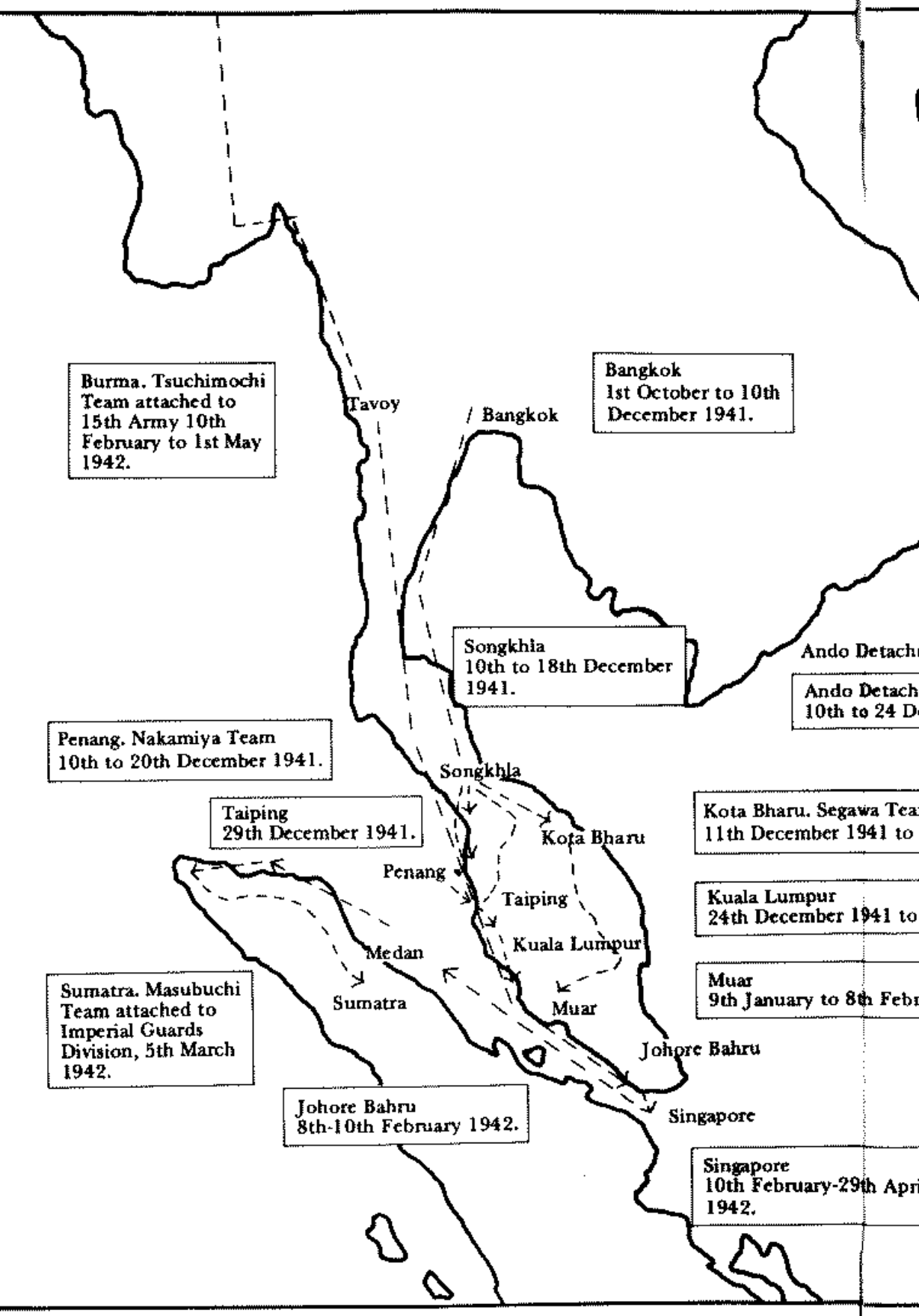
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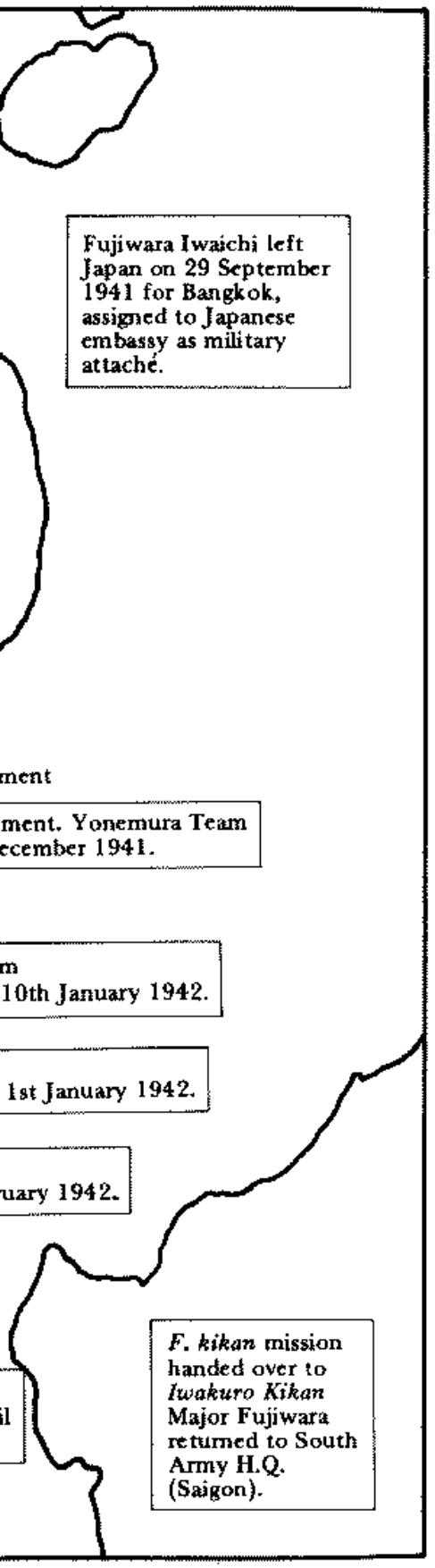

Operations of F. kikan teams and agents in Southeast Asia during the Japanese army campaigns of 1941 and 1942.

F. Kikan

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Japanese Army Intelligence Operations in Southeast Asia during World War II

Lt General Fujiwara Iwaichi S.D.F. (*ret.*)

translated by Akashi Yoji

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to

all who, irrespective of differences of religion,
creed or language, struggled, suffered and sacrificed
readily for a great and noble cause

and

to those friends and colleagues of foreign lands
to whose trust, friendship and cooperation the
writer owes whatever results might have been achieved
under the mission assigned.

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FOREWORD

World War II, thirty years after the fact, still evokes in the minds of most Westerners and many Asians a certain moral certitude about the causes for which the Allies fought. Seldom do Westerners take the time or have the opportunity to examine the motives and aspirations of individuals on the other side, particularly the Japanese. What this wartime memoir in translation presents us in English is an exceptional view of the early stages of the Pacific War by an individual who played an extraordinary role, Lt.-Gen. Fujiwara Iwaichi. Operating within the larger context of Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Fujiwara, in 1941 a young major in intelligence within the Imperial Army, developed a vision of Japan's military role in Asia at its most idealistic. Fujiwara was 'the ugly Japanese' of the purest vintage, for he took the political warfare slogan, 'Asia for Asians', most seriously.

This wartime memoir gives us an exceptional glimpse into the motives and methods of this young Army major sent on a far-flung intelligence mission to Southeast Asia just prior to the outbreak of war in the Pacific. We see a young man of great initiative, energy and imagination as he contacted Indian nationalists, overseas Chinese, Muslim sultans, and Atjehnese in North Sumatra. We share in the young major's problems as he sought to give substance and meaning to a mission very broadly defined in Tokyo. We see a Japanese major who considered most carefully the goals and hopes of his Indian and Southeast Asian contacts and counterparts. Fujiwara sought to forge cooperation between the military imperatives

of the Imperial Army and the aspirations for independence from colonial rule of Indian and Southeast Asian nationalists.

What he achieved was an astonishing degree of success in terms of the goals he set for himself. Fujiwara worked day and night with a handful of men who staffed his liaison agency, the *F kikan* ('F' standing for Fujiwara, freedom, and friendship). He brought to life the Indian National Army, an independence army of Indian POWs who fought for Indian independence in cooperation with Japan. Dealing with Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo, Fujiwara insisted that Tokyo develop a consistent policy towards India, eschewing Machiavellian methods. Working with Indian POWs and nationalist leaders such as Subhas Chandra Bose, Fujiwara elicited an atmosphere of genuine cooperation. He succeeded in gaining the confidence, too, of Southeast Asians with whom he worked and came into contact, whether overseas Chinese, Muslims, or Atjehnese nationalists. The sincerity of Fujiwara's commitment to his cause is reflected today in his many visits to and invitations from India and Southeast Asia. His total dedication to the cause of cooperation in Asia sometimes led him into confrontation with his Tokyo superiors. Fujiwara views himself as a kind of 'Japanese Lawrence of Arabia'. He had a few counterparts in other parts of Southeast Asia who helped create other independence and volunteer armies.

Fujiwara kept his wartime memoir as assiduously as he pursued the work of his mission, and the reader will be caught up by the suspense of his account. Professor Akashi Yoji, leading bibliographer and historian of Japan's military administration in Southeast Asia, is especially well qualified to bring us this translation.

Joyce Lebra
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado
U.S.A.

REMINISCENCES OF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL FUJIWARA IWAICHI

Major Fujiwara Iwaichi was the first Japanese officer I ever met. The impressions of our first and the last encounters with outstanding personalities count a lot in our lives, but, in this case, they counted much more and remain fresh as ever before in my mind's eye.

Our first meeting took place in the jungles of Kuala Narang, a small town a few miles from Alor Star, north Malaya. In response to a message sent by me through Saudagar Din of Kuala Narang to Japanese Headquarters on the afternoon of 14 December 1941, Major Fujiwara came unescorted and accompanied only by Giani Pritam Singh and two Japanese interpreters, Messrs. Otaguro and Mori. It was as if we had already known each other and were great friends. At the time we both were young, in our early thirties, full of patriotic fervour and a spirit of adventure, ready to take risks and to do or die for the sake of a noble cause. For me, as I realized later, our meeting was auspicious because on precisely the same day and at the same time, a year earlier, my marriage had taken place. Just as my marriage had proved a turning point, similarly my meeting and union of head and heart with Major Fujiwara completely changed the course of my life.

I was transferred to Alor Star along with fifty soldiers of the Indian Army who were with me. We were taken under the wing of Major Fujiwara's department, the *Fujiwara kikan*. Our soldiers were given an arm band marked with the letter 'F'. Soon we began to function in close cooperation with the Japanese Army as if we were part and parcel of the same force.

The rest of the day was spent in establishing our headquarters, settling down in our new environment and helping the Japanese soldiers to restore peace and establish law and order in Alor Star city.

Major Fujiwara appeared extremely happy at the turn of events, his face beaming with smiles. We spent the whole night talking. I remember asking the Major what his highest ambition in life was. He immediately replied, 'As an officer of the Japanese Army I am always looking for the best place to die and, now, my highest ambition is to die in the struggle of freedom for India.' He did not utter these words like most of the politicians do, from the lips outward, but from the depths of his heart, and I felt deeply touched.

