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POLICE SCIENCE

THE POSTWAR JAPANESE POLICE

Harry Emerson Wildes

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Foremost among the accusations levelled against prewar Japan was that it was a police state, not only in the broad sense of being totalitarian but in the narrower meaning that policemen dominated every social, political, or economic activity. The uniformed man in the police-box under the Imperial sixteen-petalled golden chrysanthemum crest ruled the neighborhood; the Home Ministry to which he was responsible controlled the Empire's internal affairs.

To destroy police dictatorship, to free the citizen from close supervision over his daily living—so strict that it even dictated when and how he must clean his house—and to loose the stranglehold of Tokyo bureaucracy were fundamental objectives to which the Allied Occupation policy was definitely committed.¹

How well were these objectives attained? Recognizing that by orders issued in October 1945 the infamous secret police system was abolished, the iniquitous military gendarmerie destroyed, and the more obviously evil leaders purged,² and that the Home Ministry itself was wiped out in January 1947 by Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) directive,³ how far has police reform proceeded? What is the situation today? How, if at all, does Japanese resumption of independence affect the changes introduced by order of the Allied Occupation Forces? The results are both encouraging and ominous.

Police enrollments provide a case in point. While police duties have certainly diminished, numbers have increased. Instead of being less policed, Japan is being more policed, with 125,000 uniformed men

1. United States Initial Post Surrender Policy for Japan, originally issued as Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive No. 10, September 22, 1945, and revised as Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive No. 18, November 3, 1945.

2. Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers Instruction (SCAPIN) No. 93, issued October 10, 1945, and made effective by Imperial Ordinance 568, October 13, 1945. See also SCAPIN 156, October 17, 1945, effective by Imperial Ordinance 590, October 22, 1945, and extended by Imperial Ordinance 711, December 22, 1945. By SCAPIN 606 of January 16, 1946, all remaining auxiliary police organizations were abolished.

3. The Home Ministry was abolished, on instructions from the Supreme Commander, by the Ministry of Home Affairs Abolition Law, No. 238, December 26, 1947.

today as against 84,141 on December 7, 1941. In 1941 there were 872 Japanese per policeman; in 1952 there are but 672.⁴

This increase of police strength by 48 percent over a period when population rose but 20 percent may not in itself tell the full story. There are, in addition 110,000 members of a National Police Reserve (NPR), which although in reality an embryonic army, is theoretically a police force. If this NPR were to be added to the police enrollment the increase, instead of being 48 percent would be 179 percent.

Much of the increase has centered in the larger cities. Disregarding NPR, Tokyo provides one uniformed policeman for every 130 residents as compared to one per 251 in 1941. Osaka, which in 1940 had one policeman for every 493 residents now has one for every 150 people. But the increase appears in every section of Japan. Whereas in 1940, 14 prefectures had more than 1,000 persons per policeman, in 1952 there are but two such prefectures. Instead of 1,013 prewar police stations, Japan has 1,565, plus 705 NPR centers.⁵

Maj. Gen. Charles A. Willoughby, who as the SCAP chief of intelligence and head of its Public Safety Division approved, if indeed he did not initiate, the increased strength, never explained why increases were necessary. He intimated, however, that abolition of the third degree, of secret espionage agencies, and of other undesirable prewar practices had so reduced efficiency that more men were required to do the work that expert policemen had previously performed.⁶ He also declared that only 5.7 percent of the prewar personnel had been eliminated by SCAP order as practitioners of such evil methods.⁷

Yet on nothing were Willoughby and Col. Harry S. Pulliam, chief of his Public Safety Division, more insistent than in reporting that Japan has had no significant increase in crime. Whereas, they said, Japan in 1932 had shown 1,298,327 offenses against the criminal and penal codes, the 1948 record, despite a larger population, postwar dislocations, and a multiplicity of new laws, revealed only 1,586,444 such offenses.⁸ The crime rate during the period from 1945 to 1950 was, they said, below the 1933-35 average.⁹

Not all Japanese observers accept the Willoughby statistics at face value. Yoshio Izui, chief of the Criminal Department of the Tokyo

4. Statistics from data prepared by Public Safety Division, G-2.

5. Public Safety Division (PSD).

6. Based upon Check Sheet from G-2 (of which Maj. Gen. Willoughby was chief) to Public Information Office for transmissal to United Press under date of May 17, 1949.

7. PSD report, June 15, 1947.

8. G-2 Check Sheet, May 17, 1949.

9. "Organization and Activities of General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers and Far Eastern Command," Tokyo, 1950, Chart No. 28.

Procurator's Office, complains of an "amazing postwar increase in crime" which, he says, indicates that one out of every 30 Tokyo residents is a criminal.¹⁰ This is, in all probability, an overstatement, but it is true that the Willoughby statistics do not cover violations of the economic regulations, where the largest increase has occurred, nor do they include misdemeanors.

