

Carson Newman

Douglas MacArthur's Nation-Building: The Reconstruction of Japan

Thesis Director: Dr. David Snead

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## Introduction

The afternoon of August 30, 1945 was a bright blue, sunny day with wisps of clouds at Atsugi Air Base when General Douglas MacArthur stepped from his C-54, *Bataan*, wearing his trademark Filipino field marshal's cap and wielding his corn cob pipe.<sup>1</sup> General Robert L. Eichelberger and the contingent who had arrived earlier greeted MacArthur, who told the welcome party "Melbourne to Tokyo was a long road, but this looks like the payoff."<sup>2</sup> The American Occupation of Japan had begun. MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Asia (SCAP), knew the task that lay before him and had a list of objectives to achieve a democratized and demilitarized Japan. During the next six years, he put his full effort into this work. Yet, MacArthur also had vision to see beyond the objectives he was given and used his autonomy to make decisions to carry out reforms that he knew were necessary for Japan's reconstruction and long term stability. Even though the occupation experienced bumps along the road, the weather on that typical Japanese summer day foreshadowed the eventual success of MacArthur's mission.

At the end of World War II, Japan was militarily and economically devastated; Hiroshima and Nagasaki were radiated ruins; and the people were on the brink of starvation. Japan's situation in 1945 looked very bleak as its people slowly began to rebuild their lives and move past years of bloody war. Transforming Japan meant replacing a military state focused on expansion with a parliamentary democracy focused on economic prosperity through innovation, industry, and peace. The American occupation lasted eight years and by the 1960s the Japanese economy was well on its ways to becoming the third largest in the world. General Douglas

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of the Army (Historical Section, G-2 FECOM), ed. *Reports of General MacArthur, vol. 1: Supplement (MacArthur in Japan – The Occupation: Military Phase)*, (US Government Printing Office, 1966), 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

MacArthur was the man most responsible for Japan's reconstruction. The Japanese willingness to restructure their political system, economy, and society combined with the leadership of MacArthur and the autonomy he wielded as Supreme Commander, brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability.

MacArthur is somewhat of a paradox, on one side he was a brilliant military leader and able administrator, but on the other he was arrogant and egotistical. One of MacArthur's biographers' notes, "Douglas MacArthur was no George Washington." He adds MacArthur "was a great thundering paradox of a man, noble and ignoble, inspiring and outrageous, arrogant and shy, the best of men and the worst of men, the most protean, most ridiculous and most sublime."<sup>3</sup> Despite his shortcomings he proved the right man for the task of rebuilding Japan. MacArthur was a student of history and was very aware of his place within it. He had studied the great men and wanted to be a great man. Nearly a decade after the occupation of Japan MacArthur recalled his pride in presiding over the "world's great laboratory for an experiment in the liberation of a people from totalitarian military rule and for the liberalization of government from within."<sup>4</sup> The occupation of Japan was his chance to be remembered not only as a military commander, but also as a peacemaker. The Japanese came to respect and revere MacArthur, who symbolized the occupation's mission and principles.

President Harry S. Truman gave General MacArthur command of the occupation of Japan because the position was considered to be ample reward for a top American commander for services rendered during the war. His detractors expected MacArthur to fade away into the background at a semi-important Asian post in the postwar world until his eventual retirement.

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<sup>3</sup> William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1946* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1978), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 322-323.

President Truman was certainly MacArthur's biggest detractor as he very much so disliked the general and putting him in a Asian post could keep him away from Washington. Europe had center stage and a Eurocentric view dominated the leadership of the American government and military.<sup>5</sup> Asia was seen as a distant second to European policy as most of the region was underdeveloped and was of remote strategic interest to the American military. Unfortunately for MacArthur's detractors and fortunately for Japan, the United States could not afford to be completely Eurocentric as the Cold War began and Asia took a central role.

The Cold War changed everything for the occupation of Japan by raising the importance of Asia in American foreign policy. MacArthur understood the importance of having Japan as an ally and sought to build the foundation for that alliance through his time there. The position of Supreme Commander came with a large degree of autonomy and included both the American military command in Asia and the occupation of Japan. This autonomy allowed MacArthur to go beyond the objectives he was given. The Potsdam Conference had laid the guidelines for the occupation, but they were deliberately broad. Politically, the rewriting of the Japanese Constitution was a landmark achievement; economically, land reform was instrumental in helping boost the economy and implementing a democratic land system; and socially, the establishment of democratic ideals reenergized the Japanese people and their tradition-based culture as they entered the era of the New Japan. Religiously, MacArthur reignited Christian missions to Japan and under the new freedom of religion clause in the Japanese constitution set the foundation for the small Japanese Christian church to grow.

Scholars have always been interested in the occupation of Japan as it was one of the first American attempts in nation building. The historiography focuses on the three main branches of

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<sup>5</sup> Justin Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur: A Participant's Account* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 1.

the occupation: the political, economic, and social aspects with a small group of scholars examining the religious changes during the occupation. Within this historiography, two names are the most recognizable among American scholars: John W. Dower and Michael Schaller. Dower's *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* describes the occupation of Japan and focuses on the transformation that rebuilt the country. Schaller's *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* discusses Japan's position in American diplomacy in the early years of the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> A key Japanese scholar, Eiji Takemae examines in *The Allied Occupation of Japan* (formerly titled *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan And Its Legacy*) the Japanese occupation in detail and explores the reforms that changed Japan. He also examines the Americans and Japanese who worked inside the occupation government headquarters.<sup>7</sup>

During the 1970s the declassification of U.S. documents on the occupation of Japan led to the outpouring of scholarly research and analysis that continues to this day. Many scholars turned their attention to the economic rise of Japan and how the nation recovered after the war. John R. Roberson's *Japan from Shogun to Sony, 1543-1984* examines Japan's transformation from feudal state to economic power. It is not surprising that more books were to follow as additional scholars were interested to know why and how the Japanese economy had become the third largest in the world. Hugh Cortazzi's *The Japanese Achievement*, Deborah J. Milly's *Poverty, Equality, and Growth: The Politics of Economic Need in Postwar Japan*, and Richard J.

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<sup>6</sup> Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); and John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> Eiji Takemae, *The Allied Occupation of Japan* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2003).

Samuels' *Rich Nation, Strong Army: and National Security and the Technological*

*Transformation of Japan* focus on the economic side of the transformation of postwar Japan.<sup>8</sup>

While the economic side of Japan was examined, others dissected the political side. The occupation of Japan had established a democracy that remained stable after the occupation forces were removed. American and Japanese scholars have explored the constitutional and other political reforms of the occupation in great detail. In the late 1980s, Robert E. Ward, Yoshikazu Sakamoto, and Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai's *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation* investigated the political and governmental transformation of Japan. Again during the 1990s, scholars also examined the political and governmental structure of Japan that came to symbolize a success story in the history of American nation-building. A large focus within this specified area was on the Japanese Constitution such as Shōichi Koseki and Ray A. Moore's *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*.<sup>9</sup> Japan had been introduced to democratic principles when the country was open to the world in the nineteenth century, but such ideas did not stick. It would be only after World War II that democracy would be established and become entrenched.

In recent years, with the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and American attempts to introduce democracy in those countries' scholars have turned to the occupation of Japan to understand its success. Dayna L. Barnes' *Architects of Occupation: American Experts and the Planning for Postwar Japan* reexamines the occupation of Japan with a look to the leaders who planned it. Ray A. Moore and Donald L. Robinson's *Partners for Democracy: Crafting the New*

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<sup>8</sup> Hugh Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1990); Deborah J. Milly, *Poverty, Equality, and Growth: The Politics of Economic Need in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999); and John R. Roberson, *Japan from Shogun to Sony, 1543-1984* (New York: Atheneum, 1985); and Richard J. Samuels, "*Rich Nation, Strong Army:*" *National Security and the Technological Transformation of Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> Robert E. Ward, Yoshikazu Sakamoto, Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, Joint Committee on Japanese Studies, and Social Science Research Council (U.S.). *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1987); and Shōichi Koseki, and Ray A. Moore, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

*Japanese State under MacArthur* looks at the Japanese constitution and the role MacArthur had in the constitutional process. Bowen C. Dees' *The Allied Occupation and Japan's Economic Miracle: Building the Foundations of Japanese Science and Technology 1945-52* examines not just the Japanese economic change that transformed the country, but illustrates the change in focus towards science and technology that became staples of the new Japanese economy.<sup>10</sup>

Contrary to what his detractors expected or wanted, the occupation of Japan has placed the name MacArthur securely in the history books. General Douglas MacArthur is the name most associated with the occupation of Japan and he was well known by the American public as a war hero. MacArthur biographies examine his life or at least specific parts of it. Such titles include Russell D. Buhite's *Douglas MacArthur: Statecraft and Stagecraft in America's East Asian Policy*, James D. Clayton's *The Years of MacArthur*, Mark Perry's *The Most Dangerous Man in America: The Making of Douglas MacArthur*, and Arthur Herman's *Douglas MacArthur: American Warrior*.<sup>11</sup> MacArthur was a military man most of his life and as such he had a very military oriented perspective on things. He saw puzzles and patterns of nations and militaries. The role MacArthur played in the occupation of Japan is an important one and a role that can only be explored by understanding the man.

The strong relationship between the United States and Japan since World War II has its roots in the occupation; the economic success and power of the Japanese economy had its start

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<sup>10</sup> Dayna L. Barnes, *Architects of Occupation: American Experts and the Planning for Postwar Japan* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017); Ray A. Moore, and Donald L. Robinson, *Partners for Democracy: Crafting the New Japanese State under MacArthur* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Bowen C. Dees, *The Allied Occupation and Japan's Economic Miracle: Building the Foundations of Japanese Science and Technology 1945-52* (London, UK: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Russell D. Buhite, *Douglas MacArthur: Statecraft and Stagecraft in America's East Asian Policy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008); Arthur Herman, *Douglas MacArthur: American Warrior* (New York, NY: Random House, 2016); James D. Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971); and Mark Perry, *The Most Dangerous Man in America: The Making of Douglas MacArthur* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2014).

with the occupation and the reforms that came with it; and the Japanese government was reformed to a parliamentary democracy focused on peace, innovation, and prosperous economics because of the occupation. Plus, the injection of democratic ideals into Japanese society gave energy to the New Japan that helped to drive the nation forward into a new age. The psychological acceptance of the Japanese to their defeat, the leadership of the occupation, the military-over-civilian administration, and the preparation that went into the occupation of Japan during the war contributed to the success of the occupation.<sup>12</sup> MacArthur will always be remembered as a key leader in the transformation of Japan and its relationship with the United States. Without MacArthur the occupation would have looked different and the current American-Japanese relationship would not be the same.

The occupation of Japan has been well examined and analyzed; therefore this thesis will not explore the occupation in its entirety. Rather it seeks to explain the reforms that General MacArthur directed that went beyond the objective guidelines of the Potsdam Declaration that he received when he became the Supreme Commander. The autonomy that MacArthur wielded was almost absolute. None of the major directives he initiated were overturned by President Truman or the Pentagon. Further when the occupation ended the Japanese government did not revert to its previous way of operating. The Japanese willingness to restructure their political system, economy, and society combined with the leadership of MacArthur and the autonomy he wielded as Supreme Commander, brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability.

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<sup>12</sup> David Hunter-Chester, "The Particular Circumstances of Time and Place: Why the Occupation of Japan Succeeded and the Occupation of Iraq Failed." *Military Review* 96, no. 3 (May 2016): 44-45.

The process of establishing democracy in Japan occurred through four steps. First, the Japanese emperor had to be brought down from the godlike throne he had been put upon. The legend and ritual myth that surrounded the Chrysanthemum throne were deeply ingrained in the Japanese way of life. Second, and connected to the emperor's divinity was the issue of separating Shintoism from the state. Freedom of religion would be declared in the Japanese constitution. With the emperor's divinity denied and Shintoism no longer the state religion, the third step in Japan's transformation into a democracy was a revised constitution. There was no clear plan on paper to how this was to be achieved. Certainly, it was figured that Japanese leaders would take a leading role in the revision of their constitution. Yet, given Japan's strong traditional and conservative history, Japanese leaders were not prepared to bring their country into a new democratic era. Finally, the anti-war clause in the new Japanese Constitution was monumental. Japan's renouncement of war, guaranteed in their constitution, would ensure the country never engaged in a war of aggression again. The rise of a truly democratically independent press tied the political transformation together. MacArthur proved his caliber in these steps in establishing a democratic Japan by being able to look beyond the objectives he was given and use the power he had to achieve his mission.

Japan was utterly devastated by World War II. It had a shattered economy, collapsing financial system, mass unemployment, ruined cities, atomic radiation, and a broken agricultural system. The occupation of Japan would help rebuild the Japanese economy with resources and materials worth billions of dollars. The landmark economic development that MacArthur put through the Japanese government was land reform. Up to that time, Japan still very much had a feudal based land system. The SCAP initiated reform turned many Japanese tenants into independent landowners. Land reform brought democratic ideals to a large portion of the rural

Japanese population as the new landowners could decide what to do with their own land. While the road ahead would be hard and the Japanese economy would be slow to recover during the occupation years, those years would lay the foundation for the economy to grow and develop over the following decades.

MacArthur envisioned democracy and Christianity together as two great pillars for a successful modern nation-state. His call for missionaries and Bibles reignited the Japanese mission field after World War II. Yet, MacArthur did not realize that the Japanese were not in a spiritual vacuum. Buddhism and Shintoism suffered at the end of war because of the Japanese surrender and the mood of defeatism that pervaded the Japanese consciousness for a time. Japan was not Christianized though and the Japanese church would remain small. MacArthur saw Christianity as a key to helping Japan prosper and thrive. During the occupation Christianity only experienced a small amount growth. Buddhism and Shintoism remained important to Japanese culture and social life. Christianity was never forced onto the Japanese as a SCAP policy and the new education law left out religious education. That said, Christianity became a respected social ethic and an interesting curiosity for the Japanese.

The occupation of Japan is an example of the right factors being put together that led to the long-term success of the nation. The Potsdam Declaration provided the plan to guide the reconstruction effort and MacArthur provided the vision and drive to carry out reforms that were not specified that needed to be taken to insure success of the occupation. Combined with the planning and leadership there are four reasons why the occupation succeeded: preservation of self-respect, noncoercion, social adaptation, and procedural consistency.<sup>13</sup> MacArthur worked through the Japanese government to enact the objectives of the Potsdam Declaration. By doing

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<sup>13</sup> Ralph J. D. Braibanti, "The Role of Administration in the Occupation of Japan." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 267 (1950): 163.

this he allowed the Japanese to keep their self-respect. MacArthur did not force democracy onto the Japanese. He used a gentle, but firm hand with the Japanese government in reforming their governmental system. Concerned that the Japanese elites were not yet capable of writing a new democratic constitution within a reasonable time frame, MacArthur took the initiative to have it written for them. Rather than just make Japan a republic modeled after the United States, MacArthur saw the best way was to develop a democracy that reflected Japan. Thus, Japan became a parliamentary democracy with the emperor in a ceremonial role. MacArthur's instrumental initiative on land reform furthered the growth of democratic idealism amongst the Japanese and also helped to boost the Japanese agricultural sector and the recovering economy. MacArthur's crusade to Christianize Japan while not successful in developing a large Japanese church, did establish Christianity as a respected and studied social ethic in Japan. The Japanese willingness to restructure their political system, economy, and society combined with the leadership of MacArthur and the autonomy he wielded as Supreme Commander, brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability.

## Chapter 1: Reconstructing Japan's Political System

World War II brought out the worst of human nature amounting to the bloodiest and most horrific war in history. War propaganda and cultural prejudice had twisted Americans and Japanese against each other. Even with the war over many Americans remained prejudiced against the Japanese and thought a hard occupation was what Japan deserved for their responsibility in going to war with the United States. *The New York Times* echoed such opinions when it printed August 19, 1945, "The Allied problem will be to shape a "hard" peace for Japan that will neutralize her as a threat but not leave her as a perpetual sore spot in the Far East."<sup>1</sup> No one wanted a repeat of the Versailles Treaty and an angry, vengeful Japan. The question was not if Japan should be punished, but how it should be punished.

A couple days before President Harry Truman announced to the American public what the plan for the occupation of Japan entailed, Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles wrote, "It must be a policy which will teach the Japanese people that war does not pay. It must be a policy which will create within Japan a basis upon which at least a rudimentary democracy can be built up."<sup>2</sup> The occupation of Japan needed to be sufficiently long to ensure that the Japanese learned democracy and would not pose a threat to world peace. Welles continued, "That will be a policy which implies some years of intelligent, constructive and expensive enterprise on our part," and "it is the only policy which spells future security for the American people."<sup>3</sup> Japan had to be occupied and a considerable occupational force needed to be retained to insure that American security in the region would be protected.

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<sup>1</sup> "Japan's Fate: (1) the Surrender End of Empire Role of the Emperor War of Nerves (2) the Occupation Japan Unrepentant Fabric of Government More Men Needed Looking Ahead Question of Trade," *New York Times*, August 19, 1945, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Sumner Welles, "Occupation of Japan: Much Remains to be Done," *The Washington Post*, (September 19, 1945, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

President Truman announced on September 22, 1945 the occupation of Japan was, “to insure Japan will not again become a menace to the United States or to the peace and security of the world.”<sup>4</sup> Truman, referencing the Potsdam Declaration, continued “Japan will be completely disarmed and demilitarized. The authority of the militarists and the influence of militarism will be totally eliminated from her political, economic, and social life.”<sup>5</sup> Japan would never again pose a threat to world peace. Potsdam Declaration Point 6 stated, “There must be eliminated for all time the authority and influence of those who have deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest.”<sup>6</sup> Such a venture to remove all militaristic influence from Japan was a daunting task. The planning for the occupation demanded a well-developed list of objectives to achieve the first point of the Potsdam Declaration.

