at about the same time he and Takase were plotting the scheme of military administration at Taiping. Col. Ishii turned down the demand.³⁴

Failing to obtain the funds for the political purpose, Watanabe modified his position. *Principles Governing the Military Administration of the Twenty-Fifth Army*,³⁵ a document that he had been working on since December 23 and that was approved by Generals Yamashita and Manaki on February 8,³⁶ declared: "For the time being, the sultans who do not resist shall be allowed to maintain their political and social status. They are to be supervised, however, by a Japanese advisor and their police power is to be exercised in conjunction with a Japanese police inspector." He was still opposed to using the political power of sultans

³¹ *Marei ni okeru gyosei*, Riku A Mitsu Dai Nikki, vol. 1, 1942, no. 50, in *Archives of the Japanese Army, Navy and other Government Agencies, 1868-1945*, Reel 118, F. 31116, 31121-31122. Hereafter *Army and Navy Archives*.

³² Kushida Masao, *Kushida Nikki*, (Unpublished) January 18, 1942. This diary is in the possession of Col. Kushida. He was a staff officer at the Army General Staff in charge of the mobilization of materials and in 1943 he was a staff officer in charge of military operations attached to the Headquarters of the SEF.

³³ Ishii Akiho, *Nampo gunsei Nikki* (Unpublished), pp. 151-152. Hereafter *Ishii Nikki*. This memoir was written in 1957 based on his unpublished diary. The Nikki is in the possession of the Historical Section of the Defense Agency, Japan.

Col. Ishii was a senior staff officer at the Headquarters of the SEF in charge of military administration.

³⁴ *Ibid.* In my interview with Watanabe on July 9, 1966, he denied that he requested the funds.

³⁵ Dai 25 gun Shireibu, *Dai 25 gun gunsei jisshi yoko*, n.d. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo., n.p.

³⁶ Watanabe Memoirs, pp. 25, 43.

for winning the confidence of the people, for the policy nowhere mentioned the established principle. On the question of religion and customs, Watanabe conformed with the directive of the higher Army circles in "respecting and protecting them in order to put the people's mind at rest and to induce them to cooperate with the Japanese."

Once the Malay Military Administration (MMA) rolled on its wheels, it planned to induce sultans to surrender their autonomous power to the Japanese. Preparations seemed to have begun in mid May when General Suzuki made a trip visiting sultans for the purpose of acquainting himself with the present status of sultans and of getting information for their future treatment.³⁷ Two weeks after his return to Singapore, Marquis Tokugawa, who had been appointed to the position of supreme advisor to the Twenty-Fifth Army responsible for sultan affairs,³⁸ went to Tokyo at the request of the Malay military authorities. He talked with General Sugiyama, Army Chief of Staff, about the question of how to deal with sultans. Tokugawa proposed that sultans must be coaxed to give up their autonomy and to become new subjects of the Empire but their lives and property must be guaranteed, and they might be given some honorable position. Although the sultans' religious position must be respected, he said, they should not be regarded as heads of autonomous principalities. It was advisable, Tokugawa suggested, to re-educate the Malays along this line of policy, inculcating the Japanese spirit into their minds. They must be made to realize that they would be a united people under the Emperor of Japan.³⁹

General Sugiyama must have approved Tokugawa's proposal in principle, for in July the Military Administration Department of the Tomi Group Army, i.e. Twenty-Fifth Army, prepared a document concerning the *Disposition of Sultans*.⁴⁰ The policy contained essentially the ideas of Tokugawa which he had proposed to the Army Supreme Command, but Watanabe's hand in it was evident. The objective of the policy, it stated, was to remove sultans as heads of autonomous states. But, in the view of practical politics, it was not wise "to dispose of them abruptly by force; hence, special plans shall be formulated on the basis of which the heads of autonomous areas shall be induced to surrender voluntarily

³⁷ Tomi Shudan Shireibu, *Senji geppo*, May, 1942. Marked "Military Secret". Mimeo. Sultans were invited to meet with dignitaries of the Tomi Group Army on April 11-13. There was no written record of the meeting. It was presumably calculated to impress them with Japanese dignitaries and to ask them to help organize an impressive celebration for the Japanese Emperor's birthday on April 29.

³⁸ Tokugawa was appointed to the post in March. The appointment must have been made in response to Col. Watanabe's request made earlier. Cf. Interview with Kushida Masao, August 8, 1966.

³⁹ *Kushida Nikki*, June 2, 1942.

⁴⁰ Tomi Shudan Gunseikanbu, *Oku shori ni kansuru ken*, July, 1942, n.p. Marked "Top Secret". Mimeo. The English translation is found in Benda et al., *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia*, pp. 184-186.

their political privileges." In short, the Japanese military wanted them to relinquish their political prerogatives to the Japanese Emperor as the Tokugawa Shogunate had surrendered its power to the Throne at the Meiji Restoration in 1868, since Malaya had become "an integral territory of Japan when it came under Japanese occupation." To fulfill these objectives, no coercive measures must be taken against sultans for submission. Instead, the goal would be realized by re-educating them that "the future of a Malaya under Japanese sovereignty shall be a united land and people under benevolent Imperial rule, and (by convincing) them gradually of the concept of Hakkoiichiu, the rule of all peoples under one sovereign." The Military Administration must make clear to sultans that it would not "permit their existence" in Malaya unless they would cooperate, and the military authorities should induce them to undertake voluntarily the positive implementation of the following:

- (1) To offer their titles, lands, and peoples to His Imperial Majesty through the Japanese military commanders;
- (2) Voluntarily to set an example for the people by swearing loyalty as Japanese subjects.

Only then, would sultans be granted status as religious leaders "under the concept of the unity of religion and government" They were also guaranteed income with the assurance of financial inheritance for their descendants, "necessary to the maintenance of their name and position" at a minimum level. In addition, "a specific annuity shall be distributed to the heads of autonomous areas from local administrative funds, thus ensuring direct contact with the administration of Malaya. This will not only give them the satisfaction of enjoying a special position but will also enable their utilization for civil administrative purposes." As a means to implement these policies, negotiations with sultans should proceed on an individual basis, and in a later stage an influential sultan like the Sultan of Johore should be induced to "assume a major role in gradually bringing about the collective support of all the heads of autonomous areas." These plans must be approved by "the top military and Central authorities prior to the full implementation" The M.M.A., however, went ahead implementing the policy; Marquis Tokugawa succeeded in persuading the sultans to relinquish their autonomous authority to the Japanese.⁴¹ It appears that he pacified them with a largess of money.⁴²

⁴¹ *Ishii Nikki*, p. 151.

⁴² *Kushida Nikki*, June 2, 1942. For instance, Marquis Tokugawa disclosed that as of the end of May, 1942, the Sultan of Johore had been paid 48,000 yen, the Sultan of Kelantan 12,000 yen, the Sultan of Trengganu 10,000 yen, the Sultan of Kedah 30,000 yen, the Sultan of Perak 40,000 yen and the Sultan of Pahang, 14,000 yen.

It was shortly thereafter that the Army held a conference of executive administrators of military government in Tokyo on July 14. In his speech to the assembled administrators, War Minister Tojo Hideki touched upon the treatment of sultans, saying in effect that the policy was to give them titles and honors in order to reap fruit.⁴³ In other words, Tojo did not want to deal with sultans as harshly as the M.M.A. of the Tomi Group Army. Tojo's message was conveyed to Lt. General Kuroda Shigenori, who was slated to become the Director General of Military Administration and concurrently Chief of Staff of the SEF. Tojo picked the right man at the right moment to transmit his message to military administrators in the Southern region, for Kuroda was generally regarded as Tojo's protege, and he liked to meddle with politics more than attend to military matters.⁴⁴ In his first speech as the Director General, Kuroda cautioned extreme measures against sultans saying that:

. . . in general it is deemed suitable that they be granted status, name, and stipend for their religious functions but that their political authority be nullified. However, changes from past treatment should be carried out gradually. Especially where stipends are generally concerned, consideration shall be given so that there will be no obstacle to the maintenance of their previous standard of living and care should be taken that such practices as the detailed examination of their use of allotted sums be avoided.⁴⁵

And on religion and customs, he reiterated the established principles of noninterference.⁴⁶ Specifically, he instructed them to use extreme circumspection not to impose Buddhism or other religions or Japanese morality and customs, and not to change names hastily or to institute public holidays. Nowhere was it mentioned that sultans be asked "to offer their titles, lands, and peoples to His Imperial Majesty" and be told that their existence would not be permitted, as stated in the *Disposition of Sultans*.

It is not difficult to find the reason why the Army High Command had been compelled to modify its position. First, the deterioration of the

⁴³ *Kushida Nikki*, July 14, 1942.

⁴⁴ Cf. Mori Shozo, *Senpu nijunen kaikin Showa rimenshi*, vol. II (Tokyo: Masu Shobo, 1951), p. 119; Inada Seijun, *Inada Nikki I*, (unpublished) p. 157.

Lt. General Inada was a deputy Chief of Staff of the Tomi Group Army from March to June, 1943. The *Inada Nikki* was edited in 1958 in the form of memoirs based on his diary. It is in the possession of the Historical Section, Japan Defense Agency.

⁴⁵ [Nampogun] Gunseisokanbu, *Gunseisokan shiji*, August 7, 1942. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo., n.p.

About a week earlier, General Imamura Hitoshi of the Sixteenth Army in Java issued an order to the Sultan of Soerakarta allowing him to retain his prerogatives that he had enjoyed and his administrative machinery, although he was required to disband his own army. Waseda Okuma Kenkyujo, *Indoneshiya ni okeru Nippon no gunsei*, pp. 146-148.

⁴⁶ Cf. Col. Watanabe, in his speech delivered at the Governors' Conference of July 20-31, stressed the policy of non-interference in religion but of promoting the culture of the natives by establishing research institutes and museums. *Syonan Times*, August 2, 1942.

war situation partially accounted for the change; in June the Japanese Navy met a disastrous defeat at the Battle of Midway and the Allied Forces had gradually recovered from the initial setbacks and were beginning to prepare a counter-offensive in the Pacific. Second, the pacification campaign of guerrillas had been running into difficulty and the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army had been harassing the Japanese in Malaya.⁴⁷ Finally, the indigenous people were beginning to complain of economic difficulties, spiraling inflation, and scarcity of daily necessities.⁴⁸ It had become more and more difficult for the military to win the confidence of the people in support of Japanese objectives.

