

April 30, 1952

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American Embassy,
Tokyo, Japan.

April 30, 1952.

DOS REVIEWED 18-Mar-2013: DECLASSIFIED FOR RELEASE IN FULL

Dear Luke:

Right before departure for Tokyo I paid a courtesy call on General MacArthur in New York. He talked at considerable length and I enclose a copy of a memorandum of conversation which I made afterwards. The Secretary might wish to glance at it.

I had an excellent trip over and arrived in the nick of time to make the deadline established, namely, arrival in Tokyo April 28. I arrived at five minutes before midnight!

With war^r regards, believe me

Yours ever,

Robert Murphy

Enclosure:

Memorandum of
Conversation.

Mr. Lucius Battle,
Assistant to the Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

OSD REVIEWED 21 FEB 2013 NO OBJECTION TO DECLASSIFICATION

BATTLE, Lucius

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

4/30/52
April 30, 1952

PARTICIPANTS: General Douglas MacArthur
Ambassador Robert D. Murphy

General MacArthur after cordial but brief amenities opened the conversation with references to his long association with affairs in the Pacific area; the importance which he attached to the Far East; admonishments to avoid the error of regarding Asiatic mentality in the same category with the European; emphasis on the differences of mentality and temperament between the Japanese and the Germans. It was evident that the General was concerned over my undoubted ignorance of the Far East although he asked no questions to verify whether I possessed any knowledge of the subject.

He then launched into a lengthy exposé of his view of errors of American policy which "had lost most of the Asiatic mainland to the United States" saying that the unfortunate results of this lack of wisdom would be visited on our children and our children's children. Through the long years he had preached the gospel of the importance of the Far East to the United States but the seed had fallen on the stony soil of the Pentagon where the clique headed by General Marshall and men like the present Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff - blind to anything but the small portion of the globe comprising western and central Europe because that is the extent of their acquaintance with the outside world - invariably had turned a deaf ear to his pleading. General MacArthur said he was always considered an outsider by this faction who had monopolized the power and who bore the onus of the misfortunes which had occurred.

He had been dismissed by the President ignominiously and to this day he had never been told why. He had never disobeyed orders.

His troubles stemmed from the Pentagon and he had never experienced difficulties with the State Department. Of course no Secretary of State had ever visited Japan or shown interest in the importance of that area. He had never even seen Dean Acheson. Ambassador Jessup had spent six days with General MacArthur in Japan and he believed profitably, but generally speaking MacArthur had been neglected by the Department.

He referred to Ambassador Sebald saying that the latter in essence is a naval officer, qualified in the Japanese language, who was useful to SCAP in carrying out the details of policies laid down by MacArthur.

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In this Sebald's experience as a lawyer in Japan was of utility but he, MacArthur, he said, actually was the Ambassador (sic) during that period.

The British were largely instrumental, he suggested, in his elimination. Mr. Acheson he thought is subject to British influence. The British have been guilty of heavy handedness in the Far East and that still marked their attitude in Japan. Yoshida is inclined to follow the British lead because of his associations in London where the British had given Yoshida the full ceremonial treatment, receiving him in that seductive way which is so characteristic of the British when they wish to charm. Sir Esler Dening is not as bright as Gascoigne but we should have no illusions; Dening will be pitching for the British Empire all the time and will sabotage U.S. policy whenever he believes it to British advantage, which will probably be often.

Again reverting to General Marshall he described Marshall's earlier service in China as Lt. Colonel with the 15th Regiment (?), emphasizing Marshall's "ignorance" of China and the Chinese ("Marshall is a Virginia gentleman and would abhor the practical features of Chinese life and would be unable to understand Chiang"); Marshall's later mission to China was a colossal mistake for which the U.S. would pay for generations to come. If tackled in time the Chinese communist movement could have been ripped in the bud at insignificant cost but due to the mistakes of judgment of men like General Marshall the U.S. had lost the golden opportunity and would pay enormous penalties for its failure to understand the situation and to act in time. Pushed out of the Asiatic mainland, the defense of the rim becomes impossible and the whole strategic concept of advancing our defensive frontier into Asia crumbles. We will soon find that the implacable growth of Soviet and Chinese power has pushed back our frontier to the Pacific coast of the United States with all the risks and dangers to our people inherent in such a disastrous situation.

