

# U.S. Soft Power Diplomacy for Japan in the 1950s

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**Abstract** *This article traces the root of Japanese pacifism that the U.S. occupation forces implemented through education reforms, and then surveys the policy reversal by the U.S. during the Cold War. The sudden American pressure for Japan to rearm bewildered and enraged left-leaning intellectuals and academics. Because the ideological change was so successful, the Japanese resistance to rearmament troubled the U.S. when it needed Japan to be a bulwark to Communist states in Asia during the Cold War. For the years following the end of the Occupation, America applied significant pressure to change pacifist Japanese into a nation of realistic self-defense sufficiency. This study chronicles each step of this total failure on the part of the United States.*

**Key Words:** U.S.-Japan relations, U.S. occupation of Japan, the Cold War  
**Interdisciplinary Fields:** History, Political Science, Education

## Introduction

On September 19, 2015, under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the Japanese government passed a national security bill which allowed Japan's Self Defense Force (SDF) to exercise a "collective defense" under the constraints of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which prohibits the possession and use of military force as a means of settling international disputes.

The Japanese Communist Party labeled the security bill as a "war bill" and registered its passionate opposition by appealing to ordinary citizens, proclaiming the danger of re-militarizing Japan. This Communist campaign, built upon a strong anti-war culture in postwar Japan, was and still is vigorously supported by the nation's education, which inculcates that pacifism is integral to good governance.

For the last seventy-three years, since the end of World War II, the Japanese people have been thoroughly schooled on the absolute virtue of pacifism, as expressed by Article 9. The merest mention of potential war

triggers fear and a reflexive aversion to anything related to the military. As a result of the Communist campaign, tens of thousands of people gathered in front of the Diet building and in major cities nationwide, raising their voices against the government's forceful passage of the security bill. The protests against the Abe government became particularly vocal after several prominent scholars of the constitution stated in public that the Abe security bill was unconstitutional. Although the government insists that Japan's security is at risk in the current dangerous international climate, and that the new law is indispensable to the country's protection against potential enemies, many people remain unconvinced.

The majority party, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), has been advocating revisions to the constitution (i.e., Article 9). Since its establishment in 1955, the LDP insisted that the Japanese constitution was humiliatingly imposed by the U.S. during its occupation. Meanwhile, the Japanese government has been using Article 9 to reject the pressure from the U.S. for its rearmament and to become fully responsible for its own defense. The U.S. pressure on Japan to rearm has a long history, but the Japanese government has never revised the constitution because of powerful domestic opposition from pacifist leaders and educators who defend Article 9.

The United States, in contrast, had no such troubled emotions regarding Abe's new law. For the American government, this security law is a necessary step toward Japan's role in a security alliance. However, the majority of Japanese people view such American pressure as a dangerous push toward re-militarizing Japan and, subsequently, its positioning as an unwilling participant in U.S. military operations worldwide. A significant gap in the understanding of international political situations exists between the government and the common citizens.

Why is there such strong opposition to a revision of Article 9, and such vehement protest against any hint of military-related endeavors by Japan's SDF? The Japanese attitude regarding national security has remained unchanged since the Cold War era, despite dramatic changes in geopolitics in the intervening years. Pacifism has been deeply inculcated into the Japanese psyche through school education and media reports, which have been dominated by left-leaning intellectuals. There is a long historical conflict between the conservatives and progressives (e.g., leftist, communist) regarding Japanese national security.

To understand why the Japanese intellectuals maintain such a deep-rooted distrust of the conservative government and the U.S. government, we must examine the history of ideological polarization among the Japanese during the Occupation and the Cold War period.

Japanese conservatives (at the upper echelons of politics and business)

were pro-American (anti-communist). On the opposite side were those leftists (progressives) in academia, the mass media, and labor unions who suffered gravely as the result of the anti-communist hysteria during the Occupation. Those individuals have become anti-American, if not patently pro-Soviet Union. While politicians and businessmen maintained the anti-communist conservative view, the progressives prevailed in universities and the mass media. This allowed them to shape public opinion, which is critical of the conservative government's policies and skeptical of U.S. foreign policies.

This paper argues that the privately initiated U.S. cultural exchange program unintentionally helped the dominant pro-American Japanese group and antagonized the leftists, consequently failing to close the gap in the perception regarding the American and Japanese dynamic. As a result of this gap in perception, the U.S. could not persuade the Japanese to go along with its plans.

As a backdrop, this paper first reviews the U.S. policy toward Japan during the Occupation by focusing on aspects of which Japanese intellectuals, such as academics and journalists, have been very critical. Then, the U.S. government's cultural exchange policy toward postwar Japan will be discussed. Finally, an actual U.S.-Japan interchange program will be discussed as an example of a private organization-initiated propaganda policy toward Japan. Its failure and the consequences will be discussed in closing.

## I. Historical Background: Political and Cultural Exchanges

On September 2, 1945, the Japanese delegates signed the document of surrender on the U.S. battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. During the six years and eight months of the Allied occupation of Japan (September 1945 through April 1952), Japan underwent drastic changes.

Although, the Allied powers occupied Japan as a collective in principle, in reality, the United States monopolized the occupation by formulating policies in a vacuum until the policy machinery for the Allies as a collective was established in 1946. However, the bickering multinational policymaking bodies could not function effectively, which allowed the U.S. government to remain in the position of sole policymaker.<sup>1</sup> In essence, the United States

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<sup>1</sup> Brigadier General Courtney Whitney, "Forward: The Philosophy of the Occupation," in SCAP, Government Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, vol. 1, xix-xx.

independently determined the most critical policies of the occupation.

The United States wanted to ensure that Japan would never again threaten America's security. The aim of the Occupation was to transform a defeated imperial Japan into a democratic, America-friendly, pacifist nation, a change that required not only the dismantlement of Japan's prewar system but also the destruction of its people's earlier beliefs. Thus, under the banner of democratization, the United States' intention was to disarm Japan both physically and psychologically.<sup>2</sup> General Douglas MacArthur (1889–1964), the celebrated Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), implemented a revolutionary regime change to achieve this aim. SCAP took steps to erase any military influence within Japanese society. All remnants of the war machine were thoroughly destroyed.

American policymakers understood that the purpose of Japan's prewar education had been to foster nationalism, encourage loyalty to the emperor, and ensure the subordination of the individual to the state. The U.S. State Department called the Japanese education system "a means of indoctrinating students and teachers with the ideology of aggressive nationalism."<sup>3</sup> Hence, the U.S. government immediately dismantled the militaristic and nationalistic educational practices that were previously in place. The Americans instituted a number of reforms, including the following: (1) outlawing nationalistic and militaristic ideology; (2) establishing academic freedom; (3) encouraging democratic principles; (4) removing militaristic and nationalistic teachers and administrators; (5) encouraging democratically inclined teachers and supporting the formation of teachers' associations; and (6) changing the hierarchical administration of educational institutions.<sup>4</sup> To this end, the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Tokyo supervised reforms in education, religion, and the media.<sup>5</sup>

For these radical changes to take effect, the Americans needed "liberal Japanese" to embrace the new goal of a democratic and peace-loving Japan and to cooperate with such drastic reforms. Throughout the Occupation, however, the U.S. definition of "liberal Japanese" remained unarticulated. Regardless of the country's unconditional surrender, the Japanese still

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<sup>2</sup> *United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan* in SCAP, Government Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, vol. 2, 424; Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper (JCS 1380/15, November 3, 1945), in Appendix A:13 in SCAP, Government Section, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, vol. 2, 429.

