"Stay the Course":
Nine Planning Themes for Stability and Reconstruction Operations

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The object in war is to attain a better peace... If you concentrate exclusively on victory, with no thought for the after-effect... it is almost certain that the peace will be a bad one, containing the germs of another war.—B.H. Liddell Hart

When U.S. President George W. Bush declared an end to Phase III (Decisive Operations) of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) on 1 May 2003, one could almost hear the global sigh of relief from a world that naively assumed the "hard work" was finished. But those in a position to appreciate the complex operational environment understood all too well that the hard work was far from over.

Operation Iraqi Freedom has been underway for over 2 years, during which time the Army has conducted decisive combat operations as well as stability and reconstruction operations. Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, Doctrine for Joint Operations, explains why the United States executed OIF: "When other instruments of national power (diplomatic, economic, and informational) are unable or inappropriate to achieve national objectives or protect national interests, the U.S. national leadership may decide to conduct large-scale, sustained combat operations... In such cases the goal is to win as quickly and with as few casualties as possible, achieving national objectives and concluding hostilities in terms favorable to the United States and its multinational partners.""3

"Win quickly" the coalition did, if one defines "winning" only in terms of defeating an enemy's conventional combat capabilities. However, JP 3-0 recognizes that achieving the intended end state of a campaign is much more complex: "Successful military operations may not, by themselves, achieve the desired strategic end state. Military activities across the full range of military operations need to be integrated and synchronized with other instruments of national power and focused on common national goals."4 In other words, the Army becomes involved in stability and reconstruction operations in addition to decisive combat when both are required to attain strategic objectives.

In his 1 May 2003 speech, Bush described a transition in the Central Command theater of operations from decisive combat operations to military operations other than war. Joint Publication 3-0 describes this transition as one component of the journey to a final campaign end state: "There may be a preliminary end state—described by a set of military conditions—when military force is no longer the principal means to the strategic objective. There may also be a broader end state that typically involves returning to a state of peace and stability and may include a variety of diplomatic, economic, informational, and military conditions."5

Transition Planning Themes

Drawing on stability operations doctrine, an analysis of the U.S. occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952, and the writings of military strategist Max G. Manwaring and others, I have identified nine specific planning themes applicable to stability and reconstruction operations conducted as part of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT):

- Legitimacy.
- Security.
- Commitment.
- Situational understanding.
- Unity of effort.
- Infrastructure.
- Economic status.
- Planning effort.
- Media.

The discussion that follows employs a case study of the occupation of Japan to demonstrate each theme’s applicability to postcombat planning efforts.

Legitimacy. Sociologist Max Weber defined legitimacy as a state of being "which arises from
voluntary obedience to a leader, a tradition, or a legal code.” For the purpose of this discussion, legitimacy applies to the form of governance and the mandate for the occupation/stabilization force as well as host-nation security forces. Political scientists and foreign affairs experts Manwaring and Edwin G. Corr considered this theme one of three that “contribute most directly to the allegiance of the population and the achievement of [a sustainable peace].” Military author Thomas Adams has asserted that legitimacy simultaneously empowers and limits a government’s right to coerce its citizens, ultimately resulting in an atmosphere of faith and trust.

Effective application of legitimacy was essential to the United States’ success during the occupation of Japan. At the international level, the Potsdam Declaration represented an international mandate for the Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (SCAP), while the creation of the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) and the Allied Council for Japan (ACJ) served as additional sources of international legitimacy. At the strategic level, the combination of surrender instruments and State Department directives legitimized SCAP authority, not to mention the personal legitimacy afforded General of the Army Douglas A. MacArthur by both President Harry S. Truman and General of the Army and Chief of Staff George C. Marshall. Emperor Hirohito, even after his de-mystification as part of the SCAP democratization program, remained the legitimate sovereign of Japan in the hearts of the Japanese. His immediate, unreserved support of SCAP policy endorsed the legitimacy of the occupation, which, in turn, facilitated the subsequent transfer of legitimacy from SCAP back to the Japanese Government via the postwar constitution.

Our interest in this theme extends to practical applications in non-Western cultures encountered during the GWOT. If every form of governance needs legitimacy to survive, then how does one establish the perception of legitimacy? On what basis does one claim it? How does one maintain it? And how does one successfully transfer it, especially if the transfer results in a nondemocratic approach to governance? These are the questions commanders and planners must ask before embarking on a stability operation and when evaluating courses of action intended to support the creation of a legitimate government.

