US Price Slump

Discussion of declining prices in the United States continued to dominate economic commentaries, as prefectural writers speculated on the probable effects upon the Japanese economy of international developments. SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 15 February) -- urging a Marshall Plan for Asia -- believed that "long-term American credits were necessary, in order that the United States may secure markets for her commodities." On the other hand, HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 16 February) indicated that the recent slump in American commodity markets would have an adverse psychological effect on Japanese farmers, inasmuch as the nation is largely dependent on overseas food supply. "The basis of Japanese farm organization," the editorialist pointed out, "is small-scale management . . . which would be most vulnerable to the influx of cheap foreign foods when Japan will have been restored from the present controlled economy to free trade." As an illustration, reference was made to "the recent release of imported Cuban sugar at a very reasonable price," the effect of which was assertedly to discourage Japanese sugar growers. Organization of farmers' cooperatives was suggested as "the only way of averting, or at least minimizing, the impact of cheap imports."

Taxation

Tax payment delinquency was attributed by TOKUSHIMA MINPO (Tokushima, 15 February) "to the fact that the people have not been fully informed of the object and methods of tax collection." As a means of public education, therefore, "tax-paying unions" were proposed.

AGRICULTURE

Realization of the projected 10 percent increase in agricultural output depends in a large part on efficient distribution of fertilizer, farming implements, and perquisites, prefectural commentators said in commenting on plans to hike production of indigenously grown food. FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 14 February) believed that farmers' morale -- adversely affected by alleged delays in delivery of bounties -- would determine the extent of crop increase this year, holding that "fertilizer and farming equipment would eliminate the farmers' greatest worry concerning production increase." Reporting that the rice goal of 20,550,000 koku is about 15,000,000 below 1947 consumption, the writer said that "this year will decide Japan's fate," and called for greater agricultural output to provide collateral exchange goods for foreign trade. Similarly, NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 17 February) -- describing the increase as additional driving power to rebuild Japan -- said "smooth rationing of materials" would help to overcome the reported rice shortage of 12,000,000 koku. As another means of improving the food situation, TOKUSHIMA MINPO (Tokushima, 14 February) called for consumer-producer teams to accomplish the fairest possible distribution of limited foodstuffs. "The nation is fed up with the bureaucratic way of control," the writer said, and members of a new food distribution agency were counselled to become "thoroughly democratized and end the neglect of consumers."

Land Reform and Cooperatives

To OITA GODO SHIMBUN (Oita, 17 February), crop increases also depended upon unification of small farms and cooperative farming. "Some people misinterpret this program as pro-Communist, but it is in fact a very democratic measure," the editorialist asserted. In an attack on "remnants of feudalism among the landlords," the writer said that "farmland belongs to the cultivators . . . and it must no longer be possessed as a means of gaining rent. To possess uncultivated land or too much land does not agree with the spirit of the new society."

Two other newspapers again called for greater farmer interest in the new Agricultural Cooperative Associations. CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 16 February) scored the absence of "great passion for the Cooperatives," and attributed this to the comparative ease of rural life. The entire nation must realize that land reform

and farmer cooperatives are essential in a liberal and democratic society, the commentator held. SANYO CHOHO (Okayama, 15 February) demanded an intensified program of indoctrination to impress upon farmers the fact that the new union -- unlike the old militaristic associations -- is "to be formed by the free will of the farmers, with its only aim the convenience of the workers. * * * More positive movements, such as opening of community study and meeting halls, are needed."

EDUCATION

Most educational comment in the prefectural press was divided between concern for working students, and the need for specific measures to improve educational standards. Reports that universities and colleges would treble their fees beginning in April were viewed with alarm by NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 15 February) which observed that since most students have to work in order to make ends meet, a rise in tuition will compel them to take to blackmarketing or more serious crimes in order to continue their studies. Also pessimistic over the state of students and educators was KUMAMOTO NICHINICHI (Kumamoto, 15 February) which saw only a choice between blackmarketing or death for Japanese intellectuals; MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 12 February) which reported on student crimes, and urged measures for the rehabilitation of youth; and JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 16 February) which regarded it as the duty of society to provide help for working students. More optimistic was CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 16 February), which -- while admitting that the present employment of students involves a great loss in energy and time -- nevertheless believed that work by students was a means of bringing society and the school closer together, and that an effective student employment program should be made possible.

Projects for improving educational standards included plans reported by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 15 February) and SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 13 February) for new universities in their respective prefectures, together with a proposal by ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 14 February) for an education research institute. Financing of such projects was recognized by the Kochi journal as presenting grave difficulties, but the building up of a founding fund by putting aside a certain proportion of the yearly taxes was suggested as a means of overcoming these difficulties. On the other hand, a need was seen by KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 3 February) for the creation of a supplementary budget in Toyama Prefecture to take care of the requirements of the new 6:3:3 system.

Improvement of educational standards from the standpoint of educational aims was regarded as necessary by SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 15 February), which deplored the use of such catch-words as "culture," "democracy," or "respect for the individual," and urged that guidance for young pupils should take a concrete form. Of interest were reports in FUKUSHIMA MINPO (Fukushima, 17 February) and YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 16 February), which commented on recent public meetings held for the purpose of promoting educational rehabilitation and of discussing manners in which children might be helped to "see with their own eyes, and judge with their own minds."

POLICE

Success of the autonomous police system depends upon the adoption by public officials of a democratic attitude toward the people, editorials in NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN (Tottori, 14 February) and EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 17 February) emphasized. Although the latter journal did not expect "complete democratization in a short time," it held public peace committees responsible for the progress of police reform.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 25 February 1948 No. 215

POLITICS

Causes of the resignation of the Katayama Administration were presented in numerous commentaries, as the prefectural press continued discussion of the changing political situation (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 214). A variety of opinions was expressed, but two views predominated -- one attributing collapse to the Government's inability to cope with worsening economic conditions, and the other claiming that fundamental ideological differences within the Cabinet had made resignation inevitable. There was considerable speculation on a new regime, with many editorialists simply urging formation of a "strong" cabinet.

Comparison with British Labor Government

Observing a resemblance between the Katayama and British Labor Governments, SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 14 February) declared, however, that the latter had a "plus" record, while the Japanese Cabinet had failed to execute economic policies centering around stabilization of prices and wages. Failure of the Katayama Administration does not mean that Japan has rejected socialism, the writer emphasized, but indicates that the coalition was too absorbed with "political friction." Likewise, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 10 February) inferred that the Government's economic policies were inadequate, and called for new leadership "based on the principle of reconstruction." NOOBI SHIMBUN (Tajimi, 12 February) hoped that the succeeding power would not follow present policies, but would realize that "we do not want superficial, high-handed programs on which the people place no value."

Although agreeing that the immediate cause of resignation was the dispute over raising postal and railway fares, SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 12 February) believed that the underlying reason was the intra-Administration conflict over the State Coal Control Bill. In this connection, the journal pointed out that -- since the Democrats had split on this issue -- they could not avoid at least partial responsibility for the Cabinet's collapse. TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 10 February) also contended that strife within the Socialist Party was not the only reason for resignation, and charged that members of all Ministerial Parties could not be considered "true, sincere, and prudent representatives of the people. Of course, the political consciousness of the Japanese cannot be compared with that of other democratic countries, but . . . present Diet members do not reflect the nation's will."

Socialist Responsibility

Support of the "working masses" for the Socialist Party was withdrawn, in the opinion of OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 10 February), when Administration policies did not improve living conditions. Opposed to the proposed increase in postal and railway rates, the paper praised left-wing Socialist Suzuki (who fought the plan in the Diet) for "having honestly represented the people's feelings." Another Osaka journal, ASAHI (11 February), agreed that "characterless compromises . . . have caused the Socialists to lose the support of the classes upon which they depend," but it was NANKAI TIMES' belief (Uwajima, 11 February) that at least part of the Cabinet's failure was because "the trials of the Administration were not understood by the people."

Seeking an explanation in the country's present political confusion, two journals concluded that the existence of numerous small parties had contributed to -- if not directly brought about -- the end of the tripartite coalition. OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 13 February) indicated support of a two-party system which would stabilize political conditions, but added that whether this, or a multi-party system should prevail in Japan, was a question for the voters to decide. A more positive view was presented by FUKUSHIMA MINYU (Fukushima, 13 February), which maintained that the "constant fluctuation" in politics had been created by numerous minor groups. "This can be explained," the commentator added, "by remembering that our country is still young as a democratic state and political parties are still in their infancy."

Commentaries on a new administration included the observation in SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 10 February) that "whoever assumes the premiership will need much patience, courage, and determination." Opposing beliefs appeared in HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 11 February), which thought that a new coalition was inevitable, and in SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 10 February), which reiterated a warning that another coalition would be "unhealthy."

ECONOMY

The general price decline in the United States attracted widespread attention throughout the prefectures. Although most papers were hesitant about drawing conclusions as to the probable effects of the American development upon the Japanese economy, it was generally believed that the US would not experience a depression in the immediate future. In a representative editorial, KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 13 February) -- attributing lowered prices principally to the expected curtailment of the Marshall Plan -- pointed to overseas markets, especially those in Western Europe, as the basis of continued prosperity. Meanwhile, CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 13 February) opined that Japan would be a beneficiary of the surplus world grain supply, which assertedly was reflected in the sudden slump of the American and Australian markets.

'Administrative Readjustment

Labor union opposition to rationalization of State functions was scored in editorials appearing in SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 12 February) and NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 13 February). The latter indicated that the demand for an efficient Government was "voiced by the entire nation, including the working class -- and without taking this step we cannot hope for the solution of inflation." In contrast, ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 12 February) believed that the All-Japan Government Workers' Union was justified in its denunciation of the reported plan to reduce Administrative personnel by 25 percent, "considering current unemployment and the union's role in the protection of livelihood standards." However, the Kanazawa journal warned that "blind opposition" of organized labor to all democratic plans "would result in throttling itself, because inflation cannot be curbed without administrative readjustment." Objection to the Government 25 percent retrenchment proposal was made on the ground that it would benefit "the capitalists," while requiring "unilateral sacrifices from workers."

Production

Commenting on the Katayama-initiated program to boost over-all production 40 percent during 1948, SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 12 February) declared that industrial recovery hitherto had been impeded by electric power shortage, transportation problems, and soaring inflation. As a consequence of greater output, the writer feared that additional currency would be issued and prices would climb significantly higher. As part of the production program, the Government, therefore, was asked "to take drastic measures to curb and cure inflation." Meanwhile, YUKAN FUKUNICHI (Fukuoka, 13 February) -- acknowledging January coal output as the highest on record -- expressed belief that even greater production was possible, if the official coal price was raised and the labor income tax lowered.

Taxation

Less than 10 percent of business income taxes has been collected, according to TOO NIPPO (Aomori, 13 February), which claimed that the new self-reporting system was "completely responsible" for the low rate of returns. Readers were exhorted "to help tide over the financial and economic crisis through tax payments," and the importance of popular support of State finance in a democratic society was emphasized.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Prefectural commentators who discussed the possibility of a recently-proposed 10 percent increase in food production were inclined to take a pessimistic view. HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 13 February) complained that the central authorities had evinced little enthusiasm for the program and had announced no concrete plan. Explaining that Japan's previous formula for crop increase -- the application of "more fertilizer and more labor" -- had reached its limit, the writer advocated "rationalization and efficiency" in agriculture. Although no more sanguine about the Government's role, IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 14 February) believed the distribution of the pledged quantity of fertilizer to be the most important requisite for an increase in rice production, and attributed the present shortage to "clumsy policies" on power control. Anticipating a reverse in the fortunes of rural villages, KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 14 February) foresaw coming "hard times" due to increasing population and difficulties in cultivation caused by the parceling of land in accordance with farmland reform. Three other journals -- MINAMI NIPPON (Kagoshima, 14 February), YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 15 February), and KYOTO NICHINICHI (Kyoto, 15 February) emphasized the plight of the small farmer and implied that, while it may be comparatively simple for large landholders to make additional delivery or increase production, the "poor farmers" already have exhausted themselves in meeting the initial allocation.

Farmland Reform

A SCAP warning against reactionary influences calculated to retard the development of the land reform program was endorsed by MINAMI NIPPON SHIMBUN (12 February), YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 13 February), NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 13 February), and SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 13 February) in editorials urging farmers to cooperate in suppressing "those forces which seek to impede the democratic revolution." The last-mentioned journal maintained that "joint control of farmland," once achieved, would destroy the material bases of undemocratic boss control in the villages, and aid in the realization of "fair allocation of delivery quotas and just taxation." All commentators stressed the importance of autonomous cooperative action by the farmers themselves, and regarded the latter's ignorance of their own rights as chief deterrent to progress.

Suppression of Blackmarket Dealings

Observing subsiding interest in the control of blackmarket dealings in foodstuffs, HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 14 February) and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 14 February) declared that the system persists because of the active participation of the people, who remain, at the same time, its chief victims. The apparent futility of successfully closing restaurants and eating houses led YUKAN MIE (12 February) to propose the establishment of State-run restaurants, particularly so that this rich source of revenue would not remain untaxed as at the present time. Charging that registration of customers at food shops had been unfairly administered, KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Yokohama, 14 February) called for a new registration and suggested that it be conducted at ward offices.

WAR CRIMES

Chief Prosecutor Keenan's closing arguments were widely commented on in prefectural editorials, which were almost unanimous in interpreting the Tokyo War Crimes Trials as an incentive to the Japanese people to reflect and reconstruct. Of particular interest were evaluations of the significance of the Trials and the manner in which they are being conducted -- one of the most extensive being offered by the Chinese-operated KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 13 February). This journal observed with approval the Allies' inquiry into modern history for the purpose of determining whether the "miserable destiny of war" had been inevitable for the Japanese, and spoke of the "high humanism and morality of the prosecution." CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 13 February), after quoting the Chief Prosecutor's remarks regarding the meaning of the proceedings, concluded that the Japanese people, though themselves impotent against the war-lords, had long had a "desire in the depths of their hearts" that the responsible warmongers be judged. Admiration was expressed by TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 13 February) for the thoroughness with which the Trials were being conducted, and NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 13 February) expressed the hope of a fair judgment.

The issue of individual war responsibility drew somewhat less attention than previously, although NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 13 February) scored the attempts of the accused to avoid responsibility. An unusual signed article in SHIZUOKA SHIMBUN (Shizuoka, 14 February) alleged that no individual had been found among the militarists who could be held responsible for the "unprecedented blunders" since the Manchurian incident, and saw the Trials as an effort to fix this responsibility. All the wars and incidents since 1937 were started by irresponsible troops, the writer claimed, and "even Tojo was made a cat's paw."

Japan's war guilt was cited by several papers, with NANKAI TIMES (Uwajima, 12 February) pointing out that the crimes of the accused were no less serious simply because they had not hitherto been considered as criminal offenses. The significance of a democratic reformation in Japan also was noted by several papers, among them CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 14 February) which believed that militarism among the Japanese was caused by "lack of democracy," while YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 12 February) believed that through the Trials the defendants would for the first time learn the power of democracy.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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MAR 3 1948

PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 20 February 1948 No. 214

POLITICS

Resignation of the Katayama Cabinet found most prefectural journals supporting the premiership of Liberal President Yoshida, and many writers believed that reappointment of the one-time cabinet chief would be followed by a general election to determine the "shifting political sentiments of the nation." As in Tokyo papers, support for Yoshida was based almost entirely upon his right of "constitutional ascension" (as leader of the second largest party and the opposition). Ideological support of the veteran conservative was entirely absent and commentators took a largely formalistic attitude toward the creation of a new cabinet. The prevailing metropolitan opinion that mere designation of a new premier would not "appreciably calm the political waters" also was in evidence in the rural press, and this impression united provincial writers behind a dissolution of the Diet and a general election.

Typical reaction to the Cabinet's resignation appeared in HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 12 February), which stated that "it seems most reasonable for the Liberals to take charge of the next Government." However, the writer feared that a Yoshida premiership would not raise Liberal strength in the lower house sufficiently to avert "chaos" (in view of the narrow majority). "Therefore, another three- or four-party coalition cabinet will be installed," the editorialist believed. In an earlier editorial, the commentator predicted that Yoshida would "courageously" dissolve the Diet in an attempt to close the "political vacuum." Similarly, GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 10 February) thought it "quite impossible for the Liberals to obtain a Diet majority . . . so a Liberal-headed cabinet would not stabilize the political situation." Considering the present Diet as no longer representing the voters, the writer demanded early dissolution in order to ask the people for "a vote of confidence." Possibility of an Ashida-led cabinet excited little editorial comment, although most commentators considered the Democratic Party president as the second most likely candidate for the premiership. MAINICHI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 10 February), one of the few journals to comment editorially, stated: "If Ashida is chosen, he may be blamed for taking over the Government directly from his colleague, and sooner or later will have to announce general elections." Two other papers -- TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 10 February) and CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 11 February) -- joined in the belief that Yoshida would have to depend upon a general election for a "solidly conservative cabinet," and doubted that even a merger with the Democrats could effectively stalemate Socialist opposition in the lower house.

Socialist Role Studied

In the opinion of the prefectural press, chief reason for the resignation of the Katayama Cabinet was the resolute left-wing Socialist opposition to further concessions to the Democrats, and writers called upon party leaders to "strengthen and clarify" their future policies. Throughout Japan, editorialists considered that compromise with the Democrats and People's Cooperatives had constituted a "betrayal of public trust." For example, NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 10 February) held that the Socialists should bear full responsibility for the downfall of the Katayama Cabinet because of their "complete failure to fulfill the pledges made at election time." Socialist substance will be additionally weakened if the Party participates in the new cabinet, instead of going into the opposition camp, the writer said. KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 9 February) saw the Socialist Party "perishing by the roadside unless it resolves its inner quarrels," while SHIN NIPPON (Fukuoka, 9 February) joined

six other newspapers in predicting a Party split over future policies. However, KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 12 February) and GODO SHIMBUN (Gifu, 12 February) praised the Socialist "sincerity," stating that their participation in the Government had given people valuable lessons in democratic politics.

Political "Deals" Hit

Sudden maneuvers for the premiership in the wake of the Cabinet resignation brought demands from at least 10 papers for an end to "behind-the-scenes" political negotiations. Perhaps the strongest attack was launched by SANYO CHOHO (Okayama, 10 February), in an editorial denouncing Liberals, Democrats, and People's Cooperatives for "operating to the exclusion of the voters' will." In Japan, the writer said, politics always have been "too much behind the boards," while JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 7 February) assailed the alleged selfishness of politicians and doubted that "there is any hope for their betterment." MAINICHI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 11 February) called for the earliest possible appointment of a new premier, so as not to protract political unrest, and AKITA SAKIGAKE SHIMBUN (Akita 12 February) urged that "useless maneuvering" be stopped.

ECONOMY

Withdrawal of the controversial supplementary budget bill (which would have increased government railway and postal rates to obtain funds for livelihood allowances) was hailed as a favorable development. In a representative editorial, the Administration was reprimanded by MINAMI NIPPON (Kagoshima, 10 February) for seeking additional revenue without Diet decision -- assertedly a violation of the Public Finance Law. Although higher transportation charges were said to be "inevitable," the writer felt that the nation should be apprised of the reasons underlying the need for government funds. Meanwhile, TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 9 February) -- predicting that the budget issue would "develop into a fatal Cabinet stalemate" -- reported that "in this prefecture payment of livelihood allowances already have been made." Therefore, the Government was charged with "deceiving the people" and ignoring public opinion as reflected in the Diet.

Administrative Readjustment

Commenting on the projected 25 percent reduction of government personnel, NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 10 February) claimed that only 10 percent of public employees actually would be dismissed. The readjustment plan was considered "fictitious," inasmuch as "discharged" workers allegedly would be "rehired as temporary employees." Like MINAMI NIPPON (above), the Nara journal also objected to decisions on important matters without Diet consultation. Meanwhile, ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 8 February) envisioned problems resulting from the retrenchment program, pointing to the anticipated payment of dismissal allowances as a grave imposition on prefectural treasuries.

Foreign Trade

Although peace treaty negotiations were not expected soon, SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsonomiya, 10 February) proposed that a standard exchange rate be established without delay. Similarly, SHIN EHIME (Imaharu, 9 February) and DAILY TOHOKU (Hachinoe, 11 February) felt that "the peace treaty has been shelved at least for the time being, and instead the emphasis of US policy has been placed on industrial rehabilitation." A reconstructed Japanese economy must serve the peace and welfare of all Asia, the latter papers declared, and the public was urged "to keep a strict vigilance lest undemocratic and reactionary elements within industry and commerce grow powerful, by taking advantage of the new circumstances."

Taxation

Continued appeals for tax payments appeared in rural papers, as the final month of the fiscal year approached. In a typical commentary, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 12 February) regarded the success of the tax collection campaign as "the test of whether Japan can qualify as a modern nation." Unless the National treasury was supported, the editorialist warned that the attainment of sound finance would be impossible, and "the consequent increased issuance of currency would cause the aggravation of the inflationary trend."

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Prospects for success of the new agricultural cooperative unions were considered dependent upon the ability of the member farmers to grasp control from the hands of the "bosses" formerly identified with the Agricultural Associations, and make intelligent use of opportunities offered for mutual profit and progress. SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 6 February) was concerned with the problems peculiar to Hokkaido, where land holdings were said to be larger and more amenable to machine cultivation than those in other parts of Japan. In most areas, the chief purpose of the unions will be to make possible an expansion of productivity by cooperative cultivation of sections of farm land too small to be operated profitably alone, it was said, whereas, in Hokkaido, the function of the cooperative will be to encourage rural electrification, water control, large-scale reclamation, and the provision of medical facilities for isolated villages. Neither agricultural industrialization nor cooperative farming can be accomplished without difficulty, EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 11 February) cautioned, in urging development of a sense of "public spirit" and willingness to "wrestle with practical problems" among farmers. "Bureaucratic sectionalism" was listed as a major obstacle by KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 11 February), while GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 12 February) emphasized the necessity for selection of "disinterested" and "impartial" leaders rather than those "ambitious persons" merely anxious to fall heir to the properties of the dissolved Agricultural Associations.

Increased Production in Hokkaido

An editorialist in HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 8 February) argued that a 10 or 20 percent increase in production in Hokkaido would be possible, provided the Government distributes fertilizer and implements in sufficient quantity and takes measures to prevent the destruction of crops by insects and other pests. Pointing out that the cultivated area in that district was 22 percent less than in 1938, the journal hoped that -- with the increase in agricultural labor -- fallow land might be reclaimed and recultivated.

Perishable Food Control

Sole noted commentator on perishable food control was NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 12 February), which hailed a SCAP announcement that the program was working smoothly, and reported that during the second period (from 15 February) attention would be concentrated on those areas where control had been least successful during the last two months. Pointing out that the strengthening of control was "inevitable" in order to insure "faith" and "fairness" both at home and abroad, the editorialist urged continued cooperation from the people.

INTERNATIONAL

Interest continued in the remarks of Major General McCoy, United States member of the Far Eastern Commission, regarding extension of American aid to Japan (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 210), with KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 2 February) expressing the opinion that the statement had clarified US policy toward Japan, GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 29 January) regarding the proposed extension of aid as part of American foreign policy in general, and CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 13 February) seeing the Far Eastern Commission as about to give serious consideration to the Japanese peace treaty.

The aid program itself was regarded as a signal development in the rehabilitation of Japan. In spite of its conviction that steps regarding the peace treaty are under consideration, CHUBU NIPPON believed that the treaty would not be concluded for some time, and

consequently that economic reconstruction was of especially vital importance. Typical of earlier comments was that of SHIKOKU KEIZAI (Takamatsu, 5 February), which urged that full use be made of American aid, while the KOBE SHIMBUN editorial noted above believed that if US economic aid to Japan were extended, Japan inevitably would find itself deep in international affairs.

Russian-American relations in Europe and the Far East over the issue of extended aid were felt by several journals to be increasingly strained. Of interest was the observation of MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 7 February) that the Cold War now seems to be centering on the Far East. Although repercussions of the American aid program in Europe are likely to be great, CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 29 January) believed that Russia desires international peace and will follow a formerly demonstrated policy of reversing her stand at the last minute.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 13 February 1948 No. 212

POLITICS

Projected conservative political parties found little support in prefectural commentaries, despite general support for early establishment of a two-party political system in Japan. As in the past (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 202), editorialists insisted that it was not the intent of new party organizers to form a "healthy" opposition to "progressive" (Socialist) elements, but to band dissidents into a group capable of assuming political power. Consequently, writers indicated that "opportunists and blackmarketeers" were exercising influence over new party activities, thereby adding to instability and unrest.

'Policies are Neglected'

Current political party movements are merely promoting "combinations or persons and are neglecting policies," in the opinion of NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 4 February). Fearing that the creation of temporary groups would -- "under present circumstances" -- result in concentrations of power harmful to the nation, the editorial urged rejection of this "retrogression." Voters are disappointed with present parties and favor the birth of a "healthy" conservative group, according to HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 5 February), but the journal was "distressed" because promoters were "merely massing in an attempt to obtain power." Popular demand for two groups -- one advocating a free, the other a controlled economy -- will not be satisfied by a "foolish merger of the present conservative camp," the commentator warned.

It is the "ambition" of Liberal President Yoshida (who has proposed a National Salvation Party) to take advantage of the "confusion" within the Socialist Party, TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 2 February) contended, adding that other proposed groups appear to have the same goal. "It is regrettable," the editorialist said, "to find such decadence in politics." Describing the projected Yoshida group and Democratic President Ashida's suggested center party as "similar in character," YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 4 February) thought that neither faction would contribute to the recovery of party politics. "What we expect," the editorialist added, "is not a quarrel among brothers, but the ultimate establishment of a conservative and a progressive party. Therefore, we are not interested in new parties based on personal relationships and the desire for immediate power." Similar observations appeared in KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 3 February), YUKAN HIROSHIMA (Hiroshima, 2 February), and KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 4 February).

Other Political Comment

Other comment on political activity was varied, and included consideration of the Diet's record, examination of left-wing policy proposals, and speculation on the suggested conference of Ministerial Party leaders. It was the belief of HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 2 February) that the Diet's principal task was to check inflation, but the writer declared that neither the Government nor the opposition was prepared to offer concrete plans. NAGOYA TIMES (3 February) urged the Cabinet to "understand the importance of the Diet," and KYOTO SHIMBUN (4 February) advocated closer contact between representatives and their constituents.

LABOR

The fundamental importance of a strong, well-directed labor movement in the industrial rehabilitation of Japan -- and especially its value as an anti-inflation weapon -- was emphasized in six prefectural editorials, as the rural press turned from comment on specific issues to a call for continuing improvement in labor-management relations. The usual charges of "ideological dogmatism, misguidance, and selfishness" were lodged against unions in general, but criticism was basically constructive and apparently partisan to the creation of powerful workers' groups with the "interest of their country at heart."

For example, NIPPONKAI (Tottori, 5 February) found that cooperative tendencies are increasing in both management and labor circles. "Unions are coming to refrain from extreme strike tactics and are paying deeper attention to public opinion," the writer said, adding that "employers are growing more accustomed to negotiations and are abstaining from provocative speech and behavior." Nevertheless, the editorial continued, management's remaining distrust of workers' intentions is taking the form of attempts to revise labor legislation to refuse "unjust" judgments in labor disputes. According to the commentator, this illustrates employers' fears of "some union leaders who are low in intelligence, too ideological, and lacking in public appeal." Earlier, in a 20 January editorial, the same newspaper called for an amalgamation of small unions in order to unite labor during industrial rehabilitation. "Reconstruction needs the concern of all workers," the newspaper stated, "and while union advisory groups in Tottori Prefecture are showing vivid activity, locals in the central and eastern parts of the Prefecture have a narrow outlook and are interested only in their own welfare."

The theme of "union selfishness" was considered in a NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 3 February) editorial, which charged that union activities in the past have sometimes been directed against the masses. As an example of this, the writer cited projected increases in railway and postage rates -- to finance Government workers' livelihood allowances -- and said that the "Japanese economy will go bankrupt if workers continue staging movements to stabilize only their own livelihood." The writer agreed that the prudent use of the strike was a justifiable union weapon, but admonished labor to confine disputes to management rather than extending them to include the "enduring masses." CHIBA SHIMBUN (Chiba, 3 February) believed that problems caused by deficient leadership -- might be partly corrected by naming to the Regional Labor Committees "persons of common sense and sincere concern for the development of labor."

Elsewhere in the prefectural press, SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 2 February), reported that strike instructions already have been issued to government railway, electrical, and Monopoly Bureau workers, and said that the "unions will attempt a general strike, but not in such a way as to directly affect the national livelihood. * * * We hope that unions will not forget that they must endure the unendurable for the sake of national rehabilitation." Discussing morale of agricultural unions, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 28 January) said that farmers' spirits had deteriorated because too early delivery dates fixed by the Government had resulted in the spoilage of 100,000 bales of rice and 10,000 bales of potatoes.