Publicists point out that regeneration has been slow in reaching the police. Shunnosuke Abe, Japan's most popular press commentator, believes that the police, far from being democratized and far from having become servants, rather than masters, of the people, have retained their old time haughtiness.¹¹ The Attorney-General's Office protested, in the summer of 1951, against police brutality.¹² Shunkichi Ueno, head of the Civil Liberties Bureau, an official agency, reported a thousand violations monthly against basic human rights, mostly by the police.¹³ The shrewdly observant English-language newspaper, *Nippon Times*, remarked that Japanese police are polite to Occupation personnel—although not to Thailanders, Filipinos, or other Orientals—but continue their prewar brusqueness in dealing with their fellow countrymen.¹⁴ Police rudeness toward women has led to official protests in the Diet.¹⁵

National Rural Police officials, disturbed by criticisms, authorized a public opinion poll on public reaction to postwar changes. The survey, compiled after questioning 2751 adults in 64 communities, showed that while 64 percent of respondents believed that police methods had been improved, 12 percent denied betterment, and 24 percent were undecided. Only 21 percent believed that policemen in 1951 merited being called "democratized," and 61 per cent desired further changes. Dissatisfaction was "particularly strong among the intelligentsia."¹⁶

Much of the failure, if indeed there is a failure, is traceable to the fact that while regulations were easy to issue, enforcement of compulsory kindness, thoughtfulness, and democratic attitudes was difficult, particularly where enthusiasm was lacking. Failure also springs from the fact that while Japanese were usually willing to cooperate they were often bewildered concerning what was actually required. Prime Minister Baron Kijuro Shidehara, an old-school liberal, confessed that

10. Chiba Shimbun, May 21, 1949.

11. Hassen-mannin magazine, Tokyo, September 1948.

12. *Nippon Times*, Tokyo, July 25, 1951.

13. *Asahi*, October 29, 1951.

14. Editorial, August 27, 1951. See also editorial September 22, 1950.

15. Toratoro Nakamura and Yoshie Oshie of the House of Representatives, Tokyo Shimbun, August 27, 1947.

16. National Public Opinion Institute, Prime Minister's Office, February 22, 1952.

after hearing MacArthur instruct him to democratize the government, he came away with only the vague idea that he must dismiss his Home Minister, draft a new Constitution, and free all those jailed for Communism. Inquiry at Major (then Brigadier) General Courtney Whitney's Government Section yielded only the explanation that police democratization was required but that the Japanese must themselves discover the means of accomplishing that goal. To draft specific requirements, Shidehara was told, would constitute an undesired intrusion by Government Section into Japan's internal affairs.¹⁷

Shidehara's guidance consisted chiefly in orders to purge his police of all militaristic and ultranationalistic elements, and of all those who had been instrumental in denying political, social, or economic equality.¹⁸ Later he was told that controls over labor must be taken away from the police.¹⁹ An effort to insure political neutrality by barring police from political activity was forbidden by Occupation order.²⁰ Provisions of the new Constitution guaranteed fundamental human rights, equality of treatment, and due process of law but failed to interpret the meaning of the guarantees.

The Occupation's concern with the maintenance of civil liberties, especially of free speech,²¹ together with the injunction that nothing be said critical of any of the Allied Powers,—including Russia²²—led some high-placed Japanese to the mistaken conclusion that certain of MacArthur's chief advisors were Communist-minded.²³ This conviction was intensified by the order to release radical leaders from their 18 year long imprisonments.²⁴ When to this was added the realization that Japanese might criticize their Emperor as harshly as they might desire but that praising him, or even defending him, was "feudal," various Communist spokesmen professed, and with impunity, that they, and they alone, were MacArthur's special pets.²⁵

17. Interview with Baron Shidehara February 1950. The reported statement is entirely in keeping with Occupation policy.

18. SCAPIN 550 (The Purge Order) January 4, 1946, reinforced the verbal instructions of October 11, 1945. SCAPIN 550 was followed by Imperial Ordinance 101, February 23, 1946.

19. Imperial Ordinance 711, December 22, 1945. See also Labor Relations Adjustment Act, Law No. 25, September 26, 1946, and Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Welfare Joint Instruction, No. 136, November 11, 1946.

20. SCAPIN 1063, July 12, 1946.

21. SCAPINS 33, September 19, 1945; No. 66, September 27, 1945; No. 93, October 21, 1945. Ministry of Home Affairs Ordinance 27, October 15, 1945.

22. Address to Japanese editors by Col. Donald Hoover, chief of censorship, Counter Intelligence Corps, September 15, 1945. SCAPIN 33, September 18, 1945.