Our discussions continued for over a week, and several sensitive points regarding the formation of the Indian National Army and launching of an Indian independence movement in the East were amicably settled. I also thoroughly impressed upon him the necessity of bringing to the East, Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, who was in Germany at the time, to lead the movement.

During these discussions, Fujiwara struck me as a shrewd, tactful and well-informed person. He had an open mind, free from prejudice. He was always calm, cool and unruffled and had a remarkable capacity for seeing his opponent's point of view sympathetically. He had a penetrating mind and could understand the meaning of the unspoken language behind the spoken words. His outstanding ability for looking at a disputed point from differing angles in a detached and dispassionate manner always resulted in creating a happy solution to the various knotty problems that we faced. I have had the honour of meeting and discussing important matters with many distinguished Japanese gentlemen, but, without exaggerating, Fujiwara impressed me the most and the credit is entirely due to him that within a few days a deep sense of mutual trust, confidence and understanding was established between us. General Yamashita, Chief of the Japanese Forces, was kept fully informed by Major Fujiwara regarding the progress of our talks. He was very happy over the role Major Fujiwara was playing in the matter and the way things were shaping. A few

days later, Major Fujiwara gave me the happy news that the General had invited me to have tea with him. When I reached the General's Headquarters at Alor Star, accompanied by Major Fujiwara and Giani Pritam Singh, he did not wait for any formal introduction but immediately embraced me affectionately in a fatherly manner. He congratulated me profusely on coming forward to fight for the liberation of my country and promised aid in this noble cause, on behalf of the Japanese Government. It was not difficult for me to see that it was Major Fujiwara who had prepared the ground.

The soldiers who had accompanied me to join the Japanese were sent out in the evening to the jungles around Alor Star to collect Indian stragglers retreating to their own regiments. By nightfall the number of Indian soldiers in our camp had risen to nearly 300 and within the next three days our strength increased to about 1,000 soldiers, which also included some commissioned officers. Due to the persistent personal efforts of Major Fujiwara, on 31 December 1941 General Yamashita issued instructions that all Indian troops captured by the Japanese were to be handed over to me. This order greatly facilitated our task and our number swelled daily. At the fall of Kuala Lumpur in January 1942, this number exceeded 5,000 and, finally, when Singapore surrendered in mid-February 1942, about 10,000 soldiers of the Indian Army, including several officers, had already joined the Indian National Army. The official surrender of Singapore took place on 17 February 1942 when Col. Hunt, on behalf of the British Commander, surrendered 45,000 Indian officers and soldiers to Major Fujiwara, who accepted them on behalf of the Japanese Government. Major Fujiwara then handed over these soldiers to me and made a stirring speech exhorting them to join the Indian National Army, which was well received, as were my own words.

During these months Major Fujiwara and I were together, day and night, throughout the fighting in Malaya and Singapore. We had, in a way, become inseparable companions and had developed an immense liking and regard for one another. Lieut. Kunizuka and Mr. Ito were permanently attached to me as my Japanese interpreters and they, too, were my

constant companions. Ito was a good-natured lad of about eighteen. The two of them were always ready to interpret our discussions at a moment's notice. We seemed to spark one another off mentally. In short, though physically separate, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually we had become one.

We both worked very hard, but Major Fujiwara worked much more than I did. He put a tremendous effort into helping Giani Pritam Singh organize the Indian Independence League.

It must have been far more difficult to lay the foundations of a sound organization amongst the civilians than dealing with the disciplined soldiers of the Army, as I was doing. Despite his military background I found the Major very well suited to this type of work. With his dynamic and charming personality and sympathetic approach to the difficulties of the Indian civilian population, he inspired great confidence in them and they regarded him not as a representative of the Japanese Armed Forces but as one of their own kind. All over the war-ravaged area of Malaya and Singapore, Indians were treated with respect and honour and there was no case of rape, murder or looting of Indians that came to our notice. The credit for all this goes to Major Fujiwara, and the Indian community, as a whole, was full of gratitude for the role that he was playing in this movement. After the fall of Singapore, his work had greatly increased, but with tenacity of purpose, untiring energy and hard work, he acquitted himself of the burden admirably. At that time, there were only two Japanese names which were known to all, General Yamashita, the Commander-in-Chief, and Major Fujiwara. The Major's popularity and great achievements caused jealousy in certain Japanese quarters. That was but natural. As things stand today, whereas General Yamashita's name is being gradually forgotten, the name of Major Fujiwara is still remembered with affection and with respect by thousands of I.N.A. soldiers and members of the Indian Independence League and multitudes of others who witnessed the Indo-Japanese movement and are still living.

By the middle of 1942 the Indian Independence League had been properly organized in all the territories that had fallen under Japanese control and the I.N.A. had taken shape as a

well-disciplined, well-knit and well-organized military unit, full of patriotic spirit. With political foresight and flexibility of mind, Fujiwara had built a political and military edifice through great patience and strenuous effort. He thoroughly understood the tempers, the moods and the emotions of its various components and the ways and means to consolidate them. The rapid development of this movement into such a cohesive force (beyond the expectations of all) greatly surprised the Japanese authorities and they (for reasons best known to themselves) thought it advisable that instead of Major Fujiwara, a much more senior officer of the rank of Major-General should take charge. It is an unfortunate irony that the man who had put body and soul into building up the movement was considered too small and too junior a person to lead it further towards its goal. Major Fujiwara, though a junior officer in those days, is no ordinary person. His capabilities should have been judged not by his rank but by his achievements.

In my opinion, the removal of Major Fujiwara was a basic mistake which sowed the seeds of a serious crisis later on. He was first replaced by a Major-General, who was himself later replaced by a Lieutenant-General. Not every senior military officer is cut out for non-military or semi-military and political tasks. Most senior officers are too rigid and inflexible in their opinions. It is not easy for them to understand the feelings, sentiments, and aspirations of people of different nationalities with whom they have never before come in touch. When a clash of interests occurred, their attitude was not helpful, particularly in that heyday of Japan's unprecedented victories. After his posting to General Headquarters Major Fujiwara often came to see me. Although, as was to be expected, he was acquitting himself of his new assignment very capably, yet he did not appear to me to be happy or spiritually contented. When I asked him how he felt about his new job, he replied, 'The job is comparatively much easier and there is far less work; but I prefer to be the head of a small bird than the tail of a big elephant.'

Major-General Iwakuro, who along with a new team of officers, replaced Major Fujiwara was, militarily speaking, an

able and intelligent officer and a gentleman in his own way. But whatever may have been his qualifications and abilities, he could not equal Major Fujiwara. His method of approach and style of work were quite different. He had no previous experience of working with Indians. The rapport that had been established between the Japanese and the Indian sides, resulting in close cooperation and the sharing of each other's problems, began to receive a serious setback under his tutelage. Instead, both sides became suspicious of one another.

If Major Fujiwara had been brought back at this early stage, then, perhaps things might have taken a turn for the better, but on the Japanese side no one thought along these lines. Their attitude stiffened, they decided to cut us down to size and to impress upon us that the I.N.A. movement would get the shape and play the role that the Japanese desired. I am not sure whether those who were dealing with us were acting of their own accord or were being helplessly driven by bigger men sitting in Tokyo quite unaware of what was happening thousands of miles away.

There was no hope of Subhas Chandra Bose's arrival from Germany, nor was any promise or assurance given us by the Japanese that they would bring him over.

In November all these differences, doubts and suspicions came to the surface, resulting in a serious crisis between the Japanese and the Indian sides. Early in December Major Fujiwara met me secretly one night in a bid to prevent the break, but even that meeting only delayed the severance. By the second half of December we had reached a point of no return. I had completely burnt my boats and was prepared to do or die. Instead of meeting the fate of a sacrificial goat I had mentally prepared myself to die as a martyr. I would not yield and bring a bad name on my country. Consequently, I was arrested on 29 December 1942, and sent into exile till the end of the war.

Both Major Fujiwara and I had been snatched away from our progeny by the cruel hand of fate. For us the I.N.A. was more than a military or a political force. It was, in a way, a child of our creation, the very flesh of our flesh. We had conceived the idea of its formation, painted it as a beautiful

picture, first in our vision and then on paper. We had nourished it and brought it up. After our departure from the scene many godparents tried to look after this child, but they could seldom replace the real parents.

Major Fujiwara was yet to witness the sad end of this political and military drama, though only as an observer and not as one of the chief actors.

A couple of months after my arrest, when all efforts to restore the I.N.A. to its former strength and spirit had failed, the Japanese High Command decided to bring Subhas Chandra Bose from Germany to the East. It was then too late. However, Bose took the risk of undertaking this hazardous journey in a submarine and arrived at Singapore in the first week of July 1943, to assume command of what was left of the I.N.A. His arrival in the East imbued the Indians with fresh hope. He did his best to infuse the I.N.A. with high spirits and started rebuilding it in real earnest. Three months later, he formed the Azad Hind Government and declared war on the British and the Americans, but alas, the most opportune and psychological moment for this dramatic action had already passed. Already the tables had begun turning in favour of the Allied forces. The British had, by then, assembled a huge force on the Indo-Burmese border that was far superior to the Japanese in every respect. The most dreadful battles of World War II were fought at Imphal and Kohima. The Japanese had taken a critical and very bold decision to launch this campaign, which turned out to be a disastrous miscalculation.

Time is sometimes a decisive factor in a military campaign. There are occasions when one division is enough to achieve an object which, later on, may not be achieved by ten divisions. Once, when asked to define the best test of a General, the Duke of Wellington replied, 'To know when to withdraw and dare to do it.' But the Japanese generals failed to follow this rule and when they did start withdrawing they could not avert the tragedy.

Anyway, in the defeat of the Japanese and the I.N.A. forces on the battlefield lay the future victory of India through the trial of I.N.A. soldiers at the Red Fort and the last phase of our struggle for independence.

Besides hastening the process of India's independence, this movement spread the sparks of patriotism in the territories of the entire Far East which were under the foreign yoke. When the Allied forces reoccupied these territories after the war, it became difficult for them to suppress the patriotic forces which had sprung up and consequently, within a brief space of time, most of them became free. The pyrrhic victories won by the British compelled them to foresee the shape of things to come. Consequently, they wisely withdrew from these regions with grace and good spirit, leaving behind a good parting impression.

I am glad that General Fujiwara's book is now being published in English. In my opinion, the history of the I.N.A. has been distorted and it was essential that the record should be set right. No one else is better suited for this work than General Fujiwara. Indeed, in a way, it was incumbent upon him to undertake it. I am sure his book will be widely read and will be of great service to historians.

I am sure that posterity will recognize and appreciate the outstanding role played by General Fujiwara in the Indian Independence Movement.

Before closing I must pay homage to the memory of those who laid down their lives for the freedom of our country, and I salute General Fujiwara for his contribution to this cause.

Mohan Singh
(General-I.N.A.)