ECONOMY

Opposition to proposed hikes in rail and postal rates -- to finance the 0.8 month's livelihood allowance for government workers -- was aroused throughout the prefectural press, as editorials in 12 representative newspapers described the plan as the "torture" or "betrayal" of the common laborer. The Katayama Government's economic program suffered one of the severest attacks yet noted, and the rural press criticized the proposal as "the result of a too crude technique . . . the easiest thing to do . . . a device to aggravate inflation . . . a sacrifice of the masses on the altar

of the new-yen rich." Newspapers also were united in fears that the initiation of the rail and postal hikes would alienate private laborers from government workers, and demanded that the Cabinet prevent this by making budgetary adjustments by which no single class would be held financially responsible for the Government's "inept and insufficient attempts to hold down prices and wages."

Typical of provincial reaction was KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 5 February), whose editorial stated: "It is vitally essential to maintain the existing price structure to check the tide of inflation and not contribute to the people's hardship or resentment of the Government." Scoffing at contentions that rail and postal increases would be the only source of revenue, the writer called for the selling of Government-held textiles, the uncovering of hoarded goods, and the drastic taxation of blackmarket millionaires. To FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 5 February), the argument for the increases could have been conceived "by an innocent little boy in the streets . . . and served only to expose the incompetence of the Government."

Although editorial attacks on the Government were severe in all sections of the press, editors agreed that State workers themselves were justified in seeking livelihood allowances. However, the majority of the writers pointed out that this justification stemmed from "ineffective" or "incompetent" Cabinet efforts to maintain the wage-price structure. Accordingly, OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 4 February) asserted that the Government was intensifying its alleged misjudgments by reverting to an imposition on the masses, while "the rich, escaping taxation, are laughing at this sacrifice of the working people." Similarly, SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 4 February) supported the decision to grant the allowance to the State workers, but held that the "easy decision" to increase rail and postal rates constituted Government violation of the Anti-monopoly Law and the Economic Decentralization Law.

FOOD

Comment on the recent appeal for an additional 10 percent rice delivery drew attention from papers widely scattered throughout Japan. While a number of journals reported favorably on food delivery in their prefectures, those which indicated delay in meeting quotas attributed this failure to such factors as slow distribution of incentive goods, placing of delivery quotas too high, and variation in official prices from district to district. Typical of complaints was that in ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 3 February), which maintained that allocation of incentive goods was lagging behind the favorable delivery of rice, while HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 4 February) pointed out that the quota of sweet potatoes had been set too high, and that, in addition, the crop was much smaller than in normal years.

On the other hand, there was considerable optimism over deliveries in certain districts, with SHIGA SHIMBUN (Otsu, 3 February) attributing the satisfactory rice delivery in Shiga Prefecture to greater concern on the part of the farmers and the promise of rewards for delivery. Land reform -- particularly measures to give small farmers land ownership -- was seen by CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 2 February) as a factor encouraging farmers to produce more food.

Need for Improving Farming Techniques

Concern was expressed by a number of papers over the need for improving farming techniques. Thus, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 2 February) believed that training institutes should be reformed to make them more scientific; YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 3 February) complained that there had been no improvement in techniques, and that investigation should be carried out regarding the possibility of two yearly crops in more northern regions, and NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 3 February) urged that allocation of crops should be made carefully with regard to the nature of individual regions. Also of interest was SANYO CHOKO's announcement (Okayama, 4 February) urging long-range measures to make possible continued high production and delivery of rice.

FOREIGN

The proposed league of Western European countries and the devaluation of the franc were featured in foreign comment in prefectural journals. Regarding British Foreign Secretary Bevin's proposal for a Western European union, two papers recalled that a similar proposal had been broached earlier by Winston Churchill, while a third -- KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 27 January) -- felt that the situation in Western Europe was still in a transitional stage. The Bevin proposal is an indication that the US and Britain are in complete agreement, CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 29 January) believed, but HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 28 January) expressed the opinion that Britain was following a middle course between the US and the USSR, and advised Japan to take counsel "from the attitude of this great (British) people, unshakable in their convictions." The movement for union was characterized as "wise" by KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 2 February) which felt that no matter what attitude the Soviet takes toward the rehabilitation of Europe, further expansion or strengthening of Communism will become a threat to peace. The paper urged that "the good sense and desire for permanent peace in the world" impel the peoples of Eastern Europe to act in accordance with the establishment of the Western European league.

Cost of the German occupation of France was a major reason for France's failure to regain financial stability, according to KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 29 January), which joined with KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 29 January) and CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 31 January) in regarding devaluation of the franc as offering Japan "much to learn." The Nagoya journal, however, believed that the devaluation carried out "in neglect" of possible influence on other countries would inevitably bring about devaluation of currency in Europe and the United States. On the other hand, the action was referred to by KOCHI SHIMBUN as "daring and courageous," while KITA NIPPON -- after reviewing conditions necessary for successful devaluation -- and the advantages attendant upon it, expressed the opinion that although devaluation is not now possible in Japan, it may be carried out in the future with the help of funds and materials from the United States.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 6 February 1948 No. 210

POLITICS

Anticipation of a general election (described by some papers as "inevitable") prompted widespread demands for revision of the election law. Apparently convinced that differences among Ministerial groups -- and increased dissatisfaction with Administration policies -- dictated an election as the only solution, numerous writers felt that balloting regulations should be changed in order to guarantee accurate expression of the nation's will. Nearly all commentators emphasized the need for controlling campaign expenses to eliminate "boss and blackmarket control" of elections.

The 'Price' of Election

Regarding an election as inevitable, ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 28 January) reported that local politicians were busy raising campaign funds, and charged that, under present inflation, it would cost from one million to a million and one-half yen to be a successful candidate. Wondering if "real leaders" could raise such an enormous amount, the editorialist declared that if not, Diet seats "will be occupied by blackmarketeers or their agents." Unless revision of the law curbs expenses, it was believed that Diet dissolution would not "save the masses from the present situation." Similarly, NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 26 January) favored dissolution and a general election under regulations which would eliminate "corruption," and urged Premier Katayama to lead the fight for revision. Along with several other papers, this writer endorsed the principle of "public management" of elections.

The experience of the past two elections convinced FUKUSHIMA MINYU (Fukushima, 27 January) that "the corruption of the political world originates from the enormous sums necessary for election." In order to send "better people" to the Diet, the journal declared that elections "which cost little must be realized at any price." IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 25 January), SHIN IWATE (Morioka, 27 January), and TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 28 January) were among other papers which advanced similar views.

Diet Attendance and Dissolution

The opinion that poor attendence at the Diet indicated that the members were "idle" was advanced by OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 28 January), while OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 27 January) believed that Diet members were devoting primary attention to preparations for an election. In contrast, a few editorials -- although critical of the Diet and the Government -- offered encouragement to both. YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 24 January), for instance, urged a policy of "clear-cut resolution," and HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 28 January) advocated early completion of a new three-party policy agreement. Also sympathetic, CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 21 January) felt that perhaps the "burden placed upon the Cabinet was too great," and counselled the Government to offer the people hope.

Critical of the dispute between Socialist right- and left-wing factions, CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 27 January) declared that if the Party could not agree on policies, it should split into two new political groups. But KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 27 January) opposed the formation of new parties without the nation's sanction, and asserted that "such illegal transference of political power should be strictly prohibited."

Hara Case

The case of Susumu Hara -- since-resigned Liberal Representative whose arrest was sought for alleged trafficking in hoarded goods -- brought editorial demands for a "thorough purification" of political parties and for "non-partisan" operation of the newly-formed Illegal Property Transactions Committee. Commenting journals viewed the Hara incident as illustrative of "dark politics" and "corrupt administration," and generally called for examination of the source of party election funds.

Pointing out that illegal transactions undermine public confidence in the Diet, YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 28 January) charged that enormous expenses incurred by election candidates derived from blackmarket funds, and concluded that "political parties so formed are mere puppets." The writer joined NIPPONKAI (Tottori, 27 January) in demands that the Diet "strive to regain its prestige by inquiring into political funds connected with hoarded goods." Considering the Liberal Party's threatened attempt to expose Government groups to similar charges, YUKAN OKAYAMA (Okayama, 28 January) felt that such plans indicated that "even in the legislature -- the supreme organization of democratic politics -- there are dark shadows of scandal." The newspaper added that bribery of rural officials was an "open secret," and stated that "corruption on the administrative side cannot be remedied if corruption in political parties and the central Government is not swept away." Like NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 28 January), this journal also called for greater public interest in politics, to prevent corrupt politicians from gaining office.

Possibility of political influence on the Illegal Property Transactions Committee was considered by NIPPONKAI and GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 28 January) in editorials demanding that wide scope -- unrestricted by party opposition -- be given the investigating group. In this regard, the first-named journal scored the statement by Democratic President Ashida that the Committee would "produce vital effects upon the new conservative party movement," and asked that both Ministerial and opposition parties struggle to maintain the non-partisanship of the Committee. GIFU TIMES, too, declaimed against "political unilization" of this group, stating: "Diet members seem content to be satisfied with the party purification law and election law revisions. They seem intent on restricting the research activities of the Committee. We want to oppose these moves which would settle cases (of illegal property transactions) on a political basis."

ECONOMY

Defaulted tax payments continued to be the subject of considerable editorial attention. Generally stressed was the point that "tax payment is the greatest duty we owe the State. It goes without saying that we shall be disqualified from becoming a truly democratic people, if we claim the right to have our livelihood guaranteed without fulfilling our tax obligations" (SAGA SHIMBUN, Saga, 29 January). Even though the present system may be somewhat unsatisfactory, the journal indicated that, because "it was instituted in a democratic way," tax regulations must be observed until duly amended.

Completed tax payment was mentioned by other writers as essential for economic stabilization. For example, NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 27 January) warned that "inflation will spread as payments are delayed, and the writer advised against granting the special tax dispensations assertedly requested by large establishments.

Noting that unpaid taxes amounted to 90,000,000,000 yen (approximately 44,000,000,000 yen have been collected), the principal causes of unsuccessful tax collection were attributed to the delinquencies of irresponsible businessmen and blackmarket profiteers. YUKAN FUKUNICHI (Fukuoka, 28 January) declared that "arrearage is due chiefly to deficits in the field of private enterprise," and FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 28 January) alleged that some companies were using payroll-deducted taxes as working capital. Similarly, SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 25 January) commented on the fact that poor results were obtained from direct tax payments of employers.

LABOR

Urging the utmost cooperation of labor and management, several prefectural editorialists expressed concern over production decreases considered certain to follow any conflict between the two. Both CHUBU KEIZAI SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 25 January) and YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 26 January) regarded the development of regional strike strategy as dangerous in the sense that the central union authorities would be able to exert less control and that intense local feelings would be provided with a ready mode of expression. The first-named journal, in addition, found dissension within the union organization itself inevitable as a result of the outlet offered pro- and anti-Communist agitators under the joint impetus of "democratic" and "local" control movements. Good will on the part of management and broad understanding on the part of regional labor relations committee members were considered essential in coping with the problems thus posed.

SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 23 January) emphasized the dependence of production recovery upon both labor and capital. Labor leaders were advised to make their most important task the "elevation" of the workers' consciousness above the level of preoccupation with their own "professional selfishness." In another editorial, CHUBU KEIZAI (21 January) called for maintenance of the balance necessary for full utilization of Japan's abundant labor power and at the same time satisfying the demands for enterprise rationalization and administrative readjustment. While the easiest course may be to resort to "drastic legal measures" to curb union activity, the writer advised against restrictive legislation which would hinder the sound growth of trade unionism and play havoc with the workers' "will to produce." Explicitly prohibited should be any measure likely to give the impression of resulting from private strife between Socialists and Communists, or of being "mere reactionary oppressionism," the journal observed.

KOCHI NIPPO SHIMBUN (Kochi, 28 January) questioned the legality of vote by proxy in the conduct of union affairs. While it may be valid to admit proxy votes in corporation meetings, union decisions should reflect the free opinion of each union member, the writer said, and union members must not be so indifferent to union activities as not to attend meetings in person.

In a signed article published in YUKAN SHIN TOKAI (Nagoya, 27 January) the objectives of General deGaulle's proposal for the abrogation of the labor union system in France and those of Japan's war-time Patriotic Industrial Association were condemned alike as "reactionary." At the same time, opinion supporting this kind of restraint was said to stem from excessive exercise of Communist influence within the union movement, and the writer recalled that this predominance had served as excuse for the rise of Fascism in pre-war Italy and Germany, and was causing concern in present-day Italy and Japan, as well as France. Organized labor was advised to deal with the situation itself, lest outside interference, likely to become oppressive in nature, be justified in the public mind.

AGRICULTURE

Several prefectural editorials deplored the indifference shown by farmers toward the Agricultural Cooperative Unions. Journals agreed that this attitude, coupled with the farmers' inability to obtain mechanized equipment, had created obstacles retarding the progress of the nation's farmland reformation, and commercial and industrial rehabilitation. TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 25 January) reported results of a survey conducted by the Japan Agriculture Association. The writer listed questions and answers of the poll, which revealed that 65.7 percent of the farmers questioned "knew a little" about the organization, 26.8 percent "knew about it," and 7 percent "knew nothing." When asked if "they expected the association to be helpful," 34.2 percent "expected a great deal," 50.8 percent "expected little," and 12.7 percent "were quite indifferent."

FOREIGN

Prefectural comment on foreign news during the past two weeks centered around developments in Europe and proposals to extend American aid to Japan. As before, attention to the European situation emphasized differences between the US and Russia, with TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 27 January) observing that "Soviet foreign policy is not popular with nations outside the USSR." On the other hand, KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 29 January) reasoned that relations between the two major powers were not so much a conflict of capitalism against communism, but of "two different doctrines in democracy, and disagreement over the manner of realizing their aims."

The reconstruction of Western Europe was felt by YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 25 January) to have lagged behind that of the sector under Russian influence, and this was believed to constitute a "grave danger" which the Marshall Plan aimed to overcome. Devaluation of the franc, KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 29 January) anticipated, might give a "fatal shock" to the Western European organization proposed by British Foreign Secretary Bevin, inasmuch as it involved unilateral action at a time when unity was especially important among the nations of Western Europe.

Extended Aid for Japan

A number of journals commented on the proposed extension of American aid for the reconstruction of Japan, as outlined in statements by the American member of the Far Eastern Commission. Most editorials were united in urging "spiritual, political, and economic reconstruction" (GODO SHIMBUN, Okayama, 25 July) as preparation for making full use of American aid. America desires the revival of Japan as a democratic and economically independent country, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 28 January) averred, while KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 28 January) anticipated that American aid would check Japanese inflation, and expressed hope that such assistance would be forthcoming as soon as possible. A somewhat different view was carried by NIPPONKAI (Tottori, 26 January), which warned against the growth of an "undesirable tendency" to depend entirely upon aid from the United States, and to forget "our own task of democratizing our country."

PURGE

Circumstances surrounding the purge of ex-Agriculture-Forestry Minister Hirano were again criticized, as four prefectural newspapers renewed demands that Central Screening Committee decisions be made independent of political considerations. Typical of the continuing reaction was an OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 27 January) report that the purge issue had excited "general dissatisfaction" with the Government's decision. "If this concerned only Hirano, it would matter little. However, if everything is to be at the mercy of the Government . . . fascism might rule again." Similarly, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 29 January) felt that "if the chairman of the Committee maneuvers to make the vote favorable to the Government . . . the Committee will become a subsidized organ of the Government," while YUKAN NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 27 January) noted the "impression that the Committee's investigation was not made fairly and appropriately in accord with the concrete facts."

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POLITICS

Effects of the leftists' policy victory at the Socialist national convention drew heavy comment in papers throughout Japan, with a majority of writers reiterating endorsement of a "return to original socialism" (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 208). There were few exceptions to the belief that other Ministerial groups would not accept such leftists' demands as a second property tax and suspension of war bond interest. Consequently, most journals predicted increased dissension within the Administration. Some editorials called for dissolution of the Diet and a general election as the only means of determining the extent of support for the Socialist left-wing.

'Socialists Recovered Their Spirit'

"Logic" dominated the Socialist meeting, according to EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 21 January), which regarded the outcome as evidence that "the Socialists have recovered their spirit." But the writer warned that "since the character of the Party has become clear-cut, the end of the Katayama Cabinet is in sight, regardless of how desperately the Premier and Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishio exert themselves to prolong its life." It was believed, therefore, that the "fair way" was to dissolve the Diet and appeal to the nation for a decision. Although contending that the Socialists "saved their honor," HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 21 January) noted that the convention's action had not solved intra-Party differences. "The Socialists now stand at the cross-roads," the editorialist declared. "They must decide whether they attach importance to the general public or to the retention of political power."

KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 22 January) welcomed a return to the Party's original platform ("even though it may bring about the collapse of the coalition Government"), and minimized the dangers that might follow dissolution. In the opinion of HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 22 January), the leftists won policy decisions at the convention because the Cabinet "is losing the confidence of the laboring masses," but MURORAN MINPO (Muroran, 22 January) thought that rank-and-file Socialists had expressed dissatisfaction with socialism "hampered" by the Democratic and People's Cooperative Parties.

Comment on Nishio's Statement

A statement attributed to Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishio -- who said that the Government would not necessarily be bound by convention decisions -- interested several writers. Similar editorial in JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 23 January) and SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 21 January) argued that the policy of "shelving principles as the case and time require" showed "a dangerous tendency toward totalitarianism and the Maebashi writer felt that failure to execute official policies would result in the Socialist Party's "political suicide." Moreover, SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 21 January) cautioned that construing Cabinet policy as different from Socialist policy was a "neglec of the spirit of the new Constitution." The financial journal was opposed to the leftist economic program ("which might stimulate inflation and unrest"), and felt that economic stabilization would depend largely on the Democratic Party's attitude. EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 21 January) declared simply that "the opinion that the Socialist Party and the Katayama Cabinet are two different things is illogical."

Although criticism of the leftist victory was limited and generally moderate, an exception was OSAKA SHIMBUN's (Osaka, 21 January) editorial, which warned that "the sacrifice of Japan's economy must not be permitted." The writer added that "the people must realize this and must not make a mistake in judgment." Belief that the convention had presented only a "formal agreement" was advanced by JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 23 January), and YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 21 January) described the Party as "a disorderly crowd of opportunists."

ECONOMY

Incomplete tax collections continued to draw considerable editorial comment, as the prefectural press reported that arrearage amounted to approximately 100,000,000,000 yen of the nation's tax bill of 133,900,000,000 yen. As an anti-inflation measure, papers requested prompt discharge of tax obligations, which were considered to be "civic duties imposed on all groups in a democratic society."

Revenue officers were held accountable for unpaid taxes by CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 24 January), SHIN IWATE NIPPO (Morioka, 16 January) and AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 24 January). The first-named journal claimed that "only 11 percent of business income taxes have been paid," because of inadequate and incompetent tax collection machinery. The writer regretted that blackmarketeers have been allowed to evade payment, whereas taxes imposed upon the common people have been disproportionately burdensome. Similarly, SHIN IWATE NIPPO attributed tax payment delinquency to the fact that "revenue officers lack skill and technical knowledge." In contrast, responsibility for tax evasion was placed upon the public itself, by EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 22 January) and TOO NIPPO (Aomori, 22 January). The latter alleged that some people were defaulting because they were investing tax funds in profitable enterprises. Other persons were said to be delaying payments with the expectation of increased inflation and consequent currency devaluation.

HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 23 January) and SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 22 January) attributed unpaid taxes to excessive assessments necessitated by the general budget. The Toyama paper objected to taxation of individuals, and proposed that organizations, such as trade unions, be the exclusive source of tax revenue. Meanwhile, NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN (Tottori, 22 January) pointed to levies on "the blackmarket profits of the new yen class as most essential to tax collection," but vigorous opposition was expressed against detection of tax dodgers by the informer procedure -- assertedly advocated by the Finance Ministry.

Supplementary Budget

Commenting on the third supplementary budget's projected increase of railway and postal rates -- in order to obtain additional funds for the payment of Government employees' livelihood allowances -- YAMANASHI JIJI SHIMBUN (Kofu, 21 January) claimed that the revenue measure was "undemocratic," and would adversely affect "the welfare of the masses." The writer predicted that the general price level would advance as a result of higher charges for Government services, and wage and salary groups were said to be suffering severely from inflationary prices and high tax rates.

Hoarded Goods

Severance of "the vicious interrelationship between blackmarket circles and political groups" was believed by KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 20 January) to be "indispensable to the sound development of democracy." Hoarded materials -- formerly the property of the Japanese armed forces -- were declared to be the source of both blackmarketing and corrupt politics. Referring to the Communist Party's announced determination to disclose hoarded and unutilized production materials, the writer cautioned against trespass and violence, and urged tha employment of only lawful and democratic investigation procedures.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Anticipating completion of rice delivery by the end of February (on the strength of Agriculture-Forestry Ministry figures showing 78.9 percent delivery up to 10 January), prefectural editorialists continued to exhort cooperation with the Government food program. A number of journals, however, explained circumstances peculiar to their own districts and asked redress of specific grievances, particularly in connection with the Administration's request

for surplus delivery. Uneasiness and mistrust were most evident in discussions of the Government's responsibility for fulfilling its promise that farmers who completed their alloted quota would not suffer from a future shortage of staple foodstuffs.

Typical was the query put by NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 22 January). Maintaining that completion of delivery in that prefecture had been made at the sacrifice of "reserve rice" by a number of individuals, the journal asked: Who will pay the difference between the delivery price of 1,800 yen per koku and the ration purchase price of 2,221.50 yen? It was pointed out that only prompt payment of reward money and elimination of delays and blackmarketeering in distribution of rationed goods and production materials would justify the Government's demands on the farmers. YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 22 January) cited as an example the experience of Hamanaka village (Sodeuramura, Nishi Tagawagun) where allegedly a normal quota was alloted and collected despite infertile soil and damage from flood water.

Both NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 24 January) and EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 23 January) explained at some length that the five percent surplus delivery of rice asked by the authorities was in no sense compulsory and should not be interpreted to work hardship on farmers who had been barely able to fulfill the initial quota. Japan is not in a favorable position to petition the International Emergency Food Committee for deficit food, the first-mentioned journal emphasized, in conjunction with an exposition of the world food shortage. Similarly, editorialists in SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 24 January) and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 24 January) explained that Japan had no alternative to increased home production.

In a survey of delivery completion on a national level, CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 23 January) purported to show that single-crop areas were far in advance of and more susceptible to control than districts given over to diversified agriculture. The journal questioned whether Agriculture Minister Hatano's encouragement of the latter was sound policy under present conditions.

Agricultural and Fishing Cooperatives

Progress in establishment of Agricultural Cooperatives is obstructed by traditional rural lack of receptiveness to new ideas, as well as deliberate maneuvering on the part of those connected with the old Agricultural Associations, according to ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 23 January) and KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Yokohama, 17 January). The last-mentioned newspaper complained that no positive steps had been taken during the past month for dissolution of the old organization and urged that such groups as the All-Japan Farmers Union and the Young People's Agricultural Association attempt to stimulate prefectural authorities into action. HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 22 January) urged speedy implementation of the new Fishing and Aquatic Industrial Cooperative Union Laws. Essential to success, according to this journal, are (1) careful selection of personnel of the fishing industry readjustment committees, (2) extension of the term of fishing rights beyond the five years now contemplated for private companies and unions, and (3) provision for adequate financing of the new union organizations.

COAL

Opinions expressed by HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 23 January), NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 26 January), and SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 24 January) indicated hope that the efforts of coal miners -- considered responsible for the recent increased coal output -- would not be betrayed by management. Improved working conditions, modernized equipment, and better labor relations must be given considerable thought by mine operators, the three journals claimed, otherwise the output boost in coal production would not last long if maintained only by intensified labor.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 30 January 1948 No. 208

POLITICS

Support for the left-wing faction was apparent in numerous prefectural press commentaries on the Socialist Party's recent national convention. Placing emphasis on the vote for abrogation of the four-party policy agreement (as proposed by the leftists), a majority of papers felt that the Party had "cleared its honor" and had reverted to original principles. That this decision had jeopardized the Cabinet was widely acknowledged, but writers appeared to regard this as a consequence of secondary importance. Possibility of a new three-party pact was discussed by some journals, while others considered the effects of the leftists' victory upon the Liberals' drive to organize a new conservative group.

Pact Abrogation Expected

The convention's verdict was not due to the success of left-wing strategy, but was "only natural," in the opinion of HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 21 January). Charging that the Socialists "have been dragged around by the Democrats" while living conditions have worsened, the Hokkaido paper observed that the Socialists "have been obliged to revert to their original form." The writer regarded the likelihood of a split between the Socialists and Democrats ("which the Liberals desire") as "exceptionally strong." Although endorsing the pact abrogation, YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 21 January) warned that right-wing Socialists were too strong for the leftists to be able to execute their policies immediately. Despite the "skill" of Premier Katayama and Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishio, it was expected that left-wing influence would increase as economic conditions become "more difficult" and labor's demands stiffen. Moreover, even if a new three-party accord were reached, the editorialist maintained that "it would not be able to match the real power of the masses, who support the leftists."

Many writers thought it "strange" that a pact which allegedly had outlived its usefulness had not been revoked before. "It is not only unnatural, but comical, to adhere to such an agreement after the Liberals became an opposition party," KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 18 January) contended. Denouncing right-wing efforts for cooperation as "meaningless," the editorialist thought it was "urgent for the Socialist Party to regain its dignity." Japan cannot "tide over the economic crisis with such lukewarm policies (as provided under the pact)," according to CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 20 January), which advocated "intensified national controls and complete socialistic policies." To SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 21 January), the significance of the convention's action was that it had relieved the Socialists from the "bondage . . . of a policy of compromise."

Cabinet's Position Weakened

Decision to abrogate was considered by a few papers to have weakened the Cabinet (by opening the way to opposition from other Ministerial Parties) to the extent that dissolution of the Diet might be expected. Such a view was presented by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 20 January), which encouraged a government change by declaring that the Socialists would lose the nation's confidence if they remained in the present coalition. YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 20 January) flatly asserted that the convention's action meant the collapse of the Government, and MINAMI NIPPON (Kagoshima, 20 January) foresaw "disintegration of the Administration from within."

GOVERNMENT

Scheduled reduction of Government workers by 25 percent (under the proposed administrative readjustment and reform program) continued to win only mild support from prefectural journals, as editors -- while agreed that bureaus were overstaffed -- feared that the absence of a program to absorb dismissed workers would defeat the purpose of the proposals. Thus confronted with an "oversized and archaic bureaucracy" on one hand and the consequences of added unemployment on the other, writers again demanded that the Government evolve "workable" programs to occupy the estimated 319,000 workers affected by the planned retrenchment.

Typifying provincial reaction was a KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 17 January) editorial which stated that while "adjustment of Government offices is imperative . . . retrenchment without an unemployment policy is a social vice." Two other papers, TOKAI SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 19 January) and SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 19 January), agreed that "government offices are weighted down with unnecessary workers," but warned that personnel reduction would aggravate unemployment, and called upon the Cabinet to guarantee the livelihood of dismissed workers. Similarly, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 17 January), urged the Government to take immediate steps to assure workers of relief and, at the same time, make use of "newly available workers" in long-range economic planning.

"Bureaucracy" Criticized

Sharp criticism of the present bureaucracy continued to mark editorial study of retrenchment measures. Editors attributed the reported ratio of one government employee to every seven citizens to "hangovers from the Meiji Era" or the complex, "yet weak" structure of administration. HAKODATE SHIMBUN pointed out that United States government employees number one to every 60 citizens, and the writer blamed the Japanese situation on an unjustified extension of wartime bureaucracy. In the same vein, TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 18 January), demanding a "simple and strong administrative structure," said that the present bureaucracy was hampered by "formalism," while SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 18 January) charged that the Government "still makes jobs for people . . . thereby contributing to inefficiency." Unnecessary workers, according to KOCHI SHIMBUN, could be eliminated by hiking the proposed percentage of reduction to 35 percent, inasmuch as "the present percentage is actually only 13 or 14 percent of the government staff."

ECONOMY

The general budget of the 1948-49 fiscal year attracted editorial comment from several prefectural journals, all of which stressed the need of gearing appropriations to the conditions of a **critically** inflated economy. OSAKA JIJI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 22 January) expressed a typical opinion to the effect that "unless inflation is checked, all desk plans will fail immediately." As a "sound finance measure," the writer urged tax reduction on all income groups.