23. This statement cannot be documented by published material but two of Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida's closest advisors, including Ichiro Hatoyama, as well as leaders of other conservative parties so expressed themselves repeatedly in interviews with the author.

24. SCAPIN 93, October 4, 1945.

25. Counter Intelligence Corps agents reported, during the April 1946 election campaign that Communist candidates repeatedly used this argument to solicit votes.

It was Japan's good fortune—and America's—that the Communists were too slothful—perhaps they were too confident—to take the initiative. A disorganized police, defenseless and leaderless, uncertain of their privileges and instructed to tolerate many things that previously had been anathema, were helpless. For months after the Occupation, any lawless element might have deposed the Emperor, taken over the Government, and functioned at will, provided only that it did not tread on Occupation toes. MacArthur was under strict orders not to interfere with any coup d'etat that did not imperil Occupation security.²⁶ Many conservative Japanese leaders were, in fact, certain that this was what MacArthur wanted; they flocked to Government Section to inquire if they actually must cooperate with Communists.²⁷ Their worry was intensified when such men as Ichiro Hatoyama and Reikichi Kita who had stood firm against the Reds were purged as dangerous reactionaries.²⁸

The Communist tide, favored by a press whose larger papers were controlled by radical influences, could not be stemmed by police activity. Even ordinary detective work was handicapped by restrictions upon interrogations or investigations unless specifically ordered by some responsible government bureau and then only upon matters especially assigned.²⁹ Happily the Communists, probably concerned that excess activity would bring the Allied Army of Occupation into play and so precipitate a third world war, failed to take advantage of their opportunity.

This was fortunate since the Japanese police had recently lost as undesirables 10,031 experienced officers, chiefly from the Police Bureau of the Home Office or from leading local administrators. Undoubtedly, many others quit voluntarily since of the 84,141 policemen on Pearl Harbor Day only 40,993 were active by the end of 1946.³⁰

Filling the vacancies was difficult. Applicants with previous police service were not encouraged, and former military personnel were barred. Low pay and loss of former privileges still further handicapped recruiting. Tokyo experimented with hiring women and, in March 1946, recruited 65 high school graduates, only half of whom remained

26. Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive No. 10, September 22, 1945, and Directive No. 18 November 8, 1945. MacArthur, however, was restrained under Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive No. 12, October 6, 1945, from taking action against the Emperor as a war criminal. This was repeated by Directive No. 40, April 24, 1946.

27. The record of interviews by the author shows that right-wing Socialist leaders were particularly worried lest they be required to join a united front with Communists.

28. SCAPIN 919, May 8, 1946.

29. Verbal instructions issued by Government Section, July 5, 1946, concerning enforcement of Imperial Ordinance 101, February 23, 1946.

30. Statistics from Public Safety Division, G-2.

as long as three years. The experiment was not particularly successful since only 99 of the 223 Japanese cities employing women allow them to make arrests. Most of the 860 female policemen are actually clerical assistants.

Not only are two-thirds of the present police relatively inexperienced; they were, for a long time, tragically defenseless. Supposedly, by a MacArthur order of January 1946,³¹ each policeman was to have a revolver and 100 rounds of ammunition, but as late as June 1948, Col. Pulliam found but 12,000 revolvers among the 125,000 officers.³² Many of these weapons, moreover, were useless, and the 12,000 pistols included 197 different models produced by 110 different manufacturers. Cartridges were so lacking that recruits were limited to three practice shots during their entire training period, with two additional refresher shots while in service.³³

Lewis J. Valentine, former commissioner of New York police, was called upon to remedy this confused and inefficient system, but after examining the situation, he spluttered angrily, "These people drive you crazy." The absurdity of sword-bearing policemen riding bicycles, the requirement of innumerable reports, the inexplicable communications system, and above all the nondescript uniforms fastened by safety pins caused him acute distress. "Even the cops on the Toonerville trolley," he said bitterly, "wouldn't be seen in some of these uniforms."³⁴

Together with Oscar Olander of the Michigan State Police and Frank Meals, each concentrating on a special field, Valentine recommended that recruits be better selected, better trained and better armed, that they be given ample opportunity for promotion, and be better cared for in clothing, food, and pensions. They suggested a strong national police force of 30,000 men, with separate police systems, totaling 95,000 more, for each city of more than 50,000 population. While theoretically decentralized, each of the 118 local forces should be coordinated through national police schools, fingerprint and records bureaus, radio services, and special investigation and detective units.³⁵

General Willoughby and Col. Pulliam forwarded this plan to the

31. SCAPIN 605, January 16, 1946.

32. Quoted in *Nippon Times* June 28, 1948. The same data had previously been reported by Public Safety Division reports.

33. International News Service dispatch in *Nippon Times* January 17, 1950. The same data had previously been reported by PSD reports.

