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JAPANESE PRISONERS OF WAR:
LIFE AND DEATH IN SOVIET
P.W. CAMPS

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DISCREPANCY BETWEEN SOVIET
AND JAPANESE REPATRIATION FIGURES

Climbing on the band-wagon, Secretary General Kyuichi Tokuda of the Japan Communist Party addressed a petition to the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, in Moscow, on 6 May 1949. With "comradely greetings" he urged a speed-up of repatriation of Japanese war prisoners, a serious political issue in Japan.

That the subject had become a burning issue is not strange since thousands of Japanese families had been waiting for their men-folk to return since 1945.

As the 1949 repatriation season approached, the Japanese press made much of the subject. Mainichi Shimbun, on 28 April, published a sharp editorial inquiry into the fate of approximately 400,000 Japanese still unaccounted for. On the same date Asahi Shimbun, in a similar plea, listed figures unaccounted for as 324,000 in Siberia, 84,000 in Sakhalin and the Kuriles and an estimated 60,000 in the Chinese Communist controlled areas; Jiji Shimbun covered the same subject and on the same date.

Moscow radio (Pietersky), obviously touché and embarrassed, hurriedly answered the Asahi Shimbun editorial with the flimsy argument that "the prisoners, when repatriated, are faced with unemployment and lack of housing" and that the "Soviet Government has been spending huge sums of money to feed the Japanese prisoners of war." The Japanese spontaneous newspaper protest, said the commentator, was a "deliberate and vicious intent to arouse unnecessary concern and anxiety among relatives of prisoners of war in Japan." Closing in the classic Soviet manner, he asserted that all this was caused by "Japanese and American propagandists who are deliberately trying to obstruct the work of the Soviet repatriation movement."

The paradoxical combination of a Simon-pure Communist Party petition, with a nation-wide editorial campaign, gave the Soviet Government pause. SCAP had repeatedly pressed them for the resumption of repatriation. Idle ships were waiting steam-up to report to Soviet ports.

Then came a shattering Soviet announcement. A "Tass" press release in Moscow on 20 May indicated that only 95,000 former Japanese troops remained to be repatriated. This figure was at complete variance with official Japanese Government Demobilization Bureau compilations and General Headquarters G-2 and G-3 Demobilization/Repatriation Record Sections. These records listed a total of 469,041 persons still to be repatriated from Soviet controlled areas as of 26 May 1949.

For years, repeated efforts by SCAP to obtain precise statistical information from Soviet authorities on general prisoner of war totals or on deaths of Japanese internees had been abortive. Soviet repatriation authorities had refused to allow repatriates to carry ashes of their dead back to their homeland, an old Japanese tradition, and had suppressed the transmittal of Japanese rosters of deceased internees to offset this official silence. Instead Japanese authorities at home had been required to compile death lists through exhaustive and time-consuming interviews of returnees; under this system, Japanese internees were not officially listed as dead until the exact date, place and cause of death could be substantiated by at least two witnesses.

This Soviet failure to report deaths among Japanese prisoners held for over four years in Siberian camps probably accounts for the wide discrepancy between Soviet and Japanese repatriation figures.

The difference between the Soviet and Japanese figure is roughly 374,000 persons. Though this figure appears staggering, it must be remembered that the prisoners were held for over four years under unbelievably hard working and living conditions conducive to an extremely high death rate.

The discrepancy between Soviet and Japanese records is glaringly evident in the official tabulation as of May 1949, the beginning of this year's repatriation season. (See attached Table)

Status of Repatriation of Japanese from Overseas Areas
for the Period from 3 December 1946 through 26 May 1949

Geographical Areas	Original Strength	Evacuated To Date	To Be Evacuated
Australian Area.....	138,680	138,680	0
China.....	1,501,225	1,501,225	0
Formosa.....	479,050	479,050	0
Hawaii.....	3,547	3,547	0
Hong Kong.....	19,217	19,217	0
Korea (S of 38°).....	594,714	594,714	0
Manchuria.....	1,105,837	1,045,525	60,312
Nearby Islands.....	62,389	62,389	0
Netherlands East Indies.	15,563	15,563	0
New Zealand.....	797	797	0
North Indo-China.....	32,015	32,015	0
Pacific Ocean Areas.....	130,906	130,906	0
Philippine Islands.....	132,907	132,907	0
Ryukyu Islands.....	69,221	69,221	0
Southeast Asia Area.....	710,670	710,670	0
Soviet-controlled Areas.	1,617,655	1,208,926	408,729
(Dairen).....	(223,093)	(223,093)	0
(Karafuto & Kuriles) ..	(372,016)	(287,880)	(84,136)
(Korea (N of 38°))....	(322,546)	(322,546)*	0
(Siberia).....	(700,000)	(375,407)	(324,593)
TOTAL..	6,614,393	6,145,352	469,041

* Includes 293,968 repatriated via S. Korea

Recapitulation of repatriation from Soviet and Soviet-controlled areas:

1 Period	2 Ship Spaces Requested by U.S.S.R.	3 Ship Spaces Furnished by SCAP	4 No. Japanese Re-patriated	5 Application 50,000 Monthly Rate
3-15 Dec 46	25,500	33,200	28,421	--
1-31 Jan 47	86,000	86,700	83,438	/ 33,438
1-28 Feb 47	60,000	67,100	63,693	/ 13,693
1-31 Mar 47	90,700	104,700	90,606	/ 40,606
1-30 Apr 47	50,000	62,700	58,083	/ 8,083
1-31 May 47	50,400	54,400	51,920	/ 1,920
1-30 Jun 47	52,200	53,400	49,125	- 875
1-31 Jul 47	52,300	59,000	46,564	- 3,436
1-31 Aug 47	30,000	35,900	30,418	- 19,582
1-30 Sep 47	35,000	41,400	36,181	- 13,819
1-31 Oct 47	37,000	41,800	35,181	- 14,819
1-30 Nov 47	42,222	50,200	47,667	- 2,333
1-31 Dec 47	3,800	4,000	3,676	- 46,324
1 Jan 48-30/Apr 48	0			-200,000
1-31 May 48	48,500	62,100	46,345	- 3,655
1-30 Jun 48	46,000	56,800	44,999	- 5,001
1-31 Jul 48	46,300	56,800	46,034	- 3,966
1-31 Aug 48	40,500	49,300	40,030	- 9,970
1-30 Sep 48	37,500	45,800	37,214	- 12,786
1-31 Oct 48	37,500	47,800	37,420	- 12,580
1-30 Nov 48	37,350	44,700	37,929	- 12,071
1 Dec 48-26/May 49	0			-250,000
	905,772	1,057,800	914,958**	

** Does not include the 293,968 repatriated via S. Korea.

Total remaining Soviet-controlled areas - 408,729/469,041. Soviet monthly deliveries for period 1 January 47 - 30 April 49, averaged 31,662. It is evident that the Soviet deliveries have consistently fallen below the stipulated quota of 50,000 of the SCAP-Soviet agreement of 19 Dec 46.

Source: G-3 Status of Repatriation, 27 May 49.

THE DEATH-FACTOR IN SOVIET PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS

Surrender of the Japanese Army in 1945 placed under Soviet responsibility 2,723,492 Japanese (civilian and military) according to the Japanese General Staff. Approximately 700,000 of these were transported from Manchuria and Korea into Soviet territory for internment. As of May 1949, the repatriation account showed 469,041 military and civilian personnel still to be repatriated and chargeable to Soviet prisoner of war authorities. The Soviet authorities consequently will be accountable for 374,041 persons after deducting this season's announced repatriation of 95,000. The Japanese Government estimates 153,509 possibly alive, based on the receipt of post cards by relatives in 1947 and 1948; this is by no means conclusive, but exceeds, under any criterion, the official Soviet figure of 95,000 to be repatriated as of 1 May 1949:

	Soviet Areas	Manchuria	Total
Unrepatriated	408,729	60,312	469,041
(Verified dead)	(39,937)	(17,418)	(57,355)
(Presumed alive)	(153,509)		(153,509)
(Status unknown)	(215,283)	(42,894)	(258,177)
Soviet Admission	-95,000		-95,000
Balance Accountable	313,729	60,312	374,041

For many years prior to the surrender, the Japanese Government had kept a detailed record of the movements of military and civilian contingents. Their official records were initially checked by G-2, in charge of the Agenda for the Surrender Delegation in Manila, in 1945, and have been under periodic scrutiny since, in the G-3 surveillance of the repatriation programs and related naval transport. The statistics have been checked through every possible means, including nation-wide surveys of the families of missing personnel, conferences with survivors of Japanese military units disarmed by the Soviets and the countless interrogations of thousands of returnees from various Russian PW camps. Repatriates report that intolerable conditions found upon arrival at prisoner of war camps in 1945 resulted in thousands of fatalities.

A tabulated list of 125 prisoners of war camps in the Soviet Area, giving the number of prisoners and number of dead, was compiled by the Japanese Demobilization Bureau in January 1947, based on numerous interrogation reports, oral and written statements by repatriates. Of 209,300 prisoners of war in these camps, 51,332 died from malnutrition and communicable diseases. The mortality rate obtained was thus 24.5 percent. This cumulative percentage deals with the first years after the war, when prisoners treatment and general camp conditions were admittedly at their worst.

In spite of improvements after 1947, the cumulative death rate for the four year period would still represent an appalling and reckless waste of Japanese lives.

In addition to statistics arrived at through analytical research and compilation, thousands of repatriates have made sworn statements which substantiate an excessive mortality rate of prisoners of war, in certain periods, through malnutrition, overwork, cold and disease.

