

GREAT DECISIONS

Topic No. 6

What Can the U.S. Do About Japan's Role in Asia?

THE PROBLEM

A squadron of American warships under Commodore Perry opened Japan's doors to the rest of the world in 1853. Nearly 100 years later, in September, 1945, another American fleet sailed into Tokyo bay to begin the most unusual occupation of a defeated country in history.

Perry provided the spark that remade feudal Japan into one of the six most highly industrialized nations in the world. The American occupation tried to remake militaristic Japan into a peaceful, Western-type democracy.

Yet the occupation was only a few years old when the U. S., under pressure of the cold war, helped Japan rearm, contrary to her "new constitution . . . this time in defense against a common threat, communism."

Now, experts say that new communist tactics present more dangerous challenges to the U.S., and to Japan, with a neutralized Asia slipping closer to communism.

If this is the cold war program for 1956, what does it mean to the U.S.? Where does Japan fit into this picture and what kind of partnership are the U.S. and Japan building? What responsibilities has the U.S. assumed for this former enemy . . . and are we right or wrong in doing so?

How does the U.S. see Japan's role in Asia . . . and what is Japan doing about it? What is happening inside Japan? What happened to the industries that supported a 14-year war with China and a four-year war with the U.S.? Is Japan leaning toward the West, toward neutralism or communism?

IS THERE A NEW JAPAN?

At the height of power in 1942, Japan proper had about 70,000,000 population and a conquered empire of 3,000,000 square miles to sustain her economy and feed her people.

In 1945 Japan was stripped down to her four home islands an area of 142,000 square miles. Industries were shattered by war and wear; raw materials and markets cut off.

Repatriated Japanese citizens, numbering 7,000,000, added to the crowded home population. A climbing birthrate and dropping death rate added another 1,000,000 citizens annually . . . until the population reached 89,425,000 on Jan. 1, 1956.

What problems did this shattered empire face . . . how did it survive? How has Japan fed her people, kept her industries going? What does the future hold for the only modern, industrialized nation in Asia?

IS JAPAN MAKING AN ECONOMIC COMEBACK?

Like Britain, industrial Japan must buy food and raw materials . . . and sell manufactured goods in order to survive. Twenty per cent of Japan's food is imported, plus nearly 90 per cent of the raw materials that feed her industry. Her only food surplus is fish, which is exported all over the world.

Japanese agriculture has long been close to the saturation

point. Only 16 per cent of the country is suitable for farming. Over half of that is devoted to rice and Japan must import 10 per cent of the rice she consumes.

Military conquest was one way to balance the deficits, which include 100 per cent of the raw cotton and large percentages of Wool, petroleum, iron ore, coking coal, wheat and barley.

Since the war, through peaceful methods, Japan has built an industrial, world-trading economy that rivals West Germany's. The major pre-war market for silk was cut into by synthetic fabrics, so Japan switched to cotton.

In 1955, 40 per cent of Japan's total exports were cotton textiles and during the same year, she became the world's third largest exporter of merchant ships.

The U.S. buys 17 per cent of all Japan's exports and sells Japan 35 per cent of all her imports. This deficit of nearly \$600,000,000 a year in trade with the U.S. throws an added burden on Japanese finance. She must earn the dollars in favorable trade with other parts of the world. U.S. dollars are scarce.

Loss of empire and cold war strategy have changed Japan's foreign trade pattern drastically. China took 45 per cent of Japan's exports in prewar days, and furnished a quarter of her imports. Now, with a Western embargo on Red China trade, those figures have dropped to 25 per cent of exports and 1.5 per cent of imports.

South East Asia is a logical target for Japanese development, but these countries have been slow to welcome Japanese capital and economic cooperation.

In addition, they are short on capital, low on purchasing power, deeply involved in tasks of developing their own economies. However, Japan built her exports to this area from a prewar 16 per cent to 33 per cent in 1955 export total.