The war situation made it necessary for the Military Administration authorities to pay more attention to the problem of gaining popularity among the people.⁴⁹ To demonstrate Japanese sympathy and respect for indigenous customs, the M.M.A. acknowledged an anticipated decline in working efficiency of Muslims employed by Japanese government agencies during the fasting month of *Hari Raya* beginning on September 11. Col. Watanabe⁵⁰ also issued a directive to governors and mayors asking them to pay Muslim employees wages for the month of October, together with a bonus, before October 10, since October 12-13 were their religious holidays.⁵¹ To follow up the policy, Watanabe cabled to governors and mayors directing them to communicate a message of felicitation for *Hari Raya Besar* from the Director of the M.M.A. to all Muslims who had fallen in battle for the Japanese and asked them to cooperate with the Imperial Army for the construction of Greater Asia.⁵² Reaction of the indigenous people was favorable to such conciliatory policy, even discounting a diplomatic nicety. "I am grateful," said the Sultan of Perak, Abdul Aziz, "for the freedom allowed by Nippon Government in the matter of religion. I am inclined to say the Nippon Government must took [sic] a great deal of interest in the fasting month of Hari Raya." The Sultan also commended the Governor of Perak, Kubota Shun, for having taken a keen interest in religion by attending the mosque. He was very happy with the Nippon Administration, the Sultan added, because he had no

⁴⁷ Cf. [Tomi Shudan] Gunseikanbu Keimbu, *Marei ni okeru chianjo no ichi kosatsu*, November 27, 1942, n.p. Appendix I. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo.

⁴⁸ For economic conditions and the people's reactions, see Tomi Shudan's monthly and ten-day reports.

⁴⁹ *Ishii Nikki*, p. 9.

⁵⁰ Watanabe became chief of the General Affairs Department in April. In that capacity he was the executive director of the Military Administration for Malaya and Sumatra.

⁵¹ Tomi Shudan Shireibu, *Senji geppo*, October, 1942; Watanabe Umeo and Nagaya Yuji, *Shukyo shukan seisaku* (1944), pp. 12, 21. Marked "Secret." Mimeo. This study was prepared by the Research Department for the M.M.A.

On March 21, 1943, the M.M.A. also promulgated the observation of Moslem holidays: the Islamic New Year (January 7); January 16 for the tenth day of the New Year; Mohammed's Birthday (March 18); the Ascension Day of Mohammed (July 30); Hari Raya Besar (September 30); and Hari Raya Haji (December 7).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

fear of religious interference. And he "had always found Nippon officials easily approachable and eager to be helpful."⁵³ The statement does not tell his latent displeasure with Japan's religious policy, as it will be discussed. And Kubota resigned his post in April, 1943, in disagreement with the M.M.A.'s policy.⁵⁴

Sultans did not fare well with the Administration, despite the prudent measures advised by Tokyo in August. As was pointed out, Marquis Tokugawa had induced the sultans to surrender their political authority and, to some extent, religious authority to the Japanese, and Japanese governors had been exercising power in the sultans' stead.⁵⁵ Also Takase, Watanabe's brain trust, was very much in favor of such disposition, and he reported his support for the policy at a meeting with Col. Kushida when he returned to Tokyo after having finished his tour of duty.⁵⁶ Sunada Shigemasa, supreme advisor to the Headquarters of the SEF, likewise had an unkind word for Malay sultans with the exception of the Sultan of Kedah, saying that "they alienated themselves from the masses, and the people were resentful of having paid heavy taxes to sultans."⁵⁷ Whatever the feeling of the Social Administration toward sultans, the Army Supreme Command in Tokyo recognized the importance of sultans as a matter of military necessity, especially in view of the coming invasion of India which was being planned. Earlier in August, the Army General Staff prepared a draft for the guidance of policy toward nationalities in Great Asia,⁵⁸ apparently to be used for a coming conference of Directors of Military Administration, which was held on October 5 in Tokyo.⁵⁹ Although this document did not mention specifically what sultan policy was to be pursued, it stated implicitly the need to treat sultans with circumspection.

Subsequently, the Army High Command directed military commanders and directors of military administration to be more generous toward sultans. On November 9, Lt. General Saito Yaheita, Commander-in-Chief of the Tomi Group Army, ordered that no hasty change be made in dealing with sultans in consideration of Japan's policy toward India, and that sultans be accorded religious position and honors and provided

⁵³ *Syonan Times*, October 20, 1942; Interview with Kubota, August 30, 1966.

⁵⁴ Interview with Kubota, August 30, 1966.

⁵⁵ *Ishii Nikki*, pp. 13, 152.

⁵⁶ *Kushida Nikki*, October 21, 1942.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, October 27, 1942. Sunada was not the only one who possessed this opinion. Lt. Col. Otani Keijiro, a military police officer and chief of the Police Department of the M.M.A. recalled that sultans were unpopular among natives. He reached this conclusion after having talked with representatives of the old and young Malay people. See his unpublished memoirs, *Dai 25 gun Marei, Sumatora gunsei no ichi kosatsu*, pp. 84-85. Hereafter, *Dai 25 gun gunsei*.

⁵⁸ Japan Sambo Honbu, Dai 14-ka. *Daitoa minzoku shido yoko (an)* August 6, 1942, n.p. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo. This document seemed to have been based on lectures given by Professor Oka. Cf. *Kushida Nikki*, July 2, 1942.

⁵⁹ *Ishii Nikki*, p. 107; *Osaka Mainichi* (Osaka), October 10, 1942.

with stipends.⁶⁰ Maj. General Nishioeda Hitoshi, a new Director of the M.M.A., at the conference of governors of Malaya and Sumatra held at Shonan on November 27, reiterated the points that General Saito had made three weeks before.⁶¹ Nishioeda's instructions were more specifically to the point. Opening his speech with the remark that he was conveying directives given to him at the October meeting of directors, Nishioeda gave the governors an order "to utilize (sultans) to the fullest advantage. Since our dealing with sultans will affect profoundly the decision of five hundred Maharajas of India (whether to take our side or to remain loyal to the British should Japan invade India), we must treat them with utmost circumspection and must not be stingy in giving them honors and stipends." Col. Watanabe, who had not seen the point of using sultans for achieving his own objectives of military administration, was reconciled conditionally with the view of the High Command. "Sultans," he told the governors in the same conference, "must be utilized for inducing the natives to cooperate with the military. They shall also be given stipends equal to the sums they received (from the British) in pre-war years, but the stipends and treatment must be differentiated according to the extent of their cooperation. The policy shall be determined on the basis of how useful they prove to us."⁶²

It is patent that the policy for the sultan had measurably changed as a result of the worsening of war conditions and of the impending military invasion into India. A tangible evidence in the transformation of the M.M.A.'s sultan operation can be observed in a gradual increase of stipends.

According to the budget for the first quarter of 1942 (April to June), the M.M.A. appropriated 90,000 yen for sultans as a special allowance. But this sum was never spent for an unexplainable reason, as evidenced by the balance sheet of expenditures that appeared in the budget table for the second quarter of 1942 (July to September),⁶³ for which period the Administration also recorded 90,000 yen as having been spent.⁶⁴ It presumably did not give 90,000 yen in the first quarter because

⁶⁰ *Marei, Sumatora tochi ni kansuru ken*, Tomi shusei mei no. 28, 25 gun meirei, November 9, 1942. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo.

⁶¹ Shonan Gunseikanbu, *Marei, Sumatora kaku shu (shi) chokan kaigi* (November 26-28, 1942). n.p. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Tomi Dai 8990 Butai, *Showa 17 nendo dai ichi shihanki (4 gatsu—6 gatsu) gunsei kaikei sainyu saishitsu yosan*. n.p. Marked "Secret." Mimeo.

⁶⁴ Dai 25 gun Gunseibu, *Showa 17 nendo dai ni shihanki (7 gatsu—9 gatsu) gunseihonbu gunsei kaikei sainyu saishitsu yosan*. n.p. Marked "Secret." Mimeo.

According to Otani Keiji, sultans were invited in April and August, 1942, by Generals Yamashita and Saito, Yamashita's successor, and were given 10,000 yen each time. There is no record of the monetary gift given to the sultans in April. The 10,000 yen given in August could be the 90,000 yen that appeared on the itemized expenditure for the second quarter period of 1942. Otani, *Gai 25 gun gunsei*, pp. 90-91.

of its chastizing policy toward sultans, as reflected by Watanabe's attitude toward them. Also the sultans' monthly allowance paid by the M.M.A. was sharply reduced. A detailed study of stipends is made available by the Research Department of the M.M.A. conducted in March and May, 1944. This study covers only the three sultanates of Pahang, Selangor, and Perak, but it is sufficient to reveal a change in the policy of the Administration.⁶⁵

The Sultan of Pahang was paid the monthly allowance of 4,000 yen first in April and thereafter until December, 1942, in addition to other expenses. Altogether the Administration gave 78,551 yen for that year, or 28 per cent of what the British had appropriated for the 1942 fiscal year. After January, 1943, the Sultan received 8,000 yen every month until March, 1944. He got 196,785 yen including other allowances in 1943, or 65 per cent of the 1942 level. Only in 1944 did the allowance (301,533 yen) almost match the amount paid by the British (303,012 yen); but in the actual monetary value, it must be said that the 1944 figure was far less because of a rampaging inflation. The Sultan of Selangor received 1,000 yen in March, and 10,000 yen for April, May and June. The sum was raised in July to 15,000, and he received in addition 15,000 yen as a supplement. Beginning in April, 1943, the Japanese paid 25,000 monthly. His total receipt for 1942 was 196,960 yen, 46 per cent of what he used to receive under British rule; for 1943 (332,800 yen), it was 78 per cent; and in 1944 (530,124 yen) it exceeded the allowance he received from the British (427,416 yen). The Sultan of Perak fared no better in 1942. His monthly income, beginning in April until November, was 2,000 yen, which was only one sixth of what the British paid in 1941. His allowance, however, increased to 6,250 yen in December, or about a half of what he used to receive. Only in April, 1943, his allowance equalled with the pre-war monthly figure. His total receipt for 1942 was 165,122 yen, or 33 per cent of what the British appropriated for 1942 (498,806 yen); for 1943, it was 66 per cent; and 85 per cent for 1944.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Yamashita Kakutaro and Itagaki Yoichi, "Pahan, Serangoru shu ryoshu sshucho hokoku," *Chosabuho* no. 1 (May 1, 1944); Itagaki Yoichi, "Pera Doko jijo ni tsuite," *Chosabuho*, no. 4 (June 20, 1944).

The authors of these studies used the dollar monetary unit but this writer prefers to use the yen unit. However, the dollar and the yen were on par during the occupation years.

⁶⁶ According to the 1944 budget, sultans were paid allowance comparable to pre-war figure. The Sultan of Johore received 430,000 yen; the Sultan of Negri Sembilan, 304,000 yen; the Sultan of Perak, 455,000 yen; the Sultan of Pahang, 304,000 yen; and the Sultan of Selangor, 378,000 yen. In addition, the military paid 170,000 yen for the construction of a residence for a sultan. The 1944 budget for sultans was an increase of 400,000 yen over the previous year's budget. Marei Gunseikanbu, [Showa], *19 nen gunsei kaikei yosan, setsumeisho*, n.p. Marked. "Top Secret." Mimeo.

In the case of Negri Sembilan, it was corroborated by an interview with Hatta Saburo, August 6, 1966. Hatta was the Governor of Negri Sembilan from March, 1942 to the end of the war.

