MR. MATSUTARO SHORIKI, EMBATTLED GUARDIAN of FREEDOM of the PRESS in JAPAN

Translated excerpts from an anthology of critical studies of the colorful figure in journalism by well-known columnists in Tokyo. The book with above title went into second edition within a week of its publication.

CONTENTS

SHORIKI DECLARES ON THE ARMY

By Tatsuo Mitarai

Of all conspiracies which led Japan step by step to the Pacific War none was more insidious and blatant than the one which threatened the freedom of the press. That the intrigue against freedom of expression, the press and society chose the Newspaper Publishers Association for its jumping board testifies to the boldness of its author, the Army.

In the battle that developed between the Big Three National Newspapers, Asahi, Mainichi, and Yomiuri, and the sinister forces, Mr. Shoriki literally staked his life as leader of the triple alliance of the press. The story of how he played his part in the drama deserves a place in the history of Japan's suicide war.

The months following the Manchurian affair of 1931 witnessed an alarming increase in interferences with the press by the Army and its henchmen in the civilian branch of the government. And yet frequent and annoying though their thrusts were, they stopped short of getting at the throat of the free, independent press. The foes, however, were not content with the skirmishes. They kept a sharp lookout for the right moment to strike at the very life of the public press.

The Manchurian incident soon spiraled into the China

War. It was inevitable that the expansion of hostilities over the mainland of China brought about a situation where production materials including newsprint grew scarcer. Newsprint supply was put on ration in 1931 : the bottleneck of newspaper production was now in the hands of a young government official still in his twenties. Presidents of leading newspapers had to go to the young man on their knees as they knew their papers and the welfare of hundreds of their employes depended on his whims. The plight proved intolerable to the publishers but a source of great rejoicings to the army leaders who, remembering how the free press stood in the way of aspirants to power in the past. The latter hoped that it would not be long before the democratic weapon would pass into their hands.

Free disemination of news was drastically curtailed when in 1930 the two major wire services, the Dentsu and Rengo news agencies, were merged into the Domei News Service under the sponsorship of the army and officials of the Ministry of Communications. The step was taken ostensibly for the purpose of economy, better service and preclusion of stories inimical to the best interests of the country which they held could only be effected by a powerful, better equipped organization.

In point of fact, the monopoly in the distribution of news thus set up represented nothing but a bridgehead of the militarists from which they could advance to total destruction of freedom of the press. The NHK (Nippon Radio Broadcasting Corporation), a subsidiary of the Communications Ministry, was told to finance the newly created wire service with a handout of ¥4,000,000. In addition to the financial backing, the army-bureaucrats combine armed their child, the Domei News Service, with a monopoly in overseas wire-

less coverage. The Dentsu, true to its proud distaste for living under the shadow of the government subsidies or interferences, fought tooth and nail against the merger and failed. The people behind the scheme were inexorable and almighty. As was expected, the Domei became a mouthpiece of the army. It promptly put the whole nation on a rigid news diet heavily flavored by Fascism. Thus an irrevocable step was taken toward the decline and fall of the Japanese Empire.

At the time the Domei embarked on its career, it was agreed that its operation cost was to be covered by subscription fees paid in by its member newspapers. In the course of time, however, its balance sheet disclosed a heavy leaning on the financial support from the armed services and NHK which annually footed one half of the cost bill. The fact steadily shifted the sole news agency in the country from a position of cooperation with the newspapers to that of hostile isolation from them. Meanwhile, due to difficulties, financial and otherwise, various newspapers could no longer keep their staff correspondents abroad. The situation played into the hands of the Domei. Its influence with the press was markedly increased as a result.

Elated with their successes in the campaign against the free press, the militarists now got busy with the idea of regimenting the press by setting up a single newspaper publishing colossus to look after the entire readership of Japan.

As a prelude to their grand finale, the military authorities bludgeoned through their stooges in the government some 115 provincial dailies into mergers. Most of struggling publications were rather willing since they were being brought face to face with deficits and increasing difficulty in securing newsprint and other production materials. The

success attendant to this sweeping surgery on provincial newspapers was largely due to the severe strains the China adventure put on our economy and to the enactment of the wartime mobilization law.

It was shortly after the mergers that Mr. FURUNO, a key figure on the wrong side in the army's assault on our freedom of the press and formally president of the Rengo News Agency served notice to the eight major newspapers in Tokyo and Osaka that it was time they moved for an amalgamation voluntarily. He put emphasis on the word "voluntarily." "Sooner or later," said the man, "you'll be confronted by a more rigid press control by the government. Why not take the initiative toward the inevitable and guard your freedom as best you can?" The suggestion had a ring of patriarchal wisdom and friendliness. No one knew at the time, however, whether FURUNO was speaking for himself or for the army. All the eight publishers thus approached could see was that the mind of the forces behind the portentous overture was set and that if they turned it down they might be forced to close down by a slip of paper bearing the signature of a government official. It was in such frame of mind that the new Japanese Newspaper Publishers Association came into being in May, 1941.