V. & P.O. Jugiana,
Distt. Ludhiana, Punjab
India

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

I first met General Fujiwara Iwaichi, then retired from the Self Defence Forces, in the office of Congressman Kaya Okinori in 1966, when I was gathering materials in Tokyo for my study of Japanese military administration in occupied Malaya, 1942-45. The lanky general with his short haircut, tight lips, and hawkish eyes gave me the impression that he was a man of strong will and principle. Though my interview with him lasted for less than one hour, I came out of his office with the feeling that General Fujiwara was something like the old-fashioned *samurai* with all the virtues attributed to that class.

Eleven years later, I had an opportunity to meet the General for a second time in 1977 at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, when I was a visiting professor at the University. I invited him to an evening gathering attended by a number of my colleagues in the Department of History. They questioned General Fujiwara about his *F kikan* activities during the Malay campaign. There was such a great deal of interest in the *F kikan* and the Indian National Army that the session lasted almost until midnight without running out of questions, because it was the first time the historians at the University had had the privilege of listening to his story about the *Fujiwara kikan*. The enormous interest in the subject is largely attributed to the dearth of information about it, though it is well known to Malaysians of the wartime generation. It was a legend among them, particularly among Malaysian Indians. Some of my Malaysian colleagues urged me to translate General Fujiwara's memoirs which he had published in Japanese. My interest in the subject, that has a bearing on my research, has moved me to take up the task,

encouraged by my Malaysian colleagues, to translate General Fujiwara's book in order to make it available to an English reading audience. I should like to acknowledge Mr. David Keitges' assistance with proof reading and improving the English style. It should be of great service to the peoples of Southeast Asia not only for the understanding of an important phase of the war in Asia, but also for an appreciation of the humanism with which General Fujiwara and his staff won the friendship and trust of fellow Asians in Malaya, Sumatra, and India. The book, *Fujiwara kikan*, is a record of a war of moral principles with which he fought to realize his ideals, although not always successfully.

There are a number of books in English about the *F kikan* and the Indian National Army such as memoirs by participants and works by historians. Among the former are Mohan Singh, *Soldier's Contribution to Indian Independence,* K.S. Giani, *Indian Independence Movement in East Asia,* and Shah Nawaz Khan, *My Memories of I.N.A. and its Netaji.* Included in the latter are Joyce C. Lebra, *Jungle Alliance. Japan and the Indian National Army* and K.K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army. Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement.* Except for General Fujiwara's own account, no history of the *F kikan* and the Indian Independence Army has been written by a Japanese, particularly of the early phase of their history. Although General Fujiwara's book has been known to the English reading audience and quoted by historians of the subject in many countries, details of his activities and his day-to-day association with I.N.A. soldiers and officers, as well as with men of the Indian Independence League during the Malayan campaign, have not been told. General Fujiwara's book provides the reader with this information and fills a gap in the history. It is important as a primary source, without which no history of the *F kikan* and the Indian National Independence Movement can be complete.

As a memoir, however, the book has its own shortcomings, like all other memoirs which tend to justify actions or failures. This is a pitfall of the personal record no matter how hard the writer tries to be as objective and truthful as possible, because everyone has his own bias though he may not

be aware of it. It does not mean, however, that Fujiwara's book is not as objective an account as he could make it of the history in which he participated. Nevertheless, it has some flaws which I as a historian must point out, not to discredit the value of the book but to enhance its usefulness as a primary source of information.

First, the author has a kind word for almost everyone with whom he was associated. It is possible that Fujiwara was lucky enough to have worked with persons who were selfless, virtuous, upright, and righteous. One may become nonetheless a little sceptical of the praise he bestows upon every person, particularly in a battle situation when the nerves of everyone else were frayed with tension. I wish that General Fujiwara could have been more candid in evaluating the personality and role of General Iwakuro, who succeeded Fujiwara as head of the *F kikan* and who played no small part in bringing about the tragic end of the first I.N.A. movement in December 1942. Instead, he discreetly restrains himself out of his deference to a senior officer. In my opinion, Fujiwara could have rendered a service to the understanding of the history of the *F kikan* and the I.N.A., if he were more outspoken in appraising Iwakuro.

I wish that General Fujiwara could have elucidated the circumstances that transformed the character of the Imphal operations from a purely strategic military campaign to a politico-military operation, following the appearance of S.C. Bose in July 1943 at the headquarters of General Kawabe Masakazu, commander of the Burma Area Army. The decision in favour of the Imphal operations and the resulting fiasco were interrelated with Bose's insistence on the urgency of the campaign as being indispensable for the I.N.A. movement and India's liberation. As a result, the Japanese high command in Burma decided to make use of the I.N.A. for political purposes in the campaign, even though staff officers of the Burma Area Army had considered the I.N.A. a liability for the military operations. Thus the Imphal operations, originally conceived as a defensive campaign, were transformed into an operation incorporating the Netaji's wishes to invade India.

Second, General Fujiwara is inconsistent in his view of

Bose, as Louis Allen, the author of *The End of the War in Asia*, has pointed out in his book. Writing of Bose in July 1946, Fujiwara's account of the Indian revolutionary leader has feeling and subtlety. After praising Bose's zealous fighting spirit, earnest and precise mind, vigourous actions and initiative, and love for the masses without any discrimination between classes, Fujiwara reveals a less favourable aspect of his personality as a leader.

> ...However, the standard of his operational tactics was, it must be said with regret, low. He was inclined to be unrealistic. For instance, without being familiar with the actual fighting power of the INA, he was always demanding it to be employed in a separate and decisive operation on the Imphal front and, in July 1944, when the tide of battle had turned and the Japanese Army had retreated, he urged that although the Japanese might retreat the INA should continue to confront the Allies until their aim was attained. He was temperamental and had strong likes and dislikes. It is also said of him that his stubborness made him adhere strongly to his arguments on matters of slight moment. This is so, and it cannot be said he possessed much magnanimity or very much tolerance for the opinion of others. ('Fujiwara Essays', *SEATIC Historical Bulletin,* No. 240, Singapore, 9 July 1946, p. 37, quoted in Louis Allen, *The End of the War in Asia,* p. 155.)

Fujiwara's account of Bose in his memoirs and in his preface to K.K. Ghosh's book, *The Indian National Army* published in 1969, are much more moving and stirring in his adoration. I do not know what accounts for this inconsistency. It is the task of future historians to delve into Fujiwara's varying opinions of the Netaji.

Third, because Fujiwara wrote his memoirs based on his recollection and without the help of documentary sources, there are some minor factual mistakes. I have corrected these oversights in the translation.

Fourth, some of Fujiwara's observations are uncritical. For instance, his account of the impact of the I.N.A. court martial at the Red Fort was wrapped up with such emotion that he overlooked the motives of the leaders of the Indian National Congress, who had helped defend the three accused I.N.A. officers at their trials. Though his account is not judicious, it tells the reader truthfully of the impact that he felt the court martial had on Indian politics for national liberation. Of course, Fujiwara is not an historian and he never aimed to write the memoirs with the objectivity of an historian. Nevertheless, the reader must be aware that his enthusiasm is sometimes carried away by emotion.

Lately, the *F kikan* and the I.N.A. have been the subject of reappraisal by Japanese and western historians. Hugh Toye, the author of *The Springing Tiger: A Study of Subhas Chandra Bose*, Louis Allen, Milan Hauner, and Leonard Gordon are preparing books about these subjects. Nagasaki Nobuko of Tokyo University has been studying them, and has edited *Minami Ajia no minzoku undo to Nippon* (Nationalist Movements in South Asia and Japan). Toye, who is rewriting his book, first published in 1959, and Allen have taken a different position in their assessment of the I.N.A., saying that the I.N.A. did not play a crucial part in India's national independence movement (see Professor Allen's *Postface*). Hauner and Gordon are yet to contribute their evaluations of the *F kikan* and the I.N.A. Nagasaki's latest article included in the work mentioned above is penetrating. She has studied the formation of the I.N.A., not as a phenomenon unexpectedly created by the Japanese Army, but as an entity formed out of internal and external actions, interactions, and counteractions within the Indian nationalist movement.

Nagasaki has explained that the Japanese Army's policy towards India at the beginning was never intended to assist her towards independence, but was intended to induce Indian soldiers to surrender in order to facilitate the Japanese military campaign in Malaya and Sumatra, while the I.I.L.'s objective was to achieve India's national freedom through an anti-British struggle. In order to solicit the I.I.L.'s cooperation, the Japanese made concessions, transforming their policy towards

Indians to that towards India. It was agreed in a memorandum exchanged between Colonel Tamura Hiroshi, military attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok, and Pritam Singh. Among other things, they reached agreement to create an Indian independence voluntary army. As Nagasaki has pointed out, however, the formation of such an army agreed between Fujiwara and Mohan Singh was not a part of the assignments given to Tamura and Fujiwara. They seemed to have exceeded their authority and to have created the military unit with their *dokudan senko*, a prerogative of staff officers to make decisions without consulting with superior officers. Therefore, the army to win India's national independence came into being neither with a clear-cut approval in a statement from Imperial Army Headquarters in Tokyo, nor with complete voluntary action generated by the Indian people. The Tamura-Singh agreement was only a private understanding – so it was understood by Colonel Kadomatsu Shoichi, who was at General Army Headquarters in charge of intelligence operations toward Indians – and no one was bound by the protocol except Tamura and Fujiwara as well as the I.I.L. According to Nagasaki, this irregular birth of the Indian military unit delivered by an army colonel and a private Indian was to cause much trouble in the future.

From the very beginning of the Indian National Army, however, disagreements surfaced and the *F kikan* was replaced by the Iwakuro *kikan* and Fujiwara was transferred. As a result, there emerged a mutual distrust between Japanese and Indians, which broke out at the Bangkok Conference in June 1942, leading to the arrest of Mohan Singh and the dissolution of the first Indian National Army in December.

Different interpretations presented by historians notwithstanding, one thing remains undisputed: that it was Fujiwara who created the Indian National Army and that independent India owes a great debt to him. While Fujiwara takes a great pride in his contribution to India's national freedom, as the finest hour in his life, he also wants to tell the reader the record of his 'war of moral principles'. The value of the book lies just as much in the personal memoirs of Fujiwara's association with the Indian National Army as in the record of his

'war of moral principles' based on the codes of *Bushido.* Fujiwara and his colleagues, who bore no arms, dealt with Indians and Atjehnese with sincerity, honesty, and integrity and won their trust and friendship. For his earnestness and candor, Fujiwara is still respected and honoured by Indians, Atjehnese, and Malays even today. This is the reason that influenced me most in taking on the task of translating his memoirs into English, so that as many people as possible in Southeast Asia and India and western countries will have an opportunity to read his 'glorious success' story of the *F kikan,* which united Japanese and Indians for a common cause to achieve national independence.

Akashi Yoji

PREFACE

The Greater East Asia War ended in Japan's disastrous defeat and tragedy.

The Japanese people, having surrendered to the Allied Powers, examined past mistakes and experienced many difficulties in their transformation. It has been more than three years since they tasted the bitterness of defeat. Today, we are able to find some ray of hope in reconstructing a just, bright, free, peaceful and democratic Japan, as demanded by the Potsdam Declaration. When we see the achievement of Japan's reconstruction and the glorious independence being gained by neighbouring nations in Asia, we have reason to celebrate twin occasions of happiness for Asia. A dark cloud is beginning to overshadow Asia, which is seeking to achieve freedom, peace, and prosperity in its reconstruction. Conflict and confrontation once more involve us in a bitter struggle of war.