From this study, Watanabe's instruction in November, 1942, that sultans be remunerated with a sum equal to that they received before the war was not fulfilled in 1943. It is plain that the M.M.A. did not pecuniarily treat the sultans well in 1942 and 1943, though some improvement was made in the latter year.⁶⁷ The evidence leaves some room to raise doubt if the M.M.A. had attempted to coerce them to cooperate with the Japanese, using the allowance as an inducement to achieve the objective. The disparity of the annuity, as seen in the three examples, also suggests that the Administration was not about to restore the pension and other allowance unconditionally to the pre-war level. It did not follow the British practice of paying sultans in accordance with their importance and prestige. It is recalled that Watanabe said in November that his Administration would treat sultans individually in the payment of allowances, depending upon the degree of their cooperation. This policy became official when his office prepared the basic and most important document relating to nationality policy, *Reference Material and the Explanation for Nationality Policy*, on November 28, 1942.⁶⁸ "Sultans shall be utilized," it said, "in such a way as to be the central driving force for reconstruction and the leaders for inspiring an Asian consciousness. Those sultans who are proved to be less useful to us and less enthusiastic shall be treated coldly and ignored as a warning to others."⁶⁹ Therefore, an increase in remuneration was conditional on good conduct, although the High Command said nothing about it in an earlier instruction. Watanabe's sultan policy was one of carrot-and-stick; a conciliatory sultan was given a better treatment at the expense of a recalcitrant sultan. A somewhat more generous pension given to the Sultan of Selangor than to the Sultan of Pahang could be explained in this light. The sultan of Selangor was installed in his position by the Japanese military,⁷⁰ therefore, he was more friendly to Nippon officials. The Sultan

⁶⁷ Cf. Interview with Sukegawa Seiji, July 22, 1966. Sukegawa was a reserve Maj. General and the Governor of Kedah from March, 1942, to August, 1943, when the state was incorporated into Thai territory. He told me that he cut the sultan's allowance in half, as directed by the Administration, though it was "a little bit cruel thing to do."

⁶⁸ [Tomi Shudan Gunseikanbu] Somubu Somuka, *Minzoku taisaku sanko shiryo oyobi setsumei*, November 28, 1942. n.p. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo. This document appeared to have been prepared on the basis of *Guiding Principles for Nationality Policy in Greater Asia*. See footnote 53.

⁶⁹ For sultans in Sumatra, the policy specified the educational support to be given for their children in order to train them to become administrators and to use them for future guidance of the people. Generally, the Administration seemed to have a better opinion of sultans of Sumatra and the Sumatrans of the Minangkabau region and the Achehnese. The Acheh Moslem Association for the Development of Asia organized on March 20, 1943. Cf. Sunada's report in *Kushida Nikki* October 27, 1942.

⁷⁰ Interview with Katayama Shotaro, July 28, 1966. Katayama was a reserve Lt. General and was the Governor of Penang from March, 1942, to April, 1943, and the Governor of Selangor until the end of the war; Interview with Manaki, July 10, 1966; Sir Harold MacMichael, *Report On A Mission To Malaya* (London: Colonial Office, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1946), p. 134.

of Perak was at least acquiescent, if not hostile, to the Japanese authorities, partly due to his role as the spokesman of the sultan, as evidenced by his remark at the time when the Administration issued orders to governors, directing them to treat Islamic religious holidays with a special consideration and by his active cooperation with the Japanese.⁷¹ On the other hand, the Sultan of Pahang was known to have been a man of strong character and individuality, harboring ill-feelings toward the Japanese overlord. Reportedly he rebelled against the Japanese in the summer of 1945 and “. . . narrowly escaped capture by the Japanese when cooperating with our (Allied) forces . . .”⁷²

It is in this context that we can understand why the Vice Minister of War sent an urgent telegram on December 4 to the Director of the Military Administration of the Tomi Group Army at Shonan. Reminding him of “the importance of the policy for the rulers of princely States in India” in connection with the about-to-be taken India Operation, the Vice Minister said:

For the administration of occupied Southern areas, it is extremely important to win the confidence of the peoples under our control in order to execute the war. High government officials have reiterated the need to utilize existing administrative organizations, to exercise circumspection in dealing with customs, religion, and sultans, so that they are not changed and interfered in without good reason. Nevertheless, it is reported lately that contrary to the policy of the Center, sultans' allowances such as administrative subsidy and remuneration that they received prior to the war have been reduced sharply, or changes in the treatment of sultans have been made in such a way as to damage their honor. Under the present condition, it is all the more vital to win the hearts of the indigenous peoples. The treatment of sultans must be accompanied with special circumspection. Not only hasty changes should not be introduced but the policy of giving more honors should be pursued with greater efforts—the policy based upon an over-view that will yield real results in the long run. Accordingly, you are requested to report back to me the present condition of sultans with respect to their political, religious, social status, and allowances as compared with those in pre-war years.⁷³

The Vice Minister's memorandum was in effect a concession to sultans, who had been demanding the restoration of power as the supreme authority of the Islamic religion they had enjoyed, however nominally and formally, under British rule.⁷⁴ Consequently, the M.M.A. invited representatives of sultans in Malaya and Sumatra to Shonan to hold a

⁷¹ See footnote 49.

⁷² MacMichael, *Report On A Mission To Malaya*, p. 6.

⁷³ *Doko (Sarutan) no toriatsukai ni kansuru ken*, Riku A Mitsu Dai Nikki vol. 64, 1942, no. 13, Reel 119, F 31973, *Army and Navy Archives*.

This writer could not ascertain who initiated the change in the policy toward the sultans. Marquis Tokugawa did not know the existence of the Vice Minister's cable until much later, as he told me in an interview on August 31, 1966. It is likely that someone in the Headquarters of the SEF brought the Vice Minister's attention to the problem at the Conference of Directors of Military Administration held in October, 1942, in Tokyo.

⁷⁴ Itagaki, *Chosabuho* no. 4 (June 20, 1944).

meeting on January 20-21.⁷⁵ The purpose of the conference was to ask them "to do everything to facilitate the permeation of the Military Administration into the States as widely as possible and to get . . . (the) people to unite together with a common aim so as to stabilize their feelings. . . ." Both Generals Nishioeda and Saito, the Director of the M.M.A. and the Commander-in-Chief of the Tomi Group Army respectively, addressed the representatives, enjoining them to have "faith in the Great Nippon" and to "lead the people to submit with heart and body to the policy of the Military Administration." In return for their cooperation, the Administration officially reaffirmed the position and honor of sultans as the supreme heads of the Islamic religion, and their rights to the ownership of private property, and, for the first time, the Administration pledged that it would pay the sultans the same sum of allowances and pensions as they had received in pre-war years. As it was discussed, not all sultans during 1943 received the annuity comparable to the amount they received from the British and only in 1944 did they get the amount of remuneration equivalent to the pre-war level. The Administration's promise for the payment moreover, did not mean that sultans would be fully compensated in cash, but rather the balance of the annuity would be supplemented by the sultan's rights to own property. This point was made clear in a speech of General Nishioeda when he said: "[since] . . . the people are still suffering from the horrors of war and, as a fine gesture on your part to share love and sorrows with Nippon, your remuneration will be on a lesser scale than before Of course, we will acknowledge you as owners of properties which you possessed and in view of this we trust that you will not feel the reduction to your income." At the conclusion of the conference, Marshal Terauchi Hisaichi, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the SEF, received the sultans and gave a Japanese sword to each of the eleven sultans. This was a shrewd step to impress them with their importance and dignity. Later, they contributed 60,000 yen to the military for the erection of a memorial for war dead.

Thus, it took nearly one year to establish a definite policy for the sultan. Throughout 1942, opinions among the High Command in Tokyo, Headquarters of the SEF, the M.M.A., and provincial governments on the disposition and treatment were not always in agreement.⁷⁶ The Gen-

⁷⁵ *Syonan Shinbun*, January 22, 1943; Itagaki Yoichi, "Some aspects of the Japanese Policy for Malaya under the Occupation, with Special Reference to Nationalism," Paper presented to the First International Conference of Southeast Asian Historians, Singapore, 1961; Waseda Okuma kenkyujo, *Indoneshiya ni okeru Nippon gunsei*, p. 152; *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), January 21, 1943.

⁷⁶ Interview with Tanabe Toshio, July 20, 1966; Interview with Maruyama Shizuo, August 5, 1966; Interview with Kushida Masao, August 8, 1966; Interview with Kubota Shun, August 30, 1966.

Lt. Col. Tanabe was chief of the Planning Section of the M.M.A. from March 1942, to March, 1943. Maruyama was an *Asahi Shimbun* correspondent covering Malaya and Burma during the war.

eral Staff and the SEF were inclined to be a little more lenient than the M.M.A. The former group saw the utility value in sultans for achieving the objectives of occupation. The latter, represented by Watanabe, while reluctantly accepting the usefulness of sultans, insisted that they must first be chastened and must atone for the parasitic way of the past life. It did not see any need to pamper them with a preferential treatment and only after they proved themselves useful was Watanabe prepared to grant some benefit while maintaining the attitude of sternness. There was a dichotomy of the view throughout 1942. Watanabe's view retreated in the face of the deterioration of the war situation, which forced the High Command to re-examine its policy for indigenous peoples in the Southern region.⁷⁷

Once principles for the sultan operation became official, the M.M.A. adopted gradually a positive attitude in relation to sultans and to religion, although troubles did develop when the policy was put into effect, as will be discussed. The change in the policy became more facile with the reorganization of the M.M.A. and the transfer of personnel at the top hierarchy in March and April, 1943. The Tomi Group Army moved to Sumatra, and the Oka Group Army assumed the responsibility of Malaya under the direct command of the SEF. Also, Watanabe was replaced by Maj. General Fujimura Masuzo in March. Fujimura was not a politico-military officer as his predecessor was, and he appeared to get along better with civilians.⁷⁸

With the end of what might be called the Watanabe *gunsei* era and the reorganization, a new Administration took a more constructive but cautious step in support of the Islamic religion. One of the notable events in its religious program was the convening of a conference of representatives of Mohammedans of Malaya and Sumatra, held at Shonan on April 5-6. Ostensibly, the conference was made to appear to have been voluntarily organized by Mohammedans themselves, but it was planned

⁷⁷ Premier Tojo already made public in his State of the Union message in January, 1943, that Japan planned to give independence to the Philippines and Burma. The Army drafted *Principles for the Administration of Southern Occupied Areas*, promulgated in February. This new *Principles*, for instance, stressed the need to place able local inhabitants "in the right places for the satisfactory operation of the Administration" and "to enlist the aid of overseas Chinese" for reconstruction. The Chinese had been most ill-treated by the Administration. The new policy promised protection for their rights and interests. See *Syonan Sinbun*, February 3, 1943; *Ishii Nikki*, p. 131; Lt. Kato Akihiko, "Nampo gunsei wo genchi ni miru," *Nanyo* (February, 1943), vol. XXIX, no. 2, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁸ *Watanabe Nishi*, October 15, 1942; *Watanabe Memoirs*, pp. 70-80; Interview with Watanabe, July 9, 1966; Interview with Ogita Tamotsu, August 2, 1966. Watanabe criticized the sectionalism of the bureaucrats surrounding Otsuka Isei, a supreme advisor, and the bureaucrats resented the arrogance of the Watanabe-Takase faction. Watanabe's diary (January 21, 1943) shows his growing disgust with his job. Anticipating his transfer, he had sent home his hand-picked staff. Ogita was chief of the Finance Department of the Shonan City Municipality from 1942 to 1944.