<sup>3</sup> Department of State, Office of Intelligence Coordination and Liaison, "Progress in the Field of Education in Japan since the Surrender," December 9, 1946, iii, 1, 16–19, 57.

<sup>4</sup> "Progress in the Field of Education in Japan since the Surrender," December 9, 1946, iv, 4–13.

<sup>5</sup> SCAP, CIE, Education Division, *Education in the New Japan*, vol. 2, 58.

worshipped the emperor as the inviolable spiritual head of the nation. Before the war, only hardline communists had loudly criticized the imperial system, and as a result, were imprisoned for twenty years by the Japanese government. If the Americans wanted real “liberals,” they had to free the communists from prison. However, they viewed these communists as covert warriors for the Soviet Union. Together, these two factors posed a significant dilemma for the GHQ.

To the imperial Japanese government, communists were the archenemy of the imperial system and its capitalist economy. Moreover, communism was the ideology of the treacherous Soviet Union, a nation that had broken its neutrality treaty with Japan and launched a massive, murderous attack on an already powerless Japan.

Ironically, both the U.S. government and the Japanese communists wanted to eliminate militarism and fascism and establish a new democratic Japan. Hence, the U.S. policy makers concluded that the Japanese communists, who had fought militarism, could become valuable allies. In October 1945, to publicize the idea that America promoted “freedom of thought,” the GHQ in Tokyo released staunchly anti-war communists from their lengthy solitary confinement and legalized the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), despite the impassioned objection of the Japanese government. This move by the U.S. dramatically demonstrated to the Japanese public that the United States was indeed “a promoter of human rights and liberty,” a perception which was expected to enhance the American influence in Asia.<sup>6</sup> GHQ seemed to respect liberty for all, despite observing the increasing encroachment of Soviet and Chinese communists in Europe, Asia, and particularly in occupied Japan.

The new constitution of Japan, written in English in a week by MacArthur’s GHQ staff, laid the foundation for a democratic Japan: sovereign powers were held not by the emperor but by the people. The new constitution embraced America’s Bill of Rights, establishing suffrage for all people, including women, beginning at the age of twenty; equality of all family members under the law; and an independent judiciary system with the power of judicial review to safeguard these rights. In addition, the new constitution added a provision, Article 23, which read, “Academic freedom is guaranteed.” This simple phrase was interpreted as a safeguard for “university autonomy and the rights of academic professionals to academic investigation and expression,” offering legal protection from undue control by the state.<sup>7</sup> Most famously, with Article 9, Japan renounced both war and the maintenance of military forces, even for self-defense.

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Oinas-Kukkonen, *Tolerance, Suspicion and Hostility: Changing U.S. Attitudes toward the Japanese Communist Movement, 1944–1947* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), 2–3, 5.

The MacArthur-initiated reforms benefited Japanese communists most of all. As of December 1945, among the thirty-nine newly established postwar political parties, only the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) advocated the sovereignty of the people.<sup>8</sup> The goals of the GHQ's reforms eerily resembled those of the JCP, which claimed the GHQ as one of their few, if not best, friends.

### **The “Reverse Course” and the Red Purge**

The alliance between the GHQ and the communists was short-lived. The growing communist influence in universities began to alarm the Americans in Tokyo. Following the defeat of Japanese militarism, many Japanese intellectuals openly embraced Marxism as the guiding philosophy of a new political order, and some willingly joined the newly legalized Japanese Communist Party (JCP).

In 1947, two years after the start of the U.S. Occupation, the long-simmering antagonism between the United States and the Soviet Union finally erupted. In this context, MacArthur came to view communists as more dangerous than the “reactionary Japanese” who had been purged soon after the war. To counter this threat, MacArthur purged the domestic communists. The education sector underwent both a covert and overt Red Purge from September 1949 to March 1951, in which communists and sympathizers were ousted from society: an estimated thirty to forty communist professors were dismissed from their posts. Leftists and liberal intellectuals have harshly criticized this Red Purge as an infringement on freedom of thought and academic freedom, decrying it as a behavior violating both the letter and the spirit of the Japanese Constitution. After the Korean War broke out in June 1950, those Japanese who were labeled ultra-nationalists and purged from their public offices in the initial period of the Occupation were allowed to return to their former posts as the “real friends of the United States.”

### **Peace Treaties and Rearmament Pressure**

In October 1949, Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China, controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. Most American officials in Washington saw the loss of China to communists as a

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<sup>7</sup> Lawrence Ward Beer, *Freedom of Expression in Japan: A Study in Comparative Law, Politics, and Society* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1984), 253.

<sup>8</sup> Nihon Kyōsantōno Chūō linkai, *Nihon Kyōsantōno 65-nen*, vol. 1 (Nihon Kyōsantō Chūō linkai Shuppankyoku, 1988), 102; Robert Scalapino, *The Japanese Communist Movement, 1920-1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 48.

threat to American interests in Asia.<sup>9</sup>

As early as September 1949, the United States initiated negotiations with Britain and France to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. The question of whether the Soviet Union would participate in such a treaty was a potential diplomatic powder keg. The Japanese Communist Party (JCP) stressed its desire for “a comprehensive peace” with each of the country’s former enemies, including the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. However, under conservative Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida’s cabinet, the Japanese government was considering the possibility of “a separate peace treaty” with only the U.S. bloc.<sup>10</sup> Article 9 of the Japanese constitution prohibited Japan from having a military force or engaging in war, so the question of how to guarantee Japan’s security after regaining its independence was integral to any possible peace treaty.

Some of Yoshida’s comments on the treaty implied that to solve Japan’s security problem, the Japanese government might accept the presence of U.S. military bases in Japan, a suggestion the JCP angrily opposed, claiming that Yoshida’s real intention was the revival of the Japanese military.<sup>11</sup> This attack marked a 180-degree pivot from the JCP’s original stance: it had publicly opposed Article 9, arguing that Japan should have the right to defend itself with its own military force. The JCP declared that GHQ policies revealed Washington’s hidden agenda, which was to colonize Japan.<sup>12</sup> From then on, the JCP’s stance of protecting Article 9 became a rallying cry as it worked to gain public support.

