

**Captain Hitomi's "goodwill" missions in Luzon and Panay, 1942 -43:
a logic of conciliation in the Japanese Propaganda in the Philippines.**

**Papers prepared for the 13th IAHA Conference
Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan
September 5 - 9, 1994**

**draft only
not for citation**

1

When examining the eyewitness accounts concerning the Japanese occupation of the Philippines during World War II, one inevitably finds two contrasting opinions. In the records left by Filipinos who experienced the occupation, we find descriptions leaving us with the conclusion that few occupations have been so brutal and oppressive. On the other hand, in the memoirs and interviews remaining from the Japanese military officers and bureaucrats who engineered the occupation, we find the general argument that policy at that time was quite conciliatory in nature¹. As to why such a wide gap exists in the perceptions of the occupiers and those who suffered under their regime concerning what really happened, the simplest answer is that the actual perpetrators of the cruelty have remained silent, while those who conducted themselves properly have spoken out in order to maintain their innocence. However, in the present paper I would like to pursue a different answer that considers the question in a little more depth. What I will argue here is that there were actually two different aspects of the same basic occupation policy direction adopted by Japan for the Philippines: one, the oppression and brutality described so vividly by its victims; the other, "a logic of conciliation" that appears in the much of the Japanese source materials. Moreover, these two aspects are by no means contradictory because they stem from the same passive disconcern on the part of the Japanese occupation policy with regard to the Philippines and the Filipino people.

In the present paper the term conciliation is not used in the sense of two parties in a dispute who agree to differ and choose to let peace be restored by conciliation. Rather, the term is used in the more basic sense of Japan adopting a "conciliatory attitude" towards the occupied Philippines, a tendency towards self-restraint or patience on the part of the Japanese with a specific framework or agenda of demands they thought might be acceptable to the Filipino people. It may also be thought of as Japan's occupation policy direction there: that is, a logic for calling out to the Filipino people, a logic for asking the Filipino people to adopt a pure wait-and-see attitude and thus remove themselves completely as participants in the war with the United States. It was a kind of appeasement, if you will; but not the appeasement practiced from a position of weakness by the French and British towards the Nazis on the

¹See such Japanese argument found in interview materials and memoirs as following: *Showa-shi no Tenno (Emperor of Showa Era)*, Vol.10 and 11 (Tokyo: Yomiuri-shinbun Co., 1970); Utsunomiya Naokata, *Minami-jyujisei wo Nozomitsutsu (Seeing the Southern Cross)* (privately published, 1981); The Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, (ed.), *Intabyu Kiroku: Nippon no Firipin Senryo (Interview Records: Japanese Occupation of the Philippines)* (Tokyo: Ryukei shosha, 1994).

eve of World War II; rather, it was the conciliatory attitude necessary for appeasing or neutralizing a bothersome country that does not fit into one's overall plans for conquest.

An excellent example of Japan's logic of conciliation may be found in the experience of one Army Captain Hitomi Junsuke of the Philippine expeditionary force, the 14th Army, in spreading propaganda among the Filipino people under Japanese occupation. Hitomi, who is still alive by the way, has already been introduced as a cadre officer involved in the army's propaganda efforts by the works of Motoe T. WADA, Suzuki Shizuo, and other historians². I myself had the opportunity to interview Hitomi during the four years I spent participating in the Forum for the Survey of Records Concerning the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines. At that time he also made public to us theretofore secret materials concerning his propaganda activities in the Philippines. This paper is based on the information gathered at that time. The interview should be published by now, and the Hitomi documents are in the process of being reprinted with commentary by both Motoe Wada and myself³.

