

WWU - 2
Neutral Shades Around the Rising Sun

Kokusai Bunka Kaikan,
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Dear Mr. Rogers:

Just after my Pan American plane put into Tokyo airport the other morning, I stepped out, noticed rows of lined up police guards and the arriving, high-backed, 30-year-old Rolls Royce of Emperor Hirohito. If I had any such thoughts as, "Really he shouldn't have gone to all this trouble--" I was quickly disabused. Philippine President Garcia was just concluding his State visit and the Emperor and Empress had come by in their crimson car to see him off. Nevertheless, I would call this an auspicious first moment on visiting Japan. And curious things followed. The airport limousine driver, no doubt anxious to make his American passengers feel at home, on the drive into downtown Tokyo, turned on his car radio to the local Voice of America broadcast and treated us to a recorded discussion of New York synagogues and the history of their founding -- at full volume. The unraveling Japanese landscape was thus accompanied for a good half hour, with we Americans just too polite to say no. Finally, when the rabbinite switched from history to the chanting of psalms, the Japanese driver had enough himself, and flicked over to a second English station, featuring swing and sway with Sammy Kay. All this, combined with the wonders of Tokyo traffic which has five lanes to choose from and straddles every one of them (I later learned the one traffic rule is to make the other guy touch your car first -- then he pays), the Arabic numerals on license plates (what cop could chase after a speeder while deciphering character radicals from his pocket dictionary?) and the fact that the airport limousine we were driving in was once General MacArthur's pet Chrysler were, I felt, all quite consistent with finding the Emperor doing a greeting job at the airport. Added to this, I found the lodging to which Phil Talbot had referred me was International House, similar to the place of that name I had lived in while an undergraduate at the University of California in Berkeley. Only this "I" House is very new, partly financed by the Messrs. Rockefeller and partly by the Japanese themselves, and rises among the beautiful ponds and rock gardens of a pre-war head of the house of Mitsubishi.

Today is Monday, December 8, Sunday, December 7, on your side of the International Dateline, and the third Sunday, December 7, since 1941 and Pearl Harbor.



Hypocondriacal Tokyo shoe-shine girl: Mask may be for your cold, or hers.

I scanned the newspapers, which exist in multitude and which are read in multitude (and they should be: they are full of news.) On page 8 of the English language version of Mainichi, Takamasa Arai of Tomioko City writes a letter to the editor complaining that his students readily know what happened on December 8, 17 years ago, but not what happened 2500 years ago. Said Professor Arai: "On that very day, long before Christ, Gautama, one of the world's big four sages, got suddenly enlightened when glancing at the morning star twinkling above...To overcome sad memories of the defeat and start as a new and peaceloving nation, December 8 should be widely observed as the anniversary of enlightenment." This thought for today was buttressed by one on page 3 of the very pro-American Japanese Times, a United Press International story saying Japan today probably would not be thinking of 17 years ago. Then came a paragraph quoting a GI declaring that if FDR really had known in advance about Pearl Harbor -- as he had heard -- then the surprise attack has been vastly overrated. There is another UPI story on this day which tickles me, a dispatch from Washington reporting how the Japanese Ambassador, Koichiro Asakai, and Embassy Minister, Takezo Shimoda, called on the Assistant Secretaries of State and Commerce to inform them of Japan's proposal to ease her self-imposed quotas on the sale of textiles to the U.S. The story quotes the Japanese emissaries as saying the Americans were "very skillful at concealing what they were thinking." Had I been writing the head on that story, I would have called it, "FACE, Or The Mysterious Occidental Smile."

Well, Japan is the first country on my calling list where I can start inquiring about my theme for these coming 13 months, the arguments for neutralism and non-alignment. I quickly learned that there is a very definite movement in this country for a neutral position between the Western and Soviet orbits and that it is espoused by the Socialist party.

Shimpei Fujimaki, the young, Western-educated deputy director of the Social-Democratic Party's Bureau of Policy Research Board (sic), told me over a teacup one afternoon that the pressure for neutralism is governed by the memories of the A-bomb and its destructive potential, resentment over the continued existence of U.S. troops and bases in Japan, a long-time inclination toward pacifism (I suppose he meant with some notable exceptions) and an "emotional" complex which his fellow Socialists are now linking with national policy. Japan's right and left-wing Socialists for the past three years have been joined -- with some noticeable jars -- into one party. Fujimaki is a member of the right-wing faction, one which likens itself to the "democratic socialism" of the British Labour party. But he assured me that both wings stand for parliamentary democracy and are opposed to violence and revolution.