The first problem the new body grappled with was that of the allocation of newsprint. To bring to the light of day the hitherto concealed circulation figures was seen to be the first prerequisite to any just distribution of the essential material. Those publishers who had reason to stand in fear of the disclosure opposed. Mr. B. MIKI, President of the Hochi, and a prominent leader of Tokyo's Tammany Hall led this group. And it was on the scene of heated discussion of the matter that Mr. MATSUTARO SHORIKI of the Yomiuri

Shimbun took his stand as the avowed crusader for the free press. "It is not only absolutely necessary," declared SHORIKI defiantly, "but the figures can be easily ferreted out of secrecy." Throughout the sharp exchanges between the two camps that followed he stuck fast to his stand as he was fully aware that the Yomiuri Shimbun of which he was president had everything to gain and nothing to lose from the welcome expose. Besides, his position had the support of reason and justice. He won the day. But there were many a publisher who had to suffer losses in advertising and reputation when the black curtain of concealment was torn down.

The Japanese Newspaper Publishers Association's next target in line was the sales end of newspapers. Joint nation-wide sales agencies were set up in an effort to cut down expenses and eliminate waste of trucks, fuel etc. The step turned out to be a godsend to smaller metropolitan and provincial dailies as the sales machinery paved the way for easier and surer collection of subscriptions on the one hand while it weathered them from further penetration of bigger rivals on the other. It can be said in fairness that the J.N.P.A. accomplished much that could not have been done without it. It was useful in staving off further government encroachments on the free press and this and other pressing problems were dealt with successfully by the publishers themselves.

Alarmingly short however, was the honeymoon period of the J.N.P.A. In September of the same year, it was asked by the government to deliberate on the following questions:

1) Do you think it advisable to have the press classified into three groups, namely the national, bloc and provincial

newspapers?

2) Shall the national and bloc dailies be denied their provincial news supplements?

3) Do you approve of continued publication of financial, trade and other specialized newspapers?

4) How about curtailing the number of provincial dailies down to one paper for each prefecture?

5) Does it not occur to you unjust in the light of the current circumstances that one publisher should be issuing more than one daily?

6) Do you favor outright press control by the government or voluntary control by the publishers themselves?

7) Report your views on the proposed creation of a national newspaper pool.

8) Shall the present legislations on newspapers be revised?

Of the eight-point ultimatum, Point Seven was most significant. Obviously it was the thing they were after. In any case, it soon gave rise to a protracted hot debate among the J.N.P.A. leaders in which Mr. SHORIKI demonstrated his nettle as a fearless fighter for freedom of the press. The Yomiuri Shimbun president gathered at once that the whole thing was a masterpiece in the history of chicanery. Translated into hard fact, Point Seven was tantamount to an outright confiscation of billions in investment and production facilities against mere scraps of paper in so far as the authors of the plan proposed to all newspapers in this country that each publisher would be given so many shares representing the current value of his property and interests. The executives of the corporation they had in mind were to be government appointees although, according to their blueprint, the actual production of newspapers would be left to the former

publishers. In short, army leaders and bureaucrats could sit at their ease on top of Japan's newspaperdom as its kings in the event their plan was hatched.

What makes the episode sound more preposterous was the fact that there were a good many publishers who swooped down on the poisonous idea with a wow. It only serves to show how hard put they were in the face of nosediving income from advertising, increasing production cost and a hundred other headaches.

The J.N.P.A. directors dutifully met in a conference to discuss the government's eight-point ultimatum with Mr. T. TANAKA, President of the Chugai Shogyo and formally Ambassador to Moscow, in the chair. Major-General YOSHIZUMI and Colonel MATSUMURA joined the discussion as representatives of the government. As was expected, Point Seven became the central issue. It drew fire from the Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri Shimbun and other self-reliant newspapers while the weaker ones rallied around the standard bearer for compromise, Mr. MIKI of the Hochi. For a full month did the battle of words pro and con raged in the conference room without reaching agreement on the vital point. One day dazed by the heat of September and debate, the Mainich president was caught napping during the discussion. The quite harmless lapse of the gentleman ired the government representatives so much that he was finally replaced by his colleague on the Mainichi's board of directors.

A bright idea dawned upon the Vice President of the Board of Information who was also fretting over the stalemate. The official boasted of a whirlwind success in putting through the electric power control by throwing into jail the president of Nippon Electric Company after spying on him for some time and uncovering his minor past. Acting

upon this fast worker's suggestion, a small steering committee was set up with a view to injecting speed to the deliberation. And believe it or not, all the committee members were recruited from the army and government officials. Mr. TANAKA of the Chugai Shogyo was the only exception who knew anything about journalism. The aforementioned FURUNO, ever the arch-plotter back stage, was one of the five members. That an issue which was to determine the life or death of Japan's free press was left to the discretion of such committee offered little promise of a fair and acceptable solution.