Solving these problems of integrating Japan into world trade and commerce has been hard for government and private capital alike. Japan got a temporary transfusion from the U.S. during the Korean war from military purchases, but the \$80,000,000 monthly price the U.S. paid to maintain bases during the height of the war has dropped to \$16,000,000.

To meet the crisis five things had to be done—step up exports, decrease domestic consumption, modernize the industrial plant, pare down manufacturing costs and curb inflation. By 1955 headway had been made on all points. Exports were doubled; Japan's modernized textile plants are among the best and most efficient in the world; production was stepped up and the workers got real wage boosts; the yen appreciated stable at 360 to \$1.

The national budget was balanced. For the first time exports exceeded imports in dollar value.

IS JAPAN DEMOCRATIC?

The new, occupation-inspired constitution proclaims "that sov-

ereignty resides in the people." The once-divine emperor has become a symbol only, with no powers and only ceremonial duties.

Among reforms initiated are a Western-type "bill of rights," abolition of the peerage and secret police; academic freedom for teachers; women suffrage; abolishment of conscription; and renouncement of war "forever," with "land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, never to be maintained."

A two-house legislature was set up with executive powers in the prime minister elected by the people. Each city, town and village has its elected assembly.

One of the most striking reforms is the establishment of an independent judiciary, headed by a supreme court with authority to rule on the constitutionality of laws, as in the U.S. The rights of labor to organize are protected by the constitution, and about 6,000,000 Japanese are members of unions.

WHAT IS JAPAN'S ROLE IN ASIA?

Remembering Japan's wartime "co-prosperity" enforced at gunpoint, Asia has been slow to cooperate with a new Japanese co-prosperity program. During 1955, however, a number of war claims against Japan, and in several cases private Japanese capital investments as well as easy payments were involved.

In the Philippines' settlement, capital investments were to be made in major Philippine mining, agricultural and industrial companies. With India, construction and operation of a glass factory was arranged, with 51 per cent Japanese owned. An Indo-Japanese fishing company was established and technical assistance was offered to Indian industries.

Similar agreements were made with Ceylon. Japan also invested cash and equipment in Latin America.

WHAT IS JAPAN'S ROLE IN U.S. STRATEGY?

Intelligence reports reveal that Russia is staging a steady military, air and naval buildup in the Siberian coastal areas. Together with forces of Red China and North Korea these forces far outnumber Western defenses in the Pacific.

What is the balance of military power in the Far East? What part does the U.S. expect Japan to play in Western strategy?

It is estimated that the Communists have a total of 4,000,000 troops, and the Western allies, including four U.S. divisions and those of Japan, South Korea and Nationalist China, total 1,500,000 troops.

Communist air power is estimated at 7,000 combat jet aircraft and the Western allies 2,500. In naval strength, the Russian submarines are known to be in the Pacific and 30 new warships have reached Pacific bases by the Arctic route. The allies have the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Taiwan Straits, plus reserve Pacific Fleet bases in Hawaii and on the Pacific coast. It may be presumed that a large part of this country's 200 submarines are operating in the Pacific.

WHERE IS JAPAN GOING IN 1956?

The burden of economic comeback has rested on the Japanese

people—businessmen, manufacturers and farmers in partnership with a pro-U.S. government and limited U.S. aid. The old monopolies with their authoritarian management were more profitable to operate and slowly, with the end of the occupation, the old combines have come back.

Although not holding companies, the new zaibatsu are monopolies. Two handle 20 per cent of all Japan's trade in 1956, and Japan's 15 biggest companies now handle 60 per cent of all trade.

Such monopolies may threaten free enterprise but it apparently has speeded economic recovery.

JAPAN'S ROLE IN ASIA

What opportunities and responsibilities does industrialization offer Japan in Asia? Is Japan's economic expansion into South East Asia a help or a hindrance to the underdeveloped countries of that area?