Security. Demilitarization and demobilization eliminated the possibility that a resurgent Japanese military might jeopardize a peaceful occupation and postwar reconstruction program. Demilitarization and demobilization satisfied specific Potsdam Declaration and surrender stipulations and had second-order effects on domestic security and economic environments. However, the cost of compliance was steep. MacArthur predicated his initial occupation plan on the assumption that Japanese capitulation required an invasion followed immediately by an opposed occupation. He projected a requirement of approximately 685,000 soldiers.

Taking into account the relatively benign domestic environment, but still mindful of the need to compensate for the elimination of Japan’s self-protection capability brought about by a successful demobilization program, SCAP subsequently revised this number down to roughly 315,000 U.S. and 45,000 U.K. soldiers. By the end of 1945, the United States had stationed 354,675 troops in Japan as security forces and members of local military observation teams. That number represented a substantial commitment of combat power to establishing and maintaining a secure environment in a country little more than three-quarters the size of Iraq and two-thirds the size of Afghanistan—a fact even more significant given the Japanese people were not violently opposed to the occupation.

In 1950, the Japanese Government, with SCAP’s endorsement, created a 75,000-man paramilitary National Police Reserve to respond to large-scale domestic disturbances—this in a country whose society took pride in its heritage of social harmony and polite interaction. Establishing and maintaining security and, when appropriate, transferring responsibility for it was vital to occupation democratization and economic programs.

Security transcends the typical military definition centered on force protection; in the context of stability and reconstruction operations, military commanders and planners from every agency involved must recognize a responsibility to a much larger community. Under the provisions of the U.S. Law of Land Warfare and the Law of War, as codified in customary and conventional international treaty law, occupation forces must provide a secure environment for the host-nation population as well as all other elements having a legitimate reason to reside or conduct business in the area of operations. This sounds straightforward, but the second- and third-order effects of security, or lack thereof, are important to remember. If the local populace is afraid to venture out to conduct business, or work, or vote, the legitimacy of the government and law-enforcement apparatus is in question. If the international community is unwilling to invest resources in what it perceives to be an insecure environment, stability operations risk
exceeding their capability to support the growth of an economic infrastructure.

Commitment. Aside from the troops provided by the United Kingdom, and minimal participation in the FEC and ACJ advisory bodies, the level of international commitment to the post-World War II stability operation in Japan was relatively inconsequential. The U.S. commitment of 7 years, several billion dollars, over 350,000 soldiers, and untold intellectual energy ultimately resulted in a tremendous payoff—a Pacific Rim ally who continues to grant basing rights, functions as a major international trading power, and serves as an example of how Western democratic principles can be successfully adapted to a non-Western society.

Various methods combined to demonstrate the U.S. level of commitment to the enterprise: the presence of U.S. troops visibly reinforced the message; MacArthur’s provision of emergency food assistance tangibly demonstrated a level of compassion and commitment totally unexpected but graciously accepted; and SCAP’s willingness to occupy Japan through a Japanese Government administrative structure demonstrated a real commitment to the principles of democratic governance the occupation worked to inculcate.

An additional measure, albeit somewhat intangible, was the decision to assign MacArthur as the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers. On the surface this made operational sense: MacArthur had commanded Allied operations in the Pacific and was capable of wielding similar authority in Japan. On a deeper level, however, MacArthur’s selection demonstrated a remarkable sense of situational understanding and provided clear evidence of the level of U.S. commitment to this particular stability operation. That the United States committed one of its most prestigious military commanders to the occupation—a man whose talents could have been applied in any number of postwar venues—was not lost on the Japanese.

Ambassador William Walker, with the experience of several diplomatic postings on which to draw, placed a strong emphasis on this as a planning theme: “If you can’t stay the course, don’t go in. And ‘the course’ will likely include commitment and attention well beyond dealing with the immediate threat, and recognition that the issues at play are more complex, difficult to resolve, and resource-intensive than previously imagined.”12

Future military and civilian stability operations commanders and planners would do well to keep this occupation example in mind when estimating key resources—especially time—needed to demonstrate resolve and commitment to a transition where the effort will be continuous and the population potentially ambivalent, if not outright hostile.

Situational understanding. The U.S. occupation of Japan did not proceed without controversy: this was, after all, a clash of cultures in every sense of the phrase. But the transition between combat and stability operations was much more efficient because MacArthur and SCAP planners demonstrated an appreciation of the environment they faced.