The occupation of Japan under his direction had successfully oriented the Japanese people in favor of the United States. Ridgway is an officer whom he respects but of course he is a man selected by the Marshall clique. There has been a deterioration of occupation conditions lately.

Our aim should be the creation of ten Japanese divisions which the United States should equip. Article Nine of the Japanese Constitution is not a barrier. He did not influence the Japanese to include the text of Article Nine in the Constitution but this was strictly the inspiration of Nishimura. After the establishment of the Japanese forces we could reduce our troop basis in Japan.

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If he had remained in Japan, the General said, the Soviet Mission would no longer be in Tokyo as he would have taken measures to cause its departure. The Russians had refused to accredit the Mission to SCAP and it was accredited to the Allied Council which goes out of existence on April 28. He doubted that the Japanese Government would have the courage to expel the Soviet Mission.

The Korean situation he considers as fairly hopeless. Here again he had been defeated by the Pentagon and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who understood nothing of the Far East. Our failure in Korea no doubt is a prelude to the loss of all the Asiatic mainland to Communism. If we had acted in time as he had recommended, all of this could have easily been avoided.

Apart from admitting occasional questions by me, General MacArthur spent the seventy five minutes of our interview in releasing a steady and powerful stream of apparently well-rehearsed comments with overtones of bitterness and resentment. In parting he made the "generous" and courteous concession of referring to his and my Milwaukee origin.

Robert Murphy

RMurphy:mps

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Robert Murphy

RMurphy:mps

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G.W.
Battle, Lucius

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AMERICAN EMBASSY
Brussels, Belgium
December 29, 1950

Dear Luke:

The Secretary might be interested to know that Senator Green of Rhode Island and Senator Ferguson of Michigan spent a couple of days here this week and should return to Washington today. They went to Canberra to the Parliamentary Union and returned to the United States via Europe.

Senator Green talked at great length regarding the failure of United States policy in the Far East. He seems to feel that through our fault we have alienated the good will not only of the Chinese people but almost everybody else in Asia. He is positive in his affirmation that support of the French in Indo-China is a dangerous error. He asserts that any support of Chiang Kai-shek is folly and that our action in controlling the waters around Formosa has been wrong, but in replying to my question whether he would now withdraw the fleet, he hastened to say that was a tactical consideration at the moment which he could not answer.

Senator Green also said that while he constantly through the years supported the Administration in voting credits for foreign aid, he would no longer do so. He feels that the money has been squandered haphazardly and that it has not been used in obtaining adequate return for the United States. He feels that responsibility lies with the Executive Branch on this score because in framing legislation such as the Economic Recovery Act of 1948 it was almost impossible to include in the text the specific conditions under which foreign aid should be expended. He was extremely critical of the "do gooders" in the ECA Administration who seem to feel that their mission is to give out funds for purposes which may be laudable per se from the local point of view in a foreign country but which is not related to the American taxpayer. The

Lucius Battle, Esq.,
Office of the Secretary of State,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

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operation, he thinks, is conducted in such a way that the United States gets little or no credit or practical benefit.

Senator Green was also aggressively critical of the conduct of the Department's and ECA's information services. It is his observation that most of the personnel engaged in this work have little or no conception of what they should do, whereas from what he had seen in India and other places, the Soviet Union is doing an excellent job in presenting its side of the case. Our people, he says, feel that they must present not only the bright side of the United States picture but the seamy side as well, which he thinks is equivalent to a lawyer stating his client's case to a jury and feeling the necessity of emphasizing the weak points of the case as well as the strong ones. He finds this is particularly true with films which are distributed by our Information Service as well as printed matter and radio broadcasts. We arranged here for several briefing sessions with, I believe, some favorable effect on the Senator's thinking regarding our Information Service work. The Senator agreed that the Soviet state monopoly film production is more easily adapted to a straight-line propaganda effort than the American film industry and our federal government Information Service is not free to undertake competition with commercial agencies, whereas this consideration is not applicable to the Soviet Union.

Senator Ferguson's attitude on these subjects was much more reserved than Senator Green's, but I gathered as a Republican he was quite willing to have Senator Green indulge in this criticism. I don't know what importance the Secretary might attach to Senator Green's attitude, but I thought he should know the vigor with which he attacks the Administration's Far Eastern policy and his statement that he will no longer vote in favor of foreign aid as he has done in the past.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Murphy

RM:td

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