Disagreement regarding the peace treaty increased tensions between the conservative government and the opposition parties. After analyzing editorials and media reports, U.S. intelligence concluded that the majority of Japan’s public opinion leaders were in favor of a “comprehensive peace treaty,” which would engage all of Japan’s former enemies. The analysis suggested that the Japanese were worried that if their country concluded a peace treaty that did not involve the neighboring communist countries, Japan would have to live in constant fear. In addition, losing good relations with China meant that Japan would sacrifice a large market that was necessary for its economic recovery.<sup>13</sup> Even so, the Yoshida government pushed for a peace treaty with

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<sup>9</sup> Chizuru Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan: Promoting Democracy 1948–1960* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 39.

<sup>10</sup> Takeshi Igarashi, “Peace-Making and Party Politics: The Formation of the Domestic Foreign-Policy System in Postwar Japan,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 11, no. 2 (1987): 327; Toshio Nishi, *Unconditional Democracy: Education and Politics in Occupied Japan, 1945–1952* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1982), 263.

<sup>11</sup> United States, Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research (OIR), File 097.3 Z1092 #OIR-5136A, “Japanese Attitudes Toward Peace Treaty Problems,” February 28, 1950, 4–5.

<sup>12</sup> OIR, “Japanese Attitudes Toward Peace Treaty Problems,” February 28, 1950, 6–7.



only the U.S. bloc, a stance against which the JCP spearheaded a vehement verbal attack. Japanese intellectuals, and particularly academics, were in favor of a neutral Japan forged from the comprehensive treaty, and sided with the JCP. Japanese academics criticized Yoshida, and the peace treaty issue further embittered the relationship between the Yoshida government and academics who had already been soured by the Red Purge.

Another complicating factor was the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950. This war determined the position of Japan during the Cold War in Asia. On July 8, 1950, the transport of American troops from Japan to the Korean Peninsula coincided with MacArthur's order to Yoshida to form a 75,000-member national police reserve and to add 8,000 men to the maritime police.<sup>14</sup> To justify this about-face, MacArthur had to announce that the Japanese Constitution did *not* deny the possession of military forces for "self-defense."<sup>15</sup>

With the start of the Korean War, the United States began pressuring the Japanese government to rearm: the same country that had imposed the pacifist Article 9 on Japan was now trying to dispose of it. The new Japan's ideology of pacifism, which had now pervaded the Japanese psyche, was so strong that this shift in U.S. policy bewildered the Japanese people and their skepticism toward American policy grew into anti-American sentiment.<sup>16</sup>

On September 8, 1951, the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed without the participation of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. On the same day, the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was signed, which allowed the United States to retain military bases in Japan. The treaty became effective on April 28, 1952, when the Occupation officially ended.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> OIR, "Japanese Attitudes Toward Peace Treaty Problems," February 28, 1950, 4–5.

<sup>14</sup> Igarashi, "Peace-Making and Party Politics," 329.

<sup>15</sup> Masaru Tamamoto, "Unwanted Peace: Japanese Intellectual Thought in American Occupied Japan, 1948–1952" (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 1988), 137.

<sup>16</sup> Toshihiro Menju, "The Development of Grassroots International Exchange in Japan and the Impact of American Philanthropy," in *Philanthropy and Reconciliation: Rebuilding Postwar U.S.-Japan Relations*, ed. Tadashi Yamamoto, Akira Iriye, and Makoto Iokibe (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2006), 255.

<sup>17</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 41. However, the islands of Okinawa remained under the authority of the U.S. Government (the U.S. military was the de fact ruler of the island). With the intensification of the Cold War, the U.S. regarded the geographic position of Okinawa as strategically important and its long-term rule over the islands had been a fixed policy. Okinawa's reversion to Japan was realized on May 15, 1972. However, the U.S. military bases on the Okinawa islands remained the same: 75% of the U.S. military bases in the land area of Japan are located in Okinawa. Therefore, the U.S. military has retained significant control over the islands. Okinawa's History, 5. Postwar Okinawa, "Defeat and U.S. Occupation" "USCAR and the Struggle for Autonomous Rights" [http://rca.open.ed.jp/web\\_e/history/story/epoch5/outline.html](http://rca.open.ed.jp/web_e/history/story/epoch5/outline.html) (accessed on November 24, 2017).



## II. The U.S. Post-Occupation Policy toward Japan

In the early 1950s, waves of anti-American sentiment among the Japanese grew out of the prolonged occupation, a difficult economic situation, and the U.S. pressure on the Japanese government to rearm.<sup>18</sup> This sentiment had been fanned by anti-U.S. propaganda orchestrated by communists and their sympathizers. In particular, Japanese intellectuals criticized the inconsistency of U.S. policy during the Occupation, noting that it had shifted from demanding the complete disarmament of Japan to the pursuit of rearmament to turn Japan into an American fortress in East Asia.<sup>19</sup> Japanese academia was dominated by so-called progressives, who described the history of the U.S. occupation of Japan as a failure and coined the term “the reverse course” to describe these dramatic changes in the U.S. policy toward Japan.

The U.S. Embassy in Japan conducted research on the prevailing Japanese view of the United States in February 1952, two months before the end of the Occupation (April 1952). According to its report, “Psychological Factors in Japan,” dated February 28, 1952, Japanese public opinion showed “Japan’s ignorance of the real nature of the Soviet Union and Soviet foreign policy.” In this view, Japanese leftists, easily fooled by communist propaganda, wrongly assumed that the Soviet Union was a socialist state aspiring to create a world utopia under the leadership of the labor class, with broad humanitarian aims. These naïve, gullible Japanese leftists encouraged “the concept of neutrality, continued disarmament, and resistance to the alliance with the United States.”<sup>20</sup>

To correct these distorted perceptions of the Soviet Union and to counter anti-American propaganda in Japan, the U.S. authority applied significant effort towards instilling a true understanding of American democracy through censorship and anti-communist measures during the Occupation, as well as through cultural exchange programs following the Occupation. Through such programs, the United States endeavored to correct the Japanese perception of the U.S. that was tainted by communist propaganda to foster pro-American feelings among the Japanese.

The U.S. cultural exchange programs in post-occupation Japan were a form of “information” diplomacy (that is “propaganda”) and were one of the key strategies of the U.S. government during the Cold War. One feature of U.S. policy, especially “information” diplomacy, was that the policies were mainly implemented through private organizations (NGOs). Indeed,

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<sup>18</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 43.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

as Emily S. Rosenberg argues, through lobbying organizations and think tanks, private American organizations have significantly shaped U.S. foreign policy, particularly following World War II.<sup>21</sup> The policies of the U.S. toward Japan were no exception.