MacArthur’s exceptional situational understanding of the Asian environment, in general, and the Japanese postwar situation, in particular, was firmly grounded in his earliest military experiences. In October 1904, he had accompanied his father, Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur, on a 9-month inspection visit to the Far East to observe the Russo-Japanese War. During the trip, he developed an appreciation for the “boldness and courage of the [Japanese] soldier [and the] thrift, courtesy, and friendliness of the ordinary citizen. . . .”13 Although he was only lieutenant at the time, he recognized the critical role the Emperor played in Japanese society, especially with regard to the military: “His [the Japanese soldier’s] almost fanatical belief and reverence for his Emperor impressed me indelibly.”14

Some 40 years later MacArthur’s challenge would be to de-mystify Hirohito without destroying a critical component of the Japanese social fabric. As historians Ray Moore and Donald Robinson observed, “Japan’s public philosophy had to change. [It] had to be transformed, incorporating the people’s emotional attachment to the Emperor but explicitly and decisively rejecting the notion that he was the sovereign ruler.”15 MacArthur’s decision to work through the Emperor in pursuit of democratization, based to some extent on his understanding of this one man’s influence, paid huge dividends and greatly impressed the postwar Japanese Government.16

MacArthur also recognized that his responsibilities as SCAP during Phase IV differed fundamentally from those he exercised as the Pacific Theater combatant commander during Phase III. During decisive operations his focus was on forcing a Japanese capitulation, but during stability and reconstruction operations he determined his professional military knowledge “was no longer a major factor.” His highly developed sense of situational understanding led him to recognize he had to be, in his own words, “an economist, a political scientist, an engineer, a manufacturing executive, a teacher, even a theologian of sorts. [He] had to rebuild a nation that had been almost completely destroyed by the war.”17
The need for situational understanding also applied to U.S. occupation soldiers and their interactions with the civilian population. Most Japanese citizens never saw MacArthur, senior SCAP officers, or even senior Japanese Government officials, but they interacted daily with occupation troops. Almost overnight several hundred thousand U.S. troops shifted from an invasion mindset to one of stability operations. American troops influenced every aspect of Japanese culture they came in contact, yet few disturbances were reported. The U.S. soldier’s courtesy, professionalism, dignity, and discipline deserve much of the credit for the success of the occupation at the local level. So, too, must we credit SCAP efforts to train occupation soldiers, enhance cultural awareness, and supervise interactions between military teams in the field and in Japanese administrative agencies. The U.S. occupation of Japan shows that informed, adaptive situational understanding at all levels of a stability operation is a key combat multiplier in the fight for a sustainable peace.

Field Manual 3-0, Operations, defines situational understanding as the “product of applying analysis and judgment to the common operational picture to determine the relationships among the factors of [METT-TC].” But these factors do not do justice to the complexity and significance of situational awareness in the context of stability and reconstruction operations. Manwaring and Corr admonish us to redefine “enemy,” “power,” and “victory” when thinking about stability operations. They state that once the transition has been announced the enemy is no longer a viable entity but, rather, becomes the much more complex notion of “violence” and its causes.

Pretransition power is combat power brought to bear by the joint force commander (JFC). During stability and reconstruction operations, however, power is a “multi-level and combined political, psychological, moral, informational, economic, social, military, police, and civil activity that can be brought to bear. . . .” To develop situational understanding, commanders and planners must become ever more proficient in combining cultural awareness, an innovative METT-TC analysis, and an informed intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). Without it, they risk making decisions based on inaccurate or inapplicable data.

**Unity of effort.** A unified Allied effort was essential to Phase III’s operational success in the Pacific Theater, but when it came to planning and conducting Phase IV, the international community’s contribution was marginal. By and large, the United States found itself planning and executing stability and reconstruction operations in Japan on its own.

Unilateral U.S. unity of effort, however, was instrumental in the transition to stability operations. Unity of effort began at the highest levels of the U.S. Government and extended down to military teams deployed throughout Japan. MacArthur, his staff, and the final occupation plan (Operation Blacklist) benefited from detailed expert planning efforts of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) prior to Japan’s surrender. MacArthur enjoyed the support of the U.S. executive and legislative branches during the occupation. His staff understood his end-state goals and interim objectives for the demilitarization and democratization of Japan, and it was able to issue instructions to the Japanese Government to guide reform programs.

Unity of effort entails the idea that no stability operation can truly succeed unless it benefits from long-term multilevel commitment and support. This is not a new concept for military commanders in decisive operations, but the sheer complexity of the environment, and competing end-state goals envisioned by any number of external agencies, make this a critical stability operations planning component.