Said one returnee: "After the surrender, we were disarmed at Hsingen, Manchuria, and taken to the coal mining town of Morodoi,

Mongolia. Later an epidemic broke out among us and all the prisoners in the camp contracted it. Only 225 prisoners out of more than 600 survived." This constitutes a catastrophic death rate of approximately 60 percent in this particular area.

Another one stated: "Our battalion of 350 men was detained in the 3rd PW Camp in Khebarovsk. About 200 men died from illness and malnutrition." This, again, is a death rate of almost 60 percent.

A 1948 repatriate explained to the widow of one of his PW comrades: "In October 1945 we were sent to a camp west of Chita, where we felled trees. Owing to meager food rations and severe cold, many prisoners fell ill, and toward the end of March 1946, 50 percent of the prisoners in the camp died. At that time your husband fell ill with eruptive typhus. Owing to the shortage of medicines, he died."

Another 1948 returnee said: "Our group of about 1,000 was taken prisoner in Manchuria when the war ended. We were taken as far as the Ural Mountains in European Russia, and interned in a camp. About 70 percent were repatriated safely, but the rest died either from malnutrition or accidents while working."

Repatriates have expressed extreme bitterness concerning the camps in the Amur area, reporting 3,000 deaths in a total of 11,000 internees in some 20 camps, a death rate of approximately 27 percent. One returnee from this area reported: "The number of dead buried in the Kuibyshevka Special Hospital, Area No. 888, from a count of graves, totaled 1,500. At the hospital in Blagoveshchensk, 500 prisoners of war died of smallpox and other diseases; in the Mukhino and Tu Camps, there were 600 dead; in other camps 400 were reported; these figures aggregate 3,000."

A repatriate employed as a grave digger at one of the district PW hospitals reported that "So many died from starvation and disease that a crew of 50 men could not keep up with the job of burying the dead. According to a medical officer, the deaths between 1945 and 1946 ran as high as 30 percent of the prisoners in that area." A death rate of 30 percent, even allowing for cumulative errors, assumes more serious proportions compared to the Japanese domestic death rate at the height of the American air blitz of only 2.9 per hundred.

If we strike an average of the statistical death rates applied to the three winters from 1945 to 1947 inclusive, under variable camp conditions, we arrive at a certain annual cumulative rate of 7%. With a weeding out of the physically unfit through death, the sturdy survivors, with greater resistance, show a decreasing mortality rate, combined with a factual improvement in living conditions in 1948 and 1949 for calculated political effect, in order to support the systematic Communist indoctrination of the remaining prisoners.

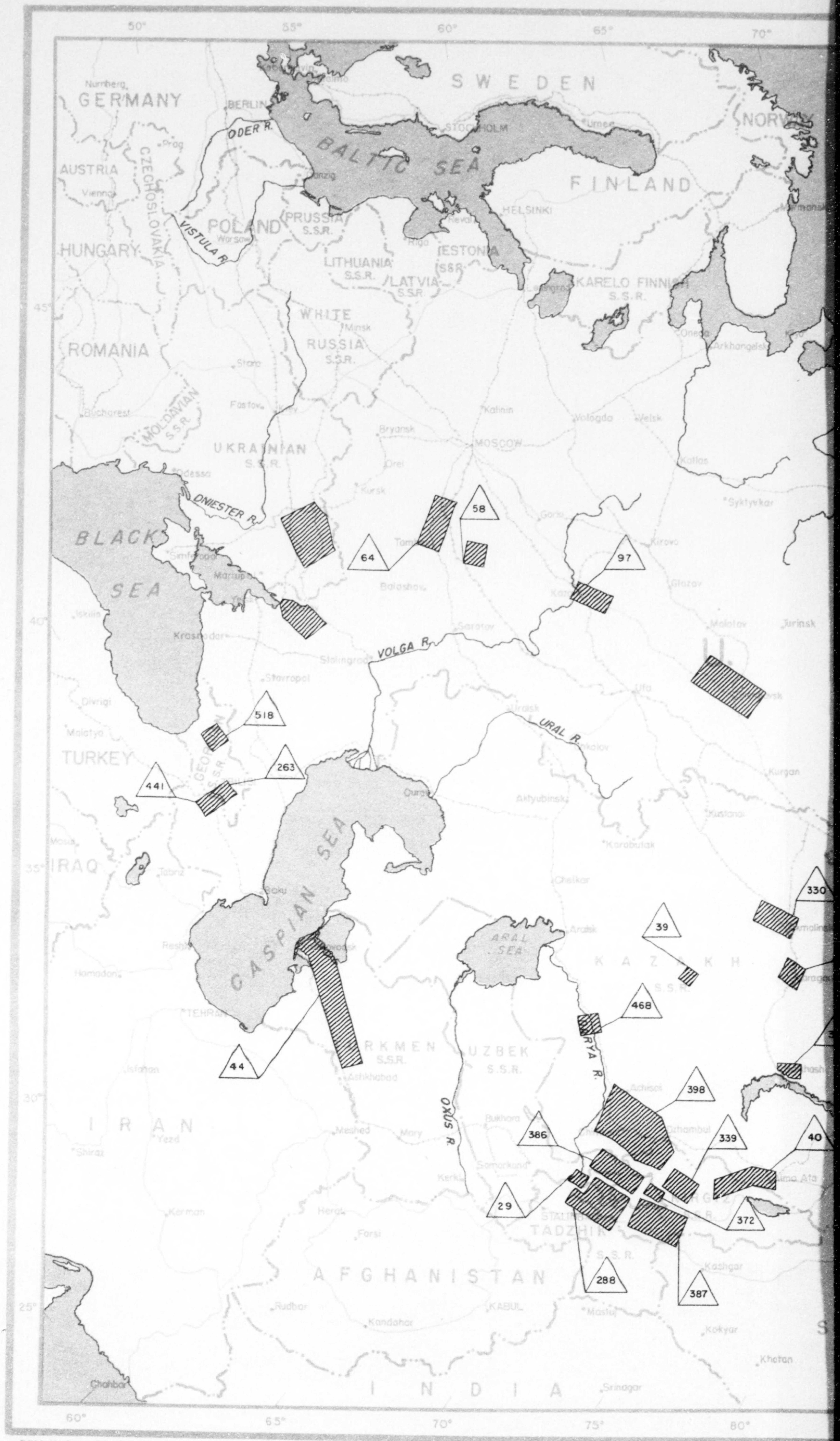
Discounting that the initial high percentages, reported in certain localities in 1947, apply uniformly to all camps, the general application of these macabre percentages, in a descending scale after the murderous winter of 1945, will account for the discrepancy between Soviet figure of 95,000 and Japanese totals of 374,041 prisoners of war unaccounted for at the end of the repatriation season of 1949:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Classification</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Losses</u>
1945	Worst Winter	10	272,349
1946	Slight Improvement	7	77,816
1947	Marked Improvement	3.7	19,668
1948	Indoctrination Period	2.0-	4,208
	Aggregate		374,041

Soviet camp authorities have repeatedly refused to answer queries into the fate of these unknown thousands.

When confronted recently with an accounting for the 374,000 missing, a Soviet spokesman coldly brushed aside all implications and voiced indifference to "the book-keeping methods" of the Japanese Government or SCAP.

This is poor comfort for the thousands of bereaved Japanese families that have awaited the return of a father or son. The world will hold the Soviet camp authorities responsible for tolerating conditions and treatments that have resulted in the probable death of several hundred thousand Japanese prisoners of war, in military and civil categories.









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MALNUTRITION AND LACK OF MEDICAL CARE IN SOVIET PW CAMPS

Repatriates are unanimous in asserting that especially during the first year of their captivity in Siberia food supplies were far below the minimum needed to offset cold and fatigue. Internees were forced to rely on whatever they could scavenge from the countryside to supplement their deficient diet, eating bark from trees, frogs, snails and anything else they could find. Accentuated by a total lack of sanitary facilities, disease spread through bodies already weakened by fatigue, exposure and malnutrition. The death rate was high in all of the prisoner groups even before they arrived at the make-shift internment camps.

Camps reflected almost total unpreparedness by Soviet authorities to care for large numbers of prisoners. Prisoners were generally housed in whatever facilities were available, usually in labor camps that lacked any serious provision for sanitation or welfare. Many camps were far from human habitation and almost all were considered totally unfit as living quarters because of poor construction and overcrowding. Repatriates allege that it was not unusual for prisoners to be herded into buildings so tightly that they could not lie down.

Statements bearing out these facts have been furnished by thousands of Japanese repatriates. One reported that "in the camp some prisoners killed themselves, others escaped. For fully three months we were given only potatoes, so we ate all the frogs, snails and slugs around the camp." Typical comments follow: "A number of us fell ill because of insufficient clothing in addition to the poor food supply; four prisoners sometimes shared one ration; often no food was received for an entire day. Quarters were crowded, facilities inadequate."

Approximately 26,000 Japanese civilians were assembled in an area around Hamhung (Korea) in May 1946. "Seven thousand died from exposure and starvation;" and "we left Suifenho on 13 September 1945, crossed the Amur River and marched for about a month across the Siberian wilderness, suffering from hunger, chill and fatigue. Our destination was a camp in a mountain mining area where neither house nor life could be seen." All prisoners agreed that conditions were so bad that only the strong could survive.