Two months later in November, George Gallup investigated the American mood and thought pattern on the occupation of Japan. His polling group asked Americans “Do you think we will have to police the Japanese many years, or do you think we can withdraw our troops in a few years,” and resulted, “Many years needed...64%,” “Few years needed...23%,” and “13% undecided,” showed that Americans expected a long occupation. Gallup revealed that many people thought the occupation would last a long time because “We cannot trust the Japs,” “They have to be entirely reeducated, and this will take a long time,” and “They still don’t know they are licked; it will take a long occupation to teach them.”<sup>7</sup> When asked to give an approximate time frame for how long the occupation should last Gallup added, “The median average of all

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<sup>4</sup> Harry S. Truman, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, April 12, 1945 to January 20, 1953*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Print Office, 1961), 333.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

<sup>6</sup> Potsdam Declaration, Proclamation By Heads of Governments, United States, United Kingdom, and China. July 26, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948, Report of Government Section*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Print Office, 1949), 413. MacArthur Archives, Norfolk, VA.

<sup>7</sup> George Gallup, “Public Feels Occupation of Japan to Last 10 Years,” *The Washington Post*, November 3, 1945, 4.

replies is 10 years. If the answers of only those who have attend college are added, the median average jumps to 15 years.”<sup>8</sup> Most Americans wanted an occupation of Japan that would ensure that another war would not break out and that would reeducate the Japanese to not wage war again.

During the war in November 1943, President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill began addressing their vision of a postwar Japan at the Cairo Conference when they decided what to do with the territory Japan had conquered. The Cairo Declaration stated that “Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.”<sup>9</sup> In the summer of 1945, the allied leaders confirmed this goal at the Potsdam Conference by announcing, “The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Skikoku and such minor islands as we determine.”<sup>10</sup> Because of this, Japan would have to engage in trade to gain the resources it needed and utilize diplomacy.

Following the Cairo Conference, the State Department’s new Postwar Programs Committee (PWC) and the army’s Civil Affairs Division (CAD) took a leading role in formulating an occupation plan, specifying the nations to be involved, the program to be developed, and a method for disposing Japan’s colonies.<sup>11</sup> Given the United States’ pivotal role in the Pacific Theater, it is not surprising that there was a group of military and civilian leaders who preferred an American occupation. Schaller contends, “In March 1944, members of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> The Cairo Conference, December 1, 1943, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 411.

<sup>10</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 413.

<sup>11</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*,” 18.

PWC reported that they favored a nearly exclusive American occupation.”<sup>12</sup> The PWC also was in favor of an occupation military administration working through the Japanese government and retaining the Emperor if only temporarily to achieve its objectives.<sup>13</sup> It also believed that while the Allied Powers could give advice and stay updated on the occupation. America had earned the right to be the leader of the occupation since it had done the lion share of the bleeding in the Pacific Theater.

At the end of 1944, Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinus, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, and Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal organized the SWNCC (State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee). The SWNCC took a leading role in formulating the plans for the occupation of Japan. Schaller illustrates, “Expanding on earlier reports, it urged exclusive American rule with no zonal division and utilization of the Japanese government to speed thorough but nonvindictive demilitarization, democratization, and economic reform.”<sup>14</sup> Although in agreement that Japanese heavy industry used in war production should be dismantled to prevent Japan from rebuilding militarily, the SWNCC pushed more for economic reform and keeping Japanese industry to help with the reconstruction. With the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in April 1945, SWNCC presented its report to President Truman, who ultimately approved of the plan.<sup>15</sup> The post-surrender plan for Japan was the Potsdam Declaration finalized on July 26, 1945.

The Potsdam Declaration laid out the objectives that were to be achieved through the occupation of Japan. This was the directive that MacArthur followed to achieve a demilitarized, democratic, and peace-oriented Japan. The six points in the Potsdam Declaration that dealt with

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<sup>12</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*,” 19-20.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

occupation policy were general in nature. Thus, General MacArthur had room to carry out decisions and reforms he saw as necessary for the reconstruction and stability of Japan.

MacArthur wrote, “It was clear that the experiment in Japan must go far beyond the primary purpose of the Allies.”<sup>16</sup> While the Potsdam Declaration was clear, it left room for adaptation and independent action to achieve the objectives.

The occupation of Japan was inevitable to ensure that the country would not again pose a threat to world order and peace (Point 1 of the Potsdam Declaration). What was not clear was how the occupation would be organized. Further no time limit was established by the Potsdam Declaration as Point 7 stated, “Until such a new order is established and until there is convincing proof that Japan’s war-making power is destroyed, points in Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies shall be occupied to secure the achievement of the basic objectives we are here setting forth.”<sup>17</sup> SWNCC 228 stated, “The effectiveness of governmental reforms in preventing the resurgence of military control in Japan will depend in a large measure upon the acceptance by the Japanese people of the entire program.”<sup>18</sup> SWNCC 228 also established a line of authority for the Supreme Commander. When it came to implementation of necessary reforms the Supreme Commander, “must take into account the problem of sequence and timing, as well as measures which might be adopted to prepare the Japanese people to accept the changes, in order to insure that the reforms are lasting in strengthening representative government in Japan.”<sup>19</sup> The leader chosen to command the occupation would have a tall order to fill and at this point the

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<sup>16</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 282.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> SWNCC 228, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946; The Far East*, Volume VIII, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 99.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

American government did not know the extent of the damage in Japan or what condition the Japanese people were in.

Because of MacArthur's personality, his drive to secure his place in history, and his outspoken perspective he did not make many friends or admirers. Justin Williams adds, "MacArthur projects two images, one malign and one godlike. He is loathed by his detractors and revered by his admirers."<sup>20</sup> President Truman disliked MacArthur passionately, however, for political reasons and because of MacArthur's popularity he kept the general around. He wanted to keep the general in a position that was out of the way, but not appear to be unrewarding to a war hero. George F. Kennan was another MacArthur detractor who disagreed with many of MacArthur's views.<sup>21</sup> The key to understanding MacArthur is that he was driven to secure his place in history. MacArthur had a broad understanding of historical perspective that allowed him an intuitive sense of world events and while he got a lot wrong he also got a lot right.<sup>22</sup>

Despite his personal views, President Truman saw the position of Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Asia as a fitting reward for MacArthur's service in the war, but a station where MacArthur would fade away. Asia was viewed as an underdeveloped region and not a focus for postwar rebuilding. MacArthur disagreed and refused to become a footnote in some history book. He considered Asia a very important region and he would use his energy to achieve success in Japan. William Sebald, a senior civilian official within SCAP recalled, "it was wise that MacArthur was appointed the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. No American has wielded such vast power over a foreign country with the wisdom and restraint of this victorious general. MacArthur became not only the symbol of the Occupation; to the Japanese people he

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<sup>20</sup> Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur*, 264.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Kawai, *Japan's American Interlude*, 12.

was the Occupation.”<sup>23</sup> Williams praises MacArthur’s skill, “a brilliant military leader,” and “he could also very well be remembered as an illustrious statesman,” because “His performance in Japan was the true measure of his character and caliber.”<sup>24</sup> Japan was a broken country and in a position to be molded. MacArthur had the strength and will to guide the Japanese leadership toward the democratization of their country.

Named Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers for Asia on August 15, 1945, MacArthur was in Japan a week later establishing his headquarters in Tokyo and getting to work on rebuilding the defeated nation.<sup>25</sup> The objectives of the Potsdam Declaration were clear to MacArthur and he would put his energy into the task before him. MacArthur wrote, “My professional military knowledge was no longer a major factor. I had to be an economist, a political scientist, an engineer, a manufacturing executive, a teacher, even a theologian of sorts.”<sup>26</sup> As supreme commander he demonstrated his resolve and determination to see through a successful occupation and reconstruction of Japan. Despite the destruction caused by the war John Roberson reports “the imperial government bureaucracy was still intact throughout the nation.”<sup>27</sup> Japanese conservatives and moderates had taken back the government from the militarists following the surrender.<sup>28</sup> Unlike in Germany where the government and bureaucracy had completely collapsed, MacArthur was able to get to work rebuilding Japan relatively quickly. Arthur Herman remarks, “MacArthur approached it, as he did everything else, with supreme confidence rooted in a faith in his own competence.”<sup>29</sup> MacArthur did not have to bring

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<sup>23</sup> William J. Sebald, Forward, *With MacArthur In Japan; A Personal History of the Occupation* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1965), 11.

<sup>24</sup> Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur*, 263 & 265.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>26</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 281-282.

<sup>27</sup> John R. Roberson, “Rebuilding A Nation,” In *Japan from Shogun to Sony, 1543-1984*; 162-177 (New York: Atheneum, 1985), 168.

<sup>28</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 655.

in many American military officials to run the country. SCAP had an easier time establishing itself in the early days of the occupation not having to establish a new Japanese government as well.

The position of Supreme Commander, when it came to governing Japan, came with considerable power and autonomy from President Truman and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Japanese expected that MacArthur would wield complete autonomy and control over the occupation. MacArthur's orders from President Truman clearly stated, "The authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the State is subordinate to you as Supreme Commander for the Allied powers. You will exercise your authority as you deem proper to carry out your mission."<sup>30</sup> Sebald recounted, "Subsequent instructions from Washington, furthermore, gave General MacArthur ample authority and extensive guidance for the wholesale reforms carried out by his headquarters."<sup>31</sup> Army Chief of Staff Dwight D. Eisenhower informed, MacArthur "All recognize that the position, views or recommendations of SCAP on any question will be for your decision and advice to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or, where appropriate, the War Department as Executive Agency for the Joint Chiefs of Staff."<sup>32</sup> The autonomy MacArthur wielded was designed such a way because Japan was on the other side of the world. In case something happened MacArthur had the power to do whatever he needed to do.

MacArthur certainly cultivated an image of power and command in the image he portrayed every day. He had a dominating presence which certainly had developed in his time in the military. James Clayton reveals, in the first few months of the occupation, "to MacArthur's

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<sup>30</sup> Authority of General MacArthur As Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, September 6, 1945, *The Political Reorientation of Japan*, 427.

<sup>31</sup> Sebald, *With MacArthur In Japan*, 77.

<sup>32</sup> The Chief of Staff (Eisenhower) to General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Tokyo, Washington, January 7, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Far East, (1946)*, 97.

delight and with no small amount of cultivation by his public relations staff, the majority of Japanese were overawed by SCAP and viewed him as a sovereign with powers ranging from establishing occupation policy to curing invalids.”<sup>33</sup> MacArthur understood the importance of bringing the Japanese people to his side. Borton remarks, “He instilled confidence and acted with benevolence.”<sup>34</sup> Within the first two years he demonstrated a remarkable ability to carry out the objectives in the Potsdam Declaration and even initiate his own reforms that he knew were critical to Japan’s reconstruction.<sup>35</sup> Kawai adds, “His viceregal manners were hardly democratic in spirit, but he did not neglect to give the Japanese as much democracy as they could absorb.”<sup>36</sup> Japanese civilians sent thousands of letters to MacArthur’s headquarters, many addressing him as the new shogun or savior of Japan. “An estimated total of 500,000 letters arrived at his office.”<sup>37</sup> Toshikazu Kase, a Japanese diplomat, described MacArthur in his account to the Emperor, “In the dark hour of our despair and distress, a bright light is ushered in, in the very person of General MacArthur.”<sup>38</sup>

The cultivation of public opinion that MacArthur initiated not only established the power and influence of SCAP, but was the first step in rebuilding relations between Americans and Japanese. MacArthur envisioned a place for Japan at the world table and took the steps to make it an American ally. Herman illustrates, “MacArthur felt no such sense of race superiority. A sense of cultural superiority, however, was another matter.”<sup>39</sup> The Japanese political, economic, and social institutions were backwards and outdated. MacArthur, through SCAP, would revolutionize

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<sup>33</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 4.

<sup>34</sup> Borton, *Japan’s Modern Century*, 461.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Kawai, *Japan’s American Interlude*, 12.

<sup>37</sup> Yukiko Koshiro, “The U.S. Occupation of Japan as a Mutual Racial Experience,” *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 3, no. 4 (1994): 304.

<sup>38</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 277.

<sup>39</sup> Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 655.

those institutions and bring Japan truly into the twentieth century. While most American leaders were looking to Europe as the center to focus military resources, MacArthur saw Asia as a strategic region to focus military resources and form alliances. Sebald illustrates, “MacArthur had an unusually broad view of foreign affairs, for a military man, and this characteristic, no doubt, prevented many problems that otherwise might have arisen.”<sup>40</sup> MacArthur set about to instill democracy, a free enterprise economy, and a more egalitarian society as directed by the Potsdam Declaration guidelines. There was some resistance from Japanese leaders, though MacArthur proved he was a skilled statesman. MacArthur wrote, “I had formulated the policies I intended to follow, implementing them through the Emperor and the machinery of the imperial government.”<sup>41</sup> Jennings stresses, “Skillful manipulation of the media, clever exploitation of latent class animosities, and the emperor’s acquiescence led to the reforms being embraced with enthusiasm.”<sup>42</sup> MacArthur was not just a military leader, he understood politics, employed humanitarian efforts, and expressed adamant feelings to show the Japanese he was on their side. MacArthur was autocratic, vain, and inconsistent, yet he had a crusading spirit and strong leadership qualities.<sup>43</sup>

Japan was a devastated nation when the American occupation forces arrived. The Americans had heard of rumors that some Japanese would resist the surrender. American soldiers were wary of the Japanese after the bloody and vicious fighting in the Pacific.<sup>44</sup> The Japanese were fearful, wondering what was to become of their country many fearing abuse and rape from the occupiers.<sup>45</sup> Yet at the same time a number of Japanese were relieved by the end of the war

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<sup>40</sup> Sebald, *With MacArthur In Japan*, 116.

<sup>41</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 281.

<sup>42</sup> Jennings, *The Road Ahead*, 16.

<sup>43</sup> Hugh Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 252.

<sup>44</sup> John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1993), 12.

<sup>45</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 251.

and looked forward to what the future held with eager anticipation. Seraphim reveals, “Many Japanese felt liberated by the end of the war and perceived new personal and societal opportunities; others feared for their professional and social existence, particularly under the occupation’s purge orders.”<sup>46</sup> “Fujiyama Aiichiro, a business leader who later served as foreign minister, recalled that “when it was learned that the occupying power would be the U.S . . . many industrialists uncorked their champagne bottles and toasted the coming of a new industrialist era.”<sup>47</sup> The Japanese had resigned themselves to the inevitability of an occupation. What concerned them was the size and scope that the occupation would take.<sup>48</sup> Williams writes, “What struck them was the image MacArthur projected of an extraordinary man sincerely bent on hacking out new paths for the good of all peoples.”<sup>49</sup> The occupation began with MacArthur being the dominant image of power and hope.<sup>50</sup>

The occupation forces arrived in Japan without incident and went about securing the country. To insure the smooth transition of American troops into Japan “Soldiers were issued handbooks detailing the rules of engagement with local populations as well as appropriate responses to administrative dilemmas, the structure of local governance institutions, methods to disarm local police, and the manner in which civil disturbances should be settled.”<sup>51</sup> Such a gesture to make a good impression with the Japanese reveals SCAP’s intent to understand the culture and people they were ruling. MacArthur recalled, “I cautioned our troops from the start that by their conduct our own country would be judged in world opinion, that success or failure

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<sup>46</sup> Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan*, 36.

<sup>47</sup> John D. Montgomery, *Forced to Be Free: The Artificial Revolution in Germany and Japan*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 106–107.

<sup>48</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 15.

<sup>49</sup> Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur*, 265.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Jennings, *The Road Ahead*, 10.

of the occupation could well rest upon their poise and self-restraint.”<sup>52</sup> The fearful Japanese could not hide forever and curiosity if nothing else brought them out of hiding. Raymond A. Higgins remembers, “Before long, the local people realized the victors had not come to punish them at all,” and “Soon the GIs had enticed out the kids with candy bars and gum, and word spread of the Americans’ visits to hospitals with food, medicine, and kindness.”<sup>53</sup> This scene against the backdrop of a defeated and broken nation and American memory of the bloody fighting in the Pacific, was the beginning of healing between two formerly bitter enemies. Despite the racism and bias between Americans and Japanese and the cultural misunderstandings between the West and East the occupation was benevolent not vindictive. No country before then had been occupied by another country with less venom.<sup>54</sup>

It was the children who broke the tension between the adults and the American soldiers. The American soldiers intrigued the Japanese children who were amazed that the Americans were nothing like they had heard. Yoshio Ninomiya a young teenager remembered the Americans as “very handsome” and “they had long legs and would give us snacks. They were very kind.” Hidekatsu Nankano recalled, “Their guys were very big, very different from us, and I was really curious about them. Some of them stayed on the second floor of a traditional Japanese inn, and when they came to the windows they tossed chocolates to us. I never harbored any anger toward them, even though we lost the war.” Toyoki Goto who was fourteen, remembers, “when the Americans came in their jeeps and started giving us gum, that’s when it really sunk in that we

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<sup>52</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 283.

<sup>53</sup> Raymond A. Higgins, *From Hiroshima with Love: The Allied Military Governor's Remarkable Story of the Rebuilding of Japan's Business and Industry after World War II* (Central Point, OR: Hellgate Press, 1997), 50.

<sup>54</sup> Sebald, *With MacArthur In Japan*, 294.

had lost the war. Seeing them for the first time on our land was when it hit me.”<sup>55</sup> Many children understood that their country had lost the war, yet they did not hate their occupiers.