Local Finance

In addition to national budgetary problems, provincial papers pointed to the difficulties of formulating prefectural budgets. ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 22 January) expected that current expenditures in its prefecture would amount to three times those of last year, and the local budget was said to be reaching a staggering sum -- assertedly almost half of the central Administration's budget. The editorialist complained that prefectures were levying taxes indiscriminately, and that local funds were required to support the new police and educational systems.

NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 13 January) also pointed to the financial plight of local government bodies, and mentioned "administrative readjustment and dismissal of useless officials" as economy proposals. Meanwhile, NIIGATA NIPPO SHIMBUN (Niigata, 20 January) asked the national Administration to assume responsibility for expenditures incidental to natural disasters because "recovery works" required more than 60 percent of the local budget.

Taxation

Incomplete tax collection was again the subject of vigorous editorial consideration (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 207), which requested taxpayers' cooperation in making payments to defray budget deficits. HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 22 January) noted that "despite the favorable results of mass taxation, no more than 10 percent of enterprise taxes was collected to date." The reported Government plan of extending loans for tax payments was denounced as "encouraging inflation and tax delinquency."

SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 18 January) -- even though considering the "pay-as-you-go system as highly democratic and progressive" -- believed that it was "inappropriate" at this time. Particular emphasis was placed upon "the fact that many private establishments are holding back payment of a considerable sum of taxes which have been deducted from employees' salaries." On the other hand, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 15 January) focused its attention on blackmarket profiteers, who were held responsible for the bulk of unpaid taxes.

Hoarded Goods

Because of shortages of necessary materials, factories were said to be operating on limited work schedules. OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 18 January) and MURORAN MINPO (Muroran, 18 January) believed that a thorough exposure of hoarded goods -- formerly the property of the Japanese Army and Navy -- would contribute significantly to the needs of businessmen. The latter journal felt that "the investigations must be accomplished at all costs," even though conservative political circles may be found guilty of having engaged in illegal property transactions.

AGRICULTURE

Conflicting opinions were reflected in regard to the necessity for the "immediate" transition from Agricultural Associations to Agricultural Cooperative Unions. AKITA SAKIGAKE SHIMPO (Akita, 21 January) urged dissolution of the present Agricultural Associations "as an all-important groundwork move for a new democratic organization." In a similar vein, SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 21 January) urged that "farmers -- formerly, forcibly obliged to enter the Agricultural Associations-- make haste to establish cooperative unions." In contrast, HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 17 January) cautioned farmers against "haste" in forming unions without considerable forethought. The writer believed that prospective participants should first "listen to the opinions of trustworthy men, then establish a democratic union by which to stabilize their economy."

Reviewing recently published figures in connection with the "productivity of arable lands, etc.," both SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 20 January) and SHIN IWATE (Morioka, 20 January) implied that "statistical fact-finding" was too complicated to be understood by farmers. In order to increase production at the present time -- bearing in mind the farmers' possible inability to grasp the reasons behind "planned crops" -- the latter paper declared that the "most essential problem" is the farmers' need for "simple garden implements" such as scythes and plows.

Another opinion regarding the success or failure of the proposed Agricultural Unions was voiced by a writer for SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 13 January), who pointed out that "personal consciousness is deep-rooted with farmers who have worked hard and with good results under a personal and separate system," and predicted that "under a cooperative system, the same farmers will work sluggishly and with poor results." The journal added that the above "trend had been observed all the more notably in this prefecture, where farmers, for the greater part, are tenants." A CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 15 January) reporter -- during a recent visit to farming villages "after a long absence" -- noticed that "landlords no longer are influential." He added, however, that landlords "had maintained a stranglehold" on the Agricultural Associations for so long that ordinary farmers, "lacking experience, knowledge, and wealth," faced a big problem in maintaining union management "on their own."

POLICE

Pleas for public understanding and assumption of responsibility for the new local police system were voiced by a number of prefectural papers. As before (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 199), most journals felt that selection of local police commissions was of primary importance, although considerable doubt was expressed regarding public interest in these appointments. Choice of competent commissioners was believed by SHIN NIPPON (Kyoto, 12 January) to be a good index of the ability of the local authorities to exercise their appointment functions appropriately, and, in turn, a test of the people responsible for electing the local administrators.

Difficulties attendant upon the appointment of police commissions also were pointed out by several papers. A problem not noted in other papers was indicated by YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 14 January) which reported rumors that members of the local police commission would not be able to walk the streets unless armed. More generally recognized as a problem in setting up the commissions was that of local finance, which was discussed at some length by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 18 January) and NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 17 January). The dailies reported that some towns are hesitating to form a self-administrative police because of financial difficulties. Although the new police law provides that financial burdens are to be borne by the prefectural or central governments until economic stability is achieved in the local self-governing bodies, the papers said that no practical measures have yet been devised to provide for such division of costs, and poorer cities and towns are tending to relinquish their rights to an independent police force.

The inadequacy of local finance also was felt by the Kochi journal to account for the unwillingness of policemen to enter the locally administered police organizations, and their preference for the greater financial security of the national rural police. (The need for improving police pay in general was stressed by TOKAI SHIMBUN, Okazaki, 14 January, which -- while admitting the difficulty of raising salaries -- felt that it was a necessary step in democratization.) On the other hand, NIPPONKAI (Tottori, 17 January) maintained that the policemen's desire to be part of the national rural police force sprang from the fact that "many policemen are still swayed by an erroneous idea of national power." Even with re-education, the police are in danger of taking an "undemocratic and reactionary course, unless prefectural police leaders alter their way of thinking," the journal warned.

The functioning of the local police commissions should be limited to laying down general outlines for procedure, NISHI NIPPON believed, and should leave the execution of police matters to the police officials appointed by the commission.

COAL

Demands for harmony between mine operators and workers dominated prefectural comment on coal production, as many rural editors took a more optimistic view of future mining output and working conditions. SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 17 January) believed that "a good conscience on management's part" would be reflected in increased efficiency among the workers. However, the writer cautioned operators against aiming merely at profit or exploitation, pointing out that "profits should be invested in rehabilitating the mines and improving the workers' lot." SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 17 January), too, predicted that closer relations between management and labor would double present coal output, and claimed that increases have been proportionate to the rate of improved relations between miners and operators.

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 18 February 1948 No. 213

POLITICS

Political unrest preceding the en bloc resignation of the Katayama Cabinet divided prefectural journals on the advisability or necessity of dissolving the Diet and holding a general election, with seven of 10 commenting newspapers actively favoring a dissolution or at least believing such action "inevitable." To these newspapers, the most compelling argument lay in the "continuing irreconcilability" of warring left- and right-wing factions within the leading Ministerial Party (Socialist). But anti-dissolution commentaries described the "feud" as a "private matter," one for Party, rather than public action. Partisan comment -- except for expressions of general dismay over the intra-Socialist "turmoil" -- was lacking, and most editorials were little more than summaries of the Socialist arguments over policy. This preoccupation with events leading to the current "gloom and confusion" in politics limited speculation on the consequences of a general election, and only KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 6 February) hazarded to define the role of the Socialists in the event of a Cabinet turn-out. "The only way the Socialist Party can salvage its future is to resign now, while not too hard-pressed," the writer said. "Rather than make clumsy attempts to lengthen the Cabinet's life, the Socialists should retire and concentrate on developing the self-confidence necessary to regain the nation's trust."

Studying reasons leading toward the expected downfall of the Cabinet, editors agreed that insurgent left-wingers' demands for abrogation of the four-party pact and opposition to projected hikes in rail and postal rates had done most to aggravate the "latent political differences between leftist Socialists and the conservatives in the Administration." According to MINAMI NIPPON (Kagoshima, 7 February), Socialist moderates and rightists "were in no position to reject the left-wing's resolution favoring suspension of interest payment on war bonds . . . while there was no likelihood of the Democrats' and People's Cooperatives' accepting it." In addition, the editor said, left-wingers were strong enough to check conservative programs, thereby creating a political impasse. "In view of this," the editorial concluded, "public opinion is now in favor of Diet dissolution." Similarly, NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 7 February) stated that these circumstances made dissolution "absolutely necessary," but added that any political revamping should aim "not at shifting power but at a general election to determine the will of the people." Three other papers -- OSAKA SHIMBUN (Saga, 8 February), KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 2 February), and SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 9 February) -- agreed that Premier Katayama had lost his power to the extent that "there was no reason for the Socialists to remain in office any longer."

Opposition to Diet dissolution was strongest in SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 7 February), which countenanced a Cabinet resignation, but saw no reason to dissolve the Diet inasmuch as the "critical situation was not created by contention but by internal dissension." Doubting that a general election would stabilize politics, the writer called instead for a resolution of troubles among the four parties to the extent that a four-party coalition Cabinet might be formed. Belief that "internal partisanship" was not sufficient reason for a general election was also held by MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 9 February), which perceived no advantage in transferring power from "one weak party to another." Recalling Katayama's intention to remain in power until the Peace Conference, YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 7 February) found rumors of his resignation "quite incomprehensible." "Katayama's intention to dissolve the Diet, or lead the en bloc resignation of his Cabinet merely because of the opposition of Mr. Suzuki (left-wing Socialist Chairman of the Lower House Budget Committee) is very queer," the editorialist said.

Hirano Purge

The Tokyo District Court judgment temporarily enjoining the Government from effectuating the purge of Rikizo Hirano brought renewed charges of "political influence" in Central Screening Committee decisions -- even though partisan support of the former Agriculture-Forestry Minister was absent. Typical of provincial reaction was a SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 5 February) editorial which -- while describing the "Hirano purge itself as none of our concern" -- said that "it was a serious matter to have a Government-sponsored committee or Prime Minister vested with (power to make) the final decision, which is a deprivation of fundamental human rights." YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 5 February) felt that the "independence of administration and jurisdiction would not be maintained if it was proved that the Government maneuvered to screen Hirano politically." Expecting the Government to assume an "oppressive attitude," OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 6 February) counselled the District Court to be "brave enough . . . for the sake of fairness and sacredness of judgment."

On the day after the final decision upholding the purge of Hirano (Press Analysis No. 698), CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 6 February) found it "manifest that the purge cannot be influenced by the Court," and -- although agreeing that Hirano's wartime record justified his banishment from public life -- expressed the opinion that "it is necessary for the Committee to be reformed."

ECONOMY

The supplementary budget bill -- which would have provided for increased railway and postal rates as a principal source of funds for government employees' livelihood allowances -- continued to draw vigorous opposition from rural journals. (The bill was subsequently withdrawn, following decisive rejection by the Lower House Budget Committee.) In a rebuke of the Socialist Party, GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 7 February) charged the Katayama Cabinet with failure to keep its pledges concerning the welfare of working people, and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 7 February) and IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 8 February) criticized the Administration revenue proposal on the ground that it would precipitate a general rise of commodity prices.

CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 6 February) declared that three months would be needed to raise the necessary livelihood allowance funds from the projected revenue source. During that interval, additional currency would have to be issued to pay the allowances, the writer said, and, consequently, inflation would be greatly aggravated. On the other hand, endorsement was given to the proposal of leftist Socialist Suzuki (Chairman of the Lower House Budget Committee), who suggested that revenue could be obtained from assessments on the domestic sale of textile goods deemed substandard for export. In addition, the editorial denounced the Government for seeking an appropriation without Diet consideration or sanction -- an alleged violation of the Constitution and the Public Finance Act.

OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 8 February) -- predicting the Katayama Cabinet's resignation as a consequence of the supplementary budget controversy -- opposed increased Government charges as "an easy-going method" of meeting State deficits. In a similar vein, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 6 February) devoted another editorial to an expression of objections. The journal maintained that the proposed increases were "a mere makeshift," and that rates revised without consideration of the people's financial capacity could not be tolerated.

Foreign Trade

Relaxation of SCAP regulations pertaining to entry and residence of foreign traders was regarded as a highly significant step toward the resumption of normal commercial relations. "This epoch-making measure," TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 6 February) commented, "has the greatest political and economic significance, inasmuch as the Japanese economy accordingly has gained a new

position in international trade." In order to attract foreign capital, the Takaoka journal recommended "easing" of tax regulations, whereas MINAMI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kagoshima, 6 February) and NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 7 February) stressed "the stabilization of domestic economy." The latter paper also pointed to the need of an established exchange rate, and effective price control.

GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 6 February) was among many other papers that considered the SCAP action "a gratifying and epochal event for Japanese trade." The problem of utmost importance, in this journal's opinion, was "how the nation herself must meet the new situation made possible by the SCAP measure." Now that entrance regulations "have been broadened to normal peace-time standards," the writer believed that it is "essential for Japan to avail herself of this opportunity to prepare the stage for complete trade activities," even though foreign trade still would be transacted through the offices of the Board of Trade.

Taxation

Tax payment delinquency was blamed on the new income-tax self-reporting system, which -- OITA GODO (Oita, 6 February) claimed -- was incomprehensible to many conscientious citizens. Moreover, the system was said to have occasioned considerable inconvenience as in the case of the non-war sufferers' tax. Persons subject to the latter tax assertedly were required to spend a whole day investigating rental rates and standing in queues before revenue offices. The editorial also indicated the need for improved selection and treatment of tax collectors. In NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 8 February) progress was noted in the collection of over-due levies. However, completed tax payments, as well as savings, were urged as "the only way to check inflation."

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Completion or near completion of rice delivery quotas called forth congratulatory editorials in several prefectural journals. BOCHI SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 4 February) emphasized the farmers' "heightened consciousness of national responsibility" as chief reason for 100 percent delivery in Yamaguchi Prefecture, but also mentioned the comparatively early allocation and "fairness" of quotas as contributing factors. Like other commentators, the writer implied that no small degree of sacrifice had been necessary to this achievement, and admitted some sympathy for farmers tempted to channel their goods through the blackmarket as a means of relieving their "difficult livelihood." In common with KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Yokohama, 6 February) and CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 7 February), the opinion was put forth that both the Government and the consuming public must now exert themselves to make production goods available to the agricultural population and do their share toward Japan's industrial rehabilitation.

Completion of rice delivery has given an "immeasurable material and spiritual" boost to general morale, KANAGAWA SHIMBUN said, and, in addition, has enabled the Japanese people to demonstrate to the world their sincerity and ability to assume responsibility for the reconstruction of the country. It now remains for the rest of the populace to seize the chance of importing food and industrial equipment, and to encourage the introduction of private capital. Remarking on plans of the City of Nagoya to reward the farmers in that area for having increased deliveries 30 percent over last year, CHUBU MINPO told readers that the most appropriate compensation would not be the monetary contribution mentioned but rather the determination to supply rural areas with more fertilizer and farming tools.

In contrast, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 4 February) attempted to assess the reasons for relatively inactive deliveries in that particular area, and warned that -- even if delivery quotas were surpassed -- the people there would have to depend upon food from outside. Either unreasonable allotments or blackmarket profiteering were thought to account for failure to meet the assessment, and it

was reported that some individuals were holding up deliveries because they feared an unwarranted increase in quotas next year if rice were given up too easily this season. CHUBU MINPO (2 February) judged the real question to be one of "productive capacity" rather than "productive will," and asked the Government to lighten tax burdens, implement financial measures for the relief of agriculture, and accelerate the democratization of farm villages. "Forced delivery" was anticipated in Saitama Prefecture by SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 6 February), which confessed itself puzzled by the fact that flood-ravaged areas in the north had completed delivery while the "granary district" to the south of the prefecture had failed to meet its quota.

Agricultural Cooperative Unions

An editorialist in YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 8 February) expressed susprise that forty separate groups had held preparatory meetings for the establishment of cooperative unions, and cautioned against "irrational" and too hasty development. Farmers should fully understand the operation and objectives of the new organization, and strive to establish unions on a sound and independent basis, the writer declared.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Need for local initiative in stimulating cultural programs in rural areas was seen by three prefectural journals which explored the problem in almost identical editorials. In general terms, the papers concluded that cultural movements should be initiated by farmer and labor union groups as well as by youth and women's associations, and should be on a level within reach of the people as a whole.

Economic difficulties of teachers, students, and private schools were considered by several journals, one of which (HOKURIKU YUKAN, Toyama, 8 February) -- although recognizing the problems confronting educators -- criticized them for losing their sense of responsibility toward their work. Similar recognition of the difficulties faced by university professors was expressed by YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 9 February), which pointed out that in spite of rising admission costs in institutions of higher learning, some university professors were not receiving even the basic salary of government officials. In addition, there has been no uniformity with regard to the purge of professors, the Kyoto paper maintained, and in some cases incapable professors were reported to be retaining their posts.

Increased tuition was believed by YUKAN KYOTO to limit the attendance of "honest students" at universities while those from the new-yen class were able to gain admission readily. As a partial remedy for such conditions, an extensive government scholarship system was urged by SHIZUOKA SHIMBUN (Shizuoka, 7 February), which reported a recent increase in the number of students seeking scholarships -- in contrast to last year when not all the funds set aside for this purpose were used.

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 16 January 1948 No. 204

POLITICS

Appraisals of the Katayama Cabinet -- with emphasis upon chances of survival until the Peace Treaty -- dominated prefectural editorials during the week ending 5 January, as rural commentators united in admitting the growing seriousness of intra-Socialist struggles and Liberal maneuvers toward creation of a new conservative front. The Hirano-led Farmer-Labor Party was not yet viewed as a serious threat to the Administration, and editors continued to believe that the real peril to the Socialist-headed Cabinet lay in the Shidehara-Yoshida project for the National Salvation Party.

Katayama Criticized

Criticism of the Katayama Cabinet continued, with nearly all newspapers mentioning the coalition's weakness in direct connection with intensifying moves toward amalgamation by the Liberals and Shidehara-led Democrats. For example, SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 26 December) hailed the evolution of the Liberals into "a party of pure opposition" as an aid to partisan politics, and praised Party leaders for authoring "a new party movement to represent the people's criticism of the Cabinet." Similarly, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 3 January) found that "the fissure in the Socialists is widening . . . so the appearance of a healthy new conservative party is desirable."

Those newspapers which did not link Socialist unrest to the possibility of a Cabinet overturn were critical of the Party nevertheless. Charges that the Socialists reneged on their election-time promise to check inflation were lodged by SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 3 January) in an editorial alleging that "the Cabinet has not instituted socialistic policies, but rather has carried on measures to spur inflation." Socialist apologies, based on limitations of a coalition government, merely point up the need for two great parties, the writer said. "The separation into many small parties," the editorial concluded, "cannot operate the administration smoothly." According to BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 3 January), this "separation" extends into parties themselves, notably in the (then expected) secession of the Hirano group and the hardening attitude of the left-wingers. The paper added that Katayama's "interpreting the Democrats' revised capitalism in its broadest sense indicates that the reconstruction program can be no more than already announced." In this connection, the Saga journal stated that "the present economic crisis . . . is conceiving a greater danger than the wartime oppression by the militarists."

New Parties

Editors generally foresaw a conservative resurgence in 1948, but the Yoshida-Shidehara group -- blueprinting the proposed National Salvation Party -- failed to win outright support. What was loosely described as "healthy conservatism" won hospitable treatment in the press, but the treatment appeared to result from disillusionment with the "scrambles and quarrels" attending the Coalition, rather than from positive support. KOCHI SHIMBUN thought that 1948 offered a "ripe opportunity for the Shidehara group" but added that the people do not want "the political pendulum to swing too far left or right." KOCHI NIPPO felt that the "production slogans of the conservatives" were gaining in mass appeal, while Socialist and Communist "share the profits" approach seemed to place secondary emphasis on production recovery. However, SHINANO MAINICHI believed the Liberals' platform -- the introduction of sufficient foreign capital to finance industrial recovery and free economy -- was impractical in view of the Occupation.

Considering the "moral aspects" of the conservative party, CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 26 December) doubted whether the organization was propelled by "passionate ideals, with the rescue of the fatherland as the first aim." The writer scored secessions and creations of new parties without the public's permission, and said that policies should be carried out in accordance with the people's will, which could be accomplished only by a general election.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Anticipated financial reverses in the relatively prosperous farm villages were discussed in two editorials of unusual interest. SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 7 January) estimated that money deposited with the prefectural Agricultural Associations had increased one billion yen over last year, and claimed that funds retained by individual farmers amounted to three or four thousand yen in each instance. The journal predicted that under present inflationary conditions the former amount would be required for spring production, and the latter would not be sufficient to maintain farmers until the harvest of cash crops in the fall. Attempting to allay fears of an agricultural crisis (apparently aroused by an Agriculture Ministry announcement that wheat and rice may be imported as soon as a foreign exchange rate is set), CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 6 January) maintained that as long as trade is controlled and importation limited, the situation will not become critical. However, farmers were warned that with increased food supplies they must prepare to support their household economy on income obtainable through the sale of agricultural products at the official rate. This will be no hardship if, at the same time, farmers are able to obtain necessary production goods at official prices, the journal said. The significant crisis was expected in the more distant future, when Japan may experience an over-all readjustment of economy with emphasis on light industry rather than agriculture.

Agricultural Cooperative Unions

Present farm village prosperity also was seen as a temporary phenomenon by OITA GODO (Oita, 4 January). This journal, together with several others, advised concentration on the development of the Agricultural Cooperative Unions as the best means of ensuring the farmers' position in the national economy. Both EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 4 January) and SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 4 January) repeated press warnings against the retention of "bossism" and the influence of the "local Zaibatsu" in the new organization, and exhorted the small landowner to familiarize himself with his rights and privileges under recently enacted legislation. Opposing the decision of Shikoku area Agricultural Association and Youth Federation leaders disallowing political activity on the part of the local cooperative unions and pledging first attention to "mutual profit of management," SHIKOKU KEIZAI (Takamatsu, 29 December) warned that only intelligent support of progressive political ideology would accomplish the true aims of the organization. More specifically, "this platform will lead the Agricultural Cooperative Union into a basic policy as undemocratic in function as that of the . . . Commercial and Industrial Cooperative Unions" and result in "another Government sponsored organization" becoming a "hotbed of abuses and evils." True aims of the cooperatives were defined as breaking up the monopoly of profit, capital investment, etc. in agriculture and revision of its "semi-feudal organization" into a democratic one with emphasis on cooperative management, mechanization, and industrialization.

Establishment of Government Control over Food Distribution

Opposition to transfer of control over food distribution from private to official control through the setting up of government corporations (scheduled for 20 January) was examined by YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 6 January). Real reason for agitation against the measure was said to be the fear of executives and employees connected with private operation that they will not be able to maintain profits at the present high level, thus ensuring their own economic position to the detriment of the general public.

Consumers were warned that arguments relating to extension of bureaucracy being advanced by these individuals were hardly disinterested, and advised to cooperate actively with the authorities for the improvement of general living standards under the new system.

ECONOMY

Compilation of the general budget for the fiscal year 1948-49 was the subject of several prefectural editorials, all of which emphasized the importance of State finance as an instrument of anti-inflation policy. TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 4 January) declared that budget formulation should not be influenced by conflicting political ideologies, charging that only the left-wing Socialists thus far have presented concrete proposals (discontinuances of interest on war bonds, and imposition of a second property tax). Meanwhile, CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 3 January) urged budget economy, recommending Administrative readjustment, curtailment of State subsidies, and reduced expenditures for materials and supplies.

Currency Issue

Observing that the value of Bank of Japan notes had exceeded 200,000,000,000 yen by the close of 1947, SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 4 January) pointed out that currency issue itself was not objectionable, providing production gains were simultaneously registered. The journal feared that deflation -- assertedly "the final stage of inflation" -- already was threatening the nation's economy. Similarly, JIJI SHIMPO (Osaka, 3 January) expressed concern as to "the extreme diminution of mass purchasing power," rather than the recently reported expansion of note issue. On the other hand, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 4 January) believed that only the peace conference would provide "the key to Japan's economic crisis."

OCCUPATION

Commenting on General MacArthur's New Year's message, several prefectural papers joined in ascribing progress made in democratizing Japan to the efforts of the Allies rather than of the Japanese people, and stressed the need for "spiritual revolution" in accordance with the substance of the SCAP statement. In spite of progressive changes already effected, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 3 January) asserted that Japan's situation does not warrant an optimistic view so long as her people fail to assume their responsibilities, while GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 3 January) expressed the opinion that the most important point in the message was the emphasis on individual responsibility and freedom.

Reconstruction

Similar views were expressed in New Year's editorials on reconstruction. In addition to emphasizing individual responsibility in reconstructing Japan, several writers criticized the Katayama Cabinet's failure to solve vital economic problems, with one journal(KOCHI SHIMBUN, Kochi, 4 January) urging that the Government work out a system whereby excess profits would no longer accrue to farmers.

Japan is suffering "a racial tragedy" MURORAN MINPO (Muroran, 4 January) remarked, but asserted that "nothing is so terrible as despair." The journal urged "a step forward, with new, strong ideals." SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 3 January), on the other hand, felt that by comparison with European countries, Japan might be considered "happy." "In contrast to Germany and Italy, which were once Axis countries, only our country has escaped from the pressure of fear," the journal concluded.

POLICE

Noting that the new police system "already has been enforced in certain communities, and will be in effect in some 1,600 municipalities within a few months," CHUBU NIPPON SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 28 December) declared that the success of reform would depend principally upon the caliber of public safety committeemen. A HOKURIKU YUKAN editorial (Toyama, 28 December) also called attention to the importance of electing responsible public safety committees. The effectiveness of the decentralized system was said to be a test of the extent to which democracy was taking root in Japan.

CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 5 January) hailed the reform, and recalled the authoritarian character of prewar law-enforcement officials. "As the first step toward democratization, the police administration is being transferred to municipalities from the dissolved Home Ministry," the writer commented. Meanwhile, IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 26 December) maintained that "the success or failure of the new police system" would depend largely upon the adequacy of local finance.

SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 29 December) manifested concern about "the sharp increase in juvenile crimes." The editorialist warned against explaining away criminal offenses "as the fault of society." This point of view assertedly has the effect of condoning anti-social conduct "until the realization of a utopian order." The journal regretted that not much attention was being given to the prevention of juvenile delinquency by providing youths with wholesome, leisure-time activities.

EDUCATION

New Year's hopes for a better understanding in the education field were expressed in various journals. Warnings that "feudalistic embers" threaten the future of educational reform were issued by HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 25 December), while OITA GODO (Oita, 27 December) criticized "lack of practical leadership from teachers." The latter journal conceded that many reforms have been accomplished in that area, "but upon close inspection we will find many other things to be desired. For the real goal of the 6:3:3 system is not yet clearly understood by the people in general."

Vocational Training

The need for vocational education in primary schools was considered by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 30 December). At a Prefectural Teachers Union meeting one speaker was quoted as having disclosed figures indicating the desire for such training on the part of younger students -- many of whom reportedly were anxious to assist their families in obtaining a livelihood during difficult times. Although believing that "perfect vocational education is given in high school," the writer emphasized that many primary school students do not carry their education beyond the lower grades. Educators were urged to give attention to this problem.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 14 January 1948 No. 203

WAR CRIMES

Former Premier Tojo's testimony before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East brought discussion of the war crimes to prominence in prefectural journals for the first time in several months. In evaluating Tojo's testimony, most journals tended to be critical of the wartime leader, although in several cases there were inuendos of admiration. Thus, CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 27 December) referred to the "business-like" nature of the wartime Premier's affidavit, and contrasted it favorably with the testimony of Kido and Togo. Moreover, much of the criticism expressed was on the basis of responsibility for defeat rather than for initiation of an aggressive war. Thus, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 29 December) noted that if Tojo were responsible for initiating a war which he feared could not be won, he was consequently responsible for the defeat and should apologize to the people. KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 29 December) regarded the affidavit as the "elegy of the Japanese people marching toward tragic war destined to end in surrender." Similarly, CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 27 December) observed that it was impossible to avoid resenting the fact that Tojo had taken a "meager chance" for victory.

Responsibility for the War

Tojo's assumption of responsibility was not, apparently, considered adequate by many writers. Thus, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 28 December) and EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 28 December) felt that Tojo's actions since the end of the war did not indicate any great sense of responsibility, while HAKKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakkodate, 27 December) and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 28 December) believed that Tojo did not express any real responsibility in his affidavit.

Tojo's justification of the war as self-defensive also was criticized. For example, NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 30 December) stated that Tojo's assertion that the war was one of self-defense was no more than the "shameless and arrogant excuse of an unrepentant and stubborn war-monger," while SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 30 December) and ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 29 December) pointed to the contrast between Tojo's assertions that the war was self-defensive and Japan's conduct since the Manchurian incident.

