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KYUSHU (VI) REGION

17 FEB THRU 27 FEB 1951

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POLICE INVESTIGATOR

PSD POLICE BRANCH REPORT

TO: Chief, Public Safety Division
SUBJECT: Inspection of Kyushu (VI)
Region

Date of Report: 10 Mar 51
Report by: Virgil Kilgore
Police Investigator

Period Covered: 17 February thru 27 February 1951

SUMMARY:

The alleged unpredictable financial policy of the national government in the matter of subsidies to municipalities has resulted in many budget difficulties. Growing friction between MP and NRP is developing, chiefly engendered by MP resentment over the widely publicized NRP proposed amendments to the police law. This, the MP alleges, is the first step to reactivate a national police state in Japan. Patrol is attracting more attention, both from MP and NRP. Foot patrol systems generally used in the cities, however, follow the traditional Japanese plan, patterned to fit the convenience of patrolman rather than actual law enforcement needs. Municipal departments all were citing the need for more personnel although their present strength is not being used to best advantage. Both MP and NRP strongly favor large headquarters reserves, to sit around and wait for an improbable situation to arise. It was a commonly expressed concept, both by MP and NRP officials, that a riot or other unlawful assembly cannot be properly handled unless mobilized police strength closely approximates that of the opponent. Illegal entry and smuggling from Korea has been sharply reduced and no longer presents a problem of much concern. A slight, unexplained rise in criminal code offenses was noted during the past year, and for January of this year, due chiefly to the increase in various types of thefts. Traffic accidents and offenses continue a steady trend upward and police finally appear aware that more drastic action must be taken. Vehicle traffic volume is growing rapidly. Weakness and corruption in the Japanese court system was reported by police officials (and probably justly), as contributing to current law enforcement deficiencies. In the field of illegal and protest meetings, strikes, and demonstrations, the police have had virtually no trouble in the past six months. Procurators continued to hold suspects in custody for excessively long periods, without indictment in order to leisurely examine their past history for evidence which might connect them to other crimes. Army CIC and CID in Kokura were found to be setting a poor example in this practice.

ATTACHMENTS: 1

RECOMMENDATIONS: (a) That efforts be made to clarify, as quickly as possible, the future status of the smaller municipalities in the law enforcement picture. (b) That smaller municipals, unable to demonstrate a certain degree of financial independence, and operational responsibility, be required to return to NRP jurisdiction.

AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE: LO-29-11, GHQ, FEC, dated 29 January 1951, to observe, supervise, and coordinate operation of Municipal and National Rural Police in implementation of the New Police Law in the Kyushu Region.

DETAILS: Fukuoka Prefecture

Hisayama

1. A brief, general discussion of police matters in the region was held with Regional Police Director Isayama. No points of consequence were disclosed at this time. The director, recently returned from a trip to the States, appeared to be out of touch with affairs in his area of jurisdiction. He stated that his trip to America was extremely educational and provided many new ideas which he proposes to apply to Japanese police operations.

2. A visit to Fukuoka Prefectural Headquarters was made. The director, not expecting the call, was reportedly "home with a cold".

3. Performance of the recently acquired Japanese manufactured patrol car, the Izusu, was discussed. Fukuoka has been assigned 17 of these cars, one for Prefectural Headquarters and one each for 17 of the prefecture's 23 districts. The investigator was given a test ride in the one at Prefectural Headquarters. Best speed attainable at this time was 55 kilometers per hour. The car is very sluggish in pick-up and the driver had considerable difficulty in starting the engine. It is unwieldy and not easily maneuverable. Radio messages, however, were transmitted and received satisfactorily between the car and its headquarters station. Each of these cars operates on a monthly gasoline allotment of 900 liters, permitting a consumption of about seven and one-half or eight gallons per day. The car, including radio equipment, costs about ¥1,200,000, equivalent to \$3300. Foot and bicycle patrol reportedly has been intensified in the rural areas. Each policeman assigned to a sub-station, or residence box, is required to patrol a total of three hours per day in the village or area under his jurisdiction. Call boxes at various locations along the policeman's patrol route are visited and the patrolman's han, or official stamp, is affixed to forms contained in these boxes to record the time and location of his patrol. Inspection and supervision of these patrol activities from higher headquarters, however, is loosely and haphazardly performed.

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4. A conference with the Fukuoka City Chief and his staff was held. Uppermost in the chief's mind was concern over the proposed and highly controversial amendments to the present police law. The Chief was particularly opposed to the provision designed to give NRP complete investigative authority of eleven specially designated crimes. It was found later that Chief Narita has been extremely active in organizing municipal resistance among all the cities and towns in Kyushu to this proposal.

