



THE POSTAL SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL

UNRESTRICTED

No. 2681

Subject: Transmitting Clipping: "Democratic Japan"

London, November 25, 1946
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
DISTRIBUTION OFFICE
JAN 9 1947
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEC 3 PM 2 18

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington,

Sir:

In reference to the Embassy's telegram no. 9503 of November 14, 1946 (repeated to CINCAFPAC, Tokyo, as telegram no. 4) on the above-cited subject, I have the honor to attach copies of the clipping on which the summary in the reference telegram was based.

Respectfully yours,

For the Charge d'Affaires ad interim:

Everett F. Drumright
Everett F. Drumright
First Secretary of Embassy

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INTELLIGENCE REFERENCE DIVISION

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NOV 25 1946

Enclosure: *at 4/11*
Article from Manchester Guardian dated November 14, 1946.

(To Department in triplicate)

Copy to CINCAFPAC, Tokyo

EFDrumright/ejg

OFFICE OF SPECIAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS

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OFFICE OF INTELLIGENCE
COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION

Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No 2681 of Nov. 25, 1946
 from the Embassy at London, England.

PAPER: THE GUARDIAN

CITY: LONDON

DATE: NOV 14 1946

"DEMOCRATIC" JAPAN

General MacArthur's Policy

By Sir Paul Butler

Authorities on Japan both in this country and in the United States have always held to the opinion that the Japanese nation would seek in the Throne a refuge from the bewilderment and humiliation of defeat, and that a Government in the name of the Emperor would provide the only effective instrument through which the Allies could hope to overcome the unparalleled problems presented by the execution of the surrender terms and the subsequent administration of the country under their armed occupation. It was also felt that, if the Japanese were to retain responsibility for internal administration (and language and other difficulties would have made direct administration by the Allies an almost impossible task), native resources would afford little alternative to political confusion except reliance upon personalities whose democratic convictions were qualified and opportunist.

These expectations have so far proved well founded. Except for the Communists, who make up in aggressive energy for their comparatively small numbers, the nation has ranged itself steadfastly behind the imperial institution. The retention of that institution has also served the purposes of the Allies. It was the prestige of the Emperor's name that secured the unexpectedly smooth execution of the surrender terms, and it has since kept within bounds the vast problems of the first year of military occupation. The pattern of the new Japan is, however, essentially an American pattern, and American hands have launched the Japanese ship of State upon uncharted seas of democracy. Japan's leaders are steering an unfamiliar course with obvious misgivings and reluctance, but at least they cannot turn back. The old reactionary havens are being destroyed behind them by their conquerors.

IMPORTANT REFORMS

General MacArthur has carried out with much ability the instructions of his Government to use, rather than to support, the pre-surrender form of government, while at the same time giving much needed encouragement to such democratic inclinations as the Japanese people may acquire. The first major measure in this encouragement was taken in October, 1945, when the Supreme Commander called upon the Japanese Government to enact what has become known as a Japanese Bill of Rights, providing for enfranchisement of women, encouragement of labour unions, reform of education, relaxation of oppressive police supervision, and dissolution of the "zaibatsu" monopolies. The second measure was reflected in the New Year Rescript, in which the Emperor abnegated both his own divine mission

that no responsible Japanese would consent to tamper with this hallowed document), and American correspondents in Tokio have not hesitated to allege that the new document was drafted in General MacArthur's Headquarters. Certainly the constant references to the rights of the individual and the insertion of phrases from the Gettysburg address suggest an American rather than a Japanese habit of political thought; and there are clauses which arouse an uneasy suspicion that the drafting was undertaken without the advice of constitutional lawyers. It is difficult to share General MacArthur's enthusiasm at the inclusion of article 9, under which Japan renounces for all time the right to make war or to maintain armed forces even in self-defence. The history of the last peace suggests that such a renunciation of sovereign rights by a defeated nation, even though ostensibly self-imposed, is unlikely to be observed when the victors are no longer in a position to apply compulsion.

Nevertheless, whatever defects the cynic may find in this Constitution, it has at least the merits of being a charter upon which the Japanese might lay the foundations of a democratic State if they acquire the ability and inclination to do so. The Diet which passed the Constitution is the offspring of the first free election in Japan's history, and high praise is due to General MacArthur for the intensive campaign of political re-education which made this possible. Seventy-two per cent of the electors went to the polls, a remarkable achievement in view of the dislocation of the population and the very high proportion of politically immature women voters. The size of the women's vote and the success of women candidates (nearly half of whom were elected) are among the most hopeful signs for the future of Japan. In the new Diet (reduced to an assemblage of novices by the purge of January, 1946, which had precluded all but a small number of former members from standing for re-election) the old political parties the Minseito and Seiyukai are strongly represented, though under new names and with platforms adjusted to the new epoch. The Liberals took first place with 140 seats, while the Progressives (whose conservatism belies their name) and the Social Democrats follow with about 100 seats each. The Communists, emerging from decades of suppression with a vigorous programme of social reform which was in marked contrast to the insipidities of their Right wing opponents, polled over a million votes but only secured five seats.

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

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the lot of few military commanders in a vanquished land.

There are, however, portents in the Japanese political firmament which may have disquieting implications. Most important is the recent tendency for representatives on the four-Power Allied Council in Tokio to take sides in Japanese internal politics, a conspicuous instance being the sharp altercations between the American and Russian representatives in the matters of land reform and the latitude to be permitted to Communist agitation. It would be disastrous if ideological differences were to afford the Japanese a renewed opportunity to exercise their traditional propensity for playing off one Great Power against another. Secondly, while the culpable but politically experienced reactionary and conservative elements have been either destroyed or discredited, practical democracy is an exotic plant which has yet to

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General MacArthur has also lent the full weight of his authority to the new and highly idealistic Constitution, which has now passed both Houses of the Diet and was consecrated upon the bomb-blasted soil of Hiroshima. Resort was had to a new Constitution only after the Japanese themselves had failed to propose adequate amendments to the Meiji Constitution (there are indications, indeed,

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THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

After the political commotion which is characteristic of Japanese cabinet changes and some attempts at intimidation on the part of the Communists, Mr. Shigeru Yoshida, a former Prime Minister and ambassador in London, succeeded in forming a Coalition Government of Liberals and Progressives. Although it probably fails to satisfy the confused aspirations of a defeated people harassed by day-to-day anxieties, the new Government is making all the required gestures of democratic reform and popular re-education, and seems to have won the confidence of Allied Headquarters.

On the surface, therefore, both political regeneration and military occupation in Japan are proceeding as well as could be expected. Partly perhaps because he has been instrumental in procuring for his undernourished charges over half a million tons of American food supplies, General MacArthur has been enveloped by the baffling but essentially practical Japanese in a nimbus of popularity such as can have fallen to

Continued on page 6

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take root in Japan's soil. The method of forced culture applied by the Americans can only be effective if adequate forms of control remain in Japan until the plant is strong enough to withstand an inclement climate. Finally, several Japanese press editorials have recently advocated a new and chastened approach to co-operation with China. Goodwill between China and Japan is essential to Far Eastern security, and in her low-paid technical skill and organising ability (much of which has been made surplus to her own economy by the consequences of defeat) Japan has a potential invisible export which might be of the greatest value in reconstruction in China. But, in view of the disruptive forces now at work in China and Japan's own past record, it would be difficult to feel any confidence that Japanese influence, re-established in China under new and even obsequious conditions, would not be used for subversive ends.

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Everett F. Drumright
First Secretary of Embassy

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November 14, 1946.

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triplicate)

Copy to CINCAFPAC, Tokyo

EFDrumright/ejg