The part played by the militarists in bringing on the war was emphasized, with KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 27 December) asserting that no war can be justified without the full support of the people, but observing that the recent struggle was begun by the military clique without the knowledge of the people. In the same way, SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 28 December) maintained that military prestige backed by military power was responsible for the war. Similarly, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 29 December) pointed out that important decisions which would affect the fate of the nation had been made by one man -- Tojo.

Relatively little was said of the position of the Emperor. HAKKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakkodate, 27 December) did, however, remark that the Japanese people were encouraged by the testimony which had been advanced to prove that the Emperor had been consistently in favor of peace. Tojo's insistence on the innocence of the Emperor also was considered by OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 30 December) to reassure the importance of the imperial system.

The people's responsibility in the war and in the judgment of war criminals was pointed out by several journals, among them TOKAI YUKAN which remarked that "defeated Japan is also a judge," and by NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 30 December) which asserted that pursuit of war responsibility was not to be entrusted to the Tokyo tribunal alone. The question of the war responsibility of the people as a whole is a never-ending one, NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Nara, 30 December) maintained, while GODO SHIMBUN offered the opinion that "our own reactions" to the trial would decide the degree of democratization of Japan.

The significance of the trial as a whole was touched on GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 23 December) stated that the main aim was the "thorough explanation of history," TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 28 December) saw the trials as the pursuit of "justice of universal validity," and YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 28 December) felt that the testimony should be considered "in the current of history."

POLITICS

New party activity and the conflict among the Socialists continued to win editorial attention in papers throughout Japan. As in the past (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 202), commentators questioned the motives of new party advocates and reiterated charges that the "will of the masses is being ignored." Socialist difficulties aroused a variety of comment, but writers agreed that -- together with other recent political developments -- intra-Party antagonism had further weakened the coalition Government.

'Boss' Influence Attacked

Close scrutiny of new party activity was recommended by DAILY TOHOKU (Hachinor, 26 December), which warned that "the same old bosses whose ultimate object is private profit" were dictating political movements. However, belief that some new party supporters were sincere was indicated by the statement that "bosses" should not be permitted to attain positions of influence in the new groups. Contending that the object of new parties should be "to bring prosperity and happiness to the people," CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 26 December) asked, "Which movements of parties have such a lofty principle in view?" Statesmen were called upon to abandon the idea of "power for personal profit," and to work simply "for the people."

In contrast with Britain and the US, SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 25 December) said that in Japan political parties "have appeared and disappeared . . . because the general public did not support them due to a lack of understanding (of objectives)." Parties should not be the "mere work" of politicians, the editorialist explained, but should reflect the will of the public. To win the nation's confidence, therefore, parties were urged to clarify their platforms and then ask for the country's judgment.

'Socialists Losing People's Confidence'

Belief that the Socialists "are losing the people's confidence" was expressed by KUMAMOTO NICHINICHI (Kumamoto, 26 December), which attributed the alleged situation to emphasis upon compromise with other Ministerial Parties. A statement by a Socialist spokesman that the Party attached more importance to the nation than to the "working masses" was assailed on the ground that "the nation cannot exist without the support of the people," and that the Government "is not for a privileged class." KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 27 December) thought that the Katayama Administration faced "a critical moment," and declared that continued Socialist-Democratic cooperation would be difficult because of the "disintegration" of the Premier's Party.

POLICE

The Police Decentralization Bill (separating the national police force from autonomous municipal organizations under popularly controlled public safety committees) brought warnings from the provincial press that "old-line bosses" might defeat the purpose of the Bill unless political consciousness is developed in the prefectures, cities, and villages. Editorial writers unanimously favored the spirit of the measure, which was greeted as the natural companion of the new Constitution. Nevertheless, commentators were openly apprehensive lest public apathy ruin the Bill's effectiveness as a democratically-controlled means of assuring order. In this respect, an editorial in NOOBI SHIMBUN (Tajimi, 16 December) called for close attention to public safety committeemen, and cautioned against "the old Japanese habit of regarding an outward pattern as the completed thing."

Newspaper acclaim of the Bill as ending the previous system of "high-handed, arbitrary, and cruel" police officers was offset by fears of eventual "political control" of the public safety committees. "Still in our memory," wrote GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 14 December), "is how often our society has been spoiled by bosses who committed all kinds of evil in conspiracy with the police. If these (bosses) take the posts of committeemen, we can never expect a democratic police force. * * * Furthermore, we feel that those elected might be made mere puppets of the old bosses." Similarly, KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 18 December) predicted that "fearful evils will arise if political bosses are elected," while OSAKA ASAHI (Osaka, 1 January) claimed that voters' indifference already had resulted in electing a committeeman with 12 previous criminal offenses, "a grave example warning us not to relax for a moment."

Demands for a greater sense of public responsibility in connection with the new police system appeared in numerous editorials, typified by the KITA NIPPON statement that "the true basis of a people's police has been established . . . and the people must know whether committeemen are trustworthy or not." Like CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 25 December), the writer stated that establishment of "real autonomy -- free from the evils of centralism -- rests in the hands of the people." SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 20 December) did not hold the committeemen personally responsible for the police: "They (the committeemen) are servants of the people and, in representing the latter's will, must be audacious in confronting police tradition."

LABOR

Local issues of varying importance were discussed by prefectural labor commentators during late December. For example, KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 21 December) attacked recent union activity in the Kyoto-Osaka area on the ground that strikes which may have as a legitimate aim the maintenance or improvement of livelihood may also disturb public peace and destroy the social order. A signed article in KYOTO NICHINICHI (Kyoto, 27 December), from a similar point of view, criticized short-of-strike tactics as evidence of lack of discipline, and regretted that management had so lightly given up its right to dismiss employees who neglect their jobs. Voluntary settlement, after mediation, of a dispute of three-months' standing at the Murata Textile Company in Kyoto disclosed a "misunderstanding of facts on the part of the union," was also a target of adverse comment. Production is too vital in Japan's present economic condition for a three-month delay based on a "misunderstanding" to be tolerated, the journal said.

Legal issues were examined by TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 30 December), which advised revision of Articles 2 and 11 of the Labor Union Law on the ground that -- with gorwth in "the self-preservation instinct of capital" -- evasions detrimental to union development were widely practiced and accepted. Prohibited by Article 11 from

dismissing employees for union activities, management was said to have resorted to the ruse of dissolving certain enterprises on the pretext of economic difficulties, thus throwing all employees out of work, and then forming an apparently new organization with workers who were docile or could be intimidated. By deliberately introducing management-oriented division and section chiefs into labor unions, employers were charged with having succeeded in many cases in weakening the workers' organizations. The paper favored strengthening Article 2 to bar such "workers" from participation in organized labor.

DEMOCRACY

Critical evaluations of the process of "democratization" in Japan during 1947 were attempted by several journals. Typical was the conclusion reached by SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 31 December): that, compared with the formal change in systems and legislation, the change in people's way of thinking was inadequate. While attributing this, as well as alleged lack of progress in the fields of education, farmland reform, police and civil service reform, etc., to the fact that the "democratic revolution" had been "given" to, rather than "won" by, the people, the paper also emphasized lack of confident leadership from men who took the place of those purged from politics or industry.

Bureaucratic control remained the chief threat to democracy in the opinion of SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 31 December) which maintained that bribery of Government and public officials was an open secret, and that economic control, far from impartial, had become an "incubator of official blackmarketeering." Now is the time for the Japanese people to reread the Potsdam Declaration and meditate upon what they have done for the realization of democracy during the year, the journal said. MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 30 December) welcomed preparations for the formation of an Association for Freedom and Human Rights in Kyoto on the suggestion of an official of the Civil Liberties Union in the United States, and anticipated that a fresh attack by an association of professional men upon problems created by the force of tradition and traditional methods of control would prove valuable.

Japan's "racial misery" lies in the apparent long-standing inability of her people to acquire individual self-consciousness and respect for humanity, GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 27 December) concluded in an unusual editorial. Despite stipulations in the new Constitution, Government officials were accused of conducting "self-complacent and high-handed administration" entirely unaltered, with more concern for the letter than the spirit of the law, and more concern for directives as written than for the execution of these directives for public benefit.

COAL

Asserting that production has been restricted due to the coal shortage, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 14 December) expressed belief that the State Coal Control Act would not alleviate the problem. The writer pointed out that even though November output reached a postwar peak, it was still "less than 90 percent of the schedule." Workers' apathy -- manifest in decreased productivity -- was considered the principal factor "hampering coal production."

On the other hand, KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 31 December), NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 29 December) and SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 30 December) indicated that they were favorably impressed with the recently reported boosts in coal production. The first-named journal declared that "the will to work on the part of miners -- indicated by the extension of working hours and the suspension of holidays -- has done much to raise the output." Accordingly, the editorialist asserted that additional production gains must be achieved mainly "through the rationalization of management."

FOREIGN

Demands that Japan prepare itself intellectually, politically, and economically to reenter world affairs as "an effective instrument for world peace" were voiced by prefectural papers, in the face of heightening Four-Power discussions on the Japanese Peace Treaty. Interpreting statements by General MacArthur, President Truman, and Secretary of the Army Royall as indicating an early opening of peace negotiations, provincial writers called for a deeper application of democracy, a "trustworthy" Government, a more stable economy, and a "less confused" labor front.

Readers were cautioned that Japan's difficulties will not end with the conclusion of the Peace Conference, and CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 1 January) charged that the "democratization of our country is still superficial. * * * We must continue to fight against reaction and totalitarianism." Developing democracy is essential, the editorial continued, as "we have no army . . . cannot rely upon ourselves for safety . . . and for protection must depend on all other countries who love peace." Similarly, SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 3 January) felt that Japan must have a thorough knowledge of international conditions and must "establish a trustworthy Government which can execute the decisions of the Peace Conference."

The rehabilitation of industry has first priority, in the opinion of NIPPON KAI (Tottori, 1 January), but this cannot be done, the journal maintained, "unless the fundamental right and liberty of the working masses are assured." Describing the labor front as confused, the writer stated: "We should promote a peace movement which expresses the workers' desires. Therefore, we must fight the reactionary Socialists more intensely than the conservative powers. * * * Recently the United States reportedly said that Japanese labor should strengthen the working spirit and not complain of the prolongation of working hours. Of course, we shall have to observe this. But if it were revealed by Japanese capitalists, the case would be a little different." In this regard, NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 1 January) urged readers to "stop narrow-minded and domestic quarrels at once, cast away excessively ideological arguments . . . and hasten economic recovery by uniting against inflation."

The end of the "punitive" period in the Occupation of Japan was discerned by CHUKOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 30 December) in an editorial declaring that "it is bright news that U.S. policy will be carried out strongly and positively toward the rehabilitation of our country. We are not entitled to insert our ideas into the Peace Conference or the discussions on reparations, but both are reportedly becoming favorable to us."

GOVERNMENT

The "administrative readjustment" program calling for dismissal of 20 percent of the Government workers -- designed to increase efficiency and reduce expenditures -- was variously criticized as "makeshift," "a negative theory," and "artificial" in three commenting journals. KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 30 December), in the strongest attack on the plan, said the measure was decided upon before the bureaucracy was rearranged and "so can be blamed for being makeshift." Agreeing that Government offices are overstaffed -- "seven people nourish one official and his family" -- the writer said that the Administration must yet solve the unemployment" by providing dismissed workers with sufficient opportunities in other fields. In the same vein, HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 30 December) believed that the plan ignores the Government's duty to workers, and called, instead, for the release of high-ranking officials. YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 8 January) said the need for such a program betrayed a lingering feudalistic approach to bureaucracy, and asserted: "When the nation is able to handle administration, readjustment will come about naturally."

ECONOMY

Prefectural commentaries on economic affairs were devoted principally to reviews of 1947 and to forecasts for 1948. In a representative editorial, KITA NIPPON SHIMBUN (Toyama, 31 December) declared that "despite anticipation of increased production by raising official prices, national output declined and prices rose markedly during the past year." Foreign trade also was said to have been seriously short of last summer's expectations.

HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 31 December) believed that "the Government has no policies to meet the present crisis," maintaining that the State Coal Control Bill was "thoroughly mutilated" before passage, and that the Administration has failed generally to obtain increased industrial production. Similarly, YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 31 December) pointed to "the fact that the crisis in production -- with coal and electricity shortages constituting the basic issues -- has caused us great concern." The writer also regretted that foreign trade has not developed to the extent predicted last August.

In contrast, SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 31 December) believed that some positive gains were registered in 1947, especially in regard to democratic reforms of the nation's economy. The journal, nonetheless, warned that inflation and underproduction menaced the people's welfare, and that the volume of foreign commerce proved gravely disappointing.

Forecasts for 1948

Forecasts for 1948 reflected renewed hope and optimism. JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 1 January) predicted that a favorable exchange rate would be set, that hoarded goods would be thoroughly investigated, and that tax payments would be made promptly and completely. HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 1 January) expressed confidence that "enterprise reorganization and administrative readjustment" (assertedly the prerequisites of checking inflation) would be successfully effectuated during 1948. Meanwhile, CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 1 January) set the following goals for the new year: the development of foreign trade, the negotiation of the peace treaty, acquisition of foreign credit and capital, durrency stabilization, and establishment of the exchange rate.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 7 January 1948 No. 201

POLITICS

Instability of the Japanese political situation -- as manifested by new party movements and the split within the Socialist Party -- aroused considerable concern in papers throughout the country. Editorialists generally avoided endorsement of any new group or Socialist faction, but several journals called for a clarification of issues involved. Many editorials reflected uncertainty, while others were confined to an explanation of recent political developments.

New Socialist Policies Urged

Predicting that differences among the Socialists would reach a climax at the Party's convention this month, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 21 December) felt that "the only way to deal with this crisis is to establish new and effective policies based on actualities." GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 17 December) described the Socialists as "an extremely disorganized party in which conflicting leftists, rightists, and other factions . . . (have caused) the people to re-examine its program," and SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 16 December) wondered "how will temporizing Socialists answer to the working people?"

The opinion that even if left-wing Socialists were to assume party leadership they would be unable to execute their policies was expressed by HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 16 December), but CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 20 December) acknowledged that recent left-wing Socialist statements had made "a rather good impression" and that the present Cabinet was "incapable" of carrying out policies "demanded by the public." Nevertheless, the latter journal admitted that "no one is certain whether the leftists have the power to execute these policies." Cancellation of war bond interest payment (a left-wing Socialist proposal) was considered by TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 18 December) to be "too radical to be adopted by the present Administration," and KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 18 December) thought that if the plan should be put in effect, it would be necessary to block the new yen issue. Present political instability was, in the editorialist's opinion, the result of "checks and balances of opposing influences working in opposite directions."

Party Splits Advocated

Belief that the cause of political stability would be served better by definite party realignment was expressed by several journals. For instance, OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 19 December) argued that it was "contradictory for opposing elements to remain in the obscure atmosphere of one party," and NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 21 December) maintained that if compromises were not possible, final breaks with party connections were the only solution. The last-named paper also emphasized two other points: that Japanese political "confusion" was linked to world conditions, and that "the weakness of the Socialist Party stems from the fact that many persons voted for the Party without knowing what Socialism is."

Efforts to organize a new conservative group were attacked by CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 20 December), which felt that platforms and principles "should first be submitted to the people for examination. * * * We regret that we have too many professional politicians who desire nothing except . . . the reins of government and do not mind betraying the people." Likewise,

KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 20 December) contended that a new conservative party should present a "reliable platform," and expressed fear that advocacy of "oppressive measures" would intensify the "labor offensive (which) would increase the Communist Party's prominence." In contrast, NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 14 December) urged the overthrow of the Katayama Administration and support of the Liberal Party.

LABOR

Government workers' decision to continue "short-of-strike" action (despite acceptance of their demand for livelihood allowances) drew measured criticism from prefectural commentators. Numerous editorials pointed out that, even if the unions were dissatisfied with the method of payment and the source from which the Government expects to secure additional revenue, nothing better could be expected when Japan's hard-pressed economy is taken into consideration. At the same time, workers were advised that only increased production will solve their, and the nation's, problems. Several journals warned that neither public opinion nor newly acquired labor rights will stand unwarranted additional strain.

Suspension of Right to Strike

Recalling the SCAP statement which halted the projected general strike last February, both SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 23 December) and KOCHI NIPPO (Kochi, 19 December) warned against unlimited use of strike action. Although the message "did not halt the general strike, as such, much less suspend the labor unions' right to strike," workers must not conclude that suspension of the right to strike" may not occur, the first-named journal explained. Further, "temporary suspension . . . may be brought about by law when it is thought that strikes in certain government enterprises or important industries will seriously obstruct administration or management of the national economy." "Social good sense" should govern future action, KOCHI NIPPO said.

Loss of Public Opinion

Public opinion was thought to have been in sympathy with previous demands of Government workers, whose incomes were generally admitted to be lower than those of workers engaged in private industry. However, according to CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 18 December) and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 20 December), if unions persist in pressing the issue through the use of "invisible strikes," "regional strikes," etc., their economic struggle will develop into a "political struggle," and will eventually alienate the good will of the people. "Acceptance of the mediation plan and increased efficiency" comprise the only short cut to solution, the first-named paper said. EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 19 December) quoted a SCAP spokesman's admonition that disputes should be settled in such a way as to make the worker's benefit coincide with profit to society in general, and enjoined against the disregard of duty which entails inconvenience to the people as a whole. Similarly, SHIN OSAKA (Osaka, 18 December) pointed out that the "masses" suffered first from the "wildcat strikes" of the communications workers, and doubted that the application of a formula of this kind would ever gain public approval.

"Livelihood Reconstruction Allowances" vs. "Deficit-Covering"

Only one journal objected specifically to the sophistry involved in paying what were generally admitted to be allowances covering inflated living costs as "livelihood reconstruction allowances." HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 17 December) interpreted this terminology as an "attempt to ward off the generalization of demands for special allowances by industrial workers." The same journal went on to say that, whether one favored allowances or not, the problem was not solved, for "payment of livelihood allowances is regarded as fundamentally wrong as a measure (i.e. in the light of the Government wage-price policy), though allowances themselves are justifiable (i.e. because of inflation)."

ECONOMY

Publication of a hoarded goods report -- prepared by the Kato Committee of the Diet's lower house (Press Analysis No. 661) -- evoked considerable comment in the prefectural press. In a typical editorial, HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 23 December) declared that disclosure of concealed materials was vitally important, because "these commodities were essential for the reconstruction of Japanese industries." Moreover, effective control of speculation and blackmarkets assertedly required a thorough investigation of the disposition of property formerly owned by the Japanese Army and Navy. Apprehension was expressed, however, lest "many important persons involved in the scandals" would bring political pressure to bear, in order to obstruct the Government probes. Similarly, SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 21 December) maintained that hoarded goods were "the fundamental evil" responsible for the chaotic condition of the nation's economy. If these materials had been properly utilized, the writer believed, economic rehabilitation would be less difficult and protracted.

TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 21 December) also attached grave significance to the hoarded goods problem, declaring that "Japan will not deserve a peace treaty, until suspicion about the disposal of former war materials is cleared up." The writer regretted that "some local officials have hampered investigations, and, in some cases, have even tried to conceal information about illegal transactions." Attention was directed to a statement of the Kato report, which alleged that "some hoarders intend to conceal their goods in hope that the Occupation Forces will soon withdraw."

Several editorials charged public officials with irresponsibility or indifference toward "the outrageous crimes" committed during the past two years in connection with property previously owned by the Japanese Army and Navy. Furthermore, "local bureaucrats and high-ranking officials of the central Government," according to KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 21 December), were participants in illegal activities as agents of private individuals and organizations. "The blackmarket influence on politics" also was the subject of a TOYAMA SHIMBUN editorial (Takaoka, 22 December), which scored successive administrations since the Surrender for "negligence, inactivity, and irresponsibility" in regard to the disclosure of hidden stocks of war materials.

AGRICULTURE

Appointment of Kanae Hatano to the controversial post of Agriculture-Forestry Minister, passage of the Agricultural Co-operative Union Bill, and land reform progress were the principal agrarian topics considered by the prefectural press. Comment on Hatano continued to be extensive (with five newspapers devoting lengthy editorials to the political and agricultural aspects of the appointment), but passage of the Agricultural Bill evoked comment in only three papers.

Provincial newspapers appeared to believe that the present "unsatisfactory" food collection and distribution program could not be appreciably improved by any single ministerial appointment. Thus, continuing reaction to Hatano viewed his entry into the cabinet as a purely political, rather than "agricultural" development. Even then, commenting journals in the main denied Hatano's political acumen, with one writer going so far as to say that the designation of the former economics professor was "meaningless to the farmers." Even the most favorable editorial HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 14 December) found, "in reviewing the failures of the Government's agricultural policy," the lack of a comprehensive and scientific program. Therefore, the writer hoped -- "in view of the new Minister's knowledge of the science of economy" -- for drastic reforms in the collection and distribution system. However, this writer joined others in accepting the Hatano appointment as a political expedient to maintain the support of the People's Cooperatives and the Democratic Party.

EDUCATION

Attention to education was consistent throughout December, and comment covered a variety of issues. Of special interest, however, were editorials on educational standards and techniques, teachers' organizations, and on the effectiveness of the new "social courses" in the schools and among adults.

Educational Standards and Techniques

Realization of the importance of the manner of teaching and the aims of education was urged by JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 10 December), which felt that creation of a "vocational intelligence" as the objective of education would cause it to lose "most of its significance." Injunctions to teachers to grasp the differences in personality and intelligence among their pupils were expressed by KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 16 December), while TOKAI SHIMBUN (Okazaki, 3 December) saw deterioration in the quality of teachers as one of the major problems contributing to the seriousness of the teacher shortage. Teachers were urged by HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 17 December) to have a "strong faith" in carrying out their teaching.

Teachers' Organizations

Opinions differed over the activities of teachers' unions. "Simplification" of the teachers' unions in Chiba prefecture was hailed by CHIBA SHIMBUN (Chiba, 7 December) which felt that "organization and development of the union (will) establish sound education and sweep away the spirit of slavery which dwells in teachers' hearts." The journal saw the union movement as stimulating teachers' self-confidence, and as giving them the ability to "regain the spirit of criticism as intellectuals. A somewhat similar -- although broader -- view of union significance was expressed by the head of the Kawasaki teachers' union in KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Yokohama, 14 December). The writer emphasized that teachers must fulfill certain duties in democratizing education, and not merely make claims for their own rights.

On the other hand, TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 4 December) felt that if the local branch of the Education Association were dissolved (a development which the journal asserted was wholly in the hands of the local union), the cultural movements of the old association might be neglected in favor of the more exclusively economic objectives of the union.

Social Education

The social education program in the schools and the use of Citizens' Public Halls for adult education appeared to be meeting with varying degrees of success in different localities. Thus, KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe 16 December), in a general criticism of various phases of education, expressed the opinion that the course was being neglected, while CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 11 December) remarked that the social course did not seem to be fully understood by the people. In contrast to the above criticisms, TOKUSHIMA MINPO (Tokushima, 30 November) gave a favorable report on the progress being made in securing lecturers on special topics for weekly sessions of the social course in some of the local middle schools. The courses were opened to adults as well as regular students, the journal reported, but caution was expressed that care must be exercised in the type of lecturers invited to speak.

TRANSPORTATION

Noting an accumulation of 2,800,000 tons of goods because of inadequate transportation facilities -- an 80 percent increase compared with a year ago -- MURORAN MINPO (Hokkaido, 17 December) indicated that "not only are coal mines troubled by the delay of transportation, but food is rotting, and wood and charcoal are piling up at railway stations." The writer deplored that "the Japanese people" could not solve the railway problem, but expressed gratitude to SCAP for assistance rendered.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 9 January 1948 No. 202

POLITICS

Conflicting opinions over the worth and significance of new party movements were expressed, as the prefectural press continued to place primary editorial emphasis upon recent political developments. Dissension within the Socialist Party again won the attention of many editorialists (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 201), and the tendency to avoid endorsement of any single faction continued. There was general agreement that all recent political activity had weakened the Katayama Administration.

Two-Party System Advocated

Constant changes in parties ("the major cause of political uneasiness in this country") should center around adherence to definite platforms, and should not have as their goal the desire to obtain power, according to KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 24 December). Perceiving "a dark shadow" over the political situation, the writer claimed that establishment of a two-party system was the only solution. Similar endorsement of "concrete" party proposals as the basis for political readjustment appeared in HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 24 December), which charged that many moves were dictated by private considerations. Foreseeing no likelihood of the creation of a single-party cabinet, nor of a two-party system, TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 24 December) nonetheless urged the country not to be indifferent to current developments.

Political instability cannot be eliminated if new party movements continue to follow present tendencies, according to YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 22 December) and YUKAN SHIN OSAKA (Osaka, 22 December). Although the first-named journal welcomed attempts to organize new parties, it was believed that "there may be trickery and use of old methods," and the Osaka paper complained that "the masses are being ignored." Regarding the Liberals' efforts to form a new party, the editorial attacked the announced principles for "having no fresh meaning," but conceded that Liberal President Yoshida "is probably not indifferent to the complaints." In another commentary on the Liberals' plan, FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 27 December) believed that "Mr. Yoshida's vigorous activity is quite remarkable," and thought it possible that a new conservative group centering around the former Premier's Party might be established.

Comment on Socialist Dissension

If the Socialists are to exist as a strong reform Party, "they cannot avoid internal readjustments," in the opinion of GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 22 December), which hoped, however, that neither right- nor left-wing factions would secede. A similar view was presented by YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 24 December), which held that "the incessant friction" in the Socialist Party was not simply a struggle for supremacy, but was the consequence of a natural conflict between opposing political philosophies. SHIZUOKA SHIMBUN (Shizuoka, 18 December) also appeared to regard Socialist differences as inevitable, and believed that the main body of the Party could now join forces with the Democratic Party. Support for this belief came from TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 23 December), which declared that "so-called socialistic policies of the Cabinet are, in fact, Democratic policies." If the motive of recent political activity is to "simplify political ideologies," MURORAN MINPO (Muroran, 23 December) felt that the existence of the present Socialist Party would become "meaningless." Reason for this conclusion was the belief that the Liberals and Democrats would merge and a "thoroughly socialistic party" would provide the opposition.

FOREIGN

Throughout December, comment on the London Conference of Foreign Ministers turned from predictions of the serious consequences if the conference failed to observations after the sessions came to an abrupt end that the break-up did not necessarily mean the end of all negotiations. Apparently seeking some hope in the situation, many journals expressed the opinion that opportunities for speedy conclusion of a Japanese peace had been improved.

Typical of the various commentaries during the early days of the conference were those in CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 16 December), which saw the Conference as an opportunity to settle the issue of the "cold war"; in TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 3 December), which predicted "dire results" if the sessions failed, and in HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 2 December), which saw the Conference as the "last effort for world peace." Of particular interest was a commentary in KUMAMOTO NICHINICHI (Kumamoto, 13 December) which expressed belief that the American people would reject the Marshall Plan, or even the Truman Doctrine, if they believed that it would lead to war with Russia. Also of special interest was a signed article in SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 15 December), which suggested that current differences between the US and Russia were the result of such factors as fear and mistrust, rather than "matters of ideology or interest."

Effect on Japanese Peace Treaty

Effect of the London Conference on the Japanese peace treaty was, perhaps, the issue of greatest interest to prefectural papers. If the Conference succeeds in writing a German peace treaty, FUKUSHIMA MINYU (Fukushima, 13 December) observed during the course of the sessions, this will set a precedent for a Japanese treaty; if it fails, it was believed that attention would be focused on Japan.

Interest was high over the Russian proposal for a Japanese preliminary conference in January, 1948. While CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 3 December) felt that the Soviet proposal merely added one more issue to be settled, CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 16 December) asserted that the political intention of the Russian Government in making the proposal regarding the Japanese treaty was apparent. Similarly, OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 16 December) hazarded the opinion that the proposal might have been made partly to feel out the Chinese position, and -- though reportedly regarded by the US as an attempt to delay action on the treaty -- might equally well have been meant as a concession to America's position in the Far East, in return for US recognition of Russian demands in Europe.

Possibility of Early Treaty Seen

Actual break-up of negotiations at London was felt by TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 19 December) to have consequences for Japan which would be "not necessarily bad," and the journal suggested that the conclusion of the Japanese peace treaty might even be earlier than the German. In contrast was OSAKA TIMES' opinion (Osaka, 21 December) that failure of the London Conference had cast "a dark shadow" on the Japanese issue, and the pessimistic observation that if failure of the big powers to reach an agreement is definitive, the key to world peace is destroyed. The Japanese people were urged by several papers to make further efforts to fulfill the demands of the Potsdam Declaration, in preparation for the forthcoming peace conference. Thus, both TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 23 December) and HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 7 December) regarded thorough democratization as a prerequisite to the conclusion of a peace treaty, while MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 24 December) saw the treaty as merely the "recognition" of changes already effected in accordance with the Potsdam Declaration.