and sponsored by the Planning and Education sections of the M.M.A.⁷⁹ The purpose of the meeting was to win the confidence of the people through Muslim leaders, to inject the Japanese view of the world into the people's minds, and to unite all religious groups, including Mohammedans, Christians, Buddhists and Hindus.⁸⁰ Delegates were received in a pompous ceremony and entertained lavishly by dignitaries of the Administration. Maj. General Isoya Goro, a new Director of the Administration, delivered an opening message to the Moslems, emphasizing Japan's respect for local religions, customs and cultural heritage and asking them to "share the burden of the war to its end and share difficulties of food shortage and daily necessities." To demonstrate Japan's interest in the desire of the Muslim faithful for making a pilgrimage to Mecca, Isoya indicated that the Japanese government was trying to communicate with the Holy Land so that Muslims in Asian countries could fulfill their religious duty.⁸¹ Marquis Tokugawa, chairman of the conference, assured delegates of the freedom of worship and laid stress upon their commitment to "live and die together" with Japan.⁸² After paying a tribute to native Muslims who had died for Japan, several Muslims were commended and awarded with citation and gifts for their meritorious conduct in cooperating with the Japanese. The conference closed with a declaration:

We strongly believe that Dai Toa Senso is a holy war for the freedom of our peoples who have been oppressed and exploited by the British, Americans, and Dutch, and for the establishment of a new Asia.

We, the Muslim people, hereby declare that we will unite with all our strength and power to serve Dai Nippon in fulfilling the aim of this holy war.⁸³

Following the conclusion of the meeting, each day a reception was given by Marquis Tokugawa and Odachi Shigeo, the mayor of Shonan. The conference appeared to be a resounding success in impressing natives with Japan's genuine interest in religion and with an easy access to Japanese dignitaries. The Conference evoked many favorable comments from participants and religious leaders of communities. One representative was reported to have said that he was greatly impressed by the fact that he was privileged to be able to attend the reception together with Japanese high officials, for natives were never invited to such a party under the colonial rule of the British and the Dutch.⁸⁴ Syed Ibrahim bin Omar

⁷⁹ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, pp. 24-25.

⁸⁰ The M.M.A. had treated various religions separately. The attempted unity of these religious groups appeared to have been patterned after the Japanese example at home.

⁸¹ *Syonan Sinbun*, April 6, 1943. *Marei Gunseikanbu*, *Senji geppo*, April, 1943. *Marei Gunseikanbu*, *Marei, Sumatora kakushi doko daihyosha Shonan kaido kankei shorui tsuzuri*, April 1-6, 1943. n.p. Mimeo. Hereafter *Marei, Sumatora doko kaido*.

⁸² *Marei Gunseikanbu*, *Marei, Sumatora doko kaido*.

⁸³ *Syonan Sinbun*, April 6, 1943.

⁸⁴ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, p. 25; Cf. Interview with Kubota, August 30, 1966.

Alsagoff, president of the All-Malaya Muslim Missionary Society of Shonan, said: "Muslims here are very grateful for the encouragement given to them by the Nippon Government in all matters relating to religion."⁸⁵ A number of meetings to report on the Conference were held throughout Malaya and Sumatra. In Medan, Sumatra, ten thousand persons were reported to have attended such local meetings, and Muslims in Shonan were preparing a mass thanksgiving demonstration on the Emperor's birthday.⁸⁶

The successful conference of April encouraged officials. Some of them were prepared to take a more positive stride in reaching the hearts of the people by giving native Muslims some voice in their politico-religious affairs, in conformity with *Fundamental Guiding Policy for Political Strategy in Greater Asia*, which was adopted by the Government of Japan on May 31 soon after Premier Tojo returned from his trip to the Philippines.⁸⁷ Sometime in the summer of 1943, the *Hikari Kikan*, the special agency working with the Japanese sponsored Indian National Army, requested the Headquarters of the SEF to draw up a plan to give a limited politico-religious power to Muslims, obviously intended to strengthen propaganda activities of the *Hikari Kikan* for the war of the liberation of India which was being planned. Marquis Tokugawa, who was responsible for persuading sultans to relinquish their authority to the military, drafted a plan, which envisioned the creation of a supreme Islamic religious council for Malaya. The council was an advisory body to help the M.M.A. maintain security, deal with human affairs of the Muslims, restore Moslem organizations that had been destroyed in the war, and formulate policy for the pilgrimage to Mecca.⁸⁸ The draft did not say explicitly that the Muslims would be granted some political power, but it was drawn with the idea that they would be given some degree of political freedom, because in the Islamic religion the exercise of religious authority could not be separated from secular power, and because Tokugawa had clearly calculated the political mileage such a religious council would produce for Japan among the Muslims when the Japanese-Indian armies were thrusting into the Burma-Indian territory. The proposal, however, was turned down for the time being without an explanation.⁸⁹ One can only speculate that the military might have been afraid of being

⁸⁵ *Syonan Sinbun*, April 9, 1943.

⁸⁶ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, p. 25.

⁸⁷ *Documents relating to the Assembly of the Greater East Asiatic Nations*, May–November, 1943, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan, 1868-1945. Reel 584; Sato Kenryo, *Daitoa Senso kaikoroku* (Tokyo: Tokuma Shoten, 1966), pp. 314,317; Tanemura Sako, *Dai Hon'ei kimitsu nisshi* (Tokyo: Daiamondosha, 1952), Entry May 31, 1943.

In this document, the Japanese government spelled out its intention to permit natives to participate in local councils. It was promulgated in October, 1943.

⁸⁸ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, p. 28; Tokugawa Yoshichika, *Kaikyo shukyo kaigi*. n.d. Stenciled.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

too partial to the Moslem-Malays and that a grant of political power, even if it was implicit, to the Muslims exclusively would open up a whole complex problem of the nationality question. The military had not been prepared to deal with the problem. The point is corroborated by the decisions that had been made by the Army authorities and the M.M.A. in June and July. Premier Tojo had already enunciated that Japan would permit natives to participate in local councils and directed on June 8 the chiefs of the general affairs department of military administration to prepare the ground. Subsequently, in July, General Fujimura told governors and mayors as well as chiefs of the general affairs department of states in Malaya to plan for the participation of natives in a consultative council.⁹⁰

As it was put into practice, the Japanese granted the political privilege to *all* racial and religious groups. It is plain that the military was obliged to modify its policy toward various racial groups in Malaya, particularly the Chinese and Indians, in view of the critical war situation. Since the summer of 1943, there had been a definite shift in the attitude of the military toward the Moslem-Malays in relation to the ethnic Chinese,⁹¹ because the military had realized that the Malayan economy would grind to a halt without the Chinese business cooperation. It seems that this change may have something to do with the decision of the military of not having granted a special, even though limited, political privilege to the Moslem-Malays alone. Only after the decision had been made that all racial and religious groups were allowed to participate in the forthcoming consultative conference, the M.M.A. authorized on September 14 the establishment of a religious committee which included Malays, Chinese, Indians and Eurasians representing various religious groups, but it was geographically limited to the Shonan district,⁹² an organization far from what Marquis Tokugawa conceived at first.

Not only was the military hesitating to take a decisive step in dealing with the Muslims because of its fear of opening the Pandora's box of native nationalism, but also it was over-zealous in imposing Japanese customs and morality. The military required natives to bow their heads to the

⁹⁰ Marei Gunseikanbu, *Marei kakushu (shi) chiho chokan kaigi no kaido shorui toji*, July 11, 1943, n.p. Marked "Secret". Mimeo; Marei Gunseikanbu, *Marei kakushu (shi) Somubuchō kaido kankei shorui toji*, July 20, 1943, n.p. Marked "Secret". Mimeo.

⁹¹ For instance, the M.M.A. lifted in April, 1943, the ban on the Chinese remittance to China which had been suspended since the beginning of the occupation. General Fujimura instructed governors and mayors to take more positive measures to promote Chinese activities at the Conference of Governors and Mayors in May, 1943. In July, at the Conference of Provincial Administrators, General Isoya repeated to them the essentially same theme Fujimura had told the governors, but Isoya stressed that he was conveying Premier Tojo's directive. See Marei Gunseikanbu, *Senji geppo*, April 19, 1943; *Marei kakushu (shi) chokan kaigi kankei shorui toji*, May, 1943; Marei Gunseikanbu *Marei kakushu (shi) chiho chokan kaigi shorui toji*, July 11, 1943.

⁹² Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, p. 29.

Japanese and to the direction of the East, where Japan was situated, to pay their homage to His Majesty and to pay a visit to the Shonan Shrine, a shinto shrine for the war dead, and they taught them the divinity of the Emperor and the *Hakkoichiu* (Universal Brotherhood). Moslem-Malays resented these imposed practices and indoctrination as they were incompatible with the monotheistic Moslem religion.⁹³ In other instances, the Japanese intervened in sultans' religious administrative affairs, despite their declared policy of non-interference. Professor Itagaki, who made a field study of sultans for the M.M.A., concluded that repeated Japanese enunciations for the respect of the sultans' religious position were "merely declarative" and hollow, and the Japanese policy flouted the principle of non-intervention.⁹⁴ Serious problems that were creating a chasm between the M.M.A. and sultans were, Itagaki observed, an insufficient attention given to the Islamic education and an interference in the religious prerogatives of sultans. In Pahang and Selangor, the sultans and Kadzis, as well as people in general, were reportedly dissatisfied with the Japanese because of their inadequate financial aid given to religious schools and their lack of interest in the curriculum. In both states, the Islamic education had been slighted and the Sultans were said to have been providing, out of their own pockets, money to run Arabic schools for the training of Islamic religious functionaries.⁹⁵ Another thorn in the flesh that irked the Sultan of Perak was that the M.M.A. forced him to relinquish his prerogatives of appointing kadis and assistant kadis to the Japanese governor. Only after several petitions did the governor restore the Sultan's former authority on February 28, 1944.⁹⁶ The Sultan of Perak, together with other sultans, also demanded the re-opening of the Chief Ulama Council, the central executive body for religion and customs, whose functions had been suspended by the military since the beginning of the occupation. Kawamura Naooka, the governor of Perak, finally agreed to remove the ban on the Council on April 4, 1944, thus setting a precedent for other sultanates.⁹⁷

⁹³ Cf. Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down*, pp. 148-165; 168-177; Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, p. 123.

⁹⁴ Itagaki, "Some Aspects of the Japanese Policy for Malaya under the Occupation," Itagaki Yoichi, "Sarutan seijiteki kengen," *Chosabuhō* no. 1 (May 1, 1944), n.p.

Many Japanese were so ignorant of the religious customs of the Islamic religion that *Shonan Hokokai*, a society formed by Japanese for the promotion of solidarity, issued pamphlets telling them "don'ts" of Moslem customs.