34. Quoted in *Stars and Stripes*, Tokyo, April 1, 1946, and March 14, 1946.

35. Valentine Report, May 17, 1946; Olander Report, June 1946; Meals Report, October 1946.

Japanese Government and induced the Cabinet, February 22, 1947, to send it to MacArthur as a Japanese proposal for police reform.³⁶

Willoughby was certainly charged with responsibility for police affairs, but the proposal ran counter to Government Section's cherished ideal of a completely decentralized administration. General Whitney, therefore, sharply opposed the plan and interchanges of checksheets within the Occupation delayed reform. Argument, and often tempers, ran high, but in July Willoughby, unwilling to wait longer, circulated the proposal to all Occupation section chiefs for comment. Most of the sections concurred, some with suggestions for amendment, but Whitney flatly rejected the plan. In its stead he suggested a scheme, which he ascribed to Justice Minister Yoshio Suzuki, forbidding centralized police and recommending a separate and independent police force for each town of more than 5,000 population.³⁷

Whitney's proposal, approved by none of the Willoughby staff, led to a rebuttal in which Col. Pulliam declared that as Hammurabi, Genghis Kahn, Cesar Borgia, and Charles V had each relied upon a centralized police, Japan should do likewise.³⁸ Willoughby added, after a conference with Suzuki, that the Whitney plan carried no Japanese endorsement whatever but had been imposed upon Suzuki by Government Section. Public Safety Division reprimanded the Justice Minister for accepting it.³⁹

Prime Minister Tetsu Katayama, also rejecting the scheme proposed in Suzuki's name, consulted Public Safety Division, August 23, and, three days later, promised Willoughby to recommend the Valentine-Olander-Meals proposal to MacArthur.⁴⁰ This was embodied in an official letter from Katayama to MacArthur, September 3, 1947.

Whitney, nevertheless, continued his objections and argued so persuasively that MacArthur ordered Willoughby to accept the Whitney plans. On September 16, 1947, MacArthur wrote to Katayama to establish an independent—MacArthur's word was autonomous—police force in every community of more than 5,000 population. There was no provision for centralization or for compulsory cooperation.

This meant that instead of a single, nationally unified police with 118 local forces, Japan must create 1,605 small systems, each self-

36. K. Asakai, Central Liaison Office, forwarded the plan, in advance of receipt of the Valentine report, February 28, 1947.

37. The Provost Marshal replied, July 11, 1946, approving the plan but recommending a larger police force. Gen. William F. Marquat, chief of Economic and Scientific Section, approved it (July 30) but suggested that more democratic methods be incorporated. Whitney sent a preliminary rejection July 17 and a final rejection August 8.

38. The Pulliam Memorandum was dated August 5, 1947.

39. Data from Public Safety Division.

40. *Ibid.*

contained and each independently financed. Of these, 23 would be in greater Tokyo, plus a Metropolitan Police Board; indeed some believed that a separate force would be required for each Tokyo and Osaka ward.

MacArthur thus approved the rise in police strength to 95,000 local policemen plus a National Rural Police (NRP) of 30,000 men. The NRP was to guard the countryside, to intervene locally whenever the Prime Minister declared an emergency, and to offer as much integration as possible for fingerprint exchange, laboratory analysis, and centralized records. There was to be however no interchange of personnel and no centralized control over the fragmented forces.

Experienced Japanese legislators privately opposed the plan but dared not take an open stand against a bill proposed by General MacArthur himself. The bill therefore passed the Diet, December 17, 1947, and became the Police Law.⁴¹

The Police Law vested administrative control in a five-member National Public Safety Commission, appointed for five years by the Prime Minister with the consent of the House of Representatives, and directly responsible to him. Membership was forbidden to those with police experience, to those who, prior to Surrender, had been career public officials, or to officers of political organizations. Members could be dismissed (also by the Prime Minister with Diet consent) if they became physically or mentally incompetent, or bankrupt, if they "behaved badly," or "violated official obligations," or if they joined subversive organizations. Similar regulations applied to the 46 prefectural and 1,605 local Public Safety Commissions, each of three members appointed by the governor, mayor, or headman and approved by the appropriate legislative council.

Fears that undue powers had been given the Prime Minister were dispelled by clauses requiring him to report promptly to the Diet any action involving police matters and to obtain its consent to those actions within 20 days.

In theory, police financing was to continue from the national treasury until such time, believed to be imminent, as the prefectures or local communities could pay the bills. In practice, however, the Diet proved reluctant to vote appropriations for police systems which it could not control. Local communities, it was hoped, could defray police costs by taxing amusement enterprises, but as these were not present in rural regions nor often in the suburbs of large cities, recourse was made

41. Law No. 196, December 17, 1947, operative March 7 1948.

to income taxes, to levies upon sewing machines or gardens, or upon electric consumption.⁴²

Another solution, while socially undesirable, was also available. For many years various unofficial groups had voluntarily contributed for police expenses. Sometimes these "police supporters" or "crime prevention clubs" were innocent; more often their support covered bribery or protection of illicit interests.