COAL

Increase in coal production attendant upon dispatch of SCAP and Japanese Government inspection teams to the mines and as a result of a reported production drive determined upon by union workers themselves was lauded in prefectural commentaries. Outstanding among factors involved was said to be an improvement in the psychological attitude of both management and labor. Government responsibility for providing improved transportation and working facilities in the future was not minimized, however.

Typical of editorial reaction was that of HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 17 December), which attributed coal production up to 105 percent of that expected during the second month of the drive to a realization by capital and labor of the importance of coal to the national economy. The same journal pointed out that under present conditions (with production costs allegedly above the selling price) management, denied commercial profit, would rather retard production than increase it, and credited the adoption of the State control formula with overcoming this obstacle. At the same time, it was thought that eventually either a price raise or "thorough rationalization of management" would be necessary. HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 23 December) particularly commended the "timely leadership and encouragement" given by the visiting inspection teams, and HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 21 December), contrasting one of the inspection team's reports with the "abstract white papers of the Katayama Cabinet," also praised their "serious and positive work."

"Spiritual encouragement" to the people of the entire country was declared by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 27 December) to have been the most significant result of the production increase, while HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 19 December) emphasized the importance of the drive in substantiating the conviction that labor and capital can work together. To KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 24 December), rising coal output was a sign that production might reach 40 million tons annually in the near future.

AGRICULTURE

Editorial comment on the passage of the Agricultural Cooperatives Union Bill emphasized that the success of the measure depends on the awareness of farmers themselves. KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 16 December) described the Bill as "a great revolution," but, like YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 13 December), the writer's enthusiasm was restrained by fears that the people were not completely aware of its importance. Farmers are lacking in "positive zeal," the Kochi journal believed; "so far, the Bill seems to mean only that any 15 farmers can form an association." As in previous editorials, papers called for wider education among the farmers lest the measure "deteriorate into a scrap of paper." GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 16 December) also felt that the Bill represented another great step toward democracy. However, the writer believed that the persisting limitations of Japanese agriculture -- too many people on too little land -- called for agricultural rationalization.

Similarly, AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 20 December), discussing progress of land reform, stated that redistribution of land has resulted in decreased production per acre. "The idea is spreading," the writer said, "that the best way to carry out management is through a cooperative union tailored especially to Japanese needs. The excessive population on the one hand, and shortage of land on the other, precludes the institution of either the Russian or American system of farming, the editorial concluded.

LABOR

Criticism of unorthodox strike tactics of Government workers' unions continued, with increased emphasis upon the growing disfavor with which the public was said to be viewing work stoppages affecting the people's livelihood and convenience.

A number of journals noted specifically the "political cast" of union activity. Prolongation of strike action after virtual Government acceptance of the terms of settlement outlined by the Central Labor Committee may be directed against the Katayama Cabinet, but it is the people who suffer, CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 25 December) pointed out. SHIN NIPPON (Kyoto, 20 December) contrasted the alleged preoccupation of Government unions with larger political issues to the detriment of particular economic ones with the attitude of private and industrial unions, which were said to be composedly watching objective circumstances and strengthening and extending their organizational setup.

ECONOMY

The hoarded goods report submitted by the Kato Committee of the Diet's lower house continued to be the major topic of editorials concerned with economic matters (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 201). KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 22 December) estimated that the value of concealed materials -- formerly the property of the Japanese Army and Navy -- exceeded 50,000,000,000 yen, which assertedly was "an amount equal to one-fourth of this year's budget." Inasmuch as hidden goods were believed to be "the roots of blackmarkets," the Government was charged with blocking economic reconstruction, in view of its "irresponsibility" toward disclosing illegally appropriated war supplies.

Similarly, NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 25 December) pointed out that "the illegal disposition of hidden goods constituted a hotbed of blackmarket activities, obstructing sound production revival and contributing largely to the rise of war-profiteering millionaires." HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 23 December) also attributed blackmarkets principally to illicit transactions involving former military commodities, and claimed that inflation would have been effectively checked "had the enormous amount of special goods been included in our controlled economy." Meanwhile, GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 22 December) regretted that investigations of the disposition of military materials had not been undertaken, allegedly due to the impotency of political parties.

Comment on Taxation, Budget

Opposition to a second property tax was expressed in a HAKODATE SHIMBUN editorial (Hakodate, 26 December), which doubted the practicability of the levy in light of widespread delinquencies in tax payments. On the other hand, TOKUSHIMA MINPO (Tokushima, 23 December) advocated additional taxes on "the new rich and blackmarket profiteers." The writer asserted, however, that "it is no easy task for taxation officials," because the kinds of property subject to taxation were not clearly defined.

Commenting on the Finance Ministry's budget policy, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 25 December) declared that budget compilation would be almost impossible, unless commodity prices were stabilized. As an economic reconstruction measure, the Ministry's proposed public sale of "production bonds" was regarded as impracticable due to fluctuations in currency values. KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 23 December), warning that "there is a limit to the people's life of austerity," urged that State expenditures be balanced with national income. "Sound finance," the editorial declared, requires that the Government budget constitute the balance of national income, after allowances have been made for industrial and consumer needs.

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 31 December 1947 No. 200

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Perishable food controls evoked considerable comment, but little enthusiasm, from the prefectural press. As in metropolitan journals (Press Analyses Nos. 657,658, 661), disappearance of fish and vegetables from the open market was anticipated along with increased blackmarket activity and a rise in the (non-official) price. Virtually unanimous agreement on the necessity for control in Japan's straitened economy was coupled with general pessimism over the possibility of enforcement.

Ineffective Administration of Controls

Typical of emphatic protest was the comment in NOOBI SHIMBUN (Tajima, 17 December). New measures were characterized as a simple reiteration of regulations previously proved ineffective. "If the authorities are determined to stamp out blackmarketing, they should pay closer attention to the back, not the front, of the circles to be controlled," the journal declared, and "if the (maintenance of) official prices is vital to the 1,800-yen wage standard, (the Government) should rack its brains to facilitate delivery of commodities at the fixed price." Recalling past experience, SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 14 December) held that there had been neither "eagerness for practice" nor "responsibility for result," and, consequently, only a "series of failures." The writer concluded that it was now most natural for the people to question the advisability of control. Nevertheless, a cooperative and enlightened attitude on the part of the general public was declared to be as crucial to the success of controls as strict enforcement by Governmental authorities. AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 16 December), explaining at some length the difficulties involved in the control of perishables, put in a strong plea for responsible control "from the beginning of re-enforcement," and declared the problem to be particularly important in that prefecture, where 80 percent of the fish and vegetables consumed must be shipped in from other parts of Japan. In a similar vein, FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 17 December) contended that resumption of controls would take on significance only when rigid measures were enforced and an increased amount of rationed goods could be distributed. Delivering the same message, OITA GODO SHIMBUN (Oita, 12 December) stressed the problem of eliminating the blackmarket concurrently with applying rationing measures. Sole dissenter on the necessity for control of fresh foods was SHIKOKU KEIZAI SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 14 December), which maintained that more production and better distribution would result from free sale of such goods, and asked the Government to undertake an over-all reassessment of its economic control policies.

Agricultural Cooperative Union Law

Numerous journals heralded the approach of an era of democratization for farm villages with the implementation of the Agricultural Cooperative Union Law on 15 December. Nearly every commentary emphasized the importance of active participation in the movement at the lowest level, and expressed disappointment that "working farmers" seemed insufficiently aware of the opportunities offered them in the new organization. Both MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 16 December) and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 16 December) specifically noted a prevailing "low spirit" among the farm population of that area, and the first-mentioned journal encouraged farmers to actively dispute "conservative influence" for control of the unions.

Barriers to Reform

Deep-seated "conservatism" on the part of farmers was declared by TOKUSHIMA MINPO SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 14 December) to be likely to prevent the joint democratic action contemplated under new legislation. Listing exchange of farmland, rearrangement of land, improvement of irrigation, cooperative plantation, joint-control and joint use of agricultural machinery and tools, etc. as possible ways to increase production and labor efficiency in rural areas, education in the economic benefits to be derived from cooperation was advocated as one method of attack on an obstructive mental attitude. CHIBA SHIMBUN (Chiba, 14 December) found regrettable a reported emphasis on the advantage of joint sales and purchases through the unions and asked that more attention be given to the introduction of scientific farming and modern practices. Setting up of a "model rural community" of a "model Agricultural Cooperative Union" in each prefecture was suggested by SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 9 December) as a method for persuading and educating farmers throughout Japan. A commonly expressed warning was that given in IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 13 December). Authorities in each locality, the journal said, should think much less of "formal establishment" of the union and much more of management of the union after its establishment, and "should strive toward enlightenment" of the ordinary farmers in the aims and possibilities of cooperative unions.

POLITICS

Prefectural papers followed the Tokyo press in emphasizing the political aspects of Kanae Hatano's appointment to the Agriculture-Forestry portfolio (Press Analysis No. 655). Qualifications of the Socialist Diet member received some attention, but most commentators gave primary consideration to the effect of the selection upon Socialist Party unity. (In this connection, writers pointed out that left-wing Socialists had vigorously supported Masaru Nomizo, Japan Farmers' Union executive, for the Cabinet position.)

Intra-Party 'Confusion' Predicted

To NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 15 December), Hatano's appointment meant "definite intra-party confusion," and was a manifestation of the weakness of the tripartite Administration. Describing Premier Katayama's policy in making the choice as "neutral," the writer declared that "it is not an exaggeration to say that the Socialist-led Cabinet has completely lost power . . . (over) personnel matters." No fault was found with Hatano himself, however and his "non-partisanship and wide experience" were expected to improve the administration of agricultural affairs. CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 14 December) also foresaw left-wing discontent over the selection, and felt that it would be "irrational" for that group to remain within the Government.

A lengthy explanation of the People's Cooperative Party's attitude toward the Agriculture Ministry choice appeared in YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 13 December), which argued that it was "reasonable" for that group to oppose the left-wing Socialists' candidate. Claiming that the People's Cooperatives had agreed to participate in the coalition Government provided leftists would not become Cabinet members, the editorial declared that if the Party assumed a "conciliatory" view toward the appointment, it would constitute "abandonment of a pledge to the people." The journal believed that it would be "almost impossible" for the Socialists to reject Nomizo, and said that the only course open to the People's Cooperatives was to become an opposition party "without hesitation." In another comment on political phases of the appointment, CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 15 December) maintained that the Socialists had conceded their power in the Cabinet to the Democratic Party.

Premier's Choice Opposed

Opposition to Hatano was registered by SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 16 December) on the ground that "he is closely connected with Hiroo Wada, Director-General of the Economic Stabilization Board, which is the headquarters of the new bureaucracy." In addition, the editorialist appeared to fear that Hatano would be unable to cope with a situation expected to result from a reported drift of new yen from rural to urban areas. SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 14 December) conceded that Hatano was "fairly well known as an economist," but thought that he lacked knowledge of Agriculture-Forestry administration.

Another Osaka paper, OSAKA SHIMBUN (14 December), warned the new Minister that food problems required urgent attention, and that he should adopt "a firm attitude regardless of political parties and special groups." Deploring the conflict between farmers' unions, AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 14 December) notified Hatano that encouragement of the "sound development" of such organizations would be one of his principal jobs. "We wish to emphasize," the writer added, "that it will be necessary for him to use strong political power for the present . . . in order to persuade farmers to participate in unions with confidence."

LABOR

Belief that the public would bear the financial burden of the Government's decision to pay an estimated nine billion yen in livelihood allowances to disputing communication and railways workers was widely expressed in prefectural newspapers, and writers immediately linked the subsidies to reported plans to hike tobacco prices and rail and postal rates as the most practical means of revenue. Nevertheless, most editorials -- while united in the opinion that the subsidies would spur inflation -- felt that Government workers were justified in demands for higher wages in view of climbing prices. In this connection, commentaries usually resolved into attacks on the Government for its alleged failure to eliminate the blackmarket, viewed by all journals as the chief impetus to wage struggles.

Although opposed to rail and postal increases to finance the 2.8 months' subsidy, writers with few exceptions were unable to suggest other sources of revenue. Each newspaper demanded that heavy taxation be levied against blackmarketeers and the "new yen" class, but again specific suggestions were lacking. Of the 15 commenting newspapers only FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 16 December) and KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 13 December) proposed, respectively, that interest on war bonds be suspended and coal subsidies be cancelled.

The theme of public responsibility for the Government's decision (in this respect) was typified by MURORAN MINPO (Muroran, 14 December). Workers were justified, the writer said, in demanding wages of "closer proportion" to commodity prices, but the editorial doubted that any substantial benefits would be achieved by the victory in view of the latter's "contradictory nature," (that is, its effects as defined in immediate plans to raise rail and postal fares). Secondly, the workers were compelled to militate against the 1,800-yen wage base, which, as a result, was "practically cast away." This journal's prophesy that increases in tobacco, rail and postal costs would stimulate price climbs on all fronts was echoed by AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 12 December), which felt that the "price rises might . . . cause a deficit in real wages."

According to FUKUI SHIMBUN, the issue was not one of wage rises and price increases but of destroying the blackmarket, "the real enemy of labor." The channeling of commodities into legal routes would automatically depress prices, the journal stated, and lead to the stabilizing of national livelihood. Like other newspapers, the journal conceded the difficulty of this task and urged union leaders to sympathize with the Government's plight in this respect. By "offensive action against the blackmarket,

instead of defensive action against inflation," real wage increases would be realized and national livelihood elevated, the writer held.

Believing that relations between "labor and the public" were imperiled by the proximity of wage rises and price boosts, CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 14 December) considered reported increases in tobacco and rail and postal services as a possible means of alienating Government workers from the people. According to the editorial, the projected cost raises were a "clear contradiction . . . inasmuch as the resources have been sought from the public instead of from the blackmarket."

ECONOMY

Currency stabilization drew primary attention from prefectural journals commenting on economic affairs, but among other subjects of editorial interest were taxation, the exchange rate, industrial rationalization, the public sale of Zaibatsu stocks, Government workers' allowances, the Economic Deconcentration Act, and the "White Paper on Public Finance."

Dire consequences from the current inflationary trend were generally feared. In a representative commentary, IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 16 December), warned that Government controls were no assurance against complete financial collapse, and urged the Administration to adopt a production policy stressing greater coal output. To this end, increased prices and wages were recommended for the mining industry. On the other hand, OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 16 December) believed that foreign credit was indispensable for establishing economic equilibrium. Increased savings were advocated as an anti-inflation measure, but currency devaluation was firmly opposed. Meanwhile, TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 12 December) objected to the Cabinet's reported approval of increased railway fares and postal rates, because of the expected effect of boosting the general price level.

YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 12 December) advocated "the sliding-scale wage system" (Press Analysis No. 663), asserting that it would put an end to continuing discrepancies between prices and wages. In contrast, YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 15 December) emphasized the relationship between currency volume and gross national product. Anticipating that additional bank notes amounting to 100,000,000,000 yen may be issued by next April, and that production may simultaneously decrease due to coal and electric power shortages, the writer indicated apprehension lest "the inflationary trend accelerate during the first six months of 1948."

Taxation

Tax payment delinquencies were interpreted by ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 14 December) "as the manifestation of the people's want of confidence in the Government," HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 14 December) attributed tax arrearage to the inefficiency of collectors, as well as to public indifference. "A streamlined tax collection system" and a larger force of revenue officers were deemed necessary. In addition, thorough taxation of inflation profiteers," the editorialist thought, would encourage all people to pay taxes.

SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 12 December) advised the Administration "to be most careful not to disregard the balance between taxation volume and people's incomes," and regretted that the Government Railway Labor Union had demanded tax exemptions on the special monthly allowances that they were recently granted.

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AGRICULTURE

Speedier, more efficient delivery of perquisites by the Government, and full awareness of the national food plight by farmers, were urged by the prefectural press in editorials on the progress of rice and sweet potato deliveries. In commentaries generally sympathetic to farmers, writers in 14 provincial journals pointed out that delays in perquisites -- bonuses including clothing, foodstuffs, and bicycles -- were diverting staple foods into the blackmarket, "thereby detracting," as one paper said, "from the efforts of the farm villages."

Detailed suggestions for higher delivery were lacking, however, as most newspapers published only general pleas for more effective distribution of gifts, which, in nearly all circumstances, was linked to Government "unawareness" of the farmer's predicament. Typical of the comment was a TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 9 December) editorial stating: "Unfair allotments (of bonus goods), shortage of electricity, and (Government) 'unreasonableness' . . . must be immediately eliminated." This was echoed by SHIN EHIME (Imaharu, 8 December), which added that delays in food rationing were encouraging farmers to withhold rice at the expense of their individual quotas. DAILY TOHOKU (Hachinoe, 9 December) believed that only modernization of Japanese agriculture -- whereby "the brain is used more than the body" -- could provide the solution to the nation's "food crisis."

Agricultural Cooperatives

Renewed warnings that individual farmers must abandon their "feudalistic notions" if villages are to be democratized under the Agricultural Cooperative Union Law appeared in GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 4 December), TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 3 December), and NOOBI SHIMBUN (Tajima, 3 December). All three journals considered that "old-line bosses" might capitalize on the "indifference and ignorance" of the farmer and regain the agricultural powers held under wartime organizations. "In this sense," the Tajima paper said, "farmers must rid themselves of their subordinate, feudalistic disposition thoroughly . . . if they are to realize their emancipation." Unless they do, added GIFU TIMES, the democratization of villages and land reform will become "dead letters."

Land Reform

Charges that small and medium-size landholders are "absolute antagonists of land reform . . . using their past influence to grasp control of Agricultural Associations" appeared in CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 7 December), which asserted that "this (land reform) is the basis of democratization, and reactionary powers are trying to prevent it."

WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 8 December) -- reporting that food production has been decreased by land redistribution -- stated: "Landowners are silent about their big sacrifice. As the result of reformation, no definite progress has been made toward surmounting the food crisis. It has had a bad effect on the acreage. We wonder for what purpose reformation was undertaken."

LABOR

An anticipated year-end "labor offensive" absorbed the interest of labor commentators during the first week of December. While general opinion supported as "reasonable" demands for a higher wage -- particularly in the case of Government employees whose earnings were thought to be substantially lower than those of laborers employed by private industry -- unions were cautioned against taking action adversely affecting the nation's economy.

Labor's Responsibility for Production

The labor offensive must be developed on the basis of measures "consistent with the public good," said GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 6 December), in a editorial atttibuting decreased production,

in part, to protest tactics currently employed. "Careful consideration" of the influence of any major labor action on general public welfare was advised, for if unions take a "false step," it was believed that "incurable social disorder" may result. GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 6 December) and SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 7 December) similarly urged positive attention to production increase as a "real" base for wage increase. The first-named journal asked that trade unions add "reconstruction of post-war economy" to their traditional mission of "promoting the economic welfare of the laboring masses," while the latter commended as "constructive" the production drive carried out by a local coal miners' union in conjunction with its demand for higher wages. "It is not capital but production that pays wages," SHIN NIPPON (Kyoto, 12 December) maintained, in the course of a comparison of Japan's labor efficiency with that of England and the United States.

Criticism of Labor Tactics

Most critical of recent labor movements was KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 7 December), which accused Japanese workers of acting like "spoiled children" with a tendency to "make themselves the index of everything." Slow-downs and work sabotage by government employees caused HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 7 December) to doubt union appreciation of the "spirit" of the Labor Standards Law. SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 7 December) denounced the government workers' unions for allowing themselves to be controlled by "bosses," and implied a connection between the unions and the Communist Party.

ECONOMY

The Government's "White Paper on Public Finance" (Press Analysis No. 649) drew considerable editorial comment from prefectural journals. The proposals for increased savings and completed tax payments were generally endorsed, but -- in contrast with editorials appearing in Tokyo papers -- the provincial press expressed almost no opinion on the Finance Minister's statement relating to foreign loans. An exception was KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 8 December), which declared that "if we can convince America and other countries with our sincerity in the establishment of a democratic Japan, we can expect their aid in loaning us funds." The writer believed that, with foreign investments, "inflation can be surmounted and economic rehabilitation attained."

Several editorials were critical of the tax programs outlined in the White Paper, and tax payment delinquencies were attributed to "excessive and unreasonable" levies imposed by the Government. OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 8 December) blamed "Administration policies and incompetency" for "an enormous amount" of unpaid taxes, and CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 8 December) expressed belief that tax arrearage was "promoting the present inflation." On the other hand, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 8 December) attributed inflation to blackmarket activities and the alleged ineffectiveness of Government control measures, but it also charged the Administration with responsibility for tax payment delinquencies. "The reluctant payment of taxes by the people is a reasonable result of their being pressed by the blackmarket economy," the editorialist declared.

Increased Savings Viewed As 'Impracticable'

Although no disapproval of increased savings as an anti-inflationary measure was expressed, virtually all writers regarded it as "impracticable." CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 9 December) said that "it is difficult to contrive methods to promote increased savings by advocating economies in addition to those that are now in effect," unless "free purchases" are reduced to the minimum. Thus, the writer pointed to the need for increased distribution of commodities through proper channels, which assertedly requires the elimination of blackmarkets.

GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 9 December) claimed that the Government finance report failed to indicate how increased savings and completed tax payments could be realized. The Administration was urged to conduct "scientific investigations," and to utilize reliable statistical and analytical data. CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 9 December) maintained that effectuating the report's proposals depended upon "restoring the balance between finance and the national economy." To this end, the writer advocated "substantial wages," administrative readjustment and currency circulation stabilization. Similarly, YUKAN FUKUNICHI (Fukuoka, 10 December) asserted that, "to check inflation," financial policy must be supplemented with production and distribution measures.

POLICE

Warnings that care must be exercised in the selection of local police commissions, and fear that the commissions would be subject to "boss" influence dominated prefectural comment on the recently enacted police law. "As already seen in Chiba Prefecture," YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 11 December) remarked, "the emphasis in the committee's selection has been placed on the side of the conservative influences, and an opposition movement is appearing here and there over the election of 'bosses' and members of the new yen class, and the rejection of representatives of democratic organizations," [Danger of direct political influence in the selection of commissioners was cited by TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 11 December), which felt that differences between mayors and local assemblies would have a "great effect" on the appointment of police commissions, and might result in "political trouble." Claiming that "operation of municipal and village offices, as well as of the assemblies, seems to have lost all semblance of order lately," the Tokushima journal expressed doubt whether "under the circumstances, nomination of commissioners can be carried out fairly."] While the seriousness of failure to achieve satisfactory operation of the new system was emphasized by OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 8 December), TOKAI SHIMBUN (Okazaki, 11 December) took a more optimistic view than most journals, with the remark that "every reformation must carry uncertainty."

Legal Section

Some criticism of the new system because of definite problems in implementation was expressed by a few journals. Among these, KYOTO NICHINICHI (Kyoto, 6 December) questioned whether "abrupt and thoroughgoing decentralization" would enable the police to continue their functions, and pointed to difficulties in liaison between the national police force and the locally controlled police. Recruitment of additional police, and enlargement of police offices were also cited by the journal as specific problems to be encountered. Regarding the issue of additional personnel, SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsonomiya, 18 December) remarked that there appeared to be more applicants for local than for national police in some areas -- a situation which was regarded with some surprise since the position of the national force was thought to be more secure financially. The explanation, the paper reported, appeared to lie in the fact that under local police administration, officers were more certain of being stationed near their homes.

COAL

Cooperation between labor and management, coupled with efficient administration of the State Coal Control Law, were urged by eight prefectural newspapers considering related aspects of the campaign for greater coal production. No commentators believed that application of the Law would automatically raise output; instead, they felt that passage indicated Diet recognition that coal production -- "vital to Japan's recovery" -- should be a Government responsibility.

The feeling prevailed that solution of problems in other fields -- notably labor and management -- contained the key to the coal problem. For instance, CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 10 December) observed; "Management and labor are requested to . . . materialize the aim of the Law. It is no longer a problem of whether the legislation is right or wrong."

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 17 December 1947 No. 197

POLITICS

Departure of 24 dissidents from the Democratic Party -- an outgrowth of intra-Administration differences over the State Coal Control Bill -- aroused considerable interest in the prefectural press. In contrast with Tokyo papers, a majority of commentators believed that the action of the Shidehara-led faction was inevitable and had served to clarify the positions of "conservatives" and "progressives." Comment on other political developments emphasized the allegedly diminishing popularity of the Katayama Government.

'Political Confusion Eliminated'

Contending that dissension between the Ashida and Shidehara factions had existed since formation of the Democratic Party, and was a cause of Japan's present "chaotic" political situation, CHUBU NIPPON (Nagoya, 30 November) declared that "thus, the Party was destined to break up sooner or later." The indication that both groups would be able to act independently in the future was welcomed because the source of "political unrest has been eliminated. The discord within Democratic ranks has had an unfavorable effect not only upon the Party, but upon the Administration. Therefore, the split has clarified the policies of the Cabinet . . . and has brought the Socialists and Democrats closer." SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 2 December) also thought that the two factions had not split over the coal control issue alone, but that the withdrawal of the Shidehara group had been anticipated for sometime

An identical view was expressed by SHIN NIPPON (Kyoto, 30 November), which added that the dissidents would merge with the Liberals and the Ashida supporters would work more closely with the Socialists. However, OITA GODO SHIMBUN (Oita, 30 November) -- discussing the "constant changes" in Japan's political parties -- felt that the move to join the Liberals would be gradual. Describing the Democrats and Liberals as successors to the Seiyu-kai and Minsei-to (Japan's leading pre-war parties), the writer saw in the Democratic split "a golden opportunity to cast off their old skin." In view of "changed international and internal conditions," it was believed that the Liberals might be justified in attempting to form an anti-socialistic party.

In the opinion of CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 30 November), the establishment of the two-party system was desirable, but merger of the Shidehara Democrats with the Liberals was assailed as "meaningless" if resulting policies were not intended to improve the nation's welfare. A minority view -- voiced by KOCHI NIPPO (Kochi, 29 November) -- was that it was "disgraceful" for the Ministerial Parties to be "desperately engaged in maintaining political power," and suggested that this consideration had caused the Democratic split.

Cabinet Strength Believed Waning

Citing allegedly worsening inflation and increased labor unres several papers warned that the Government was losing the support of "the masses." To KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 29 November), the reason for decreased support of the Cabinet was the Socialists' "sacrifice of principle and their emphasis upon maintaining the coalition Administration. * * * The Socialists, therefore, should renew their policies . . . and express their own characteristics as the party of tomorrow."

LABOR

Editorials in connection with labor problems were generally devoted to studies of the overall situation -- rather than specific phases -- as rural commentators pleaded for harmony to hasten economic rehabilitation. Typical was a SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 27 November) editorial which found both workers and managers guilty of "confusing methods." With labor these methods sometimes took the form of ". . . factory workers concurrently engaged in agriculture (who) combine strong claims with foolhardiness," the writer said. On the other hand, industrialists in some cases "still cling to their anti-union prejudices," and refuse to "yield to understanding or study the criticisms of the public." Unless a concrete program is devised, the journal concluded, labor will continue in its "clumsy strikes" and management will resort to such "unfair labor acts" as personnel retrenchment allegedly aimed to eliminate labor leaders.

In view of their influential role in the workers' movement, labor leaders must act more prudently and with greater foresight, if justifiable labor claims are to be realized, CHUBU KEIZAI SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 27 November) warned. Discounting "leftist extremism" in the National Congress of Industrial Unions -- described as a powerful influence in the direction of the labor offensive -- the paper defended labor's pursuit of welfare institutions, adequate pensions, and unemployment insurance as the "natural aims of any progressive labor offensive." However, leaders were advised to draft objectives consonant with the limitations of Japan's economy, and not "carry their principle of strife . . . too far." Similar advice came from KITA NIPPON SHIMBUN (Toyama, 30 November) and HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 29 November) in editorials urging constructive programs for workers' betterment rather than strife for strife's sake. The first newspaper, while sympathizing with the plight of the Government financial workers, nevertheless warned against "any act which would suspend the financial functions of the State."

The "dullness of production" was partly caused by a lack of harmony in labor unions SHIN HOKKAI SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 29 November) conceded, but the writer believed that most labor strife was due to blackmarket food costs which caused disputes to rise accordingly with commodity prices. "About 80 percent of workers' food costs -- which form 70 percent of their household economy -- are spent on illegally purchased food," the journal said.

ECONOMY

Emergency measures for rationing fuel and perishable foods -- announced at a recent prefectural governor's conference -- were the subject of varying editorial comment in the provincial press. Whereas some journals approved of the new controls, other papers expressed either opposition or indecision.

NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 29 November) was representative of journals sanctioning the emergency controls. The writer believed that "success or failure of these measures will influence . . . the future of commodity prices, as well as that of inflation in general." Government authorities were charged with responsibility for the alleged failure of former controls. "In view of the world food situation," the editorial declared, "it is a truism that Japan must properly distribute indigenous foodstuffs to the maximum extent."

On the other hand, WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 30 November) indicated opposition to food controls, and endorsed the reported views of Kansai district (Kyoto, Kobe, Osaka) merchants. "If controls were abolished," the journal maintained, "there is every possibility that prices would settle down far below present blackmarket figures, as in the case of fruit released from control." Meanwhile, SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 1 December) expressed an equivocal attitude toward the emergency measures, and asserted that "the control of food is so difficult that theory and practice do not always coincide, due to transportation problems and seasonal price changes."

Taxation

Continued interest in taxation problems was indicated in several editorials. TOKAI MAINICHI SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 29 November) charged that "while income based on the 1,800-yen standard is 27 times that of 1935-37, national taxes have increased 194 times." The writer believed that "taxes should be borne by all the people as a joint liability." In fairness to citizens who are obliged to assume a heavy tax burden, the paper felt that "the honesty of public servants in charge of the national Administration" must be unimpeachable.

BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 29 November) suggested that to lend significance to a prospective visit of the Emperor, the occasion should be celebrated by paying taxes to local officials. "Indifference to taxation is the greatest post-war tragedy," the writer asserted, pointing to the fact that "delinquency in paying taxes invites additional issue of banknotes, thus stimulating inflation." Economic rehabilitation cannot be achieved, the editorial concluded, unless revenue is forthcoming to pay off the national debt.

Disapproval of increased taxes on tobacco and sake, and on admissions to entertainment establishments, was expressed by TOO NIPPO SHIMBUN (Aomori, 28 November). Tobacco and sake were said to be "daily necessities for farmers, fisherman and coal miners," whereas moving pictures and drama assertedly "cannot be separated from the life of city workers." The income from these sources was expected to comprise about 43 percent of total tax revenue, but because these "popular taxes" were considered disproportionately burdensome, the editorial denounced Government budgeting as "unsound finance."

OCCUPATION

The existence of a "hidden government" in the traditional sense continued to stir denials by prefectural newspapers, but commentators unreservedly called for elimination of the oyabun-kobun system as a stifling influence on democratization (Press Analyses Nos. 637-644). Editors agreed that contractors, restaurateurs, embittered ex-soldiers, and "die-hard reactionaries" were joined either in commercial brotherhoods or spiritual coalitions, but strongly doubted whether these had coalesced into a full-fledged underground movement. In most instances, editorials viewed the reports as a challenge to the people to effectuate democracy in Japan.

A specimen reaction to the press reports was provoked in TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 30 November): "There are still some who do not realize the (present) situation fully and are sticking to the feudalistic ideology. * * * We must annihilate these customs, systems, and ideologies even though there is no such underground organization powerful enough to endanger our Constitution." TOKAI YUKAN (Tokushima, 29 November), considering the political effectiveness of the oyabun system, warned the voting populace to "watch over and control political parties."

GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 27 November) criticized the tendency to consider democratization as complete and pointed to the underground government reports as proof that "criminal minds are harder to detect than criminal acts." SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 1 December) called for an attack on the oyabun by "cutting off economic bonds and developing critical powers."

PEACE TREATY

Attention to developments at the London Conference of Foreign Ministers, and interpretation of the eventual effects of the sessions on the Japanese peace treaty characterized foreign comment during recent weeks. Influence of the conference on Japan was variously evaluated by prefectural papers, with AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 30 November) and HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 29 November) regarding the occasion as an incentive to preparation for a Japanese peace treaty, and ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 14 November)

remarking that if the German problem is settled, a solution to the Japanese issues "can be automatically expected."

A number of journals tended to express merely pious hopes for the success of the present conference, and minimized possibilities of a diplomatic break. Thus, KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 26 November) maintained that it was the part of "common sense" to believe that there would be no war between the US and Russia, and that "under present circumstances, both nations are doing all they can to avoid war." Similarly, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 21 November) remarked that it was "absurd" to think that "the cold war will turn into a hot one," although the Nara journal admitted that the Korean issue again was raising tensions in the Far East. NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN (Tottori, 16 November) felt that the world's "yearning for peace" would overcome any diplomatic crisis.

On the other hand, warnings against over-optimism -- particularly regarding the Japanese treaty -- were also expressed by several papers such as KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 28 and 30 November) which remarked that "there cannot be any optimistic view on the relations between the Soviet and the US, Britain, and France" and that an early conclusion of the peace in accordance with Molotov's suggestion, was unthinkable. In spite of the fact that many representatives of the Allies favor a speedy and generous conclusion of the peace with Japan, NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 2 December) remarked, "this is not a unanimous opinion, and it is mistaken optimism to emphasize only the attitudes which are favorable to Japan." The "question of the Japanese treaty is one of the causes of US-USSR dissension," HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 29 November) said, while TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 30 November) hazarded the suggestion that the Soviet might not have expected the United States and Britain to accept the proposal for a four-power meeting in China to decide on the Japanese peace terms. One journal, NANSHIN NICHINICHI, (Suwa, 30 November) cautioned the Japanese against "anticipating that opposition between the Big Two (US and USSR) might bring about a happy future for Japan."

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 12 December 1947 No. 196

DIET

Violence in the Diet -- during consideration of the State Coal Control Bill -- aroused unusually severe criticism from papers throughout Japan. Prefectural writers were unanimous in branding the action as a "national disgrace" which had retarded the advance of democratic parliamentary procedure. Demands for punitive action ranged from insistence that the members involved be reprimanded to calls for dissolution of the Diet and a general election.

'Political Parties Are Responsible'

A thoughtful commentary in AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 26 November) attempted to explain the reasons for the Diet's "loss of dignity," and came to the conclusion that political parties were responsible. "If the parties had offered concrete platforms at the time of the last general election," the editorial contended, "voters would have elected the proper representatives." MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 24 November) acknowledged that, "since we are responsible for sending these men to the Diet, we are also obliged to get rid of them." Although SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 23 November) declared that there was "a limit to the insults the nation will take," the writer attributed the representatives' behavior to "the low level of the national intellect."

Several journals urged citizens to remember the offenders at the next general election. Statements in SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 26 November), OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 26 November), and ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 27 November) suggested that the country's "disgust" should be expressed at the polls. However, KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 24 November) advocated immediate dissolution "because the present Diet cannot be trusted."

Criticism of the Diet on other grounds appeared in a few editorials. "The Diet has established a new record for the length of time it has been in session," HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 28 November) remarked, "but it would be more appropriate to say that it has established a new record for inefficiency." The writer appeared to be particularly concerned over the delay in enacting the State Coal Control Bill -- a situation which was also discussed by another Hokkaido journal, HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 27 November). The latter attributed the delay to mismanagement of committees, and charged that the first session under the new Constitution had committed "grave errors."

The new Diet committee system was the subject of comment in KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 26 November), which complained that the nation had not been informed of committee decisions. Under the old system, the writer declared, legislation was discussed at plenary sessions which were reported by the press and radio. It was held to be important for the Diet to modify the system so that voters could be informed of committee decisions.

Diet Political Activity

Belief that "confusion" in the Diet reflected the instability of the Administration was expressed by several writers, while others attacked the political activities of opposition parties. The former opinion was advanced by NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 26 November), which believed that the Cabinet was "on the verge of collapse . . . because it has failed to understand the situation facing this country since the Surrender." SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 26 November)

contended that the Government "has been weighed and found wanting," while TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 26 November) indicated the opposition groups were attaching more importance to politics than to legislation.

COAL

Prefectural journals commenting on lower house approval of the State Coal Control Bill critically reviewed the Diet controversy called forth by the legislation, and presaged further difficulty in the House of Councillors. That the bill was passed despite initial rejection by the Mining and Industry Committee was regarded as seriously impairing the "prestige" of that group by GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 28 November), and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 27 November) considered the event of sufficient importance to warrent a "reinvestigation of the status and authority of standing committees." EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 27 November) remarked on certain Democratic and opposition "maneuvers" to ensure rejection of the bill by the committee, and also criticized the alleged attempt of the Socialists to present the bill to the plenary session without submission to the committee. Even though the success of the measure was "vital" to the Socialists, the writer considered the Government party "short of discretion" to have been willing to disregard the means by which the legislation was pushed through. "Careful article-by-article deliberation" in the upper house was urged by TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 27 November), although some were said to hold the view that the upper house should consider itself subordinate and should not make drastic changes tantamount to "overriding the will" of the House of Representatives.

Increased Coal Production

The possibility that the revised bill would be able to realize its stated objective -- increase in coal production -- was examined and rejected by OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 27 November) and SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 24 November), although the latter anticipated favorable results from the efforts of "on-the-spot supervisors" dispatched in consequence of recent Government emergency measures. Both papers felt that the purport of the original measure -- "enhancement of the worker's will to produce by strengthening the worker's right to participate in management" -- had been seriously weakened although the case for "State control" was still expected to stand or fall in terms of the success of the coal issue.

Effect of Coal Shortage on Transportation

Forty or fifty percent curtailment of transport facilities was predicted by OSAKA JIJI (27 November) because of continued decrease in coal output. Fear was expressed that Japanese firms would be unable to fulfill time delivery requirements on foreign contracts, that decrease of income from freight and passenger fares would increase financial difficulties of the National Railways, that increased taxation would then be inevitable, etc. Increased coal production and the establishment of a tight priority system funneling coal to railways was advocated.

LABOR

Attention to the labor situation centered around coal output (see above) -- with emphasis on the miners' "social responsibilities" under the program for higher production -- and continuing demands for the elimination of the blackmarket as essential to wage-price stabilization. Commentaries were more in the nature of ethical summons. as writers eschewed comprehensive studies of labor in the coal fields to call, instead, for "moral" reappraisals by individual miners, fulfillment of labor's obligations to the nation, and more "democratic, earnest efforts" by workers.

Typical of the comment was a SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 28 November) editorial which admonished union leaders to take action against idle miners and keep order in the mines by attaining "strong, democratic management" and a clearer sense of direction. In the same vein, HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 26 November) reported that increased coal production was not widespread, but confined

only to mines which had shown previous improvement. The writer demanded that "idle miners . . . consider the existence of their colleagues" in related industrial fields.

Belief that the blackmarket would ruin even an economy of moderate commodity prices and coordinated wages was voiced by HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 28 November), in a call for stronger Government action against illegal markets. Similarly, SHINKO YUKAN (Kanazawa, 27 November) urged organized workers' groups to "eradicate the blackmarket enemy . . . labor's greatest foe." Both journals agreed that, until the blackmarket is destroyed, wage increases will have little effect on workers' living standards.

ECONOMY

"Rationalization of industry" was the subject of editorial comment in several prefectural journals. NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN (Tottori, 26 November) and SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 28 November) commended the National Economic Council for efforts in this connection, while SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 27 November) cautioned against adopting efficiency programs which were limited to "personnel adjustments." The objectives of rationalization, the latter paper maintained, should also include technological advancement, improved quality and increased quantity of products, and lowered prices. The writer argued that decreased productivity is often "prevented by increasing personnel," and reported gains in Japanese coal production were cited to illustrate the point. Official data indicates that increased coal tonnage reflects the employment of additional miners. However, productivity -- tonnage per manhour -- apparently has not improved. Workers' understanding and cooperation were said to be necessary for the successful execution of personnel adjustments; employees assertedly would oppose mass layoffs, and the Government would have to make huge expenditures for unemployment allowances and social insurance.

SHIN EHIME (Imaharu, 28 November) felt that "administrative readjustment should not be performed merely from the standpoint of curtailing the budget." A survey of the activities of Government offices was recommended, so that "the liquidation of superfluous personnel can be carried out from the point of view of improving the efficiency of administrative management.

Taxation

Continued interest in taxation problems was indicated in the provincial press. TOO NIPPO (Aomori, 27 November) pointed to delayed tax payments and the evasions of blackmarketeers, and urged the expansion and strengthening of revenue-collecting machinery. Meanwhile, NOOBI SHIMBUN (Tajimi, 27 November) declared that the mass resignations of tax collectors -- because their wage demands were rejected -- could not be justified.

AGRICULTURE

Warnings that individuals must develop political consciousness proportionate to statutory reforms, if farm villages are to become democratized both "physically and mentally," were sounded by WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 27 November) and KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 26 November). Comparing the projected Agricultural Cooperative Unions with the wartime groups which suppressed individuality, the first-named paper reminded farmers of their opportunity to develop "subjectivity . . . which must go hand in hand with land reform for the realization of agricultural democratization." In this respect, KAHOKU SHIMPO said: "Farm land reform would be nonsense if (mere) possession of land were its goal. The elevation of the farmer's intellect is the final aim of the reformation."

Criticism of alleged land reform sabotage by Buddhist and Shinto priests appeared in a GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 25 November) commentary, denouncing them for behaving like "members of a privileged class . . . who (charge) that land reform officials in towns and villages are Communists." The writer warned that "there are some who spread feudal ideas (in the name of) religion and who are the real enemies of democracy. * * * It is not permissible for Buddhist priests to live an idle life when our Imperial Family has democratized their forests and sacrificed all privileges."

EDUCATION

While considerable attention to educational problems was shown by prefectural journals, discussion did not center around any particular issue. Less comment on the educational budget was noted than previously, although AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 22 November) expressed the opinion that if the people's political level were high enough for them to reject the present Government for cutting the school budget, the Education Ministry would be better able to obtain the funds. More resigned to seeking funds on the prefectural level was MINAMI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kagoshima, 23 November), which advocated various money-saving devices and "contributors unions" among the people in order to obtain money for schools without resorting to forced contributions or increasing local taxes.

Plans for using "authorized" locally chosen textbooks (in place of the old national school texts) were hailed by HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 25 November) and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 21 November), with the latter urging that steps be taken by the local authorities to speed publication of the new texts. The difficult living conditions of university students, the "little attention" being given to the new social course in the schools, and the hope that proposed changes in the school inspection system would be adequate were subjects of discussion in other journals. Education in the broader sense through possible participation in UNESCO, encouragement of public halls, and the elimination of popular superstition were felt by several papers to be of particular significance.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 10 December 1947 No. 195

POLITICS

Demands that the Diet concentrate on increasing coal production, and avoid political maneuvers, appeared in several papers, as the prefectural press gave primary attention to developments relating to the State Coal Control Bill. Discussion centered principally around whether Government parties would be able to force the measure through both houses and the dissenting opinions within these groups.

'Bill Is Not a Political Problem'

Members of the Democratic Party who advocated a delayed enforcement date for the Bill were attacked by SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 21 November), which charged that the real intent was to defeat the measure and aid the formation of a new party. "The State Coal Control Bill is an economic problem designed to increase production, and should not be considered a means to further political ambitions," the writer maintained. Likewise, JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 25 November) warned all parties "to bear in mind that what the people seek now is not political strife but a method of bettering the national situation." Apparently neutral, KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 24 November) contended that deliberation should center only around whether the Bill would stimulate output. "As long as this measure is, as claimed, a basic condition for economic reconstruction, it should not be utilized as a political weapon," the editorial pointed out. "The people desire sound criticism based on scientific study and a knowledge of actual conditions in the mines."

Several journals either criticized the control proposal or doubted that it would be approved. Strong opposition in the House of Representatives was construed by TOKAI MAINICHI (Nagoya, 20 November) as evidence that the Cabinet "lacks political power." Should the Bill fail of passage, the writer believed that the Administration would have to retire. Similarly describing State coal control as "a matter of life or death for the Government," SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 26 November) indicated belief that Cabinet leaders would have to consider a substitute plan.

NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 24 November) -- one of the Administration's most outspoken critics -- denounced State control as a "disaster" and charged that the operation of present Government monopolies was proof that there would be decreased efficiency. In contrast, SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 24 November) seemed to endorse the measure and blamed the Liberal Party for the delay in passage, while NISHI NIPPON (Fukuoka, 21 November) attributed the "confusion" to the existence of factions within the Ministerial Parties.

Rowdyism in the Diet

Editorials which criticized "rowdyism" attending Diet consideration of the Bill variously attached the blame to the Representatives involved, to the entire lower house, or to the nation as a whole. The latter view was expressed frequently and a commentary in KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 24 November) was representative. "Behind this scandal," the editorialist declared, "is a reflection of the people's degree of culture and training. * * * No legislative group of high standard can be expected in a country in which morality is low." But it was believed that efforts to encourage "democratic politics" should not be abandoned; "although it may be a round-about way, it is essential to raise the level of culture and discipline of the people."

LABOR

Demands for higher wages caused prefectural commentators to unite in predicting further assaults on the 1,800-yen wage base. Agreed that widespread requests for higher wages would seriously affect the entire price structure, writers called for stronger Government action to stabilize internal economy.

Considering present pay as a "political wage" (as opposed to wages estimated on the basis of actual production), KOCHI NIPPO (Kochi, 23 November) doubted whether "newly born democracy and the Government are powerful enough to deal with such political problems." The journal -- describing as absurd the alleged conversion of an economic issue into a political issue -- foresaw "suicidal difficulties" if the Cabinet continued to study wages from a political point of view. Only a coordinated economy and polity, the paper said, could overcome inflation.

Similar to this approach was a SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 25 November) editorial, which stated that wage increases are meaningless unless accompanied by production increases. Only maximum efficiency pay -- based on increased production rather than economic theory -- would improve working conditions and elevate living, the writer concluded. On the other hand, YAMATO TIMES (Nara, 25 November), noting Government committance to the 1,800-yen base, endorsed rationalization as the only way to raise production and workers' efficiency.

ECONOMY

An Administration-sponsored bill requiring Government offices to observe official prices in making payments for labor and materials was editorially endorsed in prefectural papers. Anticipating enactment of the bill, EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 21 November) urged rigorous enforcement, and indicated that "confusion in the economic order" would otherwise be the consequence of the new legislation. Because of the large-scale requirements of the Government, the writer believed that establishments insisting upon blackmarket prices would lose considerable business, and, in fact, would "ruin themselves."

HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 20 November) also hailed the proposed policy on State expenditures, and asserted that economic stability could not be achieved "without eliminating Government blackmarket dealings," as well as illicit transactions among private citizens. On the other hand, SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 26 November) regarded the Administration policy of strict observance of official prices as "contrary to our expectations." Expressing belief that blackmarket prices should be countenanced, to some extent, at this time, the journal feared that "if compulsory measures were taken by the Government," the welfare of the entire nation would be adversely affected.

The consequences of "tax evasion by big profiteers" were discussed in a NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN editorial (Tottori, 23 November). To compensate in part for unpaid taxes, the general public was seen as required to bear an increased burden of excise levies on consumer's goods. Noting the reported resignation of tax collectors in certain districts, the writer recommended that their working conditions be improved in an effort "to mitigate the problem of tax arrears."

Taxes and the National Income

SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 24 November) found that "the rate of taxation in Western countries seems to be around 20 percen of people's incomes." But because of relatively higher living standards in Europe and America, the writer believed that "this example" was inapplicable to Japan, and, "consequently, it is inadvisable for the Government to consider that a fixed percentage of incomes may be safely collected as taxes."

The State budget for the current fiscal year was said to comprise about 23 percent of the national income. In addition, the journal referred to "enormous local taxes," and another supplementary budget was anticipated. Acknowledging that heavier taxes could be levied on "the new-yen rich," the writer claimed that "the tax burden, in general, already has exceeded the amount which the people can bear." Consequently, "a general tendency of tax evasion was said to have developed.

OCCUPATION

Belief that democratization would automatically destroy any underground movement in Japan was advanced by provincial writers who considered the reported existence of a "hidden government" of incurable militarists and political extremists. Nearly all editorials disputed Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishio's statement on the political ineffectiveness of the shadow organization, with some branching into a general condemnation of Cabinet economic policies as a cause of social unrest.

The question also provoked editorial comment in newspapers of rival ideologies, as two journals attacked the Communist Party while a third called for "the laboring masses" to combat the reported underground movement in view of the "Government's weak stand against the new conservative party."

The first approach was taken by DAILY TOHOKU (Hachinoe, 24 November) which, in considering extreme reaction, found an equally perilous threat to democracy in "extreme leftism." Japan's becoming a democracy depends on its rejection of both philosophies and the acceptance of a middle course of justice and freedom, the writer said. Similarly, NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 26 November) included Communism in the extremist category and voiced the belief that both right and left have "common points." While pointing out that the Communist Party is without "anti-social bodies and military structures," the editorial stated that "as far as (the extreme rightists' and leftists') basic principles are concerned, neither compromise nor negotiation seems to be possible."

NIPPONKAI (Tottori, 24 November) construed reports of a hidden government as the signal for "laborers to combine themselves strongly against Fascists." The paper said workers themselves must destroy the movement, since "the attitude of the Socialist Party -- taking rather a weak stand against the conservative group in the name of practical politics -- is greatly disturbing the progress of democratic laborers." The editorial also exhorted the Socialists to "exclude conciliations to the Fascist trend."

Two other newspapers, YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 24 November) and GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 24 November), were less partisan. The first-named journal viewed rumors of a "hidden government" as signifying "insufficient efforts by the people to create a democracy," and listed repatriated youth as the most susceptible to "reactionary teachings." The second journal urged the Government to take positive countermeasures to avert underground usurpation of power.

FOREIGN

Expressions of hope for the success of the London Conference of Foreign Ministers were mingled with apprehension as to its failure, but there appeared to be very little real conviction among prefectural writers that inability to reach a compromise would have disastrous effects on the world at large. According to GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 25 November), the British were most concerned over the outcome of the conference, partly because the disposal of the German problem would have a "direct influence" on the fate of Britain. However, the paper asserted that the fate of the council "depends on the relation between America and Russia, rather than on Britain's efforts." The opinion was expressed by OSAKA TIMES (Osaka, 27 November) that Japan should hope for the success of the Conference, although if it fails, "preparations should be made for a separate (Japanese) peace."

Plans for the peace conference also were discussed in JOMO SHIMBUN (Maebashi, 23 November) and KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 25 November), with both journals stressing the need for Japanese independence -- the former emphasizing economic independence in order to make democratization effective, and the latter asserting that initiative in political reform must be taken by Japan without depending on the Allies.

European aid under the Marshall Plan continued to be a subject of some discussion. Hope that the aid program eventually might be extended to Japan was voiced by KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 23 November), which urged the people to work for an acceptable governmental structure, to enable the Japanese to participate in the prospective aid. On the other hand, GODO SHIMBUN (Olayama, 20 November) observed that Japan's recovery -- like that of Europe -- is dependent on American credit, but because of the demands of other countries the writer proposed that Japan must try to secure private credit and investments with the reopening of trade, instead of depending on assistance from the American government.

WELFARE

Need for the coalition of private relief funds in order to supplement the operation of the Livelihood Protection Law and other social legislation was stressed by a number of prefectural papers at the launching of a campaign for a Japanese "Community Chest." Several journals pointed out that private social works organizations had fallen into grave difficulties, while FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 25 November) offered the opinion that repeated requests for funds in the past had caused individuals to refrain from giving as fully as they might to any one cause. Feelings of sectionalism and persistence of the idea of individual rather than institutional relief likewise were felt by KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 25 November) to be contributing factors in the poor response to public welfare requests thus far made, while KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 25 November) believed that an increased sense of social solidarity as a result of the drive would be an "ample" result.

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 5 December 1947 No. 194

POLITICS

The Liberal Party's call for the organization of a new conservative party drew widespread interest in the prefectural press, with a majority of papers expressing doubt as to whether there had been spontaneous demand for such a group. Criticism of the Katayama Administration was undiminished, but few writers felt that the proposed new party -- or any other political group -- was capable of assuming power at the present time.

Statement of Policy Urged

Believing that the Cabinet "is rapidly losing the people's confidence," KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 20 November) nevertheless felt that the nation would not support the proposed new party movement ("even though it makes much sense") until "abstract words" were replaced by a frank statement of policy. The writer considered it "meaningless" to seek power through political maneuvers "which do not reflect the sentiments of the masses." In agreement, ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 19 November) regarded the development as a consequence of political enmity, and declared that the people were "more concerned with a stabilized livelihood than (with) the movements of political parties." Existence of factions within the present major parties was pointed out as another reason why the country would not support current attempts to establish a two-party system.

"Further confusion" in the political situation will result from the Liberal Party's announcement, according to TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 20 November), which deplored "mere party activity (at a time) when the people are on the verge of starvation." Although the editorialist was aware of "the need for a spontaneous political adjustment," it was believed that "motives and objectives" should be publicized. In the opinion of AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 20 November), the country should keep "a strict watch" on the Liberals' suggestion in order to determine whether it was "opportune" to establish a new party and whether such an organization could contribute to a solution of present problems. The writer added: "If the new party remains conservative for conservatism's sake and attacks socialism in order to advance free economy, it will not contribute to progress."

A similar argument was put forth by CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 21 November), which charged that "the conservatives intend to apply the brake to progressive reform in Japan. This may be a logical move, but the underlying reason is a struggle for political power. Why do not the Liberals ask for the people's opinion before they attempt to organize a new 'democratic' group?" In contrast, a minority belief -- advanced by TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 20 November) -- indicated that the nation should prepare for the formation of a new administration. Contending that the Liberal announcement should be welcomed, the editorial claimed that "by this method alone can the sphere of influence of Japan's political parties be made clear." Discussing the proposal on a local level, SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 20 November) said that the platforms of Liberals and Democrats in Saitama Prefecture were "quite vague," and questioned whether the parties could reach an agreement which would win wide support.

A discussion of recent Cabinet changes and the split in the Democratic Party led SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 18 November) to conclude that these developments might indicate the need for a new party, but SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 19 November) feared that organizing methods would bring on a repetition of present conditions.

LABOR

Demands that the Government forestall labor unrest by establishing a wage system based on full distribution of reasonably priced commodities dominated continuing prefectural reaction to the Central Labor Committee's mediation of the communication workers' dispute. The CLC recommendation that the Government pay a subsidy amounting to 2.8 of monthly salaries -- in lieu of a general wage increase -- was interpreted by all commenting journals as a new threat to the survival of the 1,800-yen monthly wage base, and writers were unreservedly critical of the Government's alleged failure to keep wages down by full distribution of commodities. Generally, writers considered the subsidies in relationship to the nation's overall economy, rather than as a labor development. For this reason, apparently, comment did not emphasize the validity or invalidity of Government workers' claims

Typical of prefectural comment was a YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 16 November) editorial which predicted that the "current financial situation and management of enterprise" would make implementation of the subsidies plan impossible. The mediation plan itself, the newspaper continued, admitted the Government's failure to establish economic order and stamp out the blackmarket. CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 17 November) cautioned the Government to consider wage demands as outgrowths of economic stress rather than as conventional union gestures without foundation. If the CLC plan is not accompanied by tighter control of commodity distribution, the plan will be "meaningless," the journal said.

Predicting that the ten billion yen estimated total of subsidies under the CLC plan would aggravate inflation, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 18 November) doubted the Government's ability to finance the subsidies by heavy taxation of blackmarketeers. The writer joined AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 21 November) in demanding a thorough "administrative retrenchment," or economy in personnel expenditure, as a possible source of revenue. This journal also expressed fears that an upward revision of the 1,800-yen wage base might result in the resignation of the Katayama Cabinet. Workers, therefore, were counselled to sympathize with the Government's difficulties and cooperate wherever possible, in view of the Cabinet's friendly attitude toward labor.

SHIN HOKAI (Sapporo, 16 November) defended the Government stand in estimating wages in relationship to economic capacity as opposed to reproduction capacity, and insisted that wages must be considered as part of the overall economy. Wage increases, the editorial stated, are now beyond the reach of the wage issue itself.

AGRICULTURE

Editorials summoning farmers to acquaint themselves with their responsibilities in connection with the projected Agricultural Cooperative Associations -- lest the organizations fall under the sway of "reactionary" landholders and old-line political bosses -- highlighted agrarian comment. Reported indifference to the aims of the new associations, believed to stem from distrust of former organizations, was noted in three journals, all of which joined in demands for farm education on the benefits accruable under the Agricultural Cooperative Association Law.

Defining the organization' aim as the "expulsion of landlords' control over farmers" and elimination of bureaucratic control of rural areas, CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 20 November) pointed out that only the resolution of the farmers will decide whether the cooperatives become "merely repainted associations of the past." The journal noted that land reform was effectively diminishing landlord influence, but it added that "some medium landowners with reactionary ideas (continue to) obstruct democratization of farm villages."

