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Instructions to Japanese Soldiers
at the Front

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Army Order. No. 1

Let this book be used as a guide in raising moral at
the front.

War Minister, TOJO, Hideki

January 8, 16th year of Showa (TN: 1941)

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Instructions to Japanese Soldiers
at the Front

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Instructions to the Japanese Soldiers
at the Front

Introduction

The battle-field is the place where the Imperial Army, in obedience to the Imperial command, should deeply impress the enemy, with the august virtue of His Majesty by displaying its true spirit, capturing whatever it attacks, gaining victory whenever it fights, and propagating widely KODO (The way of the Imperial grace) wherever it goes.

All soldiers at the front, therefore, are expected of to firmly comply with the mission of our country, strictly observe moral principles of the Imperial Army, and exalt the prestige of our Empire throughout the world.

The essence of the soldiers spirit is clearly shown in the Imperial Instructions to the soldiers and a Basic outline on fighting and training are given in the General Principles of the manual. However, the actual conditions at the front are such that the soldiers, often become too absorbed in matters of the present and are apt to forget the essentials and fall short of their duties and dignity as military men. We must be well guarded against this pitfall. From our past experiences, therefore, it is now desired to show the standard of actual behavior expected of all the men, in hopes that perfect observance of the Imperial Instructions at the front shall be observed thereby enhancing the morals of our Imperial Army.

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Such is the true aim of the following instructions.

Essentials Part I

I KOKOKU (TN: Imperial Land)

DAI NIPPON is the KOKOKU (TN: -- an Empire reigned over by His Majesty the Emperor), a country ruled over by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal, and reigning forever in accordance with the Imperial policy which was established at the time of the foundation of the Empire. The Imperial grace and majesty reaches over entire humanity and envelops like the sun the whole universe. We the subjects, on our part, have adhered from generation to generation to the virtues of loyalty, filial piety and bravery, and have rendered service in the fulfilment of the Imperial mission and the vindication of the moral way of our Empire. United in one body with the Emperor, we have worked out our national growth and prosperity.

All officers and men at the front, realize the intrinsic spirit of our national policy, and maintain an indomitable belief in it, so that you may devote yourselves to the fulfil-^{ment} of your great duty to protect and maintain this glorious Empire

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of His Majesty.

II The Imperial Army

The Army is under the supreme command of His Majesty the Emperor, and by embodying the spirit of "SHIMBU" (TN: martial spirit of god) in its action, charges itself with the duty of enhancing the majesty and virtue of our Empire and maintaining the prosperity of our Imperial Throne.

The spirit which is righteous, brave and benevolent, and which, ever in compliance with His Majesty's mind, strives for the realization of world harmony, is the very spirit of "SHIMBU". Martial spirit should be resolute, and benevolence impartial. Should an enemy resist our Imperial Army, wield the sword bravely to their utter submission. Even though your military might overcomes the enemy, your martial virtue will not be perfect if you are devoid of the virtue of benevolence to forgive those who submit and to love those who obey. Martial spirit should not be haughty and benevolence not ostentatious. The virtues of bravery and benevolence are noble only when they flow naturally and spontaneously from one's self. The true province of the Imperial Army lies in the execution of justice tempered with mercy so that the universal virtues of His Majesty shall be looked up to by all.

III Military Discipline

The pith of the Imperial military discipline exists in the sublime spirit of absolute obedience to His Majesty the Commander-in-Chief.

Every person, high or low, should realize wherefrom comes the majesty of supreme command. The higher should be strict in the execution of the entrusted Imperial Command, and the lower sincere and loyal in the obedience thereto. The vital requisite to victory and for securing public peace is the firm unity of the Army obtained through its single-hearted loyalty to the Emperor and perfect consolidation and coordination under a single, supreme command.

The front is especially the place for military men to put utmost practice to their sublime spirit of absolute obedience. What enables our military men to conduct themselves duly in the face of a life-and-death struggle and, at a command, to march forward joyously to death, to the silent consummation of their supreme obedience and self-sacrifice, is the quintessence of our Imperial martial spirit.

IV Unity

The Imperial Army looks up to His Majesty the Commander-in-Chief as its head. All military men should comply with His Majesty's gracious mind, and by attaining harmony among themselves through their unanimous loyalty to the Throne, should realize complete unity of the whole Army.

Each unit in the Army should, in conformity with the basic principle of supreme command, establish a strong unity in it, permeated, however, with a peaceful harmony, with its commander as its center. Military men of all ranks, high or low, should be strict in discharging their several duties and obedient to their commander's will, and while trusting in others and

standing aloof from cares of earthly life and interests, should be ready to sacrifice their individual selves for the sake of the whole.

V Co-operation

All soldiers should be united in discharging their several duties and at the same time should be ready to sacrifice themselves joyfully for the sake of the victory of the whole Army.

Each unit should reciprocally respect the duty and honor of other units. Put trust in and give assistance to one another. Take up difficult tasks voluntarily, and through co-operation and harmony, make every effort for the accomplishment of the common aim.