### The Cold War: A Propaganda War

Howard B. Schonberger, in *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945–1952*, reveals that a group of powerful individuals, the so-called “Japan Lobby,” pressured the U.S. government to alter its Occupation policy from democratization and demilitarization to economic recovery and remilitarization by taking advantage of the situation created by the Cold War. This group, officially known as the American Council on Japan, was formally established in June 1948.<sup>22</sup>

Working from Schonberger’s study, Glenn Davis and John G. Roberts, veteran journalists on Japan, discuss a hidden, or rather, avoided subject: How the American Council on Japan (ACJ), a powerful private group composed of “big business” leaders and government and military elites, “consistently and purposefully circumvented, obstructed, or torpedoed the democratic process to achieve its objective of maintaining Japan as a dutiful American Cold War ally.”<sup>23</sup> Their painstaking, in-depth research reveals that many, if not most, members of the ACJ had also been members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a group of American foreign policy experts based in New York.<sup>24</sup>

Established in 1921 in New York, a think tank called the Council on Foreign Relations, is, according to its own document, “an independent, national membership organization and a private nonpartisan center for scholars dedicated to producing and disseminating ideas” on world affairs and U.S. foreign policy. The group, which publishes *Foreign Affairs* magazine, the “preeminent journal covering international affairs and U.S. foreign policy,” has played a key role in shaping American policies on world affairs. Although the current organization (as of 2006) claimed that “the council takes no institutional position on policy issues and has no affiliation with the

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<sup>21</sup> Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading American Dreams: Economic and Cultural Expansion 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 12.

<sup>22</sup> “1943–1955–The Kay Sugahara Electronic Archives (working draft), p1, <http://kayasugaharatesting.weebly.com/1943-1955.html> (accessed on November 24, 2017); Howard B. Schonberger, *Aftermath of War: Americans and the Remaking of Japan, 1945–1952* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1989).

<sup>23</sup> Glenn Davis and John G. Roberts, *An Occupation without Troops: Wall Street’s Half-Century Domination of Japanese Politics* (Tokyo: Yenbooks, 1996), 14.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

U.S. government,”<sup>25</sup> the membership rolls show that many council members joined the presidential cabinet, particularly during the postwar and Cold War eras, serving in critical roles that helped mold U.S. foreign policy.<sup>26</sup>

Starting at the end of World War I, the CFR's members had direct influence on major foreign policy decisions made by the United States.<sup>27</sup> During World War II, the leaders of the CFR's "War and Peace Studies Project" were incorporated into the U.S. State Department's Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy. In other words, the CFR's own studies on wartime and postwar planning foreign policy were implemented in the State Department's planning.<sup>28</sup>

The CFR's members also played a crucial role in the development of the country's Cold War policies. On March 12, 1947, President Truman announced The Truman Doctrine before the U.S. Congress, which called for the containment of communism. Emphasizing the need to protect the United States and Europe, he urged Congress to approve the dispatch of military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey to combat communism's encroachment there.<sup>29</sup> Further, in June 1947, Truman announced a massive economic aid plan for Western Europe called the "Marshall Plan." Such a bold gesture triggered an aggressive response from the Soviet Union. The enmity between the two nations escalated into the Cold War.

In May 1947, the State Department established a new group, the Policy Planning Staff, to formulate a long-range Cold War strategy. CFR member George F. Kennan (1904–2005), who had first advocated the communist containment policy in *Foreign Affairs*, became a chief architect of this strategy. Truman established the National Security Council (NSC), which consolidated numerous agencies that had been simultaneously waging the Cold War.<sup>30</sup>

## War of Ideas

As the Cold War policies and strategies were developed, the U.S. government recognized the importance of informing the rest of the world of its policy stance as communist propaganda smeared U.S. policy as

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<sup>25</sup> The Council on Foreign Relations, <http://www.cfr.org/history-and-theory-of-international-relations/continuing-inquiry/p108> (accessed on August 23, 2015).

<sup>26</sup> Laurence H. Shoup and William Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council on Foreign Relations and Unites States Foreign Policy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977), 17; Davis and Roberts, *An Occupation without Troops*, 150.

<sup>27</sup> Davis and Roberts, *An Occupation without Troops*, 147.

<sup>28</sup> Shoup and Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust*, 29.

<sup>29</sup> Katherine A. S. Sibley, *The Cold War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 8, 139.

<sup>30</sup> Sibley, *The Cold War*, 132; Yonosuke Nagai, "The Roots of Cold War Doctrine: The Esoteric and the Exoteric," in *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, 27.

“imperialism.” The government’s desperate need to explain American foreign policy and its principles to the rest of the world prompted Congress to endorse various propaganda programs. Public Law 402, the so-called Smith-Mundt Act of 1948, which aimed “to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries,” provided the Truman administration with the legal and financial grounds for establishing an information service and an educational exchange division.<sup>31</sup> The State Department created the Office of International Information (OII) and the Office of Educational Exchange (OEX).<sup>32</sup> This marked the first time in American history that the U.S. government committed to international information and educational exchange programs on a global scale during peacetime.<sup>33</sup>

The Cold War increasingly became a “war of ideas,” a “battle for hearts and minds,” or “ideological warfare.” Consequently, the Cold War “institutionalized propaganda as a central component of American foreign policy.”<sup>34</sup> However, most people in the United States think of propaganda as a manipulative, deceitful practice: it has distinct negative connotations in the American mind and could not be referred to as such when discussed and promoted publicly. Hence, the U.S. government employed numerous euphemisms for their propaganda, such as “information.”<sup>35</sup>

Multiple U.S. “information” and cultural strategies were developed to counter Soviet propaganda. In April 1950, Truman launched the “Campaign of Truth” to negate the appeal of Soviet propaganda. He told the American Society of Newspaper Editors:

This is a struggle, above all else, for the minds of men. Propaganda is one of the most powerful weapons the Communists have in this struggle. They systematically use deceit, distortions, and lies as a matter of deliberate policy. This propaganda can be overcome by truth—presented by newspapers, radio, and other sources that people trust. ... Unless we get the real story across to people in other countries, we will lose the battle for men’s minds by default.<sup>36</sup>

When the Cold War manifested in an actual armed battle with the onset of the Korean War in June 1950, Truman switched the peacetime label of

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<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Lawrence Ward Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War*, 32–33.

<sup>32</sup> Belmonte, *Selling the American Way*, 33.

<sup>33</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 26–27.

<sup>34</sup> Kenneth A. Osgood, “Propaganda” <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/propaganda.aspx> (accessed on September 22, 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted in Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 27.

“information” to a wartime moniker, the “psychological warfare effort.” He issued a Presidential Directive on April 4, 1951 to establish the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) to “authorize and provide for the more effective planning, coordination, and conduct within the framework of approved national policies, of psychological operations... The PSB was composed of the Undersecretary of State, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence, or their designated representatives”<sup>37</sup> and it was instructed to report to the National Security Council. The PSB conducted planning for psychological operations, such as the country’s cultural and information campaigns through mass media, publications, films, libraries, and educational exchange in two strategically important countries, West Germany and Japan.<sup>38</sup>

In May 1950, just before the Korean War erupted, Truman appointed another CFR member, John Foster Dulles (1888–1959), the chairman of the Rockefeller Foundations and the chief foreign policy advisor for the Republican Party,<sup>39</sup> as special ambassador to Japan. From June 21st to the 27<sup>th</sup> 1950, “the Dulles group” visited Japan to gain a better understanding of the real situation in Japan regarding the peace treaty.<sup>40</sup> The Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950 during their stay in Japan.