2

Let me begin now with a brief description of Hitomi's military career before being assigned to the 14th Army. Born on a Kyoto Prefecture as "the third son of a poor peasant⁴" in 1916, Hitomi volunteered for the Army and was enrolled in the Second Royal Infantry Regiment in 1936, after leaving his job as a regional youth school teacher. He was one of the many young people in prewar Japan who were striving for social reform through the agrarian youth movement⁵. His enlisting in the Army was originally motivated by the belief that military training would be useful for educating

²See Motoe T. Wada, "The Japanese Propaganda Corps in the Philippines: Laying the Foundation," Grant K. Goodman (ed.), *Japanese Cultural Policies in Southeast Asia during World War 2* (London: Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1991); Suzuki Shizuo and Yokoyama Michiyoshi (eds.), *Shinsei Kokka Nippon to Ajia* (Holy Japanese Empire and Asia) (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1984); Nakano Satoshi, "Nippon no Tonan Ajia Senryo Taisei (Japan's Occupation Regime in Southeast Asia)," *Rekishigaku Kenkyu* (Journal of Historical Studies) 653 (October 1993).

³"Intabyu 14: Dai 14 Gun Sendenhan-Hodobu wo Megutte (Interview 14: Regarding the 14th Army Propaganda Corps/Department of Information)," *Intabyu Kiroku*, pp.481-538. This record is based on interviews with Hitomi Junsuke on April 20, June 15, and June 27, 1992. Hitomi Documents will also be reprinted very soon. The title will be, Nakano Satoshi and Terami Motoe (Motoe T. Wada) (eds.), *Dai 14 Gun Gun-sendenhan Senden Kosaku Shiryo -syu* (Documents of the Propaganda Activities of the 14th Army Propaganda Corps) (Tokyo: Ryukei shosha).

⁴"Intabyu 14," p.482.

⁵During his college years, he went to Tokyo and attended the summer school held at Kinkei Gakuin owned by a famous Confucian (Yomei) philosopher Yasuoka Masahiro. Hitomi was very much impressed with Yasuoka's preaching that emphasized the important role which the rural youth should play in the Japan's historical development. See "Intabyu 14," p.482.

Japan's rural youth. That was, however, before the situation in China escalated into a full scale war in 1937, and Hitomi lost the opportunity to return to teaching. In 1938, after going through an officer training program, he was attached to the 12th Battalion of the Manchurian Independent Defense Force with the rank of second lieutenant.

During his fourth year in Manchuria, the Battalion was ordered to take punitive action against a Communist Party-organized guerrilla force calling itself the "Unified Anti-Japanese Resistance Army of the Northeast (Dongbei Kang-Ri lianjun)". The campaign against this guerrilla army made Hitomi into a highly trained expert in the art of anti-guerrilla warfare and intelligence. He had taken a deep interest in the agrarian communities of Manchuria on the other hand and passionately presented proposal after proposal to the regional high command in the interest of improving Manchurian agricultural policy⁶. Hitomi not only became a talented military officer, but also grew into an idealist with a strong affinity to rural life, a passion for furthering education, and deep sentiments concerning the conditions of the masses under the Japanese occupational forces. In November of 1941 Lieutenant Hitomi was transferred to the 14th Army's Propaganda Corps.

Here I would like to point out that there were two types of propaganda put out by Japan during the Pacific War. One was the conventional type of military publicity designed to gain direct support for the strategy of the invading forces, then help its efforts to restore and maintain law and order after the occupation was achieved. The other type was designed to indoctrinate the occupied people with the Japan's plan for building a Greater Asia, in order to gain their cooperation in obtaining "defense resources" and securing "regional autonomy." In the Philippines the main part of the Propaganda Corps was active within and around Manila, organizing the media, mainly radio and the newspapers and developing political and cultural propaganda programs. The indoctrination element was present in these activities, which have been examined in detail by Motoe Wada and Ricaldo T. Jose⁷.

Hitomi, on the other hand, was assigned during the earlier years of the occupation to the propaganda effort outside of the Manila region. First, in order to persuade people in the countryside who had fled from the occupation forces into the mountains to return to their homes in Manila and resume their daily lives, Hitomi twice led Propaganda platoons into the Batangas and Bicol regions of southern Luzon. These missions took place in 1942 from January 26th to February 8th and from February 27th to March 9th. Then, after the surrender of Battan and Corregidor by the US Army Forces in the Far

⁶"Ibid.," pp.483-485.