About a month into the occupation a baseball game became a visible sign that the scars of war were healing between the Americans and Japanese. Kou Takeda remembered, “a group of American soldiers came to our school on a friendship visit. It was the first time I saw Americans. They started to play baseball on our sports field at the school, and it was the first time I saw a new type of baseball glove. They used their equipment to flatten the ground, so we could play better. A month later, we had a friendship game between the students and the soldiers, and I remember thinking, “Why did we have a war with these people?””<sup>56</sup> Baseball the national past time of the United States and an admired sport amongst Japanese youth, brought the two groups together.

Very quickly the American occupiers and Japanese saw that neither one fit the stereotypes that the other had come to believe about their enemy. The Americans were not cruel conquerors and the Japanese were not all fanatics. Dr. George E. Blakeslee noted on his visit to Japan, “The U.S. soldiers have made an excellent impression and General MacArthur is widely popular.”<sup>57</sup> The Japanese people did not castigate the Americans or blame the emperor for the destruction and death caused by the war, rather they turned against the militarist leaders.<sup>58</sup> The Americans were in Japan to help rebuild and MacArthur did everything in his power to let them

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<sup>55</sup> Yoshio Ninomiya, Oita City, Oita Prefecture, Japan, April 21, 2012, Interview; Hidekatsu Nakano, Oita City, Oita Prefecture, Japan, May 25, 2012; Toyoki Goto, Oita City, Oita Prefecture, Japan, June 8, 2012, Interview, Edgar A. Porter and Ran Ying Porter, *Japanese Reflections on World War II and the American Occupation*, (Amsterdam, NL: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 207-208.

<sup>56</sup> Kou Takeda, Saiki, Oita Prefecture, Japan, June 9, 2012, Interview, Porter and Porter, *Japanese Reflections on World War II and the American Occupation*, 209.

<sup>57</sup> Report by Dr. George E. Blakeslee on the Far Eastern Commission’s Trip to Japan, December 26, 1945-February 13, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Far East*, (1946), 164.

<sup>58</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 6.

know American intentions. Jennings explains MacArthur “sent troops and civil affairs officers on rounds of motorcycle diplomacy throughout the country to establish security and to explain U.S. intentions while managing local expectations of the military government.”<sup>59</sup> Besides MacArthur’s commanding presence in the occupation, the countless thousands of interactions between the American occupational forces and the Japanese added to the growth of the new American-Japanese friendship. Yukiko Koshiro adds, “it was not difficult for the Japanese to anticipate at the onset of the Occupation that a new phase of U.S.-Japanese relations would begin in which the two equal peoples would together set out to build a democratic and cosmopolitan Japan.”<sup>60</sup> The efforts of democratization and Westernization seemed to the Japanese as a return to the old search for national identity in the connecting of East and West as the American protégé.<sup>61</sup> Kawai concludes, “the countless little demonstrations of spontaneous good will and kindness on the part of most of the American troops toward the Japanese more than counterbalanced the relatively few cases of American misconduct, and the Japanese attitude soon became unmistakably one of gratitude.”<sup>62</sup> The postwar U.S.-Japanese relationship was well established through the best efforts of MacArthur and SCAP and the Japanese children.

MacArthur set out to organize SCAP into an efficient military administration divided into sections that paralleled the Japanese government. As Supreme Commander of Allied Powers he was also in charge of Far East Command (also Army Forces Pacific). MacArthur appointed his Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Richard Sutherland to draw up a system that would manage the occupation of Japan. Sutherland split the Civil Affairs (G-5) section creating SCAP General Headquarters (GHQ) and the Far East Command (FEC) GHQ. “This established that the nature

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<sup>59</sup> Jennings *The Road Ahead*, 10.

<sup>60</sup> Koshiro, “The U.S. Occupation of Japan as a Mutual Racial Experience,” 302.

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

<sup>62</sup> Kawai, *Japan’s American Interlude*, 13.

of American control was to be supervisory rather than operational and that economy of personnel could be realized,” and at the same time “Retaining the government and entrusting it with serious responsibilities from the outset saved Japanese face.”<sup>63</sup> Ultimately, SCAP Headquarters, “consisted of nine sections (Economic and Scientific, Civil Information and Education, Natural Resources, Public Health and Welfare, Government, Legal, Civil Communications, Civil Intelligence, and Statistics and Reports).”<sup>64</sup> Both headquarters would be under MacArthur, but each had distinct and independent purposes. SCAP GHQ would handle the business of nation-building, while FEC GHQ would handle military and security matters. This division proved most adequate as the majority of the military career officers served in FEC, leaving SCAP to be manned by reserve officers with key civilian backgrounds. Such an organizational setup eased the tension that was inherent in military autocracy and gave room to the requirements that a budding democracy demanded.<sup>65</sup>

MacArthur had the autonomy to dictate occupation policy in line with the Potsdam Declaration and appoint within his military administration who he wanted. The line that separates the formulation of policy and the execution of policy were many times blurred by MacArthur as he deliberated and planned.<sup>66</sup> Even though MacArthur’s appointees were all good friends and officers who had previously served with him, they were competent and qualified for the offices they led. The upper leadership was Brigadier General Courtney Whitney, heading the SCAP Government Section, Brigadier General Ken R. Dyke, supervising education, press, and cultural affairs, Brigadier General Charles A. Willoughby, overseeing the Counter-Intelligence

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<sup>63</sup> Ralph J. D. Braibanti, “The Role of Administration in the Occupation of Japan.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 267 (1950): 157-158.

<sup>64</sup> Katherine Rogers, “The Interagency Process In Reconstruction Of Post-World War II Japan,” 179.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Kawai, *Japan’s American Interlude*, 17.

Corps, and Major General William F. Marquat leading the Economic-Scientific Section. Lower offices were manned by experienced and skilled military and civilian personnel. A shortage of personnel in some areas, however, allowed the Japanese to monitor and report more on their own.<sup>67</sup> MacArthur, though more conservative, allowed SCAP to be more progressive. He called his strategy “the great middle course of moderate democracy.”<sup>68</sup> During the early reform stage of the occupation that lasted until early 1947, leaders in Washington encouraged SCAP to deal in a progressive New Deal way.<sup>69</sup> This period 1945-1947 saw the key reforms of the occupation directed towards the Japanese government. The emperor denying his divinity, the separation of shrine and state, the revision of the constitution, and the establishment of an independent and free press.

MacArthur’s first priority was to demilitarize Japan and demobilize its armed forces. When the American 8<sup>th</sup> Army secured Japan the demilitarization process was started. Potsdam Declaration Point 9 stated, “The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives.”<sup>70</sup> At the end of the war MacArthur reported Japan had a combined strength totaling “6,983,000 troops, consisting of 154 army divisions, 136 brigades, and 20 important naval units.” MacArthur noted that from this statistic there were, “2,576,000 soldiers” in Japan.<sup>71</sup> Since SCAP worked through the Japanese government, the Japanese Army and Navy Departments oversaw the demobilization of Japanese troops. The two departments had demobilized 2.2 million on the home islands by December 1, 1945.<sup>72</sup> Demobilization of Japanese troops outside

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<sup>67</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 45-46.

<sup>68</sup> Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, xx.

<sup>69</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 42.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 285.

<sup>72</sup> Rogers, “The Interagency Process In Reconstruction Of Post-World War II Japan,” 180-181.

of the home islands was overseen by the Allies in their respective jurisdictions. 6.5 million Japanese soldiers had to be repatriated back to Japan.<sup>73</sup> The Potsdam Declaration had been achieved in this one important area. By the time the threat of the Soviet Union was fully realized and the Cold War started, the demilitarization had been so effective that a remilitarization of Japan was only possible through creating the Japanese Defense Forces.

U.S. forces removed caches of weapons and ammunition, collected military equipment, and dismantled heavy industry. The Allies used the dismantled industry as reparations. Cortazzi reports, "Equipment from 394 Japanese factories, which might be used as reparations for the countries conquered by the Japanese, was confiscated, and industries indirectly involved in the machinery of war were controlled and production limited."<sup>74</sup> The demilitarization of Japan went smoothly and was accomplished by the end of 1945. Unfortunately, the influx of so many veterans back in Japan caused its own set of problems as unemployment increased and the already stagnant economy showed no signs of recovery.<sup>75</sup>

While the general mood of most Americans was to punish the Japanese, and the Potsdam Declaration was firm in its points, for a document of occupational policy, it was not malevolent or crushing for the Japanese spirit.<sup>76</sup> Only those who had led the country to war would be punished. Potsdam Declaration Point 10 stated, "We do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners."<sup>77</sup> Strong feelings ran high for justice against Japanese war crimes and various Allies undertook their own tribunals to

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 253.

<sup>75</sup> Economic reconstruction will be discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

<sup>76</sup> "Japan's Fate," 1.

<sup>77</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, 413.

judge the guilty. In Japan, SCAP led the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), better known as the Tokyo war crimes trial or Tokyo Tribunal, which oversaw the trials of twenty-eight Japanese leaders for war crimes.<sup>78</sup> General MacArthur's decision to keep Emperor Hirohito as a stability piece for the occupation removed the Emperor from the war criminal list.

While he decided to not try Emperor Hirohito as a war criminal, MacArthur had no intention of leaving him with much power and viewed the demotion of the emperor from god to man and making him a ceremonial leader as the first step towards making Japan a democratic nation. On January 1, 1946, Emperor Hirohito denied his divinity, "We stand by the people and we wish always to share with them in their moment of joys and sorrows. The ties between us and our people have always stood upon mutual trust and affection. They do not depend upon mere legends and myths. They are not predicate on the false conception that the Emperor is divine and that the Japanese people are superior to other races and fated to rule the world."<sup>79</sup> MacArthur always intended to bring reform through "implementing them through the Emperor."<sup>80</sup> MacArthur recognized that keeping the Japanese emperor would be beneficial. George Kennan agreed, "there is no question that the Emperor is most useful. He is obeyed by officials and the people at large. He manifests sincerity in wishing to aid in the accomplishment of our general objectives and is seemingly more anxious to be democratic than some of the people around

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<sup>78</sup> John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton 1999), 443.

<sup>79</sup> Emperor's Imperial Rescript Denying His Divinity, January 1, 1946, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 471.

<sup>80</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 282.

him.”<sup>81</sup> The Japanese people turned to Emperor Hirohito for guidance and looked to see what he did and how he interacted with the Americans.

To have removed the Emperor from power completely would have satisfied the thirst for vengeance from some, yet Hirohito meant too much to the Japanese people and in a time of such drastic change the people needed a symbol of familiarity. MacArthur recalled, “I believed that if the Emperor was indicted, and perhaps hanged, as a war criminal, military government would have to be instituted throughout all Japan, and guerrilla warfare would probably break out.”<sup>82</sup> MacArthur exercised his power in choosing to build up Emperor Hirohito as the main stabilizing factor in Japan.<sup>83</sup> George Blakeslee reported at the time that many Japanese people “felt strongly that the institution of the Emperor should be retained, but that it should be modified so that it would come to be similar to that of the British crown.”<sup>84</sup> Unsurprisingly when a Japanese Gallup Poll asked the Japanese public whether or not they wanted to retain or remove the emperor an overwhelmingly 92% supported retaining the emperor.<sup>85</sup>

The Japanese had shown themselves to be willing to reform the Imperial institution of objectionable characteristics and leaders in Washington recognized that the majority still wanted to retain the emperor.<sup>86</sup> Concerning the Imperial institution, SWNCC 209/1 gave MacArthur the authority to “not take the initiative in advocating its complete elimination,” because “A monarchical form of government in Japan, if so modified as to be a peaceful and responsible

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<sup>81</sup> George Acheson Jr., The Acting Political Advisor in Japan (Acheson) to President Truman, Tokyo, January 4, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign relations of the United States, The Far East*, (1946), 90-91.

<sup>82</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 288.

<sup>83</sup> Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur*, 20.

<sup>84</sup> Report by Dr. George E. Blakeslee on the Far Eastern Commission's Trip to Japan, December 26, 1945-February 13, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946*, 165-166.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> SWNCC 209/1 Treatment of the Institution of the Emperor of Japan, Report by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Subcommittee for the Far East, *The Far East*, (1946), United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 200.

constitutional monarchy, would be consistent with American objectives in Japan.”<sup>87</sup> Ultimately, Article 1 of the new Japanese Constitution would declare, “The Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with who resides sovereign power.”<sup>88</sup>

With the emperor in a ceremonial role and Shintoism no longer the state religion, the biggest and last step in making Japan a democratic nation was the revision of its constitution.<sup>89</sup> Yet, the Potsdam Declaration provided only a generalized roadmap with the key goals to achieve. Further, SWNCC, “never formulated a consistent policy on rewriting the Japanese constitution.”<sup>90</sup> Polls revealed a growing grass roots democratic movement and a majority of Japanese favored constitutional revision and selecting a commission to carry out the revisions.<sup>91</sup>

The second part of Point 10 declared the occupation mission to establish democracy in Japan, “The Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought, as well as respect for the fundamental human rights, shall be established.”<sup>92</sup> A system would be installed to keep the Japanese people from becoming controlled by leaders who could mislead them again. The Japanese Constitution would exemplify and confirm these points for all Japanese. SWNCC 228 later clarified key points that the Japanese government should be reformed, “A government responsible to an electorate based upon wide representative suffrage;” “An executive branch of government deriving its authority from and responsible to the electorate or to a fully representative legislative body;” “A legislative body, fully representative of the

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Kyoko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution: A Linguistic and Cultural Study of Its Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 9.

<sup>89</sup> The end of State Shinto and the separation of shrine and state will be discussed in Chapter 3 of thesis.

<sup>90</sup> Kyoko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 273.

<sup>91</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 261-262.

<sup>92</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, 413.

electorate;” and the “Guarantee of fundamental civil rights to Japanese subjects and to all persons within Japanese jurisdictions.”<sup>93</sup> Yet, a plan as to how the constitution was to be revised was not explained.

Democracy had been introduced to Japan in the nineteenth century with the adoption of the Meiji Constitution in 1889, giving the Japanese a taste of western ideals. The Meiji Constitution, though appearing democratic, was not and maintained the Japanese feudal order. Prewar and wartime Japan constituted a totalitarian state intertwined with a tradition-guided society. Japanese social tradition was driven by relationships; every situation and interaction that the Japanese would encounter was based on the decorum of the relationship to the person or thing in question. The emperor was head of state but also worshipped, surrounded with a rich ritual tradition that tied into myth and superstition. Traditional Japan was backwards in its political and social institutions, superstitions and myths distorted and continued to have great sway over Japanese culture.<sup>94</sup> SCAP had a tough job breaking into a such a strong, resistant culture and society, but the devastation in Japan at the end of the war made its efforts easier.

MacArthur gave the Japanese leaders the opportunity to revise their constitution. The Japanese government appointed Matsumoto Joji, a distinguished Tokyo legal scholar, in October 1945 to head up the constitutional revision committee with the objective to protect the imperial institution.<sup>95</sup> The document they gave SCAP revealed democratic ideas were still slow to break into the traditional and conservative mold of the Japanese leadership. MacArthur was disappointed and described it as “nothing more than a rewording of the old Meiji constitution.”<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> SWNCC 288, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Far East*, (1946), 99.

<sup>94</sup> Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 655.

<sup>95</sup> Howard B. Schonberger, *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945-1952*, (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1989), 56.

<sup>96</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 300.

The biggest issue was the wording around the Emperor, who was still kept in a position of power. The second issue was that the basic rights of the people were not properly guaranteed and could be overridden by a return to totalitarianism. After reading this draft constitution, MacArthur and his advisers knew Japanese leaders would have to be more firmly guided in implementing democratic ideals. Fortunately for them, MacArthur had the will as well as the respect from the Japanese leaders and people to firmly show them the way into democracy.

The decision to put SCAP's Government Section in charge of writing a completely new democratic constitution for Japan arose out of several concerns MacArthur considered would slow or even stall the occupation's progress. MacArthur worried about the upcoming Diet election, procrastination on the part of the Japanese leadership, and possible filibustering in the Far East Commission.<sup>97</sup> The procrastination of the Japanese leadership was not only slowing the constitutional revision process down, it was risking the Imperial institution. Dower reveals, "MacArthur was galvanized into action because he believed such an initiative had become essential to protect the emperor," because "the government's ultraconservatism was imperiling the goal the old guard cherished most."<sup>98</sup> If the constitutional process happened to get drawn out longer than was necessary, the Imperial institution could very well be discarded.

Another problem dealt with time. Following MacArthur advice, the Japanese government had revised their voting laws and had called for a general election on April 10, 1946. MacArthur had expected the revised constitution to be ready by then, yet as the situation stood the Japanese people would have either voted for the old constitution or one that was basically the same. Because of delays in getting the constitution completed, MacArthur knew he needed to

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<sup>97</sup> Williams, *Japan's Political Revolution under MacArthur*, 105.

<sup>98</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 262.

accelerate the process and established a committee of twenty-four members to revise it.<sup>99</sup> The Government Section worked to produce a constitution that would incorporate Japan's Imperial Household, while also establishing a democratic system.

The United States had established the Far East Commission and Allied Council to give the Allies a window into the occupation. The Allied Council was not a problem for MacArthur since it met in Tokyo and was "under the chairmanship of the Supreme Commander (or his deputy) for the purpose of consulting with and advising the Supreme Commander."<sup>100</sup> The Far Eastern Commission's purpose was "To review, on the request of any member any directive issued to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or any action taken by the Supreme Commander involving policy decisions within the jurisdiction of the Commission."<sup>101</sup>

MacArthur feared that the Soviet Union might holdup the commission's review of the Japanese constitutional draft; therefore, he bypassed the Far East Commission. MacArthur's defense was that the Far Eastern Commission was a "policy making body with no executive power that it is not empowered to require prior approval of any action either by the Supreme Commander or the Japanese Government."<sup>102</sup> While representatives on the commission complained, they had no real authority over MacArthur and his autonomy remained intact.<sup>103</sup>

The SCAP constitutional draft was given to the Japanese cabinet on February 13, 1946, and it shocked the Japanese conservative leadership.<sup>104</sup> The new constitution took inspiration

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<sup>99</sup> Jennings, *The Road Ahead*, 18.

