

## My Experience in Occupied Japan, 1947-1960

By Koon Hin Choy, Cpl

In 1947, I volunteered for the army in Honolulu and was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division. I received training as an artilleryman at Schofield Barracks.

I was shipped to Saitama, Japan, with the Division as a member of the public information section. In 1948, I became a staff member of the *Stars and Stripes* and soon became its circulation manager, supervising nearly 500 Japanese nationals. I worked closely with the 1st Cavalry Military Government in Saitama in civil affairs matters, and was active in monitoring local election activities. Any indications of corruptions or election law violations were promptly reported to the Military Government for action.

In 1960 I left the *Stars and Stripes* and returned to Honolulu.



*Lt. Iwao Yokooji, Chief of Interpreter and Translation Section. Public Health & Welfare Section GHQ. Dai-Ichi Bldg., Summer of 1946.*

## Public Health and Welfare, GHQ, Japan

By Iwao Yokooji, Col., AUS., Retired

In early 1945, when the 171st Battalion at Camp Shelby disbanded, some of the senior NCOs and I were sent to the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, for officer training.

Upon graduation, we earned commissions as 2nd Lieutenants, Infantry, and were assigned as Infantry Training Officers with duty station in Fort McClellan, Alabama. Going back to recruit training was not what we had hoped for. Consequently, we received

transfer orders, after writing to Colonel Rasmussen at the Military Intelligence Service Language School, Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Five officers (Haruichi Hara, Ronald Ota, Gary Otoshi, Claude Takekawa, and I boarded a Victory ship in early 1946 for Nagoya, Japan. With the situation normal, no one was expecting us there, but we leisurely found our way to Allied Translators and Interpreters Service (ATIS) in Tokyo, where our group of five received separate assignments.

I was assigned as Chief of Translators and Interpreters in Public Health and Welfare Section of General MacArthur's Headquarters on the ground floor of the Dai-Ichi Building. It was utter drudgery perusing the multitudinous reports, letters, and documents detailing the pathetic conditions of the health and sanitation of the natives from all parts of the country, including the massive destruction and the after-effects caused by the atomic bomb.

The onslaught of huge numbers of Japanese soldiers being literally kicked out of Manchuria and China over-taxed the Japanese government's ability to cope with the situation. Shiploads of returnees afflicted with almost every known disease choked every harbor in



*In front of Fort Snelling BOQ 1945. Lt. Gary Otoshi and Lt. Claude Takekawa.*

Japan. The diseased patients were isolated in cages like animals on the decks of ships without proper medical attention.

An English language paper, in banner headlines, accused the U.S. Occupation Forces of purposely killing the Japanese returnees aboard the ships. Of course, this news utterly surprised the Chief of my section, Public Health and Welfare. The Chief and I rushed off on an inspection tour of the ships in the Port of Uraga. What we saw on board the ships horrified us. The diseased were left unattended for lack of medical supplies. In the ships' holds, mothers suffering from tuberculosis breast-fed their babies.

DDT teams hurriedly fanned out all over Tokyo to stamp out the outbreak of typhus. The threat of a cholera epidemic scared me into curtailing my tour of Occupation duty in Tokyo. After nearly six months in Japan I returned to Hawaii in August of 1946 for separation but, instead, I was assigned a company of recruits for basic training in Schofield Barracks. Upon completion of that assignment, I reverted to the active Army Reserve in January of 1947.

I was recalled to active duty in military intelligence for the Korean War in January 1951, followed by civil affairs duties in Japan, and retirement in 1974.



*Officers' Club, 4th Floor, NYK Bldg., taken early 1946. L-R: Rear view of unidentified officer; Lieutenants Gary Otoshi, Richard Hamasaki, Ronald Ota, Kobayashi of Gardena, CA., and Iwao Yokooji.*

## CIC in Yokohama, 1945 to 1953

By George S. Ishida, Maj., USA, Retired

After completing college studies in engineering on the mainland in 1944, I volunteered for military service and received my infantry replacement training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Then, being a Japanese linguist, I was ordered to attend Counter Intelligence Corp (CIC) Schools in Maryland at Camp Ritchie, Holabird Signal Depot, and Ft. Meade. In November 1945, I completed my CIC training at the 441st CIC Detachment School, Tokyo. Subjects at these schools included investigations, interrogations, surveillance, small arms, photography, rules of evidence, military vehicle operations from motor-cycles to semi-trailers, cartography, communications, cryptography, explosives and miscellaneous covert-type courses. Many others and I became qualified parachutists.

My route to CIC in Japan, a major arm of military intelligence (MI), was a pleasant road, but with vigorous training in spy work. In great contrast, many CIC agents came from MI units which were attached to American and Allied combat forces in the Pacific Theater where they experienced harsh, gory, island-hopping campaigns before assignment to Japan.

CIC operated in Japan through detachments located in all prefectures and municipalities. As Army personnel we bore the title of Special Agents, with plain "US" insignia on our uniforms.