⁷See Wada, "The Japanese Propaganda Corps in the Philippines," pp.183-188, 195-201; Ricardo T. Jose, "The Japanese Occupation and Philippine Culture: An Overview," *Panahon ng Hapon: Sining sa Digmaan, Digmaan sa Sining* (Studies of Philippine Art and Society, 1942-1945)(Manila: the Sentrong Pangkultura ng Pilipinas, 1992), pp.9-20.

East (USAFFE), Hitomi was reassigned to the 65th Brigade for the purpose of getting the American-Philippine guerrilla forces in northern Luzon to surrender as well as persuading the local people to cooperate with the Japanese Army to restore law and order. Leading a platoon that included a US military representative, Hitomi toured the Mountain Province and Ilocos region from April 25th to August 18th, 1942. Then in October he commanded another platoon on a mission to the guerrilla infested Visaya region, during which he lent support to the 170th Independent Infantry Battalion in their activities to destroy the very strong guerrilla organization on the island of Panay. However, in May of 1943 Hitomi was suddenly relieved of his duties for reasons I will discuss forthwith and returned to Manila, where he served as a Captain of the Hodobu (Department of Information)⁸ until the end of the War. The kind of work that Hitomi did in the rural propaganda effort was mainly of the conventional type designed to restore and maintain public order, and thus reflects well the Philippine situation characterized by anti-Japanese guerrilla groups continually rising up all over the country. In the reports filed by Hitomi to his superiors, we notice the groups he led being referred to as the "Hitomi Senden Tai (Hitomi Propaganda Platoon)," but we also see their assignments being euphemistically called "goodwill missions" to avoid the negative connotations in the term senden, which means propaganda or advertisement. What these missions intended to do was allay the fears of local folk by sponsoring "Japan-Philippine friendship events" with entertainment in the form of singing, dancing and motion pictures, and also physicians to treat the sick and distribute medicine. Therefore, in order to organize such varied events these platoons included not only officers and men from the Propaganda Corps, but also local Japanese residents, news reporters, photographers, and novelists, in addition to Filipino entertainers, motion picture projectionists, public speakers and physicians. These methods used by the Hitomi platoons were, as already described by Motoe Wada, quite different from the rest of the Corps⁹. What I would like to point out here, though, is how different Hitomi's logic of propaganda was from the programs developed within and around Manila and those employed in the other occupied territories of Southeast Asia. That is to say, Hitomi did not try to impress on his listeners that the Pacific War was a holy war for the liberation of Asia, but rather urged them to adopt a wait-and-see attitude concerning the conflict that the United States and Japan were involved in.

3

⁸In July 1942, Sendenhan (Propaganda Corps) was renamed and reorganized into Hodobu (Department of Information).

⁹"Ibid.," pp.192-193. Hitomi's "goodwill mission" to Bicol region was vividly described in a Ishizaka Yojiro's following novel: Ishizaka Yojiro, *Mayon no Kemuri* (Smoke from Mayon) (Tokyo: Shuei sha, 1977).

Hitomi's refusal to use the holy war theme in his activities was motivated not by any doubt that Japan was fighting for a liberated Asia or any lack of interest in the indoctrination type of propaganda. From his experience as a school teacher and his contact with agrarian communities in Manchuria, he was indeed passionate enough in his views and certainly had sufficient strength of character to carry out an indoctrination campaign directed at the Philippine masses, if the situation had definitely called for it. Furthermore, concerning this type of approach, we know that it was employed by at least one officer in the Corps, Mochizuki Shigenobu, who set up the training center in Tagaytay directed at Filipino youth¹⁰. This was an organization that Hitomi himself ardently supported. Hitomi's decision to apply the logic of conciliation was based on the reality he was facing as a military officer, a reality that demanded he maximize the effect of propaganda aimed at restoring and maintaining law and order in the Philippine countryside.