Similar views were expressed by SHIMOTSUKE SHIMBUN (Utsunomiya, 19 November), which stated that "farmers must know first that these are democratic organizations of their own making." Wide discussion of the composition of the new associations would insure a democratic, farmer-controlled group, the writer said. Rural leaders were held primarily responsible for popularizing the program in an editorial in SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 21 November), which hoped that these leaders would "sweep away the idea that the new organizations" are, like former groups, "characterized by high-handed control."

ECONOMY

The electric power shortage was the subject of several prefectural editorials which expressed the belief that effective Governmental action could alleviate the problem. Asserting that the average monthly electricity supply from January to August of this year was 2,600,000,000 kilowatts, SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 17 November) claimed that the figure represented 90 percent of the average monthly supply for the comparable period in 1943 -- when the pre-war peak was exceeded three times -- and deplored that "industrial productivity this year has been no more than 41 percent of the monthly average of the 1930-34 period." The writer maintained that there is "no absolute shortage" and felt that "the free market of electric tools and machines has afforded a medium for illegal utilization of electric current."

Similarly, YAMAGATA SHIMBUN (Yamagata, 17 November) reported that 43 percent of the electric supply of the Tagawa Power Company had been "stolen." Illegal use of heaters "must not be overlooked," the journal warned. "The consumers themselves are responsible for the electricity shortage." IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 16 November) also interpreted the main cause of the power scarcity to be increased domestic utilization, especially for heaters. A long-range program was advocated, to include "repairing and improving hydro-electric plants, increased coal production, and the development of natural resources."

The Government policy of furnishing electricity to industrial establishments during the day, and to homes at night, was endorsed in a TOKAI YUKAN SHIMBUN editorial (Gifu, 15 November). Because the "meter system" was held to be impracticable, the writer urged upon every family self-imposed restrictions motivated by " a spirit of joint responsibility."

Tax Dodging

Delayed tax payments were said to be threatening the national fiscal system. In a representative commentary, TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 19 November) claimed that "a concrete plan for levying heavy duty upon blackmarket profits has not yet been found." Blackmarket eradication and the detection of "tax dodgers" could not be achieved, the paper concluded, "without public cooperation with measures taken by the Government."

KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 19 November) asserted that "less than 20 percent of accrued taxes have been collected, and, consequently, State finance is on the brink of collapse." The majority of tax officials were said to be inexperienced and incompetent, and the writer declared that "the problem which must be settled before attempts are made to fill vacancies," is to improve the caliber of presently employeed officials."

Small Business

The reconstruction of the Japanese economy "must be carried out by small and medium-sized enterprises, not by monopolies," according to YUKAN KYOTO (Kyoto, 18 November). Because of the acute need for capital and raw materials, Administrative aid to small business was believed indispensable. Meanwhile, BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 15 November) emphasized the point that "the true development of small business cannot be expected before the entire dissolution of bureaucratic politics."

EDUCATION

Expenses for education -- particularly with regard to the 6:3:3 system -- continued to receive prominent attention during mid-November. Misgivings over the "inadequate" national budget appropriations were voiced by CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 14 November), while TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 11 November) maintained that educational expenses had never been sufficient in Japan, and warned against a decrease in proposed appropriations at this time. Inasmuch as a large part of the funds for enforcing the 6:3:3 system must now come from prefectural budgets, TOKAI SHIMBUN felt that "we must reach the conclusion . . . that we must be satisfied with actual school buildings and equipment as they are."

While admitting that there seems to be no other method for securing additional funds than that of soliciting contributions, WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 17 November) protested against the "extortion" of contributions from students. The journal reported that, when their families were unable to make expected donations, some students had been forced to leave school -- apparently as a result of social pressure. In one case a student was said to have stolen in order to obtain the necessary amount. On the other hand, BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 17 November) saw the need for funds as being so acute that it urged that families "save one meal out of three" in order to contribute to school funds.

The shortage of qualified teachers was deplored by OSAKA NICHI-NICHI (Osaka, 8 November), while KUMAMOTO NICHINICHI (Kumamoto, 12 November) criticized teachers for failing to use the opportunities offered by the present period of transition. A few days later (17 November) the same journal urged clearer understanding of the teachers' movement. Proposed dissolution of the prefectural branch of the nation-wide Teachers' Association, and its amalgamation with the local branch of the Japan Teachers' Union was hailed by SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 12 November). It will be necessary for the union to undergo changes and reforms, the journal said, and a plea was voiced for greater attention to "spiritual issues."

Student employment was discussed by OITA GODO (Oita, 8 November) and SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 10 November), with the latter voicing an emphatic objection to forced work by students on school farms and paddy fields. "If this work is required," the journal observed "let the students study in the schools, and make use of the unemployed now crowding the streets." Recognizing the growing need for students to work in order to continue their education, the Oita paper maintained that "it must be an urgent necessity of the times to offer students better conditions for study," and proposed an increase in night-lectures to permit daytime employment.

COAL

The unsettled history of the State Coal Control Bill -- characterized by "disillusioning" compromises, political upheaval, and alleged behind-the-scenes intrigue -- was deplored in prefectural editorials, and few writers believed that the final draft would contribute toward increased production. Especially significant, in most opinions, were Socialist concessions to conservative elements which, writers charged, had cost the former heavily in public support of future socialization projects.

Democratic-sponsored amendments -- accepted by the Socialists despite "encouragement" from the workers -- were responsible for loss of worker participation in mines management, according to CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 18 November), while MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 18 November) said that no coal control measure would be accepted by the workers if it did not "express the latter's wishes." Both journals felt that the Socialists had been bested in political battle by the Democrats. In view of political strife and economic shortages, CHUBU NIPPON SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 19 November) predicted that the 1947 goal of 30,000,000 metric tons of coal "will end in a mere dream."

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 21 November 1947 No. 191

ECONOMY

Possible collapse of the 1,800-yen monthly wage ceiling under pressure of rising living costs was widely foreseen in early November, as prefectural press attention remained focused on threats to the official price system and the over-all emergency economic program. Despite majority approval of the existing wage level "in principle," commentators generally warned against Government failure to relax present limitations in line with inflationary prices. Belief that revision of the salary base would mean "political failure on the part of the Katayama Cabinet" was voiced by CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 8 November), but the paper declared that "events have reached the stage where some change in the wage structure seems imperative." Similarly, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 5 November) called upon the Administration "to demonstrate by living example just how the people can live within the monthly limit of 1,800 yen.'

The charge that Cabinet leaders "are attempting to restore financial balance through the sacrifice of the masses" was advanced by NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 6 November), which asserted that the official wage structure "already shows signs of collapse" and urged attention to increased food rations and lower commodity prices rather than to "the mere increase of nominal wages." The writer agreed with SHINANO NICHINICHI (Ueda, 3 November) that counter-inflation measures should emphasize greater control over distribution, the limitation of currency issue and avoidance of higher indirect taxes.

Wage Revision Urged

Description of Government wage-price policies as "contradictory and incomprehensible" was contained within a SHIKOKU KEIZAI editorial (Takamatsu, 28 October), which asserted that "there is no sense to the official insistence on the 1,800-yen limit while spokesmen acknowledge the impossibility of balancing household budgets within the scheme." Expressing approval of Government attempts to "uphold the wage structure as a means of staving off inflation," the paper observed that, "when it becomes obvious that the people cannot live on those standards, it is more important to protect their lives than to save the face of the Economic Stabilization Board." The opinion that wages and salaries "throughout private industry" exceed the Government limit was voiced by SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 4 November) in a commentary noting that, "while basic payments may be small, salaries generally are augmented by bonuses and special allowances."

A "split" in Government economic policy, arising from the alleged conflict between official price increases and the wage stabilization program, was seen by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 4 November), which declared editorially that "the public is well acquainted not only with the fallacy of appeasing inflation through 'healthy finance' . . . but also with the contradiction of policies within the supplementary budget." In a closely similar argument, TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 4 November) maintained that the pending budget draft "clearly reveals the division among Administration agencies which threatens eventually to destroy the economic program."

POLITICS

Criticism of the Cabinet's performance in the Hirano case dominated prefectural political comment, with most writers attacking what they believed were projected manipulations of the Purge Directive for political reasons. Partisan comment on the justice or injustice of the ouster itself was almost absent. Editorials were overwhelmingly devoted to scoring the Administration's "improper; bungling policies" in dismissing the former Agriculture-Forestry Minister for "noncooperation" after publicity considering his amenability to the purge.

In this respect, KAHOKU SHIMPO (Miyagi, 7 November) stated that "the purge was a sacred duty of the people and should not be discussed by a mere spokesman" -- an apparent reference to Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishio's remarks in connection with the Hirano case. Nishio's influence in the disposal of his political foe also was deplored in KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 5 November), which considered his behavior "most childish" and the question of the purge "a form of terrorism in a time of revolution." One upshot of the case was expected to be the creation of a Hirano party, or at least a considerable strengthening of his forces within the Socialist party.

The same possibility was cited by TOKAI SHIMBUN (Aichi, 5 November), which joined SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Saitama, 5 November) in forecasting a right-wing Socialist shift toward the Democrats as a result of "sensibilities offended by the raising of the purge for political reasons." Only KUMAMOTO NICHINICHI (Kumamoto, 5 November) believed that the dismissal of Hirano would stabilize the Cabinet. However, the newspaper felt that any gain in stability would be accompanied by descending public faith in the Government.

FUEL

Stringent restrictions on the use of electricity and a continued shortage of other fuel for heat and light were seriously regarded by editorialists. Provisions establishing priority for industrial users during daylight hours and allowing domestic consumption only at night were deemed "reasonable" by HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 7 November), but at the same time the fear was expressed that, unless the system is operated justly and fairly, living hardships during the winter will prove unbearable. The people are unable to combat both cold and hunger, WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 4 November) warned in an editorial urging Government "counter-measures against winter." Commenting on ESB measures for dealing with the fuel crisis, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 30 October) noted that the "problem lies not in the program, but in whether or not the Government can translate into action what it has scrupulously and minutely planned." Cooperation in terms of economy in the use of electricity was dubbed "passive concern" by BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 29 October), which attempted to stimulate the people's "positive concern" as a prelude to attacking the problem of the fuel shortage.

CHUBU MIMPO (Nagoya, 29 October) charged those in control of the Japan Electricity Generation and Transmission Company with complicity in the present crisis. In the Kyushu area, equipment capable of generating 60 thousand kilowatts was said to be left idle and unrepaired, because it was more profitable for company owners to buy electricity at low prices from distribution concerns and sell their organization's coal on the blackmarket.

AGRICULTURE

"Agricultural cooperative unions" were endorsed by prefectural writers as a promising substitute for the "undemocratic agricultural associations." Anxiety was expressed, however, lest the new groups be "taken over by the feudal bosses" who had dominated the old associations. "Although the cooperative unions must belong to the farmers themselves," as provided under the Agricultural Cooperative Union Bill, SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 8 November) anticipated that former leaders of agricultural associations would attempt "to obtain important posts" in the cooperatives. Similarly, OITA GODO SHIMBUN

(Oita, 4 November) warned that "farming villages must be on guard (against) maneuvers by which agricultural association officers seek to gain control of cooperative unions."

Meanwhile, some journals feared that the new organizations might fall under the influence of political parties or labor partisans. SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 13 November) asserted that "the attainment of the ideals (of the agricultural cooperative unions) may not be easy, if political party leadership is accepted, or the organizations are influenced by the labor movement." KOCHI NIPPO SHIMBUN (Kochi, 30 October) specifically charged that "the All-Japan Farmers' Union and the National Farmers' Union may intend to grasp control of the leadership of the cooperative unions."

TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 20 October) was doubtful whether "agricultural cooperative associations would be formed spontaneously after the dissolution of agricultural associations," because the latter were said to be "deeply rooted in farming communities, and farmers are now indulging in a feeling of security after obtaining land for themselves." Additional difficulties were said to include an ambiguous definition of "farmers" by the Government authorities, disputes concerning the disposal of properties belonging to the agricultural associations, and "the danger of interference by bureaucrats." On the other hand, KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 29 October) anticipated problems in connection with the organizational structure of cooperative unions. The writer queried whether cooperatives should be established on a prefectural basis, or "according to the natural branches of agriculture." It was suggested that this question be decided by the members themselves, as soon as tentative arrangements were made for setting up cooperative unions.

POPULATION

Emmigration, industrialization, scientific agriculture, and birth control were suggested as partial solutions of Japan's population problem by journals which continued comment on the situation revealed by the 1 October census. A tendency to regard the dilemma (like that presented by the nation's food shortage) as one deserving the attention of the world community, when possibilities for internal solution have been exhausted, was indicated in TOKUSHIMA MINPO (Tokushima, 2 November) and HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 6 November) editorials. After advocating further industrialization as an initial point of attack, the last-named journal mentioned "an appeal to the world for rescue on the basis of human morality." Japanese must become "peaceful immigrants, loved and welcomed by the world" and give up previous ideas of "imperialism" and "temporary settlement," according to the Tokushima journal. SANGYO KEIZAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 26 October) thought immigration impossible as long as the idea of "one world" is not realized and saw little hope for its materialization.

Meanwhile, the ability of farm villages to absorb surplus population was deprecated by the TOKUSHIMA MINPO, because "there is no land to divide among newcomers," and living is so cramped and crowded that "even a trifle will cause trouble." However, further expansion of urban centers was regarded as unhealthy if without foundation in industrial enterprise, and serious study of an industrial system to "rationalize the relation between city and village" was favored over simple "redistribution of urban dwellers in farm villages." SANGYO KEIZAI SHIMBUN also thought "regulation," such as the "rational allocation of people in home industries," might afford a solution. This paper, as well as SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 26 October) and CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 23 October), noted, but did not expand upon, the possibility of limiting the population by birth control as a partial or last resort measure.

The contention that population figures have been swelled by the recording of "ghost households," invented in order to acquire additional rations, was supported in FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 1 November). Six hundred such mythical establishments were said to be registered in Fukui along, and former town and block officials were termed the chief offenders.

PRESS

Renewed demands for the abolition of gorotsuki (gangster) newspapers were made in editorials on press responsibility, and writers called for strict control of newsprint rationing and distribution on the part of the Government and "higher morality" on the part of readers. Most commentators tolerated the rash of such publications immediately after the surrender as "understandable in view of long police oppression and censorship," but, like SHIN NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 1 November), believed the time had come for "readers to adjust their tastes to fit a democratic nation." Editorials were concerned chiefly with the progress of morality within the press itself as a prerequisite to a heightening of public ideals, with CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 5 November) urging newspapermen to "consider themselves deeply in this respect."

FOREIGN

Steps to realize American aid were felt by KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 5 November) to be gaining ground in both England and France, as evidenced by recent conservative victories in local elections. Other causes for the conservative success were instanced by KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 6 November) and KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 1 November), which rejected the possibility that France in particular was heading for a Nazi or Fascist ideology, but stressed, respectively, the desire for political change resulting from difficult living conditions, and the wish to "correct the excesses" of the leftists. At the same time, Conservative Party victories in England were apparently considered by KOCHI SHIMBUN to be partly the result of Britain's "generally conservative" politics. Churchill's reported assertion that the Labor Cabinet "does not have a positive policy for the reconstruction of Great Britain" was regarded by KITA NIPPON as "seeming to have been approved" by the people.

Attempting to draw some parallel between the political situation in Japan and that in Western Europe, the Kochi paper expressed the opinion that while Japan's Socialist Cabinet may be succeeded by a Liberal Party Administration, "the crisis lies in the fact that the Liberals . . . have not attained the confidence necessary to lead Japan."

YOUTH

Causes for the reported increase in crimes among youth were considered in identical editorials in IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 4 November), SHINKAN YUKAN (Kobe, 7 November), and YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 4 November), which expressed the opinion that training of youngmen for military aims had blunted their understanding and made difficult their adjustment to the post-war economic problems and ideology. Reform of the police system alone will not eliminate such crimes, the papers observed, urging efforts to advise and assist demobilized soldiers "in adjusting their ideas of life, the world, and the State, and in leading them to fair opportunities and good jobs."

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

DEC 24 1947

PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 19 December 1947 No. 198

POLITICS

Conflict over a successor to former Agriculture-Forestry Minister Hirano aroused widespread comment in prefectural papers during the first week of December. Acknowledging that the appointment would bring protests from either the left- or right-wing groups within the Administration, commentators nevertheless urged Premier Katayama to act immediately to fill the portfolio which one journal described as the most important in the Cabinet.

Perhaps significantly, provincial editorialists did not mention the reported struggle for power in farm villages, which -- according to some Tokyo papers -- was reflected in the argument over selection of a new Minister. Instead, writers generally emphasized the possible effect of the Premier's decision upon the coalition Government.

Full-time Minister and Rice Delivery

The period since Hirano's dismissal has witnessed "great changes," according to KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 3 December), which demanded appointment of a full-time Agriculture Minister in order to encourage rice delivery. Moreover, the paper contended that the vacancy had resulted in "great losses" to farm villages. Similarly, KITA NIPPON (Toyama, 2 December) thought it was "unreasonable" for Katayama to hold the Agriculture portfolio concurrently with the Premiership, and declared that if he was unable to fill the position, the Premier should "retire." And KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 3 December), doubted whether rice delivery quotas would be met because of an appointment problem "which threatens to bring the Cabinet to collapse."

Editorials in YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 2 and 5 December) considered the controversy as evidence that the coalition was "in danger" as a result of the split within the Socialist Party. Assailing the "stubborn attitude" of Socialist leftists (who insisted that Masaru Nomizo, Japan Farmers' Union executive, be named), the commentator warned that as long as this group remained adamant, the Cabinet would be exposed to a possible crisis. However, Katayama was cautioned not to make a choice from outside his own party because it was feared that this would be construed as a sacrifice of Socialist principles. Dissension among the Socialists was also deplored by TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 5 December) and by NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 6 December).

Discussion of Democrtaic Party Split

Departure from the Democratic Party of 24 members of the "Shidehara faction" continued to draw attention from numerous papers (Prefectural Press Analysis No. 197). In the opinion of NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 1 December), the only course left for the dissidents was to join the Liberals in a "national recovery party," and HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 4 December) indicated a similar belief by claiming that conservative elements had "clarified" their attitude to the nation. The latter also discussed disputes among the Socialists, and concluded that it would be better for that group to return to "political poverty . . . and start over again."

TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 6 December) felt that if members were not going to be bound by party decisions, "there is no reason for forming parties." Asserting that it was "quite natural" for the Shidehara group to withdraw, the writer wondered why they had

joined the Democrats "when they opposed the views of the majority. Charging that the dissidents had left because they were "self-seeking," KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 3 December) contended that this was "proof of Japanese political immaturity."

LABOR

Possibility that economic pressure may compel Japanese unions to minimize strikes for the sake of national recovery was considered by two prefectural newspapers. Both writers believed that union leaders recognized the "futility" of higher wages without greater production and were studying the coordination of labor, "a vital and influential segment of Japanese industry." As stated by ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 2 December), "participation of labor in management and distribution of profits has to be considered in relation to the internal political condition (and the) people as a whole must be served first, before any individual class." In view of such conditions and obligations, the editorial concluded, "trade unions are going to revise tactics which formerly resorted simply to class struggle." Similarly, TOO NIPPO SHIMBUN (Aomori, 2 December) believed that labor realized its importance in the revival of industry. Therefore, "workers know that the maintenance and improvement of life by increasing wages cannot be achieved" without accompanying improvement in every phase of the economy.

Government, management, and workers alike were criticized by ISE SHIMBUN (Tsu, 2 December) for failure to cooperate in the rationalization of the national economy, which, in the writer's opinion, held the key to economic recovery. By "vigorously tackling this problem at once . . . sound finance and the efficient distribution of workers could be accomplished" to the immediate welfare of industry, the editorial said. KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 6 December) discounted "capitalist" charges that labor alone is responsible for lagging production. Nevertheless, the journal said that union tactics to date have been "poor enough," and urged the development of a constructive spirit and a "consciousness of duty" to attain full production efficiency. In the same vein, SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 5 December) stated that labor's tendency is to swing suddenly from "hot to cold," without developing the "just and strong attitude" essential to the union's progress.

ECONOMY

Adequate methods of taxing blackmarketeers should be formulated by the Diet and local assemblies, an editorial in YAMATA TIMES (Nara, 4 December) recommended. Workers and merchants reportedly were suffering from heavy taxation, while the Government strained under financial difficulties because it has collected only 20 percent of the revenue scheduled for the current fiscal year. "The reason for this contradiction" was said to be the laxity of tax officials in obtaining payments from blackmarket operators.

KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 3 December) asserted that unpaid national taxes amounted to more than 100,000,000,000 yen, and added to this figure a considerable sum in arrears to local governments. The writer thought that the Administration was likely to establish new levies in the preparation of next year's budget, in order to defray the current deficit. Tax payments delinquency was attributed principally to "the negligence of the new-yen class." NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 4 December) also commented on tax delinquencies, but did not ascribe responsibility to any particular group. The writer proposed a vigorous tax collection campaign to encourage all citizens to pay taxes punctually.

Capital Investment

Popular stock subscriptions were considered by SANGYO KEIZAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 2 December) to be essential for "the establishment of a democratized economy." On the other hand, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 4 December) stressed the need of foreign capital to aid Japan's industrial recovery. "Rationalization of the economy" assertedly would displace a large number of workers, who, in the

writer's opinion, could not be reabsorbed in gainful employment without the investment of funds from abroad.

SHIN HOKKAI (Sapporo, 4 December) advocated increased savings, so as to provide capital for industrial production, as well as to combat inflation. The writer declared that the national savings goal of 131,200,000,000 yen had been exceeded, and that a new goal of 170,000,000,000 yen has been set. Similarly, SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 4 December) pointed to increased savings as "one of the most effectual measures to alleviate inflation."

Blackmarket

Believing that blackmarkets were decreasing as a result of effective policing, BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 3 December) queried "why is it that economic conditions are not improving?" The editorialist suggested that this might be "because (official) prices have been raised to the level of blackmarket figures," and the Government-sponsored "free sale of tobacco" was cited to illustrate the point. Thus, the Administration's tobacco policy was charged with having the same effect on inflation as blackmarketing itself, and the Cabinet was said to be "ignoring the people's suffering."

PURGE

Demands that machinery be established to continue the elimination of ultra-rightists -- "the biggest obstacle" to democratization -- and renewed warnings that the voting public is responsible for the evolution of a modern polity in Japan dominated prefectural editorials on the purge. Almost identical in approach, writers pointed out that physical removals of "extremists" would be meaningless unless accompanied by a corresponding growth of political consciousness among the "masses."

Fears that extremists "pretending to be democrats . . . will gather to conspire with their friends" were expressed by IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 2 December) in an editorial reminder that "we ourselves must elect the new leaders." This was echoed by YUKAN MIE (Yokkaichi, 3 December) and SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 3 December), which warned that the "old gang was too strong to be stamped out in a day." Unless democratic thought is developed, the writers asserted, "the important posts again will be occupied" by the old-line politicians and democratization will have miscarried.

FOOD

Satisfaction with the program of rice delivery was expressed by YAMANASHI JIJI (Kofu, 4 December) and FUKUI SHIMBUN (Fukui, 3 December), with the former attributing improvement in Yamanashi Prefecture to good administration and increased awareness among farmers of the "national importance" of meeting the delivery quotas. The delay of farmers in delivering miscellaneous foodstuffs in Hokkaido caused SHIN HOKKAI to urge the prefectural government to take steps to remedy the situation as soon as possible. One-hundred percent delivery of rice quotas, even if insufficient to meet the national food requirements will, the journal suggested, permit Japan to request importation of foreign foods to supplement home production next spring.

Control Over Perishable Foods

The emergency measures to increase rationing controls on perishable foodstuffs (announced at the prefectural governors' conference on 27 November) were regarded with varying degrees of approval by prefectural journals. Most critical of those surveyed was BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 2 December), which held that the "policy of control has been control for the sake of public officials," and intimated some doubt that this could be remedied. The difficulty of imposing the regulations effectively also was emphasized by HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 2 December) and CHUBU KEIZAI (Nagoya, 3 December). Free sale of perishable goods is unthinkable until the food situation in general becomes less stringent, the Sapporo paper maintained, while CHUBU KEIZAI felt that

no regulations could have any significant effect so long as "the materialization of real wages is not realized," and government officials remain lethargic. While recognizing past failures in control of fresh foods, HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 2 December) felt that if the present measures are successful, "most of the nation will for the first time place some trust in the Government's control economy."

WELFARE

Contributions to the Community Chest Fund were solicited in several prefectural editorials. IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 5 December) acknowledged that "it may be difficult for the masses of people who are preoccupied with daily problems to render aid to others," but warned that many of the needy may not survive the winter without relief from private charitable organizations. The writer claimed that the Government could not afford to expand its relief program, and average citizens -- making contributions of 10 yen -- were expected to be the main source of funds.

MIYAKO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 3 December) also emphasized the public's responsibility to the needy. The editorial declared that "success will be attained only when the Community Chest drive is encouraged among the people as their own, and when it is strongly supported by them all." Similarly, SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 3 December) interpreted "the Community Chest movement as testifying the extent to which the Japanese people have been democratized since the Surrender."

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 19 November 1947 No. 190

ECONOMY

Government efforts to maintain existing wage-price levels in the face of worsening inflation and continuing commodity shortages drew broad criticism in early November, as prefectural writers singled out the Economic Stabilization Board for major editorial attack and expressed pessimism over the prospects of early economic recovery. Representative of the general viewpoint was the comment of HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 2 November) that the Katayama Cabinet "is faced with a crisis in economic policy . . . having destroyed its own wage scale and broken its promise to balance household budgets." The paper scored attempts to "hold wages and prices at a fixed point" while black market levels continue to rise, and called upon the Administration to effect "a radical change of policy" in the direction of greater economic controls.

A corollary appeal for drastic reform of Government bureaucracy to supplement the proposed "rationalization" of private industry was advanced by SHIN NIPPON (Kyoto, 3 November), which charged that the current inflation "is Government-manufactured and a direct result of the expanded budget." Similarly, KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 31 October) demanded re-examination of the emergency economic program and voiced fear that higher supplementary budget expenditures together with the increased rice price would lead to final breakdown of the "precarious" 1,800-yen salary ceiling.

Mass Unemployment Feared

Apprehension that the number of jobless "soon may exceed the total of gainfully employed workers" was expressed in a SHIN IWATE editorial (Morioka, 3 November), which asserted that "the problem has grown more and more severe . . . until virtually all major industries except coal have ceased hiring employees." Attributing the development to diminishing material reserves, the establishment of strict controls over commodity distribution, and new official loan restrictions, the journal urged a broad program of Government planning to shift workers within industry and absorb the jobless through public works construction. An IBARAGI SHIMBUN editorial (Mito, 5 November) warned that "the Cabinet's so-called 'life of endurance' has reached the point of limitations," and charged that current stabilization and reconstruction measures "only aggravate the difficulties of living and lose the cooperation of the nation's workers."

Sympathy with the official wage-price program was voiced by a KYUSHU TIMES writer (2 November), who observed that "the austerity life must be carried out at all costs . . . as the single ray of hope for the future and an essential condition of reconstruction." The commentator nevertheless considered higher wage demands "reasonable" and appeared to favor relaxation of existing salary restrictions. Meanwhile, the belief of several papers that Government controls should be relaxed over production and distribution of key materials was reflected in a TOKAI YUKAN editorial, which called upon the Administration to abandon major industrial controls in the interest of "the revival of free competition."

POLITICS

Socialists were pictured in an increasingly weakened and disorganized position, as the prefectural press -- considering pre-dismissal aspects of the Hirano case -- reported rising disappointment as a result of the Socialist policy compromise with conservative Cabinet elements. The editorial tone, though stern, remained basically sympathetic, with most papers calling for Socialist rededication rather than for a new administration. Believing that political aims alone were motivating the then-rumored Hirano ouster, commentators scored the former Agriculture-Forestry Minister's feud with Cabinet Secretary Nishio as typifying Cabinet discord. Nevertheless, in view of remaining economic problems, few newspapers felt that solution of the case would restore public faith in the Socialists.

Virtually all consideration of the Hirano issue resolved into criticism of the Socialists. SHINANO NICHINICHI (Nagano, 5 November), YAMANASHI JIJI (Yamanashi, 4 November), and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 5 November) respectively assailed the Party as "an ex-convict," "in political retreat," and "probably degenerating." CHIBA SHIMBUN (Chiba, 4 November) found political processes in the Hirano affair "incomprehensible and inviting public unpopularity." On the other hand, GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 2 November) and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Toyama, 2 November) believed that the Socialists would benefit by removing Hirano.

The earlier issue of Hirano's amenability to purge moved HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 4 November) and ASAHI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 5 November) to deplore the seeming use of the Purge Directive for political purposes.