⁹⁵ Yamashita and Itagaki, *Chosabuhō* no. 1 (May 1, 1944), n.p. The religious education policy varied from one state to another. In Perak, Arabic schools had been operating and a course in the Koran had been taught since October 16, 1942, at government expense. Also the Sultan of Perak enjoyed his prerogative to issue the license to religious functionaries as he did in pre-war years. Security conscious Perak allowed Roman Catholics to hold a preaching service, even though other states prohibited this on the ground of security.

⁹⁶ Itagaki, *Chosabuhō*, no. 4, (June 20, 1944), n.p.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

From the preceding study, it is patent that the M.M.A.'s policy was vacillating and hesitating in giving political and religious power to sultans and Muslims. On the other hand, the Japanese were too eager to make the natives conform with the Japanese way and its religious and moral precepts and doctrine, and not infrequently they infringed upon the sultans' religious position making their own policy of non-interference a lip-service. It is also evident that there was no uniform policy; the policy differed from one state to the other. By all indications the sultan policy in Perak was more progressive, while that in other sultan states administered by military-governors appeared to be retrogressive.⁹⁸ The lack of a central policy led to contradictions between declarative statements and deed. This stemmed from the expediency and haphazardness with which the M.M.A. dealt with sultans and religion and from the absence of a clear-cut statement on the ultimate disposition of sultans. The central Army authorities laid out general principles for the M.M.A., which in turn authorized local governors to execute the policy within the framework of utilizing sultans for winning Islamic support. The result was a highly individualistic policy of reflecting the governor's own character and background. Military-governors tended to be unpopular among sultans. This uncoordinated policy gradually improved contributing to the emergence of a more rational policy for sultans and the Islamic religion. The turning point seems to be the establishment of consultative organs in states and cities, which was announced on October 2, 1943.⁹⁹ The Japanese appointed sultans as vice-chairmen of their respective state councils. However nominal their position in the council,¹⁰⁰ the Japanese formally gave the sultans a specific position adding prestige to the council. They were also prepared to accord honors in recognition of the sultans' dignity in order to induce them to work wholeheartedly with the Military Administration and to lead Moslem inhabitants in their states. In this new-look policy, Tokugawa became the spokesman for the sultans, and the M.M.A. relied increasingly on his advice. He and General Fujimura who became the Director of the M.M.A. in August, 1943, had been convinced that the Moslem-Malays could not be won without the sultans'

⁹⁸ Interview with Tokugawa, August 30, 1966. Friction between a sultan and a governor occurred more often in a state where the governor was a military officer.

⁹⁹ *Syonan Sinbun*, October 3, 1943.

¹⁰⁰ Itagaki Yoichi, "Malay Nationalism no tenkai," *Hitotsubashi Ronso* XXVII, no. 2 (February, 1952), p. 144.

The Consultative Council was a disappointment for the sultans and Malays. The council was not the restoration of the former State Council, a legislative body in which the sultan was the chairman and presided over the meeting. Also laws enacted by the State Council were promulgated in the name of the sultan. In the new councils, Chinese were given a larger proportion in representation in Shonan, Malacca, and Penang and, even in the sultanates, the ratio of representation was not particularly favorable for the Malays in comparison with the Chinese and Indians.

cooperation.¹⁰¹ Tokugawa was now in favor of preferential treatment of sultans by giving them "a membership status in the Japanese Imperial family," as were the Emperor of Manchukou and a former member of the Korean court, and by awarding them princely titles and medals, as were former *daimyos* of the Tokugawa period after the Meiji Restoration had been completed.¹⁰² Accordingly, the Japanese government conferred decorations upon the sultans in recognition of their past contributions to the M.M.A.¹⁰³

The M.M.A. meanwhile had accelerated the study of the Islamic religion and customs of the indigenous people by creating a study group on nationality to investigate their religions, customs, education, and administration. The military had been persuaded that native customs and manners detrimental to military administrative objectives could only be corrected through education, not through coercive measures and frontal attack. The change in the attitude of the military was evident in an instruction given in January, 1944, by the Headquarters of the SEF to directors of military administration. ". . . sultans and influential religious leaders," it said, "must be re-educated in such a manner as to change voluntarily their customs and religious precepts, and habits of the Moslem-Malays such as disinclination to savings, [which were incompatible with administrative objectives], must be rectified through the education of children."¹⁰⁴

The education meant a training in the Japanese language and in the Japanese spirit through language teaching, in military service, and in labor service. The M.M.A. directed to redouble efforts to strengthen Japanese language training and created the Volunteer's Army and Corps for the Malay youths as well as the Labor Service Corps for Islamic men and women in December, 1943.¹⁰⁵ The military assigned sultans a role to play

¹⁰¹ Interview with Tokugawa, August 30, 1966; Interview with Fujimura Masuzo, July 11, 1966.

¹⁰² Otani, *Dai 25 gun gunsei*, pp. 88-90; Interview with Tokugawa, August 30, 1966.

¹⁰³ Marei Gunseikanbu, *Senji geppo*, October, 1943.

¹⁰⁴ Nampogun Soshireibu, *Showa 19 nendo gunsei shisaku ni kansuru ken*, January, 1944. n.p. Marked "Top Secret." Mimeo; Watanabe Umeo, "Gunseika ni okeru shukyo, shukan no riyō," *Chosabuhō*, no. 4 (June 20, 1944), n.p.

¹⁰⁵ The Volunteers' Army was created at the suggestion of General Inada, Deputy Chief of Staff of the SEF, and at the encouragement of Premier Tojo. *Inada Nikki II*, p. 410; Imaoka Yutaka, *Nansei homon Rikugun sakusenshi*, pp. 147-148. (Unpublished). Col. Imaoka was a senior staff officer of the SEF from 1943 to 1945.

On December 12, 1943, Col. Okubo Koichi, chief of the Propaganda Department of the SEF, admonished the Malays for being lazy and exhorted them to lead an industrious life and to grow more foodstuffs. His speech laid the ground work for the formation of the Labor Service Corps. Later in January, 1944, the M.M.A. announced the recruitment of women into the labor force. One writer said that this policy of recruiting Moslem women into the labor force from the secluded life customary for them contributed in part to the breakdown of the Moslem feudal custom of secluding the women. Lee Tin Hui, "Singapore Under the Japanese 1942-1945," *Journal of the South Seas Society XVII* (April, 1961),

in these tasks. In a meeting with General Doihara Kenji, Commander-in-Chief of the Seventh Area Army, on April 15, 1944, Doihara asked the sultans "to devote their efforts to waging this war till victory." In reply, the Sultan of Perak representing his colleagues read resolutions. "The sultans, each as the leader of his respective province," he declared, would "henceforth strive doubly hard for the realization of a completely self-sufficient Malai." "The sultans having been fully cognizant that the true objective of Nippon in the War of Greater East Asia lies in the establishment of an Asia for Asiatics," he continued, "have agreed also among themselves to do their utmost in leading inhabitants in their respective provinces to cooperate and collaborate fully with Nippon in the war until final victory is achieved." They agreed further that "youth be spiritually and morally trained and be imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion to duty for the good of the entire community as a whole."¹⁰⁶ The military had succeeded in inducing the sultans to subscribe to the Japanese way and to throw their support behind the "war of emancipation of all Asia" and "the establishment of the New Order in Great East Asia."

In this context we can better appreciate why the M.M.A. had offered to sultans beginning in 1944, an increment in allowances and pensions equal to the pre-war level, commensurate with their positions and contributions. The Administration not only rewarded the sultans with the largesse but also it authorized in the summer of 1944 the establishment of a religious administrative organization to enhance their religious position. The new Religious Council was created to correct shortcomings of the Religious Committee for the Shonan district formed in September, 1943.¹⁰⁷ Beginning in August, religious councils were created in Perak (August 12), Johore (September 21), Negri Sembilan (September 23), Selangor (September 24), Pahang (October 7); and Shonan, Penang, and Malacca all in October.¹⁰⁸ As a result, the organization of Mohammedan law, Mohammedan religious courts, religious education and religious charity were considered improved, and the sultans regained some religious and political authority.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, the Administration started the re-training of Islamic religious functionaries at a Japanese training school, patterned after the re-educational program of the Islamic *kiats* which had been underway in Java.¹¹⁰

Part I, pp. 68-69. Hereafter JSSS. Cf. *Syonan Times*, October 31, 1942. The Governor of Kedah, Sukegawa Seiji, urged as early as in October, 1942, that the Moslem women be emancipated.

¹⁰⁶ *Syonan-Sinbun*, December 9, 1943.

¹⁰⁷ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, pp. 8, 34. For the Religious Council, see footnote 82.

¹⁰⁸ Itagaki, *Hitotsubashi Ronso*, pp. 144-145; Itagaki, *Some Aspects of the Japanese Policy for Malaya Under the Occupation*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Watanabe and Nagaya, *Shukyo shukan seisaku*, pp. 8, 35; Waseda Okuma kenkyujo, *Indoneshiya ni okeru Nippon no gunsei*, pp. 234-235.

The innovation in the policy culminated in the convening of a three-day Malay Conference of Religious Councils at Kuala Kangsar on December 13, presided over by the Sultan of Perak. High priests and representatives from Perak, Johore, Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan, Shonan, Malacca, and Penang attended the meeting and discussed Moslem customs, administration, and religious courts. The conference was fruitful and the representatives freely debated and reached decisions without interference from the M.M.A. It was also a "singularly significant event" for the Religious Councils, because no similar meeting was ever held under British rule.¹¹¹ Summing up the importance of the gathering, Professor Itagaki said that with the convocation of the conference, "... the minimum step was taken by the Japanese Military Administration to appease sultans, who had been deprived of all political rights as rulers since the suspension of the State Councils . . ." ¹¹² For the rest of the war years, the Administration's policy for sultans and religion remained substantially unchanged, while it gave more attention to the Malay youth nationalist movement of Ibrahim bin Jaacob, reviving it into the KRIS (Kesatuan Ra'ayat Indonesia Semenanjung)¹¹³ Movement.

In the earlier stages of the occupation, Japan had every intention of retaining Malaya as part of the Empire. Therefore, the M.M.A. deprived sultans of their political authority and banned the activity of the nationalist Malay Youth Movement. The deteriorating war situation compelled the military to modify the original plans for Malaya. The worsening war condition and the reversion of the northern four provinces to Thailand in August, 1943, created an acute food shortage and manpower problem disenchanting the indigenous people with the Japanese. Winning the minds of the Moslem-Malays through sultans and religion became essential for the military. The sultans must be satisfied not only with the assurance of the minimum level of livelihood, but also with a grant of politico-religious authority. Islam is a religion in which the realms of religion and politics make little distinction; politics and religion are one and inseparable. The military therefore had to be cautious in the treatment of sultans and religion, treading on the thin ice of a potentially dangerous question that might confront the military with Malay nationalism.

¹¹¹ Itagaki, *Hitotsubashi Ronso*, p. 145; Syonan Sinbun, December 27, 1944; Fujimura Masuzo, *Marei gunsei gaiyo*, n.p. This was prepared by the Historical Research Section of the First Repatriation Ministry (formerly War Ministry) in 1946 on the basis of Fujimura's recollection.