<sup>100</sup> Agreement of Foreign Ministers at Moscow on Establishing Far Eastern Commission and Allied Council for Japan, December 27, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 421-422.

<sup>101</sup> Agreement of Foreign Ministers at Moscow on Establishing Far Eastern Commission and Allied Council for Japan, December 27, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 421.

<sup>102</sup> Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Vincent) to the Secretary of State, Washington, April 19, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Far East*, (1946), 211-212.

<sup>103</sup> Schonberger, *Aftermath of War*, 48.

<sup>104</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 256..

from several constitutional models, but the American and British systems were dominant. The Japanese Constitution was ultimately a mix of monarchism, democratic idealism, and pacifism.<sup>105</sup> For example, Article 9 stated, “Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.”<sup>106</sup> Article 9 represented a dramatic switch in Japanese thought. The origin of Article 9 is disputed by American and Japanese scholars as some argue that the anti-war clause was pushed through by MacArthur’s personal wish to include it in the constitution, others contend that Charles Kade or Courtney Whitney were responsible, and some agree with MacArthur that Prime Minister Kijuro Shidehara proposed the idea in a meeting with the Supreme Commander on January 24, 1946. Regardless, Article 9 undoubtedly originated in Tokyo rather than Washington and would not have passed without MacArthur’s support.<sup>107</sup>

Several drafts would follow but no considerable changes were made, mostly rewording of particular words and phrases between the English and Japanese translations. MacArthur announced on March 6, 1946, to the Japanese people “It is with a sense of deep satisfaction that I am today able to announce a decision of the Emperor and the government of Japan to submit to the Japanese people a new and enlightened constitution which has my full approval.”<sup>108</sup> The new Japanese Constitution became effective on May 3, 1947, declaring Japan a democratic nation.<sup>109</sup> The whole constitutional process had taken just a year and half to complete. MacArthur stated,

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<sup>105</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 347.

<sup>106</sup> Inoue, *MacArthur’s Japanese Constitution*, 275.

<sup>107</sup> Schonberger, *Aftermath of War*, 58.

<sup>108</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 301.

<sup>109</sup> Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 171.

“Not only was I convinced that it was the most moral of ideas, but I knew that it was exactly what the Allies wanted at that time for Japan.”<sup>110</sup>

The new Japanese constitution gave the Japanese rights and liberties they either had not known or that had been restricted. A key foundation of a democratic nation is an independent and free press. A less examined success MacArthur achieved was the establishment of a free press in Japan. While Japan had no tradition of freedom of press, its media outlets often had some leeway. Laws related to the press that were enacted during the Meiji Period to strengthen control, were not initially strongly enforced. Prior to the rise of military control in Japan in the 1930s, the Japanese press found it preferable and profitable to remain politically neutral.<sup>111</sup> Unfortunately, with the laws in place for government control the press was in a potentially vulnerable position to be manipulated and controlled. Coughlin illustrates this by explaining that by the 1930s, “a situation ripe for any group in power which wished to take advantage of it.”<sup>112</sup> When the Japanese militarists started their rise to power, two factors contributed to their hold on power through the press: first, the widespread low literacy rates among the Japanese population and second, newspapers provided the main source of news for the people.<sup>113</sup> Because of these factors, it was easy for the militarists to control what information they allowed the press to share with the Japanese public.

After Japan surrendered, MacArthur directed one of his first non-military directives to the Japanese press on September 10, 1945. It ordered the government “to prevent the dissemination of news, through newspapers, radio broadcasting or other means of publication, which fails to

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<sup>110</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 304.

<sup>111</sup> William J. Coughlin, *Conquered Press: The MacArthur Era in Japanese Journalism* (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books, 1952), 5.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

adhere to the truth, or which disturbs the public tranquility.” He then threatened, “The Supreme Commander will suspend any publication or radio station which publishes information that fails to adhere to the truth or disturbs public tranquility.” MacArthur did guarantee “there shall be an absolute minimum of restrictions upon freedom of speech.”<sup>114</sup> Unfortunately, the press initially ignored several orders from SCAP to change its approach.<sup>115</sup>

The Supreme Commander cracked down on September 14: the newspaper *Domei* was ordered to stop all oversea broadcasts in English, French, Spanish, and Chinese, but later was shut down permanently. Coughlin notes, “The next day, the nation’s news leaders were assembled to be told that a 100 per cent censorship would be effective at once.”<sup>116</sup> SCAP was showing its might, Colonel Donald Hoover, chief of censorship, told the group of assembled news leaders that MacArthur was displeased with their adherence to the directive and that the latitude shown in the directive could not be entrusted to them because of their untruthful news. He explained, “The tone of the colored news you have been presenting to the public gives the impression that the Supreme Commander has been negotiating with the Japanese government,” Hoover said, “There are no negotiations...the Supreme Commander will dictate orders to the Japanese government. He will not negotiate with it.”<sup>117</sup>

This was the first time MacArthur demonstrated that he had complete autonomy and power as Supreme Commander and that the Japanese would adhere to SCAP directives. MacArthur showed the Japanese news leaders that the occupation would lead with a steel fist, language that they understood. MacArthur had started with a very reasonable censor for the press

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<sup>114</sup> Office of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Harold Fair, Lt. Col., A.G.D., Assist. Adjutant General, *Conquered Press*, Appendix, September 10, 1945.

<sup>115</sup> Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 20.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>117</sup> Text of Statement of Colonel Donald Hoover, Chief of Censorship of the Army Counter-Intelligence Service in *Conquered Press*, Appendix, September 15, 1945.

until the Japanese press forced his hand. In order to create an independent and democratic press, the Japanese press had to be censored. The *Domei* was allowed to continue domestic services, yet on September 18 the newspaper *Asahi* was suspended for forty-eight hours for saying the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan went against international law and that the Japanese occupation of the Philippines was like the American occupation in Japan. Next, the newspaper *Nippon Times* was suspended for twenty-four hours for not sending their printed editions to be checked by the censors.<sup>118</sup> The road to a free and independent Japanese press was not easy.

Progress was forthcoming though and SCAP was patient and even helped train the Japanese pressmen in the ways of a democratic press. Given the extent to which the Japanese press had been controlled by the government and for so long, the transformation was bewildering for many Japanese newsmen who had to adjust to the new system. Coughlin writes, “What appeared to the Occupation authorities in the early days as a defiant attitude by a reactionary press often was honest confusion as to what line the Allies wished the press to follow.”<sup>119</sup> Coming from a controlled press without any experience on how to be an independent press, Japanese newsmen needed training.

Beginning in October 1945, SCAP held a number of conferences with Japanese newsmen and editors to prepare them. MacArthur laid out a five point program to eliminate government control and or interest in the press and Japanese newspapers, ending special subsidies for particular newspapers (this led to the demise of *Domei*), and that the government allow foreign news services and provide facilities for them to serve the Japanese press.<sup>120</sup> MacArthur stated this was “to further encourage the liberal tendencies in Japan and establish free access to the

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<sup>118</sup> Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 21.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-24.

news sources of the world.”<sup>121</sup> This breakdown of the established Japanese press and the creation of a new, more independent and free one was a big achievement of SCAP and MacArthur.

In the first two months of the American occupation, MacArthur had moved quickly to establish a blueprint for the Japanese press. The press still struggled with moving past the old system, reporting on news was irregular and the old arrogance still pervaded the news services, but the blueprint showed that the Japanese press would be transformed. For example, “Japanese readers learned for the first time in the newspaper *Mainichi* on September 20, 1945, the full story of the 1937 rape of Nanking.”<sup>122</sup> The *Mainichi* asserted that Japanese atrocities at Nanking ruined efforts of promoting friendly relations with China stating the truth of Nanking had been suppressed during the war.<sup>123</sup> There was still a reluctance to name war criminals as the press was towing the line of least resistance, as the government’s grip on the press was not yet broken.

Then on October 4, 1945, the “Bill of Rights” directive was issued, and where it pertained to the press it forbade the government from revoking freedom of thought and speech, opened up conversation about the Emperor and the government, and lifted restrictions on information. Coughlin concludes, “The SCAP censorship of the press for nearly three years was an unfortunate but necessary evil. It often was maladministered, but no permanent harm was done. There can be no doubt that, even after actual censorship was eliminated, Occupation attitudes greatly influenced the press.”<sup>124</sup> MacArthur created an independent and free press by censoring the old Japanese press and training them how to be democratic and free to report on stories that needed to be reported published.

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<sup>121</sup> Disassociation of Press from Government, Office of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in *Conquered Press*, Appendix, September 24, 1945.

<sup>122</sup> Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 23.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

Nation-building in Japan worked in part because the American occupation did not have to start from the ground up in reconstructing the country's political system. Though much of Japan's infrastructure was in ruins from American bombing, the imperial political system was still intact. All that was needed was to reform the system and establish democratic principles with the Japanese leaders and people. The plan for the occupation of Japan was reasonable and fair. The American occupation was a turning point for Japan that removed the old rigid imperial impediments to parliamentary democracy. The new Japanese Constitution delivered democracy to the Japanese, yet did not immensely change Japan from the outside. The emperor became a ceremonial head of state, Shintoism remained a dominant force in the lives of many Japanese; but was no longer the state religion, and the rights of all Japanese were guaranteed. Plus, the anti-war clause in the constitution developed a nation around pacifist ideals that would demonstrate an incredible growth in the Japanese people. The reformed Japanese press also obtained the tools to be an independent organization responsible to the Japanese people to keep them rightfully informed. Japan still kept its culture and many social aspects intact though the nation would change from the inside through the leaders and people.

The political reconstruction of the Japanese government in making the emperor a symbol, disenfranchising State Shinto and guaranteeing religious freedom, and the new Japanese constitution reveal the genius of MacArthur. He set out to revolutionize the Japanese political institution and he did exactly that. Plus, MacArthur gave the new Japanese political system an independent, democratic press. MacArthur's wise leadership laid the foundation for the American-Japanese friendship and alliance. The Japanese were able to maintain a level of respect and dignity through showing respect and fealty to the occupations policies. The reforms that MacArthur initiated pushed Japan toward democracy. MacArthur took the initiative where it

counted to achieve his goals and fulfill his objectives. The Japanese people's rebuilding and restructuring of their political system together with the leadership of MacArthur brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability during the Cold War.

## Chapter Two: The Reconstruction of Japan's Economy

The destruction of Japan's infrastructure and the loss of all of the country's territorial holdings was devastating to the Japanese economy. The destruction left millions without adequate shelter and the country was in a desperate food crisis. John Dower states, "Sixty-six major cities, including Hiroshima and Nagasaki, had been heavily bombed, destroying 40 percent of these urban areas overall and rendering around 30 percent of their populations homeless."<sup>1</sup> The devastation of war overall left fifteen million Japanese homeless as there was a desperate housing shortage of 4,500,000 buildings.<sup>2</sup> Many Japanese left the cities and returned to family farms to work and for shelter. As the Japanese began to rebuild their nation, the devastation caused "a loss of idealism and an aimlessness" in Japanese society, "a condition that would not be overcome until the economic boom in later decades provided a new source of pride for the Japanese public."<sup>3</sup> Japan faced seemingly insurmountable problems, but a combination of SCAP initiatives, Japanese internal reforms, changing ideas, and the start of the Cold War placed Japan on a path towards economic prosperity by the mid-1950s.

Japan's economy would be rebuilt in the aftermath of the war so that the country could be prosperous and successful. Potsdam Declaration Point 11 stated, "Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those which would enable her to re-arm for war."<sup>4</sup> The Japanese economy would be rebuilt along the American competitive, free enterprise system. American anti-trust and anti-monopoly legislation would be transplanted to Japan. A SCAP statement to the Japanese

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<sup>1</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 45.

<sup>2</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 5; and Lawrence S. Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan," *Pacific Historical Review* 40, no. 1 (1971): 85.

<sup>3</sup> Ray Salvatore Jennings, *The Road Ahead*, 19.

<sup>4</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 413.

government explained, “The democratization of Japanese economic institutions to the end that monopolistic industrial controls be revised through the development of methods which tend to insure a wide distribution of income and ownership of the means of production and trade.”<sup>5</sup>

Unemployment, high inflation, food shortages, and a war-torn economic infrastructure were all serious problems facing SCAP. Besides those issues the Japanese economy was short on raw materials and trade partners. Japan’s aggression had antagonized many countries; therefore, the wounds of war would need time to heal. The United States became the primary trade partner of Japan during the occupation working to stimulate the economy and solve the major problems hindering economic recovery.

MacArthur and his advisers realized early on that reparation payments in the form of Japan’s industrial material would cripple economic recovery. In the end some industrial material was shipped abroad as reparation payments, but it was a much smaller amount than originally planned.<sup>6</sup> MacArthur believed “every pound of material so removed is a reduction in the resources available to support the stabilization program” of the Japanese economy.<sup>7</sup> The goal was not to cripple Japan for the next several decades nor keep the nation dependent on U.S. money and resources. Robert B. Cochrane of *The New York Times* pointed out, “The equipment used in many heavy industries is easily convertible to less warlike uses. The machine tools so important in war production are equally important in the manufacture of articles urgently needed for peacetime living. It is important for the Allies to see the Japanese become self-supporting as

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<sup>5</sup> Statement to the Japanese Government Concerning Required Reforms, October 11, 1945, 741.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas MacArthur General MacArthur’s Remarks at Lunch, March 1, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, Volume VI, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 654-655.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum by the Chief of the Division of Northeast Asian Affairs (Bishop) to the Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Butterworth), Washington, December 17, 1948, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 1064.

quickly as possible, despite the battering they have received.”<sup>8</sup> George Kennan agreed, “the idea of removing industrial equipment from Japan for shipment to other Far Eastern countries, as conceived in the reparations schemes discussed to date, is—without overstatement—sheer nonsense from the practical standpoint and basically inconsistent with the requirements of Japanese recovery.”<sup>9</sup> Japan basically required all that was left of its industry to provide even a basic living standard.<sup>10</sup>

The first disaster the American occupying force had to address was the food crisis in Japan. George Atcheson Jr. summarized the crisis, “In the dire straits of the Japanese people today, political development depends upon solution of the problems of food, shelter and clothing. Today political education and experience in the practice of democracy are impeded by the preoccupation of the people with their economic distress.”<sup>11</sup> Donald D. Kennedy reported on February 26, 1946, “There is general agreement that the food situation in Japan will be extremely serious in the spring and summer.”<sup>12</sup> MacArthur reported in May 1946 to Herbert Hoover, Chairman of the Famine Emergency Committee, “SCAP is convinced that the mass starvation in prospect in Japan in the event that adequate imports are not secured will make it impossible to achieve the major objectives of the occupation.”<sup>13</sup> Japan was used to importing 15-20% of its food to supplement what it could produce on its own, but with foreign trade restricted the

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<sup>8</sup> Robert B Cochrane, “Democracy Touch To Be Given Japan: Occupation Forces' Main Job Is To End Old Nippon Ways Democracy Touch To Be Given Japan By Occupation Forces,” *The Sun*, (Aug 24, 1945), 2.

<sup>9</sup> Explanatory Notes by Mr. George F. Kennan, March 25, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 716.

<sup>10</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 253.

<sup>11</sup> George Atcheson Jr., The Acting Political Advisor in Japan (Atcheson) to President Truman, Tokyo, January 4, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, The Far East*, 88.

<sup>12</sup> The Chief of the Division of International Resources (Kennedy) to the Director of the Office of Requirements, Department of Agriculture (FitzGerald), Washington, February 26, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, The Far East*, 149.

<sup>13</sup> Report of Japan’s Food Situation for Herbert Hoover, May 6, 1946, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 749.

nation's devastated agricultural sector was not producing enough food for Japan's population of seventy million people. SCAP estimated that the majority of the Japanese would be resigned to an average 700 calories per day for the period of May through September 1946 if something was not done to help.<sup>14</sup> In mid-1946 MacArthur ordered that over 500,000 tons of rice from the Australian forces in Japan be released to help the Japanese until the next harvest and offered more assistance in the coming years.<sup>15</sup> MacArthur was fully aware that until the food crisis was resolved the work of democratization would be impeded as the Japanese people were too busy just trying to survive.

Besides timely reminders and cajoling, MacArthur and the other American authorities offered tangible assistance to solve the crisis. MacArthur reminded Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida in March 1947 it was "the responsibility of the Japanese Government to maintain a firm control over wages and prices and to initiate and maintain a strict rationing program for essential commodities in short supply so as to insure that such commodities are equitably distributed." The crisis would continue MacArthur added, "Unless determined measures are undertaken at once by the Japanese Government."<sup>16</sup> Corruption and the black market exacerbated the crisis and often made food only available for exorbitant prices. To help alleviate the crisis and put Japan's food supply on sounder footing, the United States provided regular food shipments through 1952. As examples, Japan received \$392 million in American food aid in 1948 and \$429 million in 1949. With this money, Japan was able "to increase food imports to 1.7 million tons in 1948

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 258.

<sup>16</sup> General of the Army Douglas MacArthur to the Japanese Prime Minister (Yoshida), Tokyo, March 22, 1947, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, The Far East*, 191-192.

and to 2.4 million tons in 1949.”<sup>17</sup> By 1949 the worst of the food crisis was over, but food rationing was kept in effect until 1952 when the occupation ended.

The next immediate problem in the Japanese economy was unemployment. The destruction caused by American bombing to Japanese businesses, factories, and SCAP’s shut-downs of the war-related industries, dealt significant blows to economic opportunities. Unemployment jumped to double digits, even before two million Japanese servicemen stationed on the home islands retired from service joined the job market by the end of 1945. Then in 1946, another six million servicemen came home from abroad. Around three million former servicemen and jobless urbanites returned to family farms to work, but there were still ten million unemployed seeking jobs in a shattered and broken economy that gave no signs of revival and hope of economic opportunity.<sup>18</sup> Fortunately, help was on the way, and one source of employment for the Japanese was the occupation itself.