Elsewhere, prefectural opinion was divided on a two-party system. CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 1 November) approved provided the parties had "the people's welfare, not politics as their aim." KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 29 October) felt that two-party systems were the property of "politically developed countries such as America and Great Britain . . . and the boss influence makes its transplantation to Japan an empty dream." TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 25 October), in opposing the Political Party Bill restricting "splinter groups," stated that a two-party system might frustrate the development of "a true people's party."

LABOR

Several prefectural papers commented on the recent "mass absenteeism" of Government postal employees, all agreeing that it was "a wild-cat strike" rather than a mere spontaneous act as claimed by the union. Although an appreciation of the workers' demands was generally expressed, editorial opinion unanimously scored the National Communication Workers' Union for the tactics of its members. For example, HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 29 October) asserted, "It is true that members of the NCWU, like other workers, are living an extremely hard life. * * * But we may think rightly that their group absenteeism is partly intended to coerce the Government."

SHIN OSAKA (Osaka, 3 November) also was critical of the postal employees, charging that their movement was tantamount to "sabotage." Union leaders were cautioned to be "very prudent ... not to take any action that will lose the confidence of the general public."

The immaturity of Japan's labor movement, some editorialists believed, was reflected in the postal workers' action. CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 8 November) hailed the rapid post-war organization of labor unions as "one of the major accomplishments of democratized Japan," but warned that "if labor's power is used in a way which leads to the detriment of the nation's economy, the workers themselves will be the victims." Similarly, DAILY TOHOKU (Hachinoe, 3 November) maintained that the labor movement should strive for Japan's reconstruction rather than for its own selfish interests.

CHUBU NIPPON SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 2 November) denounced the communication workers for bolting a mediation hearing sponsored by the Central Labor Committee. Such action indicated "insufficient growth of the union movement," the writer asserted. On the other hand, HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 29 October) emphasized the Government's responsibility for the establishment of satisfactory working conditions, and urged that "the issue be settled as soon as possible" without mutual recrimination.

Upward revision of the 1,800-yen wage standard was editorially advocated by some provincial journals. In a typical editorial, IBARAGI SHIMBUN (Mito, 2 November) claimed that current labor unrest was due to the Government's failure to check inflation, and that "it is simply impossible to live on the 1,800-yen wage standard." Similarly, KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 4 November) believed that "wild-cat disputes" would not occur, if wages were readjusted.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

As rice harvesting progressed and local delivery allocations were being decided, prefectural journals reiterated exhortations on farmers' responsibilities in connection with the nation's food problem. HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 29 October), TOKAI SHIMBUN (Okazaki, 4 November), SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 1 November), MINAMI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Kagoshima, 27 October, 30 October), and YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 21 October) attempted to stimulate the "will to delivery" by discussing the basic nature of the food shortage and the stringent living forced upon urban consumers. Only "full understanding" will make complete delivery possible, the writers agreed.

Lack of dependable technical information was deplored by TOKUSHIMA SHIMBUN (Tokushima, 25 October), in connection with settlement of a local dispute over crop yield, and the journal asked that competent personnel be attached to the prefectural office. KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 30 October) voiced sundry complaints on the operation of the link system for distribution of fertilizer, most of which allegedly reaches the blackmarket instead of the cultivator for whom it is intended.

In two editorials, AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita, 22 October, 28 October) commented on enthusiasm for improving deliveries in that area. In one village, where it previously had been necessary to resort to forcible measures, the women were reported to have successfully organized a drive for early fulfillment of the current assignment. In another, a "delivery consummation union" was able to achieve like results. Fairness in individual allocations and prompt distribution of promised production goods and daily necessities were said to be the main problems remaining. According to OITA GODO (Oita, 3 November), which emphasized the importance of the same two factors, committees, such as those created in Kyushu to promote delivery, also should concentrate on acquisition and distribution of agricultural necessities. Both WAKAYAMA SHIMBUN (Wakayama, 1 November) and EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 30 October) stressed the necessity for absolutely impartial apportionment among the people of prefectural assignments, said to be comparatively heavy because of insect, drought, and flood damage in these areas. The first-named journal questioned the likelihood of fair judgment on the part of prefectural and village food adjustment committees, which were said to be unscrupulous and subject to bribes and intimidation.

CONSTITUTION

Greater effort on the part of the Japanese people to understand and effectively use their new Constitution was advocated by prefectural papers on the anniversary of the promulgation. Laws implementing the Constitution also must be understood, KAHOKU SHIMPO (Sendai, 6 November) noted, and with OITA GODO (Oita, 2 November) favored activities by such groups as the Constitution Popularization Association in order to encourage general understanding.

Instances of lack of awareness of the significance of the Constitution were cited by several journals, while MAINICHI (Osaka, 4 November) felt that the splits in political parties, and the stormy progress of debates in the Diet proved that "the people have not yet had sufficient training in use of the right to vote." Similarly, SHIMANE SHIMBUN (Matsue, 3 November) remarked that the people "must be educated in order to achieve the same modern character as the Constitution." Lack of popular support, OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 3 November) observed, might have results similar to those which followed the promulgation of the Weimar Constitution which offered theoretical democracy but failed because of lack of popular acceptance. Realization of the new Constitution in Japan was felt by SANGYO KEIZAI (Osaka, 3 November) to be instrumental in "restoring national dignity and achieving racial independence," and the journal advocated renewal "of our resolution for economic rehabilitation."

The position of the Emperor under the new constitution was reviewed by NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 5 November) and IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 3 November), with the former expressing the view that changes in the Emperor's status under the new system were "a true indication of the bloodless revolution." Both journals voiced approval of the elimination of lese majeste provisions from the Criminal Code, in connection with the implementation of the new charter.

EDUCATION

Reduction in Education Ministry funds for implementing the 6:3:3 system was viewed with concern by prefectural papers. Administration authorities were charged by OITA GODO (Oita, 1 November) with failing to understand the significance of changes in the educational system, while YAMANASHI NICHINICHI (Kofu, 4 November) similarly accused the Government of lack of interest. In the opinion of YUKAN FUKUNICHI (Fukuoka, 2 November), the question of the budget has gone beyond the matter of a "technical negotiation," and has become a "political issue."

Regarding the increased financial burden on prefectural governments (as a result of the cut in the national budget), MAINICHI (Osaka, 5 November) insisted that local finances were in an even worse condition than national, and joined SAGA SHIMBUN in advising redonsideration of the appropriations. Educators -- especially teachers' unions -- were urged by OITA GODO to "rouse themselves and initiate a campaign of education for the people" in an effort to correct the indifference with which educational reform reportedly was viewed.

Other problems such as the education of children for the society in which they live, part-time higher schools, and the establishment of standards for educational institutions also drew the attention of provincial journals. Proposed night schools for the instruction of youth in the agricultural communities as well as in the cities were considered by HYUGA NICHINICHI (Miyazaki, 1 November) and CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 19 October), and the actual establishment of such schools as soon as possible was urged by KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 29 October).

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Civil Information and Education Section
Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 13 November 1947 No. 189

POLITICS

Initial prefectural attention to the dismissal of Agriculture-Forestry Minister Hirano was characterized by doubt that the public had been fully informed of the reasons for the Premier's action. Several papers demanded that the Government clarify the matter, while others -- although acknowledging dislike for Hirano and his policies -- nonetheless deplored what was widely interpreted as a "political plot."

Representative Comment

Editorials in three Nagoya papers were representative of the general reaction. "We fail to understand the reasons for the sudden dismissal," CHUBU KEIZAI (6 November) said. "If disunity within the Cabinet has resulted from the economic crisis, the solution will not be found by removing Hirano." To the usually pro-Administration NAGOYA TIMES (4 November), it was disappointing that such an event had occurred under a Socialist-led regime. "It would be understandable," the writer added, "if these 'behind-the-scenes' maneuvers had taken place when one of the other parties was in power." Emphasizing the fear that Hirano's removal would delay rice delivery, CHUBU NIPPON (5 November) contended that Katayama had been imprudent if he had not considered the need for uninterrupted leadership. "The people do not understand why the Agriculture-Forestry Minister was discharged at this time," the editorialist maintained. "We would like the Government to make public the real reason for the Hirano affair."

OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 5 November) considered it "outrageous" that the purge issue had been introduced into the case when Hirano was finally dismissed for being "uncooperative." The writer doubted whether "the people will be fully satisfied with the Premier's explanation, especially when they recall the case from the very beginning. * * * We earnestly hope for the early settlement of the struggle within the Socialist Party; otherwise the party will not be able to overcome the present grave situation confronting the nation." Belief that Hirano's expulsion would relieve the Government of an "explosive" official was expressed by HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 1 November) and EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 4 November). Hirano's recent statements and activities have caused "disturbances," the former noted, while the latter charged that Hirano "cannot hold his tongue."

Comment on Administration

Other comment on the Administration and the Socialist Party emphasized the difficulty of maintaining the 1,800-yen wage level, and, consequently, of retaining labor's support. In this regard, HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 22 October) observed differences of opinion among some Ministers, and urged that "struggles for power and prejudices" be dismissed in the interest of a unified view of the problem. A similar appeal for unity was made by SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Urawa, 2 November), which thought that farmers' unions -- particularly the Hirano-led National Farmers' Union -- should reaffirm their support of the Government. Strong criticism of the Socialist Party appeared in CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 27 October), which charged the party with "complete responsibility" for the alleged failure of important measures to pass the Diet.

REPATRIATION

Prefectural press reaction to the SCAP plan for speedier repatriation from Soviet-controlled areas seemed noticeably partisan in comparison with metropolitan response, and comment in five journals included criticism of the Japanese Government, the Soviet Union, and economic aspects of the issue.

The most outspoken critic of the USSR was NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 31 October) which -- in denying Soviet charges that the US and Great Britain were using repatriation to "excite Japan's anti-Russian feeling" -- stated: "We have heard many of the reasons for the delay from the repatriates themselves." On the other hand, NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 1 November) blamed the Japanese Government, the Diet, and local authorities for taking a "lukewarm attitude" and reported that "none of the repatriates from the Soviet territory have uttered critical comment, and all are in good health."

The Niigata newspaper joined GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 1 November) in questioning whether the Administration was making sufficient efforts to provide a livelihood for repatriates, with the latter journal urging that repatriation be coordinated with a strong economic policy and not viewed only from a sentimental standpoint.

MAINICHI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 2 November) hoped that repatriation would not be considered in connection with political problems, while CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 31 October) stating that "nothing would please the Japanese people more than increased Soviet understanding in this matter," solicited Communist Party cooperation in expressing the people's wishes.

FOOD

Final decision on the 1947-48 producer price of rice prompted more or less standardized comment, but even reserved approval was rare. Most journals emphasized the severe economic plight of the nation and the necessity for both farm and urban populations to share equally in the "burden of defeat," and discussion of the mechanics of price fixing was limited to a minimum. Distribution of production goods -- farm implements, clothing, etc. -- at official prices was thought to be of paramount inportance in ensuring the farmers' consent to a price reportedly below production cost, and the Government was charged with full responsibility for fulfilling its promises in this connection.

KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 23 October) described the price as "moderate" and TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 23 October) thought it "reasonable" in view of the discrepancy between the low price advocated by the ESB and the high price demanded by the Agriculture-Forestry Ministry. "Although general consumers may consider the price high, farmers are doubtful whether it is possible to cultivate at this price," reported ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 23 October). BOCHO SHIMBUN (Yamaguchi, 24 October) regretted the stand reportedly taken by the prefectural agricultural research institute during the negotiations (setting 2,400 yen per koku as the absolute minimum at which rice would be delivered) and felt that excitement caused by this and other specific demands had rendered the present situation "awkward."

Inequalities Noted

Difficulties presented by relatively unprofitable rice growing and the special problems of farmers in single crop areas were considered by YUKAN NIIGATA (Niigata, 4 November), GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 23 October), and MAINICHI (Osaka, 24 October). The last-named journal deplored the lack of exceptional rules to deal with single crop areas, while YUKAN NIIGATA estimated that twice as much profit might be obtained from the production of other crops than rice, and felt that the sacrifice of farmers required to grow the staple should be recognized. "Land measurement and the delivery quota," rather than price, are serious problems for the 86 percent of the nation's farmers engaged in rice production, the writer

said. The discrepancy between incomes realized by farmers with orchard and forest land at their disposal and those solely dependent upon cereal production was thought significant by GODO SHIMBUN, and the Government was urged to take this factor into consideration in determining quotas.

Delivery Incentives

The prime requisite for delivery was said to be prompt distribution of daily necessities to farmers at official prices. Under present conditions of blackmarket buying, small-scale farmers in the Chugoku district would find it impossible to get farming implements and fertilizer if they remained content with an income derived from selling rice at the official price, CHIGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 24 October) maintained. However, if the new price of rice were to set the standard for other commodities, no difficulty was anticipated. In a similar vein, SHINKO YUKAN (Kobe, 23 October), OSAKA NICHINICHI (Osaka, 23 October), and HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 23 October) stressed the importance of ensuring comparatively low prices for general commodities as the determining factor in the appropriateness of the rice price. "Firm execution of public promises" was demanded by HOKKAI NICHINICHI, and "fairness and impartiality" in allotment of delivery quotas by OSAKA NICHINICHI. Free sale of surplus rice after delivery was advocated by IWATE SHIMPO (Morioka, 28 October) as an effective measure for placing additional rice on the market.

Consumer Price

Severe criticism of the Government's "too prudent deliberation" which delayed fixing of the consumer price of rice until ten days after settlement of the producer price was registered by ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Kanazawa, 2 November). General consumers now pay more than half their income for staples, the writer said, and the raise in the rice price was expected to result in "severe privation."

ECONOMY

The supplementary budget drew editorial comment from a large number of prefectural papers, virtually all of which criticized certain aspects of the new fiscal plan. The most common objections related to the tax provisions and the increased price of tobacco. In a typical editorial, SAGA SHIMBUN (Saga, 20 October) complained that the tax levies would be too great for people to bear. "It is very doubtful," the journal opined, "whether the people whose wage level has been pegged at 27 times the pre-war figures can bear a tax burden --- of 151 times that prior to the war." Opposition to the increased cigarette prices was expressed in OSAKA SHIMBUN (Osaka, 28 October), which claimed that "tobacco is second to staple food in its importance to the people," and therefore the price boosts were unjust and economically unwise.

The prefectural press generally maintained that the new budget did not represent "sound finance," and it was held to be only "paper balancing" of revenue and expenditures. MINAMI NIPPON (Kagoshima, 26 October) pointed out that taxes constituted "the greater part of revenue," and that because of tax evasion by blackmarketeers adequate revenue was not attainable. Several recommendations were made in the interest of a "sound budget." For example, GIFU TIMES (Gifu, 22 October) urged "administrative rationalization," and NIIGATA NIPPO (Niigata, 29 October) proposed blackmarket eradication. Budget curtailment was suggested by SHIZUOKA SHIMBUN (28 October), which charged that "this year's revenue has not amounted to one-third of what was expected." On the other hand, HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 30 October) considered "that it is most important to strengthen the authority of tax collectors."

The new budget presages "the inevitable collapse of the 1,800-yen wage standard," several journals maintained. "Judging from the spiraling increase in commodity prices in addition to higher tobacco prices," EHIME SHIMBUN (Matsuyama, 28 October) considered that "it seems quite impossible to maintain the present wage standard." The Cabinet was charged with failure "to carry out sound financial measures," and it was predicted that "the Government would not be able to give up the 1,800-yen wage policy." On the other hand, some papers, such as HOKKAI TIMES (Sapporo, 31 October) felt that the Government could maintain the present wage base, providing the blackmarket was eradicated.

LABOR

Absenteeism by the All-Japan Government Communication Workers' Union --- reportedly dictated by the need for daytime blackmarket purchases, but assailed by critics as a form of dispute -- drew support and opposition from commenting journals. The arguments of sympathetic newspapers usually resolved into a criticism of alleged Government failure to coordinate the 1,800-yen wage base with commodity costs, while foes charged union leaders with placing labor aims before the national welfare.

The Government warning that absent workers would be docked in pay moved GODO SHIMBUN (Okayama, 25 October) to demand that Cabinet attention be concentrated "not on threats," but on evolving a workable price control policy coordinated with the wage base. This characterized an ISHIKAWA SHIMBUN (Ishikawa, 1 November) editorial which viewed the aim of striking or absenting workers as a price cutdown instead of an upward wage revision.

Contrasting editorials in three newspapers --- ISE SHIMBUN (Mie, 31 October), SAITAMA SHIMBUN (Saitama, 25 October), and KAHOKU SHIMPO (Miyagi, 25 October) --- deplored absenteeism for having "the same effect as a dispute." The Government warning of pay-docks was justified, the newspapers agreed, not only as a "reciprocal precaution against union threats" but also as a means of heightening the workers' sense of responsibility to the public. Only MAINICHI (Osaka, 25 October) believed that conduct of both Government and labor was equally reproachable.

PEACE TREATY

The recent visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang received considerable comment in the prefectural press, which joined metropolitan journals (Press Analysis No. 616) in discussing the Minister's visit in connection with possibilities for an early peace. The common view regarding China's position was expressed by CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 3 November) which observed that "accurate understanding and cooperation between China and Japan are the bases of peace and reconstruction in East Asia," while the Chinese-operated KOKUSAI SHIMBUN (Osaka, 26 October) expressed the wish that in the future China "will play a great role in influencing Soviet policy (toward the peace treaty) which has been opposed to the proposals of the US." Hopes for Japan were sought in the Chinese Minister's statements, with KOCHI SHIMBUN (Kochi, 24 October) voicing the opinion that Wang's attitude appeared "more conciliatory" than formerly, and observing that "since China assumes such a compromising attitude she will in the end agree with the US."

The part Japan will play in the preliminary peace conference was discussed by several journals. Typical was CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 25 October), which reminded readers that "we possess no right whatsoever of having any say in setting the date, or in the formula for the conference," but added that "every opportunity to express our interests and desires as much as possible must be used."

A peace-conference cabinet was considered by NIPPONKAI SHIMBUN (Tottori, 31 October) and HOKKOKU MAINICHI (Kanazawa, 27 October), with the latter asserting that in the event the Katayama Cabinet fails to deal successfully with the economic crisis, "preparations for the coming peace treaty will not be perfect. That is why we have insisted on general elections in preparation for the peace treaty."

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GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
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Analysis and Research Division

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PREFECTURAL PRESS ANALYSIS, 29 October 1947 No. 185

ECONOMY

Government efforts to maintain the 1,800 yen basic wage scale in the face of rising prices and aggravated inflation attracted broad criticism in mid-October, as commodity shortages and production lags turned prefectural attention to the immediate problems of daily livelihood. Representative of majority opinion was the charge of OITA GODO (Oita, 16 October) that "the Cabinet itself is split over the wage issue . . . and only the ESB still insists on maintenance of the present scale." Declaring that "living conditions are more and more strained under the pressure of soaring prices," the paper considered that recent wage demands of the Government workers "illustrate the impossibility of survival under the 1,800 yen base." Similarly, SHIZUOKA SHIMBUN (Shizuoka, 17 October) asserted that ESB Director Wada "must have something wrong with his brain" in advocating retention of the official ceiling, and alleged that "most experts ignored his explanations as irresponsible nonsense."

Official assurances that family budgets would be "out of the red" by November were scored by HAKODATE SHIMBUN (Hakodate, 17 October) and HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 16 October) in editorials denouncing emergency economic measures of the Katayama Cabinet as "demonstrated failures." Recalling that "the promised balance was to be gained through establishment of the new price system, together with the 1,800 yen salary limit and the circulation of rationed goods," the latter journal maintained that "none of these measures has been realized . . . and the official policies have proved unworkable." Widespread rejection of the salary standard was anticipated as a result of the precedent set by one factory, which reportedly had raised wages to 4,600 yen, and the writer predicted that commodity prices "will increase rapidly with the disbursement of the supplementary budget."

Effects of Rice Price

Apprehension that the expected Government increase of the rice price "will cause new threats to the wage program and impose heavy burdens on the people" was voiced editorially by AKITA SAKIGAKE (Akita) on 17 and 19 October. But the journal expressed preference for "retention of the official 1,800 yen scale rather than abandonment of the standard as a concession to the new price." Meanwhile, TOYAMA SHIMBUN (Takaoka, 15 October) called for drastic changes in the emergency economic program -- "which has served only to drive the common people into vicious inflation" -- and the conservative NARA NICHINICHI (Nara, 16 October) condemned Cabinet economic measures as "generally poor . . . and ineffective." NANSHIN NICHINICHI (Suwa, 16 October) agreed with the majority of commentators that the Government wage standard "is on the brink of catastrophe," but warned that "it would be unreasonable and anti-social to take such independent action as would mean neglect of the State and the national economy."

GOVERNMENT

The anticipated extension of the Diet session prompted many prefectural papers to study the legislative record thus far and to appraise the new parliamentary system. Although most commentators were "disappointed," a few defended the legislators and indicated that the Government was to blame for delay in the pas-

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sage of important bills. There also were references to inadequate physical facilities at the Diet and asserted lack of public interest in proceedings.

Diet Committee System Attacked

Observing that the present is the first session since enforcement of the new Constitution and that many far-reaching policy decisions must be deliberated, ASAHI (Osaka, 16 October) thought that a third extension was justified, but felt that there had been unnecessary delays because of the standing committee system. There were two principal complaints: that some committees were "flooded" with bills while others had few or none to consider, and that the routing of measures to committees precluded general understanding of their purpose and content. However, the writer praised the new parliamentary procedure as "much better than the old one." Absence of popular criticism was cited by TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 19 October) as a primary reason for a disappointing Diet record, but the editorialist emphasized that such criticism should be watched or "outside powers will attempt to coerce the Diet members."

To CHUKYO SHIMBUN (Nagoya, 17 October), it was "strange that Diet critics had not considered the "out-of-date structure, poor equipment, and unskilled employees -- all of which try the patience of the members. * * * The old Diet should be buried as a nightmare and the new one should be modernized by adopting American efficiency principles." Asserting that "no legislation deserving the title of a bill has been passed," HOKKAI NICHINICHI (Asahigawa, 17 October) blamed "inefficient administration on the part of the Cabinet."

Political Aspects

Political aspects of the present session were discussed by HOKKAI TIMES (Otaru, 17 October) and KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 17 October). The first-named journal was impressed by the absence of clear-cut lines between progressive and conservative forces as compared with the previous session, and believed that the character of the Socialist representatives was the explanation. "While the Liberal and Democratic Parties have become younger due to the purge of many older members, most of the Socialists are of the old type who are ignorant even of the meaning of socialism," the editorialist declared. This situation was said to underline the confusion in post-war Japanese politics. In a charge that Diet has failed to meet the nation's expectations, the Kyoto journal claimed that young members of the Liberal Party were the only legislative group with "spirit."

EDUCATION

Decentralization of educational authority, the need for cooperation between school and home, and the position of teachers' organizations provided major editorial interest in mid-October. Concerning decentralization, HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN (Sapporo, 17 October) reported that the University of Hokkaido had investigated new university systems and had come to the conclusion that "decentralization of Education Ministry authority is essential." Teachers were condemned for alleged indifference to the value of teachers' unions by HOKURIKU YUKAN (Toyama, 12 October), although the journal admitted that the proportion of those replying "inadequately" to a questionnaire was small (2.2 and 4.2 percent). "Some educators accept democratization of Japan as a kind of punishment inflicted on the vanquished," the writer asserted, "and therefore think it natural during the term of punishment, but unnecessary after such a term."

Inactivity of the Japan Teachers' Union was criticized by CHUBU MINPO (Nagoya, 15 October), which asserted that teachers "are keeping quiet because those in education are blackmarketing and begging." The Nagoya paper recommended greater efforts on

the part of the union toward reform of educational administration, possible courses of study, and the liberation of teachers from the "old educational ideology" of Japan. Only one journal, OITA GODO (Oita, 15 October) reported on the dissolution of the Teachers' Association and its replacement by the Japan Teachers' Union (Prefectural Press Analysis 180). Noting that dissolution of branches of the association "is taking place all over Japan at present," the journal pointed out that masters of middle and higher technical schools are not included in the union. This was held to be reasonable "if the union is to be concerned solely with economic struggle," but the journal felt that, "if cultural activities are an integral part of its program, such exclusion is undesirable."

LAND REFORM

Mounting difficulties in the land reform program -- arising from the purchase of land charged to residents as opposed to absentee landowners -- received detailed consideration in the prefectural press. Charging that some farmland committees "are incapable and subject to pressure from landowners" who allegedly desire to hold more than the legal limit of acreage, several journals declared that tenant farmers lack both the knowledge and initiative necessary to apply for remedial measures.

Success of Reform Illusory

"No sign of farmland reform" was seen in Tabemura (Mitogun), by TOO NIPPO (Aomori, 2 October), which charged that the village committee had failed to carry out even the purchase of land owned by absentees, while a landowners' organization was held to be insisting that "farmland reform is against the constitution." NISHI NIPPON SHIMBUN (Fukuoka, 2 October) claimed that, in the Kyushu area, only 1,594 cases of a reported 33,500 disputes over illegal retention of land were treated by prefectural authorities from January to the end of May. Pointing out a recent increase in disputes, and judging the tenant farmers "ignorant of their own rights," the journal asked the Government to re-examine the justice of previous transfers and retentions before continuing with the "Third Reform." A similar request was voiced by KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 14 October), which considered the first and second purchase programs to have been carried forward smoothly, but anticipated new purchase problems and thought that existing uncertainties regarding illegal purchase should be cleared up first.

Farmland Committees

The role of the local farmland committees was considered by KYUSHU TIMES (Fukuoka, 4 October) and CHIBA SHIMBUN (Chiba, 7 October), with the former journal questioning the justice of decisions dispensed in Fukuoka, while the latter paper urged "careful vigilance" against the interference of "private considerations" and "bribes." "Non-cultivating landowners" were charged with making personal contracts with tenants and exerting money as a condition of sale, and it was declared that "feudalistic relations" between tenant and former owner were being retained by "all kinds of contrivances."

LABOR

Comment on the labor scene centered around calls for a unified front of agricultural workers, criticized feudalistic remnants in Japan's labor and industrial relations, and registered disapproval of reportedly lagging public interest in labor developments.

Farm union rifts splitting the agricultural workers' front into sharp rivals was said by TOKAI YUKAN (Gifu, 15 October) to have created a "chaotic" condition, and the writer importuned the Socialists and Communists in the Japan Farmers' Union and the

National Farmers' Union to mitigate their ideological strife for the industrial well-being of the nation. "The simple principle that a farmers' union is a people's union designed to protect farmers' interests has been forgotten," the editorial said, and warned that Japan "would suffer another affliction in the near future" if politicians won control of agriculture unions.

SANYO CHOHO (Okayama, 13 October), in reviewing the ideological and political conflicts which split the agricultural workers' front, accredited the Japan Farmers' Union with contributing to the democratization of farm villages and the emancipation of the farmer, but refrained from extending editorial support to either of the contending factions. Instead, the paper appealed to farmers to "unite under the most promising leader after close study" and admonished union members to abandon the "blind obedience" which characterized such groups in the past.

Similarly, KYOTO SHIMBUN (Kyoto, 12 October) warned farmers not to allow present favorable circumstances to weaken their "political consciousness" and asked them to "harmonize their interests with the nation and its industries." The writer charged that in some cases, farmers were serving their own interests at the expense of community progress.

A study of the labor union movement appearing in SHIKOKU SHIMBUN (Takamatsu, 15 October) concluded that unions in Japan -- erupting out of a "feudalistic society and after atrocious oppression" -- were functioning without the social advantages of maturely formed movements in Europe. For this reason, the writer said, "quality has not developed in proportion to quantity." The same theme dominated an editorial in SHINANO MAINICHI (Nagano, 15 October), which criticized "union-busting" tactics allegedly used by plant heads and advised company officials to adopt a long-range plan by encouraging "sound unions which would benefit the nation rather than temporizing policies adding to unrest and industrial decline."

A warning that rank-and-file indifference to union leaders' activities might corrupt unions into "autocracies" or "subsidized organs of management" was sounded in CHUGOKU SHIMBUN (Hiroshima, 17 October). Frank conferences between labor and management were urged as a means of forestalling unrest and industrial decline. A more emphatic stand was taken by the NAGOYA TIMES (Nagoya, 19 October) in an editorial suggesting rationalization or "some form of State control" to end the capital-labor "crisis" and avoid the deterioration of affected industries.

Expulsion of five Communists from a company union assertedly dominated by plant officials in influential union posts moved the KOBE SHIMBUN (Kobe, 12 October) to write that -- although "Communists tend to assume a destructive and despotic attitude -- such closed shop unions ruled by employer-officials are apt to become Fascist."

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