This was echoed later, in his Senate Office Building chamber, by Fujimaki's superior, Eki Sone (pronounced SAW-nay). Sone, now in what I would guess were his mid-forties, was for many years a career man in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and served as deputy chief of Cabinet and liaison with the MacArthur regime. Sone, wealthy

by birth and marriage, then broke with his old boss, Prime Minister Yoshida, now Japan's conservative elder statesman, and ran as a Socialist for the Senate, the Diet's upper, but less influential, house. Even though the Government may have some dire thoughts about the Socialists, they seem to respect Sone. As a matter of fact, I was guided to him by his old colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Should the Socialists ever obtain power, Sone, one of the very few of their number with any international experience, might well become his country's Foreign Minister. This, despite the fact that he is a member of the Socialist's minority right wing.



Socialist Sone: Neutrality has its prerequisites.

Here is what Sone had to say, condensed into one quote: "We (the right wingers) are rather pro-Western neutralists. The leftists should be called anti-American and anti-Western neutralists. To say pro-Communist would be too much. The leftists are not consciously pro-Communist although, unfortunately, there are some fellow travelers -- but very few. As a whole, the leftists look upon the Japanese Communist Party as a competitor. But there is some ideological link between their orthodox Marxism and Lenin-Stalinism.

Sone explained that to achieve neutralism for Japan, the Socialists as a whole are plunking for a double situation, "a new type of Locarno Treaty," he called it, in which the Japanese-American security pact would be severed simultaneously with the Sino-Russian security pact. Then, together, the three great powers would give Japan their blessing. This left me a bit dazzled since Sone was conditioning his own country's neutralism on three other nations, and on a Sino-Russian treaty which Japan has no voice in. Sone admitted this took a bit of aspiring and he said that if Red China and Russia didn't comply by breaking their pact, then Japan would have to stick with the status quo: its security pact with the U.S. But Sone stressed that this last is the attitude of only the rightwing Socialists. The left wing is for bulling ahead in the hopes that Red China and Russia will cooperate eventually.

Sone is a nervous, slightly-built man who can throw up the whites of his eyes and become absolutely unfathomable when you are looking at him. But there were some moments during my chat in his little office -- crowded with desks, secretaries and an electric heater -- that I thought he was being surprisingly candid. For instance, when I told him that I had heard the incumbent Liberal-Democratic (conservative) Party government people say that the Socialists were not constructive, Sone replied: "It is true we are not a constructive opposition. Honestly, we don't see the possibility of coming to power in the very near future (the Socialists hold about one-third the seats in each House) so our policy is to oppose rather than to offer.

That is the drawback of our party and the rightists are trying very hard to thrash this out and offer constructive alternative policies. We have gotten rather negative support because the people are not satisfied with the conservative government. It is easy to get one-fourth to one-third of the popular vote. But if we mean to get more than one-half, the negative attitude will not suffice. We cannot possibly lose the support of the leftist intellectuals and the big trade unions if we are ever to come to power. And yet we are always fighting within our party because the left wing keeps calling for purer socialism."

Sone doubted that the right and left-wing Socialists would split and go their separate ways as they once did because, he explained, this inter-dependence is mutual: neither wing can ever hope to come to power on its own. And, waiting for that day, the two wings are busying themselves juggling back and forth to see which compromises are absolutely necessary to bring along the other and the other's popular following. Sone did suggest, however, that if the conservative party should ever split into two camps, then the Socialists might too. But he doesn't think either fission very likely.

Neutrality is the exclusive plank of the Socialists, according to Shigeharu Matsumoto. "Japanese conservatives want protection of Japan as a duty of America. Big business wants complete protection without paying any of the price." Matsumoto is also quite a gentleman of ideas. A tall, low-keyed man who speaks with almost a Southern drawl, Matsumoto is a Yale graduate, was head of Domei, the Japanese news agency, in China during World War II and currently is director of International House. I learned that Matsumoto twice declined offers of ambassadorships from ex-Prime Minister Yoshida -- to the U.S. and to the U.K. Matsumoto and I had breakfast together at I House one morning and I got some hint of why he likes the spot he is in. Matsumoto has a pet theory, "triangulation" among Japan, the U.S. and India. He thinks this would keep Peking from playing India against Japan. And he thinks that the three countries can do a good deal for each other working cooperatively. For instance, Matsumoto said the Ford Foundation is now staking a Japanese professor to some work in Delhi. If massive American help came, Japanese scientists, able to withstand the low living standards that defeat Western scientists in South Asia, could pour into India during the next 10 to 15 years and "help take care of the family child." India is the one Asian country Japan did not invade during World War II and Matsumoto said the antipathy toward Japan is at a minimum. He is all for pushing this "triangulation" and says he consciously makes a play to get leading Indian intellectuals and politicians to visit I House and Japan. One is staying here now, Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, director of the Indian Statistical Institute and a key figure in pushing India's second Five Year Plan.