The draft resolution reported out of the steering committee went farther than what the publishers feared. It proposed:

1. Pending the passage of a special legilation on the matter, the all-Japan newspaper publishing setup shall function as a limited liability concern.

2. The existing newspaper publishers will get shares of the new concern the amounts of which will be determined by the circulation, physical assets and business showing of each newspaper.

3. The existing newspaper publishing companies shall operate on behalf of the new concern.

4. The existing newspaper publishing companies shall be recast into legal persons run by their present executives.

It was only natural if the draft added oil to the fulmination of the J.N.P.A. leaders. Why, they thundered, it was nothing but outright robbery. At their explosive session upon receipt of the draft, Mr. MIKI of the Hochi echoed the views of the robbers. "I was very much impressed," he began, "by the unanimity of opinion voiced by the staff of the Hochi in favor of the move. My editors and managers

see no reason why any effort to coordinate public opinion along the line of our national policy should be discouraged." Impatient of the sugar coated prevalication, Mr. YAMADA, who now represented the Mainichi after his predecessor paid his price for napping, flung a direct, personal attack at the last speaker thus: "Although I admit Mr. MIKI is an eminent political leader, the gentleman, in my opinion, is but a freshman in journalism. He is yet to learn that ours, of all jobs, requires a willing teamwork by editors and managers down to printer's devils and delivery boys. Besides, the last speaker enjoys a reputation which is farthest removed from loyalty to the cause of the free press." "Wide-mouthed idiot," shouted the irate MIKI. After an awkward silence, the fast worker of the Board of Information spoke up. "Gentlemen, if you only realize the grave external and internal situation we are now facing," he said, "you would not hesitate to do your part in our effort to build up a solid, united front of public opinion. I am here today to see the draft approved by you all. And let me add that I am here to see it through even at the cost of my position in the government and even my life." He sat down, pale with emotion. Another spell of tense silence followed. Suddenly, someone shoved his chair back. It was Mr. SHORIKI of the Yomiuri Shimbun. He stood up with a determination. "His excellency," he spoke, "has my respect for his courage to stake his life on his plan for regimentation of the public press. I assure him that I, as a man who has always held journalism dear to his heart, will join his bet by staking my life on the proud cause of the independent and free press." The electrified scene reached white heat. Resort to violence appeared likely. Fortunately, they had Mr. TANAKA, a seasoned career diplomat, in the chair. He

rapped the table and announced the session adjourned. Needless to say, the resolute stand of Mr. SHORIKI gave a plenty of strength to the elbows of those publishers who disapproved the army-government script.

It was now apparent to the ranking chief of the Board of Information that it would serve no useful purpose of his to engage Mr. SHORIKI in a frontal clash. A tete-a-tate with his brainy pal, Mr. FURUNO, pointed to the back door namely that of buying up the intrepid publisher with some attractive bait.

A few days after the stormy conference, FURUNO called on the Yomiuri Shimbun president to try the new approach on him. The burden of the caller's offer was that in the event the projected newspaper control agency became a reality Mr. SHORIKI would be its first president. "Let me tell you one thing," observed FURUNO, "the army is all set to put it through no matter what the cost. As you know, the only obstacle to consummation of the deal so far is the opposition to the idea of Asahi, Mainichi and your paper. Only if you could acquiesce in the army's project, the army is ready to override the opposition of the remaining two journals." Every time he repeated the word "army" he put a sharp, strong accent on it. "Who in the army said so?" pursued the old man. "Well, " rejoined FURUNO, hesitantly, "I mean the army as a whole." "Granted," declared Mr. SHORIKI, "it is the collective decision of the army, but I have opposed and I will continue to oppose the whole thing. Mind you, my decision does not stem from consideration of dollars and cents. I am standing behind freedom of the press." SHORIKI thus left no room for further talk.

The temptation was no doubt very great. It should

be recalled that his publication, the Yomiuri Shimbun, had for years been confronted by a cut-throat rivalry with Asahi and Mainichi. Suppose he accepted the offer, his rivals would be clay around his fingers. Not only that, he could throw his weight around with lesser creatures in the nation's publishing business as their Lord Paramount.

His flat rejection came at a time when the free press of Japan stood on the edge of a precipice.

