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master plan for a



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Word Count: 2329 The occupation of was, from start to finish, an American operation. General Douglas MacArthur, sole supreme commander of the Allied Power was in charge.

The Americans had insufficient men to make a military government of Japan possible; so they decided to act through the existing Japanese government. General MacArthur became, except in name, dictator of Japan. He imposed his will on Japan. Demilitarization was speedily carried out, demobilization of the former imperial forces was completed by early 1946. Japan was extensively fire bombed during the second world war. The stench of sewer gas, rotting garbage, and the acrid smell of ashes and scorched debris pervaded the air. The Japanese people had to live in the damp, and cold of the concrete buildings, because they were the only ones left.

Little remained of the vulnerable wooden frame, tile roof dwelling lived in by most Japanese. When the first signs of winter set in, the occupation forces immediately took over all the steam-heated buildings. The Japanese were out in the cold in the first post war winter fuel was very hard to find, a family was considered lucky if they had a small barely glowing charcoal brazier to huddle around. That next summer in random spots new houses were built, each house was standardized at 216 square feet, and required 2400 board feet of material in order to be built. A master plan for a modernistic city had been drafted, but it was cast aside because of the lack of time before the next winter. The thousands of people who lived in railroad stations and public parks needed housing. All the Japanese heard was democracy from the Americans.

All they cared about was food. General MacArthur asked the government to send food, when they refused he sent another telegram that said, "Send me food, or send me bullets." American troops were forbidden to eat local food, as to keep from cutting from cutting into the sparse local supply. No food was brought in expressly for the Japanese during the first six months after the American presence there. Herbert Hoover, serving as chairman of a special presidential advisory committee, recommended minimum imports to Japan of 870,000 tons of food to be distributed in different urban areas.

Fish, the source of so much of the protein in the Japanese diet, were no longer available in adequate quantities because the fishing fleet, particularly the large vessels, had been badly decimated by the war and because the U. S. R. closed off the fishing grounds in the north.

The most important aspect of the democratization policy was the adoption of a new constitution and its supporting legislation. When the Japanese government proved too confused or too reluctant to come up with a constitutional reform that satisfied MacArthur, he had his own staff draft a new constitution in February 1946. This, with only minor changes, was then adopted by the Japanese government in the form of an imperial amendment to the 1889 constitution and went into effect on May 3, 1947. The new Constitution was a perfection of the British parliamentary form of government that the Japanese had been moving toward in the 1920s. Supreme political power was assigned to the Diet.

Cabinets were made responsible to the Diet by having the prime minister elected by the lower house. The House of Peers was replaced by an elected House of Councillors. The judicial system was made as independent of executive interference as possible, and a newly created supreme court was given the power to review the constitutionality of laws. Local governments were given greatly increased powers. The Emperor was reduced to being a symbol of the unity of the nation.

Japanese began to see him in person. He went to hospitals, schools, mines, industrial plants; he broke ground for public buildings and snipped tape at the opening of gates and highways. He was steered here and there, shown things, and kept muttering, " Ah so, ah so." People started to call him " Ah-so-san.

" Suddenly the public began to take this shy, ill-at-ease man to their hearts. They saw in him something of their own conquered