¹¹² Itagaki, *Some Aspects of the Japanese Policy for Malaya Under the Japanese*.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* The KRIS Movement was a political organization preparatory to the independence of the Malays and for the unification of Malaya and Indonesia. Interview with Itagaki Yoichi, June 26, 1966; Interview with Kushida, August 8, 1966. Kushida said that the military was prepared to give the Malays independence at an indefinite future date.

To compound the difficulty, Malaya is a multi-racial and a multi-religious society. In the early stages of the occupation, the M.M.A. seemed to regard "the Malays as the rightful owners of Malaya"¹¹⁴ and the Chinese and Indians as subordinate races.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, the M.M.A. was obliged to re-evaluate its policy toward the Chinese and Indians for economic and political considerations. The preferential treatment of the Malays and Islam must be carefully weighted against the adverse reactions from Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists it could possibly generate. The Administration therefore ought to "avoid an undisguised partiality to any one of the races and religions,"¹¹⁶ the Headquarters of the SEF warned in 1944, lest it would create communalism. In dealing with sultans and the Moslem-Malays, the Japanese faced another problem. Many Moslem-Malays harbored latent ill-feelings against sultans, according to reports of the Japanese military police.¹¹⁷ On the basis of intelligence information from the military police and his conversations with young and old indigenous people, Col. Otani maintained that they were unhappy with the favoritism given to sultans by the M.M.A., complaining that "the military was not after all our friend."¹¹⁸

The dilemma that the Administration faced was its own making, largely the consequence of ill-preparedness and expediency and of the unforeseen development of the war which forced the military to improvise the policy to appease the people and the sultans. The seeming conciliatory policy toward them and their religion in the later stages of the occupation did not appear to have emanated from Japanese sympathy for them but from the bankruptcy of the policy.¹¹⁹ More fundamentally, the failure of the military in reaching a consensus on the ultimate disposition of Malaya was the root of all ills. The higher military authorities could not agree upon the principal question of whether Malaya be given independence and the M.M.A. was unable to formulate a suitable policy for the sultanate, the indigenous Malays, and the Islamic religion. The result was the pursuit of a policy without direction with the consequence that the M.M.A., though it took more positive steps in the last phase of the war, was never able to formulate an imaginative plan beyond

¹¹⁴ Lee, JSSS, XVII, p. 59; Cf. Japan, Sambo Honbu, Dai 14-ka, *Daitoa minzoku shido yoko (an)*, August 6, 1942, n.p.; [Tomi Shudan Gunseikanbu] Somubu Somuka, *Minzoku taisaku sanko shiryō oyobi setsumei*, November 28, 1942, n.p.

¹¹⁵ Japan, Sambo Honbu, Dai 14-ka, *Daitoa minzokushido yoko (an)*, August 6, 1942; Somubu Somuka, *Minzoku taisaku sanko shiryō oyobi setsumei*, November 28, 1942.

¹¹⁶ Nampogun Soshireibu, *Showa 19 nendo gunsei shisaku ni kansuru ken*, January, 1944, n.p.

¹¹⁷ Otani, *Dai 25 gun gunsei*, pp. 91-92. Cf. Frank H. H. King, *The New Malayan Nation A Study of Communalism and Nationalism* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1951), p. 10. Mimeo.

¹¹⁸ Otani, *Dai 25 gun gunsei*, p. 92.

¹¹⁹ Cf. M. A. Aziz, *Japan's Colonialism and Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), pp. 206-207.

the framework of "using sultans and religion" for winning the minds of the Malays. It may be an exaggeration to say that the M.M.A. "did nothing for the sultans and the Islamic religion,"¹²⁰ as Marquis Tokugawa reminisces; its record "can not be complimented as being a success,"¹²¹ as Col. Otani concludes. Very few people disagree with Otani's conclusion.

¹²⁰ Interview with Tokugawa, August 30, 1966.

¹²¹ Otani, *Dai 25 gun gunsei*, p. 130.

THE REVOLT OF A PETA-BATTALION IN BLITAR
FEBRUARY 14, 1945

NUGROHO NOTOSUSANTO

Very little has been written about the revolt in Blitar of a battalion of the *Tentara Sukarela Pembela Tanah Air* (Volunteer Army for the Defence of the Fatherland, abbreviated PETA) against the Japanese occupation forces. Reference to it has indeed been made in several publications on the Japanese occupation in Indonesia. But I only know of two people who have written specifically about the revolt, namely Soehoed Prawiroatmodjo in his *Perlawanan Bersendjata terhadap Fasisme Djepang* (Djakarta, 1953) and Soejono Rahardjo in his short article "Kisah Singkat Pemberontakan Peta Blitar", *Madjalah PHB*, Tahun IV, No. 2/3 (Pebruari/Maret, 1959), 46-57.

Documentary sources are also extremely scarce; not much, if any, can be found in newspapers and periodicals of that period. Witness also the material included in Prof. Dr. I. J. Brugmans *et al.*, *Nederlandsch-Indie" onder Japanse Bezetting: Gegevens on Documenten over de Jaren 1942-1945* (Franeker, 1960). That fact should cause no surprise because the Japanese authorities must have considered the revolt a highly embarrassing incident.

Lacking the relevant written sources, this survey had to be based mainly on interviews with the surviving participants of the Blitar revolt. Consequently I conducted several interviews in Djakarta, Jogjakarta, Surabaya, Malang, Kediri, and in Blitar itself. While in Blitar, I have tried to trace the route which the rebels had followed when they left the city. That proved to be not too easy: a volcanic eruption of Mount Kelud in 1951 had changed several topographical features of the terrain.

After having finished the survey, I reached the conclusion that Soehoed Prawiroatmodjo's book is not wholly based on fact. It so happened that he was one of the chudanchos in Blitar, and he did not take part in the rebellion. As long as he was describing the establishment and development of the *daidan*, he was fairly accurate. In fact, chapter I-V of his book makes a valuable case study of the life in a PETA-Battalion. But when he tried to describe the revolt itself, he transgressed the borderline between history and fiction, romanticising the revolt.

Soejono Rahardjo, having participated in the rebellion, gave a more balanced picture of the event up till the dispersion of the troops outside

the city. Thereafter, he only knew the experiences of his own column, until they were arrested and sent to Djakarta to face court-martial.

In the following pages, I have tried to draw the full picture of the revolt, albeit within a small frame. However, it is evident that several parts of the canvas are still empty and waiting for the missing facts to emerge to be filled in.*

THE FORMATION OF THE PETA-ARMY AND THE BLITAR-DAIDAN

On October 3, 1943, the Commander of the Japanese 16th Army occupying Java and Madura issued Osamu Seirei (War Administration Ordinance) no. 44 calling for the formation of Tentara Sukarela Pembela Tanah Air (Volunteer Army for the Defense of the Fatherland) in Java, also called the Djawa *Bo-ei Giyugun*. The army came to be known afterwards by its abbreviation: the PETA-Army.

By the end of 1943 and early 1944, a start was made with the formation of *daidans* (battalions) throughout Java, Madura, and followed later in Bali. In principle, each *kabupaten* (administrative area) had one *daidan*, so that a residency comprising several *kabupatens* might possess 2 to 5 *daidans*. In order not to endanger the position of the Japanese, the *daidans* were not organised within a hierarchical structure, but were independent from each other. Every *daidan* was put directly under the orders of the local Japanese Army Defense Command. Contacts between the respective *daidans*, even though they might be situated in the same residency, were systematically prevented.

The formation of the *daidans* was carried out around a small core of Indonesian officers who received their training with the Officers' Training Corps at Bogor. These officers were then subsequently assigned to every residency.¹

On December 8, 1943, an installation-ceremony of *PETA*-officers was held for the first time at Ikada-park in Djakarta. In the same month the new officers were sent to their respective residencies.

The officers assigned to Kediri residency became the core of two *daidans*, i.e. the 1st *daidan* at Kediri and the 2nd *daidan* in Blitar. (One more *daidan* was established later at Tulungagung). The 2nd *daidan* of Blitar was quartered at the former Mosvia (Intermediate School for Indonesian Government officials) building at the borough of Bendogerit, near the eastern city-limits.

* This article is a somewhat abbreviated version of my full report of the survey to be published with the title *Pemberontakan Tentara Peta Blitar menentang Djepang*.

¹ See Nugroho Notosusanto, "Instansi jang melaksanakan pembentukan Tentara Peta", *Madjalah Ilmu 2 Sastra Indonesia*, II, No. 2 (Djuni 1964), 285-290.

THE SEEDS OF REVOLT AGAINST THE JAPANESE

During the first quarter of 1944, members of the Blitar *daidan* received their basic military training. In this manner they were to be isolated systematically from the society around them. They underwent a very rigorous training from early morning till night, so that every minute of free time was used for rest. During this period no leave was granted to visit their homes.

It was only during war-manoeuvres by *shodan* outside the city, that they saw how the people in the villages began to look poorer and poorer. However, the soldiers were given no time to think about the matter because no opportunity was given to stop for a while.

Basic military training was finished by the second quarter of 1944, and the soldiers were given more time for themselves. They were given time to go on visits and their families were permitted to visit them during holidays. In this way the *PETA*-soldiers began to hear firsthand what was happening in the outside world.²

They heard, for example, how farmers were compelled to sell rice to the *kumiai* (rice-purchasing organisation) above and beyond the fixed quotas (which is about one-fifth of the total harvest). As a result, the farmers did not have enough rice to feed themselves and to use as seedlings for the next planting. On orders of the Japanese, eggs were purchased in great quantities at cut-rate prices; ostensibly for the *PETA*, but in reality the *PETA*-soldiers never ate eggs. Often, all they ate was plain *grontol* (boiled corn) without any other side-dishes. They also heard about the collection of scrap-iron from fences and iron poles which were uprooted willy-nilly; and the amassing of gold and jewelry. They heard about young female relatives being sent to Tokyo, ostensibly for study, but usually they ended up in Surabaia for the "recreation" of the Japanese.

Meanwhile, the *PETA*-soliders themselves felt how low their status was compared to the Japanese soldiers. Even officers of the *PETA* had to salute the Japanese soldiers first! They also had to swallow the often humiliating way the *shidokan* (supervising officer) treated them.

It was during this period that two *chudans* (companies) were assigned for duty outside the city, in order to learn how to conduct territorial defense and wage a guerilla war. As local boys, they associated closely with the villagers and saw with their own eyes the heavy burden they had to bear. They discovered that many people in the villages only ate one meal a day, and even that was not in sufficient quantities to still

² Soehoed Prawiroatmodjo, *Perlawanan Bersendiata terhadap Fasisme Djepang* (1953), pp. 123-131; Soejono Rahardjo, "Kisah singkat Pemberontakan Peta Blitar", *Madjalah PHB*, Tahun IV, No. 2/3 (Pebr./Maret 1959), pp. 47-48.

their hunger. Usually, their meal consisted of boiled yams and cassava, because the rice they produced on their fields with hard labour was taken by the *kumial*.