Manwaring and Kimbra Fishel believe unity of effort and legitimacy are the two most critical dimensions to explaining the strengths and weaknesses of traditional peacekeeping. The concept of unity of effort invites the reader to ask hard questions: Does the international community support the decisive operations phase of the campaign? Will it lend adequate support to the transition and stability operations phases as well? Are all elements of the JFC organization unified in their efforts to execute transition tasks? Are the JFC’s interim objectives and end-state goals clearly understood by the entire force so the effort can be truly unified? Commanders and planners must work to leverage all possible resources, including nongovernmental and private volunteer organizations, not just military forces at their disposal.

**Infrastructure.** By 1945, key components of Japan’s infrastructure were in poor condition. Manufacturing and transportation had either been destroyed, damaged, or subverted to the point of inefficiency. The military, media, key political advisory councils, and the public education system had been corrupted by militaristic ultranationalistic movements, and the role of religion in Japanese society had been rendered nearly inconsequential.

By working through the Japanese Government, MacArthur and his staff initiated aggressive economic, political, and military “purges” to reform
and rejuvenate these critical infrastructure elements. Immediate humanitarian assistance in the form of food shipments aided the Japanese population until home food production and transportation infrastructures were restored. Political reform focused on designing a governmental infrastructure that complied with the Potsdam Declaration mandate and set the stage for long-term development along democratic lines. Sweeping educational reform programs undertaken at MacArthur’s direction strongly supported democratization efforts on a national level.

Immediately following its surrender, Japan was a collection of interdependent but disjointed infrastructure components. SCAP and Operation Blacklist applied adaptable solutions informed by situational understanding. The end result is widely recognized as an unqualified success.

Today’s commanders and planners should take into account the unique attributes of interdependent infrastructure elements when designing and executing decisive combat operations and the transition to stability operations. Operational decisions made during Phase III of a campaign should not be made without considering how they will affect Phase IV efforts.

The indigenous population has the right to expect that the transition to Phase IV will bring a return to precombat levels of service and the potential for continued improvement over time. Commanders should be prepared to deal with infrastructure issues and the public and media fallout that invariably follows. One of the keys to a successful transition between decisive operations and stability operations is detailed, informed, innovative planning before the onset of combat operations and continuous, adaptive planning and execution during stability operations to support the government’s efforts to rebuild and enhance the vital services infrastructure as quickly as possible.

Economic status. A key component of SCAP’s economic recovery plan was the purge of most Japanese finance and manufacturing conglomerates. MacArthur and his staff decided to act immediately and decisively to remove key leaders who, by virtue of their ultranationalistic tendencies, could disrupt postwar reconstruction programs.

MacArthur also declined to provide overt support to the Japanese Government’s economic rejuvenation program. On the surface this might seem contradictory, but in retrospect, the unique environmental conditions of the occupation supported this course of action. Truman and the U.S. Congress were sensitive to the political dangers attendant to expending funds to support two occupation efforts on opposite sides of the globe.

During the war, the Japanese industrial base had been severely damaged, but not destroyed. Even though the Zaibatsu purges significantly reduced the number of business, finance, and industry leaders, enough experienced men remained to form a foundation on which the Japanese Government could build.

Investing huge sums in the Japanese economy might have been more efficient in the short term, but such a policy would have alienated U.S. domestic support, slighted the Japanese work ethic, and undermined the Japanese Government’s legitimate efforts to rebuild its economic infrastructure. Japan’s legacy of economic vitality, sophisticated government bureaucracy, and highly developed financial systems did not disappear during World War II. MacArthur wisely limited reform programs to the minimum level needed to purge elements opposed to economic reform.

Commanders and planners must weigh many factors when determining the most appropriate course of action for economic reconstruction and stability. Immediate humanitarian needs, critical infrastructure repair demands, and employment requirements will compete for supremacy with long-term economic growth policies, and each stability operation will present a different set of conditions. Iraq’s oil industry is a case in point. For years the country delayed modernization initiatives and in many locations ignored basic safety protocols. At some point, refineries must be shut down for extended periods of time to enable workers to make overdue repairs, and this will result in lost oil revenues. In this instance, Iraq’s oil industry is caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

Iraq can elect to improve its infrastructure but temporarily lose much-needed revenue, or it can maintain revenue by assuming increased risk by continuing to push the safety envelope. Either way, the dilemma is a difficult one. Manwaring and Fishel invite commanders and planners to consider the basic tasks that await stability forces and subsequent legitimate governments: assisting in the repair of basic services infrastructure; generating employment opportunities; providing financial and technical assistance to regenerate and expand the domestic economy; and putting in place reforms, strategies, and relationships for economic growth and economic justice. Depending on the state of the preconflict economy and the scope of combat operations, these tasks might require significant effort.