The occupation helped ease some unemployment as many Japanese were hired as laborers, carpenters and cooks. Akira Tani recalls, “I worked for two years at the American military camp, the first six months cleaning up and preparing food. Then I was promoted to cook.” Tani continues, “My salary was 13,400 yen per month. And I got three full meals free every day.” He remarks, “The average pay for someone just graduating from high school then was about 3,500 yen a month.”<sup>19</sup> During the food crisis such a job was a luxury. Tani recalls, “I got this job because I cut the meat the way the Americans liked it. But they still didn’t trust us completely. There were two of us Japanese cooks, but we were never on the same shift, so we never worked together. There would always be one American cook working with one Japanese,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 89.

<sup>19</sup> Tani, Akira, Beppu, Oita Prefecture, Japan, Many 1, 2012, interview, in Porter and Porter, *Japanese Reflections on World War II and the American Occupation*, 194.

never two Japanese together.”<sup>20</sup> The benefits of working for the Americans meant food and money. It also eventually helped the mistrust between the Americans and Japanese to fade.

One of the critical ways that MacArthur wanted to tackle the unemployment problem was through land reform. Land reform became one of MacArthur’s most instrumental and successful directives. Because many Japanese were farmers and millions of former soldiers and civilians moved from devastated cities to the countryside, MacArthur knew that the feudal land system had to change. The purpose of land reform was to reduce overcrowding and eliminate unfavorable conditions for tenants. “<sup>21</sup> Since the Potsdam Declaration stated nothing about altering Japan’s feudal land policy, MacArthur used the autonomy he possessed to take the initiative to institute land reform, seeing it as a necessary step in Japan’s democratic journey.

SCAP issued Directive *Rural Land Reform* on December 9, 1945, asserting:

“In order that the Imperial Japanese Government shall remove economic obstacles to the revival and strengthening of the democratic tendencies, establish respect for the dignity of man, and destroy the economic bondage which has enslaved the Japanese farmer to centuries of feudal oppression, the Japanese Imperial Government is directed to take measures to insure that those who till the soil of Japan shall have a more equal opportunity to enjoy the fruits of their labor.”<sup>22</sup>

Through land reform MacArthur was able to achieve not only the furtherance of democratic idealism amongst the Japanese population, he was also able to strengthen the humanity in the Japanese for respect, dignity, and equality between themselves. The Japanese government handled the business of purchasing land from landowners and selling it at pre-set prices to former tenants.<sup>23</sup> MacArthur showed his enthusiasm when the Japanese government put the land reform directive into law, “I have studied with satisfaction the measure for rural land reform

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Rural Land Reform, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 575.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Comment on Proposed Rural Land Reform Proposals, August 14, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 753.

adopted by the Cabinet” and “it is gratifying that the present government has shown the courage and determination to strike at the roots of an archaic landlord system... “I am convinced that these measures which the Cabinet has drafted and approved will finally and surely tear from the soils of the Japanese countryside the blight of feudal landlordism which has fed on the unrewarded toil of millions of Japanese farmers.” SCAP estimated that almost two million Japanese farmers, previously tenants, would be able to purchase their own land. The long-term effect was Japanese farmers organized thousands of farming cooperatives with the support of the government to break up the feudal system of land ownership.<sup>24</sup>

Land reform encouraged the spread of democratic fervor amongst the rural population and strengthened conservative and moderate support in rural Japan. By addressing this issue MacArthur removed from the chess board an issue that the communists could have used to destabilize the nation. When the Japanese government land bill was passed on October 11, 1946, MacArthur stated, “Japan may be credited with a contribution which should profoundly and beneficially influence the course of human society” ... “those who till the land shall reap the profit from their toil” ... “There can be no firmer foundation for a sound and moderate democracy and no firmer bulwark against the pressure of any extreme philosophy.”<sup>25</sup> Land reform was completed between the beginning of 1946 and the end of 1948. The government reallocated two million acres and reduced the amount of rented land from forty-six to ten percent. Eiji notes, “By the end of the reform, 90 per cent of all land under crops was being cultivated by independent growers, and the number of landless tenants had declined to a mere 7 per cent of farm producers.”<sup>26</sup> With this one reform, Japan had taken a big step in its journey as a

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<sup>24</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 192.

<sup>25</sup> On Diet Passage of the Land Reform Bill, October 11, 1945, 760.

<sup>26</sup> Takemae, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 344.

democratic nation. MacArthur revolutionized the land system by democratizing it and preventing the issue from becoming a foothold that the communists could use to stir up dissent in the nation.

Just as land ownership concentrated in the hands of a few had been a problem, another critical issue was the dominance of Japan's industry by just a few families. SCAP set out to dissolve these Japanese family-controlled companies, or zaibatsu, to develop the Japanese economy into a more competitive, free enterprise system. American leaders wanted to transplant anti-trust, anti-monopoly reform to Japan. Issued on November 6, 1945, SCAP directive *Deconcentration of Economic Power* stated, "It is the intention of the Supreme Commander to dissolve the private industrial, commercial, financial, and agricultural combines in Japan, and to eliminate undesirable interlocking directorates and undesirable intercorporate security ownership."<sup>27</sup> The purposes were to bring about a greater distribution of income and means of production and trade, to encourage the growth of economic institutions that would develop through peaceful trade, and to provide equal opportunities for companies and individuals to compete in the market.<sup>28</sup>

There were four main zaibatsu of particular interest to MacArthur: Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sumitomo, and Yasuda. SCAP and the American government wanted to dissolve these four zaibatsu since they were convinced they had been in league with the militarists. Besides the Big Four, six other big zaibatsu controlled a large chunk of the Japanese economy. They were Asano, Furukawa, Nissan, Okura, Nomura, and Nakajima. In 1945 these ten zaibatsu controlled 49% of mining, machinery, shipbuilding, and chemicals; 50% of banking, 60% of insurance, and 61% of shipping.<sup>29</sup> SCAP turned first to voluntary dissolution, but that did not work very well.

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<sup>27</sup> Deconcentration of Economic Power, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 565.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 225-226.

Mitsubishi resisted; Mitsui and Sumitomo stalled for time; and Yasuda proposed a plan for limited dissolution.<sup>30</sup> The Yasuda Plan proposed that the holding companies be disbanded and family members resign from their positions in the large subsidiaries; however, it called for leaving the subsidiaries and their affiliates and subcontractors intact, which was an important part of the structure of the zaibatsu.<sup>31</sup> Eiji remarks, “The Yasuda Plan was patently self-serving and full of loopholes, a transparent ‘easy-out’ for the zaibatsu.”<sup>32</sup> Despite its shortcomings, SCAP would ultimately adopt the Yasuda Plan for the dissolution of all the zaibatsu.

Established in 1946 by SCAP, the Holding Company Liquidation Commission oversaw the process of dissolution of the zaibatsu. SCAP, Eiji concludes, “set out to dispose of the shares of 83 holding companies. A total of 16 were dissolved, among them all 10 of the major zaibatsu family companies. Some 26 conglomerates were dismantled and then restructured. Eleven were reorganized, and the remaining 30 were left intact.”<sup>33</sup> After beginning the process of dissolving the zaibatsu, Washington grew concerned that the Japanese economy was recovering too slowly and decided that it actually needed the zaibatsu in order to achieve a complete recovery.<sup>34</sup> With the Cold War beginning between the United States and Soviet Union, MacArthur and other American government officials recognized that the west needed a self-sustaining Japanese economy that could hold its own and resist the spread of communism. MacArthur received the word from Washington to pull the plug on the zaibatsu directive in mid-1948.

The Holding Company Liquidation Commission “ultimately designated a mere 18 of the 325 largest non-finance subsidiaries slated for disbanding as ‘excessively concentrated.’ Of the

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<sup>30</sup> Takemae, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 344.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 335.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 336.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

18, only 11 were actually divided into smaller firms; four had their stock holdings liquidated, three had some of their industrial assets dispersed; and, for a period thereafter, Mitsui and Mitsubishi were prohibited from using their corporate trademarks.”<sup>35</sup> The desire to dissolve the zaibatsu was a democratic policy to fulfill Japan’s economic transformation. Unfortunately, the American zeal for anti-trust, anti-monopoly reform did not translate to the Japanese, who did not share the same ideal for unconcentrated, competitive economics. Unlike in America, the Japanese did not view trusts and monopolies with suspicion nor had a problem with industrial centralization. It also came down to money since the United States was pumping millions of dollars into the Japanese economy and was seeing little return for its investment. A true transformation of the Japanese economy in the direction that American leaders in Washington wanted would have taken longer than they realized.<sup>36</sup> The Cold War took the attention and focus and the United States needed a stable and prosperous Japan so it could divert its focus and resources where it needed too.

While the effort to dissolve the zaibatsu was short-lived, it still had a positive impact. While many of the zaibatsu that were broken up in the early years of the occupation reunited afterwards, they were neither as strong nor as large as they once had been.<sup>37</sup> When the Holding Company Liquidation Commission forced the sale of shares, many investors, unrelated to the zaibatsu families, were able to become shareholders. As Japan’s economy eventually grew, the new investors saw the value of their shares increase and they gained more of a role in the businesses.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the development of the labor union and Social Democratic

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 461.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 336.

<sup>37</sup> Kawai, *Japan’s American Interlude*, 158.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

movements also placed restraints on the zaibatsu.<sup>39</sup> Despite the continued existence of the zaibatsu, SCAP's efforts as well as the evolution of Japan's labor movement helped to democratize Japan's economy and push it towards greater prosperity.

As Japan's economy was rebuilt an important question arose amongst SCAP planners: what industries should Japan invest in? Japan had been one of the top three textile producers in the world before the war.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, textile plants were easy and cheap to set up. Thus, the textile industry was reestablished in Japan, but they faced definite limits. Roberson points out, "textile mills needed semiskilled workers, and Japan had millions of skilled workers."<sup>41</sup> While important, Japan needed some other industries in addition to textiles. To help jumpstart Japanese industry SCAP encouraged and stimulated Japanese entrepreneurship. Many small businesses that would grow into big companies got their start from this drive. One of the first industries to see growth was the manufacture of cameras. With improvements to the camera made possible by war-time technology, the Japanese took over the camera market which previously had been Germany's domain.<sup>42</sup> Japanese cameras would become recognizable across the world from Casio, Canon, Nikon, Pentax, and Panasonic. While camera manufacturing became a key industry, Japanese leaders recognized they needed other industries to generate a flourishing economy.

The success of the camera industry encouraged Japanese industrialists to consider other products. The key to Japan's new industries was that they needed to require only a small amount of raw resources to import while producing a product for export that could return a large profit. Plus, skilled labor was also an important consideration. For example, Honda Katsu-ichiro started

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Roberson, "Rebuilding A Nation," in *Japan from Shogun to Sony*, 171.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

putting small motors on bicycles in 1946 and the popularity led to the bike “Dream” in 1949 and the beginning of Honda Motor Company. Ibuka Masaru who owned an electronics company that had produced communications equipment during the war started producing “shortwave transmissions to normal broadcasting frequencies, which was the beginning of Sony.”<sup>43</sup> Honda and Ibuka’s efforts, as well as the work of others, led to the development of the modern Japan that the world knows. Automobiles became a fast growing industry and companies such as Toyota, Honda, Mitsubishi, and Nissan became major players in the world market. Japanese businesses looked to industries that demanded skilled workers, thus automobiles, motorcycles, communication equipment, and electronics became staples of the new Japanese economy. Sustainability, economic recovery, and stabilization were themes of Japan’s reconstruction when considering new industries.

Another critical postwar problem was the degeneration of the Japanese currency that had caused a complete collapse in purchasing power for the Japanese people. Clayton states, “Raging inflation further diminished the already meager purchasing power of the masses: the yen dropped to less than a hundredth of its worth in late 1941, and Bank of Japan notes in circulation rose from Y4.7 billion in December 1941 to Y28.6 billion in August 1945 and Y50 billion four months later.”<sup>44</sup> The high inflation caused a breakdown in the Japanese social order.

As the yen became basically worthless many Japanese traveled to the countryside to barter their precious possessions for food supplies or turned to the black market. What could not be obtained through barter or the black market was gained through force or thievery.<sup>45</sup> Professor Shiroshi Nasu of the Tokyo Imperial University and consultant for SCAP, estimated that Japan

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<sup>43</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 225-226.

<sup>44</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 5.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

had “lost one-third of its wealth and from one-third to one half of its total potential income,” which brought the present income to “less than one-half of the pre-war level.” Nasu remarked that while “The rural population in Japan, comprising 40% of the population, has a present standard of living about 65% of the pre-war level; the non-rural, about 35% of its pre-war level; and the nation as a whole,” were at “about one-half of the pre-war level.”<sup>46</sup> Japan desperately needed financial assistance.

MacArthur issued a directive to help the Japanese government reign in the currency problem. He explained that the directive had a “series of objectives designed to achieve fiscal, monetary, price and wage stability in Japan as rapidly as possible, as well as to maximize production for export.”<sup>47</sup> Schaller illustrates, “Although neither the Japanese government nor the American authorities exercised effective control over the money supply, a shortage of raw materials and diminished purchasing power depressed production to less than half the 1930-1934 level.”<sup>48</sup> The Japanese currency continued to suffer and the crisis increased the danger of undoing everything that SCAP was working to achieve, so an expert was brought in to advise SCAP on the financial issues.

The key to solving Japan’s currency crisis was the Dodge Plan, named after Joseph M. Dodge, a Detroit banker, who was appointed by Washington to advise SCAP. Washington sent several missions to Japan to study different aspects of the nation from economics to education when experts were needed to help SCAP. The Dodge Mission arrived in Japan in early 1948 and

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<sup>46</sup> Report by Dr. George E. Blakeslee on the Far Eastern Commission’s Trip to Japan, December 26, 1945-February 13, 1946, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, The Far East*, 165.

<sup>47</sup> SCAP Letter to Prime Minister on Stabilization, Press Release Issued on December 19 by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Tokyo, December 19, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 1066-1067.

<sup>48</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 114.

was the second mission to investigate Japanese financial issues. MacArthur disapproved of the first mission, but accepted Dodge's recommendations, even though they were not very different. The Dodge Plan called for fairly draconian actions, but necessary steps. Cortazzi explains, "These included a demand that the Japanese government should balance the national budget, should terminate the inflationary loans made by the Reconstruction Finance Bank, should decrease government intervention in the private economy through subsidies and price controls, should return foreign trade to private hands and should then establish a realistic exchange rate of 360 yen to the US dollar."<sup>49</sup> SCAP adopted the Dodge Plan in 1948 and while tough medicine, it helped stabilize the yen and set the Japanese economy on the road to recovery by the early 1950s.

While the Dodge Plan stabilized the currency crisis the deficit in raw materials for the Japanese economy increased and the diminished purchasing power because of the lack of dollars, only worsened. Schaller reports, "The American Army financed relief shipments valued from \$350 to \$400 million per year," yet these shipments consisted of necessity goods not raw materials.<sup>50</sup> Such shipments were a godsend to the Japanese and eased the economic depression on necessity goods, yet economic recovery and sustainability continued to suffer. Clayton points out, "by the time MacArthur left Japan the United States had provided over \$2 billion in relief and welfare goods and services to Japan."<sup>51</sup> The Japanese economy needed raw materials to function and without territorial holdings it had to import them. This proved more difficult as many European countries were not in a condition to export or did not want to trade with Japan. Asian countries were too poor or again did not want to trade with Japan because the wounds of

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>51</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 156.

war needed time to heal. Just as the Marshall Plan changed the economies of Western Europe, the Economic Recovery in Occupied Areas program for Japan emerged as the major solution to this problem.

The Economic Recovery program developed from growing concerns about the expansion of communism. Japan's slow recovery mirrored many of the economic difficulties that drove the development of the Marshall Plan. More so than most leaders in the Truman administration, MacArthur feared the expansion of communism into Asia and believed something similar to the Marshall Plan was needed for Asia. He believed that "an integrated and expanding program of American aid for Asia" was important not just for Japan but also for other Asian nations to keep them from falling to the Communist Bloc. Such an aid program would help stabilize the "political and economic conditions in the Far East" while permitting "the necessary expansion of trade." Also, it was necessary that Japan "be increasingly free to conduct its own foreign commerce and engage in merchant shipping" and "the Japanese government and people will take the necessary steps in internal policy to accelerate production and maximize exports." MacArthur believed that "Japan's internal economy will be effectively stabilized," as long as there would be "a speedy and acceptable solution of the reparations problem" including "no international trade discrimination against Japan or opposition to her freedom to engage in world trade."<sup>52</sup> In a conversation with George Kennan in March 1948, MacArthur discussed the importance of a sustainable Japanese economy as the key to Japan's prosperity. Kennan noted MacArthur "agreed with the view that this should be made a primary objective of occupational policy but did not know what he could do today that he was not already doing to achieve it. The

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<sup>52</sup> William H. Draper, Jr., The Acting Secretary of the Army (Draper) to the Acting Secretary of State, Washington, December 14, 1948, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 1062.

problem depended, in the main, on the development of foreign trade.”<sup>53</sup> MacArthur pointed out, “Japanese industry and commerce are not yet sufficient to sustain the Japanese economy,” thus “a much greater effort must be made to bring about the attainment of a self-supporting Japan with a reasonable standard of living.”<sup>54</sup> Japan did not have much in terms of natural resources, thus it always had to rely on trade to obtain the raw materials it needed. MacArthur understood that “Economic facts of Japan’s life dictate that Japan must trade to live and therefore must finally end up where and with whom she can earn a living.”<sup>55</sup> Japan needed access to world trade to survive, especially the markets of the other democratic countries.<sup>56</sup> The United States was in a prime position to influence and benefit from the growth of Asian economics and also secure the region against communist aggression. The United States did become the primary trade partner to Japan and what might have started out as a necessary step in the nation’s recovery developed into a strong trade partnership.