Sanitary conditions were so inadequate that typhus, eruptive fever, pneumonia and other diseases were rampant. To a large extent this was due to a lack of resistance resulting from malnutrition, fatigue and exposure. Returnees assert that the lack of facilities in the camps to prevent the spread of disease and the general apathy of Soviet authorities toward the illnesses of the prisoners often permitted the epidemics to become critical before anything was done. Thus many deaths, estimated at 10 percent in even the best camps, were caused by disease. The prisoners, in weakened condition, were easy victims, even succumbing to diseases that are not usually fatal. The ratio of deaths to number of prisoners was still higher in camps in obscure localities. Medical care was scanty and existing dispensaries and hospitals were understaffed and lacking in equipment and medicines. Indeed, had it not been for medical supplies and stores from the Japanese Army in Manchuria and Korea and the availability of trained Japanese medical personnel, repatriates believe that medical assistance would have been entirely lacking.

In their attempt to get all the labor possible from prisoners, Soviet authorities reportedly forced injured and sick prisoners to work and these individuals were often subjected to beating and other disciplinary action if they were unable to complete their work satisfactorily. Only prisoners with fever temperatures of over 100° Fahrenheit and those with visible external injuries were relieved from work. Thus hernia, appendicitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis and other illnesses often killed the prisoners

because of lack of treatment. Individuals seeking medical attention were usually suspected by authorities of "malingering" and so prisoners did not seek attention for fear of disciplinary action in the event that nothing serious could be found.

With the start of repatriation the policy was to repatriate only internees too ill or weak to work. However, most of these individuals were interned in hospitals for a time to recuperate before actual repatriation. If their health improved markedly they could always be returned to PW camps. Those who did not show improvement, however, were repatriated. Some were so ill before entering hospitals that they died there. Some 10/20 percent of the prisoners transferred to hospitals in North Korea, from the USSR, are reported to have died.

Innumerable other reports from returnees round out a picture of abject misery in which Japanese internees found themselves obliged to exist. Everywhere they were forced to perform heavy manual labor while the food issued was both meager and lacking in nourishment. Almost everywhere housing was poor and deficient in proper sanitary facilities. The inevitable result of the conditions of starvation, over-crowding and filth was that the sickness rate soared and finally assumed epidemic proportions. It was obvious to internees that the Soviets had no serious plans to care for the sick. In this period the Soviets could not control even comparatively minor illnesses and many died who, with a modicum of care, would have recovered. But real tragedy befell when malignant, filth-bred epidemics appeared. Top killer was eruptive typhus. Victims first developed a fever accompanied by a mulberry-colored rash. Next they would thrash in delirium, become covered with ulcerations and suffer severe attacks of diarrhea, after which they would fall into a deep final stupor preliminary to death. During all these stages the possibility of contagion was great, and the disease swept through the crowded, filthy encampments. In the Chien-Tao and Yen Chi internment camps alone, repatriates report that more than 10,000 succumbed to the disease. Those who lived through the typhus epidemic faced lung diseases brought on by extreme exhaustion, scurvy resulting from diet deficiencies, and the occasional amputation of gangrenous toes, fingers, arms or legs which had been frozen in the bitter cold.

Regardless of the suffering that prisoners endured, camp authorities forced them to produce a set amount of work.

Sakae Otsuka who made the trip to Siberia in the "comparative comfort" of an open freight car loaded with 100 of his fellow prisoners, said: "We worked during the day only at first, later we had to work even at night. In the meantime rations had become very bad and we worked on empty stomachs. The temperature was sometimes 40 or 50 degrees below zero. Due to hunger and hard work, we gradually became weak and many comrades were taken ill and died. We ate weeds and anything we could get...."

Cumulative evidence of the incredible heartlessness of the Soviet camp authorities toward the Japanese interned in Siberian prison camps came in with every shipload of men returning from captivity.

One repatriate, a surgeon, reported that under Soviet Army orders he established a 1,000 patient hospital in North Korea. He added that in June and July 1946, the Soviets sent 30,000 serious cases and cripples who were unable to work to North Korea where, hampered by overcrowding and lack of medical supplies, both the patients and the hospital staff went through "indescribable hardships". The Soviet troops, the surgeon went on, "searched the prisoners for any documents, ashes, hair and like items in order to conceal their atrocities and seized all evidence by making surprise inspections". The doctor concluded his report with the statement that he and members of his staff managed to evade Soviet searchers by concealing certain documents and records in secret places.

Another repatriate, a former Japanese Army captain, after verifying the surgeon's story, made the following statement: "Due to unsatisfactory conditions an unknown fever broke out and our comrades were infected daily. There was only one non-commissioned sanitary officer and he had no sanitary equipment and very few medicines. Despite our earnest entreaty, the Soviet authorities still enforced the allotted work, while the fever spread throughout the whole company. Together with the fever, all members of the company suffered malnutrition. By this time, we were allowed to enter the hospital, but despite the efforts of a Japanese nurse many of our comrades died. I carried the ashes of 25 dead with me, but to my regret, I was obliged to bury all of them due to the stubborn rejection of the Soviet authorities. Moreover, a name list which I valued very much was also confiscated by the Soviet authorities. The total dead in my company was 80."

Another repatriate reported that Cherenhov was one of the major coal mines in Siberia and more than 3,000 Japanese PWs were forced to work in the coal mines. "We were sent via the Siberian Railway from Mukden, Manchuria to Cherenhov, which is west of Irkutsk on Lake Baikal." We suffered greatly from the acute cold climate, poor and insufficient food and bad sanitation."

The unfavorable conditions under which prisoners of war were employed took their inevitable toll, "with compulsory hard labor under such bad conditions about 1,000 died of malnutrition or eruptive typhus during a period from December 1945 to February 1946."

The horrors faced by the Japanese coal mining crews who saw one-third of their fellow prisoners die of starvation and disease in a period of three months can be gained from the story of a repatriate who was employed as a grave-digger at a PW hospital: "They came here because of malnutrition. In the winter of 1945, many of the patients had loose bowels and about 90 percent of the men who contracted this sickness died. Fifty men were on duty digging graves every night. At first individual graves were dug but as the death rate grew we dug graves for two, five and 25 bodies, but even at that we were unable to bury them all and they were stacked up. Most of the soldiers that died were young; some of them also died from the cold....According to the medical officer, the deaths between 1945 and 1946 ran as high as 30 percent of the prisoners in that area."

Bearing out the statements made by the Lake Baikal coal miner, Kazuho Furuya wrote a letter to the "Asahi" in Tokyo: "During our internment in the Chinagolskaya Camp, Soviet Union, the starvation, coldness and excessive heavy work forced on us resulted in many victims. Soviet soldiers would carry away the naked bodies of the dead PWs piled up on a sled."

The Maritime Provinces also provided the customary hardship and death for the imprisoned Japanese. On 20 October 1945, one hundred PWs were assigned to a camp in Manzovka where they were employed as farmers. Eruptive typhus broke out and became so deadly that only 60 were returned. At a sawmill nearby 120 out of 200 died of the fever.

A former inmate of a PW camp in Ulan Bator, Outer Mongolia, had this to say about his imprisonment and his jailers: "The fact that 15,000 Japanese prisoners of war in Ulan Bator fought and persecuted one another in order to live is an unprecedented tragedy caused by the defeat. We were forced to engage in various kinds of work such as lumbering, quarrying, construction and coal mining. Since 15,000 of us were detained in a town with a population of 50,000 starvation was a matter of course. To make matters worse we were forced to fulfill the "norm" fixed under the Five Year Reconstruction Plan (of the Soviets) and all our human rights were utterly ignored. Ulan Bator was a town of thieves and prevaricators."

A returnee from Londoko, northwest of Khabarovsk, reported that prisoners in his camp existed on Kaoliang, soy-beans, salt and oil and that a death rate from malnutrition and pneumonia soared, making the period from October 1945 to January 1946 "really a living hell on earth". A returnee from Antonovka and Santago, both in Siberia, remarked, "Compared with the life of a PW my present life in Japan is so easy that I feel as if it is a dream. The mere thought of the life I led as a prisoner makes my blood run cold. I wish to let my countrymen have a sight of the prisoner's hardships and worry of those days." "I was fortunate to get out of the region 400 miles west of Lake Baikal where many of my comrades died one after another due to a starvation diet, severe cold and heavy work", admitted another returnee.

A Japanese who spent his period of imprisonment felling trees near a small mountain village 180 miles north of Chita, Siberia, bitterly recalled: "Many Japanese died of tuberculosis and malnutrition due to hard work and the food shortage. Having been prepared for the worst, that we would be forced to work to our dying day, we often thought that we would rather die than suffer from heavy labor any more. Really we were envious of the dead at that time."

Repatriate interrogations are full of remarks such as: "Whenever I recall to memory the life I had in Siberia a shudder runs through my frame" or "As the food situation was bad, we suffered acutely from hunger." But this comment from a repatriate formerly imprisoned near Vladivostok is an important clue to one of the real problems facing PW's: "In this camp there were many democrats and communists, however, most of them were false progressives. The living conditions were not so good, but we were especially annoyed by the Japanese who acted as informers."

To the miseries of starvation, bitter cold and hard labor burdening the PWs, the Soviets added their indoctrination plan which was furthered by self-seeking stooges recruited from among the PW ranks. One disgusted returnee reported that, "at the time of my repatriation the 'Democratic League' was organized and the greater part of its members consisted of former military personnel and civilian workers. The league was conducting a communist training course and had great power in deciding who was to be repatriated."

One of the leaders of the Youth Communist Party formed by the PWs said: "I was one of the leaders of the Youth Communist Party during my detention in the Soviet Union. Prior to our embarkation for Japan at Nakhodka I, like other comrades, hailed "Long live Generalissimo Stalin!" and pledged before the Democratic Group to join the Japan Communist Party as soon as we landed in the country of the reactionaries. After I returned home I learned that the Occupation Forces, which we were told to be our greatest enemy were exerting the utmost effort to accelerate our repatriation and the people at home, whom we believed to be indifferent towards our return, were making a strong campaign to expedite our repatriation. I was surprised at the real situation of the country and became aware that the ideas with which we were indoctrinated were false."