In January 1951, Truman sent Dulles to Japan again on a peace mission known as “the Dulles Mission,” to lay the groundwork for a peace treaty with Japan. Dulles invited his benefactor, philanthropist John D. Rockefeller III (1906–1978), to join the mission as a cultural affairs consultant. Rockefeller was in charge of advising Dulles on how to strengthen the U.S.–Japan relationship through intellectual and cultural exchange.<sup>41</sup> Before World War II, the Rockefeller Foundation supported the conferences held by the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR): hence, Rockefeller’s name was well known in Japan, especially among financiers and intellectuals. In fact, the IPR was the most significant channel for Japanese–American intellectual exchange before the war.<sup>42</sup>

After researching the situation in Japan, Rockefeller submitted his

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<sup>37</sup> “Collection Description, Harry S. Truman Papers Staff Member and Office Files: Psychological Strategy Board Files Dates: 1951–1953.” <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/psysc.htm> (accessed on June 1, 2018).

<sup>38</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 28.

<sup>39</sup> Davis and Roberts, *An Occupation without Troops*, 35, 40.

<sup>40</sup> “Summary Report by the Consultant to the Secretary (Dulles), drafted by Mr. Allison [who accompanied Dulles for the visit], [Washington] July 3 1950, United States, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, East Asia and the Pacific, Volume VI, 794.00/7-750, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d728> (accessed on November 5, 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 115–116; Fumiko Fujita, “The U.S.–Japan Intellectual Interchange Program and U.S.–Japan Relations in the 1950s,” *University of Tokyo Journal of American Studies* 5 (2000): 70.

recommendations to Dulles on April 16, 1951. His own research was substantially supplemented by the assistance of scholars and diplomats who had in-depth knowledge on Japan.<sup>43</sup> The report suggested two strategies to persuade the Japanese to follow the American democratic model through cultural exchange programs: (1) the U.S. should develop contacts with Japanese intellectual leaders through “selective and direct channels” and (2) the U.S. should approach the Japanese people as a collective through mass communication media. The report emphasized that the cultural programs should be “private in nature” and maintain complete separation from official governmental offices.<sup>44</sup> These recommendations became the guidelines for the U.S. government strategy in Japan. This privately initiated approach was adopted as a core foreign policy by the next president, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

In January 1953, Eisenhower, a CFR member and *Foreign Affairs* editorial advisory board member, was inaugurated as president of the United States. John Foster Dulles was appointed the secretary of state.<sup>45</sup> A former general and expert on psychological warfare, Eisenhower considered effective psychological strategy imperative to winning the Cold War. With the advent of nuclear bombs, the physical military means of confronting the enemy became almost obsolete: he explored the cultural exchange programs as an effective alternative for containing communism. In January 1953, Eisenhower established the Jackson Committee, which discussed the role of psychological warfare in the conduct of foreign policy.<sup>46</sup> After investigating the methods and contents of the Soviet’s systematic, yet crude, propaganda campaign, the Jackson Committee called for the “expanded use of private groups, non-governmental organizations, and ordinary Americans as vehicle[s] for transmitting propaganda messages.”<sup>47</sup> In order to prevent any such program from appearing propagandistic, Eisenhower favored a friendly way of promoting positive views of the U.S. through informal contacts. Subsequently, Eisenhower launched the “People to People Program,” in which

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<sup>42</sup> Makoto Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange: The Relationship between Government and Private Foundation,” in *Philanthropy and Reconciliation: Rebuilding Postwar U.S.-Japan Relations*, 69.

<sup>43</sup> These individuals included “Edwin Reischauer, Hugh Borton, Sir George Samson, Burton Fahns, Eileen Donovan, and Douglas Overton.” Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 116.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>45</sup> Shoup and Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust*, 37.

<sup>46</sup> Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, Kansas: The University Press of Kansas, 2006), 46-53; Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 29; Fumiko Fujita, *Amerika bunka gaiko to nihon: Reisen ki no bunka to hito no koryu* (U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Japan in the Cold War Era) (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2015), 12-13.

<sup>47</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 31.



the government encouraged ordinary Americans to develop friendly contacts with foreigners to convince them of the beauty of American democracy and the greatness of American culture.<sup>48</sup>

To implement this new policy, Eisenhower announced the creation of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in the State Department in June 1953.<sup>49</sup> It incorporated all outbound government information programs and bore all responsibility for overseas information activities targeted at foreigners. The United States Information Service (USIS) represented the overseas offices of the USIA, which had more than 190 posts in 141 countries.<sup>50</sup> This reorganization of information activities was meant to concentrate the authority over psychological warfare in the hands of the executive branch. The USIA was an independent foreign affairs agency within the executive branch: Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and President Eisenhower had the authority to direct the group's policy and content decisions.

At the end of the U.S. Occupation of Japan in April 1952, the State Department took over the information and education program that had been run by the Civil Information and Education section of the SCAP. After the creation of the USIA in Washington in 1953, USIS Japan assumed this responsibility.<sup>51</sup> USIS Japan had its headquarters in the American Embassy in Tokyo, and established sixteen regional public affairs offices and fourteen information centers, popularly known as American Cultural Centers, in major cities in the early 1950s.<sup>52</sup>

The U.S. ambassador was the chief American officer in Japan on all matters of cultural policy, so the embassy worked with the assistant directors of the USIS to prepare an initial statement of USIS objectives in Japan. The Psychological Office of the Far Eastern Command in Japan was also involved in planning the cultural propaganda programs in Japan. Those plans were routed to the USIA in Washington, as well as to the State Department and other executive agencies concerned with foreign policy.<sup>53</sup>

According to the "USIS Country Plan-Japan Part 1" dated June 24, 1953, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles issued "the objectives of American cultural campaign against communism in Japan:"

1. To promote orderly political, economic, and social progress based upon free, democratic institutions.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>49</sup> For a detailed study on USIA, see Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>50</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 30.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 44.



