MEMORANDUM FOR:

SUBJECT: Observations on Post Hostilities Policy Toward Japan

1. To be realistic, post hostilities policy toward Japan must be based upon:
   a. Recognition of the probable reaction of the American public over a period of time. A policy which does not win the continuing support of the American public is doomed to failure.
   b. Recognition of the lessons taught by history with respect to relations between the conqueror and the conquered.

2. The most important points to be noted in connection with a and b above would appear to be the following:
   a. The American public will unquestionably become restive under a prolonged occupation of Japan by American forces. It will not wish to assume the burdens of governing Japan over an extended period. Demands for withdrawal are likely to begin within six months after the surrender of Japan and thereafter to build up increasing political pressure to that end.
   b. Even under the most just and equitable administration, resentment against a conquering nation exercising direct political and military control over a vanquished nation inevitably tends to increase over a period of time. Difficulties arise which present the ruling nation with the alternative of either extending and tightening control or withdrawing without accomplishing the desired objective.
   c. The conquering nation cannot impose its form of government, ideals, or way of life upon a conquered nation except by permanent military occupation and immigration.

3. The formulation of our policies toward post hostilities Japan, therefore, requires the highest degree of statesmanship. We must look forward as well as backward. We must:
   a. Avoid to the maximum extent possible policies dictated by current war hysteria which subsequently the American public will repudiate or which will involve commitments which the American public will be unwilling to fulfill.
b. Attempt to accomplish the maximum degree of progress towards the regeneration of Japan in the minimum amount of time. Our degree of success in accomplishing this objective will depend upon the intelligence with which we approach the problem of the relations between the victor and the vanquished.

4. It would appear desirable in the light of the above:

a. To retain the Emperor and the civil administration. As part of the terms of surrender the Emperor would be forced to dismiss the present cabinet and call a liberal cabinet excluding representatives of the military and naval forces. It would also be part of the surrender terms that the Imperial House would be retained only so long as it cooperated fully with the Allied Control Council.

b. To set up a Supreme Allied Council which would in fact be the supreme authority in the country but which would function and issue its directives through the regularly constituted government.

c. To give every encouragement to the Japanese to undertake under their own leadership the development of democratic institutions and the elimination of the spirit of military conquest.

5. The following arguments are advanced in support of such a program as compared with the establishment of Allied Military Government in place of the Emperor:

a. The retention of the Emperor will probably insure the immediate surrender of all Japanese forces outside the home islands. It is assumed that the surrender terms would require the Emperor to order all Japanese Armed Forces wherever located to cease resistance and to prepare to return to the home islands.

b. Allied Military Government is bound to be bungling, undiplomatic, and inefficient. We must give full recognition to the fact that we do not have sufficient personnel with the proper vision, training, and ability to carry out the task effectively.

c. There would appear to be a strong probability that the Japanese will be ripe, if permitted to direct it themselves, for a genuine democratic movement:

   (1) The Japanese are essentially an imitative people.
   (2) Like all Orientals, they have great respect for power.
   (3) Having seen what we as a democracy have accomplished, they are quite likely, as in 1867, to attempt to imitate us.
5. (Continued)

(4) Whether or not we invade Japan before her surrender the Japanese military will have lost "face" and been completely discredited.

(5) Prior to 1931 the democratic elements in Japan were increasing in strength and, with the military discredited, could probably be revived.

d. The Emperor, like the British King, can summon a cabinet of any political complexion. If the Emperor after the alienation of the militarists, summons a liberal cabinet and openly supports a democratic program, the people are likely to accept it and support it wholeheartedly. If Allied Military Government attempts to impose a democratic program, democracy will be associated with the rule of the conqueror and will be discredited with the people.

e. The continuation of the Imperial rule with the Allied Control Commission remaining in the background should reduce the possibilities of friction and disturbance to the minimum and permit the earliest withdrawal of Allied Occupation Forces, and of the Allied Military Council. The Allied Military Government, particularly with the quality of personnel available, would almost inevitably create situations that would require a more protracted military occupation than the American public will accept.

f. The United Nation's machinery, backed by the Armed Forces at its disposal, promises to be the most effective instrumentality for exercising continuing supervision over the Japanese Government. It should be our objective to turn the problem over to this instrumentality at the earliest possible date. This method of policing Japan will be far more acceptable to the American public than direct occupation and control. It will be less expensive and have a greater chance of success.

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