Russia, China and other communist countries are offering loans and technical assistance to Asian neutrals. What effect might Japan have, through investments and technical cooperation, on communist penetration in Asia?

Red China is also industrializing rapidly, with Russian aid. Should the U.S. consider backing Japan in the same way? To what extent would an economically strong Japan, dominating Asian trade, serve U.S. interests? Or would it threaten them?

IS JAPAN'S PROBLEM A U.S. PROBLEM?

Is a democratic Japan an asset to the U.S.? If so, why? Do you think Japan is on the road to democracy? In terms of the cold war, what kind of asset is Japan to the U.S.? Is the U.S. justified in expecting the Japanese to amend the anti-war clause in their constitution? Would a neutral Japan be a serious liability to the U.S.? What can—or should—the U.S. do about Japan's problem?

BACKGROUND TO CRISIS

What the U.S. does about Japan in 1956 will depend on many factors . . . what the U.S. would like in the Far East . . . what Russia and Red China are doing in the Far East . . . what Japan wants and needs. The following headline events of the past year tell something of the present far east situation. What effect should these events have on U.S. policy?

Jan. 18, 1955—Japan's Foreign Minister Shigemitsu declared "The fundamental aim of Japan's foreign policy is to help advance the cause for peace and progress of East Asia and thereby contribute toward the enhancement of the general welfare of mankind."

Feb. 28, 1955—General elections throughout Japan gave the new Democratic party of Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama a plurality of 185 seats in the 467-seat lower house of the Diet. The Democrats favor strong cooperation with the U.S. but an independent foreign policy.

Mar. 13, 1955—Harold Stassen, U.S. Foreign Operations administration chief, urged Japanese industry to play a leading role in the economic development of the Asian region.

Mar. 19, 1955—Ichiro Hatoyama, reelected prime minister, said that improved trade relations with China and other communist nations will not weaken

Japan's policy of cooperation with the United States and other free nations. He had indicated that he favors improved trade and travel relations with the communist bloc.

Mar. 24, 1955—The U.S. may be asked to return Okinawa, a major strategic air base, and the Bonin islands, both wrestled from Japan during World War II. Prime Minister Hatoyama told the Japanese Diet he favors negotiations with the U.S. on this.

May 4, 1955—Communist Chinese representatives and private Japanese interests conferring at Tokyo signed an agreement providing for \$184,000,000 in two-way trade this year.

June 13, 1955—Japan reached a one-year agreement with communist China on fishing rights. Japan suffers from restrictions imposed by Russia, South Korea, Canada, Australia and the U.S., as well as China.

June 14, 1955—After two weeks of negotiation in London on a treaty to end the technical state of war between the two countries, Russia presented the Japanese negotiator with terms which would, in effect, neutralize Japan in the East-West cold war.

June 15, 1955—Agreement was reached between Japan and the Philippines on the question of war reparations. The original Philippine demand for \$8,000,000,000 has been scaled down to \$550,000,000 in indemnities and \$250,000,000 in investments and development loans.

Aug. 2, 1955—The Japanese Diet adjourned after a stormy closing session, without amending the antiwar clause in the constitution or taking any action toward rearmament.

Aug. 11, 1955—Japan was admitted to the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, with the approval of 30 of the 34 member nations.

Aug. 16, 1955—Japan submitted a counterproposal to the Russian delegation on a proposed peace settlement between the two countries. She requests the return to Japan of southern Sakhalin, Kurile and other Russian occupied islands and the return of 10,000 Japanese prisoners of war.

Aug. 16, 1955—Communist China's Premier Chou En-lai told visiting Japanese newsmen that the price of normal relations between the two countries is Japan's severance of all relations with the Nationalist Chinese.

Aug. 31, 1955—Foreign Minister Shigemitsu of Japan and U.S. Secretary of State Dulles concluded three days of talks on problems of mutual interest, including Japan's need for more extensive trade in Asia, the pro-

Sunday, April 29, 1956

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—FIVE

gressive withdrawal of American military forces and a six-year rearmament program.