Incidentally, I met Mahalanobis under about as adverse conditions as any reporter could have. I had been told to look him up when I got to Calcutta but thought I would take advantage of our proximity under the same Tokyo roof. He phoned my room, awakening me just after I had gulped two aspirins and foregone dinner in order to hit the sack early and get rid of a headache. He said the only time he had available was right then and there, and there meant the dining room. I got dressed, staggered downstairs and found that I was not only invading a dinner party, but that they were holding dinner until my arrival. Mahalanobis seated me on his left and then proceeded to tell me how little he trusted reporters, how ridiculous it was for me to have a theme pertaining to the "arguments" for neutralism when some things are neither spoken aloud nor argued, etc. etc. I took all I could, half awake as I was, and then asked him why he was so intent in pushing me off my chair the moment I had sat down -- I came only to listen and learn. Well, the fighting back somehow appealed to the old fox, at least he began to smile. After that, I was only dimly aware of what was happening. I gathered that he was neither a statistician nor an economist, but a physicist, and that he was explaining India's neutrality to me in terms of Einstein's Theory of Relativity. I also gathered that we parted friendly as he told me he thought he would have room for me in the guest quarters at his Indian Statistical Institute and that I would find it much quieter than downtown Calcutta. The next day, Prof. Mahalanobis put a few of his speeches in my mail box. As yet, I haven't dared look at them.

Well, I seem to have "triangulated" through the Theory of Relativity and quite away from any relation to neutralism. I might as well make another digression. A friend of mine in Washington asked me if I would bundle along a gift to a friend of hers in Japan, Mrs. Takakichi Aso, ex-Prime Minister Yoshida's daughter and official hostess, and the wife of one of Japan's leading industrialists. My friend slyly mailed the bundle to me in California, where I was well enroute. It turned out to be one lady's slip, pink nylon. Calcifying bachelors just don't pack along lady's pink underthings. Nor is it easy for them to arrive in Japan, supposedly a sensitive country with sensitive ways, and say: "How d'ya do Mrs. Aso, here's a little something for you, I hope it fits." Anyway, why in the dickens bring nylon to Japan where silk is staple? But to continue, Mrs. Aso and I did meet up. I was further disconcerted to find her taking me to lunch (at a magnificent restaurant she has just opened in order to reemploy a chef and a waiter who insisted on serving her state banquets nightly, even after her father's retirement). But Mrs. Aso, a stunning looking and speaking woman and the mother of six, had the worldly wisdom not to open her package while I was still with her. Instead, she opened up her mind a bit to discuss her country. I was fascinated to find that she reacted just as I had to the endless industry of the Japanese people. Street repaving, for instance, seems to go on through the night and through the weekend. And no matter how harrassed, people seem to keep smiling. Mrs. Aso said the tradition for work is so strong that her mother-in-law always suspects her of idling when she reads a book.

As for the smile, she thought that natural. She said that life has always been so hard for so many people that they have learned to make the best of it they can. Mrs. Aso, a Catholic, is trying to get her eldest son into Cambridge, her brothers' school. She said the Japanese have found Cambridge more "sympathetic" to their race than Oxford. She also said that the conservatives keep mentioning her father as a possible successor to Prime Minister Kishi, whose popularity is waning. But she calls this ridiculous as Yoshida is now past 80 and quite determined to enjoy his position as Elder Statesman. Yoshida, incidentally, thinks that the consolidation of the two Socialist party wings came too early and that there should be a third party in Japan today to balance things out. There was one thing which Mrs. Aso said, toward the end of our lunch, which really threw me. "Why don't you give us back Taiwan?" she asked. "Not Korea. We've had enough of that. But Taiwan." I asked her what she had in mind but she said she didn't know, it was just an impulsive thought. I learned no more.

