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REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL RESEARCH UNIT, O/RR, ON THE  
PROPOSAL FOR PROCUREMENT AND UTILIZATION OF  
UNEXPLOITED STUDIES CARRIED OUT BY JAPANESE  
SCIENTISTS IN THE AREAS IN AND AROUND THE  
PACIFIC BASIN TO 1945

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1. Attached are

a. A summary of the views of Mr. Harold J. Coolidge, of the National Research Council, on further exploitation of Japanese documents as expressed in a conference with members of CIA, OIR, State, and the Library of Congress on 27 January 1951 (Attachment A);

b. copies of letters on the same subject from: (1) Mr. Coolidge to Brigadier General Edwin L. Sibert, Director of Staff, Inter-American Defense Board, dated 17 January 1951 (Attachment B), and (2) Mr. Donald J. Pletsch, Division of International Health, Federal Security Agency, to Mr. Coolidge, dated 13 October 1950 (Attachment C).

2. During a visit to Japan in 1950, Mr. Coolidge received information leading him to believe that there are important pre-1945 studies made by Japanese specialists in various fields of the exact and social sciences which have not been collected or exploited through the activities of the United States, but which might have intelligence value. Exploitation of such sources could only be carried out to maximum advantage before conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan.

3. Mr. Coolidge's views in this regard were supported by those of Mr. Pletsch, who served three years in Japan as a biologist in the Scientific and Technical Division, Economic and Scientific Section, General Headquarters, SCAP. Among Mr. Pletsch's responsibilities during this period were collection, appraisal and abstracting of many Japanese scientific papers.

4. Following informal investigation of the matter in O/RR, the Assistant Director for Operations placed Mr. Coolidge in contact with the Production Staff, O/RR, on 25 January 1951. As a result of this contact, Mr. Coolidge developed his ideas regarding unexploited pre-1945 Japanese documents in a conference with representatives of CIA, the Department of State, and the Library of Congress, on 27 January 1951. Those present, besides Mr. Coolidge, were:

State Dept. review completed

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Nazi/Japanese War Crimes Task Force review completed



b. Department of State: Mr. J.W. Lydman, DRF/OIR

c. Library of Congress: Mr. E.A. Beal, Jr, Division of Orientalia.

At this conference, Mr. Coolidge stated his views along the lines given in Attachment A, which parallels the content of Attachment C. Mr. Coolidge is now visiting Japan, where he will further explore the status of the types of materials which he described. He will return to Washington on 19 March, when he will be available for additional consultation.

5. On 30 January, through arrangements made by [redacted] O/CD,

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[redacted] consulted at length with Mr. J.J. Bagnall, [redacted] of the Foreign Documents Division, O/O, regarding the nature, subject coverage, present location, and extent of cataloguing of Japanese documents already in this country, including those in university libraries and collections as well as those held by the United States Government. Japanese documents on deposit with United States Government agencies in Japan were likewise discussed as to their extent, nature, and availability.

6. From the discussions summarized in the previous paragraph, the following points were developed:

a. that the Washington Document Center Advance performed a highly systematic and thorough operation of collecting Japanese Government files, official documents, scholarly files, and publications. Combined with subsequent and current collecting by governmental agencies and private institutions, and with consideration of the extensive and valuable ATIS collection and other collections in SCAP, it appears that there has been brought under some form of United States control virtually all pre-1945 materials of appreciable intelligence value. These materials even include considerable quantities of field notes, reports, and similar documents of Japanese scientists and others who traveled throughout the Far East in the interest of the Japanese Army, Navy, Foreign Office and other ministries and whose research materials have been acquired as part of the government files or from personal and institutional collections.