Although Willoughby, briefed by the Japanese, warned against private subsidies to police, the risk was taken. Thus in 1947, the Tokyo Police Supporters Association collected 8,000,000 yen, a Crime Prevention Society gave 2,000,000 yen more, and other contributors raised enough to bring the total to at least 15,000,000 yen.⁴³ Yokohama police supporters exceeded this amount by giving 16,000,000 yen while in Osaka in 1948 a total of 67 police aid societies, all unofficial, raised 32,000,000 yen.⁴⁴ "This is an unfortunate situation," said Chief Masui of the Police Affairs Bureau "but we cannot help but rely on voluntary contributions from influential citizens."⁴⁵

Japan's highly organized gangster system thoroughly approved the private financing of the public police; it placed the fragmented, poorly equipped, and inexperienced police forces under heavy obligations. A police chief, receiving a new official residence worth, as at Sakamoto, 1,650,000 yen, as a gift from gangsters would not be likely to prosecute too vigorously a drive against his benefactors. In Chiba, Aomori, and Shiga prefectures gangster organizations, such as the postwar White Dragon Society, boasted that they had bought protection.⁴⁶

Even where the police were honest the tiny forces were inefficient; often they were at the mercy of the gangs. Villages with but a single constable were helpless; cities as large as 10,000 population, having perhaps half a dozen policemen on duty, and these unarmed, were vulnerable to armed attack. A few gangsters, wielding swords or baseball bats, warned Chief Iwasaki of the National Rural Police, could easily dominate a town.⁴⁷ Poor telephone communications, bad roads, absence of police motor equipment, and above all the lack of coordination and cooperation prevented the rush of help from neighboring communities. That the danger was real was evidenced when Konosu and Honjo

42. Osaka Mainichi, March 29, 1949; Asahi, April 19, 1949.

43. Yukun Miyako, February 27, 1948, and Chief Matsui, Tokyo Public Affairs Bureau, quoted in Yomiuri February 24, 1948.

44. Jimmin, a pro-Communist newspaper, Tokyo, April 9, 1948, and Chuka Kokusai, November 30, 1948.

45. Yukun Miyako, February 27, 1948.

46. *Ibid.* Taihei Kushida in Sekai Jeep, magazine, June 1949.

47. Quoted in Toyko Shimbun, February 23, 1949.

cities in Saitama prefecture, close to Tokyo, were captured by armed thugs, when Taira in Fukushima prefecture was taken over by Communist mobs, and when in Osaka itself the governor was held as a gangster prisoner until he yielded to their demands.⁴⁸

Though it was common knowledge that many local Public Safety Commissions were packed with gangsters, few dared to criticize.⁴⁹ Japanese, barred by directive from criticizing Occupation policies, not only kept silent but even, on occasion, praised the police for democratic attitudes; they refrained from comments on efficiency.⁵⁰

In September 1948 an expose by Shunnosuke Abe broke the ice.⁵¹ The Japanese press thereafter chorused disapproval of the decentralized police as weak, inefficient, graft-ridden, and boss-controlled; they charged that police departments, including the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Board, were riddled by jealousies and nepotism.⁵² Some observers believed that this barrage sprang from police inability to catch notorious fugitives and from failure to curb Communism; others said that it was the result of an appeal by Kudoyama town in Wakayama prefecture for permission to surrender its local police as too costly a luxury.⁵³

Whatever the cause, the criticism led the dominant Democratic-Liberal Party (now the Liberal Party) to revive the Willoughby proposals. Ministers of State Kozaemon Kimura and Senzo Higai, the latter a former Speaker who was in charge of police affairs for the Cabinet, consulted actively with police and prefectural authorities about revision of the Police Law.⁵⁴ After 31 prefectures petitioned the Diet to replace the local systems by a centralized police,⁵⁵ Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida approached MacArthur with a proposal to incorporate the local units into a national police and to create a special centralized police agency.

When news of this move leaked to the press both Frank Rizzo, deputy chief of Government Section, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaneshichi Masuda categorically denied that letters had been exchanged upon the subject, but they avoided comment upon possible verbal discussion.⁵⁶

48. For the Honjo Affair, see *Asahi*, August 6, 1948 *et seq.*

49. *Asahi*, September 9, 1948; *Yomiuri* March 11, 1949; *Toyko Shimbun*, March 7, 1949.