Japanese exports struggled to compete in world trade and were mostly limited to the United States and Western Europe. Regulation put in place by the United States, lasting until the 1970s, restricted trade with China. Southeast Asia remained too poor and underdeveloped plus anti-Japanese to be reliable trade partners in raw materials and exports.<sup>57</sup> The dollar gap continued to grow since Japan’s imports greatly outweighed its exports. Schaller asserts, “The acute dollar shortage arose from the fact that although Japan exported about 66 percent of its

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<sup>53</sup> Conversation Between General of the Army MacArthur and Mr. George F. Kennan, March 5, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 702.

<sup>54</sup> Douglas MacArthur General MacArthur’s Remarks at Lunch, March 1, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *ibid.*, 654-655.

<sup>55</sup> Telegram from the Embassy in Japan to the Department of State, Douglas MacArthur, Tokyo, December 16, 1960, United States Department of State. LaFantasie, Glenn W., Editor, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Japan; Korea*, 418.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 391.

foreign sales to Asian nations and colonies, almost 90 percent of its imports came from the United States.”<sup>58</sup> The imbalance in Japanese imports and exports meant that Japan brought in soft nonconvertible currencies with their exports, but required hard dollars to buy their imports, thus creating a dollar gap. The Economic Recovery in Occupied Areas program for Japan really helped to solve the dollar gap.

When the United States decided it needed the emergence of an economically strong Japan in the Cold War, Japan’s economy took a significant step to recovery. The start of the Korean War in 1950 proved a tremendous boost for Japanese economy as it decreased the unemployment rate as its businesses and factories increased output. Japan’s location was key, it served Japan’s military and defense industries well to supply American forces with what they needed in Korea. Samuels writes, “Within a month [of the start of the war in June 1950], more than 850 installations, including over 300 aircraft plants were returned by SCAP to Japanese owners and licensed to produce military products.”<sup>59</sup> Japan’s support for the United States and United Nations forces in the Korean War put in on the path to be politically independent, economically stable, and contributing to its own defense and that of other free nations of the Pacific.<sup>60</sup> In fact, because of American needs in the Korean and Vietnam War, Japan received approximately \$500 million annually over twenty years cementing its recovery.<sup>61</sup>

The destruction of World War II and the loss of life made the Japanese accept the anti-war clause in their new constitution unconditionally. Except for a Japanese Defense Force and American military bases providing security, the Japanese were content to focus on economic

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>60</sup> James A. Huston, “Defense Assistance to the Philippines, Indochina, Japan,” In *Outposts and Allies: 1945-1953*, (London: Susquehanna University Press, 1988), 247.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

prosperity and growth. Roberson writes, “By October 1950, production in certain industries had risen to the level of prewar days. By 1955, Japanese production overall was equal to prewar, and the growth of several new industries was yet to come.”<sup>62</sup> Japan’s industrial comeback from economic disaster in 1945 to only ten years later boasting prewar economic levels is astounding. Samuels explains, “Weapons sales of 7 million yen in 1952 grew to 15 billion yen in 1954, and overall the U.S. military spent \$140 million in Japan between 1952 and 1954.”<sup>63</sup> While the Japanese would not fight wars, they would be a producer for their American ally. The road to economic prosperity and success for Japan began in 1950 and it became one of the world’s strongest economies over the coming decades.<sup>64</sup>

While the Cold War raged around Japan, the Japanese people with no military-industrial complex to fund, put their efforts into building a specialized technological commercial economy. The key to Japanese prosperity would be industries that required small amounts of raw materials to import, while the finished product would bring in large profits. Within in two decades Japanese cars were showing up on American and other nations roads. When the camera buzz of the late twentieth century hit, Japanese cameras dominated the market. Japanese electronics were put into many products in the decades to come including the new high tech military weapons produced during the Cold War. Japan accepted U.S. military security and advanced military technology for its own defense and then turned to building a “technonationalist” nation that revolved around the manufacture, production, and distribution of technologically advanced goods.<sup>65</sup> Samuels explains, “Indigenization, diffusion, and nurturing of technology define the

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<sup>62</sup> Roberson, “Japan A World Power,” In *Japan from Shogun to Sony*, 180.

<sup>63</sup> Samuels, “*Rich Nation, Strong Army*”, 139.

<sup>64</sup> Cortazzi, *The Japanese Achievement*, 279.

<sup>65</sup> Samuels, *Rich Nation, Strong Army*, 130.

core of Japanese technonationalism.”<sup>66</sup> Following the Korean War ceasefire, Japan would spend the next several decades developing their civilian economy to create a unique technological economic model.<sup>67</sup>

The reconstruction of the Japanese economy between 1945 and 1953 laid the foundation for the economic boom that Japan would experience in the following decades. The devastation caused by the war led to brand new infrastructure being built for the new industries that would shape Japan’s economy. MacArthur more or less provided the guiding hand to the reconstruction process. He saw to it that American aid was delivered to solve the food crisis in the nation and fill the demand for necessity goods. MacArthur’s most instrumental directive that connected to the political reorientation of the nation and helped in economic reconstruction was land reform. Land reform has been a key ingredient to successful democratic nations. MacArthur recognized that fact and that if Japan was to be successful after the occupation, its feudal based land system would have to go. The land reform directive brought democracy to rural Japan and stabilized the political leanings of the rural population. The reform established a strong and organized agricultural sector.

The dissolution of the zaibatsu, though ultimately minimized, did allow for democratic economics to slowly filter into the highly centralized zaibatsu system. The decision from Washington to stop the dissolution of the zaibatsu, reveals that the need for a stable, sustainable, and recovered Japan was more important than insuring that every detail of democratization was fulfilled. This demonstrates a key to nation-building that the occupying nation has to be ready to adjust its policies and objectives if it means the success and stability of the occupied nation. The major reason for needing to change was the beginning of the Cold War between the United

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 319.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 145.

States and the Soviet Union. The United States needed a sustainable Japanese economy that could stand on its own with only limited American aid. The Japanese found sustainable industries that would become dominant and recognizably Japanese in the decades to come. Cameras, automobiles, and electronics took the Japanese economy to new heights. As their economic prosperity grew, the Japanese found a new sense of purpose and drive that revolved around technological advancements. The restructuring of the Japanese economy together with the leadership of MacArthur brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability.

### Chapter Three: MacArthur's Attempt to Bring Christianity to Japan

Douglas MacArthur believed in the great value of democracy and Christianity together. He viewed them as the two pillars against Communism and totalitarianism. Schaller asserts, "Christianity often seemed a metaphor for MacArthur's vision of postwar Asia. His most important mission, he told James Forrestal, was to secure Asia for Christianity and deny it to Marxism."<sup>1</sup> The occupation's primary mission was to firmly establish democratic political and economic institutions in Japan where before there had been none. Japanese culture and society experienced the new democratic fervor as the major SCAP reforms spread through society. MacArthur remarked to George Kennan, "The great significance of this occupation lay in the fact that it was bringing to the Japanese people two great appreciations which they had never before possessed and which were destined to revolutionize their thinking, namely democracy and Christianity."<sup>2</sup> MacArthur took the initiative to further the Christian movement in Japan. MacArthur recalled, "No phase of the occupation...has left me with a greater sense of personal satisfaction than my spiritual stewardship."<sup>3</sup>

Before MacArthur could initiate the return of Christian missions to Japan, State Shinto had to be ended. The Potsdam Declaration was clear on the establishment of religious freedom in the Japanese Constitution. State Shinto was the key to destroying the myth of the emperor's divinity, thus before Emperor Hirohito denounced his divine power, the Japanese state was separated from the Shinto shrine. Separation of church and state (shrine from state) would be

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<sup>1</sup> Schaller, *Douglas MacArthur*, 126.

<sup>2</sup> General MacArthur's Remarks at Lunch, March 1, 1948, Memorandum of Conversations with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, The Far East and Australasia*, 697.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas MacArthur, "Bringing the Bible to Japan," U.S. News & World Report, XXXVIII (February 4, 1955), 89, in Lawrence Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan."

implemented to bolster religious liberty.<sup>4</sup> President Truman stated, “ultra-nationalistic and militaristic organizations and movements will not be permitted to hide behind the cloak of religion.”<sup>5</sup> State Shinto was the imperial nationalistic version of Shintoism that embodied service and duty to the emperor. State Shinto had dominated prewar Japan and had used Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, and Taoism to its own advantage.

The Japanese militarists were very good about giving the impression that religious freedom existed under their regime, but in actuality they were very successful using Buddhist, Christian, Confucian, and Taoist doctrine to elevate and affirm their State Shinto propaganda.<sup>6</sup> Militarist Japan twisted Shintoism and Buddhism so much into its propaganda that it was difficult to separate them at the end of the war.<sup>7</sup> MacArthur noted, “In their hour of agony, like all human beings, they turned to their religious faiths to bolster them. But even these failed them at the crucial moment.”<sup>8</sup> Religious freedom would restore Shintoism and Buddhism to their former doctrines before the militarists had twisted them to their agenda. Christianity would also be free to restore itself and a new era of Christian missions was opened.

SCAP declared on December 15, 1945 in “the Shinto Directive (Shinto shirei),” the abolishment of State Shinto and the beginning of a new era of religious freedom for the Japanese people.<sup>9</sup> The directive exclaimed, “The sponsorship, support, perpetuation, control and dissemination of Shinto by the Japanese national, prefectural, and local governments, or by public official capacity are prohibited and will cease immediately.”<sup>10</sup> The Japanese government

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<sup>4</sup> Potsdam Declaration, July 26, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 413.

<sup>5</sup> *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman*, 336.

<sup>6</sup> Wing-Tsit Chan, “Origins of Nipponism.” *New York Times*, (April 18, 1943), 8.

<sup>7</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 281.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Jennings, *The Road Ahead*, 38.

<sup>10</sup> Disestablishment of State Religion, General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, December 15, 1945, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 467.

would no longer support a state religion. Plus, “All propagation and dissemination of militaristic and ultra-nationalistic ideology in Shinto doctrines, practices, rites, ceremonies or observances, as well as in the doctrines, practices, rites, ceremonies, and observances of any other religion, faith, sect, creed, or philosophy, are prohibited and will cease immediately.”<sup>11</sup> The next month when Emperor Hirohito denied his divinity Shintoism reorganized itself. Shintoism would continue to have a place in Japanese society, but it was not the state religion anymore. The Japanese people were free to believe and worship in whatever way they wanted.

With the removal of State Shinto measures were taken to ensure that the Japanese education system would provide a bulwark against militarism. President Truman stated, “The authority of the militarists and the influence of militarism will be totally eliminated from her political, economic, and social life.”<sup>12</sup> Article 9 of the *Japanese Fundamental Law of Education* issued on March 31, 1947, stated, “The attitude of religious tolerance and the position of religion in social life shall be valued in education,” and “The schools established by the state and local public bodies shall refrain from religious education or other activities for a specific religion.”<sup>13</sup> Education in Japan was reformed to provide a balanced and technical education that would provide the skills needed for the Japanese to move forward. While the history of religions would be taught, no specific religion would be taught with the purpose of conversion or suppression of other religions.

MacArthur was a Christian and had great admiration for its doctrines and also more importantly its life code. Hessel Tiltman of *The Washington Post* reported, “It is not just Christian doctrine (although the Supreme Commander and his family open each day with prayers

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Truman*, 333.

<sup>13</sup> Fundamental Law of Education, Law No. 25, March 31, 1947, *Political Reorientation of Japan*, 865.

and a reading from the Scriptures), but basic concepts of right and wrong, of clean living, of kindness to ones neighbors.”<sup>14</sup> Similar to a lot of people in his time MacArthur was very private about his faith. On the other hand MacArthur had no problem steering a conversation towards the topic of Christianity. In a statement to the press on March 17, 1947, MacArthur declared, “I believe it [democracy] is man’s greatest idea, except Christianity, and believe it will control the world and lead us toward a Utopia.”<sup>15</sup> In the postwar years MacArthur knew that the next great struggle was going to be the Communist threat from the Soviet Union. As supreme commander of the occupation of Japan MacArthur felt it was his responsibility to make sure Japan did not fall to the Communist Bloc. MacArthur steadfastly believed it was his mission to transform Japanese culture and society toward a stronger respect for human rights and life including the dignity of the individual. To achieve this MacArthur wanted to encourage and broaden the spread of Christianity to the Japanese people.<sup>16</sup>

The Christianization of Japan is an example of the authority and autonomy MacArthur wielded in Japan. The Potsdam Declaration was clear in Point 10 that religious freedom would be established. Beyond that there was nothing proscribed about making Japan a Christian nation. Neither President Truman nor the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who were MacArthur’s superiors, never told him to stop what he was doing. As long as religious freedom in all matters was not restricted between Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity with one religion growing at the suppression of the others, there was no problem. When George Kennan traveled to Japan on a policy-planning trip for the Department of State, MacArthur talked to him for two hours about the importance of

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<sup>14</sup> Hessel Tiltman, “MacArthur, 70, has A Niche in History: Age Gives MacArthur a New Laurel.” *The Washington Post*, (January 22, 1950), 2.

<sup>15</sup> General MacArthur’s statement to the Press, March 17, 1947, Appendix G:4, William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan, 1945–1952, and Japanese Religions*, (Leiden, NL: 1972), 356.

<sup>16</sup> Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 655.

building democracy and Christianity in Japan.<sup>17</sup> As long as the objectives of the Potsdam Declaration were being fulfilled and success could be measured, extra decisions and reforms that the Supreme Commander carried out were added bonuses.

MacArthur's goal was to Christianize Japan. In a conference with Lieutenant-Colonel Donald R. Nugent, Chief of SCAP's Civil Information and Education (CIE) section, MacArthur's perspective on Christianizing Japan is clear. The meeting came about because of a letter sent in by a Christian missionary who complained that under occupation policy, "Christianity...must not be favored." MacArthur showed Nugent an ideal reply "the hope and belief I entertain that Japan will become Christianized. Every possible effort to that end is being made." Nugent awkwardly told MacArthur that the CIE's Religions Division was not doing its best effort to Christianize Japan. Nugent's idea of religious freedom was the same as Washington's "a minimum of propagation, restraint, and interference on the part of the government."<sup>18</sup> MacArthur told Nugent that as long as "no religion or belief was oppressed, the Occupation had every right to propagate Christianity; that...every assistance should be given in the propagation of the Christian faith."<sup>19</sup> Nugent updated CIE's politics to reflect MacArthur's message.

The devastation at the end of the war caused a spirit of defeatism amongst the Japanese people. The propaganda that the militarist Japanese leaders had repeated to the Japanese people came crashing down at the end of the war. MacArthur observed, "Never in history had a nation and its people been more completely crushed than were the Japanese at the end of the war,"

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<sup>17</sup> George F. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950* (Boston, 1967), 370-372, 384 in Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries."

<sup>18</sup> Civil Information and Education Section, SCAP, *Mission and Accomplishments of the Occupation in the Civil Information and Education Fields* (n.p., 1950), 22-23, in Lawrence Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries."

<sup>19</sup> D.R. Nugent, memo on "Christianity and the Occupation," October 7, 1947, SCAP Manuscripts, Box 1, in Wittner, "MacArthur and the Missionaries."

explaining “Their entire faith in the Japanese way of life, cherished as invincible for many centuries, perished in the agony of their total defeat.”<sup>20</sup> As the Japanese struggled to rebuild their lives and come to terms with their defeat, the aftermath of the war had created an opportunity for Christianity to influence the nation. The *Christian Century* exclaimed, “What shall the Japanese believed in place of the discarded emperor myth?” asking “Has Christianity’s hour struck in Japan?”<sup>21</sup> *The Washington Post* noted, “Japan today is more fertile ground for Christianity than ever before in the nation’s history.”<sup>22</sup> The democratic groundwork had been done and Japan was ready for a new era of Christian missions.

The small Japanese Christian community in Japan had suffered as much as the rest of the Japanese population during the war. Approximately 446 churches were destroyed. The Japanese Catholics lost their ancient stronghold of Nagasaki in atomic fire. The few missionaries who had remained in Japan during the war moved from devastated congregation to congregation amongst the ruins.<sup>23</sup> The Japanese MacArthur wrote, “needed spiritual leadership as well as material administration.”<sup>24</sup> MacArthur reignited the Christian mission field in Japan by taking the initiative to call for Bibles for the Japanese and for missionaries to return to Japan. With the loss of Shintoism’s and Buddhism’s educational and social support from the government, Christian institutions became the most funded as American missions heeded the call to Japan.<sup>25</sup>

MacArthur talked about the importance of Christian missions in Japan’s development to the press, church leaders, and personally spoke to congregations about the need for missionary

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<sup>20</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 281.

<sup>21</sup> “Japan’s God Abdicates—to Whom?” *Christian Century*, LXIII (January 16, 1946), 70-71, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>22</sup> “Japan Called Great Field for Christianity.” *The Washington Post*, (December 27, 1947), 11.

<sup>23</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 80.