SOVIET EXPLOITATION OF JAPANESE PRISONER OF WAR LABOR

The Soviet policy to exploit prisoners of war to the fullest before repatriating them resulted in a heavy toll of lives. The Soviet Union's primary interest with respect to Japanese PWs was the complete utilization of manpower and technicians in various fields of industry to increase their postwar economic-military potentials. More labor, more production, were the Soviets' unceasing demands to attain their avowed goal of overtaking and surpassing the capitalistic world in agricultural and industrial production by a series of Five Year Plans. To this end, Japanese internees were compelled to engage in extremely arduous labor with pitifully inadequate food, clothing and shelter.

On arrival at Soviet PW camps, internees were immediately forced to work on the projects for which that particular camp was responsible. Exceedingly perfunctory medical inspections were given by Soviet medical personnel to determine the work capacity of individual prisoners. Physical classifications varied at different camps. The main distinction was between those capable of performing heavy labor and those fit only for light duties. In many instances, no attempt was made to follow these classifications, and prisoners were forced to perform heavy labor regardless of condition.

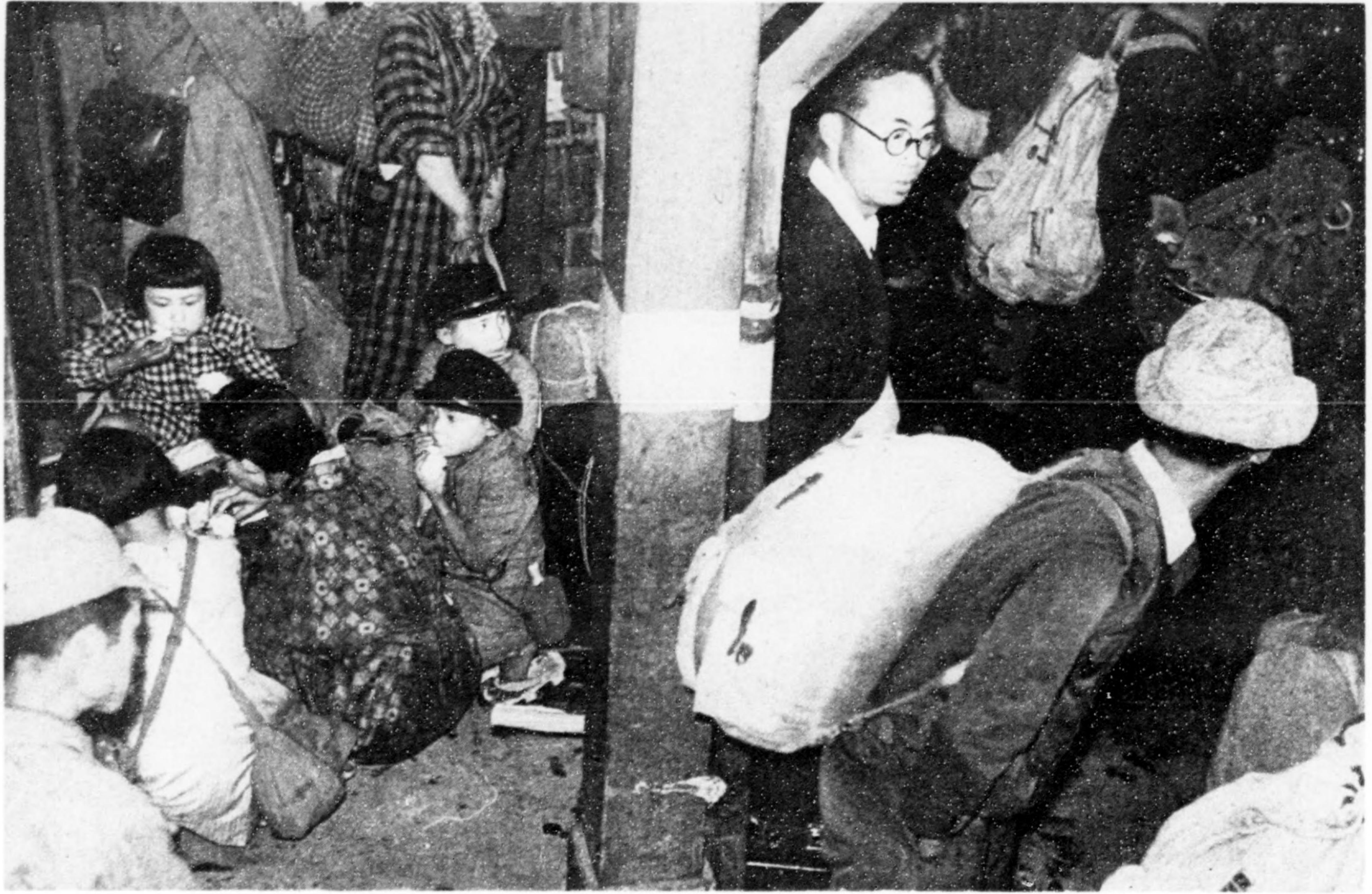
Physical examinations consisted of the PWs stripping to their waists and the doctors cursorily glancing at their general physical structure. Very little attempt was made to diagnose for internal disorder or other chronic ailments. If a person appeared to be healthy, he was automatically classified as fit for heavy labor. Only PWs with fever of over 100° were considered ill. In case of injury, when external change was not apparent, the injured were not hospitalized but were put to work. External injury without accompanying increase in temperature was often not considered as an excuse from labor.

Work projects for manual laborers, according to repatriates, included lumbering, loading and unloading railcars, mining, road or railroad repair and construction, excavation, stevedoring and other labor requiring heavy physical exertion. Japanese PWs, noted for their industry, were driven to the point of emaciation and complete fatigue. All projects were placed under the "norm" basis of production quotas, which were usually much higher than those assigned to Russian labor groups. These "norms" were reportedly based on the number of individuals in each labor group regardless of physical condition. Thus strong prisoners usually had to do much more than their individual quotas in order to make up for the weaker prisoners. If the daily production of a group was below the demands of the Soviet authorities, the prisoners were often forced to work continuously as long as 18 hours or more. Regardless of weather or individual physical condition, the prisoner's minimum working day was eight hours. Very rarely were the prisoners able to complete their "norm" in such a short time.

Repatriates report that food supplies were so inadequate that, combined with enforced labor and long hours, all of the prisoners suffered from malnutrition. The amount of food allotted to the prisoners was contingent upon the percentage of the "norm" accomplished, and thus already enervated prisoners who could not complete their "norm" were further weakened when food was denied them. Only in the most extreme cases of malnutrition were prisoners relieved from work, and it is reported that many of these subsequently died. Other deaths were reportedly caused by exposure or fatigue during working hours as a result of inadequate clothing and lack of rest. Although all were in weakened condition which became progressively worse, the work "norms" were not lessened.

With the beginning of 1948, many repatriates have reported, the Soviets began to treat Japanese PWs more kindly. Although Soviet labor commanders were reportedly prohibited from beating prisoners of war to gain more production, other means just as effective were used to increase the PWs output. Production races were held between camps, with the "winning" camp receiving flattering panegyrics, and the losing camps being looked upon with cold contempt. Campaigns for 120 percent production or 150 percent productions, etc, were held, with outstanding work being rewarded by presentation of medals and banners, and perhaps recognition being given in the propaganda newspaper "Nippon Shimbun". Leaders of campaigns reached a point of frenzied enthusiasm, with the result that PWs were often forced to work for 12 or 13 hours a day to complete the daily work quota. At the same time, the rumor became prevalent that repatriation depended somewhat upon the labor records attained by individuals and camps. With the rising stabilization of Soviet economy in early 1948, the pay system was added as a further incentive for labor. PWs completing more than 100 percent of their daily quota were awarded food or money. Most of this money was reported to have been "subtracted" as "expenses" by the Soviet authorities. Through this subterfuge the Soviets now claim that PWs were not engaged in enforced labor, but rather were paid for their work.

The Russians' insatiable demand for labor production was abetted by highly indoctrinated Japanese fanatics who were without regard for their hapless comrades. According to repatriates, a Soviet physician found that an internee he was treating for a leg injury in the Rybstroy PW Camp in April 1949, was not feverish and placed him on full duty status. The pain-wracked PW lagged in his work and his Japanese foreman denounced him. He was prosecuted for his "undemocratic" attitude by the People's Court and was told that his case would receive further consideration at another court. That night, scorned by his comrades and fearful of the future, the injured PW hanged himself with his leggings. This man and countless other thousands paid the cost of completing the current Soviet Five Year Plan in four years.



Japanese repatriates aboard ship.



Repatriates are admitted to the Matsuasa Restaurant at Omori.

Flotsam of War: Displaced Civilians

SOVIET INDOCTRINATION OF JAPANESE PRISONERS OF WAR

During their four years of captivity in the Soviet Union and the outlying Soviet-dominated territories, Japanese internees were in the custody of the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs. This office was charged not only with the lives and welfare of the prisoners, but with the gigantic task of converting them to ideals and mores which were the direct antithesis of their previous sources of racial belief and moral strength.

The indoctrination program itself is a vast centrifugal machine designed to reconstruct the lives and political future of every PW within its scope. It was skillfully adapted to the Japanese form and habit of thought; carefully paced to the prisoners' current circumstances and to each stage of his development; thereby divesting it gradually of any semblance to a part of the prisoners' lives and thoughts. As conceived and executed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs it was implemented in the PW Camps by a group of Japanese Communists, working under Soviet direction. Fellow prisoners, early converts to communism through conviction or expediency, they combined the unsavory roles of propagandists and informers, as did their European counterparts in Nazi PW camps.