I spent a good part of the Greater East Asia War as instructed by my superiors, in helping and cooperating with leaders of the Indian, Malayan and Sumatran independence movements, to achieve their objectives, and together with my men I dedicated myself – body, soul and spirit – to the cause. After the end of the war, I was subpoenaed as a witness to appear before a British military court in Delhi that was to try the I.N.A. officers. In June 1947, I returned once more to Japan.

During this period, I had the privilege of renewing friendships with former comrades in the Provisional Government of Free India and the I.N.A. and of witnessing India achieving her independence. Also I heard about the Indonesians' determined struggle to win their freedom. I could not help but

admire their great accomplishment in liberating their fatherland and winning independence.

After my return to Japan, I read and heard through the press and radio that the indigenous peoples of Asia were making great strides towards the achievement of independence. I was thrilled when I learnt about it.

I cannot help being choked with emotion when I reminisce about Netaji Chandra Bose, colleagues of the I.I.L., the I.N.A. and the Sumatran youth group, and *Harimau*, who died before seeing the fruits of their struggle in a noble cause, and who could not be present to share my joy. Also I feel saddened to think of my wife who, worrying about me when I was detained in prison as a war crime suspect, became ill through mental anguish resulting from the sudden change in circumstances. She died on 13 June 1948.

I feel obliged to share the good tidings with the great leader Chandra Bose who commanded the revolutionary movement for the liberation of his fatherland, with fallen comrades in India, Malaya and Sumatra, with my men of the *F kikan*, and with my wife. In so doing, I wish to make public the patriotism of my comrades now working for their own country and to pay tribute to them.

Prompted by these motives, I have decided to write this memoir of our activities in the early stages, which, together with colleagues in India, Malaya and Sumatra we carried out in the cause of friendship and freedom.

Because six years have already passed and the memories have somewhat faded, I am not able to recollect, I regret to say, all the details of what I experienced.

This memoir is based on a copy of my report presented to the British army authorities while I was detained in Singapore, and on the recollections that I have been able to gather since then. I am afraid there are many errors in dates, names of places, and names of individuals. I will be satisfied if this record puts the spirit of my deceased comrades at rest, helps express my appreciation for their contributions and accomplishments, and comforts the soul of my late wife.

When I think of the ominous clouds gathering once again over Asia and the world struggling for reconstruction, I will be

more than glad if this book is of any help in suggesting a way to establish the ideal of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere transcending enmity, in order to bring about freedom, peace and prosperity in Asia, mutual cooperation between the peoples of Asia, and harmony amongst the peoples of the world.

Fujiwara Iwaichi
September 1948

Note to the Preface

I started to write this memoir in September 1947 while assisting the War History Department of General MacArthur's Headquarters and completed it in May 1948, shortly before my wife passed away. I dedicated the memoir to my late wife. I wrote this record in a stable converted into a dormitory for officials of the Ministry of Repatriation situated on the top of Ichigaya Hill, where we had neither sufficient clothes to wear, food to eat, houses to live in, nor paper to write on. I am only a military officer having no particular ability and articulation in writing an essay or a poem; therefore, I am afraid, it is not a literary product in style and expression. In fact, I put away the manuscript on a bookshelf and forgot about it.

By chance, my friend, Inaba Masao, recommended my memoir to Hara Publishing House to be included in its *100 Selected Books* series. I accepted his invitation but did little in revising its style and sentence construction, being aware that I will be criticized later. I beg the reader's forbearance and understanding for the reasons I have stated in the Preface.

Fujiwara Iwaichi
29 June 1969

Part I

1. Tokyo 1941

One cold windy day in December 1940, a strange confidential cablegram was delivered to Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu[1], staff officer of the Eighth Section (Intelligence) of the Army General Staff at Miyakezaka, Tokyo. The sender was chief of staff of the 21st Army (code name *Nami Shudan*) in Canton, China, and the addressee was deputy chief of the General Staff. The message said that three Indians who had escaped from Hong Kong had arrived at the headquarters of the 21st Army. They claimed, according to the cablegram, that they were 'fugitives from jail in Hong Kong, where they had been detained for instigating anti-British activities', and they wished to 'further the anti-British independence movement in cooperation with their comrades who had been smuggled into Malaya from Berlin and India'. They wanted to go to Bangkok or, if that was not possible, to French Indochina 'under the protection of the Japanese Army'. After that, they said, they would try to reach their destination on foot. The telegram did not identify the three Indians beyond saying that they were patriotic Sikhs working fervently towards India's independence.

After some discussion between Col. Kadomatsu and Maj. Ozeki of the same office, they secured permission from their superiors and wired a reply to the Japanese Army in Canton, instructing that the Indians' request be 'treated with sympathy upon confirming their identity'. Crossing their transmitted message, however, there arrived a second wireless message from the Japanese Army in Canton with the information that

'the three Indians had left aboard a ship bound for Kobe' and requesting measures to be taken as appropriate by the Army General Staff.

Upon receiving the second cablegram, Col. Kadomatsu ordered me (Captain at that time), assisted by Capt. Koiwai, to smuggle the Indians into Thailand. After confirming that Japanese Imperial Headquarters would not demand anything in return for assisting the three Indians, I looked for a ship sailing for Bangkok from Kobe. At the same time, I sent a wireless message to Col. Tamura in Bangkok, requesting that arrangements be made for the three Indians to enter Thailand upon arrival at Bangkok.

After many days' search, I found the 'S.S. Mitsuisan Maru' of Mitsui Trading Co. bound for Bangkok with a cargo of rice. An executive of the company, Ishida Reisuke, put the ship at our disposal. Capt. Koiwai went to Kobe to solicit the cooperation of the local police (Mr. Onuki was in charge of foreign affairs) and the ship's captain. The Indians then boarded the cargo ship as soon as they arrived at Kobe, taking advantage of the darkness of night. The three passengers, hidden in one of the ship's storerooms, were finally bound for Bangkok without having set foot on Japanese soil and without even setting eyes on scenic Mt. Rokko.

According to Capt. Koiwai, the three did not utter a word of complaint about their cramped quarters. Instead, they expressed, shedding tears, their gratitude for the sympathy and kindness shown by the Japanese Army. They were resolved to commit suicide should they be arrested by the British or Thai authorities, so as not to cause embarrassment to the Japanese government. To demonstrate their determination, they produced a dagger. They were determined, according to Koiwai, to carry out their resolve to win national independence and to this end were prepared to endure the dreadful conditions of the storeroom, while crossing the South China Sea. They expressed their friendship for the Japanese.

I regret to this day not being able to recall their names, because these men at that time served no military or political interest for the Japanese Army. If they are still alive today, I wish them well, trusting that they are serving their nation.

We waited anxiously and prayerfully for the news of their safe arrival from Col. Tamura[2], military attaché, in Bangkok. We were driven by a strong desire to help the Indians who, jeopardizing their own safety, were dedicating themselves to the cause of national independence. Our friendship knew no national barriers in helping them achieve their aspirations.

* * *

The ship carrying the three stowaways sailed southwards across the South China Sea, where the temperature soared to 100° F. Hiding in the steamy hold was almost beyond human endurance. Only the captain and the chief purser were in the know. The chief purser secretly took in food saved from their meals every day and offered words of comfort and cheer. They were visibly weakened by the intense heat, though their eyes gleamed. Their sufferings were beyond imagination. Yet, not once did they ask to come out of their hiding place on to the deck to catch a night breeze. They were concerned not to cause any inconvenience to the Japanese. When the ship reached Bangkok, they were not able to disembark openly for they had no visa. Col. Tamura had made careful arrangements, and they were disguised as sampan coolies and spirited away safely to a room in Tamura's official residence situated near a park. We received a cablegram from him that the three Indians had 'arrived safely at Bangkok'. I felt like a mother delivered of a healthy baby after painful labour.

Col. Tamura offered the exhausted Indians a bath and served them cold drinks, fruit, and Indian dishes afterwards. On the following day, when Tamura asked what their plans were and if there were any acquaintances in Bangkok with whom they could stay for the time being, one of them confided to him the name of an elderly comrade, Amar Singh. He was the leader of the Indian Independence League (I.I.L.) in Bangkok. Working under him as secretary-general was a young Indian named Pritam Singh. The I.I.L. was a secret society of Sikhs working for the liberation of India and her independence, with members in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo, San Francisco, and Berlin. That night, the conspirators

vanished into the darkness of the park, thanking Tamura for his warm friendship and pledging their determination to fight for national freedom. Several days later, a *samlor* stopped in front of Tamura's official residence. When the gatekeeper (himself a Sikh) came out to greet the visitor, there emerged from the *samlor* a tall young Sikh of religious appearance, whose black hair was wrapped in a white turban. Keeping a low profile, he asked to see Tamura. This was Pritam Singh, and this was the first contact of the Japanese Army with the I.I.L.

Thereafter, Tamura, Amar Singh, and Pritam Singh met secretly on several occasions.

At this time Thailand was inclining towards cooperating with Japan. It was necessary, however, to take the utmost care in meeting the Indians because British influence remained strong in the country and Japanese, British, American, Chinese and German agents were very active in intelligence-gathering operations. Prior to the summer of 1941, however, United States-Japan relations had not yet become tense and no one predicted war between the two nations. Consequently, talks between Tamura and Pritam Singh were confined to generalities. Nevertheless, after several meetings, Tamura had learned three things: firstly, that the I.I.L. was a secret political society determined to carry out anti-British independence activities in which it would not hesitate to use force, if necessary; secondly that the I.I.L. had a network of members in such places as Shanghai, Hong Kong, southern Thailand, Malaya, India, and Berlin, though it was still weak in organization; and thirdly, information about the political situation in India and military preparedness in Malaya could be obtained through the I.I.L. network. Tamura became hopeful, after a number of conversations. Pritam Singh and Amar Singh, through Tamura, became convinced of Japan's sincerity. As a result, the I.I.L. and the Japanese Army became linked by friendly ties.

* * *

Since 1937 Japan had been fighting in China, and the United States and Britain had taken retaliatory measures against

Japan, denouncing the latter as an aggressor. The Sino-Japanese incident had developed into a larger conflict involving Japan, the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands. This confrontation intensified further when, in July 1941, Japan became allied with Germany and Italy who were at war with the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, and when she advanced to the southern part of French Indochina. The tension in the Pacific was rising very rapidly. Japan, dependent on foreign imports of raw materials for her modern industry, was put on the defensive when the three western powers imposed an economic blockade, backed by their military build-up which linked Singapore, Java, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii.

In order to ease the tension and find a peaceful solution, the Japanese government and Imperial General Headquarters proposed a tête-à-tête meeting between Prime Minister Konoye Fumimaro[3] and President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Hawaii, but in vain. Circumstances surrounding the international tension did not allow the luxury of such a meeting. Instead, the situation became worse despite the wish for peace by the countries concerned. The military tension between Japan and the Anglo-American powers in Saigon, Singapore, and Manila was near explosive with the impending crisis and war clouds gathering in the South China Sea.

