

The Allied Occupation

Hirohito's 8/15/1945 Address



H\g]a U[Y]g]b'h\Y'di V`]WXca U]b"
Gci fW. 'K]_]a YX]U'7ca a cbg"

Hirohito's 8/15/1945 Address

To our good and loyal subjects: After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in our empire today, we have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure.

We have ordered our Government to communicate to the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union that our empire accepts the provisions of their joint declaration...

...Despite the best that has been done by everyone...the war situation has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage, while the general trends of the world have all turned against her interest...

...We are keenly aware of the inmost feelings of all of you, our subjects. However, it is according to the dictates of time and fate that we have resolved to pave the way for a grand peace for all the generations to come by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable. Having been able to save and maintain the structure of the Imperial State, we are always with you, our good and loyal subjects, relying upon your sincerity and integrity.

Numbers of Total Defeat

- 2.7 million dead (including 1.74 million soldiers)
- 4.5 million soldiers wounded when demobilized
- $\frac{1}{4}$ of nation's wealth destroyed by Allied offensive
- SCAP: Japan lost “ $\frac{1}{3}$ of its total wealth and from $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of its total potential income”
- 66 major cities bombed
- 40% of urban areas destroyed; 30% of urban population homeless
- 6.9 million stranded outside Japan; 5.1 return by December 30, 1946

Fear/Hope for Revolution

They started a war they were bound to lose
saying we'll win, we'll win, the big fools.

Look, we're sure to lose.

The war is lost and Europe's turned Red.

Turning Asia Red can be done before breakfast.

And when that time comes, out I'll come.

-A "drunken gentleman" on a streetcar in Dec. 1943

Fear/Hope for Revolution

- Why so stable?

Occupation Reforms

- Dismantle the old order
 - purge wartime leaders (military, party, business)
 - break up *zaibatsu*
 - expropriate landlords

Constituencies For *and* Against Change

- Land reform: tenants and bureaucratic reforms v. landlords

Constituencies For *and* Against Change

- unions and social policy bureaucrats v.
business elite and economic bureaucrats

Beate Sirota

- Born 1923
- Daughter of Leo Sirota (mentioned in *Makioka*)
- Moves to Japan in 1929 when father becomes prof. at national conservatory
- College in America from 1939
- Back to Japan in fall 1945



Image courtesy of "The Sirota Family and the 20th Century" at Japan Society, NYC.
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“Reverse Course”

- Context of deepening “cold war”
- Fear of left in Japan
- Starting with 1947 crackdown on general strike
- Crackdown on labor
- Retreat from zaibatsu dissolution
- Purge of communists, 1950
- De-purge of some of “old guard”

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