I had another thought on neutralism from Kazushige (Kay) Hirasawa, editor of the pro-American Japan Times and a classmate at Bates College, Me. in the thirties of both Maine's new Senator Muskie and Nils Lennartson, Secretary of the Treasury Anderson's public relations assistant. Hirasawa pointed out that it was well and good for the Socialists to speak of neutralism, but as long as they continued to speak of it without discussing armament, they were not "entitled" to talk about revising the U.S.-Japanese security pact. What's more, according to Hirasawa, Japan's present security arrangement permits her full protection by spending only 11 per cent of her budget on defense. The percentage figures in such neutral countries as India, Sweden, and Switzerland, he contended, are way above that.

Shinichi Kondo is director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' public information and cultural affairs bureau and I gather the Japanese equivalent of the State Department's chief spokesman, Lincoln White. Kondo told me that when Communist China Foreign Minister Chen Yi openly recommended neutralism for Japan in November, and when Soviet Russia did the same in a formal note earlier this month, all factions in Japan -- LDP and Socialist -- united in telling China and Russia to mind their own business. I also gathered that the annoyance with Russia is considerably greater than with China, because Russia has yet to return the bulk of the Japanese prisoners taken in China at the end of World War II and still has the unhappy habit of capturing Japanese fishing boats as they ply their way off the Hokkaido coast opposite Siberia. Kondo treated me to a really great Japanese-style lunch at a downtown Tokyo restaurant (shoes exchanged at the outer door for slippers; slippers at the inner door for socks -- and enough courses for breakfast, lunch and dinner). Hessell Tiltman, of the Manchester Guardian, our companion, assured me that I wasn't expected to keep up with the Japanese appetite: doctors have informed him that, physically, the Japanese stomach is several times the size of those in the West. During our lunch, Kondo said Japan is currently embarked on both "courtesy diplomacy" and "economy diplomacy." State visits, such

as are now in the works with the Philippines, represent the latter. Kondo made no bones about the difficulty of convincing the Philippines in particular, but other nations as well, that Japan is not the economic aggressor of old. (Others, however, told me that they think Japan will push her economic incursions into the Philippines just as far as she can without making the U.S. think her private preserve is being raided.)

An official American observer in Japan was far less tolerant of the Socialist position than the Japanese Government people with whom I spoke. This gent (let's just call him Spook) said flatly: "The main source of Socialist party funds, and therefore influence, is Sohyo, the General Council of Japan Trade Unions. And even though Sohyo's principal officers say they hate communism, they go right down the Commie line." Spook said that Nikkyoso, the teachers union, is also Communist-infiltrated and the conservative Government is just able to make "headway" in putting through an eligibility system to weed out the Communist teachers. According to this American: "Japan can't afford to be neutral. She's too dependent upon the outside."

The Socialist party's Sone, as well as a good many others, told me that Japan is currently witnessing an increasing polarization of its parties: the conservative LDP is moving toward the "reactionary" spectrum; the liberal Socialists are becoming increasingly "radical". Referring to "this recent, very dangerous trend," Sone explained that as the conservatives move to the right, the left-wing Socialists have more of an excuse to move further left -- and this gives his right-wing Socialists little course but to follow the majority of their party. I was told that two issues in particular have had a great bearing on this polarization:

1. The revision of the Police Duties Law. This stems from the MacArthur occupation, which, in order to assure Japanese civil liberties in the future, abolished a series of pre-war "public safety ordinances." A number of conservatives now feel that the pendulum has swung too far the other way and that the Japanese police are being deprived of the authority needed for proper law enforcement. Prime Minister Kishi sprung a Police Duties Law amendment on the Diet which angered some members of his own party because they were unprepared for it. It also angered the Socialists because they sensed a resurgence of the pre-World War II suppression measures against civil liberties and trade union activities -- measures which had succeeded in herding a good many of them into jail at the time. The conservatives tried some steam-roller tactics to get the measure through, including a flying wedge onto the House floor where they had the deputy Speaker preside from his seat and rule an extension of legislative time. But their tactics undid them and the measure failed to pass, leaving Prime Minister Kishi in the hot seat for having started the whole business.

