The further employment of Japan's World War II spies.

CIA

WHICH WAY DID THEY GO?

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Now that more than twenty years have passed, it is of a certain wry interest to consider what happened to the members of the organizations which made up Imperial Japanese Intelligence. When the war ended, its officers, spread rather widely about the world, came home to a land that had no further use for their services and to an immediate future in which, were they to continue to exercise their considerable professional talents, they could find employment only as mercenaries of the occupying power. After the initial period of resettlement and inevitable interrogation, many of them chose to do just that.

Chiefs and Indians

As the hot dust of combat began to settle into the frigid landscapes of the cold war, the Occupation G-2, feeling need for a better intelligence insight into areas recently occupied by the Japanese armies than he was able to command with his own resources, began to press many of the Japanese professionals back into service. Their organizations took the form of little private units, referred to by the Japanese as *kikan*. Targetted mainly against China, Korea, and the USSR, the senior intelligence officers composing them engaged mostly in attempting to recover reporting assets they had controlled during the war. Many of the oldsters were thus able to secure their own livelihood and that of immediate subordinates who still wanted to play.

The hordes of lower-level operatives who were returned to Japan lived largely by their wits or, where possible, as notably for officials of the former Home Ministry, by reverting to police activity of some sort. As the cold war moved closer towards open hostilities in the Far East, however, the opportunities for intelligence employment increased markedly until, with the outbreak of the Korean War and the reestablishment of Japanese internal security systems of a sort, it became a seller's market for professional services. During this period, in parallel with the buildup of intelligence organizations in the American government, several new such agencies began to emerge in

Japan. In their present forms these are the National Police Agency, the Public Safety Investigation Agency, the Ground Self Defense Force, the Cabinet Research Chamber, and the Foreign Office.[1] These—and burgeoning Japanese industry—were the main consumers of intelligence on the outer world.

Thus the ill Korean wind blew good to both groups, the oldsters who continued as independent contractors, operators of *kikan*, and those, often the wartime subordinates of the first, who went directly into Japanese government employment as civil servants. The *kikan* operators probably reached their greatest productivity just before and during the beginnings of the Korean War. In this breathless period they were in touch with just about everyone on the intelligence scene, both American and Japanese.

Old Pros' Decline and Rescue

As the war increased American intelligence activity and sophistication, the quality of the *kikan* product began to look considerably less attractive by comparison. The oldsters were now forced either onto strictly Japanese resources or to work, with some rare exceptions, in circumstances of reduced funds and influence for American agencies, mainly military. But there were two new developments at this time which gave the pros a continued lease on life.

Japanese industry, which owed its first postwar boom mainly to the Korean War offshore procurement program, was beginning to look abroad to its Asian market and needed a certain amount of environmental reportage. This revived the *kikan* in the form of "Research Institutes" and "Area Problem Study Centers" of one kind or another. The Japanese government security agencies, as they developed, likewise began to feel the same need, largely in order not to appear ignorant when questioned by other government agencies with interests abroad, and the wartime subordinates of the *kikan* proprietors now generally manning the security agencies turned naturally to their former seniors with requests for studies.

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[1] For a historical sketch of the development of these agencies see Adam Jourdonnais' "Intelligence in the New Japan," *Studies* VII 3, p. 1 ff.

problems, were led roundabout into supporting once again with funds and assistance the collection schemes that the *kikan* men were offering their former junior officers.

Jobs for Juniors

As indicated above, many junior members of the wartime legion had gone into civil service. Possibly more had gone into business, either for themselves as traders in the areas of their wartime interest or as employees of the geographic divisions of the large Japanese trusts, which by now were fully back in operation and in need of experienced overseas hands. Those in the government, by and large, followed predictable professional lines. The police went back to being police officers, most following the CE/CI persuasion. Quite a few of the non-commissioned military officers went into CI work with the Public Safety Investigation Agency, where they formed the backbone of its internal subversive investigative talent. (Theirs was a rather doleful lot, for they had grown up on the good times of occupied China, where even a sergeant lived pretty well, and now were forced to drink the cold tea of the motherland.) Some military specialists—especially those that had been in communications intelligence—were welcomed into the revived Army, called the Ground Self Defense Force; but some of these, with training in radio direction finding, went into the police for a continuation of their specialty. A few others found employment in the Cabinet Research Chamber, where they became great sponsors of the *kikan* operators both for the CRC itself and for the Americans. The Foreign Office also used a few and maintained some contact with other *kikan*.

The Greats

The few Japanese "greats," the Onoderas and others who racked up impressive personal records as operators during World War II, gradually withdrew from the scene, finding more profitable if less glamorous employment in other fields. It would have been little joy for them, after their former glories, to work in the pinched circumstances of Japan's postwar intelligence. Nevertheless, there must be some hereditary tendencies in the profession, for in quite a few cases a second generation of the famous names has reappeared on the stage of Japanese intelligence, bidding fair, as this year's Rising Sun casts

its light across the Eight Corners of the World, to play the masters of the future.[2]

[2] The son of Matsuba Kureizaemon, the intelligence chief of the Amur River *Butai*, which almost precipitated war between the USSR and Japan in Manchuria in the 1930's, is a rising section chief in a current Japanese agency. The third son of General Yamanouchi Kawasho, World War II Chief of Operations in the Balkans, is now a bureau chief for another agency in a provincial capital in Shikoku. And there are others.