The initial phase of the so-called "enlightenment" project was a negative one, calculated to eradicate an inherited mistrust and hatred for the USSR and all it stood for. It was a growth of long standing, fostered by the continual bickering between Japan and the Soviet Union over many years, which the recent brutalities endured at the hands of their Soviet captors had done little to alleviate. It was a necessary preparation for the positive doctrines to follow.

The campaign opened in March 1946, when the captives had reached a state bordering on prostration. The shock of sudden and final defeat, the hardships suffered during the long, bitter Siberian winter, the grueling work on starvation rations had reduced the prisoners' morale and resistance to an all-time low.

Their one life-line was hope of early repatriation. Watching their companions die by the hundreds from starvation, exposure and ill-treatment, the prisoners had little hope of surviving. Into this "slough of despond" the Ministry of Internal Affairs thrust its opening gambit in the form of an anti-fascist group known as the Friends' Society (TOMO NO KAI). It urged all those interested in politics and social problems to join the discussion groups to be formed in the camps, but so few responded that the inducement was promptly changed to an offer of improved living conditions. Oddly enough, it was the Russian people themselves who succeeded where the Ministry of Internal Affairs had failed. The sight of the peasants around them, patiently toiling through a poverty-stricken existence, touched a responsive chord in the Japanese, men who had also been reared on a doctrine of patriotism and rigid self-denial.

Positive indoctrination began with an offensive on the Emperor and military caste systems, the foundation of Japan's social structure and the most formidable obstacles to an eventual proletarian revolution. The "Japan Newspaper" (Nippon Shimbun) published a series of inflammatory editorials, anti-militaristic in tone, pointing out that the Emperor and the army hierarchy were responsible for the prisoners' unhappy plight, and the Friends' Society plastered the camps with banners bearing such slogans as "destroy the officers' privileges", "better living for enlisted PWs", and "down with the Emperor System".

This part of the program met with immediate success. Freed from the control of their officers, the enlisted men got completely out of hand, and something like wholesale mutiny spread through the camps.

Once it had taken root, the Soviets were quick to push this idea to its logical conclusion and remind the PWs that their compatriots in Japan must also be freed from the horrors of imperialistic rule and military tyranny.

The Friends' Society, while preserving its own identity throughout, was an intrinsic part of the indoctrination program. Its work was accomplished by a camp committee composed of PWs, which planned the strategy, integrated orders from the Soviet authorities into camp policies, and coordinated the work of other committees.

The Japan Newspaper soon became an integral part of the PW scheme. In its first phase it was intended to transmit Soviet orders to the defeated Japanese. When the Red Army withdrew from Manchuria in February 1946 and the Kwantung Army dissolved into a half-million or more dazed Japanese ex-soldiers, the paper was developed into a propaganda organ focused on the demoralized mass of Japanese scattered about in Siberia, parts of European USSR, Manchuria, Korea and Outer Mongolia.

Its editorials attacked imperialism and the caste system and anti-American propaganda was deftly woven into all portions of the paper. Lies and half-truths kept the internees in a ferment of anxiety for their families and homes in American hands and developed in them a combination of fear and dislike toward Americans. The Japan Newspaper's Japanese staff was able to gauge the mental caliber of PW readers and largely was responsible for the rapid results achieved.

The second phase of the re-education project opened in January 1947 when living conditions in the majority of PW camps showed a slight improvement and, the famine of 1946 having subsided somewhat, food was a little more plentiful. At this point the United States stepped into the picture with a strongly worded reminder that the Potsdam Agreement called for the earliest possible return of Japanese soldiers from the battle areas to a peaceful occupation at home. An offer of ample tonnage with which to fulfill this commitment forced the USSR to a gesture of compliance and the repatriation program got under way. Only advanced tubercular cases and PWs otherwise unfit for hard labor had been repatriated the month before.

With the weeding out process accomplished, a more positive course of "enlightenment" was laid down for internees, designed to single out the intelligentsia and to exercise a more effective thought control in the future. The new instruction course covered such subjects as: a study of theoretical communism, a study of labor unions and the class struggle, a comparison of Soviet post-war policies with those of the United States, and a "Short History of the Communist Party".

These courses were introduced to every PW camp and the propaganda machine settled down to systematic indoctrination. Promising students and potential group leaders were excused from manual labor and given a stiff academic standard to maintain. With their decent appearance and clean clothing, they presented a sharp contrast to the ragged, wind-bitten laboring parties.

"We must unite to form a strong proletarian fighting line in the present Japanese social organization, and break the shackles of the Emperor system. This line will then become a bulwark of strength, protecting Japan from American Imperialism".

This item in the Japan Newspaper set the keynote for subsequent indoctrination courses. American occupation policies were consistently attacked while comparisons between American and Soviet methods provided a fertile opportunity for anti-American propaganda. The course in theoretical communism gave place to a forthright attempt to convince the PWs that their only hope of a true democratic reconstruction of Japan

lay in an alliance with the USSR, and the eradication of all American policies and influence. It was a decisive effort to make the soldier repatriates join the Japan Communist Party in preparation for an all-out proletarian revolution.

Anomalous groups of Japanese PWs gathered in camps were consolidated into definite political organizations in the summer of 1947. They had proved useful to the authorities in the campaign against the caste system and on other occasions when gangster tactics were indicated. The groups were made up of raw, turbulent youths, mere extensions of the Godsent Troops, the Blood Brotherhood, or the Younger Officers' League in the pre-war Japanese Army. Now, in singling them out for special training, in delegating extraordinary powers to their leaders, the Soviet authorities followed a familiar pattern set in the 1930's - that of using immature hotheads to eliminate the conservative elements.

Feeling ran high between the two factions in the camps - between those who studied Marx and Lenin seriously, and those who planned the communization of Japan by drastic means. But as the theorists of this world are never organized, gangster elements in the PW camps, backed by the authorities, gained the upper hand as they did in the Japanese Army during the decade preceding the Pacific War.

The real and immediate use for the youth groups was espionage within the districts and camps, though their declared duties were to stimulate interest in the communization program and increase the labor output. Selected members were secretly enjoined to spy on their comrades and report those thought to be against communism or to lack enthusiasm for their work. The ultimate mission of all youth organizations was to form a strong bloc within the Japan Communist Party, the nucleus of a general revolutionary movement. Backed by the authorities, they carried on a running feud with the camp conservatives, and although the Guard Escort Unit, acting for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, was responsible for law and order in all PW camps, the youth organizations took punitive measure into their own hands as they saw fit.

Membership in a youth group offered the prisoners some guarantee of survival at least, and at best, a certain immunity from persecution, starvation and overwork. These particular echelons of repatriates were carefully instructed in cell activity and ordered to join farmers' unions and labor groups on their return to Japan.

Limited judicial powers over Japanese PWs were held by youth leaders and group chiefs by which they maintain rigid discipline. A General Assembly Court (Tai Shu Kanpa), presided over by Japanese, was held in all PW districts where indoctrination was well advanced. Its function was to prosecute any PW who failed to cooperate satisfactorily with local Communist movements. Its procedure followed that of any "kangaroo" court, with the addition of severe purely Soviet innovations.

After the charge was read by the chairman the accused was given no opportunity for defense and his sentence pronounced without further ceremony. A practice known as "lynching" was a popular form of punishment meted out to Communist slackers or to "a decadent bourgeois". The culprit had to stand facing a crowd and was ridiculed savagely by a mob adroitly roused to a frenzy of bitter invective. Another favorite penalty was "trampling", in which a highly excited crowd went through the motions of trampling the offender to death. Even if no physical damage were inflicted, the effect on the victim's nerves can be imagined. At times mobs actually broke through to carry out the sentence with gruesome literalness. "Confessionals", patterned somewhat after the Oxford Group method, were also used to trap the unwary into damaging admissions. In any event the culprits were made to sign a pledge:

- To overthrow the Emperor system
- To establish a Communist Government in Japan
- To join and support the Japan Communist Party

Serious offenses and infringement of Soviet directives were prosecuted and judgment pronounced by the Red Army. Offenders usually were sentenced to death or life imprisonment at the hands of the Red Army.

All Japanese Communist agents and group leaders were given special training for future work in Japan. Whereas all Japanese PWs were put through the indoctrination program, only selected and tried converts were given the special courses in the three important training centers: The Moscow Indoctrination School, the Democratic School, the Youths' School and the Political School, the latter three at Khormorin.

Only the most advanced students of communism were enrolled at the intelligence school at Moscow, believed to be a training center for special intelligence agents slated to take part in the Soviet plan of espionage and sabotage in both Europe and Asia.

The Democratic School at Khormorin, set up for the study of Communist ideology, reportedly still is operating. Attendance is voluntary and the academic course covers roughly: the international situation, current conditions in the USSR and Japan, the theory of materialism, its financial development. The Youths' School covers the same subjects but its training is much more intensive. Students must be under 25 years of age and are entitled to separate quarters. The Political School, upon which much emphasis is laid, trains instructors for the camps.

From these institutions emerge the Communist zealots, youth leaders and orators who have been successfully infected with the virus of fanaticism which makes their breed potentially dangerous.

All Japanese PWs and civilian internees undergo an intensive indoctrination aimed at securing mass entry into the Japan Communist Party. The particular action is called KIKAN TOSO, or "struggle upon returning home". KIKAN TOSO, guided by the slogans "convey the true picture of the Soviet Union", and "destroy anti-Soviet and anti-Communism propaganda" is a decisive effort to make the repatriates join directly with the Japan Communist Party in preparation for an all-out proletarian revolution. KIKAN TOSO is that part of the present fourth phase of repatriate indoctrination designed to enlist sympathizers in the "democratic, racial struggle".