For national survival Japanese Imperial Headquarters was compelled to draft strategic plans to prepare for the possibility of a military clash, should efforts for a peaceful solution of the present crisis fail. The Japanese military had since its establishment organized its armed forces and trained and deployed its troops for operations on the Asian mainland against the Soviet Union and in more recent years in China. Now, the Japanese armies would have to fight a powerful Anglo-American alliance in a vast area of land and sea extending from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. Japan was not ready for such a war. Tension filled the Army General Staff at Miyakezaka.

In late July 1941, when the tension was mounting, a military officer in civilian dress took off from Haneda Airport for Bangkok. He was Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu, staff officer in charge of intelligence at Imperial General Headquarters.

Faced with the gathering storm in the Pacific, the Army High Command ordered Kadomatsu to go to Bangkok on a secret mission. Should an Anglo-Japanese war break out, Burma, Malaya, and the Dutch Indies would become crucial battlegrounds, and the indigenous peoples of the area and of India would play an important role in the outcome of the war. Although the national consciousness of the indigenous people had become eroded by years of colonial rule by Britain and the Netherlands, they still wanted to be free and independent. In fact, some had been struggling for freedom. If Japan were to study their national sentiments with sympathy and be ready to assist indigenous nationalists to realize their national aspirations, she would have some means of getting the cooperation of the people in the case of an Anglo-Japanese war. Kadomatsu needed a definite plan, which was elementary knowledge for anyone who read a book on military theory. Of course, such plans could not be formulated overnight. Contrary to my expectations, Kadomatsu had no proposals at all except a draft prepared in 1940 for assisting the Thakin Party[4] in Burma. Moreover, it was not a plan for an Anglo-Japanese war but measures directed against the British attempt through the Burma Road to help the Chungking government. Kadomatsu flew to Bangkok to see Tamura about preparing plans to elicit the cooperation of the indigenous peoples of Malaya and Sumatra and to induce the defection of Indian soldiers from British units should war break out.

If war against the Anglo-American powers could not be averted, it would certainly be a decisive conflict determining the fate of the Japanese people. It was unpardonable that the Eighth Section of the Imperial General Headquarters, in charge of intelligence, had not formulated any plans when Japan was preparing for war in the colonial territories of the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands. There was profound anxiety in the Eighth Section that it had to do something.

* * *

Colonel Tamura and Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu were huddled in a room on the second floor of Tamura's office in Bangkok. It

was a steamy day, and though two electric fans were on, their shirts were soaked with perspiration. Red flowers ("flame of the forest"), reflecting the glaring sunshine, dazzled their eyes. Oblivious of the intense heat that he was experiencing for the first time, Kadomatsu listened attentively to Tamura's remarks, taking notes of the gist of the conversations. Occasionally he directed questions at Tamura. Tamura's replies and information gave Kadomatsu new hope. The intelligence provided three possible avenues to pursue, though all of them, as Tamura outlined, had many unknown factors and were not too reliable. At their wits' end, however, Kadomatsu and the Army General Staff had no other alternative but to seize them. Tamura's skilful explanation of them captivated Kadomatsu's attention. Tamura outlined the alternatives as follows:

The first possibility was cooperation with the I.I.L. which has been already mentioned. The second one was to cooperate with '*Harimau* of Malaya', a pseudonym for Tani Yutaka whose home was in Trengganu on the east coast of Malaya. *Harimau* means 'Tiger' in the Malay language. His family settled in Trengganu in the late Meiji period and ran a barber shop for their livelihood. In the early days of the Manchurian Incident when the local Chinese staged an anti-Japanese uprising, Yutaka's six-year-old younger sister was kidnapped and murdered in cold blood. Following this incident, his personality suddenly changed and he joined a group of Malay bandits. His bold and swift actions as well as his chivalrous spirit won him awe and respect, and he soon became the leader of 3,000 outlaws. He was being hunted by the British police and was hiding in the southern part of Thailand, where he also became a trusted leader of the indigenous Thai people. Yutaka was now working under Tamura's command through Kamimoto Toshio. Yutaka would be useful for providing intelligence and would play an important role in propaganda activities to win Malays and to subvert British forces.

The third possible alternative was inciting Chinese, particularly coolies in the port of Singapore, against the British, as suggested by Tashiro Shigeto who had been despatched to southern Thailand by Kadomatsu. There was nothing to go on in Sumatra and Java. Kadomatsu returned to Tokyo promising

Tamura that he would do his best to recruit officers and allocate funds for these operations. I was at that time a junior staff officer of the Eighth Section in charge of the press section. I thought that Kadomatsu had been to French Indochina, and it was only when Kadomatsu returned and reported his findings to Col. Takeda, that I learnt by hearsay for the first time that Kadomatsu had been to Bangkok.

Though I did not know much about what he reported, I had the impression that these operations were devoid of a principle that would inspire the cooperation of alien nationals. Nevertheless, I felt satisfied that our efforts had produced an unexpected result, bringing the I.I.L. into contact with us. Because these operations did not fall under my responsibility, I was not in a position to make any suggestions.

It was already August 1941, by which time the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands had retaliated against the Japanese advance into the southern part of French Indochina.

In July 1941 the United States and Britain had frozen Japanese assets; the United States notified Japan of the abrogation of the U.S.-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation; the United States put an embargo on oil exports to Japan; and the Netherlands terminated the negotiations for petroleum. Japan and the western powers were now on a collision course.

2. To Bangkok

As the calendar turned to September, the heat of Tokyo's scorching summer began to subside. An autumn wind was beginning to blow from the west across the Imperial Palace and the leaves of the Chinese parasol trees along Miyakezaka were turning yellow. While the crisp autumn weather was encroaching on the Tokyo district, the atmosphere at Miyakezaka, in contrast, was heating up daily as the Army General Staff was preparing plans for war on an unprecedented scale. On the afternoon of 10 September, Col. Kadomatsu summoned me and said in a very solemn tone of voice: 'I want you to go to Bangkok in a few days on a mission. The purpose of the mission is to assist Col. Tamura and to oversee a *kosaku* [intelligence operation] in Malaya. Should the present situation deteriorate to a state of war against Britain, you will be assigned to the staff of the Southern Expeditionary Forces as officer in charge of the *kosaku* in Malaya. Several officers will be placed under your command.' Then Kadomatsu outlined for me intelligence reports he had obtained from Tamura in Bangkok. I was dumbfounded by the unexpected order.

The young officers assigned to me were graduates of the Nakano School of Intelligence[5]. They were Capt. Tsuchimochi, Lieuts. Yamaguchi, Nakamiya, Yonemura, and Segawa, and Sgt. (First Class) Takimura. In addition to these, Ishikawa Yoshikichi, a student at the Tokyo College of Foreign Studies specializing in Indian studies, was to join us, though his appointment was yet to be confirmed pending negotiations

with the College president and Ishikawa himself. These officers and men were sound in thought and pure in heart as well as dedicated to performing their duties. Each one of them was impeccable in character and personality. Like myself, however, they had neither concept nor experience of the *kosaku* in which they were about to engage. Besides, none of them was fluent in foreign languages, nor had they been to Malaya.

We were all military officers, trained to obey any order regardless of its nature and to execute it without demur. However, this *kosaku* was something else. To carry it out would require extraordinary knowledge and experience, as well as enthusiasm for the task to be undertaken. Furthermore, it would call for confidence on the part of the men involved. Unfortunately, having worked in the press section of the General Staff, I had neither experience nor knowledge of espionage. To make matters worse, I had no talent for a foreign language – be it English, Malay, or Hindi. I remembered only a few words of English I had learned during my secondary school years. I had no confidence in my ability to carry out the *kosaku*, dealing with alien nationals. I knew that the Eighth Section was in charge of similar intelligence operations in China and Burma, but I had taken no part in them. In fact, I had been kept in the dark partly because the High Command feared leaks of classified information through officers having frequent contact with reporters. Even though we worked in the same office, Kadomatsu had not sought my opinion about the *kosaku* to which I was appointed, but had given me the order without advance warning. I was for some time annoyed with Kadomatsu and Ozeki who I felt had been treating me like a stranger. Furthermore, my opinion was fundamentally different from that of the two senior officers towards this *kosaku*. I was of the opinion that Japan's policy in Asia ought to be aimed at seeking an understanding of the Asian peoples' aspirations for freedom and liberation and assisting them to realize their goal. What was required for the *kosaku* in modern war was an ideology based on noble and universal political principles. Such a *kosaku*, I maintained, should not be directed to a particular group but to the masses.

Also I maintained that overt propaganda warfare would be more effective than a covert *kosaku* steeped in intrigue. I was sceptical of a *modus operandi* that would appeal only to a particular group of individuals, as we had tried and failed in China so many times. I was particularly dissatisfied with a *kosaku* looking for short term gains without principles and seeking only self-interest and selfish ends. Kadomatsu was contemptuous of my views, criticizing them as being unrealistic. Because of the difference in our opinions, I could hardly accept his order without making my position plain. I disliked Kadomatsu for passing the responsibility to me, for I felt that he or someone else who was familiar with this *kosaku* should take charge of what was obviously an extraordinary task. I pleaded that I had neither the confidence nor the qualifications to assume the responsibility. My appeal and protest went unheeded, because the decision had already been made. I begged him to reconsider and said that I would think it over that evening. I went home earlier than usual.

My house was situated in Setagaya near the Shoin Shrine. My family greeted me warmly, which set my troubles aside. After changing my uniform for a comfortable *kimono*, I took a walk with my five-year-old daughter Nobuko to the Shoin Shrine. She was delighted by this unexpected pleasure, unaware of her father's agony.

Shoin Shrine was built to commemorate the dedicated young patriot and philosopher Yoshida Shoin[6], who, eighty years previously, when Japan was being transformed into a modern state after two centuries of isolation, was executed for his revolutionary and anti-Tokugawa activities. I came to the Shrine to seek guidance from Shoin, whom I admired.

Bowing before his gravestone, I asked myself questions as if I were speaking to Shoin about the unprecedented crisis that Japan was facing. When I told him of the difficult task that I was about to undertake, the magnitude of the crisis that faced Japan overwhelmed me; I was struck with an awesome responsibility for it, feeling a tension and sensation that gripped my body. When I thought about Shoin's passion and sincerity, and the benevolence with which he achieved his goal eighty years before, believing that the feudal state had to

be overthrown and replaced with a modern state through revolution, I felt a divine inspiration.

I realized that I should not permit mundane thoughts and sentiments to trouble me. I said to myself that all I needed to learn from Shoin was to follow his example of passion, sincerity, and benevolence, and develop a new phase of the *kosaku* in accordance with the spirit of *Bushido* (the way of the warrior). When I reached that state of mind, I felt a new courage welling up within my being, realizing that lack of experience, knowledge, and language skill and the poor prospects for the *kosaku* would not be obstacles to my mission. I went home full of self-confidence and a new faith.

On the way I stopped at a toy shop and bought a toy for my daughter. She was excited and when I saw her playing with the new toy, my heart was seized by a terrible sorrow that I might never see her again.

At dinner my wife noticed something unusual in my behaviour and asked cautiously if anything was wrong with me as she was serving *sake* (rice wine). Pretending that nothing was wrong, I replied in the negative, but I know that my mind and my lips were saying two different things. Having been trained not to inquire about official business, she did not pursue her questioning.

