

# Question of Alliance Between Japan And U. S. Is Raised

## Ashland Author Credits Success To Persistence, Talent, Belief

By FAITH McCULLOUGH  
Mail Tribune Correspondent

Ashland - It was Wednesday, the day after the Saturday Evening Post had appeared on the nation's newsstands, that we spent an hour in the book-lined living room of Ashland's author Verne Athanas, hoping to discover some secret formula for his remarkable batting average - 19 fiction hits with this top weekly in less than nine weeks!

The creator of "Big Elk" and dozens of popular predecessors holds no illusions about his craft and modestly credits his success to "equal parts of persistence, talent, and belief in one's self."

It was in 1948 while working in Peck's Book Store (now The Mart) that Athanas succumbed to the writing urge. He set himself a daily goal of 1,000 words, and soon was submitting short stories to a wide field of magazines from "pulp" to "slicks," on the theory that the more sent out the greater the chances.

Rejection slips came but so did checks. One story made the rounds for 10 turn-downs by the "pulp" and on its 11th trip was accepted by Colliers, Argosy, Country Gentleman and the Post were but a few of the magazines on Athanas' list.

First acceptance came from Country Gentleman for a tale that has since been incorporated in a college English textbook as one of four short stories.

Athanas' first Post fiction hit was "Charge of the Jungle Battalion," a war-time adventure which he said had been



W. VERNE ATHANAS  
Discusses Writing Success

can only write of the things he knows, adding "I am a Westerner. I could never write of suburbia or metropolitan life because I am unacquainted with them."

On the other hand he has no wish to be typed for Westerners only and therefore has strayed occasionally into the field of romance. He is contemptuous of sensationalism and declares that "if I don't feel a story I can't write it. I have never been a tongue-in-cheek writer and would not insult serious readers with that sort of fiction."

Although most of Athanas' stories have a definite appeal to masculine readers his language is light on profanity beyond an occasional damn or hell. They are replete with action and suspense and alive with vigorous verbs.

"There is no substitute for work," declares the author, "and no short cut to success. To be a good writer one must be an omnivorous reader and a lover of words and their usage."

Training in the fundamentals of grammar, familiarity with semantics, and acquaintance with the best in literature should be a part of every child's education, he believes. Remedial English for college freshmen shows a woeful lack of high school preparation, according to the author.

Verne Athanas and his wife, Alice Spencer, were classmates, graduating in 1938 from Ashland High school and marrying the same year. Their family includes two married sons, Michael and David, who both live in Ashland, and a recent addition, a very special granddaughter.

Work in the Weyerhaeuser forests, life in the mountains of Oregon, a lively interest in pioneer history, and a flair for words combined to direct Athanas toward the writing field. Latent ambition had been stirred by several of his high school teachers.

Hunting and fishing; leadership of the Ashland Junior Gun club, chairmanship of the Western Writers of America, lure the author away from his secluded study and into fields which furnish fresh grist for eventual production.

While "Big Elk" is being read this week by a majority of the Post's estimated 21 million readers its author is already deep in other adventures with a half dozen stories "on to boil."

"There are no trade secrets and no magic tools," cautioned the successful story spinner, adding "And no substitute for hard work."

## Two Factors Will Enter Into Relations in 1961, Writer Says

(Editor's note: The following dispatch is the fourth of eight being published in connection with the "Great Decisions" program of the non-profit, non-partisan Foreign Policy Association. This dispatch is related to the fourth discussion topic: "Japan—Future of An Asian Alliance—Partnership or Competition Ahead?")

By LEROY HANSEN  
United Press International

Tokyo - (UPI) - Japan has embarked on 1961 hopeful and confident of further strengthening its already close ties with the United States.

But while the two nations seem certain to retain their international partnership, Japan undoubtedly will become a strong competitor to the United States in the quest for world markets.

Two new factors could possibly enter into U.S. - Japan relations in 1961, however.

One is the question of Communist China.

Premier Hayato Ikeda's conservative Liberal-Democratic party has been coming under increasing pressure to relax its stiff attitude toward the Red mainland.

Japan has no diplomatic relations with Red China and is not likely to initiate them until the Peiping regime is admitted to the United Nations.

Trade is another matter. Despite cries from the Socialist and Communist parties and from the 3.5 million member Sohyo Labor Union Confederation, Ikeda is not likely to relax his stand. At least not this year.

Trade is another matter, however, and Japanese merchants eye the Communist mainland with yearning. Up to 1958, there was growing trade between Japan and Red China, but the Reds broke off trade relations when a youth pulled down a Chinese Communist flag from a stamp exhibition in southern Japan.