50. Cf. *Nippon Times*, December 3, 1945, March 7, 1950, etc. *Oriental Economist*, March 17, 1951.

51. Hassen-mannin, September 1948.

52. The strongest denunciation was by Todomo Sakurai in *Kaizo*, April 1950.

53. *Osaka Nichi Nichi*, September 9 and 16, 1948.

54. *Yomiuri*, March 10, 1949; *Mainichi*, May 17, 1949; *Nippon Times*, July 8, 1949.

55. *Mainichi*, July 26, 1951.

56. Masuda denial in *Nihon Keizai*, August 1, 1949; Rizzo denial in *Tokyo Nichi*

So confident were Japanese officials that police reform, previously blocked by Whitney, had Occupation support that Higai, following a House of Representatives special committee recommendation,⁵⁷ announced that revision was actually under way. Higai asserted that cities of less than 50,000 population would lose their independent forces, that the National Rural Police would be strengthened and that all police would be closely integrated. He claimed that these changes had been approved by H. S. Eaton, head of Willoughby's Police Branch of Public Safety Division, and that Eaton had also approved a plan to create a force of 50,000 well-armed infantrymen to guard against riots and insurrections.⁵⁸

The disclosure caused a furore, coming as it did soon after a tirade against Japanese police delivered before the Allied Council for Japan by Lt. Gen. Kuzma Derevyanko, the Soviet representative. Derevyanko had charged that Japanese police, exerting "ever increasing pressure upon democratic rights" had mobbed "progressively minded persons" under the very eyes of the Occupation officials and that nothing had been done to protect civil liberties.⁵⁹ Accusing the police of murdering a union leader—the charge was proved false—Derevyanko asserted that the Japanese were actively engaged in rebuilding an army. The Higai statements, capping the Derevyanko tirade, led the London Times to declare editorially that Japan was planning a revival of the hated prewar secret police.

This statement Higai denied, but unfortunately, he coupled his denial with a statement that "no concrete discussion had been made in the Cabinet" concerning plans to improve the police system,⁶⁰ which was undoubtedly an exaggeration. Nevertheless, the time was thought unpropitious to advance important police changes.

Had the Communists been clever they would have held their peace, but instead they chose this very time to threaten the Government with a crisis of serious proportions. With incomparably bad timing they staged riots and demonstrations which advertised the helplessness of local police to resist organized mobs and which led the Government to extend control legislation designed to curb reactionaries into wider applications.⁶¹

Nichi, August 2, 1949. The dispatch, filed by John Rich of International News Service, revealing the Yoshida move which Masuda and Rizzo thus denied, was not published by Nippon Times until August 6.

57. Tokyo Shimbun, August 11, 1949.

58. Asahi, August 31, 1949.

59. Nippon Times, June 13, 1949.

60. Nippon Times, September 9, 1949.

61. Nippon Times, August 31, 1949.

Higai, accordingly, reiterated a demand that police be reorganized and that special militarized forces be created to guard against the Reds. He was, however, the wrong man to make the suggestion. Whitney, who in 1946 had caused his dismissal as Speaker,⁶² distrusted him not only because of his supposed rightist tendencies but also because of his relationship with Eaton. Yoshida also for political reasons disapproved him. When, therefore, Higai's demand became public, Yoshida, professing himself scandalized, suggested that Higai resign.⁶³

Higai protested that he himself had said nothing to the press, that information had leaked, but not from him, of his private conference with Yoshida, and that, in fact, his proposals had actually been much milder than police changes suggested by Yoshida and other Cabinet members. He did, however, offer his resignation.⁶⁴

No doubt his protestations were well founded. No sooner had the furore subsided than MacArthur himself, on July 8, 1950, sent Yoshida a letter requiring Japan to follow the very policies for which Higai had been rebuked.

MacArthur called for a separate National Police Reserve (NPR) of 75,000 men—later increased to 110,000. This was to be kept under the Prime Minister's personal control, entirely separate from regular police and free from interference by any Public Safety Commission. It was to be armed with American weapons, including, as it later developed, mortars and machine guns, was to be clothed in American-type uniforms, and was to be drilled in army fashion. Both Occupation and Japanese officials carefully refrained, however, from referring to it as a military force, though on May 5, 1951, MacArthur told the United States Senate special investigating committee that the NPR could readily be converted into excellent ground troops.⁶⁵

This statement was officially repudiated before the House of Councilors by Attorney General Takeo Ohashi who denied any intention of making the NPR a ground force. He admitted, however, that it was "potentially feasible" to do so. In January 1952, moreover, he boasted that the NPR was better drilled and organized than the defunct Japanese army had been and said that it was "virtually the same as a military organization," the only difference being that it would never be called upon to serve overseas.⁶⁶