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b. that preliminary control of these acquisitions exists in complete lists in the form of card files and acquisition lists classified by categories, subject and geographical area. Although detailed indexing will be necessary to make possible spot exploitation, the existing acquisition lists and card catalogues already provide an over-all guide to the materials acquired by the United States Government. These acquisitions total an estimated 1,500,000 items.

c. that all of these United States Government acquisitions have been screened for intelligence value: some have been abstracted and other translated. Although the central collection at the former Washington Document Center has been broken up and the major part distributed to the Library of Congress (about 300,000 items), the National Archives (roughly 1,000,000 items), the Department of Commerce and other agencies, F/DD, CIA, has retained about 40,000 items. All of these materials are at present available for intelligence exploitation. It is estimated that about 75 percent of Japanese documents of intelligence value are already available through the materials already in the United States.

7. The great majority of the Japanese documents in the Foreign Document Division and of those elsewhere in the United States, however, are not available for immediate or urgent operational use. Translating and abstracting of selected materials of intelligence importance, therefore, is the only method whereby such materials could be made immediately available for operational use in fulfillment of urgent requirements.

8. It is recognized that large-scale document acquisition eventually reaches a point of diminishing returns. Further large-scale endeavors to procure documents of pre-1945 origin would have to be balanced against: (a) present possessions, (b) the need for missing pre-1945 materials, and (c) the availability of more recent materials on the Far East of a nature which would make pre-1945 materials obsolescent, and (d) the relative value of expending efforts to acquire such materials at the expense of acquiring more recent documents, if a choice between the two is necessary.

9. It seems clear that the point of departure for remaining problems regarding the over-all picture of Japanese documents of intelligence value is completion of the cataloguing of all Japanese materials of the types under discussion which are already in the United States, both those held by Governmental agencies, including the Library of Congress, and those deposited in the university libraries, such as those of Yale, Columbia, Stanford, and Michigan, and the formation of a union catalogue to be housed at a central point most

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appropriately located for over-all intelligence purposes. Information on all pertinent Japanese materials under United States control in Japan should be added to this catalogue to give it maximum utility. Complete cataloguing of information on the great volume of materials already available in both the United States and Japan seems to be the only firm ground on which to base any plans for further extensive procurement.

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Attachment A

Summary of Mr. Harold J. Coolidge's Views as Expressed in the  
Conference of 27 January 1951

In addition to information contained in Japanese scientific papers already collected, classified, and exploited by United States Government agencies, a great volume of unexplored data exists in studies made over many years in various fields, including the social sciences, by Japanese scientists who carried on investigations in areas of the Pacific Basin within the former Japanese sphere of interest. Many of the results of these latter investigations are found in inaccessible journals or in manuscript or notebook form, and cover the period to the close of World War II. It is believed that they include information valuable for: (a) basic intelligence, and (b) area studies being carried on at various United States universities.

Adequate utilization of the great store of already existing data in these unexploited studies would not only provide additional information on regions in which Japan was interested, but would: (a) provide an opportunity to view the problems and situations of the territories concerned through Asiatic eyes, and (b) eliminate the need for United States research workers and analysts to cover the same general ground independently. Furthermore, since the close of World War II, United States research workers have not been able to enter many of the regions covered by these studies, and investigations have, therefore, not been advanced beyond the point at which the Japanese left them. The signing of a peace treaty with Japan will greatly reduce the possibility of obtaining and exploiting these materials. A suggested method of approach for locating, classifying, and utilizing these unexploited Japanese studies follows:

a. Delineation of fields of interest, with priority to be given to those fields in which pre-war Japanese interest has waned, with resultant threats to accumulations of notes, unpublished manuscripts, and rare periodicals.

b. Elimination of fields already adequately covered by SCAP and other agencies.

c. Cataloguing and publicizing Japanese literature already in the United States, including collections in the Library of Congress, Yale, Columbia, and other universities, and accumulations made by military agencies, to obtain adequate knowledge of what already exists in this country and thereby prevent duplication of effort.

d. Location of, or preparation of, journal and book lists in the priority fields.

e. Translations of titles and references to pertinent articles in the most promising journal series, using Japanese translators.