Mr. SHORIKI and I have been great friends for many, many years since we have no material interests to fight over. We have nothing to keep from one another. "I admit I am stubborn," he confided to me in a reflective mood one day, "that's why I run into endless conflicts with other people and trouble." "You mean your forthrightness," corrected I. "It's the same thing to me," he persisted. "One evening during the war," continued my friend: "I was invited to dinner at the German Embassy. The fact that there were only the host, Ambassador von OTTO, and myself in the room suggested that something very confidential was up in the air. Over coffee, the German diplomat wondered [illegible] the Yomiuri Shimbun should keep such a [illegible] as Mr. Tomin Suzuki as Foreign Editor. He quoted the consensus of his Japanese friends in Tokyo in demanding his dismissal chiefly on the grounds that he was openly anti-Nazi. Considering the unusual honor the German Ambassador was doing me in playing host at a twosome dinner, I felt it to be my duty to comply with his wishes. But then TOMIN SUZUKI was an able editor. Besides, I recalled his German wife who, I was told, had to flee from Germany because of her Jewish origin leaving practically all she had in the world behind her. I was aware of some of the articles he wrote were mighty critical of Hitler's Germany

but none of them appeared in my paper. Well, I told my host that I would think about it. I presume he knew the Japanese connotation of the noncommittal phrase—a polite negative. Just imagine the dinner and my shielding of the anti-Nazi foreign editor of my paper later cost me a term in the prison for war criminals. It seems that a Japanese communist cooked up the dinner-talk and passed it on to the Occupation authorities. And you know how this man, SUZUKI, led the infamous strike, criminal assualts and siege of our plant by the communists in the Yomiuri Shimbun over the turn of the year 1945. It was not the old gribing about kindness failing to pay that made me mad. I was mad about myself. Yes, Sir, I am that goofy and stubborn."

But the forthrightness with which Mr. SHORIKI defied the dictate of the army leaders on regimentation of the press threatened to cost him dearer. He warned his 3,000 employes to prepare for the worst. The all-powerful army would get him and his paper some day. A portent of his fear came when one day a few gendarmes came to his plant and took away four reporters and wireless operators giving no reason for their extraordinary conduct. Days passed but the captives did not return. His lieutenants were of opinion that unless their president reported in person at the gendarmery and ask for their release they probably would never return. So Mr. SHORIKI betook himself to the military police headquarters. He met a tough reception there. After a brief questioning, a first-lieutenant intimated to him that the only way to have the four employes freed lay in SHORIKI's resignation from the presidency of the Yomiuri Shimbun. Toward the evening the grim fear vanished. He and the four men were set free. "Misunderstanding" was the only

apology they got from the officers for the atrocity. Meanwhile, rumors persisted around that time saying that Mr. SHORIKI was about to retire. The army, knowing only too well that a crack in the united opposition to controlled press meant surrender of the publishers as a whole, exhausted all tricks they could think up. A clarion call for more unity of the Big Three newspapers was voiced by a centenarian publicist, Mr. SOHO TOKUTOMI.

Another sly attempt to wreck the unity took the form of a rumor alleging that Mr. TAKETORA OGATA, vice president of the Asahi, was seen frequently in the company of one of the authors of the press-control plan, Mr. FURUNO. Remembering how in the past the Big Three dailies had dangled one another in a cut-throat competition, the insinuation could have raised suspicion or mistrust about the Asahi leader's loyalty by the remaining two papers. Alarmed by the gossip campaign, Mr. RYUHEI MURAYAMA, president of the Asahi chain of newspapers, sent for Mr. OGATA to tell him the truth. The latter vindicated his loyalty to the press. Be that as it may, the jittering situation called for a re-affirmation of the stand of the Big Three. At a dinner-conference attended by twelve top executives of the trio, it was categorically agreed that they stood ready to fight the control plan to the finish. After the rain, as our old saying goes, the ground of unity held firmer. In fact, the representatives at the conference had no illusion about what the army's Eight-Point demand meant. Should it take effect their publications would be as good as dead. It was all to their advantage to stake their all in their fight against it.

And, strange to state, it took this sudden stiffening of opposition to open the eyes of the military. It was brought

home to them for the first time that it was no easy thing to bust the press once and for all. They never realized until then that newspapers, like men, had individuality. In editorial policy, management and technical aspects, they were so widely different from one another that it was futile to try to cast them in a single mold. From that moment on, the army shifted their position from a policy of total "liquidation" of newspapers to that of imposing a more or less control. They tasted their first defeat when the Yomiuri Shimbun president openly challenged the army at the J.N.PA. meeting mentioned earlier. They did not want to repeat it. The initial defeat, be it noted, owes its origin to a succession of easy victories they had won prior to the flop. Local newspapers had fallen one after another under the merger storm they had initiated; the major wire services in Japan were now reduced to the solitary Domei. Drunk with those walkover successes of theirs, they underestimated the strength of the national newspapers.