Sometimes, the soldiers wanted to visit families whose houses were rather isolated; usually it turned out that the head of the family, in violation of Indonesian hospitality, was reluctant to receive them. What was more, he was even reluctant to show himself. The reason was that they could only afford to cover their bodies with a piece of *bagor* (matting, woven of coarse palm-leaves). At home, they went around practically naked so that their skins would not be further irritated by the filthy *bagor*.

In the third quarter of 1944, the *daidan* of Blitar was ordered to build fortifications on the southern coast. The hard labour was carried out by *romushas* (coolies). The *romushas* were extolled by the Japanese propaganda machine as "heroes of labour"; in practice, they were treated as mere slaves.

Working together with the *romushas* proved to be a traumatic experience to the *PETA*-soldiers. Very early in the morning, these people who resembled walking skeletons were assembled to dig bunkers in the stony coral soil. They had to cut down and transport the wood, carry stones and sand, for hours at a stretch without any rest. Because of their weakened condition, they almost did not have enough strength to walk, so that they staggered on their feet like drunkards. To rest for a moment meant running the risk of getting abuse and blows. It was only at noon that they had a chance to stand in lines to get food in their woven bamboo-containers; those who did not have bamboo containers had to use the leaves from the teak trees. They stood in line like beggars, and not as people who had the right to receive food after doing hard, unpaid labour. They had to struggle for drinking-water at wells and springs, if there were any available. If not, they had to use unboiled river-water. Often, there would be no food-distribution at night.

They slept everywhere they could. No camp was set up, so that the majority slept under the open sky and would be cold and wet if it rained. Aside from all this, waves of mosquitoes would attack them. As a result, within a short time malaria spread on a large scale. No latrines were built, so that if they were far from a river, they would relieve themselves everywhere. It was not surprising that within a short time dysentery was rampant. Within a few weeks, half of the *romushas* were stretched out everywhere groaning and raving in delirium as a result of these two diseases. In this condition, even curses and blows would not force them to get up again. After a few days, a great many of them closed their eyes forever. On top of their regular work-load, the greatly diminished labour-force had to dig holes to bury their friends.

The number of *romushas* declined enormously as a result of illness and death. The shortage was quickly filled by new *romushas* who were forcibly recruited from the villages in the *kabupaten* of Blitar. Many of them were forced to go, even though they had a family and were its sole provider. They were herded like cattle through kilometers of distance without any provisions. The soldiers of the *PETA* would see these new shipments of *romushas* arrive and as quickly decimated by death.

The *PETA*-soldiers themselves were not immune to the attacks of malaria and dysentery, and half of them had to be sent back to the *daidan* because they were no longer able to work. But they felt themselves fortunate because they were given medicine, however minimal. They still had a roof above their heads, even though it was woven of *alang-alang* (a variety of grass). But the *romushas* were completely at the mercy of the elements, disease and their tormentors. Anger and bitterness grew among the *PETA*-soldiers, watching the *romushas* die like flies around them of malaria, dysentery, beri-beri, the lack of protection against the elements, and maltreatment. Everyday quarrels arose between the *PETA*-members and the Japanese overseers of the *romushas*: often it would end up in fights. But each time they had to give in and restrain themselves, because of the ominous threat of a court-martial by the Imperial Japanese Army.³

THE REVOLT

Meanwhile, because they were being defeated on all fronts, the Japanese were forced to win over the hearts of the Indonesian people through the promises of independence "in the future". By September 1944, news of the promise seeped down to the *PETA daidan* at Blitar. In the oppressive atmosphere in which the absolute power held by foreigners weighted down their daily lives, the members of the *PETA* began to feed their minds on intoxicating dreams of independence. It was not the independence that had been promised by the Japanese but the independence that the Indonesian leaders of the Nationalist Movement had struggled for since the beginning of the century. What they visualized in their dreams as Independence, was freedom for the people from their sufferings, freedom for the *romushas* from their misery, freedom from the humiliation of rule by foreigners. Freedom meant the advent of self-respect and national pride.

When the members of the Blitar *daidan* returned to the city, it was as though they had been transformed. They had seen and participated in life at its most wretched level of suffering. In their minds they harboured shining dreams of a future that was free of misery and suffering. A resolu-

³ I have obtained this background story as a cumulative result of all the interviews conducted during the survey.

tion began to take root in their hearts. They resolved that all the humiliations should be ended, and that they should take part in the efforts to end them. They also began to connect these efforts to throw off the yoke of the alien oppressor with dreams of national independence. Independence meant self-respect as a people; it meant equal status with any foreign nation, be it the Japanese or the Dutch.

In the final quarter of 1944, the Blitar *daidan* was ordered to build fortifications again, this time in the Ngantang valley between the Kelud, Kawi and Andjasmoro mountains. Once again they had to undergo all the misery and suffering, watching *romushas* arrive and die. By the end of 1944, the male population of the surrounding villages were so decimated that finally female *romushas* were taken! With their lesser physical strength more casualties fell each day aside from the deaths among the children left behind by their mothers and deposited with neighbours, who were suffering from hunger themselves. Small wonder that the anger and bitterness among the members of the Blitar *daidan* reached its climax.

In this mental climate, rumors began to be heard stronger and stronger that the *PETA*-army was planning to rise up against the Japanese and seize freedom by force of arms! "Be prepared", was the signal that was whispered from *chudan* to *chudan*, from *shodan* to *shodan*, and from *bundan* to *bundan*.⁴

In principle, it is rather difficult to trace how the idea of revolt first began. Those who took part in the revolt consider Suprijadi as the man who sparked the revolt. During the planning-stage his closest helpers were Muradi *Shodancho*, Halir Mangkudidjaja *Bundancho* and Sunanto *Bundancho*. There are also those who consider Dr. Ismangil Chudantjo as the adviser of the leaders of the revolt. It seems that Dr. Ismangil lacked the qualities of leadership, so that the initiative was taken over by the two *shodanchos*, Suprijadi and Muradi who were then not yet 22 years old.

The two *shodanchos* began to approach a few friends whom they considered trustworthy. By the middle of September 1944, the first secret meeting was held in the bedroom of Halir *Bundancho*. The meeting was attended by six *shodanchos* and six *bundanchos*.⁵ The meeting was followed by a few other clandestine meetings, which successively planned the execution of the rebellion.

The sixth and the last meeting took place in the evening of February 13, 1945. At this meeting it was settled that the rebelling troops would

⁴ Interview with Major Soahadhi (Malang, April 29, 1964), with Mrs. Moerjono, Moeradi's mother (Malang, April 30, 1964), with Mrs. Moerman Slamet, Moeradi's sister-in-law (*idem*), with Soetjipto, Suparjono's brother (Talun, May 3-4-1964, and with Colonel (ret.) Soarachmad (Kediri, May 5, 1964).

⁵ Soejono Rahardjo, *op. cit.*

leave town in four columns: one to the North, one to the West, one to the South and one to the East. Apparently they had planned to make the teak forests at the foot of the Kelud mountain as their strongholds.

The rebellion broke out with mortars fired in the direction of Sakura Hotel, where the Japanese officers in Blitar were staying. The mortar explosions were immediately followed by machine-gun cross-fire aimed at the *shidokan* houses and *kempeitai* headquarters which were located next to the *daidan* barracks. The Japanese must have known about the planned rebellion, for the two buildings were empty and abandoned.

At the last meeting Muradi emphasized the necessity of killing all Japanese they could find, for they could expect to face an unyielding resistance from their side. The less Japanese left would be the better. Muradi had no illusion about their fate, should their rebellion fail. He knew the Japanese occupation troops all too well.⁶

After the first shots, the columns started to leave the *daidan* to leave town. The group which went to the North was led by the late Sunardjo *Shodancho*, the group to the east by Sunanto *Bundancho*, while both groups were coordinated by Suprijadi himself. The group which went westward was under the command of three "field" — *shodanchos*, namely Muradi, Suparjono and S. Djono. The group moving to the south actually consisted of two subgroups: the larger sub-group was under the command of Dasrip *shodancho*, while the other sub-group was under Tarmudji *Bundancho*.

In suppressing the rebellion the Japanese used the classic way of colonial powers handling such matters: they employed native troops to confront their compatriots. Two groups of Indonesians were engaged by the Japanese to subdue the rebellion: the leaders of the Blitar *Daidan* themselves and *PETA* as well as *Heiho* troops from out of town. In approaching the rebels the Japanese used the *iron fist in a velvet glove* stratagem. They tried to win the rebels over with promises, although at the same time they surrounded the area with troops supported by armoured and artillery units. In fact the stratagem was the only way open for the Japanese to subdue the rebellion without risking an organised and general revolt in the whole of Java. For at that time a large part of the 16th Army which occupied Java and Madura had already been transported to the front and the vacancies were filled by *Heiho* troops, which consisted of Indonesians, who certainly could not be trusted to confront their own people. The *PETA* auxiliary troops could be trusted even less, especially because they were under the command of their Indonesian officers.

⁶ The following have been checked at the simultaneous interview in Blitar, May 2, 1964.

The Japanese were also successful in isolating the rebellion because they were clever enough not to integrate the *daidans* into units of a higher order under Indonesian commanders, even if they belonged to the same residency. Thus, other *daidans* did not hear about the rebellion until much later. However, if there should be an armed clash between the rebels and the Japanese, the news of the incident would spread all over the country. Therefore the Japanese tried to appease the rebels into submission without putting up a resistance. But the peaceful moves were backed by armed units consisting of mobile troops from two Japanese regiments and from the *PETA* troops from other *daidans* in the residency. The Japanese led them to believe that Allied troops had landed around Blitar.

THE TERMINATION OF THE REBELLION

Before starting out, the rebels were instructed by their leaders not to kill Indonesians but to kill Japanese, because otherwise all those Japanese would be turned loose on them. According to plan, the rebels' force was split into four groups: one heading to the north, one to the east, one to the south and the last one to the northwest.

It was evident that at that time the conditions were not yet ripe for such a move; as a consequence each of the four groups failed to build their guerilla bases to consolidate themselves. One by one, they were persuaded to end their march and return to Blitar.

The group which headed to the north, after spending the night in a village near the Penataran temple, found itself surrounded by *PETA* and Indonesian police troops under the command of a Japanese military man. The rebels were hesitant to put up a struggle, because they were facing their own people. Sunardjo *Shodancho* finally decided to break out of encirclement by changing into civilian clothes. Most of his men were captured on the same day while the rest were caught later.⁷

The group which moved eastwards met with the most tragic fate. First of all they were already captured on the first day. Secondly, because of the fact that they were first to be caught, they had to suffer most of the unspent wrath of the Japanese. Thirdly, most of the heavy sentences, in actual number as well as in percentage, were meted out to members of this group.

At one time *PETA* troops from another *daidan* caught up with them escorting their own commanders from Blitar. The Japanese had given the commanders a guarantee that if the rebels surrendered without a

⁷ Interview with Sergeant Muljoprajitno (Nglegok, May 3, 1964), and with Sergeant (ret) Tukirin (Blitar, May 5, 1964).

fight, they would not be court-martialed. However, if they put up a resistance, they would be annihilated.