He did not appear particularly perturbed about the provision which would permit smaller municipalities to discontinue their autonomous police systems by popular vote of the people. He anticipated that only five or six of the smaller towns in the prefecture would elect such a change. While many municipalities are plagued with difficulties incident to financing their police departments, the chief blamed this situation on the national government. He said about seven hundred million yen of national funds were promised certain low revenue producing municipalities of the prefecture as financial assistance for the fiscal year 1950-1951. Late in December the municipalities were advised that expenditures of only ¥395,000,000 would be allowed and that the balance must be returned to the National government. However, many of the municipalities had

already spent or committed all the funds from their original allotments. They now find themselves faced with the necessity of re-funding almost half of the subsidy. Many protest meetings have been held because of this, the chief said. Another meeting of mayors, chairmen of city assemblies, and chairmen of police affairs committees of city assemblies from the eleven larger cities in Fukuoka Prefecture was scheduled for 23 February to discuss ways and means of defeating the proposed broadening of NRP investigative authority in towns and cities. Chief Narita is heading the movement. At the present time considerable ill-feeling between the NRP and municipal police seems to have developed. Narita had several newspaper clippings purporting to state with certainty that all NRP proposals would be enacted into law. Those newspaper stories will be translated and accompany this report. Accordingly, all municipal police are genuinely worried and regard this as only the first NRP move to restore a single national police system in Japan.

Kokura City

5. A conference with Kokura City police officials disclosed the following:

a. The Patrol and Traffic Division is divided into a traffic section of sixteen men, a patrol headquarters staff of eight, and four patrol sections numbering one hundred thirty-five. Included in these patrol sections are thirty koban police. Actual patrol police work on foot and bicycle in pairs. They are on twenty-four hours and off twenty-four hours, with an additional day off each week.

b. Their on-duty time is broken down into foot patrol over assigned routes, guard duty at the patrol's district headquarters station, roving patrol, rest periods, bicycle patrol, and traffic control. While, on paper, they perform seventy-two hours duty each week, in actuality only thirty-four hours is devoted to patrolling. Like most of the other Japanese designed patrol systems, it is haphazard and irregular in operation and fails to fix responsibility on any patrolman. In addition, the twenty-four hour duty strictly reduces his efficiency over the entire period.

c. The Chief plans to increase his force from 317 to 450 police when the present law is amended to permit it. He says it would be impossible to adopt the American three-shift with less than that number. This addition would give a ratio of one policeman per 445 residents.

d. The base salary of recruit policemen without dependents here is ¥5,292 compared with ¥4,200 for NRP. In addition there is a thirty percent service allowance. A wife entitles the policeman to ¥600 extra. Another ¥600 is allowed for the first born child and ¥400 for each subsequent child. The Chief estimated that about ¥250,000 per police officer was required for the police department's entire yearly operating expenses.

e. An inspection of the cell block disclosed that, of nine suspects interned on orders of CID and CIC, five had been in over three weeks without an indictment and one over forty days. No instructions concerning disposition of these prisoners had been received, police stated.

Miyako NRP District Headquarters

6. A conference with officials and an inspection of Miyako NRP district headquarters was conducted and the following disclosed:

a. The district, with a population of 62,000 is manned by twenty-three police residence boxes, one policeman to each box. The headquarters staff numbers twenty-one.

b. The traffic, patrol and guard section is responsible for residence box inspections. Each of these sub-stations are said to be inspected about six or seven times per month. The average size of each residence box policeman's area of jurisdiction is from four to five miles in length and width.

c. In 1950 this district handled 941 criminal cases and cleared 524. In January of this year eighty cases were handled, forty-seven cleared and twenty-three arrested, markedly higher than January of last year when sixty-five cases were worked, eighteen cleared and seventeen arrested.

d. About half of those arrested had previous criminal records. About two-thirds of those arrested came from outside the district although practically all were prefectural residents. Various types of theft constitute the offense most frequently committed.

e. Of the twenty prisoners in the cell block at the time of inspection, five had been sentenced but were appealing their cases. Of the remaining fifteen, nine remained with no indictment against them. One of this group had been interned a month and has been to the procurator's office about ten times. This obviously is another case of the procurator, unable to secure sufficient evidence on the crime suspected, holding the prisoner and going back through his past activities in the hope of connecting him with other crimes.

DETAILS: Saga Prefecture

7. A conference with officials of Saga NRP Prefectural Headquarters was held and the various headquarters sections inspected. No unusual problems or irregularities were found here. The prefecture is small and chiefly agricultural, and criminal offenses are infrequent although the crime rate for January of this year is somewhat higher than for the same period last year. There has been no illegal activity incited by radicals within the past six months and officials expect none of consequence in the near future. Traffic accidents continue a steady increase although officials stated that enforcement measures have been strengthened. Rise in the traffic accident rate is attributed to the increase in vehicular road traffic, particularly of trucks and busses. Campaigns to educate the general public in proper pedestrian habits have not been meeting with success and police favor the imposing of penalties more severe than the usual reprimand for pedestrian traffic offenses. A more aggressive manner in dealing with vehicle operator offenders is reflected in the increased number of driver license suspensions. Smuggling and illegal entry from Korea has fallen off so sharply that it is no longer regarded a major problem. Currently, the number of cases here, as in Fukuoka, run only a few a month while two years ago they were counted in the hundreds. Police could attribute no particular reason for this remarkable decline except possibly the presence of many UN patrol vessels in the intervening channel.