Sept. 10, 1955—U.S. tariffs on a variety of inexpensive Japanese imports are reduced.

Sept. 23, 1955—Japan reached agreement with Red China to buy 400,000 tons of Chinese coal.

Nov. 15, 1955—A two-party system went into effect for the first time in Japan's history with the merger of the Democrat and Liberal parties. Right and left-wing socialist parties merged a month ago into the Socialist party.

Nov. 22, 1955—In response to protest from the American textile industry, the Japanese ministry of international trade announced an embargo on the export of cotton goods to the U.S. pending regulatory measures.

Dec. 14, 1955—In a final vote on the admission of new members to the UN, the nationalist Chinese delegate vetoed Russian-sponsored Outer Mongolia and Russia countered by vetoing Japan.

Jan. 1, 1956—With the announcement in Tokyo that Japan has declined to continue trade negotiations with communist North Korea, the South Korean government lifted its embargo on Japanese goods.

WHAT CHOICES HAVE WE IN 1956?

Does the U.S. want an economically strong Japan? Should we help Japan strengthen her commerce and trade in South East Asia? What about our other allies—should we urge them to accept stiff Japanese competition in Asian markets? Are we willing to see Japan compete with U.S. industry? Would trade with the communist bloc be a threat to the U.S.? What should we do about tariffs on Japanese products?

Does the U.S. want a militarily strong Japan? How important is Japan as a military ally? Do we want a major military build up there? Or a moderate rearmament program for home defense only? What about Japanese socialist opposition to rearmament? What are the dangers of a revival of militarism in Japan? Would the U.S. be as well off if we pulled our bases out of Japan and let them worry about their own defense?

Is a neutral Japan a possibility? The Liberal Democrats believe in cooperation with the U.S. but favor an independent foreign policy. The Socialists favor taking no sides. What are the possibilities of a neutral Japan, trading with both sides, taking part in no military pacts on either side? How might it af-

fect Asia's future? What can the U.S. do to keep Japan from becoming neutral?

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

What the U.S. decides to do about Japan in 1956 may affect our relations with all of Asia . . . may determine the outcome of the cold war in Asia.

Individual opinion counts in forming the U.S. foreign policy. Your decisions, which will be forwarded to the U.S. State Department and to our Congressional representatives, should be mailed to Don Hansen, chairman of the Great Decision committee, Franklin building, Medford. Ballots included in the Great Decision fact sheets, or letters, may be sent.

The material above is a condensation of the fact sheets which form the basis for Great Decisions study and discussion groups.

Septic Tank Pumps Must Be Licensed

Septic tank pumps must be licensed and bonded before pumping will be legal, Bob Hart, county sanitarian, announced today.

Before a license can be issued the pump must first be bonded, he said. Licenses can be obtained from the state board of health.

Largest mosses in the southern U. S. may reach four feet or more in length.

The spectacled bear found in South America has a habit of building "nests" of sticks in tall trees.

Gheysen Starts As County Jailer Here

Robert Gheysen, who has been a member of the Medford police force for about three years, Saturday took over duties as Jackson county jailer.

Gheysen replaces Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Janzen, who have resigned as jailer and matron.

The Janzens were honored at a farewell party Saturday morning by sheriff's office personnel. Coffee and cake were served and the honored guests were presented a merchandise gift certificate.

The former jailer and matron plan a brief vacation trip to Los Angeles, then will return to their home in Central Point.

Night Time Is Most Dangerous Driving Time

Salem—(U.P.)—The state traffic safety division said Saturday the most dangerous time to drive in Oregon is between midnight and 8 a.m. when one out of every 87 traffic accident produces at least one death.

The high ratio of fatal crashes during hours of relatively light traffic was blamed on too much speed, tired drivers and drinking drivers.

The spectacled bear found in South America has a habit of building "nests" of sticks in tall trees.

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