2. To convince the Japanese of the threat of Soviet and Chinese communism to the realization of Japan's legitimate aspirations; of the fallacy of neutralist or "third force" concepts as solutions; and of the necessity for taking appropriate measures for national security.
3. To encourage cooperation with the United States and other Free World nations for world peace, progress, and security.<sup>54</sup>

The document also listed practical plans to achieve the stated objectives. Concerning national security, Dulles urged the USIS to inform the Japanese of "the threat of Soviet and Chinese communism" to increase the likelihood that the Japanese would accept U.S. military bases in Japan and approve of the security treaty with the United States. Dulles also expected the USIS to promote an awareness among the Japanese of the two countries' mutual interests and to encourage popular support of Japanese rearmament for self-defense.<sup>55</sup>

Dulles's focus on Japanese rearmament corresponded with a parallel movement in Japan. Shortly after the start of the Korean War in June 1950, MacArthur authorized the formation of a Japanese force consisting of 75,000 men to compensate for the American forces that left Japan for Korea. Due to the constitutional prohibition on maintaining a military force in Japan, this force was called the National Police Reserve (*Keisatsu yobi tai*). Later, the U.S.-Japan security treaty, signed on the same day as the San Francisco Peace Treaty in September 1951, approved the expansion of the National Police Reserve to 110,000 men and renamed it the National Security Force (*Hoan tai*) in mid-1952. Next, the Self-Defense Forces Act enabled the establishment of the Defense Agency on July 1, 1954, and the National Security Force was reorganized as the Japan Self-Defense Forces, comprising the Ground Self-Defense Force (Army), the Maritime Self-Defense Force (Navy), and the Air Self-Defense Force (Air Force).

Prime Minister Yoshida rejected the U.S. government's frequent demands to dramatically increase Japan's Self-Defense Forces, taking advantage of Article 9. He explained that in order for Japan to increase the size of its defense forces, the public must first consent to writing a new constitution. With such a shrewdly reasoned opposition to its overall aims in Japan, the United States felt that it had no choice but to alter popular opinion in Japan.

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<sup>54</sup> Department of State, "USIS Country Plan-Japan Part 1, "24 June 1953 Confidential File 511.94/4-2753, National Archives College Park, (NACP), MD. Quoted in Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 44.

<sup>55</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 45.

### III. Private Organization-Initiated Cultural Propaganda Activity in Japan

Following a description of the cultural and political background for the launching of U.S. propaganda in post-occupation Japan, a case study of an actual propaganda field operation should be reviewed here. In Natalia Tsvetkova's comparative study on international education by the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, she argues that while the Soviet government targeted youths from social groups of lower status, believing them "to be more likely to become a foundation for establishing a pro-Soviet elite in a long-term perspective," the U.S. government targeted "existing dominant groups" when it implemented programs designed to inculcate capitalist and liberal democratic attitudes and dispositions." She concludes that the American approach was more effective in the long term.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed, the main objectives of the U.S. government's cultural exchange program were to foster pro-American sentiment among Japan's dominant class and to educate future leaders to become pro-Americans who would keep Japan in the free world. Moreover, the U.S. programs were targeted to "existing dominant groups" consisting of affluent educated elites, such as pro-American conservatives in business, industry, and politics, as well as pro-American "liberal" academics and journalists. This target group was ideologically antagonistic toward "progressive" (Marxist) intellectuals, the very individuals whom the U.S. hoped to bring around to their point of view. To exert such influence, the U.S. implemented a program of cultural exchange. These programs often relied on private organizations to spearhead their efforts, ostensibly rendering them independent of the government.

Following the end of the Occupation in 1952, the U.S. government launched a massive cultural propaganda campaign against communism in Japan through USIS programs, including the USIS's pamphlet distribution and propaganda film exhibitions organized through American Cultural Centers. However, the State Department favored activity by non-governmental institutions (NGOs) in the field of cultural relations. However, despite ostentatious independence, the cultural exchange programs initiated by private organizations were tightly coordinated with the USIS. The whole effort was geared toward enhancing a mutual understanding between the people of the United States and Japan.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Natalia Tsvetkova, "International Education during the Cold War: Soviet Social Transformation and American Social Reproduction." *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 52, no. 2 (May 2008): 213–214.

<sup>57</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 108.

The first government-backed private philanthropist in charge of a cultural affairs exchange program was J. D. Rockefeller III of the Rockefeller Foundation. After submitting his recommendations on a U.S. cultural exchange program to Secretary of State Dulles in January 1951, Rockefeller returned to Tokyo as a private citizen in October 1951, intending to implement his strategy of developing contacts with key Japanese intellectual leaders with the full backing of the U.S. government. In fact, the strategy of emphasizing the “private nature” of his efforts was also suggested by Saxton E. Bradford, a public relations officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, who wrote to Rockefeller in a memorandum dated November 7, 1951. Bradford said that a segment of Japanese intellectuals was apparently anti-American and opposed any peace treaty finalized with only the U.S. bloc and excluding the Soviet Union and mainland China. He called for the resumption of an intellectual exchange program between the U.S. and Japan. He said that a private, NGO-initiated exchange program would be the most significant and plausible way to change the perceptions of some of the anti-American intellectuals in Japan.<sup>58</sup> With this tacit agreement in place, if cooperation was secured from the Japanese, Rockefeller was ready to support the project with funds from his foundation.

In Tokyo, Rockefeller soon found the right people to help implement his plan through “selective and direct channels.”<sup>59</sup> As mentioned, before the war, Rockefeller had been acquainted with prominent Japanese financiers, politicians, and intellectuals, including Aisuke Kabayama, who was the founder of Japan’s Kyodo News Agency and an early leader of the America-Japan Society (*Nichi-Bei Kyōkai*); Tamon Maeda, who was the first postwar education minister; Yasaka Takagi, who was the former leader of the Japanese Institute of Pacific Relations; and Shigeharu Matsumoto, who was the former chief of the editorial bureau of the Domei News Agency. Rockefeller met them at the 1929 Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR) conference in Kyoto.<sup>60</sup> After the long interval imposed by the war, they met again in 1951.<sup>61</sup> Among these prominent Japanese, Rockefeller found Matsumoto to be the most active leader and observed that he was deeply committed to the promotion of U.S.-Japan cultural exchange.<sup>62</sup> Rockefeller’s prewar connections comprised a direct channel for developing contacts with Japanese intellectuals.

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<sup>58</sup> Fujita, “The U.S.-Japan Intellectual Interchange Program and U.S.-Japan Relations in the 1950s,” 72.

<sup>59</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 117.

<sup>60</sup> Tadashi Matsuda, *Soft Power and Its Perils: U.S. Cultural Policy in Early Postwar Japan and Permanent Dependency* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press/Stanford University Press, 2007), 127; Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 69-71.

<sup>61</sup> Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 73.

<sup>62</sup> Matsuda, *Soft Power and Its Perils*, 127.