That night I was unable to sleep, being tormented by all sorts of notions. Shirking the responsibility haunted my mind. No officers outside the Eighth Section would dare to accept such an enormous assignment. I knew for sure that neither Kadomatsu nor Ozeki would volunteer for it. Preparations appeared to have been made in the past month to saddle me with the task. I would not get out of it even if I resigned from military service. Now I realized that the officers assigned to the Eighth Section in a recent staff changeover were to replace us being sent on overseas assignments. For example, Major Kuwabara, my classmate at the Military Academy, had been transferred to my office in the Eighth Section in April, obviously to take over my post when I was given a posting abroad. It might be an act of providence that the three Indians we had helped smuggle into Bangkok in February 1941 had brought us into contact with the I.I.L., and that my involve-

ment in the affair had led me to the present task. It was very cowardly of me now to shy away from the *kosaku*. I resolved to do my best and considered the assignment as an opportunity to put my precepts – passion, sincerity, and benevolence – into practice in this war of ideology. Nevertheless, I was still vacillating whether to plead next morning with Col. Takeda and Col. Usui to reconsider the appointment on the ground of my poor qualifications, and finally I decided to sound out the opinions of the five officers who were to work with me. I made up my mind to accept the assignment like a man, if my superior officers insisted on it and if my five comrades-in-arms agreed to work for me in carrying out the difficult job. I thought about going to Bangkok to exchange views with Tamura before arriving at a conclusion, but such a request from a junior officer would be a very sensitive one because Kadomatsu, as senior officer in charge of espionage, had already made arrangements with Tamura. Besides, time was running short. There was nothing I could do but my best, regardless of success or failure. I told myself that this was my rendezvous with destiny.

I went to the office early the following morning and sought out the opinions of the five men who had been unofficially informed of their assignment. They unanimously said that they would be glad to perform any duties, requesting that they accompany me to Bangkok. Their sincerity and confidence in me strengthened my determination. Nevertheless, when I reported to Cols. Takeda and Usui I pleaded that I was not qualified for the job. In reply they said:

> 'Should hostilities break out between Japan and the Anglo-American powers, it is going to be a major war that may well decide the fate of Japan. How can we as members of the Eighth Section remain idle in this great war? We do not have, however, a leader for any *kosaku* that we feel is sure to succeed. Nor do we have a qualified officer except you. Now is the time for the Eighth Section, putting its resources together, to do something to come up with a *kosaku* in order to contribute our share to the war. Col. Tamura is an expert in this kind of *kosaku*. You'd

better get instructions from him and act accordingly. For the time being, we suggest you concentrate on the *kosaku* in Malaya while serving as an assistant to Col. Tamura.'

With conviction I said: 'I am not sure whether I can do well enough to meet your expectations but I gladly accept the responsibility.' Subsequently, I told Kadomatsu of my decision. To the latter, I confided the agony with which I had been tormented since the previous night and promised to carry out the mission with my new precepts. Kuwabara, who shared my opinion, encouraged me and urged me to break new ground in ideological warfare for the Imperial Army. My mind was set at last but it was a grim resolve. I felt courage and passion welling up in my body and recited a stanza from a Chinese poem: 'A soldier once left home shall never return.'

* * *

On the day I informed the senior officers of my decision, I turned over my work to Major Kuwabara. I wasted no time in cramming all the information about India that I could find from such works as a travelogue by Takaoka Daisuke[7] and field studies prepared by the research division of the South Manchuria Railroad Co[8]. I also combed the library of the Army General Staff for material on Malaya. To my chagrin, the library had scarcely any books on India useful for my purpose, largely due to the General Staff's consistent preoccupation with planning military operations against the Soviet Union, Manchuria, and China since the establishment of the Imperial Army, and due to Japan's friendly relations with Britain[9]. Moreover, there were very few Indian specialists in Japan except Takaoka Daisuke and Kimura Nikki. Even their works did not provide information in depth about Indian military and political affairs. There might have been some scholarly volumes but I was not aware of them. Even were there such books, I did not have sufficient time to read them anyhow. Nor would the army authorities permit me to see scholars on the subject for further information on account of the classified nature of my mission.

On 16 September, Chief of the Army General Staff, General Sugiyama[10], called me and the five officers into his office. We stood to attention in military uniform and presented ourselves to him. He handed me a typewritten official order. Controlling my emotions, I read it through once. The instructions in essence said: 'You are ordered to proceed to Bangkok, where under Col Tamura's command you are to engage in a *kosaku* in in Malaya in order to assist intelligence operations, particularly with respect to the I.I.L. and Malay and Chinese anti-British groups.' Afterwards, the General asked all the officers except me to leave the office.

General Sugiyama, who had been stationed in India and Malaya as a young captain in the 1920s, made the following remark:

> 'While your mission is to assist Japanese military operations and to prepare the ground for promoting friendship and cooperation between Japanese troops and the Malay people, should hostilities break out against Britain, I want you to watch the Indian situation closely and to consider future Japan-India relations from the standpoint of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Also I wish you to keep in mind that there are many ethnic groups among the Indians serving in the British-Indian army, and that the British have organized these Indians in such a way as to pit one group against another in order to divide and rule. Do your very best. I wish you good luck.'

I interpreted the General's statement to mean that he wished me to cultivate the ground for India's independence and Japan-India cooperation in order to realize ideals of a new order in Greater East Asia, while concentrating at first on the *kosaku* in Malaya.

I set my mind to carry out the mission with all the resources I possessed, even at the cost of my life, and I felt honoured as a junior officer and a Japanese to be able to undertake the noble task. But I had no concrete ideas as to how to devise the plans and implement them to a successful conclusion. When I came out of the General's office, the five young officers were

waiting. They were comrades who were going to share with me life and death for the cause of the supreme mission. They put their faith in me. Henceforth, they would watch my every action and listen to my every word. Their faces glowed with excitement, expressing a fierce determination.

I returned to my office and phoned my wife, informing her that I would be home before six o'clock with a group of young officers. I told her to prepare a great feast and to buy sea bream and *sake* to toast with these young men who were going with me on a secret mission to an undisclosed destination.

I called the officers together in a room and conveyed to them General Sugiyama's wishes as well as my own resolve, apologizing for my junior military rank, inexperience, and unworthiness to be their leader. Asking for their cooperation and assistance, I pledged to put the essence of ideological warfare into practice at any cost, even at the risk of my life. Then I explained in detail what I believed to be the essentials of ideological warfare, as follows:

> 'Keeping in mind His Majesty's concern for benevolence that extends not only to our troops but also to enemy soldiers, we must impress His concern about indigenous people and the enemy, especially prisoners of war, and build by inducing them to cooperate with us the foundation for a new friendship and peace out of the ashes of war.
>
> We have to spread the Imperial benevolence and our friendly message to the enemy until we make them our allies. The strength of the Japanese Army should not be dissipated as we fight war but it should be consolidated by gaining the support of native people and friends from the enemy camp. We must impress on them that this war is a war of righteousness aimed at freeing indigenous people and POWs and helping them achieve their national aspirations and happiness. We need their understanding to realize our objectives. Supposing we win this war in the battlefield, it will not be a complete victory if we fail in the battle of ideology. Then how will we justify the significance of the war? Anyone

taking part in this mission ought to have stronger passion and firmer conviction than the leaders of national independence movements. We should be modest and moderate, refraining from being loud-mouths, political bullys, or swaggerers. Men of such arrogance will not achieve anything. We must be content with a thankless task. We fight with noble principles in the place of arms. What is important to us is not power but faith, sincerity, passion, and benevolence, in our dealings amongst ourselves, with friends, foreign nationals, and Japanese soldiers. We have to win an unshakeable trust. Henceforth, we are blood-brothers, sharing our lives to serve the nation.'

The officers appeared impressed with my resolve and conviction.

Then, I suggested we pay homage at the Meiji Shrine[11] in order to pledge our oath of comradeship before the altar. All of them unanimously agreed with my proposal and also accepted my invitation to a celebratory dinner at my home. In the afternoon we, bathing in the warm sunshine of early autumn, went in civilian dress to the Shrine. We bowed before the Shrine, offering a long prayer and vowing our determination to the spirit of the Emperor Meiji. Having done this, we six officers felt united in body and spirit and ready to sacrifice our lives for our country in a noble cause.

When I made the vow to God and to myself to die for a new order in Greater East Asia, I felt as if possessed by a supernatural power. After worshipping at the Shrine, we all headed for my home. On the way, we stopped at a music store at the top of Dogenzaka in Shibuya and bought records of *Aizen Katsura* and *Otoko no Junjo* which were very popular songs in those days. That night, entertained by my wife and children, we all had a splendid time drinking *sake* well into the night. We also sang *Aizen Katsura* and *Otoko no Junjo* over and over again, choked with emotion. After taking a vow of comradeship between us, we retired to bed without undressing. The following morning, we went to the office together.

From that day on we began to cast about for ways and

means to enter Bangkok without disclosing our official status and identity. Lieut. Yamaguchi and I, after negotiations between General Staff and the Foreign Ministry, were assigned to the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok, and Lieut. Yonemura was employed by the Thailand Hotel, which was under Japanese management, as a bellboy. Capt. Tsuchimochi and Lieut. Nakamiya were despatched in the guise of employees to Tainan Koshi Co. and Hidaka Yoko Co.[12] respectively. Sgt. (First Class) Takimura was given a secretarial position in the office of the military attaché at the Embassy. Lieut. Yamaguchi and I were to leave for Bangkok as an advance party by air on 29 September.

On 20 September, Kadomatsu introduced me to a man named Masubuchi Sahei who appeared close to sixty years old and was gentle and well-mannered. He reminded me of my father. He had spent more than twenty years in Malaya and Sumatra and was fluent in Malay. He had written a Japanese-Malay conversation book. He impressed me as a genuine pioneer of the southern region with his sun-tanned, healthy and childlike face and modesty, simplicity, and grace. During our conversations I found he had all the enthusiasm of a young man; he was not the type of man to seek a selfish interest while working with the Japanese Army in the South Seas. I took to him at first sight.

I was then thirty-three years old, while none of the other officers was more than twenty-five years of age. I thought it would be invaluable to have in our group a man of prudence, wisdom, and gentleness familiar with affairs in Southeast Asia. For these attributes, Masubuchi became a member of our group.

* * *

On 29 September, Lieut. Yamaguchi and I, in civilian dress, departed from Haneda Airport. Tokyo and Tokyo Bay were still wrapped in a cool early morning mist. From the air it all looked very calm and peaceful. To both of us, filled with resolve for the secret mission that lay ahead, it was painful to see our country lying so peacefully and calmly in the dawn,

oblivious of the storms ahead. As I thought that this might be my last glimpse of the motherland, I tried to impress every feature of the landscape upon my mind. Moreover, when I thought about the difficulties before us, I felt more and more that Yamaguchi would be an indispensable assistant.

We stayed overnight in Fukuoka. After registering at an inn, we went at once to the Hakozaki Shrine[13], where we, looking at framed letters that read 'The Capitulation of the Enemy', prayed for our mission's success. As it was our last night before leaving Japan, we decided to have a special chicken dinner and ate to our hearts' content. We were relieved that the maids at the inn did not suspect us when we introduced ourselves as foreign service officers. Nevertheless, we felt self-conscious with our short hair cropped to the scalp.