By the summer of 1950 it had become obvious that decentralized

62. Summation of Non-Military Activities, No. 11, August 1946, p. 27.

63. Osaka Mainichi, June 17, 1950.

64. *Ibid.*

65. United Press Dispatch May 5, 1951.

66. Nippon Times May 17, 1951 and January 10, 1952.

police forces were costly and inefficient and that, as able men had little opportunity to advance themselves in local forces, morale was ebbing. Such men as Eiji Suzuki, head of the Osaka Metropolitan Police, and Eiichi Tanaka, who held a similar position at Tokyo, resisted change as did the Local Autonomous Federation and the Local Autonomy Police Association.⁶⁷ After Whitney and MacArthur left Japan, the Diet voted, June 1951, to permit local communities, if they so desired, to merge their forces either with each other or into the National Rural Police. Within a month 101 towns voted to join the NRP, none electing to retain independence. By October 1951 a total of 1028 towns out of 1314 had held plebiscites. All but four asking the NRP to assume control. An additional 49 towns voted to merge in early 1952.⁶⁸ By the end of February 1953, less than 200 of the 1600 communities retained their local police. Thus, the Whitney proposal had been soundly repudiated.

The overwhelming vote destroyed any lingering belief that decentralization was popular. Recognition that Japanese police work involved more than routine crime prevention but must cope with major political movement, particularly with riots and perhaps civil uprisings fomented from Soviet Russia, led to the conviction that small local forces were entirely insufficient to preserve law and order.

The thesis that strong centralized forces should be restored had already been expressed, in July 1951, by an Ordinance Review Committee, established to examine the desirability of continuing Occupation-sponsored reforms. This Committee had suggested the merging of all security agencies, including local and national police, the Maritime Safety Board (Coast Guard), the Immigration Agency, and the Special Investigation Board of the Attorney-General's Office—the Japanese FBI—into a Public Safety Ministry.⁶⁹

Such an amalgamation, combining the police and the army and thus restoring a police state, met strong opposition from democratically-minded Japanese. As an alternative, the Cabinet, February 10, 1952, voted to split the forces, merging the NPR and the coast guard into a Security Force. This was to be supplemented by a 6,000 man Public Security Investigation Board to unify intelligence activity. Both Security Force and Investigation Board were to be responsible to a new Security Board directly under the Prime Minister as commander-in-chief.⁷⁰

67. Suzuki, in *Osaka Mainichi*, January 21, 1951; Tanaka in *Nippon Times*, February 17, 1951. Local Autonomous Federation and Local Autonomy Police Association in *Nippon Times*, February 19, 1951.

68. *Nippon Times*, July 23, 1951, October 20, 1951, January 7, 1952, and Feb. 9, 1953.

69. *Yomiuri*, July 23, 1951.

70. *Nippon Times*, February 13, 1952.

Instead of waiting for requests by local authority for military help, as, for instance, in the event of riots or uprisings, the Prime Minister was to have power to order military forces into action during any national emergency which he might proclaim, subject to approval by the Diet within 20 days.

The Security Board was to be headed by an Inspector-General. Originally, as suggested by Construction Minister Uichi Noda, this official was to command an integrated land and naval force, but at the advice of Minister of State Takashi Ohashi, two chiefs of staff were provided, one for ground forces and another for the coast guard.⁷¹

Despite strong protests by the *Asahi* and the *Osaka Mainichi*, Japan's major newspapers, that this plan gave excessive power to the Prime Minister—*Asahi* said it made him a dictator—the Diet, while delaying passage of formal enabling bills, endorsed the general idea by passing the 1953 budget with appropriations for the change.

Probably Communist clumsiness aided the movement toward concentration not only of military but of police authority. Disclosure of a Communist leaflet, innocuously entitled "How to Raise Flower Bulbs," setting forth a blueprint for disorder, awakened Japan to the need for controlling radicals. Director Mitsusada Yoshikawa, of the Special Investigation Bureau, reported that Communists, having abandoned plans for peaceful revolution, had instigated 38 cases of mass violation, involving 18,000 people and resulting in 1733 arrests between June 10, 1949, and February 3, 1952.⁷² His prediction that further riots were contemplated was borne out when 41 additional attacks upon police occurred in February 1952, with 91 more in March and 34 in April.

His warning was followed within ten days by Communist-led disturbances in a dozen communities. Armed with spiked clubs, handfuls of pepper and ammonia-filled bottles, rioters seriously injured 20 policemen. The occasion was a commemoration of a supposed Indian Navy mutiny against British rule, but the rioters shouted slogans accusing the United States of turning Japan into a colony.⁷³

Simultaneously, 300 Tokyo University students staged a play in memory of a Communist said to have been tortured to death by police. When, during the course of the performance, spectators discovered plainclothesmen present, they stripped the detectives of identification

71. *Nippon Times*, April 4 and 5, 1952.