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f. Locating in Japan all pertinent notes, manuscripts, and publications, enlisting the help of selected individual Japanese and appropriate Japanese organizations.

g. Preparation of informational abstracts, employing Japanese abstractors.

h. Checking of all translations, references, and abstracts by capable American personnel.

i. Final bibliographic organization and publication of material, including lists of information sources and repositories.

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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

2101 Constitution Avenue

Washington 25, D. C.

PACIFIC SCIENCE BOARD

17 January 1961

Brig. Gen. Edwin L. Sibert  
Director of Staff  
Inter-American Defense Board  
2600 - 16th Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

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Dear General Sibert:

I greatly enjoyed seeing you again the other evening, and am pleased to have you back in Washington. The project which I mentioned to you at that time is one which I discussed with our mutual friend, [redacted] and which he helped me to bring before certain people associated with C.I.A.

On my trip to Japan last year I received information which led me to believe that there are important studies which were made by Japanese specialists in various scientific fields, including anthropology, which have not been collected through the activities of United States agencies, but which might very well be of considerable value not only for the area studies programs which are underway in this country at selected universities, but also might furnish essential information for basic intelligence. I have a strong feeling that we should increase our effort to look at problems and situations in Asia through Asiatic eyes. For this reason we should make the fullest possible use of Japanese material collected openly and under cover over a period of many years prior to and during World War II. I am very much concerned that with the signing of the peace treaty with Japan, the possibility of obtaining this material will be greatly diminished. It is for this reason that I had hoped this project would be one which would interest some appropriate government agency.

You will find attached a copy of a letter from Dr. Donald J. Pletsch which he wrote at my request and which calls attention to some of the material that I have in mind. He devoted a considerable part of his three years duty in Japan to this type of work, and I have confidence in the statement which he has made. If you think that this suggestion has some merit, I shall be glad to have an opportunity to discuss the matter with the friend whom you mentioned the other evening. Because of my impending trip to the Pacific this would have to be arranged for some day next week.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

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Enclosure

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Harold J. Coolidge

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Washington 25, D. C.

October 13, 1950

Dr. Harold J. Coolidge  
Pacific Science Board  
National Research Council  
2101 Constitution Avenue  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Coolidge:

Your recent expression of interest in the utilization of Japanese information on areas formerly studied by Japanese scientists was of great interest to me. The matter is one of great importance and warrants immediate attention. There exist vast accumulations of data gathered by the Japanese from lands in and around the Pacific Basin. Many of these findings exist in inaccessible journals or in manuscript or notebook form. Since the end of the war such information has not been advanced by the research workers who can no longer enter the areas concerned. Some data have doubtless been lost, dispersed, or destroyed already. Further passage of time can only make salvage operations more difficult and costly.

As you may be aware, I recently returned from three years in Japan as biologist in the Scientific and Technical Division, Economic and Scientific Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. Among my responsibilities during this three year period was the collection, appraisal, and abstracting of many Japanese scientific papers. A summary of this project will be found in Report No. 19, Science and Technology in Japan, published in 1949. A few fields were exhaustively covered, one of which will be described later. The Natural Resources Section gave considerable attention to Japanese documentation in fisheries, agriculture, forestry, and mineral resources. However, the time limitations and specific requirements of these programs inevitably left many fields untouched and gave only partial coverage of others. To my knowledge the Japanese work in the social sciences did not receive systematic, comprehensive examination nor documentation.

The armed services made systematic accumulations of published journal series in 1945-46. Subject matter bearing on military techniques (ordnance, chemical warfare, order of battle, etc.) undoubtedly received careful scrutiny by G2 and Navy Intelligence. However, I understand that large quantities of literature were shipped in bulk to Washington and have not been systematically catalogued nor utilized.