The next day on our flight from Shanghai to Taipei, Yamaguchi complained of a sharp pain in his stomach. I thought it was probably due to over-eating the night before. As it was so severe, however, I began to wonder if it might be appendicitis. I asked him whether he had had similar pains before and he replied positively. By accident, Col. Tsuji Masanobu[14], dressed in civilian clothes, was on board. At first we had pretended that we were strangers. Noticing the emergency, Tsuji offered his help. On landing at Taipei, I requested an automobile from headquarters of the Taiwan Army Command and took Yamaguchi to an army hospital. An army surgeon confirmed my diagnosis, whereupon I urged him to operate on Yamaguchi without delay.

The surgeon found that Yamaguchi had an acute attack of appendicitis. The operation took fifty minutes. While I was glad to have been instrumental in saving Yamaguchi's life, I felt depressed at having to travel on alone to Bangkok. Yamaguchi, confined to bed, was very distressed and kept apologizing for his ill-fortune. I was uneasy about the difficulties I might encounter. On 1 October, I landed at Don Muang Airport, Bangkok. I was extremely tense and nervous and felt as if the eyes of the airport staff were fixed on me. Circumstances had placed me, who had no experience in this kind of work, on the main stage in the theatre of international espionage.

3. Secret plans for war

The car despatched by the Japanese Embassy took me to the Japanese-run Thailand Hotel. Because the guests were all Japanese I was relieved of the tension which had struck me. On the other hand, I feared I might possibly encounter a Japanese acquaintance who would unwittingly reveal my identity. I dared not go to the dining room or the lounge and so I shut myself in my room. Early the following morning, I hired a taxi and went to the residence of Col. Tamura.

On the way I saw many monks walking along the streets which were wet with morning dew. The sight of the yellow-robed monks receiving alms from devout followers reminded me of butterflies in a field of rape-blossoms in spring. I felt in my mind something that could be understood between us and the Thais, as we shared a common ground in religion.

When I arrived at Tamura's residence, he was having breakfast. Craning his neck at my arrival, he welcomed and ushered me into the dining hall to join him for breakfast. He ordered me a whisky and soda, which rather took me aback. However, his warm reception eased my nervousness. After the meal, Tamura took me to the living room and I handed him directives from the chief of the Army General Staff. He read them carefully and said in a solemn voice:

> 'Under my command I want you to take charge of liaison with the I.I.L and to assist Tashiro, who is responsible for overseas Chinese affairs, and Kamimoto, who is in charge of the *Harimau*

kosaku. But my assistant [Lt.-Col. Iino who was my classmate at the War College] will take care of matters dealing with espionage. For the time being, it is better for you to get acquainted with the situation in Bangkok. I will introduce you to Pritam Singh of the I.I.L. in a few days and will see to it that you meet Tashiro and Kamimoto, who are now in southern Thailand.

As you know Bangkok is a centre of espionage activities for Britain, America, China and Germany. We have also many military and civilian agents here engaged in political and intelligence activities as well as in the acquisition of natural resources.

The Thai government has been extremely nervous about the intelligence activities of the powers. Some high officials in the Thai government are believed to be in sympathy with Britain and are sitting on the fence. The Thai authorities have been keeping a close surveillance of our activities. If they discover your mission, not only will it be finished but also Japan's war preparations will be exposed. Furthermore, in such an event, it will reverse Thailand's friendly relations with Japan to the detriment of our interests. We have to be extremely careful about maintaining secrecy.

We must also guard against leaking of information particularly amongst Japanese. I advise you not to mix with them, nor come to my office unless you have urgent business. An occasional visit to the Embassy will be sufficient for liaison purposes.'

I appreciated Tamura's advice and entreated his guidance with an apology for my ignorance and inexperience in this kind of activity, especially for my language deficiency. In reply, Tamura encouraged me by saying: 'The important thing is eagerness and diligence. I will get an interpreter for you as soon as possible.'

I asked Tamura to find me a safer place to stay than the hotel, which he promised to do, and assured me he would do his best to expedite entry procedures for Tsuchimochi,

Nakamiya, Yoshimura, Segawa, Takimura, and Masubuchi, who were anxiously awaiting entry permits in Tokyo.

* * *

As the confrontation between Japan and the Anglo-American-Dutch coalition became intensified, Thailand, a drowsy, tropical country in Southeast Asia far removed from the centre of power politics, suddenly became the main stage of conflict and a fierce battleground of diplomatic, intelligence, and espionage operations. Faced with an economic embargo imposed by the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands, Japan had no alternative but to acquire such strategic resources as rice, rubber, tin, and leather from Thailand and French Indochina. She had been able to obtain tin and rubber from Malaya through overseas Chinese, and Thailand had become Japan's rice bowl.

For the Anglo-American powers, Thailand was a critical nation to watch so as to check Japanese military moves in French Indochina, where we had been rapidly expanding our influence. Also, Thailand, situated in the heart of continental Southeast Asia, was the country to be kept under surveillance in order to prevent Japan from acquiring the strategic materials she needed. For Japan, it was imperative to establish a foothold in Thailand in order to gather intelligence about the military situation in Malaya and in Burma and to infiltrate the indigenous people and colonial armies. Therefore, Thailand, on the outbreak of Anglo-Japanese hostilities, would become a vital strategic centre determining the success or failure of Japanese military operations in Malaya and Burma.

It was only logical that the Thai situation would become a matter of vital concern for Japan and the allied powers. For many years Britain, deriving advantage from her historical ties with Thailand, had wielded considerable influence in the political and economic arenas.

Thailand's helpless national defence and uneasy political condition, her relatively underdeveloped culture, and the Chinese-dominated economy in Bangkok created an unstable situation vulnerable to manipulation by outside forces. In

1932, Major-General Pibul Songkram seized power through a *coup d'état* and embarked on a dictatorial programme of reform. In the spring of 1940 the Japanese began to expand their military influence in northern French Indochina. Spurred on by the new enthusiasm for national socialism sweeping the world, Thailand instigated a border incident with French Indochina with the aim of recovering territory lost to the French. By mediating in the dispute and setting up a boundary line favourable to Thailand, Japan was able to build up a pro-Japanese faction in Thailand. Japanese policy was to support Pibul and Vanit Panonda who were in favour of national socialism. Japan's expansion into southern French Indochina enabled her to speak louder in Thai affairs and to make her presence felt in the country in competition with Britain. It was Col. Tamura who had been directing Japanese policy and playing a major role in shaping the political situation in Thailand. He was Japan's leading authority on Southeast Asian affairs, especially regarding the Thai situation. This was his second tour of duty in Thailand. Together with Asada, the consul general in Bangkok, they formed an ideal team maintaining very close personal relations with Pibul, and Vanit, a senior minister.

At the time of my arrival in Bangkok, the situation became more complex as a result of moves by other powers jockeying for advantage. Germany was eager to obtain raw materials and intelligence, French Indochina was anxious to collect intelligence for self-defence, and China (Chungking) was busy soliciting overseas Chinese support in Bangkok. Thailand was like a prospective bride sought after by numerous suitors. To counter these intelligence activities, Japan sent a number of agents disguised as representatives of commercial firms to buy raw materials; doctors, both in and out of military uniform, to study tropical medicine; technical advisers to handle the railways; Buddhist priests; military advisers to handle the weapons Japan had sold to Thailand, etc. These undercover agents sought information about what other Japanese were doing here and tried to keep their own identity secret. Some thoughtless Japanese allowed their tongues to run away with them while making merry in a Japanese-run restaurant,

as they boasted of themselves and gossiped about their fellow countrymen in loud voices. Such behaviour was often a source of leaks.

We later learned that Lt.-Col. Gill, who was to hold a senior rank in the Indian National Army, was also posted in Bangkok at this time as a British intelligence officer, and staying at the Railroad Hotel. He was to become the Indian Ambassador to Thailand in post-war years. Like Pritam Singh with whom we were in collaboration, he was a Sikh.

* * *

I kept constant vigilance while staying at the Thailand Hotel. I was particularly on guard against hotel guests and employees. After a few days of observation, I noted amongst the hotel residents two or possibly three Japanese military officers whom I knew well. They had come to Thailand to help the Thai army operate aeroplanes and tanks that Japan had handed over. Besides these officers, I recognized amongst the guests Col. Iwasaki who had been sent to Thailand as a member of the team drawing the Thai-French Indochina boundary. I felt sure none of the hotel employees were watching me with suspicion, but I was especially careful not to appear too conspicuous amongst the Japanese, lest I should attract the attention of the Thai police or intelligence agents of other nations. I made repeated requests to the office of the military attaché to find me a suitable but inconspicuous place as soon as possible. Several days later, Lieut. Yonemura arrived at the hotel. It was painful to see him, my trusted comrade, disguised as a waiter, even though he was working for the cause of the nation. We pretended to be strangers. I felt qualms of conscience when we had to maintain the formality necessary between guest and employee. We exchanged our mixed feelings only with our eyes.

Yonemura looked professional; he performed his role with great dexterity and charm, making humorous gestures. The more he acted, the more pathetic he looked. His perseverance and ordeal reminded me of those of the Forty-Seven Samurai of Ako. He would come stealthily to my room late at night to make contact.

On or about 10 October, I had my first meeting with Pritam Singh, secretary-general of the I.I.L., with whom I was to share my ideals and destiny. Our appointment was at noon in Col. Tamura's residence. Pritam arrived on time by *samlor*. Tamura and I were as excited as if we were meeting a sweetheart. As he was coming upstairs ushered by a boy, we greeted him at the doorway. I had imagined him to be a well-built revolutionary with a stern look; instead, he was a young, turbaned Sikh with a fragile physical appearance. I felt some disappointment when I saw this quiet and gentle young man standing before me. He greeted us politely by joining his palms together in front of his chest in the same manner as we worship at a Shinto or Buddhist altar. I was taken aback by this as I had expected a handshake. After ushering Pritam Singh into the drawing room, Tamura introduced me to him. With a smile and a friendly look as if he had known me a long time, he presented himself saying: 'I am Pritam Singh. I have been waiting for you since I heard your name from Col. Tamura. I am glad to see you.' And he shook my hand firmly. Moved by the sincerity, passion, and trust expressed in his greetings, I replied: 'I have come to help you realize your high ideal and I look forward to working together with you'. When Tamura interpreted my statement, he appeared to be very pleased.

No sooner had we sat down facing each other than I inquired of Pritam about the three Indians I had helped smuggle from Canton to Thailand the previous year. His face lit up and he exclaimed: 'Oh, it was you who sent the three comrades. They were deeply touched by the assistance extended by the Japanese Army General Staff. I wish to express my gratitude on their behalf. They have been smuggled into Malaya, India, and Berlin, according to our plans. We were destined to work together from that moment. We are already old comrades!' Though it was our first meeting, Pritam was very frank in revealing his political activities. He had been working for the independence of India since 1939, when he had to flee from India for personal safety to Singapore and then to Bangkok, where he was staying with Amar Singh, working towards the achievement of his objective.