Planning effort. A study of the U.S. occupation of Japan reveals clear evidence of a dedicated, educated planning effort. Political scientist Robert
Ward believed the occupation “was perhaps the single most exhaustively planned operation of massive and externally directed political change in world history.” Clearly, much of the occupation’s early successes should be attributed to the ground work initially led by the SWNCC and ultimately taken up by MacArthur’s staff.

Even so, Ambassador William J. Sebald’s recollection of SCAP’s planning capabilities is less than flattering. He states that senior SCAP officers were “hopelessly divided on how to approach the difficult political questions,” struggling over basic differences such as the degree of severity with which to treat Japanese war criminals and the extent and speed of political and economic reforms. He also felt SCAP headquarters did not adequately solicit Japanese views when it established initial occupation policies. Furthermore, SCAP instructions too often included directives “conspicuously geared to American, rather than Japanese, psychology.”

The two perspectives represent different facets of the planning conundrum—on the one hand, the desire to develop a detailed stability plan before commencing Phase IV operations; on the other, the recognition that each environment is unique and the Western approach to demilitarization, democratization, and economic rejuvenation might not always be the most efficient solution. Key to immediate and long-term success during stability operations, then, is a command and staff team armed with a sound initial plan, possessed of a clear vision of end-state objectives, enabled by situational understanding, and prepared to adapt that plan to accommodate changing capabilities and environmental conditions.

**Media.** During World War II, the Japanese media filtered the truth about Japanese military operations, and during the early stages of the occupation, SCAP censored it. Over time, MacArthur observed a positive shift in Japanese media coverage once humanitarian relief supplies arrived. Eventually, the Japanese media displayed an increasingly active interest in political reform initiatives, beginning with the coverage it dedicated to the constitution-development effort.

In the aftermaths of Vietnam, Operation Desert Storm, and OIF, one might be tempted to view widespread media influence as a relatively modern occurrence; the Japanese occupation provides evidence to the contrary, although one could say SCAP manipulated the Japanese media in support of democratization. Observer Marlene Mayo, for example, stated: “By one set of standards, civil censorship and propaganda dissemination in occupied Japan were highly successful in the overall reorientation goal. . . .” But she questioned the apparent hypocrisy of a democratic power that, while attempting to foster democratic principles, engaged in media censorship.

Commanders and planners must acknowledge the capacity of the media to support Phase IV themes and convey positive stability operations messages to a global audience. At the same time they must recognize that the environmental conditions leading up to Phase IV might not have been conducive to widespread popular belief in the media, or as was the case in Japan, the media might have been little more than a propaganda arm of the government rather than a forum for democratic debate and the free exchange of ideas.

**Questions for the Future**

I suspect most commanders and planners would rather focus intellectual energy on Phase III than on any other phase. But truth be told, Phase III operations do not achieve the ultimate political end-state goal of a sustainable peace: they only set conditions for Phase IV activities. Accordingly, one can legitimately argue that Phase IV deserves as much detailed analysis and planning as does any other phase of a joint campaign.

Two questions arise: Can these nine transition planning themes meet the contemporary operational environment’s (COE’s) demands? And, will they prove as applicable to future stability operations as they were during the occupation of Japan? In my estimation, the answer is yes, but only if commanders and planners are willing to consider the following points.

First, some of these themes will always be more important than others by virtue of how they affect end-state goals. Legitimacy, security, and situational understanding are so critical to the long-term success of any stability operation that an inadequate effort in any one of the three areas is sure to result in significant challenges; miscarriage in all three will almost assuredly guarantee the failure of the entire stability operation. The remaining six planning themes deserve consideration on their own merits, but the reality is that legitimacy, security, and situational understanding represent the “big three.” Every operational decision made, every resource committed, every negotiation conducted, and every policy implemented should be done only after considering the long-term effect of that action on legitimacy, security, and situational understanding.

Second, no two stability operations will ever be alike. COE describes a constantly evolving world that encompasses the present while looking to the future and evokes the notion of an enemy (which in the case of stability operations, becomes violence
and all of its root causes) that is constantly learning, adapting, changing, and pushing the envelope of civilized conduct. Long gone are the relatively comfortable days when a doctrinal template, a solid IPB, and a stopwatch sufficed as analytical tools. Commanders and planners must apply these planning themes in a dynamic mode to fight for information, intelligence, and situational understanding, especially with regard to stability operations.