The greatest treasure trove is still unexplored -- the routine, unclassified Japanese reports of observations in all parts of the former Japanese Empire. Scientists went to all parts of the Pacific and into Manchuria and southern Asia. It seems foolish indeed for our research workers ~~Approved For Release 2004/07/08 : CIA-RDP81-00706R000200010049-3~~ reported by the Japanese in their published works or personal manuscripts.



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My views regarding a practical method of approach might be of interest to you. Let me cite an example of documentation, and the procedure used. In late 1949 American research workers expressed interest in Japanese research in environmental physiology and clothing requirements. Instead of citing a few current papers published by the Japanese in this field, it was decided to exhaustively document all Japanese research, fundamental and applied, dealing with environmental physiology and related fields. The result was the publication in 1950 of Report No. 21, Science and Technology in Japan, entitled, "A Conspectus of Japanese Research in Environmental Physiology and Closely Related Fields". Most of the work was done voluntarily by the most capable Japanese authorities in the field of physiology. Professional American personnel contacted key Japanese research workers and pointed out the abysmal world ignorance regarding Japanese work in that field, due either to barriers imposed by the Japanese language or by publication in obscure journals. The Japanese scholars were eager to solve this problem. They located, supplemented, and translated Japanese bibliographies and indices on the subject. Included were papers reporting studies on tropical islands of the Pacific and the arctic areas of Manchuria, fatigue and clothing observations on Japanese soldiers in Sumatra and Japanese pilots over China. Military journals, labor magazines, and professional biological publications were all examined and indexed. The draft was then carefully checked by Nisei translators, and organized in more usable fashion. Information was added to guide non-Japanese workers to any publication in which a reference had been cited. The resultant report has given dignity to the Japanese research and encourages utilization of the information by many non-Japanese students and research personnel.

The limited number of Japanese libraries, both institutional and private, were tragically decimated in 1945. Libraries in Japan have suffered further during the postwar period of economic strain. Additional delay will mean continued loss through neglect and disinterest. Early action should be taken while some of the American professional personnel in Japan can still assist in establishing invaluable contacts with capable Japanese scientists.

Logical steps in a comprehensive program might include:

1. Delineation of the fields of interest. Priority must be given to fields where pre-war Japanese interest has waned, with resultant threats to accumulations of notes, unpublished manuscripts, and rare periodicals. Due to the secretive habits of many Japanese technicians and scientists, many research results exist only in the form of private notes and manuscripts withdrawn from the laboratories upon their dissolution.

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2. Elimination of fields already covered adequately by SCAP and other agencies.
3. Cataloguing and publicising Japanese literature now in the United States, to include accumulations made by military agencies and now presumably in dead storage.
4. Locating in Japan all pertinent notes, manuscripts, and publications, enlisting Japanese help.
5. Location of, or preparation of, journal and book lists in the priority fields.
6. Translations of titles and references of pertinent articles in the most promising journal series, using Japanese translators.
7. Preparation of informational abstracts, using Japanese abstractors.
8. Checking (scanning) of all translations, references, and abstracts by capable American personnel (the best man to organize this phase may be Mr. George Yamashiro, still employed by ESS/ST, GHQ, SCAP).
9. Final bibliographic organization and publication of material, including lists of information sources and repositories.

If the hoped for action which you expressed in our recent conversation can be implemented, results can best be achieved while the occupation of Japan is still in effect. I do not refer to any use of pressure or compulsion to reveal information sources. Such an approach would be undignified and almost completely fruitless. I refer instead to many details concerning personnel and logistics which might best be accomplished at once. Certain types of information can be found only by personal contact of American scholars with their Japanese equivalents. Other information, including locating individuals and documents connected with Japanese activities outside the home islands, may best be made available through United States military liaison with the Japanese Demobilization Bureau or other agencies. Both military and non-military channels should be used.

My best wishes in your valuable effort to accomplish this task before time lapse renders it impossible. If I can be of any help, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Don Pletsch  
Donald J. Pletsch  
Public Health Adviser  
Division of International Health