DETAILS: Oita Prefecture

8. A conference with Oita NRP prefectural officials disclosed the following:

a. There has been very little labor trouble or public peace disturbances in the prefecture during recent months and consequently few cases where NRP assistance was called for by MP. The 7,800 Koreans in the prefecture have also been unusually quiet. The number of registered Communists in the prefecture has shown a marked decline during the past year, from 1,015 to 826. The number of sympathizers and those voting the Communist ticket has also been sharply reduced although exact figures were not available. The chief stated that the general public now almost completely ignores anti-occupation propaganda from Communist sources, that it has no effect, whatsoever.

b. In discussing the recently proposed changes to the police law, the Chief declined to take a strong stand for either side although he was quite enthusiastic over the contemplated 20,000 man increase in NRP. He regarded with disfavor the political activity excited by some of its controversial issues.

c. The weaknesses of the Japanese courts in the handling of criminal cases was strongly criticized by all police officials. Judges allegedly make no effort to maintain order in the court and the judge and witnesses are often openly threatened and intimidated by spectators. Not only are such methods frequently employed but with noticeably successful results, according to police. The rights of the accused are more than scrupulously observed and the rights and authority of the state and its law enforcement officers almost totally ignored, especially if the slightest suggestion of reprisal is intimated. Procurators, too, avoid bringing indictments unless a confession or all evidence needed to assure a conviction is obtained. This reluctance to push prosecution except in open-and-shut cases results in many guilty suspects escaping with no punishment whatsoever, while the tendency of the courts to see only the rights of the defendant and critically scrutinize the policeman's action and procedure for any technical errors is making him overly cautious in performing his duty.

d. A slight rise in criminal code offense for January of this year, over the same period last year, was reported. For the entire year of 1950 a higher percentage of these cases over the preceding year was noted. The increase was chiefly in the larger towns and cities and consisted mostly of thefts and burglaries. Of the cases where approximate time of commission could be fixed it was found that about the same number of crimes were committed around midnight and at noon, these two periods leading all other times of the twenty-four hour period in frequency of occurrence. There were sixty-four murder cases in the prefecture last year, twelve of which were committed during robbery. Police reported one hundred percent clearance of these cases. There were forty other robbery cases investigated with eighty-eight percent solved.

Oita City Police

9. A conference with the Oita City police chief and his staff disclosed the following:

a. Great anxiety was displayed in regard to the proposed police law amendments. The Chief assumed the attitude that SCAP was neglecting its responsibility in failing to protect MP interests.

b. He was strongly convinced that all provisions of the present law should be continued for at least another three years. He purported to believe that virtually all municipalities, if given the option by popular vote, would return to NRP. This he explained by stating that the general public had not yet become sufficiently democratized to vote intelligently on the issue.

c. While presenting himself as a strong supporter of municipal government he feels that all funds, if necessary to finance municipal government, should come from the national treasury.

d. He stated that the city of Oita might vote to discontinue municipal police chiefly because of oppressive taxes entailed. It was found, however, that for the fiscal year 1950-1951 the national government furnished ¥20,000,000 of the ¥30,000,000 police budget. He appeared to believe that a municipality could operate as a strong, independent autonomy and yet depend completely on the national government for its very existence.

d. It is very obvious that this chief, as many other MP officials, are not strong proponents of autonomous government but are concerned solely with their own personnel stake in the game. They believe in democracy but are unwilling to let democratic processes take their course. They are strongly independent yet go to the NRP director for "advice and counsel" even on issues strictly municipal. They belong to the prefectural police chiefs associations and acknowledge without question the leadership of the permanent chairman, the NRP director. They believe strongly in the merits of municipal government but think it unfair for the townspeople to bear any part of the necessary tax burden. They desire more freedom in the regulation of municipal problems yet are even unwilling to pass public peace ordinances, stating that such laws should come from the National Government. They want all the advantages, none of the disadvantages, and especially, they do not want responsibility.

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Beppu City

10. A conference with the Beppu City Chief and his staff disclosed the following:

a. It was stated, in answer to the investigator's question, that the police and public safety commission are in charge of the following licensing services--vehicles of all types, pawnshops, dance halls, shooting galleries, all types of slot machine games, and cabarets serving drinks under the "hostess" system.

b. A campaign against careless, reckless vehicle operators, according to the Chief is bearing results. Driver license suspensions totalled fifty-three for last year.

c. The Chief stated that only between sixty-five and seventy percent of cases presented to the procurator for prosecution are indicted. The remainder are dropped for alleged lack of evidence. Weakness of the court system, the Chief said, is responsible for dropping many of these cases. The court wants only cases where evidence is ample enough to guarantee conviction. Its function, apparently, is not to determine guilt or innocence but merely to pronounce sentence.

d. The present police strength of the department, one hundred twenty-nine is not sufficient in the Chief's opinion. About sixty more are needed, he said, although his estimate obviously is based on the police-population ratio as originally established in the police law. He thinks the PSC and city assembly would approve the additional manpower.

1 Incl:

Translation of newspaper article
re Police Law Amendment Bill
Drafted; NRP Force Increased by
20,000; Coordination and Strength-
ening of Investigatory Authority
Contemplated.

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