Hitomi first realized that the holy war of Asian liberation line would not work in rural areas when he was on his first mission to southern Luzon around Batangas. Mochizuki had come to inspect first hand how the rural propaganda effort was going and had in fact just finished a speech to a crowd of local people. The person who interpreted Mochizuki's words for the crowd was the son of a local prominent family, Julio Luz, who had studied abroad in Japan. At first Luz was lost about how to interpret the difficult words spoken by this officer, who had been an adherent of the well-known imperial ideologist Watanabe Kunmi and had been to a graduate school at the University of Tokyo in the field of Chinese philosophy. However, soon he had the audience roaring in support of Mochizuki's every phrase. Later, Wada Isamu, a Japanese resident of the Philippines who understood Tagalog told Hitomi gleefully how Luz had given up on a word for word translation of a rather difficult metaphor concerning how the minds of the people are the foundation for the existence of the state. Instead, he told his fellow Filipinos about the time he was living in Nagoya and actually saw someone who had found a lost article in a large department store return it safely to its owner, proving that the Japanese really are honest and upright people¹¹.

¹⁰Mochizuki Shigenobu was another army officer in the 14th Army Propaganda Corps who drew attention in such historical writings and memoirs as follows: Suzuki, *Shinsei Kokka Nippon to Ajia*, pp.136-158; Tsuno Kaitaro, *Monogatari Nippon-jin no Senryo* (Tales of the Japanese experiences of Occupation) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Co., 1985); Mochizuki Nobuo (ed.), *Hito no Kunibashira* (The Pillars of the Philippines) (Nagano: privately published, 1980). According to Hitomi, Mochizuki was killed on Manila-Tagaytay road by an unknown bus robbery in May 1944. See "Intabyu 14," pp.530-531.

¹¹"Intabyu 14," pp.503-504. The same story was adapted for a part of the novel by Ozaki Shiro. See Ozaki Shiro, *Jinsei Gekijo: Risyu-hen* (Theater of Life: Lonesome Journey) (Tokyo: Shincho Bunko, 1954), pp.146-152.

Hitomi himself soon realized that when disseminating information through the services of a local language interpreter, any attempt to explain the holy war theme in Tagalog or any other native language would be extremely difficult, due in the first place to an insufficient vocabulary for presenting an argument that could readily be understood. Hitomi reasoned that trying to explain to rural people the meaning of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was also a big mistake. It is no mere coincidence that there was not enough Tagalog to cover the Japanese used in such propaganda efforts of the time. Therefore, it was simply not necessary to take up such subjects. It was better to talk about things directly related to the every day life of the local community, telling them about what was in their interest and what was not¹².

Then Hitomi left the pastoral atmosphere of southern Luzon, where he had played the role of a "goodwill ambassador," for northern Luzon and Panay, both hotbeds of anti-Japanese guerrilla activity. In his propaganda efforts there he employed the following logic. This is war between Japan and the United States, he argued. Japan has forced the surrender of Bataan and Corregidor. The Philippines is the country in the Pacific where this war will not be decided. I'm Japanese, so I believe that Japan is going to win the war. You may think that the United States is going to win. You can think what you want, but in any case guerrilla's attacking the Japanese forces here is not going to make any difference in the final outcome of this war. And when the Japanese begin taking reprisals, not only against the guerrillas themselves, but also innocent bystanders, guerrilla activity will become all the more meaningless. On the other hand, if this region becomes peaceful and free of trouble, the Japanese will leave, because they want to move to areas with far more strategic importance. As soon as that happens, you will be again able to live your lives in peace and be free to do whatever you want¹³.

This line of reasoning was very successful in northern Luzon. In the reports that Hitomi showed us detailing his activities in this region, we find not only the Hitomi Propaganda Platoon sponsoring as ambassadors of goodwill Japan-Philippine friendship events, but also observe what he termed "special tactical forces" that would adopt such methods as sneak attacks on guerrilla hideouts, using the prisoners rounded up for counterespionage, or taking the family members of the guerrillas hostage¹⁴. These were psychological warfare tools that he had learned during his tour of duty in Manchuria. Though his platoon itself never hurt or killed anyone, the message was quite clear: the Japanese military has the strength to suppress guerrilla activities whenever it wishes, so resistance is

¹²"Intabyu 14," p.505.

¹³"Ibid.," pp.508-510.