So, when the rebels were confronted with *PETA* troops, they were wavering between the two alternatives of taking any action or not, because their would-be captors were of their own people. Moreover, their own commanders stepped forward, asking them kindly and in a fatherly way to cease the rebellion and return to Blitar. They surrendered and handed over their arms. They were then transported back to Blitar where they were immediately put under arrest.⁸

On the second day of the rebellion the group which moved southward met the *PETA* troops from the Kediri *daidan*, which was under the command of a Japanese *shidokan*. Seeing the Japanese leader of the troops, the rebels started to fire at him. After a brief exchange, the rebel group withdrew and the Kediri troops went hurriedly on their way to Blitar.

The southern group was also persuaded to return to Blitar after being visited by the *Daidancho* himself. They were also immediately arrested on their return.⁹

Compared to that of the other groups, the experience of the group which went to the northwest was rather dramatic. They not only covered the longest distance but also killed more Japanese, and were the last to end the rebellion. Moreover, they first had negotiations with the Japanese. But as all the other rebel groups, they were also subtly persuaded to return to Blitar.

Before they left Blitar, this group had killed two or three Japanese. The Japanese at first sent a *chudancho* to fetch them back. However, the group pressed the *chudancho* to join them at their positions in the teak forest at the slopes of the Kelud mountain. More men, Indonesians as well as Japanese who had good connections with the Indonesians, were sent to persuade the group to return to Blitar. But, all of them failed to persuade these rebels to give up. Finally, Colonel Katagiri, the commander of one of the regiments which besieged the rebels, asked them to negotiate, and Muradi consented. The negotiations took place in a house which was located between the stronghold of the rebels and the defence perimeter of the besieging troops.

The outcome of the negotiations was that Muradi and his group were willing to return to Blitar under certain conditions, namely:

⁸ Interview with First Lieutenant Sukardi (Blitar, May 2, 1964) and with First Junior Lieutenant (Undan Awu, May 4, 1964).

⁹ Interview with Mr. Tarmudji (Blitar, May 2, 1964), with First Junior Lieutenant Imam Bakri (Sanan Kulon, May 4, 1964), and with Mr. Hardjo Muslan (May 4, 1964).

1. that the rebels would not be disarmed and could travel back on their own without being escorted by the pursuers;
2. that the rebels would not be court-martialed on their return to Blitar.
3. that the Japanese take corrective measures against their soldiers who mishandled the Indonesian people;
4. that *PETA* officers and men be considered equal to their counterparts in the Japanese Army.

In a gesture of chivalry Colonel Katagiri pulled off his sword and handed it over to Muradi as a token that he would fulfill his commitments.

Muradi explained the terms to his men in the following fashion:

1. After holding on in the forest for several days and nights, it turned out that no other *daidan* had joined them in the rebellion;
2. If they continued their resistance they would be forced to fight and kill their own people as the Japanese were able to deceive and use other Indonesian troops to subdue the rebels;
3. They were surrounded in a forest which was uninhabited and did not have anything edible to offer. In the beginning people from nearby villages supplied them with food. However, this source could easily be cut off by the enemy, which they had already started to do.
4. As an armed demonstration, the rebellion had already shown its point to the Japanese.

So the troops under Muradi returned to Blitar fully armed. Before leaving their positions, Muradi gave his men a chance to detach themselves from the group if they so wish. Some did, but were all captured in the following days.¹⁰

Besides the group which went out of Blitar, there were others who left the *daidan* but remained in town. Most of them were members of Sujatmo *chudancho's* company. As other *chudanchos*, Sujatmo was not asked to join the rebellion. He did want to join, but did not wish to act under the command of *shodanchos*. But the rebellion coming as a surprise to him, he was unable to immediately define his attitude. He finally decided to disperse his men all over town, while his staff and he himself went "underground" trying to contact the leaders of the rebellion.¹¹

¹⁰ Interview with Captain (ret.) Soemadi Soerjono (Surabaya, April 28, 1964), with Mr. Amin (Malang, April 30, 1964), and with First Lieutenant P. Machfud, First Junior Lieutenants Moedjali, Soemeki, Sergeant Major Marni, and Mr. Moeliono (Blitar, May 2, 1964) and with Major S. Djono (Jakarta, June 3, 1964).

¹¹ Interview with Colonel Sujatmo (Jakarta, June 3, 1964).

Before Muradi and his men came down from the slopes of the Kelud, the other groups which had surrendered earlier were already in Blitar, jailed by the Kempeitai and the Japanese Police. They were interrogated about the motives of the rebels, their actual deeds so far, and who were the ringleaders of the rebellion.

These men were interrogated in several sessions, probably depending on the amount of information which could be obtained from each rebel. One of the men who according to many ex-rebels suffered most from the torture during the interrogations, was Sudarmo Bundancho, who was later sentenced to death because he had shot and killed a Japanese. His friends presumed that even without a death sentence, he would have died soon in any case, because he seemed to have been injured internally. There were several men who died in prison because of their physical conditions.

Three weeks later, most of the rebels were transported to Djakarta. After arriving there, they were then brought to the building of the *Gumpokai* (the military court).

In total, 55 men were brought before the military court, namely:

Two *chudanchos*
 Eight *shodanchos*
 Thirty-five *bundancho*s
 Twelve *giyubeis*

The sentences were:

death sentence	:	6 men
life sentence	:	3 men
15 years imprisonment	:	6 men
10 years	"	6 men
7 years	"	17 men
4 years	"	7 men
3 years	"	3 men
2 years	"	7 men

It should be added that one of their most prominent leaders, Suprijadi, was missing. It had been assumed that he was captured and had died during interrogations. Because of the critical situation for the Japanese, his death was kept secret in order to avoid mass upheaval.

The men who were sentenced to death were:

1. Dr. Ismangil, *Chudancho*
2. Muradi, *Shodancho*
3. Suparjono, *Shodancho*

4. Sunanto, *Bundancho*
5. Halir Mangkudidjaja, *Bundancho*
6. Sudarmo, *Bundancho*

I have not been able as yet to find any information about the place of their execution and burial. The key to it might be found in Japan.

LIST OF PERSONNEL BLITAR DAIDAN

COMMANDER

Surachmad, Daidancho

A D C

1. Sukandar, Shodancho
2. Muradi, Shodancho

STAFF

Medical	:	Ismangil MD, Chudancho
Training	:	Sukandar, Chudancho
Pioneers	:	Sukeni, Chudancho
Ordnance	:	Suhadhi, Shodancho
Quartermaster	:	Sumardhi, Shodancho
Stores	:	Partohardjono, Shodancho
Colours	:	— 1. Wahono, Shodancho
	:	— 2. Dasrip, Shodancho
Staff Shodancho	:	Muljadi, Shodancho

1st COMPANY

Commander	:	Suhud Prawiroatmodjo, Chudancho
1st Platoon Cdr	:	Kusdi, Shodancho
2nd " "	:	Muljohardjono, Shodancho
3rd " "	:	S. Djono, Shodancho

2nd COMPANY

Commander	:	Hasannawawi, Chudancho
1st Platoon Cdr	:	Suparjono, Shodancho
2nd " "	:	Sunjoto, Shodancho
3rd " "	:	Mundjijat, Shodancho

3rd COMPANY

Commander	:	Tjiptoharsono, Chudancho
1st Platoon Cdr	:	Suprijadi, Shodancho
2nd " "	:	1. Muradi, Shodancho
	:	2. Sunardjo, Shodancho
3rd " "	:	1. Sukeni, Shodancho
	:	2. Wahono, Shodancho

4th COMPANY

Commander	:	Supatmo, Chudancho
1st Platoon Cdr	:	Suwarma, Shodancho
2nd " "	:	Sukijat, Shodancho
3rd " "	:	Achijat, Shodancho

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

- Mr. Abikusno Tjokrosujoso*, member, advisory council to the Military Court.
- Mr. Moh. Amin Ardjomuljono*, 4th Bundancho/1st Shodan/2nd chudan.
- Cholil, Kaia Hadji Moh*, owner of the house used by Sunardjo's column to rest.
- Mr. Darmadi*, Surpijadi's father.
- Mr. Darminto*, son of Purwosudarmo whose house was used for negotiations between Muradi and Japanese Colonel Katagiri.
- Major S. Djono*, 3rd Shodancho/1st chudan.
- Mrs. Entik*, owner of teahouse in Bentjé, in front of which Sudarmo shot a Japanese.
- Mr. Hardjo Muslan*, driver of Kediri daidan.
- First Junior Lieutenant Imam Bakri*, Staff bundancho.
- Major Imam Sukarsono*, staff Bundancho/shodancho.
- Mr. Iswarin Takatwirjodihardjo*, bundancho.
- Mr. Joesman*, dr Ismangil's brother.
- First Junior Lieutenant Katam*, giyuhei who shot the first mortar round.
- Mr. Kasman Singodimedjo*, member of advisory council to the Military Court.
- First Lieutenant P. Machfud*, 2nd Bundancho/1st Shodan 2nd chudan.
- Sergeant Major Marni*, giyuhei under Muradi.
- Mrs. Mujono*, Muradi's mother.
- Mr. Muljono*, bundancho.
- Sergeant Muljoprajutno*, giyuhei under Sunerdjo
- Mrs. Murman Slamet*, Muradi's sister-in-law.
- First Junior Lieutenant Mudjali*, giyuhei under Muradi.
- Kiai Hadji Machmud*, Son of Kiai Hadji Ngabdullah Sirat, whose house was used by Sunardjo's group to rest.
- Mr. Muljohardjono*, 2nd Shodancho/1st chudan.
- Mr. Ngabdurachim*, younger brother of Kiai Hadji Ngabdullah Sirat.
- Major Suhadhi*, staff shodancho in charge of ordnance.
- Colonel Sujatmo*, 4th chudancho.
- Captain (ret.) Sujono Rahardjo*, Staff bundancho.
- Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) Sukander*, Staff chudancho in charge of training.
- First Lieutenant Sukardi*, Bundancho of Suprijadi's shodan.
- First Junior Lieutenant Sumeki*, staff bundancho.
- Captain (ret.) Sumadi Surpono*, 2nd Bundancho/2nd Shodan/2nd Chudan.
- Captain (ret.) Sukeni*, 3rd Shodancho/3rd Chudan.
- Chief Sergeant Swip*, giyuhei.
- Colonel (ret.) Surachmad*, Daidancho.
- Mr. Sutjipto*, Suparjono's brother.
- Mr. Tarmudji*, Staff bundancho.
- Mr. Tarmudji*, Staff bundancho.
- Sergeant (ret.) Tukirin*, giyuhei.
- Mr. Wardojo*, Sukarno's brother-in-law in which house Sujatmo's group took refuge.
- Mr. Motoshige Yanagawa*, Japanese captain of "Special Section" of intelligence staff, in charge of training PETA—officers and formation of PETA—units.

C O N T R I B U T O R S

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