2. The revision of the Japanese-American security pact. Many Japanese have been rankling over a security treaty they consider too one-sided. For instance, the U.S. has the sole right to dispose of joint Japanese-American forces; it is not obligated to come to Japan's defense unless it so chooses; and also, the U.S. has the power to use its forces to quell civil disturbances within Japan, a measure many Japanese look upon as a direct infringement of their sovereignty. Now for once nobody is mad at the U.S. at this point. Secretary of State Dulles agreed in September to discussions for revision. But it is the Socialists who are balking. They fear that a treaty revision might precipitate Japan into a "NEATO" -Northeast Asia Treaty Organization. And, particularly if Okinawa and the Bonin Islands are included, the fear is that Japan would then be obligated to go to war to protect U.S. bases. All this, of course, would make the Socialists' dreams of Japanese neutrality even more distant. Because of the dispute over the Police Duties Law revision, Kishi and his Government are now doing some elaborate foot dragging over revising the Japanese-American security pact. Today's Mainichi, for instance, quotes Foreign Minister Fujiyama as saying that he wants to exclude Okinawa and the Bonins from the area of joint defense -- while still not denying Japan's residual sovereignty over these islands. The same article goes on to say that Ichiro Kono, chairman of the LDP's executive board, thinks it "desirable" that the islands be included in the area of joint Japanese-American defense.

To repeat, I am told that both issues are not only weakening the current Government and the public confidence in Kishi as Prime Minister, but driving the conservative further to the right and the Socialists further to the left. And with this last, the Socialists become more insistent on a neutral position for Japan vis-a-vis the U.S.

I fear that I am wading deeper than 4½ days observance will permit. But let me add just a few other flash-in-the-pan observations. I found Japan far more prosperous than I ever expected. Neighborhood shopping areas -- which do not cater to tourists -- have stalls of beautiful selections of fresh fruit. Appliance stores, again the neighborhood variety, have automatic washers lined up. Matsumoto of I House told me that one out of every ten Japanese families, including those who live in rural areas, now has an automatic washer. I did not check this, nor Matsumoto's report that Japan is now the world's No. 3 TV nation. But, at least in the TV line, I could use my eyes to verify Tokyo's new master TV beacon -- complete with restaurant and observation platforms -- an ENLARGED edition of Paris' Eiffel Tower which is scheduled to be opened the end of the month. Matsumoto explained that Japan's prosperity is all a matter of the last five years -- since the economic shot in the arm of the Korean War and American military investment. He said that Japan's annual income is being increased at the rate of 5 percent a year, and that 24 percent of the national income is being plowed back into capital investment -- a higher percentage than in Russia. And

Matsumoto also explained that with this higher standard of living, more Japanese have become consumers of Japanese products. Thus, even though Japan's pre-World War II population of 78 million is now around 90 million, the old pre-war need for foreign markets has not increased at the same rate as the population pressure.

I took a day's excursion the other day to Nikko, the mountain village some two hours by train from Tokyo which adjoins the family shrine and mausoleum of the late Tokugawa Shoguns. My seat companion on the train turned out to be the Hon. J.G.N. Strauss, Marshal Smuts' successor as head of the Union of South Africa's United Party. Strauss, currently a minority member of a minority party, explained that he decided to travel around the world for reasons of both personal and political health. His party, it seems, has had a good deal of internal dissension and he decided to step aside. I had a nice Forbidding Elder prototype cut out for this South African leader, but he wouldn't sit still for it. The Hon. Mr. Strauss not only ignored a Johannesburg countrywoman as she gasped and greened as our excursion bus went jogging down a mountainside road of 30 (enumerated) hairpin curves, he was gallantry itself to two United Air Lines reservation girls (well, a bit beyond the girl stage) from Los Angeles. Moreover, the Hon. Mr. Strauss grabbed me as the needed extra man to take his new found friends to dinner at Tokyo's Imperial Hotel. Both nationalities reverted to type, however. The South African ignored the fact that American dinners are preceded by cocktails. The American ladies ignored the fact that elsewhere their sex should be submissive and quickly commanded the waiter to bring them double martinis. Also at the Imperial, I was told that Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright most pointedly had not been commissioned to design the hotel's new wing, despite the fact that his original hotel had withstood both the 1923 earthquake and General MacArthur's occupation officers. Comparing Wright's geegaw monument with the fairly spartan new addition designed by local talent, I was inclined to think the Japanese showed brazen good sense.

I began this letter with Hirohito, so let me conclude it with Akhito. The papers are almost girlish in their glee over the fact that the Crown Prince will soon wed a commoner (photographed in shorts and bare legs at the tennis courts). They haven't said it yet, but it's quite conceivable that Japanese school girls soon may be taught: "Study hard, your son may one day grow up to become Emperor."

Cordially,


Warren W. Unna