¹⁴See following Hitomi's reports which will be reprinted soon: "Kita Ruson Senden Kosaku Kiroku (Documents on Propaganda Activity in northern Luzon)," Nakano and Terami (eds.), *Dai 14 Gun Gun-sendenhan Senden Kosaku Shiryo-syu*.

meaningless. As a result of effectively conveying such a message throughout the countryside, Hitomi's platoons were able to force a fairly large number of surrenders. Many of these capitulations were only temporary; nevertheless, Hitomi's troops made a very important contribution to the Japanese army's plan to suppress guerrilla activity in northern Luzon, as exemplified by the exceptional commendation made to the propaganda effort by the commander of the 65th Brigade Lieutenant General Nara Akira. Hitomi was careful not to discuss in the reports he made to his superiors the subject of what logic lay behind his activities. He always took care to emphasize his passion for doing the will of the Emperor's army. He knew full well that an explanation or a defense of his wait-and-see logic would certainly not be acceptable to either his immediate superiors or Imperial Headquarters. For this reason, when during his propaganda activities in Panay, reporters from the Imperial Headquarters Press Corps and two female authors (Kawakami Kikuko and Abe Tsuyako) visited Hitomi to request an inspection tour of the how propaganda activity is conducted in the countryside, he took a page from Furio Luz' book so that they would not discover his tactics. He arranged beforehand with the interpreter that Hitomi would speak in Japanese on the merits of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, while the interpreter promoted his wait-and-see logic in the local language. The Japanese guests seemed not to notice the nervous perspiration running down Hitomi's cheeks during this daring performance¹⁵.

4

Hitomi found out that the High Command had its own version of the logic of conciliation, only after being relieved of duty as Propaganda Platoon leader in Panay in May of 1943. Hitomi's removal from command of his unit had to do with his involvement in a plan devised by Panay Defense Force commander Lt.Col. Totsuka Ryoichi to separate the local folk from the guerrillas by forcibly relocating the former into densely concentrated barrios. Such a relocation strategy had been widely used all over the world throughout the modern history in anti-guerrilla activities, and the Japanese were using a similar strategy in China.

It is well known that there were two rival groups of guerrillas active at that time on the island of Panay: one was led by the former governor of Iloilo Province, Tomas Confesor, and the other by Colonel Macario Peralta. Although opposing each other, these two groups had developed into a force that had placed the Japanese forces on the island in a defensive posture¹⁶. Relocation of the population into

¹⁵"Intabyu 14," pp.505-506.

¹⁶Situation in wartime Panay has been closely examined by such historical studies as follows: Alfred McCoy, "Politics by Other Means: World War II in the Western Visayas, Philippines," McCoy (ed.), *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation* (Yale University Press, 1980), pp.191-245; Col Gamaliel L. Manikan, *Guerrilla Warfare on Panay Island in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Bustamante Press, 1977).

concentrated barrios was implemented to break the stalemate. In his capacity of Propaganda Platoon leader, Hitomi was assigned the task of getting the consent of villagers for their "Nippa Houses" to be moved several kilometers away from their present location and the base of guerrilla operations.

However, suddenly in May 1943, Hitomi was summoned away by the order of the 14th Army's Vice-Chief of staff Colonel Utsunomiya Naokata. It was almost unheard of for a mere captain on the front lines to have a High Command airplane specially dispatched to carry him to Manila for a meeting with a general staff officer. When he arrived in Manila, he found a Colonel Utsunomiya who scolded him saying, "Concentrated settlement relocation had not worked in China. It has no effect but to rouse hostility among the local people. I can't believe that there is some fool now trying to implement the same plan out on Panay." With that Hitomi was relieved of duty¹⁷.

It is not certain whether Utsunomiya had been pressured from the Philippine side to cancel the Panay relocation plan, but at that same time, he was also the person in actual charge of military governance of the Philippines as Chief of General Affairs of the Japanese Military Administration. Hitomi is of the opinion that pressure may have been applied by or a deal struck with Fermin Caram, who before the war was a political ally of Tomas Confesor and was made the successor to the governorship of Iliolo Province just before the War and maintain his governorship during the occupation period. In any case, here we see what seems to be an attempt by an expert in guerrilla warfare to relocate villagers into concentrated barrios being stopped by a high level staff officer guided by his own logic of conciliation.