One December day, Mr. OGATA of the Asahi and Mr. TANAKA, chairman of the J.N.PA. meetings on the army-sponsored motion, called on the champion of the free press. "It seems," said the Asahi man, "the army gave up hope of regimentation. They are now angling for some face-saving backdown." "What do you mean?" demanded SHORIKI, unrelenting. "They are mooting a modus vivendi," explained OGATA, "which consists of placing a carte blanche by the army, Board of Information and ourselves in the hands of Mr. TANAKA, our chairman. That is to say, all parties concerned undertake to support such new plan as Mr. TANAKA will draw up and lay before our next conference." "What did Mr. YAMADA of the Mainichi say to

it," SHORIKI wanted to make sure. "He is out of town at present. I'll let you know when he gets back. Do let me have your answer yes or no," pressed the visitors. Whereupon SHORIKI gave his answer in the affirmative. When the callers left, he resented his rash answer. There was no telling, he thought, if the army might not bring their pressure to bear upon the chairman. In that eventuality, he mused with a pang of remorse, all he had gone through to defeat the army would be cast to the winds. He gave voice to his fears later in the presence of OGATA, TANAKA and YAMADA of the Mainichi and gave his final consent to the carte blanche idea provided the chairman would not foist on them any plan which they could not accept.

The plan Mr. TANAKA bared at the conference a few days later was not so bad as Mr. SHORIKI feared. It proposed:

1. All newspapers shall be legal persons with their shares and investments owned by their employes including the present members of their boards of directors.

2. Profits of the newly authorized newspaper publishing companies shall come under such ceilings as are imposed on all national policy corporations.

3. Official permission is required before starting a new journal. Executives of same are to be chosen from among persons who are equipped with such qualifications as are defined in the accompanying regulation. The executives thus authorized shall not engage in any business enterprise other than the publication of their newspapers.

4. The government authorities shall hand over in trust their powers to the Japanese Newspaper Publishers Association with a view to cooperating with others in a joint effort to consolidate the body further as an organ instrumental to coordination of newspapers.

5. A stock company tentatively called United Newspapers, Inc., shall be established for the specific purpose of looking after the financial end of newspaper coordination.

6. Although the press is to become a public institution for the good of the country, due respect for the initiative, individuality and traditional pattern of production and management of each shall be assured all newspapers.

7. Allocation of newsprint and other production materials shall be given priority. A special reduction in taxes on newspaper production shall be considered.

8. In view of the fact that implementation of above points calls for appropriate legislation, the government shall undertake to see to it that necessary steps are taken to this end.

The eyes of the men present turned on the crusader for freedom of the press, Mr. SHORIKI. It seemed the latter heaved a sigh of relief now that the worst was over. Of course he did not like the revised plan at all. Unpalatable though it certainly was, it appeared to him as a lesser evil compared with the original version which had aimed at total liquidation of the newspapers in existence. Mr. TANAKA of the Chugai Shogyo, in the chair was overjoyed at the success of his eleventh hour stroke of diplomacy in the field of journalism to which the ex-Ambassador was a comparatively new comer. Obviously he fought the hardest ordeal between two fires: the army leaders harassed him with their insistence on their plan on the one hand while he had to reckon with the adamant stand of Mr. SHORIKI on the other. And after eight months of heaving and showing in the conferences, he won the day. There were others, however, who had been seeking their

financial salvation in the troubled waters. To those publishers the army's annihilation handout undoubtedly had the lure of a blessing in disguise. Great was their disappointment, therefore, when the assembly voted unanimously for the TANAKA program. It was quite possible, I think, that the army sponsors gnashed their teeth at the outcome but remained powerless in the face of the fact that Mr. TANAKA was armed with their carte blanche.

By an irony of fate a Government Bill for press coordination was introduced to the House of Representatives on the historic December 8, 1941, which marked the beginning of our disastrous war. A Representative took the floor and condemned it as a challenge to the basic right of a free people. In short, had it not been for Japan's fresh victories in the initial stage of the hostilities, the bill doubtless must have had a stiff sailing in the legislature.

The machinery thus set in motion brought a mixed blessing to the national as well as provincial newspapers throughout Japan. The best that could be said in its favor was the fact that thanks to the unflagging resistance of the leading dailies ably led by Mr. SHORIKI, the press withstood the shock of the burrowing consequences of war and constant irritants stemming from the army. It was true that the press as a whole came to lose much of its former vigor and colorfulness but it merits a special mention that freedom of the press narrously escaped total extinction the army people were after.

On the debit side of the balance sheet, we witnessed a marked decrease in the number of dailies both in our major cities and smaller ones. To begin with, the Big Three had to be content with their main plants in Tokyo, Osaka and Kyushu. Other plants were closed down. Of the prewar

total of over 170 dailies only 57 continued to operate. Hokkaido was hardest hit with its seven dailies boiled down through merger to just one paper. Lesser prinvinces were put on a rigid, stardardized diet of a single newspaper for each. Many a provincial publication which had been heading for receivership before the effectivation of the measure became a principal beneficiary as a result—if they survived the wholesale pruning, that is.