KIKAN TOSO is continued when the repatriates reach the port of NAKHODKA where they undergo a final intensive indoctrination, which is known among them as the "finishing school". The term gives little idea of the dread which they face this last and most formidable test of their fitness for repatriation which often "finishes" any hope of immediate relief. Preparation for the ordeal begins long before their departure from camp and is for the benefit of spies and informers among their company who can delay repatriation definitely by a single adverse report.

Strenuous efforts are made to smarten up their appearance, though little enough can be done with what remains of their clothing. They march to and from work in military formation and rehearse community singing so that their rendition of the "International" and "The Red Flag" will pass muster with group leaders. They learn Communist slogans, to be shouted at every passing station enroute to the embarkation port at Nakhodka, and are careful to address everyone as "doshi" (comrade).

On arrival, investigation squads take over to determine each man's degree of progress in Communist indoctrination. If a group or individual is found to be below required standards, the entire echelon is sent to a labor battalion for an indefinite period. Survivors undergo an intensive propaganda course based on the assumption that one and all love and revere the USSR and are reluctant to leave its shores.

The entire unnerving special procedure ends with a grand rally in which trained orators of the fire-eating type urge them to "stem the Americanization of the Japanese people" and prevent, "by a peaceful democratic revolution", their colonization as slave laborers of America. PWs at Nakhodka sing Communist songs on all occasions, going to and from work, from meals and lectures, and on the march, elbows locked together. They shout Communist slogans, urged on by past masters of mob psychology. And when their susceptibilities have been roused to white heat, an official appears with pledges to join the Japan Communist Party, which every repatriate present is obliged to sign.

The expedients used to shepherd repatriates into the fold of the Japan Communist Party immediately upon their return, suggests that the Soviets suspect that their new creation cannot be trusted for long outside the iron lung of their propaganda machine. Or perhaps they believe with the sage Liang Chi-Chao that "when an institution whose roots are not among the people is introduced, it is like plucking flowers from a neighbor's garden to embellish the dying branches of one's own tree; there can be no permanent life."

COMMUNIST INDOCTRINATION OF JAPANESE REPATRIATES

When the Repatriation Ship, "Takasago Maru," slipped into the port at Maizuru on the morning of 27 June, carrying the first shipment for 1949 of Japanese to be returned from Siberian prisoner of war camps, the Soviets gave an impressive demonstration of their ability to indoctrinate even basically unfriendly individuals with the principles of Marxism.

The 2,000 khaki-clad repatriates massed along the ship's shore-side rail and "in drilled harmony sang the Internationale and the International Youth Song, the hymn to Communist youth of the world adopted at the International Youth Congress in Prague in the fall of 1947." Blindly over-looking the irrefutable fact that they had been interned for more than four years, the repatriates vigorously proclaimed their affection for the Soviets and swore that they would join the Japan Communist Party and shape Japan into the same kind of country as the USSR.

How the Soviets succeeded in converting these belated repatriates into adherents of the philosophy of Leninism is a fascinating exploration into the fields of individual, group and mass psychology.

Exhaustive interviews of earlier repatriates had already shown that the Soviets follow a masterful, multiple-faceted plan of political indoctrination notwithstanding the fact that the Japanese had an instinctive dislike of all things Russian, and remained historical antagonists to the point of fighting an open, although small-scale, war along the Siberian-Manchurian border.

In 1946 when repatriation to Japan was opened for the first time the Soviets chose the weak, infirm and aged for return. The reason for this choice was obvious. They could not work and would contribute nothing to the internal economy of the Soviet Union. It was hardly worthwhile to indoctrinate them. The weak and infirm would probably die under hardships still ahead while the aged possessed rigid thought patterns less easily subverted. Almost without exception these first returnees were extremely bitter toward their captors.

The next step taken by the Soviets was designed to sift and classify prisoner groups. Older, high-ranking officers were sent to segregated camps; medium rank officers, too, were segregated. The residue consisted mainly of younger, inexperienced naive men, whose minds had not hardened into thought patterns which would adjudge the proffered ideology in the light of firmly-rooted beliefs and opinions.

Taking advantage of the perennial "Caste system" gripe of the enlisted man against his officers, the Soviets cultivated schisms between officers and troops; some pliable officers became ashamed of their former privileged status. This maneuver accomplished two Soviet objectives: it completed the transformation of military contingents into a leaderless mass and it brought the recalcitrant enlisted men, the majority of the group, closer to Red ideology.

Having secured the psychological attention of the enlisted men by exploiting the popular drive against alleged privileges of the officer class, the Soviets were ready to expand the opening made. The Soviets found many topics of immediate concern to their prisoners. The Japanese naturally hated the bitter cold of Siberia and general inherent hardships and wanted to return to their homes. The Soviets embittered them by blaming the Japanese Government for the delay in

repatriation, claiming that the Japanese Government had refused to send ships. The Soviets argued falsely that under unfriendly American control, the Japanese Government had no facilities to care for returned soldiers. As in all wars, the soldiers, remembering how they had been lionized when they left Japan for the battle area, nurtured a growing resentment against their country's leaders and heightened an already present hatred for the Allies.

Kept ignorant of the truth and fed with the propaganda that their country had deserted them in their need, the prisoners, in their misery, sought out companionship and formed "friendship societies." The Soviets promptly infiltrated Japanese "stooges" into these organizations and converted them into agencies through which inflammatory Communist propaganda was canalized.

The perverted reasoning presented to prisoners took certain definite lines: Their system of government was a failure -- hadn't they lost the war? The Soviet Union, "the winner in the Pacific," was a superlative success as a system of government; the Japanese Government known to the prisoners no longer existed, but a new, foreign element of Japanese traitors backed by American "Imperialists," had seized control.

The imprisoned Japanese had just lost a war geared to win Asia for the Asiatics. They had been thoroughly indoctrinated with hatred for the white man. To a man they knew that the United States, Australia and several other countries barred them from immigration. They were historically sensitive of any insinuation of inferiority. In Siberia they found themselves working and suffering on equal terms with Soviet citizens. Russian men and women invited some of them into their pitifully plain homes and shared their meager diet of soup and black bread. Repatriates report that when they plodded away to trains they often saw Soviet fellow-workers wipe away tears of sadness at their departure. Although the repatriated prisoners could hardly ignore the numbing hardship they had endured, they are not likely to forget that great numbers of Soviet citizens suffered with them in an equality of peonage.

The most important single instrument used by the Soviets to indoctrinate Japanese PWs has been the "Japan Newspaper" (Nippon Shimbun), a propaganda sheet. It sparked the class hatreds between officers and enlisted men. It served as the basic text book in all phases of the political re-education of prisoners and buttressed all changes ordered by Moscow. The influence of the "Nippon Shimbun" was tremendous as it was virtually the only source of "news" available to the vast majority of the internees.

The "Nippon Shimbun" is published in Khabarovsk, Siberia under the direction of political and propaganda specialists of the Soviet Intelligence Section, assisted by Japanese PWs specially selected for the job because of their educational background or previous newspaper experience. They were interned in a special camp near Khabarovsk and given "political education" before joining the staff of the paper.

Basing the bulk of its "news" on Soviet sources, the "Nippon Shimbun" played up the weakness of Japan, the "Traitorous" actions of Japanese politicians in power, and the suffering of the Japanese people "fighting off hunger and cold" and "squirming" under the heel of American Capitalists, who are making Japan a military bastion in their "imperialistic plan to control the world."

Under the impact of a cleverly calculated barrage of propaganda, buttressed by the Soviet-directed newspaper, a formalized indoctrination program which included a closely interwoven network of schools, lectures, study groups, cultural societies and Communist cells, former Communists and Communist sympathizers and other dissident elements, became leaders in embracing and propagating communism's disruptive principles. With this firm core of protagonists, the Soviets found it relatively easy to expand their program so as to enlist at least half-hearted support of great numbers of individuals who originally had been neither pro nor anti-communist.

Except for the die-hards, those who opposed the Soviet ideology generally came to heel, at least outwardly, when they realized that the date of their repatriation depended greatly on how successful they were in convincing their Soviet keepers that they had come to accept the Communist doctrine as their own.

In the latter part of 1947, the Soviet authorities changed their ruthless tactics of maltreatment of PWs and began improvement in living conditions, in order to offset the disastrous effect of the first years 1945/1946. Food became more abundant and palatable. Living quarters, medical, bathing and recreational facilities were bettered and large numbers of internees began to work an eight hour day, for which they received a certain scale of pay that could be spent for little luxuries at camp stores. At the same time, Soviet citizens, heretofore in depths of economic misery practically paralleling those suffered by the PWs began edging upward in their standard of living. Thus the internees had visual "proof" that the Soviet system was producing favorable results.

The repatriates of 1947 were more thoroughly subverted than those of 1946. Those who returned in the latter part of 1948 were indoctrinated to a much higher degree; that 1949 repatriates should show an increasing state of indoctrination was inevitable, considering the stepped-up program of Communist training and vicious anti-American propaganda to which those detained for an additional year were subjected.

The boldness and efficiency of the Soviet's indoctrination program is noteworthy. Seemingly no nation ever began a campaign of propaganda with less chance of success. In the affected repatriate, the Soviet Union has developed an efficient means to propagate her Communist ideology in Japan by agents, sympathizers and converts.

