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Democratization of
Japan 1947

Representative Mike Mansfield (Democrat-Montana) in a speech before the Montana State University Alumni Association of Washington, stated that the broad objectives of the American occupation of Japan are: (1) to prevent Japan from ever again becoming an aggressor nation; (2) to insure the establishment of a democratic government in Japan, willing to cooperate with other nations; and (3) to help bring about the ultimate creation of a peaceful world order based on political stability, economic progress, intellectual freedom and social well-being.

He stated that General Douglas MacArthur, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan, was, to a large extent, exercising the powers which were formerly held in the name of the Emperor. General MacArthur and George Atcheson, Jr., his political deputy, have, in Mr. Mansfield's opinion, done a remarkable job in bringing about the occupation of Japan with a comparatively small force and in the inauguration of certain policies destined to bring about its democratization of that country.

He brought out the fact that the Japanese government has earmarked about one-third of its ordinary budget for occupation costs which, at the official rate of exchange ⁵⁰ ~~10~~ to 1, costs Japan in excess of ^{2500.00} ~~\$10,000~~ for each member of the occupation forces, and even at the more realistic rate of 75 to 1, it exceeds \$2,000 per capita.

MacArthur's policies have been to disarm the army and navy; to bring about as speedily as possible the repatriation of the overseas Japanese troops and civilians; to bring to trial approximately 1500 major war criminals; to give the Japanese more opportunity to participate in the affairs of their government; to break the power of Zaibatsu; and to further

the interests of the Japanese people ⁱⁿ the promulgation of a new constitution based on the British model. It is the intention of the new constitution to make the Emperor comparable in position to that of the King of Great Britain.

Measures have also been taken to bring about a redirection of the land system whereby big estates are being broken up and redistributed among small farmers and former tenants.

In the matter of reparations, Congressman Mansfield pointed out that MacArthur was not in full accord with Edwin Pauley's report because he felt it was too harsh on the Japanese economy which, in his opinion, must be made self-sustaining if Japan is not to prove a drain on American resources.

Under MacArthur labor unions have been legalized and great advances have been made.

In the field of education, the old ultra-nationalistic and militaristic teachers, books and personnel have been removed and replaced by books and teachers more in accord with the democratic ideal.

In the field of religion, the national cult of State Shintoism, which was in effect largely Emperor-Worship, has been abolished and in all other respects complete religious freedom has been established.

In the matter of Russian activities in Japan, Congressman Mansfield stated that they, the Russians, had ignored American's request to contribute forces to the Allied army in that country and they have confined their official participation in the occupation to representation on the Far Eastern Commission in Washington and the Allied Council in Tokyo. Russia also maintains a liaison mission in Tokyo which in numbers exceeds that of all the rest of the Allied missions combined.

He also pointed out that the Soviet Delegate to the Allied Council, General Derevyanko, is a constant critic of MacArthur's policies and the actions of the Yoshida government. Because of this, the meetings of the Council have, in general, brought about conflict in the attitudes and the statements between Derevyanko, representing the USSR, and George Acheson, General MacArthur's representative and Chairman of the Council.

Summing up his remarks, Congressman Mansfield stated that the reparation question will be settled as soon as possible by us whether or not the Allies come in or stay out; that Hirohito, as Emperor, is filling the kind of role desired by the American occupation authorities and the American people. He further stated that while great steps have been taken in the democratization of Japan, the period of trial has been too short to arrive as yet at a final conclusion as to what ^{the} ultimate effects will be. It is the procedure of this country to give to the Japanese people as much active participation in the affairs of their government as is possible so that they can in the period ahead be able to exercise their new founded franchise effectively in the interests of a more democratic Japan and a more peaceful world.