<sup>24</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 324.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

efforts in Japan.<sup>26</sup> MacArthur was the very model of ecumenicism calling both Protestants and Catholics to Japan.<sup>27</sup> He told Archbishop Paolo Marella, the apostolic delegate to Japan that the furtherment “in every way possible...the revival and extension of Christian influence in Japan” was the goal of mission work. He wrote to Pope Pius XII assuring him that their “common struggle” was “to repulse the forces of atheism.”<sup>28</sup> MacArthur wrote Dr. Louis D. Newton, President of the Southern Baptist Convention on December 13, 1946, “Christianity now has an opportunity without counterpart in the Far East.”<sup>29</sup> The letter was later published in the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* and received wide coverage. This statement was in a way MacArthur’s marching order to rally American churches to support missionary efforts in Japan. MacArthur believed, “The more missionaries we can bring out here, and the more occupation troops we can send home, the better.” He declared “if 1,000 missionaries come to Japan, Japan will be a Christian country.”<sup>30</sup> Responding to his message, a total of 2,248 missionaries—1,165 Protestant and 1,083 Catholic—came to Japan to preach the Gospel by the end of April 1950.<sup>31</sup>

MacArthur put his full energy into promoting the Bible drive through public relations and advertising its importance to strengthening Japanese democracy. In a letter that he quoted often, he declared, “It gives me great pleasure to commend the reading of the Bible, God’s immortal gift...In the Sacred Scriptures you will find the Savior of the world Who is the chief cornerstone of all liberty, the basis of fair and honest government, and the foundation for a...faith in God

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<sup>26</sup> Buhite, *Douglas MacArthur*, 85-86.

<sup>27</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 88.

<sup>28</sup> MacArthur to Paolo Marella, July 31, 1946, SCAP MSS, Box 4; MacArthur to Lowell Nerge, December 27, 1949, MacArthur MSS, Box 10; MacArthur to Pius XII, February 10, 1950, MacArthur MSS, Box 11, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>29</sup> General MacArthur’s Letter to Dr. Louis D. Newton, October 6, 1947, Appendix G:4, in Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 355.

<sup>30</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 311.

<sup>31</sup> Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 226.

Whose promises never fail.”<sup>32</sup> When MacArthur asked the Pocket Testament League to provide 10,000,000 Bibles to distribute in Japan the League took on the challenge. The League ran a fundraising campaign for the necessary funds and in the end raised enough to distribute 11,000,000 Bibles in Japan.<sup>33</sup> MacArthur showed his endorsement of such “magnificent and constructive work” in a letter to Dr. Alfred A. Kunz, Executive Director of the Pocket Testament League, “a demonstration of practical Christianity is making a vital contribution toward meeting the heart needs of this people by means of mass meetings with wide distribution of the Scripture.”<sup>34</sup> The response to MacArthur’s call for Bibles to Japan is incredible in the scope and size of the effort. It was MacArthur’s hope “that the people of America will grasp the opportunity afforded by a merciful God to Lay the foundation for a true and living faith.”<sup>35</sup>

MacArthur used the influence and power of SCAP to support Japanese Christians. MacArthur wrote Japanese officials to secure their cooperation in Japanese Christian activities. Japanese Christians received special permissions to meet in public schools for religious meetings.<sup>36</sup> William Woodard, chief of SCAP’s Religious Research Branch, remarked “It was almost unthinkable then that any Japanese would refuse a request made by a person having a letter signed by the General.” Yet, SCAP was clearly showing favoritism to Christianity and some Japanese leaders did voice their complaints. Woodward illustrates that “It was not strange,” that SCAP’s Religious Division “was continually receiving reports and...complaints...that special favors were being extended to Christians by local officials.”<sup>37</sup> While special favors did not

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<sup>32</sup> MacArthur to Whom It May Concern, April 4, 1949, SCAP MSS, Box 47, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>33</sup> MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, 311; The Pocket Testament League Virtual Museum, Accessed on April 15, 2020, [https://www.ptl.org/museum/museumpix/decade1940s/mcarthur\\_letter.html](https://www.ptl.org/museum/museumpix/decade1940s/mcarthur_letter.html).

<sup>34</sup> MacArthur Letter to Dr. Alfred A. Kunz, December 8, 1949, The Pocket Testament League Virtual Museum.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 89.

<sup>37</sup> William Woodard, “Religion-State Relations,” 667-668, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

violate the policy MacArthur set for SCAP, the special attention and requests certainly were overbearing to Japanese officials. A Protestant missionary who returned from Japan in 1947 remarked “the Christian gospel now finds an open door.”<sup>38</sup>

MacArthur’s efforts on the behalf of Christianity in Japan earned him the respect and admiration from American religious leaders. Protestant and Catholic leaders were impressed by MacArthur’s theological and spiritual flair. Dr. Walter Van Kirk, a top official in the Federal Council of Churches observed, “The clock of destiny has struck for the Christian movement in Japan. All that has gone before is prologue.”<sup>39</sup> A spokesman for the Catholic missionary effort, who considered MacArthur “the benefactor of Christendom” remarked, “In deep gratitude I recall all and everything you have done for Christianity in Japan.”<sup>40</sup> Bishop Patrick J. Byrne noted, “both the Japanese bishops and faithful, and the foreign mission workers without exception, are unanimous in their conviction that the ... ‘MacArthur policy’ is...the ideal one for the spread of Christianity.”<sup>41</sup> MacArthur embodied the Christian spirit to evangelize Japan and he was held in high regard in Christian circles in America.

MacArthur was zealous in his encouragement and support of Christianity in Japan and the officers and soldiers who served under him in SCAP were just as zealous to build Christianity up in the nation. MacArthur recalled his command as “spiritual to the highest degree.”<sup>42</sup> While this statement is embellishment on MacArthur’s part, officers and soldiers

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<sup>38</sup>Thoburn T. Brumbaugh, *Christ for All Japan* (New York, 1947), n.p., in Lawrence S. Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>39</sup> Walter W. Van Kirk, “The Future of Christianity in Japan,” *Christian Century*, LXII (February 6, 1949), 169, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>40</sup> Bruno Bitter to MacArthur, January 26, 1950, MacArthur MSS, Box 11, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>41</sup> Patrick J. Byrne, “Memo—On the two Catholic Bishops from America,” July 8, 1946, SCAP MSS, Box 12, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>42</sup> MacArthur, “Bringing the Bible to Japan,” *U.S. News and World Report*, XXXVIII (February 4, 1955), 89.

under his command certainly contributed to Christian missions to the Japanese. The rules that MacArthur laid out at the start of the occupation for his command to abide by and understand the culture they were occupying impacted how the Japanese viewed the Americans. American missionary Charles W. Inglehart wrote that there was an “extraordinary rapport” that developed and grew between American military personnel and the Japanese, yet “still more intimate have been the contacts between Christian G.I.s and officers...with Japanese Christians.”<sup>43</sup> Many American soldiers stole military supplies to assist their Japanese friends and ease the suffering they saw inflicted on them.<sup>44</sup> Woodard, head of SCAP’s Religious Research Branch, noted “Much of this help tended to focus on Christian churches, orphanages, and social welfare institutions,” and “especially those belonging to the denominations of the service personnel giving the aid.”<sup>45</sup>

Besides the average soldier reaching out to Japanese Christians and helping them in their everyday needs, the military chaplains with the troops also lent a hand in the evangelizing Japan. Woodard noted that the chaplains provided “a great deal of direct assistance in evangelistic work” yet kept to “churches of their respective denominations.” Plus they “constantly” asked the Religions Division “to secure favorable treatment for Christian work. It was frequently assumed that this was one of its primary functions.” Woodard was personally asked “If you are not helping Christian work, what is the purpose of the Division?” In the spring of 1946, Chief of the Religious and Cultural Resource Division William K. Bunce addressed the chaplains in Japan to make them stop devoting their effort to the Christian movement, “For members of the Occupation forces to propagate any religion among the Japanese would be to exercise a privilege

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<sup>43</sup> Charles W. Inglehart, “Religion and Internationalism in Japan,” *Religious Education* (1947), 49, copy in Missionary Research Library, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>44</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 90.

<sup>45</sup> Woodard, “Religion-State Relations,” 663-664.

denied to the Japanese people.” Bunce was referring to government assistance which was strictly denied in the Japanese Constitution and education laws. Woodard noted that “this admonition was not too favorably received,” and the chaplains never did fully stop their devotion to the Christian movement in Japan. MacArthur did give his support of Bunce’s statement in a memorandum of August 29, 1946, though Woodard explained the problem “was not solved...Individuals continued to go beyond the prescribe limits.”<sup>46</sup> Military chaplains continued to reach beyond their official capacity to evangelize and give aid to the Christian mission in Japan.

The military chaplains were able to continue to devote time and effort to the Christian mission because a large extent of SCAP positions were manned by missionaries. Dr. Charles W. Inglehart, who served as a missionary to Japan for thirty years, was a SCAP advisor on education. Russell L. Durgin who had worked in Tokyo before the war as YMCA secretary worked for the Department of State and SCAP. Some other missionaries who worked for SCAP were Paul Rusch who worked at St. Paul’s University in Tokyo, William C. Kerr from Presbyterian church, Glen Bruner from a Methodist church, William Woodard from the Congregational church, and Boude C. Moore from the Dutch Reformed church.<sup>47</sup> The missionary influence within SCAP contributed to the massive surge of support for the Christian mission in Japan.

MacArthur always connected the expansion of Christianity in Japan to the growing strength of democracy. Against the backdrop of the Cold War and MacArthur’s crusade to keep Japan out of the Communist Bloc, Christianity was “a sure and stable foundation on which to

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<sup>46</sup> Woodard, “Religion-State Relations,” 664-665, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>47</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 92.

build a democratic nation.”<sup>48</sup> MacArthur wrote to the Foreign Missions Conference of North America that “through their teachings...of the immutable principles of Christianity,” the mission effort had “infused knowledge and understanding of the democratic concept” plus “an appreciation of the basic tenets which govern our own free way of life.”<sup>49</sup> MacArthur told an admirer, “Our Christian faith has formed the sturdy cornerstone upon which has rested our national strength.” Echoing a similar tone MacArthur told one Christian minister that “Democracy and Christianity have much in common, as practice of the former is impossible without giving faithful service to the fundamental concepts underlying the latter.”<sup>50</sup> Democracy and Christianity were two powerful weapons in the arsenal against Communist totalitarian atheism.

When Christians were elected to the Japanese government MacArthur saw such progress as a sure sign that Japan was being converted to Christianity. In 1947, the Japanese Social Democrats came to power, the new Prime Minister Tetsu Katayama, four member of his cabinet, and twenty-seven members of the Japanese Diet were Christians.<sup>51</sup> MacArthur released this statement, “For the first time in history, Japan is led by a Christian leader—one who throughout his life has been a member of the Presbyterian Church. It reflects the complete religious tolerance which so dominates the Japanese mind and the complete religious freedom which exists throughout this land.”<sup>52</sup> Kagawa had been converted to Christianity when he was young

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<sup>48</sup> MacArthur to Glover M. Birk, December 21, 1949, SCAP MSS, Box 7; MacArthur to Howard Stamlin, May 31, 1950, SCAP MSS, Box 5, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>49</sup> MacArthur to North American Assembly of the Foreign Missions Conference, September 28, 1948, MacArthur MSS, Box 9, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>50</sup> MacArthur to Roy G. Ross, November 20, 1950, SCAP MSS, Box 14; MacArthur to James F. Boughton, November 22, 1947, MacArthur MSS, Box 8, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>51</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 94.

<sup>52</sup> General MacArthur’s statement concerning the significance of the selection of Mr. Katayama as Prime Minister of Japan, contained in PRO release, May 24, 1947, Appendix G:4, William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 356.

and had later given away his aristocratic wealth and moved to a slum in the city of Kobe to help the poor and destitute. In 1915 he earned his divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary.<sup>53</sup> Upon his return to Japan he became “a prominent writer, social worker, poet, labor organizer, pacifist, and Christian evangelist.”<sup>54</sup> The *Christian Century* stated at the end of the war that Kawaga was “the greatest living exponent of Christianity in the Orient.”<sup>55</sup> Despite this, Kawaga was not without controversy. In March 1946, Kawaga was appointed to the Japanese House of Peers. That is where a problem arose. According to a SCAP report, Kawaga was accused of supporting the “Japanese war effort,” and giving a speech that was “anti-occupation.”<sup>56</sup> SCAP and overall MacArthur, balanced this understanding with the fact “the united Protestant evangelistic campaign...is largely built around Dr. Kagawa’s personality,” decided “It is considered advisable to take a sympathetic attitude towards him. To do other would...undermine the Protestant evangelistic movement in Japan.”<sup>57</sup> With that the issue decided, Dr. Kawaga took his seat in the House of Peers. MacArthur had an investigation into the Kagawa allegations dropped.

An important milestone in the Christian mission and Christian education in Japan was the establishment of the International Christian University. In the fall of 1949, a group of Japanese educators came together to establish a university grounded in Christian principles.<sup>58</sup> The idea initially came from Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer, a Methodist missionary. The Foreign Missions Conference of North America and the Federal Council of Churches, and fourteen other

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<sup>53</sup> Lawrence S. Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 87.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> “I Would Rather Be Dead,” *Christian Century*, LXII (September 26, 1945), 1089, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>56</sup> Nugent, “Memo for Record” (1947), SCAP MSS, Box 49, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> International Christian University, About, Accessed on April 16, 2020, <https://www.icu.ac.jp/en/about/>.

denominational mission boards gave their support.<sup>59</sup> The U.S. Education Mission which was in Japan at that time to help SCAP reform the Japanese educational system also supported the project.<sup>60</sup> The Japan International Christian University Foundation was set up to manage the fundraising for the project to raise the necessary \$15 million. MacArthur was an avid supporter of the project and in 1948 was asked to be an honorary chairman of the foundation.<sup>61</sup> “This Christian University is one of the most important things America...can do” for Japan’s success he told John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in a funds drive.<sup>62</sup> Diffendorfer later stated that having MacArthur’s name attached to the project was “a very great help to us.”<sup>63</sup>

The International Christian University came into existence on June 15, 1949, at the Gotemba YMCA Camp. The university was organized to be interdenominational. It purchased its University campus grounds in Mitika, near Tokyo. In March 1953, the university was recognized and authorized by the Japanese Ministry of Education as an incorporated educational institute and the school’s College of Liberal Arts became the first-four year program in the nation.<sup>64</sup>

American missions expanded on a strong private Christian school tradition in Japan. American Baptists, who could count several thousand Japanese Baptists, had a massive mission operation in Japan: a sizeable Japan Opportunity Fund, “which supported twenty-six missionaries, numerous schools and colleges, rural training centers, theological seminaries and student centers, and rebuilt many Japanese churches. Next to the Baptists the Catholics also had unsurprisingly a massive mission in the nation: “As of 1952 Catholics maintained 34 different

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<sup>59</sup> Lawrence S. Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan.” *Pacific Historical Review* 40, no. 1 (1971): 86.

<sup>60</sup> International Christian University, About, Accessed on April 16, 2020, <https://www.icu.ac.jp/en/about/>.

<sup>61</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 86-87.

<sup>62</sup> MacArthur to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., June 30, 1949, SCAP MSS, Box 30, in Lawrence S. Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan.”

<sup>63</sup> Ralph E. Diffendorfer to MacArthur, October 24, 1949, SCAP MSS Box 30, in Lawrence S. Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries: God and Man in Occupied Japan.”

<sup>64</sup> International Christian University, About.

journals, 25 elementary schools, 60 high schools and intermediate schools, 15 junior colleges and technical schools, Sophia University, Nanzen University, several colleges, and 14 seminaries.”<sup>65</sup>

The reestablishment of denominational independence amongst the Protestant and Catholic churches in Japan was a direct result of the end of State Shinto and religious freedom being fully guaranteed in the Japanese Constitution. In prewar Japan, the Protestant denominations had been joined together into the Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan). The Kyodan had been used by the Japanese government to control the churches.<sup>66</sup> With the repeal of the Religious Bodies Law, which the prewar Japanese government had used to form the Kyodan, many Japanese Protestant denominations had an identity crisis. Many churches left the Protestant union to reestablish their denominations: the Anglican Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, various Baptist Evangelical and Holiness churches, and the southern Presbyterian tradition formed the Reformed Church and a number of Reformed-Presbyterian churches reorganized as the Church of Christ.<sup>67</sup> With this redistribution of Japanese Christians, “only 67 percent of Protestants (that is, 133,057 of the 199,462 Protestants in Japan)” remained in the Kyodan.<sup>68</sup> This new found identity amongst the Protestant churches was a sign of independent thought and action amongst Japanese church leaders.

The destruction of the war provided an opportunity for the Japanese church to reclaim its place in Japanese society be a source of relief and aid to those in need. The church might not have pulled in many believers, but it touched a lot of lives by responding to the destruction and suffering around it. In the early postwar years the North American Interboard Committee for

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<sup>65</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 96.

<sup>66</sup> Wing-Tsit Chan, “Origins of Nipponism,” *New York Times*, April 18, 1943. 1.

<sup>67</sup> Michael J. Sherrill, “Christian Churches in the Postwar Era,” ed. by Mark Mullins, *Handbook of Christianity in Japan*. Vol. 10. Bd.10. (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 163.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

Christian Work in Japan (IBC) and the Kyodan Council of Cooperation (COC) worked together to rebuild churches and distribute aid. This collaboration between the two groups also helped the Nihon Kiristuto Kyodan survive those early postwar years. American churches besides supporting missionary efforts in Japan also helped raise millions of dollars for churches, schools, and other religious buildings. By 1951, 242 churches and seventy-two schools had been rebuilt. During the period of 1949-1950, many churches in America, encouraged by MacArthur, made Japan the topic of their missionary study.<sup>69</sup> The relief work that the Japanese Church did in the early years of the occupation encouraged many non-believing Japanese to “regard Christianity as a positive, pacifist, and liberal influence in the nation.”<sup>70</sup>

In 1948 the reconstitution of the National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ) was instrumental in developing relations with foreign missions. The NCCJ established an organizational structure that the Kyodan was able to use to keep connected to the other Protestant denominations that had left. The NCCJ represented the mainline churches such as the Kyodan, the Anglican Episcopal Church, the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Baptist Convention.<sup>71</sup> Because of this and with ties to the World Council of Churches (WCC), the NCCJ was out of favor with the more conservative churches.<sup>72</sup> Missionaries who had lived in Japan before the war established the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries (FCM), while postwar missionaries who were more conservative established the Japan Evangelical Missionary Association (JEMA).<sup>73</sup> As was soon to be a growing trend, postwar conservative missionaries soon outnumbered the prewar missionaries and the growth of evangelical churches outpaced the

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<sup>69</sup> Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries,” 96.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>72</sup> Phillips, *From the Rising of the Sun*, 183.