*Farrington High School grads at Camp Savage, Dec. 27, 1943. L-R: Kneeling, Kenneth Murakami, George Ishida (visitor) and Norman Ueno. Standing, Henry Morisako and James Tanaka.*

Armed and furnished with ID cards and impressive badges, we were representatives of the Supreme Commander, Allied Powers (SCAP) General MacArthur. Agents were permitted to wear civvies. We received the utmost courtesies from the Japanese government and police officials, as well as from all the American military services.

The original CIC missions in Japan in 1945 were to detect subversive actions against the U.S. Occupation Forces, assist in dismantling the Japanese war machine, and also in locating the accused and witnesses for War Crimes Trial. Much work also involved supervising the security aspects of the repatriation of hundreds of German diplomats, Navy personnel and business men. Other work included locating caches of military arms, foodstuffs, uniforms and other material for redistribution through the Japanese government. Our primary sources of information came from the leftists or Communist Party members who were more than anxious to retaliate against

their wartime tormentors - the rightists and militarists.

All this shifted into reverse when the Soviet Union and Communism posed a major threat to the world, especially in 1948, by their blockade of western Berlin. Communism became a serious potential enemy of the United States, which eventually culminated in the Korean War in 1950.

CIC immediately revised its priorities. Our former targets, the militarists and rightists, became our friends and the Communists became our targets. We also solicited assistance from the police, and became active in seeking positive intelligence on foreign embassies and consulates. Yokohama harbored a large number of foreign nationals, many working as domestic help at the potential enemy foreign government establishments. We interrogated White Russian boat people and Japanese repatriates from the USSR. Surveillance of suspected communist seamen from commercial ships also became a mission. CIC



*SPECIAL AGENTS, YOKOHAMA, CIC, 1947. Seated, L-R: Kazuo Matsui and Harold Oda. Standing, L-R: "Bull" Tanino, Tokio Terazawa, Takashi Yamanaka, Kikuo Fukuda, Emmett Osborne, Tom Imai and Tom Kushio.*



*SPECIAL AGENTS, YOKOHAMA, CIC, 1946. Seated: George E. Suzuki. Standing, L-R: Kikuo Fukuda, "Small" Suzuki, Tom Koshio, Harold Oda, George Ishida and James Okita.*

succeeded in placing informants in the Japan Communist Party, from their Central Committee, to regional, Prefectural, City and even down to the cells in villages and workshops. Technical surveillance on their offices proved successful. CIC also conducted many security clearance investigations of the many American military and civilians in Japan.

CIC embraced such complete coverage of Japan that in many outlying areas it functioned as a military government unit. CIC kept SCAP informed through an extensive teletype network on natural disasters and communist rallies. It also provided VIP escort and participated in ceremonies where U.S. aid was involved in rebuilding schools, government buildings, hospitals and libraries.

CIC operations were usually covert. Agents operated out of safe houses in some instances to carry out clandestine activities to facilitate their intelligence collecting tasks.

After the signing of the WW II Peace Treaty with Japan on September 8, 1951, and cessation of the Korean War in 1953, CIC activities in Japan gradually phased out.

We are confident that CIC did its part as a military intelligence organization in Japan as the "eyes and ears" of SCAP and contributed much to the prevention of subversive actions, dismantling of the militarists, and also in keeping Japan and the United States free from undue communist influences and threats.





*Yokohama CIC, Area 25 (Watanabe Bank Building, taken from Kanagawa prefectural government building, 1947).*

**GENERAL HEADQUARTERS  
FAR EAST COMMAND  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF COUNTER INTELLIGENCE**

***Certificate***

***This is to Certify*** that Takashi Yamanaka

has successfully completed the course for Special Agents at the Counter Intelligence Training School, General Headquarters, Far East Command.

A. P. O. 500 For the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2:  
15 August 1950

*Lawrence G. Smith*  
LAWRENCE G. SMITH, Colonel, Cav  
Commanding, 441st CIC Detachment

*Washington M. Ives, Jr.*  
WASHINGTON M. IVES, JR., Colonel, GSO  
Executive

CIC School, Certificate of Completion, 1950.



CIC coverage of Communist inspired labor rally, Yokohama, 1949.

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## AMERICA'S EYES AND EARS

*Half a century has flown by  
Like an eagle's swift flight  
Leaving memories, sad or happy  
For MIS men who proved their might  
As noble "Yankee Samurai."*

*They served as America's eyes and ears  
Resourcefully and heroically  
In the U.S. Army Intelligence Service  
To overcome the enemy  
In the Second World War.*

*As translators, interpreters  
And interrogators, they did their best  
With loyalty, sacrifice,  
And secret valor they expressed  
Their American faith and patriotism.*

*As Japanese-Americans  
They passed a crucial test  
By conquering bigotry,  
Prejudice and distrust  
To gain acceptance--then respect.*

*As Nisei linguists with tenacity  
Insight and integrity  
They were active, vital participants  
In the ultimate Allied victory.*

**HAPPY GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY,  
MIS VETERANS.**

Fumi Migimoto  
July 1993

**Epilogue**

*The staff thanks the many supporters and club members for making this publication possible, and sincerely hopes this 50th Anniversary Book will be a permanent record and a fitting legacy of the MIS Veterans Club of Hawaii.*

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