"What," I asked the old man SHORIKI at one of our frequent reunions, "if you accepted the offer of the presidency of the army sponsored colossal single newspaper for entire Japan?" "What?" returned he, grinning, "Don't I know the military mind? After a brief stay in the sun, I must surely have been kicked out of the glory."

LANDMARKS IN MY LIFE

By Matsutaro Shoriki

The earlier part of my life had primarily to do with riots. Fisticuffs, flying brickbats and worse had not entered my dreams when I joined the metropolitan police as a junior inspector upon leaving the Imperial University of Tokyo in 1913. After eleven years of service as a captian of the guardians of the law, I was awarded a disciplinary discharge in connection with an attempt on the life of Emperor Taisho by an anarchist. I turned and have kept my back on the government service ever since. No attractive baits dangled before my nose by government leaders could alter my decision. By an unexpected twist in life, I, an ex-police inspector, turned publisher a few months after the sensational incident when I was made president of the Yomiuri Shimbun.

I had two qualifications to become a captain of Tokyo's riot squads. First, I turned out to be the best blade in the police force. Second, in a number of scuffles I had with mobsters my no uncertain grasp of "judo" tricks stood me in good stead.

Readers, if you are above forty I don't have to recount to you the way the terrific "Rice Riot" of 1918 first got started in an out of the way fishing village in Toyama on the coast of the Japan Sea and then spread all over the country in no time. It was the toughest job I tackled in

my eventful eleven years with the police. The news that scores of fishermen's wives attacked rice shops in their village gave me hunch that the trouble could be contageous. The commander-in-chief of our force was warned against a possible outbreak of the kind in our midst. He scoffed at the idea.

True to my prediction, the thing I had dreaded came to Tokyo one sweltering summer day of the same year. At first, it looked like a harmless speech making rally at the Young Men's Hall with several opposition leaders orally whipping the government for its unfortunate food policy. Soon a stream of men winding their way towards the meeting place swelled into a flood. Sensing danger, the Metropolotian Police Headquarters alerted the police stations hard by. I was told to disperse the meeting with 200 men but I proposed that it would be better if I handled the situation singlehanded. The sight of so many officers on the scene could only have the effect of feeding oil to smouldering embers, I explained.

Upon arriving at the Young Men's Hall, I elbowed my way right up to the platform and demanded to see the sponsors of the rally. We talked it over quietly as man to man. They gave me word that they would close the meeting of their own accord.

Not so easy was the situation that awaited us in Hibiya Park toward dusk of the same day. Report brought to the police headquarters said that there were about 10,000 people gathered around the band stand in the park from which speakers by turn were opening up their broadsides of incendiary oratory. "Inspector," said the chief to me, "Take another trip to Hibiya and be sure to bring me as good an account of yourself as the one you have just given me." This time I was

prepared for a fight. But I told my men to have their sabers fastened tight so that they would not be tempted to unsheathe them even in the face of the worst provocations. As I did earlier in the day, I made straight for the band stand, heaved the speaker in action clear of the railing and arrested a few others. The sudden change in the attitude of the police in particular took the crowd by surprise. Cowed by my whirlwind performance they ebbed away rather tamely.

Before I had time to mop off the sweat on my brow, the telephone bell rang announcing that the Rice Exchange in the downtown area was being torn to pieces by a large-sized mob. My third trip in a single day brought me face to face with a wilder crowd than the last one. They were raining stones, bricks and what not at the building. All rice shops in the neighborhood were sharing the same fate with their windows smashed and doors broken down. I did my best to persuade them to stop but, conscious of their overwhelming numerical superiority, they gave us little heed. Not only that someone got me in the head with something hard. I felt a dull pain where I was hit but continued my effort to bring the excited people back to sanity. It was almost midnight. With all lamp-posts either felled or smashed up the scene of bewilderment was pitch dark with the exception of a single arclight which was too tall and solid for them to destroy. Leaning against the arclight for support, I kept on shouting something at the crowd with blood trickling down the shoulders. "You are badly hurt," a newsman reminded me as he handed me his handkerchief for bandage. "You'd better go to the nearest hospital right off," insisted the Good Samaritan. Then a strange thing happened. For some unknown reason, the mad crowd began to withdraw. Most probably the sight of a

sinking police officer made them feel sorry for what they had done. In any case, the success of my third mission on that riot-packed day was due to an accident.

My eleven stormy years with the metropolitan police taught me the unwisdom of waivering in a time of crisis. I took the lesson into the scores of years as publisher of the Yomiuri Shimbun—years which proved as fraught of crises as the earlier decade.