This Japanese elite team led by Rockefeller and Matsumoto launched an academic exchange program between Japan and the United States in the early 1950s with financial assistance from both the Rockefeller Foundation, and J. D. Rockefeller III as an individual.<sup>63</sup> First, the team worked together to create a base for international intellectual exchange in Japan in 1955 by establishing the International House of Japan (the so-called I-House) in Roppongi, Tokyo. This handsome building, with its beautiful Japanese-style garden, became a gateway for nongovernmental cultural exchange and intellectual cooperation between the people of Japan and those of other countries.<sup>64</sup> The project was made possible by financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation and prominent Japanese politicians and business leaders. For example, the incumbent Prime Minister Yoshida, Finance Minister Hayato Ikeda, and then-Secretary of Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa secured a site and raised funds for the I-House.<sup>65</sup>

This cross-cultural association between the Japanese team, led by Matsumoto and Yasaka Takagi, and the U.S. team, comprising prominent Japan scholars such as Hugh Borton and Edwin O. Reischauer, proceeded with actual operations. However, as Fumiko Fujita shows in her studies, conflicts of interest immediately sprang up between the Japanese and the Americans. From the American perspective, the program's main purpose was to interact with individuals embodying various ideological shades of the Japanese intellect, especially those who leaned left, to help them gain a better understanding of American democracy. However, the Japanese side did not want to include a broad swath of leftist intellectuals in their efforts. Rather, Matsumoto's group primarily wanted only those in Matsumoto and Takagi's own cliquish circle, those individuals who had the same ideological inclinations— liberal, capitalist “100% pro-Americans”—and excluding “progressive” intellectuals.<sup>66</sup> Makoto Iokibe, in his study of U.S.-Japan intellectual exchange, argues that “Matsumoto and the I-House group were supported and highly respected by those in Japan's ‘establishment,’” [i.e. conservative, anti-communist, political leaders and business and industrial leaders], “but they did not represent the pacifist-leftist coalition that dominated the academic and intellectual currents at the time.”<sup>67</sup>

In the 1950s, the political and intellectual worlds were sharply polarized,

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<sup>63</sup> Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 73.

<sup>64</sup> Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 74; “About I-house” <https://www.i-house.or.jp/eng/about/index.html> (accessed on October 4, 2015).

<sup>65</sup> Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 74; Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 117.

<sup>66</sup> Fujita, “The U.S.-Japan Intellectual Interchange Program and U.S.-Japanese Relations in the 1950s,” 73; Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 75.

<sup>67</sup> Makoto Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 76.

reflecting the Cold War division. The Japanese intellectual community, as a collective, bitterly regretted the war of Imperial Japan and fervently wished for peace and the healthy development of democracy. Following the end of the war, leftists, especially communists who claimed they had justly opposed the war and had therefore been oppressed by the militaristic government, gained more prominence in postwar Japanese politics. These groups, called “progressive” forces, proclaimed themselves the guardians of “peace and democracy.” When the U.S. Occupation changed its policy to address the Cold War situation in Japan in its so-called “reverse course,” these leftists—socialists and communists alike—fanned anti-American sentiment. These leftist factions could barely tolerate Japan’s conservative government, which appeared to meekly follow U.S. dictates, and were vocally antagonistic toward the pro-American Japanese.

While the Japanese intellectual circle was leaning toward the left, being viewed as pro-American was professionally risky.<sup>68</sup> Still, intellectuals such as Matsumoto, Takagi, and the others who were involved in the founding of the I-House, shared democratic values and were pro-Americans who supported Japan’s “establishment.”

In such a polarized climate, it was natural for Matsumoto to choose candidates who were his friends or students as Japanese delegates to the U.S. However, for the Americans, this selection was problematic: it meant that the program simply reinforced the existing pro-American elite strata of Japanese society, rather than radically transforming the anti-American mood among the prevailing leftist intellectuals. Until 1959, when this program was discontinued, the same conflicts and tensions over the selection of participants remained between the partnered groups.<sup>69</sup>

In the early 1950s, Japanese conservative politics were also split. One faction, led by Prime Minister Yoshida, prioritized rebuilding the economy and was wary of rearmament. Yoshida established the Self Defense Forces under pressure—and with financial support—from the U.S. government in 1954: he then left office.<sup>70</sup> The other faction, led by Yoshida’s rival Ichiro Hatoyama and Nobusuke Kishi, advocated revising the constitution and rearming.<sup>71</sup> In 1955, these two factions were combined into the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP). Hatoyama and Kishi (the present Premier Abe’s grandfather) each became prime minister and pushed for constitutional

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>69</sup> Fujita, “The U.S.-Japan Intellectual Interchange Program and U.S.-Japanese Relations in the 1950s,” 80.

<sup>70</sup> Tomohiho Shinoda, *Nichibei domei toiu riarizumu* (Emerging realism of the Japan-U.S. alliance) (Tokyo: chikura shobo, 2007), 68-71.

<sup>71</sup> Iokibe, “U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange,” 79-80.

revisions and rearmament.

Meanwhile, following the Korean War truce in 1953, another lethal accident, the *Lucky Dragon* Incident, helped aggravate Japanese unease regarding the U.S. In 1954, a Japanese tuna boat named *Lucky Dragon* was contaminated with deadly radioactive ash from a U.S. thermonuclear (“hydrogen”) bomb test on Bikini Island. This incident ignited sentiments that were anti-war, anti-nuclear weapon, and anti-U.S., and strengthened Japan’s commitment to pacifism.

Political factionalism and international power struggles made the Japanese public increasingly uneasy and allowed progressive intellectuals to spread their ideas widely through journals and newspaper articles. In fact, progressive (Marxist-oriented) Japanese, especially at the larger national universities, advocated the idea that the Soviet Union and mainland China were peace-loving, whereas the capitalist countries, including the United States, were the aggressive imperialists. They also warned that Japan’s alliance with the United States not only endangered its security but also encroached on Japan’s independence. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s (and perhaps also through the present), these progressive intellectuals were influential in shaping Japanese public opinion through their skillful use of the mass media.<sup>72</sup>

This polarization of pro-American establishment supporters and anti-American intellectuals had long been recognized and acknowledged by the United States government. In 1955, the USIA set out to investigate the opinions of Japanese intellectuals. Although the term “intellectual” was never defined, the term broadly referred to every Japanese “who has been to or is attending a university.”<sup>73</sup> In particular, the USIA considered professors, critics, and journalists, who had a significant impact on public opinion through higher education and mass media, to be the most important intellectuals. A report entitled “Japanese Intellectuals,” dated December 1, 1955, argued that intellectuals in Japan opposed U.S. foreign policy, particularly abhorring the U.S. pressure on Japan to rearm. Moreover, nearly all intellectuals favored Japan’s establishment of political relations with mainland China.<sup>74</sup>

In this political climate, in 1956, Japan and the Soviet Union signed a Joint Declaration restoring diplomatic relations between the two countries. As a favor, the Soviet Union supported Japan’s application for United Nations (UN) membership, allowing Japan to join the UN in 1956. In 1957, the Soviet

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<sup>72</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 53.

<sup>73</sup> Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 48.