If Hitomi could be called a practitioner of conciliatory-oriented propaganda in the countryside, Utsunomiya can certainly be characterized as one important military practitioner of conciliatory-oriented policy making at the national level. Utsunomiya was an officer who did all that he could to maintain the compromises between the Japanese military and the Philippine government set up under the occupation and represented by Jorge B. Vargas, who was the chairman of the Executive Commission (January 1942 to October 1943), and Jose P. Laurel, who was the President of the Japanese sponsored Republic of the Philippines (October 1943 to August 1945). In 1935 an autonomous government of the Philippines in the form of a US commonwealth was established in the hope that in 1946 the country would become a completely independent nation. President Manuel L. Quezon and Vice-President Sergio Osmena of the Commonwealth Government were persuaded by the United States to flee the Philippines and set up a government in exile in Washington D.C. However, many members of their cabinet along with congressional politicians remained behind to manage the government set up under the Japanese occupation forces. These people were overwhelmingly pro-American in their educational backgrounds, values and economic interests. There were those like

Manuel Roxas who apparently were "double collaborators," feeding important information to USAFFE guerrillas. The Japanese military leaders in the Philippines understood and to a certain extent condoned the conditions under which this elite promised to cooperate with them.

However, with the rise in anti-Japanese guerrilla activity and the increasing oppressive tactics of the Japanese military police, the Japanese army and the Philippine political elite began to mistrust one another more and more. As a return invasion by the American forces grew more inevitable, activity increased within the Japanese military to utilize the Ganap party, which originated from the same Sakdalista party that had organized an armed rebellion in 1935 in opposition to the US and the Philippine elite that supported it. The Ganap party was led by Benigno Ramos, who had sought political asylum in Japan. In December of 1944 the organization known as Makapili (the Alliance of Philippine Patriots) was established in the hope that it would function as a volunteer army in cooperation with the Japanese. The Philippine government opposed such moves, further straining relations with the Japanese military. However, such figures on the Japanese side as Ambassador Murata Shozo, President Laurel's personal interpreter Hamamoto Masakatsu and Colonel Utsunomiya attempted to neutralize demands by military hard-liners for the total suppression of members of the elite suspected of sympathizing with the enemy, and thus were able to keep the alliance in tact right up to Laurel's flight to Japan in March of 1945¹⁸.

5

The example of the activities carried out by one captain in the Propaganda Corps by no means represents the whole picture of Japan's ideas concerning the occupation of the Philippines, and it may not even represent the most important aspect. However, what we do see in the case of Hitomi Junsuke is a Japanese military not demanding that the Philippines participate directly and aggressively in the war effort, but rather asking for cooperation within a framework of what they thought the Philippines were willing to accept. What is demonstrated here is a conciliatory attitude, a posture of appeasement if you will, towards the Philippines. Now, the question is why would Japan adopt such an attitude.

The answer lies, I think, in reconfirming the purposes or goals in Japan's occupation of Southeast Asia in general and the Philippines in particular. We can find these goals expressed quite explicitly in two

¹⁷"Intabyu 14," pp.518-521.

¹⁸This section regarding Makapili problems is based on such memoirs and interviews as follows: Utsunomiya, *Minami Jyujisei wo Nozomitsutsu*; Fukushima Shintaro (ed.), *Murata Shozo Iko: Hito Nikki* (Murata Shozo's Manuscripts: Philippine Diary) (Tokyo: Hara shobo, 1969); Interviews with Hamamoto Masakatsu on July 23 and September 21, 1992. See "Intabyu 3: Raureru Daitoryo to Tomoni (Interview 3: Along with the President Laurel)," *Intabyu Kiroku: Nippon no Firipin Senryo*, pp.73-134.