Just as the army gave the free press in Japan a hot chase during the war so did the Japanese communists and fellow-travellers when peace returned. For reasons best known to themselves, they picked up from among the newspapers the Yomiuri Shimbun as their first target of attack. Incited by our managing editor, TOMIN SUZUKI, the Red and Pinks under him launched a shock assault on the management early in October, 1945. Behind them towered the MAO-TSE-TUNG of Japan, KYUICHI TOKUDA, and other top leaders of the Communist Party. From the outset, I had a clear vision of fearsome consequences of any agreement with them through compromise. It was crystal clear to me that my paper in their bag meant communization of the country. So I faced their challenge with the bridge burnt down.

The first attempt to settle the dispute was made by Mr. ICHIRO HATOYAMA, now the rival of Prime Minister YOSHIDA for political dominance. His emissary, a prominent Diet member, buttonholed me for two hours, pointing out to me that meeting the strikers halfway was the only solution to the labor war in my plant. I gave him my resolute no. As days passed with the newsroom and editorial offices firmly held by the sitdown strikers, I thought of taking the matter to the Attorney General. Upon finding the high official

of the law unresponsive, I turned to a more drastic step of pitching out the saboteurs from the bottleneck of our establishment. Immediately complaints were filed by the Communists against the alleged use of force.

The mediation committee of the city of Tokyo came to the rescue on December 5th. There were three representatives of management and the equal number of labor delegates headed by none other than the top Communist TOKUDA. The last mentioned moved for placing the matter before the Management Consultants, an organ of his own creation which was "consultative" only in name. It was in fact a task team of Communists modeled after the pattern of Soviet strategy. Conciliatory approach was conspicuous in its absence from the beginning of our conferences which were often disrupted by mass walkouts of the labor delegates. Once Communist KIKUNAMI who is now mysteriously missing along with TOKUDA snatched an ashtray from the table and crashed it under my very nose, accompanying the action with an ugly insult at me. Finally, at a sitting which lasted from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. of the following day, a general agreement was reached. It was on December 10th. A startling scene-shifting followed. I was thrown into Sugamo Prison for war criminals at 8 a.m. of the day after.

Looking back on the terrain of landmarks in my life, I am most pround of the stiff battle I waged against the army leaders at a time when the free press in Japan was confronted by the greatest peril in the history of journalism. The episode is ably taken up elsewhere in the book by my old friend and columnist, Mr. TATSUO MITARAI.

When I took it over as its president in 1924, I found my charge, the Yomiuri Shimbun, rasping and panting for

breath to maintain its puny circulation of 50,000 daily. Today its officially certified circulation, including those of seven affiliated local newspapers, exceeds 2,600,000.

For the possible benefit of those who would mistakenly attribute its spectacular rise to greatness to a heap of money they imagine I raised somehow and poured into the daily, I will set forth here with utmost frankness and honesty the secret of my success. First of all, it should be recalled that many were the publishers in the past who actually poured millions into their publications in the hope that money alone would breathe life into their dying concerns and that many are the epitaphs today announcing the futileness of the gold injection treatment. There is another fallacy to be combated. It has its roots in a similar overestimate of money power: it holds that better pay to employes is a sure promise of better work. I don't think pay in my establishment was any better than elsewhere. Nevertheless, all men from editors and managers down worked their hardest because of their conviction that they were working for a booming publication with yet greater success round the corner.

I doubt very much whether they would have demonstrated the same devotion to work had they been skeptical of the future of my paper. In other words, the lure of good pay appears to me to be a secondary consideration as an incentive to work when compared with assurances that your employes are betting their talent and labor on a "sure win" undertaking. You can't blame them if they shoud duck for self protection against fears of a failure and slow down in their effort accordingly. At the Yomiuri Shimbun, I personally lit the torch of hope and kept it burning before our 2,000 employes. I worked harder and longer than

any of them. So did the editors and managers. In addition to the exemplary teamwork, good editorial planning and management strategy hit on a type of newspaper irresistible to a mass readership. That in a nutshell sums up the whys and hows of our dramatic rise to greatness. Let me add that I played the game all by myself. I kept no brain trust to get me wise on this and that. It took quite a while and plenty of deliberation before I would arrive at an idea. But once my mind was set I saw to it that it was done.

Many were the instances where the Yomiuri Shimbun tangled with adversities in our characteristic way. Among them the most illustrative of our novel approach was our decision to reduce our space by two pages at a time when any cut meant a serious dent in circulation.

It was shortly after Japan plunged into war with China in 1937 that the government demanded of all newspapers that they reduce their space by 10 percent. As there were no restrictions on newsprint supply some dailies had 20 to 24 pages to a copy although the standard was set at 16. When we speak of so many pages to an issue, the figures represent the total number of pages of morning and evening editions issued by the same publishing company. For fear of its evil effect on circulations, no publisher indicated his readiness to comply with the behest. My decision to carry out the government order to the letter drew fire from my own trusted executives. The circulation manager was adamant against it. He wanted to know if I was in my senses. I explained to him fully and earnestly what I had in mind. The first shock of the step would be felt in advertising. As I took it, I said, the loss thus incurred could be set off by higher advertising rates in a few months.