VI Fighting Spirit

Fighting should be done resolutely and dauntlessly always consistent with fighting spirit.

In attacking, be positive and decisive, always take the initiative, and fight it out with a hardy and indomitable spirit until you completely overcome your enemy. Even when on the defensive, you should keep alive the edge of offensive spirit and never fail to secure the initiative in action. Do not yield your position to the enemy even if it means death. Pursue the enemy resolutely and thoroughly to the very end.

Be daring and courageous, and fear nothing. Meet hardships with boldness and composure, overcome difficulties with an indomitable spirit and surmounting every obstacle, devote yourselves to reach your final goal of victory.

VII Faith of Victory

Faith is might. One who fights dauntlessly with firm faith always wins.

Faith in certain victory arises from a constant and indefatigable self-training of determination to the death. In your time by all means devote yourselves to the utmost to the cultivation of unfailing power for winning victory.

The issue of the present war will decide the future of our Empire. Bear in mind your duty and responsibility to the tradition of a "Hundred battles, a hundred victories, reflect^{upon} the gloryfilled history of your army and never cease fighting until victory is won.

Essentials Part II

I Piety

Divine spirits witness our deeds from above. Ever be just, honest and pious, and be loyal to the Emperor and dutiful to parents, so that you may be deserving of divine protection from Heaven.

II Filial Piety

The oneness of loyalty to the ruler and filial devotion to the parents is the essence of our national morality, and this explains the fact that those who are loyal to the Emperor invariably are dutiful to their parents.

When you are at the front, bear your parent's wishes deeply in mind and devote yourselves to the cause of loyalty to the Emperor, therewith rendering illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.

III The Salute and Deportment

The salute manifests the genuine spirit of obedience and is the indication of the unity of superiors and subordinates. Especially, punctilious salutes are required at the front.

Punctiliousness and uprightnes of deportment which issues from a courteous personality is the proof of one's greatness as military man.

IV Comradeship

Comradeship is the way of all military men to unite in one in life and death--putting trust in one another, cultivating

moral strength through mutual and constant contact, and giving assistance in cases of need, and warning against wrong and mistakes--all for the fulfilment, in comradely co-operation, of their duties as military men.

V Exemplification by the Leaders

Those of higher ranks should, in all circumstances, set themselves as examples for their subordinates. If the superiors are not proper, disorder would necessarily follow among the subordinates.

Action is valued at the front. Lead the men personally with firm determination.

VI Responsibility

Duty is sacred. Responsibility is grave. Do not slight a single task, ^{or} a single duty. Devote your soul, exert your ever effort and use all the means in your power for the best possible accomplishment of your duties.

The one with the strongest sense of responsibility is truly the most courageous man in the battle-field.

VII View on Life and Death

That which annihilates the bounds between life and death is the sublime spirit of self-sacrifice and service.

Transcend life and death, and devote yourselves to the fulfilment of your duty. Rejoice in the life of over-lasting loyalty and patriotism which is to be attained through the serenity of the soul reached after the supreme exertion of all bodily and mental efforts.

VIII Honor

A man of honor is strong. Keep always in mind the honor of your families and native communities, and strive hard to fulfil their expectations.

Prefer death to a shameful life of captivity. Never leave a disgraceful name behind you at death.

IX Simplicity and Fortitude

Regulate your life at the front with stern simplicity, and promote thereby the spirit of fortitude and military morale.

Life at the front must necessarily be plain in mode. Practice economy and self-denial in everything, remembering that privation and inconvenience are common in the battle-field. Luxury slackens a valiant spirit.

X Integrity and Purity

Integrity and purity is the basis of our chivalrous ideal. How can a man unable to restrain himself from worldly desires, offer himself to the cause of our Empire?

Control yourself with coldness and severity. Be fair and just in dealing with matters. Act with a clean conscience in the sight of gods and men.

Essentials Part III

I Admonitions at the Front

1) Calamity falls on one's unguarded moments. Be always prepared against unexpected contingencies.

Do not despise the enemies and natives. Neither be content with a small measure of success or neglect your further duties. Mind that misfortune comes also from negligence.

2) Be careful in guarding military secrets. Spies are always about you.

3) The duty of a sentry is grave. He is charged with the fate of an army, and represents the military discipline of a unit to which he belongs. He should thoroughly understand the gravity of his duty and fulfil it with a stern sense of responsibility. Again a sentry's status should be deeply respected.

4) Ideological warfare plays an important role in modern war. Have an unshakable conviction in the Japanese Empire and exert yourselves not only to confound the enemy's deceitful propaganda but to take an active part in the vindication of our KODO (TN: the Imperial Way).

5) False rumors have their origin in lack of conviction. Do not waver but always be firm. Have confidence in the real power of the Imperial Army, and trust your superior officers.