documents: "Tai Nanpo Shisaku Yoko (the Policy Agenda for Southern Sphere)" written in June 1941, and "Teikoku Kokusaku Suiko Yoryo (the Outline for the Implementation of Imperial Policy)" written in November of that year, when the decision was made to open hostilities. The basic reason for the invasion offered here is "Teikoku no Jizon Jiei (self-sufficiency and self-defense of the Empire)." What this means is the firm establishment by military means of an exclusive economic sphere centering around the Japanese archipelago. Such an agenda put a great deal of emphasis on the capture of resources for military use within a short time frame. Indispensable to such a goal was the military occupation of Dutch and British colonies in the region that could supply the Empire with such valuable resources as oil, rubber and tin. In practice, the capture of such resources constituted the problematic under which Japanese military administration in Southeast Asia was conducted¹⁹.

In contrast to this general policy, the Philippines were placed in a different category or context, as made clear in another document, "Nanpo Sakusen ni okeru Senryo-chi Tochi Yoko-an (the Agenda Proposal for the Governance of Occupied Territories in the Southern Sphere of Operations)," which was put together in March 1941 by a research group made up of several members of the Army Chiefs of Staff. The Proposal differentiates the Philippines from other Southeast Asian regions in the words, "The main purpose of operations in the Philippines should be the destruction of the American bases of operations there. The capture of materials and resources need not be emphasized." The Proposal goes on to state that if the Commonwealth government and then President Quezon can be manipulated, no Japanese military administration need be set up and that the existing government's "sovereignty should be respected." If a military administrative mechanism has to be established, the Proposal continues, a simple mechanism guaranteeing law and order would be sufficient. In accordance with this basic policy direction, the Proposal emphasizes that the Philippines has little to offer Japan in terms of resources, but its occupation has been made strategically necessary by how Japan is conducting the war with the United States. It concludes with a statement that the occupation of the Philippines is not a fight for resources, and policy should be adopted accordingly. The proposal that sovereignty be respected if the Quezon regime agree to collaborate with the Japanese can by no means be interpreted as a Japanese gesture of trust and friendship towards the Philippines. As the proposal states, "a promise to respect sovereignty is our loophole in case the Philippine government attempts to break its bonds of dependence on the Japanese army." The Proposal adds that if Japan fails in manipulating the Quezon government and is forced to set up a military administration, the

¹⁹See Boei-cho Boei Kenkyu-syo (Defense Institute, Department of Defense) (ed.), *Shiryō-syu Nanpo no Gunsei* (Documents on the Military Administration in the Southern Sphere) (Tokyo: Asakuma Shinbun Co., 1985), pp.36-37.

organization is to be only a temporary expediency until a Philippine government "that will not resist the Empire" can be formed²⁰.

It is impossible to confirm by any historiographical evidence as to what degree of direct influence the Proposal of March 1941 exerted on actual policy decisions. The historical record does show, however, that Japan did in fact fail to manipulate President Quezon personally, but was able to utilize a large part of the already established Commonwealth political mechanism to form a resistance-free government from relatively early on in the occupation. Then, in January 1943 Japan decided to grant independence to the Philippines and Burma. A government memorandum at that time states that granting independence to the Philippines was not only politically motivated, but also necessary to eliminate the burden and trouble that the country was causing to the war effort²¹. In October 1943 Japan allowed the establishment of the Republic of the Philippines with an independent government that would not resist the Empire.

6

In sum, the major goal of Japan's occupation of the Philippines within its plan for Southeast Asia as a whole was to keep it from resisting the Empire; that is, keeping it pacified so that it would not become a military barrier to Japan's war effort in the Pacific. The propaganda programs conducted by Hitomi Junsuke in the Philippine countryside urging a "wait-and-see" attitude among the people and efforts by the military administration at the national level to maintain harmonious relations with the Philippine government are both in line with such a goal. And the logic of conciliation which underlies such activities seems to have been, at the moment, the only logic acceptable to the Filipino people under the occupation. It also should be added that Douglas MacArthur as commander of the allied forces ordered USAFFE guerrillas merely to "stand ready." Manuel Quezon in exile Commonwealth Government also wrote to MacArthur, saying "our guerrillas should devote themselves more to the securing of information..... it is..... a useless sacrifice of life and property to have our guerrillas active before we are ready to help them²²." It seems to me, therefore, during operations aimed at guerrilla surrender, arguing that it was best for everyone simply to standby and watch the direction the war was taking,