72. *Nippon Times*, February 13 and 23, 1952.

73. *Nippon Times*, February 23, 1952.

marks, beat them up, and threw them out with warnings not to enter the university grounds again.⁷⁴

These demonstrations not only convinced the Government of the need for a Security Force but also furthered the amalgamation of the remaining independent local police units. Attorney General Tokutaro Kimura promptly moved in the Diet to combine all forces, thus facilitating the transfer of personnel between local units and the National Rural Police, and to place the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Board, a separate unit since 1882, under direct central administrative command.⁷⁵

While this was pending, further riots broke out. At Tokyo Teachers College students locked up a policeman whom they found copying notices from a campus bulletin board. When Eiichi Tanaka, head of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police, protested, the school authorities cited a memorandum, dated July 20, 1950, from the Ministry of Education prohibiting police from entering college grounds without permission of the institution. Soon thereafter Waseda University students, relying on the same grant of extraterritoriality, seized two intruding policemen. Police reinforcements came up in the latter case and a club-swinging brawl ensued in which 500 police battled 1,000 students with serious injuries to 25 police, 55 students, and 3 bystanders.⁷⁶

Attorney-General Kimura, admitting in the Diet that the police were at fault in entering the campuses—an admission which Tanaka repudiated—apologized in the Diet for strong-arm police methods. He added to his Diet proposal an amendment, however, that the Prime Minister be empowered to dismiss and to appoint the chiefs of metropolitan police forces—an obvious rebuke to Tanaka—thus depriving mayors and city Public Safety Commissions of privileges formerly granted to them.⁷⁷ Mainichi and Yomiuri condemned the move as a dangerous centralization of authority.⁷⁸

Mosaburo Suzuki, Central Executive Committee Chairman of the left-wing Social Democratic Party, went further by appearing before the Supreme Court to challenge the constitutionality of all moves to centralize police and to rebuild a Japanese defense force.⁷⁹

The protests, however, were unavailing. Instead of disarming, as the Constitution seemed to require, a movement spread to amend the

74. Asahi, February 22, 1952.

75. Nippon Times, May 8, 1952.

76. Asahi, April 24, 1952; Nippon Times, May 10, 1952.

77. Nippon Times, May 11, 1952.

78. May 14, 1952.

79. Nippon Times, May 15, 1952.

Constitution by permitting Japan to possess a war potential. No counter-tendency appeared to restore the small local police departments which had been tried and which had proved dismal failures. The threat of Communist civil war proved strong enough to uproot the Occupation experiment with decentralized police, restoring, in effect if not in name, the prewar centralized systems. It was a return to the beginning but with the difference that the Japanese police were neither as efficient nor as powerful as before the war.

After more than a year's careful deliberation⁸⁰ the Yoshida Cabinet on February 18, 1953, approved a bill restoring much of the prewar police system. The plan provided:

1. Unification of all fire and police systems under a National Security (or Police) Board headed by a Cabinet minister.
2. Replacement of locally controlled police, except in the six largest cities of more than 700,000 population, by metropolitan or prefectural police, responsible to the National Security Board.
3. Transfer of all police and fire officials of the rank of inspector or above to national rather than local control.
4. Appointment of a national police chief by the Prime Minister and of all metropolitan and prefectural chiefs by the national police chief thus appointed. In each case the nomination is supposedly to be subject to approval of the national, or of prefectural, Public Safety Commission, but this consultation is regarded as merely a matter of form.
5. Reduction of powers of the various Public Safety Commissions and removal of eligibility restrictions imposed under the Occupation.
6. Appointment and dismissal of police personnel by prefectural police chiefs.

Announcement of the Cabinet proposal stirred immediate editorial protest, except from Tokyo Shimbun, on the ground that it meant restoration of a police state, tended toward dictatorship by the Prime Minister, deprived localities of police control, furthered political interference, and might perhaps lead to a restoration of prewar thought control. The virtually unanimous press opposition was echoed by the Japan Mayors' Association, the Municipal Police Liaison Council, the Osaka and Tokyo police chiefs, and the Public Safety Commission chairmen of the five largest cities.⁸¹

These protests had been anticipated and discounted. Both the dominant Liberal Party and the leading opposition party, the Progressives, favored unification, though the latter's president, former Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu, warned against reviving a police state. As

80. Yomiuri, February 23, 1952.

81. *Vide* Tokyo and Osaka press February 19, 1953 et seq. The Tokyo Shimbun dissent was February 13, 1953; after announcement of the plan it failed to comment.

Prime Minister Yoshida and Justice Minister Takeru (Ken) Inukai promised that this would not occur, the way seemed clear toward Diet passage. October 1, 1953 was set as the date when the last important vestige of Occupation police reform would be eradicated.