In recent months, there has been a gradual increase in trade between the two nations on a private basis. "This is likely to continue."

Here again, Ikeda is under pressure to sign a formal government-to-government trade agreement, but he is resisting it.

Japan's attitude toward Communist China brings up the second point which could possibly affect U.S.-Japan relations in 1961.

The government has been accused many times of not having an independent foreign policy of its own. One critic even termed Japan a "lap dog," following at the heels of the United States, afraid to make a decision of its own.

Orphans of Asia

Wrote one conservative critic: "The fact is that in international diplomacy, as in private life, Japanese are often so afraid of offending someone that they please no one. It is this indecisiveness and apparent shiftiness which tends to make other nations suspicious of Japanese motives and which in turn gives Japan the feeling of being an orphan."

Some Japanese do consider themselves to be "the orphans of Asia."

Ethnically and geographically, Japan belongs to the Asian bloc of nations. But economically Japan is the greatest industrial nation in Asia, and, as such, more often finds that its best interests lie with the Western powers. The result is a split personality.

Consequently, there may be increasing cries in 1961 urging Japan to stand on its own two feet and develop an independent foreign policy and not merely follow the United States.

No Anti-Americanism

Many influential Japanese are becoming more nationalistic and believe their nation should attain a more important position in the international community.

But this increasing nationalism cannot be interpreted as increasing anti-Americanism.

Even at the height of the Tokyo demonstrations last June, there was little or no anti-Americanism as such. The demonstrations were aimed primarily at toppling the government of Premier Nobusuke Kishi and of halting ratification of the U.S.-Japan security treaty. Cancellation of President Eisenhower's visit was a side effect.

However, all will not be

sweetness and light for the United States in Japan in 1961.

The Socialists, Communists and Sohyo are certain to raise again the issue of the U.S.-Japan security treaty, now in effect. The ultra-left Zengakuren students are certain to stage demonstrations, and there will be demands for withdrawal of U.S. bases from Japan.

But these will not alter basic U.S.-Japan friendship. Conceivably Premier Ikeda's cabinet could fall. But the new premier also would be a member of the ruling Liberal-Democratic party and, as such, there would be no drastic change in U.S.-Japanese relations.

Trade between the two nations which reached an all-time high in 1960, would con-

tinue to improve, although there would be some loss to Japan through America's save-the-dollar campaign.



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**STAR GAZER**  
By CLAY R. POLLAN

Your Daily Activity Guide According to the Stars. To develop message for Sunday, read words corresponding to numbers of your Zodiac birth sign.

ARIES	1-7-10-43	1 Don't	31 A	61 Today
Taurus	69-71-83-90	2 Don't	32 Fe	62 Winning
Gemini	31-48-59-65	3 Your	33 Contacts	63 Maintain
Cancer	14-18-24-29	4 Friendly	34 People	64 You
Leo	19-21-38-50	5 Charm	35 Affection	65 Matter
Virgo	3-5-8-23	6 Aspects	36 Can	66 Scene
Libra	16-22-28-45	7 Let	37 Will	67 In
Scorpio	51-67-70	8 Aids	38 Should	68 Fears
Sagittarius	20-25-33-36	9 Wear	39 May	69 Criticism
Capricorn	41-56-61	10 Comments	40 May	70 Authority
Aquarius	2-9-11-13	11 Yourself	41 Be	71 To
Pisces	63-73-80-82	12	42 Meet	72 Happy
		13 Out	43 Or	73 A
		14 Uninvited	44 Do	74 Agreeable
		15 Welcome	45 Against	75 At
		16 Don't	46 You	76 Colls
		17 Knock	47 Indicated	77 For
		18 Visitors	48 Delicate	78 Your
		19 Cheerful	49 Opposition	79 Your
		20 Valuable	50 Make	80 Steady
		21 News	51 These	81 Hope
		22 Harbor	52 Come	82 Pace
		23 You	53 Be	83 Disturb
		24 Stay	54 On	84 Serious
		25 New	55 The	85 And
		26 Desire	56 Developed	86 Today
		27 In	57 Favor	87 Door
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**Great Decisions Group Sets Meeting**

Jacksonville - The second in a series of eight topics will be discussed tomorrow evening when the second Great Decisions Group meeting will be held in the Jacksonville library between 7 and 9 p.m.

The meeting is in addition to the Great Decisions meetings held each Tuesday afternoon in the Public Library of Medford and Jackson County at 2:30 p.m.

Library officials invite anyone interested to attend these meetings and join the discussions concerning world problems.

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