Five million handbills were dumped on the densest population centers in Tokyo and beyond assuring the people that they would have the same news coverage as before. Our contention that government orders were government orders and that our respect for them was to be implemented at a considerable sacrifice of take from advertising was well received by the public. The Yomiuri Shimbun with two pages off added more subscribers to our regular clientele.

Encouraged by the precident set by us, other papers followed suit. Then followed a series of cuts due to the increased strains of war economy until all newspapers became two pagers. A time was when we faced difficulties on account of an alarming shrinkage in advertising income but that from circulation increased by leaps and bounds so that both ends of our business came to hit on a satisfactory equation.

Another departure from the generally accepted rules in the newspaper business here in Japan lay in the way I strove to weed out corruption in my establishment. The circulation and advertising departments came under my vigilance for the obvious reason that they have always been hotbeds for peculation, graft and other forms of dishonesty. Quite contrary to the hush-hush policy usually pursued by other publishers for fear of loss of "face," I faced the problems when they occurred with neither fear nor mercy. Miscreants were promptly reported to the judiciary. It proved to be the most effective deterrent to corruption.

There is still another thing in Japanese journalism which I have always been up against. It concerns the false interpretation of equality among employes in terms of salaries and wages. I for one do not believe in a flat schedule and progressive flat raises. It is easy to see that the respector-

of-no-persons policy is welcomed by editors and managers since it would bring them fewer complaints and criticisms from the men and women under them. To me it appears most outrageously unfair to those who deserve special recognition for their initiative, gift or loyalty to work.

All newspapers in Tokyo began to dig in for safety from the merciless strafing by B-29's only when Okinawa was threatened. A frantic search for available basements in big buildings in the capital disclosed to our dismay that none of them would be proof against heavy air attacks. Both Asahi and Mainichi decided to move miles out of town. A friend of mine tipped me off on a subsoil emplacement which was being built by the Nakajima Aircraft makers in a nearby province. Turning my deaf ear to the suggestion, I continued my search for a suitable site within a convenient radius around the center of the city so that regular delivery of my paper could be maintained. After a round-the-clock hunt we found one—a spot virtually under our very nose. A bend of the outer moat encircling the Imperial Palace is narrowed down by deep, overhanging embankments on both sides at Ochanomizu. History tells us that the man-made ravine some 45 feet deep came into being more than 300 years ago. History and convenience smiled upon us. We set down to work with a glee. Scores of men started to drill tunnels at two points. Suddenly, an insurmountable snag presented itself. It was the problem of how to remove and then install our printing presses when the shelter was completed. I figured that the job would take at least a couple of weeks. We could not afford a stoppage even for a single day. And as there were no working printing press builders in those days when all plants were commandeered by the defense services,

getting new units for our purpose was an impossibility. Fortunately, however, the president of the Tokyo Machine Company consented to scrape together some old units and shove them into our excavation. Considering that he had to do the job secretly as his plant was turning out the teeth for the Imperial Navy, he must have had constant fear of detection and the horrible consequences thereof. The fact that prison labor was thrown in to expedite the hazardous job should serve to show what we had to go through under the narrow circumstances.

While the work was under way the Yomiuri Shimbun's plant was mauled beyond recognition by air attacks. Acting upon the wartime agreement of mutual help among the metropolitan newspapers, I asked the Asahi for help and obtained their consent to print my paper in their plant which had suffered no damage. The memorable August 15, 1945, came while our excavation work was in full swing. Now, on the grounds that the return of peace brought our wartime agreement to an end the Asahi gave me a month notice that they would no longer print the Yomiuri Shimbun. I was bitter, recalling how I had offered to them and other publishers the use of my Ochanomizu shelter when completed since no one could have told in those days which one of us should have been hit. Again the gallant president of the Tokyo Machine came to my rescue. He rushed in brand new units before the Asahi's ultimatum came into effect.

A few days after my release from Augamo Prison, the good Tokyo Machine president and his wife came to see me at my home. The tale he narrated to me endorsed and barnished the dust-covered observation that reality springs more surprises than a fiction. "You did me a

good turn," said the man in his stalwart eighties, "when you placed that big order with us. In fact, it gave us an inducement and opportunity to start out as builders of printing presses. Other plants laid off skilled workers upon the arrival of peace but, due to your assignment, I retained my men and told them to concentrate on the line of work on hand. Today the Tokyo Machine, Ltd., stands out easily as top makers of presses in this country." He climaxed his little speech with an OMIYAGE (present) which was 1,000 fully paid up shares of his firm.