6) Pay regard in the custody of enemy assets and properties. Requisition, confiscation and destruction of supplies should be carried out always only on orders of the commanding

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officer according to regulations.

7) Following the basic principle of the Imperial Army, love and protect innocent native people with benevolence.

8) While at the front, never become addicted to sensual pleasures or forget yourselves ^{by} being carried away by selfish desire, so that you will not mar the prestige of the Imperial Army or spoil your honor offered in service of the Emperor. Be strictly prudent and make every effort not to stain the integrity and purity of our military men.

9) Control your anger and discontentment. "Think of anger as an enemy." says an old teaching. A momentary fit of passion often results in lingering repentance.

The severity of Military Law aims especially at the maintenance of the honor of military men and upholding the prestige of the Imperial Army. Always remember the determination and deep emotion you had embarking for the front; think of the sincere affection of your parents, wife and children; and even as a joke do not expose yourself to crime.

II Etiquette and Good Behavior at the Front.

1) According to the tradition of our military spirit, devote yourselves constantly to cultivating martial virtues and skill.

"Never get tired of whatever you are engaged in," said a certain general of the old days.

2) Free yourselves from family cares for the sake of concentrated devotion to the Imperial cause, and always keep your person and personal possessions clean and orderly so that

you may, on your death, leave good impressions behind. All military men should be ready to die in the battle-field, and your families should be given previous warnings not to be disturbed even if your remains fail to be sent home.

3) It is to be most regretted for military men to die of diseases at the front. Be strictly careful about your health so that you may not fail through intemperance in the performance of your public service.

4) Be as prudent as the ancient warriors who valued their swords as their own souls and horses as their own treasures. At the front, always treat your arms and other supplies with respect, and take good care of horses.

5) Morality at the front is the source of fighting power. Be considerate always of the convenience of other units also and never monopolize on lodgings and supplies.

It is said that, "A fowl that takes off from water never leaves it muddy." We desire to leave honorable and everlasting fame of the valiant and admirable Imperial Army even in the remotest regions of foreign countries.

6) It is a lofty character desired in military men not to boast of their own meritorious deeds but to credit others with honor.

7) Never be jealous of the advancement of others. Do not begrudge if your merits are not appreciated but think of the deficiency of your own sincerity.

8) Be sincere and honest in every matter and be ashamed of telling lies and exaggerations.

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"A fowl that takes off from water never leaves it muddy." We desire to leave honorable and everlasting fame of the valiant and admirable Imperial Army even in the remotest regions of foreign countries.

8) Always maintain magnanimity befitting a citizen of a great nation, and by taking up the cause of justice, exalt the prestige of our Empire throughout the world.

International etiquette should also be duly observed.

9) In case you are allowed to return home by Imperial order after living through many fatal battles, think first of all of those who died sacrificing themselves for the sake of the Empire. Set good examples to the public by your prudent conduct and speech and redouble your resolution to render further service to the Imperial Throne.

Conclusion

All of the foregoing are based on the spirit of the Imperial Instructions to Military Men and aim at serving the supreme end of the same. Therefore, these should be held as the standard of practical morals at the front thereby attaining full observance of the Imperial Instructions.

All officers and men at the front should firmly comply with the purpose of this book and, excelling in devotion to public service, should fulfil their duties as military men so that they may respond to the profound and gracious favor of His Majesty the Emperor.

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Certificate of the Distribution of Document

I, chief of the Documents Section, the First Demobilization Bureau, the Demobilization Office, certify that the "Instructions to Japanese Soldiers at the Front" appended herewith, consisting of thirty-two pages, and printed in the Japanese language, is a document distributed to officers and men of the entire army as Army Order No. 1. on July 8, 16th year of Showa (TN: 1941).

The sixth day of the first month, the twenty-second year of Showa (TN: 1947).

Tokyo: MIYAMA, Yoze

Chief of the Document Section, the
First Demobilization Bureau.

I certify that the above seal and signature were affixed in my presence.

On the same day and at the same place:

Witness: TANAKA, Keiji

Certificate of the Formation of Document

I, chief of the Documents Section, the First Demobilization Bureau, the Demobilization Office, certify that the publication entitled "Instructions to Japanese Soldiers at the Front" appended herewith, consisting of thirty two pages and printed in the Japanese language, is one of many documents compiled and published by the War Ministry of the Japanese Government.

The twenty-first day of the first month, the twenty-second year of Showa (TF: 1947)

Tokyo: MIYAMA, Yozo

Chief of the Documents Section,
the First Demobilization Bureau.

I certify that the above seal and signature were affixed in my presence.

On the same day, at the same place:

Witness: TANAYA, Keiji

TRANSLATION CERTIFICATE

I, Yukio Kawamoto, of the Defense Language Branch, hereby certify that the foregoing translation described in the above certificate is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a correct translation and is as near as possible to the meaning of the original document.

/s/ Yukio Kawamoto

Tokyo, Japan
Date 7 Feb. 1947

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at the Front"