²⁰"Taibei Senso ni tomonau Hito Shori Hosaku-an (Agenda of Policies toward the Philippines in the war against the United States)," *Boei Kenkyusho Nanpo Gunsei Shiryo* 62 (No.62, The Papers of Military Administration in the Southern Sphere, Defense Institute).

²¹*Shiryo-syu Nanpo no Gunsei*, pp.44-46.

²²Manuel Quezon to Douglas MacArthur, March 4, 1943. Box 9, RG10, Douglas MacArthur Memorial Archives, Norfolk, Virginia.

Hitomi was actually trying to conclude, however tacitly, a cease fire agreement that would be acceptable to all concerned: the Japanese, the Filipino people and the Americans.

Unfortunately, Hitomi was unable to live up to his end of the bargain, a circumstance that he regrets and feels much remorse about even today. It goes without saying that one factor here is MacArthur's keeping his promise to return and the transforming the Philippines into one of the worst battlegrounds in the Pacific War. But in actuality, the tacit agreement that Hitomi and others were trying to establish had already been broken before MacArthur returned, and the Philippines became a decisive turning point in the War. A detailed examination of the reasons why this happened can not be attempted in the present paper, but we should mention one important factor as the sudden collapse of the Philippine economy and the inability of the Japanese military administration to guarantee a minimum standard of living for the people. For the Japanese military, providing the Filipino people with ample means to a livelihood should have been one of the most basic conditions for maintaining law and order. However, in Japan's war strategy the Philippines had already been placed in a different context from, say, Java, in that there was no strong intent on the part of the occupiers to reform and mobilize society for its own good, and no intent to bear the basic costs necessary for a stable and secure society. The absence of such priorities could only result in Japan's failure to achieve its major goal in the Philippines; that is, preventing it from becoming a resistance force against the Empire.

Japan's rather contradictory occupation of the Philippines, characterized on the one hand by a policy of conciliation, and on the other by brutal military and police control, the plundering of the country's food supply and uncountable atrocities, reflects Japan's extremely passive attitude and lack of genuine interest towards its occupation. And in reality, it is this kind of policy that has brought to the forefront the idea that Japan used no other means in its intent to occupy the Philippines than violent ones. Even in the case of the propaganda techniques practiced by Hitomi Junsuke in northern Luzon, we can see in contrast to his preaching a line urging people to step out of the conflict and take a wait-and-see attitude towards the war, the tactics he himself used in the art of psychological warfare (learned in Manchuria) for threatening and bullying guerrillas into surrender.

In conclusion, let me touch upon one more problem: that is, the relationship of Japan's occupation to the continuity or discontinuity of political and social institutions in Southeast Asia over the period before, during and after the Second World War. Here also the Philippine experience is unique. In terms of the subject matter taken up in the present paper, the goals underlying Japan's war effort were conspicuously bereft of any intent or motivation to demand either political or social changes be made in Philippine institutions. Japan's policy of conciliation is ample proof of such passivity and neglect. On the other hand, the control that Japan did exercise over the Philippines, which was characterized by

oppression, starvation and brutality, cannot have but implanted apprehension and fear in the hearts of the Filipino people that they were being unfairly treated politically, culturally and most certainly in economic terms. It was this apprehension and fear that forced them to concentrate all their energies on defending their own lifestyles, and belongings, and conserving their freedom and values. Such a scenario no doubt has had a profound effect on postwar Philippine history. In other words, it is possible to conclude that Japan's occupation policies, which, quite intentionally at times, made no effort to demand changes be made in Philippine society, brought about in the place of urging reform naked oppression and violence, and resulted, quite unintentionally, in having influenced to a large degree a stronger continuity in the modern and contemporary history of the Philippines than many of its neighbors.