<sup>74</sup> Operations Coordinating Board, “Japanese Intellectuals” December 1, 1955 Psychological warfare file, MR91-106 #1 Eisenhower Library, Kansas. Cited in Saeki, *U.S. Cultural Propaganda in Cold War Japan*, 49.



success in launching a satellite, *Sputnik*, before the United States could do so, bolstered the leftist intellectuals' view that Japan should not side exclusively with the U.S., and if Japan could not remain neutral, it should side with the Soviet Union.

As the Cold War antagonism in Asia and Europe affected Japan's security, Japan's pacifist-leftist intellectuals grew increasingly anti-American: they supported peace and opposed rearmament. These movements were entangled with the widespread opposition to the Kishi cabinet's proposed revision of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Intellectuals' skepticism toward the U.S. and the progressives' influence over the public were revealed in the form of a massive protest by the Japanese people against the revision: in May and June 1960, unprecedentedly huge demonstrations against the treaty filled the streets of Tokyo and all other major cities, forcing the cancellation of a planned visit of President Eisenhower to Japan.<sup>75</sup>

The U.S. government was shocked by the Japanese public's violent reaction. It had engaged in outreach for decades, working toward a pro-American Japan, yet its efforts had seemingly failed. Edwin O. Reischauer, who was then a professor of Japanese history at Harvard University, a former Special Assistant in the Office of Far Eastern Affairs of the Department of State, and one of the American committee members in the U.S.-Japan intellectual interchange program, explained the state of U.S.-Japan relations in his article, aptly titled "The Broken Dialogue with Japan" and published in the October 1960 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

In the article, Reischauer assessed the reasons the US government failed to maintain the favor of the ordinary Japanese. Reischauer maintained that the 1960 security treaty controversy was "a consequence of the conservative versus progressive" polarization caused by the lack of a unifying core of ideals stemming from dramatic social and ideological change during the Occupation. He pointed out that most opposition to the Liberal Democrats and their policy of alliance with the United States was harbored by moderate democrats, such as supporters of the Socialist Party and the newly formed Democratic Socialists, which included intellectuals and journalists. Reischauer described these people as mostly "sincere believers in democracy" who were "devoted to the ideal of international peace."<sup>76</sup> He criticized them as well, saying that "few intellectuals seem to have given serious thought to the question [of] whether Japan can maintain true neutrality and independence

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>76</sup> Edwin O. Reischauer, "The Broken Dialogue with Japan," *Foreign Affairs* 36 (October 1969), no page number, online article at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1960-10-01/broken-dialogue-japan> (accessed on September 24, 2015).



without first rearming.... Japanese intellectuals have not realistically faced the logical conclusions of the course they advocate."<sup>77</sup>

However, Reischauer also admitted faults in the U.S. strategy, pointing out that the U.S. had failed to make a concerted effort to understand the mindset and thoughts of Japanese intellectuals and engaged in limited direct contact with them. In his view, the U.S. Embassy had instead been inclined to engage in more contact with "English-speaking businessmen and with conservative political leaders" who already shared more of the American point of view on world problems. He pointed out the importance of the U.S. government's realization of the great gap in thinking separating those in power, the intellectuals, and other leaders of the opposition. He highlighted the need to devote more attention to the intellectuals who were responsible for shaping popular opinion on national issues, and he recommended that the United States open a dialogue with not only the pro-American Japanese in power but also with the skeptical anti-American Japanese intellectuals.<sup>78</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

Although the U.S. government had been trying to engage with the people of Japan through both privately initiated cultural exchanges and government-sponsored programs, such as the Fulbright Program, since the early 1950s, its efforts related to the 1960 fiasco over the security treaty revision seemed to be in vain. This was perhaps because both efforts targeted the same group. Those who could speak and understand English well enough to pass the competitive selection process to become exchange students to the United States were from affluent, long-established families of a high social class—precisely the demographic which was already primarily pro-American. Candidates who were academically gifted, but were communist sympathizers or followed another shunned ideology were excluded from the programs. Thus, as Reischauer admitted, the U.S. cultural exchange program was—whether intentionally or unintentionally—exclusive, admitting only the Japanese people from "existing dominant groups," as stated by Natalia Tsvetkova in her study.<sup>79</sup> Neither governmental nor private cultural exchange programs were immune to this bias. An inherent flaw may have been that this kind of privately initiated program, especially one funded by a philanthropic giant, had significant social status attached to it—significant

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.; Iokibe, "U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange," 79; Fujita, "The U.S.-Japan Intellectual Interchange Program and U.S.-Japanese Relations in the 1950s," 80–81.

<sup>79</sup> Tsvetkova, "International Education during the Cold War," 213–214.

enough that only a select few from the establishment were typically selected. Thus, owing to the exclusion of unsympathetic candidates, the enormous gap in perception regarding the U.S. and the global outlook among the conservative Japanese elites, left-leaning Japanese intellectuals, and ordinary people remained unchanged, if not further widened.

Reischauer's analysis in 1960 of the U.S.-Japan security treaty controversy eerily resonates today with the recent protests over the 2015 security bill. The gap in perception between the conservative government and ordinary citizens about security issues is still deep and wide. Moreover, pacifist tenets are entrenched in the Japanese psyche. The Fundamental Law of Education that controls compulsory education states that the objective of postwar education is to construct a democratic and peaceful nation.<sup>80</sup> In teaching the pacifist Article 9 to youths, psychological disarmament had an extremely potent, long-lasting effect on Japanese minds. All Japanese children learn that the constitution of Japan is the first in human history that prohibits the use of military force to realize world peace in writing. They learn that this ideal constitution was the result of the deep regret of the Japanese regarding their aggressiveness during World War II.

For the Japanese, peace and democracy are one organic concept. In reality, however, "democracy" and "peace" are separate matters. The United States, the very nation that demanded that this constitution be enforced, is the most potent military power in the world. In fact, the United States has used the banner of democracy to wage war, both before and after World War II, proving that peace and democracy are not two sides of the same coin, as the Japanese have been taught.

Because of Japan's pacifist constitution, along with a postwar education that emphasizes peace, the Japanese have been loath to accept any policies hinting of war or the military. Since the country's wartime defeat, anything indicative of "patriotism" has had a negative connotation, as it could be construed as referring to the former militaristic Japan. Most importantly, ever since the Japanese lost the war, its values and history, which all Japanese were taught to protect and preserve with their lives during the war, were also lost: these were replaced with abstract ideas such as peace and democracy. There has been no deep discussion on the meaning of "peace" for Japan. "Peace," as the absence of military combat, is an idea held dear by the Japanese, but the world has seen many unending wars and conflicts since World War II. With these concepts inextricably linked in the Japanese mind, even when the United States wanted Japan to fight against communism or, more recently, against terrorism, Japan has remained reluctant to engage. Now, seven

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<sup>80</sup> Iichi Sagara, "Education, Fundamental Law of," in *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan*.

decades after Japan's defeat, Japan has become economically successful and has gained political freedom and ideological diversity; meanwhile, the country is wandering aimlessly without a vision for its role in the global community.

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