The Soviets have used every means at hand, including food, as a means to gain their objective of indoctrinating the selected men among the repatriates. They permitted the aged and weak to die with little or no medical care to ease their passing. Those more hardy among the riper-aged were worked, starved and exposed to bitter cold and none among their captors cared whether they lived or died. Only the very young and naive were carefully cared for--how well the Soviets succeeded in impressing these younger groups can be judged from the statement made by one returnee: "I landed at Maizuru on the morning of 3 July 1949. I was so fat my friends and folks were surprised. In the USSR we lived in plenty, lived on the same food as the Russians and worked among them no more than eight hours. Another eight hours were for sleep and the rest of the days were free when we could enjoy various recreation at a club in the camp. The living in Siberia was easier than in Japan and I feel ashamed whenever people say to us, 'many thanks for your trouble.'"

An interesting point to note here is that this statement was made on 9 July 1949 and the comparison between living conditions in Japan and Siberia was made immediately after the returnee had left the

repatriation center at Maizuru, long before he had had an opportunity to make an honest comparison between life in Siberia and Japan--in this knowledge it becomes apparent that his mission was to sow dissension among his circle of friends in order to further the ideas he had been taught and had accepted.

It would be interesting to know how this Communist stooge would attempt to account for the thousands of his fellow prisoners whose emaciated bodies were buried in common graves in Siberia.

VII

RECALCITRANT 1949 REPATRIATES

Though hundreds of thousands of Japanese had for months been clamoring for repatriation of Soviet-held prisoners, they little realized the stir these belated returnees would create when they reached home. The entire world, in fact, was momentarily taken aback on hearing that former prisoners of war had returned to their native land with cries of: "We are entering enemy territory! Don't lower your defenses!" The behavior of the first boatload of 1949 repatriates was widely lamented editorially as a "slap in the face" to the Japanese people.

To SCAP and Japanese Government demobilization officials who have been observing repatriation proceedings since termination of hostilities in 1945, it has long been evident that the extent of Communist indoctrination of Soviet-held Japanese PWs may be expected to be in direct ratio to the length of their detention in Soviet PW camps. Repatriates of 1946 were the aged and the ill, or persons considered to be poor indoctrinational risks. Among them anti-Communist and anti-Soviet feeling ran high.

The 1947 contingent exhibited some evidence of having been subverted, while a noticeable increase in the extent of indoctrination became apparent in the 1948 repatriates, rising to a climax in November, when the repatriates first adopted a non-cooperative attitude toward Occupation Personnel and Japanese officials at the Maizuru Reception Center. Refusal to complete forms, unruliness aboard ship, singing of revolutionary songs, dancing and capering and insolent acceptance of issues of food and clothing constituted the semi-belligerent behavior evidenced by these late 1948 returnees. That the 1949 repatriates should reflect the zenith of the Soviet indoctrination program was logical on the basis of past experience.

With the first shipload of 1949 repatriates setting the pace, the repatriation season got under way in a manner designed, to all appearances, to sorely try the patience of repatriate vessel crews, reception center personnel, welcoming groups and demobilization authorities charged with the responsibility of assisting the repatriates in settling their demobilization and personal affairs. After rudely rejecting the sympathetic welcome of the throng which gathered to cheer the first ship's entry into Maizuru Harbor, the repatriates maintained a surly and uncooperative attitude toward repatriation officials.

They boarded special trains, only to leave them at unauthorized stops to join rowdy demonstrations of Japan Communist Party members and leftist organizations. As the groups split up to return to their various districts there was hardly a railway station in even the most remote areas where the returnees failed to shout labor songs and perform Communist dances, to the bewilderment and consternation of the majority of their waiting families.

In the meanwhile, other ships of the first fleet had begun to arrive at Maizuru. Many of the repatriates on these ships had refused to fill out port cards, and after mingling with earlier shiploads of repatriates whose stay at the center happened to overlap a day or two, the general attitude became even more unruly and disrespectful. Repatriates leaving their designated trains in Kyoto participated in a large-scale demonstration* culminating in a sitdown strike and clash with police--an incident which could have grown into a serious affair save for skillful handling of the situation by the police.

A day later a large group of repatriates made an unauthorized stop in Tokyo, commandeered a public auditorium where they spent two nights, staged demonstrations at Japanese Government offices and important factories and visited the Russian Embassy to express their gratitude for the "warm" treatment they had received while interned in the USSR. Until the repatriates

from the first fleet of repatriation ships finally reached their destinations, similar incidents of varying degrees of seriousness were reported from every part of Japan.

Repatriates from the second fleet of ships engaged in activities described by repatriation officials as "nerve tactics." "Indeed, the 'cold war' has come to Maizuru," declared one representative of the Reception Center. Repatriates from the first ship of the second fleet stubbornly refused to complete details for the passenger list, and it became necessary for officials to delay debarkation until the recalcitrants complied with instructions. Officials of the center braced themselves for the next boatload, but needlessly, for the second vessel arrived at the port without incident and processing was completed in an orderly manner.

Hopes that this docile shipment was promise of better behavior in the future were shattered as the third ship entered the harbor with a load of repatriates equally as stubborn as the first. The fourth shipload followed the pattern of alternate cooperation, landing and processing without incident or disturbances of any importance. Then came one of the most unreasonable contingents of the entire second fleet. The Shinyo Maru passengers subjected the captain of the vessel to a kangaroo court, charging that biscuits served were wormy and that the crew had, in two instances, splashed water on the repatriates and their belongings. They also charged the ship's doctor with unnecessary cruelty because he gave three inoculations to the repatriates in one day. They refused to give information for the passenger list and port cards, and their ship was held in the harbor for approximately 30 hours before compliance with instructions was effected.

On another ship, the repatriates demanded the resignation of the entire crew, and refused to receive typhus inoculations. Debarkation was delayed from 2 August until 5 August pending completion of all inoculations and compliance with all orders of officials. Passengers on another ship, the Shinano Maru, held a general meeting at which they accused three repatriates of being traitors. They demanded police power from the ship's captain for the purpose of dealing with one of the "traitors", who they claimed should be hanged as a war criminal. Upon failing to receive the requested power, they insisted that the ship's captain acknowledged the accused as a first class war criminal.

The last ship of the second fleet reached Maizuru shortly following the issuance of the Imperial Japanese Ordinance 300, which provided for the orderly return of repatriates to their homes under provision of the Potsdam Agreement. Contents of the ordinance had been radioed to the ship one day prior to its arrival at Maizuru. The repatriates, however, stubbornly refused even to accept forms needed for completing the ship's roster. Arriving early on 12 August, the repatriates asserted that they would not fill out forms until the Japan Communist Party sent them instructions. They continued dancing and capering throughout the day, and as a result of the heat and consuming of excessive amounts of water, a number of the repatriates became slightly ill. They demanded that the ship's captain accept responsibility for their maladies. They were not permitted to debark until they had completed their forms, which was about noon the following day. The crew of this ship had become so thoroughly disgusted with the obnoxious actions of this shipment of repatriates that they demanded an apology of the group.

Second-fleet repatriates caused equally as much trouble in the processing center and en route to their homes as they had created aboard ship to Maizuru. In the processing center, in addition to uncooperative and insolent attitudes assumed previously by earlier repatriates, these latest returnees adopted "annoying" tactics such as maintaining complete silence when being questioned and sleeping late instead of attending scheduled events.

Following examples of previous repatriates, they disrupted train schedules, rode unauthorized trains without proper tickets and joined in rallies and demonstrations being conducted opportunely by JCP and leftist organizations. On 25 July a large group of repatriates submitted demands to the Repatriates Assistance Bureau in Tokyo and staged a sitdown strike when the demands were not met. These demands were, for the most part, of a ridiculous nature, such as rerouting repatriates trains through Yoyogi Station in Tokyo (location of Japan Communist Party Headquarters), banning police from railway stations and having the Japanese Government bear the expense of the negotiations which the repatriates entered into in order to present these demands, including meals for those repatriates engaged in the sitdown strike.

More than 400 repatriates entered the compounds of the Diet building on 8 August and presented demands to Diet members sent out to confer with the repatriates. The situation took on all aspects of a potential sitdown strike. After several hours the repatriates were prevailed upon to return to Ueno Station for food which they had demanded. Before these repatriates left Ueno Station, they were warned that if they failed to board scheduled trains they would have to bear the expense of travel to their homes, since their tickets would be forfeited. Ignoring this warning, the repatriates chose to march to the Diet Building and consequently missed their trains. Mediators hit upon a plan whereby the repatriates could sign to have the fares deducted from certain allowances due them from the Welfare Ministry and could ride the next scheduled trains without tickets. The repatriates boarded the trains not only without tickets but without having signed for subsequent deduction from their allowances.

The effect which the Imperial Ordinance would have on subsequent shipments was a matter of great interest to all concerned. Radio reports from the first ship of the third fleet indicated that the same stubborn uncooperativeness prevailed on shipboard, with repatriates, as before, refusing to complete port cards. However, when the ship dropped anchor at Maizuru Harbor, the repatriates immediately became completely cooperative. Debarking and processing proceeded without incident, as has been the case with each successive third-fleet ship.