Third, commanders and planners must also recognize that all nine planning themes are interrelated. The U.S. occupation of Japan provided several examples of how decisions made with regard to one planning theme affected another. For example, MacArthur’s masterful application of situational understanding to the issue of the Emperor’s postwar status affected the security environment and the public perception of the Japanese Government’s legitimacy. OIF provides several examples as well. The Coalition Provisional Authority’s decision to disband the Iraqi military and security forces continues to affect the region’s security situation and economic recovery. In another example, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani’s intercession with Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to help end the battle of Najaf reflects the complex interdependency of situational understanding, security, and legitimacy.

‘At any time, the operating environment can force one of the planning themes to the forefront. In response to changing conditions, commanders and planners should remain flexible in their application of the nine transition planning themes as they conduct a holistic stability operations campaign. Finally, commanders must always remember the immeasurable value of commitment and dedication to the long haul. The likelihood of decisions, actions, or policies receiving recognition in the form of positive press or popular support is slim. Stability operations’ success is measured in generations, not months. MR

NOTES

2. The White House, “President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended” (remarks by the President from the U.S. Marine Corps at sea off the coast of San Diego, California, 1 May 2003), on-line at <www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/iraq/20030501-15.html>, accessed 23 May 2005. Bush declared: “Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed. And now our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country.”


4. Ibid., I-4.

5. Ibid., II-2.


7. Edwin G. Corr and Manwaring, “Some Final Thoughts,” in Manwaring and Joes, 250-51. Corr and Manwaring identified the other two elements as “establishing security” and “regenerating and bolstering economic prosperity.”

8. Adams, 42.


11. Field Manual (FM) 27-10, Law of Land Warfare, Change 1 (Washington, DC: GPO, July 1976), chap. 6, para. 363. This entry reads: “Duty to Restore and Maintain Public Order: The authority of the legitimate power having in fact passed into the hands of the occupant, the latter shall take all the measures in his power to restore, and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety, while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country.”


16. Shigeru Yoshida, The Yoshida Memoirs: The Story of Japan In Crisis (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1962), 51. Yoshida, Japan’s second postwar prime minister, said of MacArthur’s level of situational understanding and its effect on occupation programs: “The fact remains that the respect and understanding shown by the General [MacArthur] towards the Throne, and his decision to exculpate the Emperor from all and any relationship with war crimes, did more than anything else to lessen the fears of the majority of the Japanese people in regard to the occupation and to reconcile them to it. I have no hesitation in saying that it was the attitude adopted by General MacArthur towards the Throne, more than any other single factor, that made the occupation an historic success.”

17. MacArthur, 281-83.

18. William J. Sebald. With MacArthur in Japan: A Personal History of the Occupation (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), 57-58. Sebald characterized the interaction between occupation troops and Japanese citizens as follows: “The general behavior of American occupation troops, especially the combat men who first entered Japan, was particularly impressive. Collectively, they were exceedingly effective as ambassadors of good will. The country was surprised and pleased by the natural manner in which the early occupation soldiers acted and spoke, by their helpful behavior toward Japanese women and older men; and by the unmistakable pleasure they found in giving presents to the children. These men came close to the Japanese people, and gave them a worthy cross-section of America.”


21. Ibid.


23. Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet (Pam) 550-30, 306. One might also consider Napoleon’s elimination of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 and the subsequent reorganization of the Germanys from 300 states to 38 as being indicative of tremendously successful planning efforts, as was the subsequent effort led by German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck that further reduced the number of those states to three. Sebald, 43-44.

25. MacArthur, 285. MacArthur noted the Allied naval and air blockades had been quite effective, and consequently, Japanese food supplies were woefully inadequate. He was fully aware that, because Japanese occupation policy demanded that conquered Japanese territories feed Japanese troops, the civilian population of Japan would expect Americans to demand equal logistical support. Consequently, MacArthur’s decisions to provide emergency food supplies and prohibit American troops from eating those supplies must have sent a powerful message about America, democracy, and the level of U.S. commitment to the occupation’s success. In MacArthur’s own words: “[A]s soon as the complete ex-haustion of Japanese food resources was confirmed, I issued an order forbidding the consumption by the occupation forces of local food and requested Washington to begin at once shipment of relief supplies. The effect was instantaneous. The Japanese authorities changed their attitude from one of correct politeness to one of open defiance. The press, which had been dubious at first, now began to voice unanimous praise.”