<sup>73</sup> Sherrill, “Christian Churches in the Postwar Era,” 164.

mainline denominations. Sherrill points out, “From 1949 to 1953, for example, membership in the so-called “mainline churches increased by about a 6.5 percent, while the membership in the new evangelical churches increased by 92.1.”<sup>74</sup> The evangelical movement in Japan took the churches by storm as the evangelical churches became the dominant Christian denominations within the Japanese church.

The Japanese response to Christianity was one of curiosity and questions. Many thronged the churches because they wanted to know about this religion from the West.<sup>75</sup> A prominent Japanese Christian stated, “To her rejection of Christianity is ascribable the spiritual bankruptcy of modern Japan.”<sup>76</sup> For missionaries this was the opportunity to show the Japanese the truth of Christianity, which they had not known since the propaganda of State Shinto. Cochrane for *The Sun* recorded, “Christian churches of the Western world, one expert said, now have an opportunity to show that Western civilization means something more than bombs and battleships.”<sup>77</sup> The aspect of Christianity that appealed most to the Japanese was its social ethic and it gained much respect in that regard. While the older generations might visit churches to understand what Christianity was about, they kept to Shintoism and Buddhism.<sup>78</sup> Philip Potter reporting for *The Sun* noted, “Interest in Christianity is found chiefly among the younger generation.”<sup>79</sup> The spiritual vacuum that MacArthur believed had hit Japanese society did not exist entirely. The damage caused by State Shinto certainly caused some reflection by the

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>75</sup> James M. Phillips, *From the Rising of the Sun: Christians and Society in Contemporary Japan*. Vol. 3, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981), 5.

<sup>76</sup> Nippon Times, August 19, 1949, clipping in Japan file, United Mission Library, in Wittner, “MacArthur and the Missionaries.”

<sup>77</sup> Robert B. “Cochrane, “Big Chance for Christianity Believed Imminent in Japan,” *The Sun*, (October 2, 1945), 1.

<sup>78</sup> Philip Potter, “The Struggle for Japan: Drop in Emperor's Influence Leaves A 'Spiritual Vacuum',” *The Sun*, (May 10, 1952), 1.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

Japanese, but Buddhism and Shintoism maintained their strength and influence in Japanese society. Cochrane explained, “the Japanese national outlook and individual habits of thought are on a different plane from that of the western nations, whose whole life is permeated by Christian morality.”<sup>80</sup> Christianity was accepted as a social ethic, but the Japanese did not choose it to be their religion.

In a radio message delivered to Congress on February 24, 1947, MacArthur spoke on the Christian influence in Japan, “A spontaneous development which offers both encouragement and inspiration as a measure of the progress of this concept (the superiority of moral force over physical force) lies in the increasing number of the Japanese people—already estimated at over two million.”<sup>81</sup> *The Washington Post* reported, “the Christian population is estimate at less than 500,000 by responsible officials, despite Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s statement some time ago to the effect that there are now two million Christians in Japan.”<sup>82</sup> By 1951 Protestants and Catholics numbered only 233,000 and 157,000 respectively, about 0.5 percent of the population about the same as when MacArthur came to Japan.<sup>83</sup> Postwar Japan had a population of seventy million people and Buddhism and Shintoism were ingrained stronger than MacArthur or any other Christian church and missionary leader realized. The Japanese might have been disillusioned at the end of war towards Shintoism, but it still played a very important role in the lives many Japanese. Buddhism was also very important to many Japanese and had a larger membership than Shintoism.

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<sup>80</sup> Cochrane, “Big Chance for Christianity Believed Imminent in Japan.” *The Sun*, (October 2, 1945), 1.

<sup>81</sup> General MacArthur’s radio message to Congress, February 24, 1947, Appendix G:4, William P. Woodard, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 356.

<sup>82</sup> “Japan Called Great Field for Christianity.” *The Washington Post*, (December 27, 1947), 11.

<sup>83</sup> Clayton, *The Years of MacArthur*, 293-294.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Christian boom in Japan faded and the churches continued to grow, but just at a much slower rate.<sup>84</sup> Three categories can explain the slow-down in the Japanese Church: church, society, and mission.<sup>85</sup> Firstly, the Japanese Church faced internal character decisions not external conditions. An issue that the church had to reconcile was its wartime responsibilities. The Japanese church had succumbed to the imperialistic propaganda that fueled Japan's aggression in the war. Now State Shinto bent every religion and philosophy to its will during the militarist leadership and the Japanese church lost its true identity. During the occupation it had rediscover itself. Secondly, the occupation had brought a wealth of Westernization to Japan and economic reconstruction and later prosperity became a focal point in the minds of many Japanese. The Church would remain an interesting topic of study and a good social ethic, "but it seemed irrelevant to Japanese religious sensibilities."<sup>86</sup> Japan began to secularize after the war, and while religion would still be important to the Japanese, it would no longer hold the same power that it once had. Finally, MacArthur underestimated the influence that Christianity had on the Japanese. American church leaders and missionaries also misunderstood the situation in Japan. Japan's defeat in the war did not completely destroy the Japanese faith in either Shintoism or Buddhism. The monumental missionary and Bible drive in Japan is extremely impressive, but the overall success it had bringing Japanese to the Christian faith was minimal.

MacArthur's legacy in the Christian mission to Japan is that he initiated the call for missionaries to return and asked that Bibles be sent for the Japanese. His efforts to rally support and give encouragement for the mission work demonstrates the passion he had for the project.

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<sup>84</sup> Phillips, *From the Rising of the Sun*, 9.

<sup>85</sup> Sherrill, "Christian Churches in the Postwar Era," 165.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

MacArthur saw democracy and Christianity as intertwined and he believed that by bringing Japan into Christianity the Japanese would better understand democracy. Yet, the drive to Christianize Japan was not successful because the Japanese did not choose Christianity. The Japanese church remained pretty close in size to its prewar membership, less than one percent of the Japanese population. A lasting monument to MacArthur's efforts to bring Christianity to the Japanese people is the International Christian University that continues to dedicate itself to educating young Japanese students about Christianity. Regardless, MacArthur's efforts do reflect the autonomy he possessed as supreme commander and his ability to shape occupation policy.

## Conclusion

The occupation of Japan was a success in reforming a militaristic feudal state into a democratic nation. The monumental task of nation-building took eight years from 1945 to 1952. The majority of the reforms were implemented in the first four years of the occupation. The last four years were insuring the long-term sustainability, recovery, and stability of Japan. Douglas MacArthur proved to be the right man for the job of Supreme Commander. MacArthur brought to the position a strength and will to succeed in fulfilling the objectives he was given. The Potsdam Declaration laid out a clear, yet general guideline for the occupation and this coupled with the autonomy and power given to MacArthur allowed him the room to maneuver to achieve his objectives. The Japanese willingness to restructure their political system, economy, and society combined with the leadership of MacArthur brought the country into a new era of peaceful prosperity, innovation, industrial strength, and stability.

MacArthur had a sense of destiny and wanted to leave a legacy that would endure in history. He was driven to not be a footnote in some history book. Further, he did not want to just be remembered as an American general of World War II. The occupation of Japan secured MacArthur's place in history because his name is often synonymous with the occupation. MacArthur's decisions over the course of the six years he was Supreme Commander demonstrate his leadership skills as he sought to rebuild Japan into a democratic nation. MacArthur had a keen sense of strategy and tactics, which made him a good military leader. Yet, he should also be remembered as a good statesman because he understood the workings of political mechanisms and knew how to operate in complex situations. Perhaps his strong sense of strategy and tactics is what made him so good at leading the occupation.

The type of occupation that MacArthur implemented was designed to educate and train the Japanese in the ways of a democratic state. The occupation reflected the firmness of the Potsdam Declaration when carrying out its objectives, yet no occupation in history has had less venom towards the nation it occupied. This is surprising since during the war there was large levels of racism and prejudice. As the Gallup poll reflected at the end of 1945 many Americans thought that an occupation would take upwards of fifteen years and that the Japanese could still not be trusted after their surrender.<sup>1</sup> MacArthur established a cordial relationship with the Japanese government that he worked through to reconstruct and reform Japan. He laid the foundation for the new American-Japanese friendship and alliance. By allowing the Japanese government to work with SCAP, MacArthur helped preserve the self-respect of the Japanese people and softened the consequences of their defeat. MacArthur worked at a constant pace to democratize Japan. MacArthur established respect between SCAP and the Japanese by preserving the Japanese self-respect, addressed cultural differences with understanding, instituted SCAP reforms at a constant rate, and avoided coercing the Japanese.<sup>2</sup>

Three reforms reveal MacArthur's autonomy and authority that were instrumental in the reconstruction of Japan's political institution were the retention of the emperor, constitutional revision, and the establishment of a democratic press. MacArthur retained the Imperial institution because he understood how important the emperor was to the Japanese culture. The widespread destruction of Japanese infrastructure, the food crisis, the monetary crisis, mass unemployment, and the shock of defeat to the Japanese conscience was a recipe for instability that could have been manipulated by the Soviet Union. The Japanese needed a constant to their lives and the

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<sup>1</sup> Gallup, "Public Feels Occupation of Japan to Last 10 Years," 4.

<sup>2</sup> Braibanti, "The Role of Administration in the Occupation of Japan," 163.

emperor was the key to helping maintain stability in Japan. The Japanese looked to Emperor Hirohito for guidance in the occupation and did as he did in interacting with the Americans.

The Japanese social relationship tradition played a role in how the Japanese accepted the American occupation. Japanese society was an intertwining web of relationships for interacting with others and situations. The Emperor at the top of the social relations ladder led the way for the people when he delivered his surrender announcement on September 2, 1945, “We command all Our people forthwith to cease hostilities, to lay down their arms and faithfully to carry out all the provisions of the Instruments of Surrender and the General Orders issued by the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters hereunder.”<sup>3</sup> The Japanese social structure and Confucian traditions with their non-egalitarian situational ethics allowed the Japanese to acknowledge their subordinate rank to the United States. This acknowledgement was that of fealty, thus the Japanese were able to subordinate themselves to the occupation without being in violation to their self-respect or propriety.<sup>4</sup>

The revision of the Japanese constitution demonstrated MacArthur’s autonomy and independent command of SCAP. The Japanese government had put together a constitutional committee to revise the Meiji Constitution of 1889, yet the leadership lacked a strong understanding of democratic ideals. The constitutional draft they submitted to SCAP disappointed MacArthur. He was concerned because the Japanese Diet elections were fast approaching in the spring of 1946 and MacArthur had expected that the new Japanese constitution would be ready for the people to vote on. With the current Japanese draft the Japanese people would be voting for a constitution that was basically the same as the old Meiji

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<sup>3</sup> Imperial Rescript By Hirohito, Emperor of Japan, Prior to the Signing of the Surrender Instrument; Tokyo, September 2, 1945, *The Political Reorientation of Japan*, 416.

<sup>4</sup> Herman, *Douglas MacArthur*, 655.

Constitution. Plus, MacArthur feared Soviet posturing to stall the constitutional process.

MacArthur was also concerned that the conservative Japanese leadership through stalling of their own to change their constitution threatened themselves the Imperial institution. The importance of the Imperial institution in the stability of Japan had already been decided and MacArthur was not about to let Japanese conservatism impede the transformation of the government.

MacArthur gave SCAP's government section the responsibility of writing the new Japanese constitution. The SCAP constitutional draft was a mix of democratic, republican, and monarchism. The government it created resembled the British parliamentary democratic system. On March 6, MacArthur announced to the Japanese people that the Japanese government had a constitution that was worthy of a democratic nation. On May 3, 1947, Japan would declare its political reformation complete with the new Constitution going into effect. MacArthur achieved this political reformation three years into the occupation.

MacArthur's final initiative in the political transformation of Japan was the establishment of a democratic and independent press. MacArthur started this reform early in the occupation by issuing a number of directives designed to insure tranquility and truth in the Japanese press reporting. Unfortunately, the reform of the press was harder than first believed. MacArthur ordered a one hundred percent censorship of the Japanese press and any Japanese newspapers that printed inaccurate stories were threatened with closure. Over the last few months of 1945 and into the next year, the Japanese press adjusted to the new reality of Japan. To help with the change, SCAP offered special training sessions to teach Japanese newsmen on the workings of a democratic press. By the end of the occupation the press was reporting on news across the nation and on a wide spread of topics unhindered in its work to give the Japanese people the best news it could.

While political reconstruction was critical, MacArthur knew that economic challenges were equally important. MacArthur and his staff designed the reconstruction of Japan's economy to insure sustainability and stability in the nation's recovery. Japan was devastated by the war and required American aid to assist its economic recovery. MacArthur saw to it that food was distributed to meet the most pressing needs and oversaw regular food shipments over several years. The food crisis could have derailed MacArthur's political reforms, though he showed great ability in balancing all his responsibilities to deliver relief to the Japanese people.

MacArthur's instrumental initiative to reform the Japanese land system provided political stability in rural Japan and eased the unemployment crisis. At the end of the war, the Japanese were desperate for jobs. The occupation helped provide some employment as many Japanese were needed to support the American presence. MacArthur sponsored a land reform initiative that provided many more opportunities for land ownership and independent farmers, creating a much more stable agricultural environment. With many people returning to family farms for shelter, work, and food the rural areas became more connected to the devastation in the urban areas. Rural Japan was having to support the urban areas more than they could bear. Land reform relaxed political tensions amongst the rural population and by creating many independent landowners out of a few helped the agricultural sector recover.

The program to dissolve the zaibatsu to create a more competitive free enterprise system demonstrates the effort that American leaders exerted to model the Japanese economy after the American economy. Even though the dissolution of the zaibatsu was discontinued by leaders in Washington, they were reformed to allow more shareholders and a greater redistribution of the nation's economic wealth. The zaibatsu, though they survived the occupation, would not be as

strong or exact the same influence they once had over the economy. Japan's economy was effectively democratized.

Although critical, reform and reorganization were only part of Japan's postwar economic recovery. Japan also needed to develop sustainable industries and that was a priority for MacArthur. The textile industry was reestablished and provided a level of stability, especially for unskilled workers; however, since Japan had more skilled laborers, it needed some new industries. Cameras became one such industry and later automobiles became another. The thing that these two industries had in common was that they only required a small amount of raw materials to produce the products and gave a large return on the foreign market. SCAP also gave out benefits to encourage Japanese entrepreneurs and the small business community. A small company called Sony went into electronics and another Japanese entrepreneur started Honda putting small motors on bicycles. Sustainable, low product material count industries were the future of the Japanese economy.

Japan's economic growth around sustainable industries created a new source of national pride. Economic prosperity became the focus of the nation since the nation could invest more in economic infrastructure with only a small defense force to maintain. "Technonationalism," as coined by Richard Samuels, is one way to describe the Japanese drive towards technological and sustainable industries that make up the foundation of their economy. The Japanese economy is centered around producing technologically advanced products or products that go inside of other products that sell well on the international market. The key is that the industries that dominate the Japanese economy require only a small amount of raw materials to be imported, while exporting a large return. The Japanese economic model was the first in Asia and one that can be

seen in other nations economies. For example, South Korea and Taiwan, who have established themselves as Asian economic powers.

Finally, MacArthur initiated the return of Christian missions to Japan because he believed in the combination of democracy and Christianity. MacArthur was very public about his wish that Japan be Christianized and he used his autonomy to have SCAP support the missionary work. MacArthur reignited Christian missions to Japan by putting out the call for missionaries and Bibles. The response was a wave of support with 11,000,000 million Bibles being distributed in Japan and several thousand Protestant and Catholic missionaries, coming to Japan. The mission effort received wide support amongst American churches and MacArthur was praised for initializing the mission work. Yet, while MacArthur and many American missionaries believed that Japan was open to receiving and converting to Christianity, they did not take into account several important things. First, Shintoism and Buddhism remained the spiritual and religious leaders in Japan. Christianity was a curiosity to the Japanese and many went to the churches because they wanted to learn about Christianity, usually not because they wanted to convert. The Japanese church would remain a minority in Japan, despite the resources that the Christian missions spent in Japan.

A legacy of MacArthur's in reigniting Christian missions to Japan was in the establishment of the International Christian University in 1949. MacArthur was a key supporter of the university. International Christian University still exists to this day in Japan, a lasting reminder of the Christian movement in Japan during the occupation. The school provides an educational foundation for the Japanese church. The university stands at the pinnacle of private Christian education in Japan amongst the other schools that were started during the occupation with the purpose of Christianizing Japan.

The strong relationship between the United States and Japan since World War II has its roots in the occupation. The economic success and power of the Japanese economy had its start with the occupation and the reforms that came with it; the Japanese government was reformed to a parliamentary democracy focused on peace, innovation, and prosperity because of the occupation; and the injection of democratic ideals into Japanese society gave energy to the New Japan that helped to drive the nation forward into a new age. MacArthur, as the head of the occupation, will always be remembered as a key leader in the transformation of Japan and its relationship with the United States. The autonomy and authority that MacArthur wielded allowed him to achieve all the objectives in the Potsdam Declaration and carry out reforms that though not specified were important to Japan's security, stability recovery. Without MacArthur the occupation would have looked different and the current American-Japanese relationship would not be the same.

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