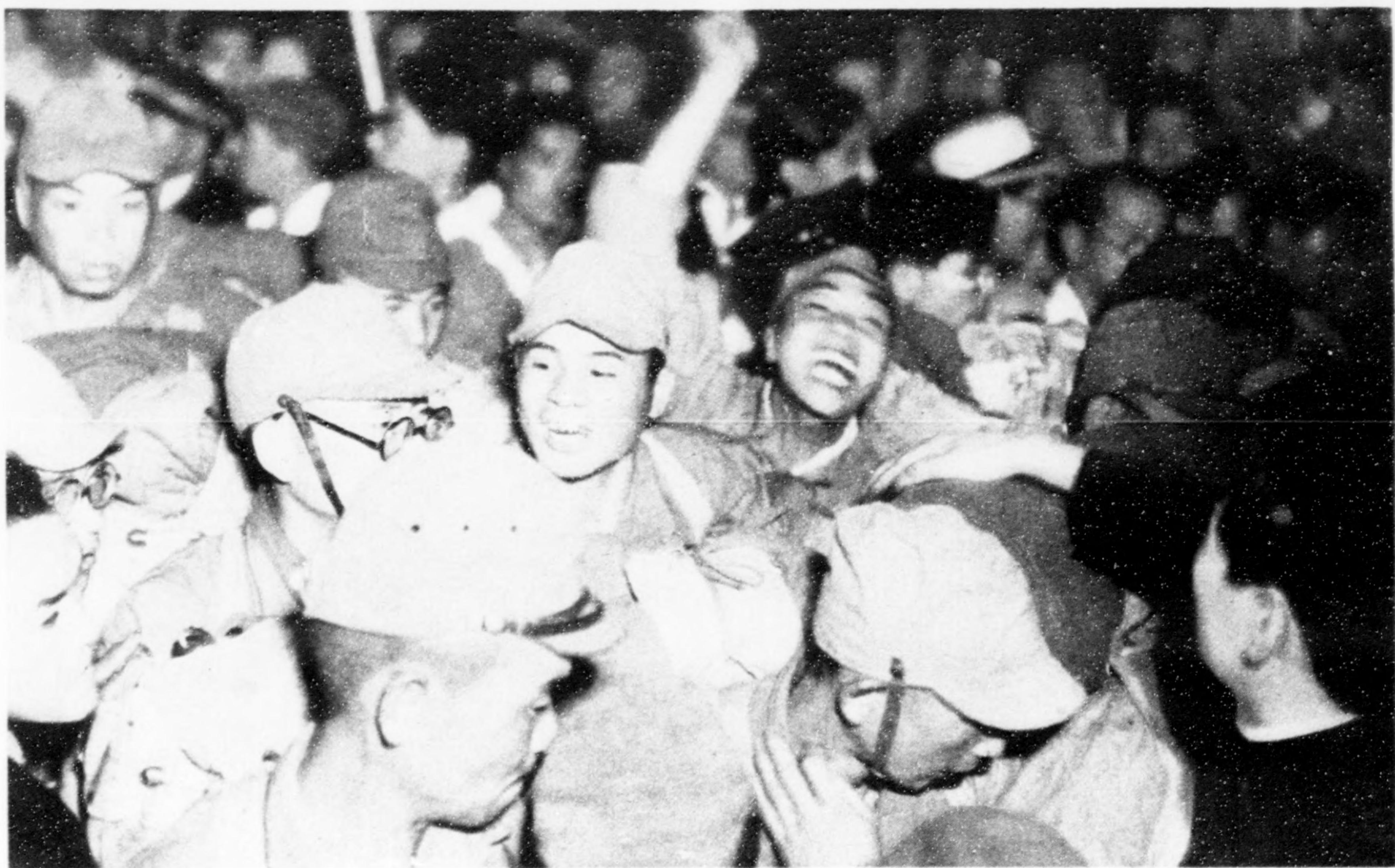
Aside from extremely light participation in scheduled activities with voluntary attendance, there was very little evidence of AKTIV leaders maintaining control over fellow repatriates in the reception center. Repatriation officials expressed the opinion that leaders who appeared to be Soviet appointed were actually puppets, and that the real leaders remained sub rosa to avoid early identification at the port, and thus, to be permitted to work undetected at the foundation of public opinion in home communities. This change in tactics is believed to have been the result of USSR sensitivity to Japanese public opinion, which was aroused against the attitude assumed by earlier recalcitrant repatriates.

Reflection over the 1949 repatriation leads to the conclusion that this year's activities showed a marked increase in intensity and coordination as compared with that of earlier years. One of the main factors responsible was the better organization of each shipment into groups and units under the rigid control of leaders or AKTIVS. At a snap of the fingers the AKTIVS bade the repatriates dance or sing or remain silent, and individual action was strictly forbidden. Also plainly obvious, and even more condemnable, was the Soviet direction of these activities from the time of embarkation on the repatriation ships until the mass of repatriates were able to at last break away from the reins of their Soviet appointed leaders as they arrived at their homes.

If the Soviets intended the raucous behavior of 1949 repatriates to serve as a fitting grand finale to their four-year slave-labor plan, their end was accomplished. Had those in charge of repatriate tactics possessed

sufficient foresight to gauge the deep imprint which such childish and unreasonable actions would leave in the minds and hearts of the Japanese public, it is doubtful that such fanfare and spectacle would have been directed by the Soviets. The Japanese nation will not soon forget the circumstances which drove their own husbands, fathers and sons to a state of complete loss of individual human dignity and temporary emotional and mental instability. *

* Note the vital, well-cared for appearance of the recalcitrant 1949 military repatriates pictured in the following two pages as compared to the beaten, miserable civilian repatriates shown on page 3, Tab IV. This is a striking example of how the Soviets accorded good treatment to those considered worthy of indoctrination, while at the same time they forced those considered unworthy of indoctrination to fend for themselves and to suffer unbelievable hardship.



Confusion at the Railroad Station.



Repatriates form cordon and challenge police.

Repatriates from Soviet PW Camps, 1949



Family struggles to keep repatriate from joining Communist demonstration.



Communist-led disorders at railroad station.

Repatriates from Soviet PW Camps, 1949

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TOKYO, FRIDAY, AUG. 5, 1949

Men or Beasts?

Are these men or beasts the Soviets are sending back to Japan from their prison camps? It is no wonder that an anguished mother welcoming her long-absent son should cry out, "What have they done to my son?"

That cry has been echoed and re-echoed many times since the beginning of this year's repatriation program.

These questions are asked because the repatriates have shown time and again that they apparently lack the basic sentiments and feelings which differentiate human from beasts. For almost a week with their native land in sight and with loved ones waiting, a shipload of repatriates have sullenly refused to land. Others have snarled and snapped at the warm words of welcome and

the kind hands extended in heartfelt sympathy. Still others have stonily brushed aside their families, who have been impatiently waiting these many years to have them back under their family roof, to stay with the pack. Moving as animal herds, they move and act at the direction of the pack leaders whatever the action or course may be.

Where is their individuality? Where is their feeling for family and home? Where is their sentiment for their native land? Where is their respect for law and order?

Perhaps the repatriates themselves should not be judged too severely for they are the products of Communist training. They are the ones so well indoctrinated that the Soviets allowed their return. They are Communists.

It is small wonder that the families of the repatriates should ask, "What have they done . . . ?" The Japanese know now, if they did not know before, what communism does to men. What sensible, freedom-loving people would take in an ideology which robs men of their individuality and their sensibility as human beings?

Excerpts from Japanese newspapers of the same period verify the opinion expressed in the above editorial:

東京日日新聞（七月三日）……引揚達者もほとんど全員が都や知友の出迎えを黙殺赤旗組の熱狂的な歓迎にインターナショナルの歌をうたい、赤旗を打ち振ってこの歓迎にこたえるなど、これまでの引揚列車に見られぬ異風景を展開した。

朝日新聞（七月六日）……ホームにあふれる家族たちの拍手と隣接ホームにならんだ共産党員のインターナショナルに迎えられて四十三名が下車、家族に囲まれて泣き出すもの、すがりつく家族に“同志が行く、離せ”と叫んでふり拂おうとするもの

時事新報（七月廿一日）マイズル発……両船とも乗っている引揚者はこれまでにない拒否的態度、沈黙戦術に出て関係方面を当惑させた。故國の山河になんの感動もないのだからか、聞けば大郁丸引揚者二千名はナホトカ出港以来、完全沈黙を守り復員カードなどの復員業務を拒否し――

読賣新聞（八月三日）マイズル発……入港後もこの要求貫徹までは下船しないと引揚業務を拒否しこのため入院患者は上陸完了まで約八時間入院不能に陥り重症患者は闘病のうちに“上陸させてくれ”と呼び続けるという状態となつた。一看護婦の話『重症患者達は病室で“早く下船させてくれ”と悲痛な声で叫び船医や看護婦が容体を見ようとして近づくと入口や重症患者の側に付添りリーダー格の引揚者が往診を拒否するため満足な手当もできない』

Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun, 3 Jul—... Most of the repatriates completely ignored the salutes of the Tokyo Governor and metropolitan officials. Instead they sang the "Internationale" and waved red flags in answer to the enthusiastic receptions by red-flag welcomers. This was an aspect unlike any observed repatriate trains in the past...

Asahi Shimbun, 6 Jul—... Forty-three repatriates alighted from the train amidst a burst of cheers by waiting families and the singing of the "Internationale" by Communists. Some, surrounded by family members, burst into tears, while others tried to tear themselves away from their families, crying, "Let me go with my comrades..."

Jiji Shimpō, 21 Jul (Maizuru Dispatch)—... The repatriates on board these two ships displayed the greatest defiance and silence yet seen, perplexing the authorities concerned... they appeared emotionless on viewing their native country. It is said that the 2,000 repatriates on board the Daiiku Maru maintained a strict silence ever since the ship left Nahodka and that they refused to cooperate in the execution of repatriation business...

Yomiuri Shimbun, 3 Aug (Maizuru Dispatch)—... The repatriates refused to fill out repatriation papers and as a result stretcher cases had to wait eight hours before they could be landed to be hospitalized... When doctors or nurses tried to approach the patients to give them treatment, the leaders of the repatriates and attendants of the patients turned them back...

Japanese Press Expresses Opinion on Soviet Indoctrination of Repatriates, 1949