He described with indignation the British betrayal of India

during World War I, expressing his conviction that India's independence could not be achieved without the uprising of the Indians themselves. For this reason, he emphasized the need for a forceful struggle for independence, taking advantage of the situation provided by World War II. He admired Chandra Bose in Berlin for his enthusiasm for the independence movement, expressing his sympathy with Bose's aspirations. Moreover, he explained the reason the leaders of the Indian National Congress did not solicit help from other powers: they were extremely fearful of the prospect of finding themselves between Scylla and Charybdis if they achieved autonomy with the assistance of other nations. They wanted to win a genuine independence free from foreign interference. If we achieved our independence and succeeded in creating our own government with the help of other powers, our well-meant activities would still lose the sympathy and support of the Indian people when the government turned out to be a puppet manipulated by a foreign power. We were powerless, however. We had no alternative but to solicit the assistance of a foreign power in order to win independence by seizing the opportunity now being presented to us. This was our dilemma, he said emphatically. While he was talking about the serious political problem in a philosophical vein, he maintained a serene state of mind, showing no sign of emotion. He impressed me as a man of cool reason and firm conviction.

He gave me several useful suggestions for my mission. After we had had an exchange of conversation on the political question, I plucked up the courage (realizing it to be rude) to ask him about the turban, long beard, and iron bracelet he was wearing. Showing no sign of displeasure, he explained about them and also about the doctrine of Sikhism in layman's terms. Our conversation translated by Tamura lasted for two hours.

From the first we were like old comrades, with no secrets between us. I was very glad I had had the opportunity to meet him and to exchange views without reservations. I felt a ray of hope for our future operation.

As we parted company he expressed the wish to see me again in three days' time. He proposed that we should meet

at a different location for security reasons and suggested we hold our next meeting at the house of an Indian cotton textile merchant. Tamura immediately endorsed his idea and I also concurred with it. During our conversation I was filled with impatience at my inability to speak English. I blamed myself for the laziness during secondary school years, and I regretted having chosen to study Chinese at the military academy. I worried about Pritam Singh's health, as I noticed during our talk, he had a bad cough.

Two days after my meeting with Pritam, Tamura introduced me to a Japanese named Otaguro, who hailed from Yamaga-machi, Kumamoto prefecture. He had been teaching English at a Japanese school in Singapore but had left because of mounting tension in Anglo-Japanese relations. He was short and sun-tanned, looking no more than thirty. He appeared to be gentle and honest. When we spoke with him, I was moved by his obvious eagerness and desire to serve the nation in any capacity, though I did not get the impression that he had any real interest in the nationalist movement or profound views on the changing international situation. I recruited him as a comrade to act as my ears and mouthpiece. That day turned out to be my lucky day, for I found a hide-out, near Bangkok's central railway station.

It was a house to rent, modest in size and inconspicuous in location, complete with servants and furniture. The previous tenants were a professor and his wife from Taipei Medical College who had come to study tropical medicine and were about to leave the country. There were five rooms on the first floor and a spacious reception room and a dining room on the ground floor. It all looked very comfortable. I was delighted with it and moved in that day with a new set of bedding, looking forward to a peaceful night's sleep.

* * *

The day before I was to meet Pritam Singh I sent Otaguro to reconnoitre. On his return he gave me a rundown of the neighbourhood and residents. The rendezvous appeared to be a hut situated behind a dilapidated building in an alley about a

mile from Lumpini Park. That night I sat burning the midnight oil and racking my brains to come up with a framework of negotiations with Pritam. I wanted to find out about I.I.L. activities in southern Thailand and Malaya and the activities of Indian residents in Bangkok, as well as his plans for the independence movement. It was absolutely essential, however, not to give him the impression that Japan was seriously preparing for war against the Anglo-American powers. I was unable to sleep that night.

When I was leaving Tokyo I had been warned that war might break out in early October against the United States and Britain. It was now mid-October and I had not seen any sign of possible hostilities. On the other hand, an urgent cablegram could arrive the following day notifying us of the outbreak of war. If military conflict should occur, I was not prepared for it because I had had no lead necessary for formulating concrete plans to be implemented for my important mission. My staff had not yet arrived in Bangkok, nor had I met Kamimoto and Tashiro, our agents in southern Thailand. I worried over these problems, tossing and turning in bed. The whistle of the first train and the sound of its engine sharpened the edge of my nervousness. Finally, I got up and took a shower and then drank a glass of straight whisky. Soon I felt a numbing sensation and fell asleep.

I stayed in my room all day and pondered on the scheduled meeting. At 7 P.M. I left the house, telling the maid I was off to a reception given by Ambassador Tsubogami. I walked for about a kilometre, making sure that nobody was following me. Then I took a *samlor* and told the driver to take me to Chinatown, which was located in the opposite direction from where I planned to go. Halfway to Chinatown I got off the *samlor* and transferred to another one, directing the driver to return along the road I had come. I alighted near an alley not far from a Japanese-operated Kirin beer hall and took a walk browsing amongst the leather goods and dry goods stores. Making use of shopfront windows, I made sure that nobody was watching me with suspicion. Finally, I hired a *samlor* to go to Lumpini Park. At the entrance to the Park I met Otaguro. We walked together along a dimly-lit street towards the house, paying careful attention around us.

We arrived ten minutes early for the 9 P.M. appointment. The house was situated at the very end of an alley. A man dressed in a white robe was standing outside. Startled by his appearance, we passed by but the man stopped us, addressing me by my assumed name, Yamashita. I remembered that at our first meeting, I had introduced myself to Pritam as Yamashita Koichi.

We followed the guide in silence and were led to the first floor of a smelly warehouse that appeared to be a pickle factory. The only furnishings were a small dirty desk, a three-legged wooden chair, and a dilapidated rope bed in the corner. There Pritam was anxiously awaiting our arrival. Impatiently he extended his hand for a handshake with the traditional greeting of holding hands together before his chest. He said apologetically: 'I am sorry to ask you to come to this filthy place, but it is safe here and you may speak freely. There is a guard downstairs.' To tell the truth I could hardly bear the stuffiness and the stench, but I said: 'Don't worry about it. I am very glad that you have been able to find a safe place.'

It was a sweltering humid night with no breeze. Mosquitoes were buzzing around and attacking us. For the next five hours we talked, occasionally quenching our thirst with lukewarm water. Pritam briefed me on the activities of Indians in Bangkok as follows:

In addition to the I.I.L., there was an Indian organization in Bangkok which aimed at promoting Thai-Indian friendship and cultural relations. Members of this association were moderates in their political orientation within the Indian National Congress, and their leaders were Professor Swami, who taught at a university in Bangkok, and Debnath Das. The organization maintained close contact with the German embassy. Being supported by Indian businessmen, it was more powerful than the Sikh-dominated I.I.L., and the two groups were not on good terms.

Das, together with Sahay, had been associated with an anti-British movement in Japan and I had met both of them in Tokyo in the spring of 1941. I felt instinctively that the relations between the two organizations could be very tricky and their mutual antagonism might bring about disclosure of I.I.L. activities. Pritam told me that their relations were

irreconcilable. I was tempted to get in touch with Das on the grounds of our personal acquaintance, but I was afraid that this would displease Pritam and I.I.L. members and would reveal the relationship between Japan and the I.I.L. I reached the conclusion that it would be better to bring the two organizations together after war broke out.

I explained to Pritam at length the importance of future cooperation between the two organizations in order to achieve independence, counselling patience and magnanimity to avoid conflict for the time being.

I learned also that the I.I.L. had some members stationed in Hajai Raya in southern Thailand and Kota Bharu on the east coast of Malaya, and that Pritam Singh travelled there once a month on the pretext of an evangelical mission in order to maintain contact with the comrades and distribute propaganda leaflets. According to him, there were many Indian soldiers in the British-Indian Army deployed in Trengganu and Kedah States and the I.I.L. was involved in propaganda activities to win them over. Apparently the I.I.L. had not been able to infiltrate the Indian troops guarding the border because the units there were frequently rotated, but Indian troops in the British-Indian Army harboured anti-British sentiments and were receptive to propaganda. Pritam was confident that Indian soldiers would respond to his appeal if I.I.L. agents were to accompany Japanese troops.

I was concerned to learn that I.I.L. activities had not penetrated into the interior region of Malaya, particularly amongst Indian soldiers in the British Army. Pritam urgently wanted Japan to declare war against the Anglo-American powers. I explained the present international tension and urged him to step up propaganda activities amongst British-Indian troops stationed in Malaya. Pritam gave me an exposition of his future plans; he believed that war between Japan and Britain was inevitable (he seemed, however, to think that it was still in the distant future). In that eventuality, he said, he would request Japanese military support and call upon Indian officers and men in the British-Indian Army and upon comrades living in Thailand, Malaya, and Burma to rise against the British. He hoped to organize an Indian National Army to

carry on the struggle, and, at the same time, to develop the I.I.L. movement on a worldwide scale.

I gave my hearty support to Pritam's aspirations and promised cooperation. He also requested Japan's assistance in making contact between the I.I.L. and Subhas Chandra Bose in Berlin and also setting up a broadcasting station to disseminate anti-British and pro-independence messages to India through Tokyo.

Bose's propaganda activities through radio appeared to be a matter of great interest to Pritam. He furthermore requested help in communicating with Pratap in Tokyo and comrades in Shanghai. The fateful D-day was approaching moment by moment, and I was tempted to reveal Japanese invasion plans to encourage him. How could I divulge this top military secret! While we were engrossed in conversation, we were sometimes alerted by slapping sounds from the Indian guard downstairs. This turned out to be the noise made when he tried to kill mosquitoes with his fan. Nevertheless, we strained our nerves and lowered our voices to a whisper. The Buddhist temples on either side of the Menam River lay silent as the night crept on, and still we talked. Pritam's frequent coughs disturbed me, and he looked very tired. At last I asked about his health.

With a touch of sadness he replied that he had some respiratory trouble, assuring me that it was nothing serious. Holding his head high, he declared that he could not afford to die before accomplishing the mission entrusted to him by God. His grim but solemn resolve touched my heart. It was past two o'clock when we parted.

Before leaving, Pritam told me that he would be away for the latter part of October to make contact with his comrades and disseminate propaganda in southern Thailand. I wished him well and good health, promising to see him again in early November.

I returned home via two changes of *samlors* as before, my shoulders were wet with night mist. I was exhausted, but I felt more and more clear-headed. I asked the maid for whisky and water and then wrote down almost verbatim the conversation I had had with Pritam. It was almost dawn when I went to bed.

The following morning I reported to Tamura, and the gist of our talk was transmitted to the Army General Staff. Tension in the Pacific basin was heightened after a ban on the export of petroleum to Japan imposed by the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands. No sooner had Pritam left for southern Thailand than Kamimoto and then Tashiro came to Bangkok and reported their findings. As I had expected, the *kosaku* for overseas Chinese undertaken by Tashiro was not promising.

They both returned to southern Thailand and a few days later Tsuchimochi, Nakamiya, Yamaguchi, Segawa, Takimura, Ishikawa and Masubuchi arrived from Tokyo. As planned, I took personal charge of liaison with the I.I.L. and ordered Yamaguchi, Nakamiya, Ishikawa, and Otaguro to remain in Bangkok as my assistants. I despatched Nakamiya to Hidaka Yoko Trading Co. as a cover agent, and Ishikawa and Takimura to the office of the military attaché as secretaries.

The other agents were sent to southern Thailand on the staff of Mitsubishi and Dainan Koshi Trading Co., to assist Tashiro and Kamimoto. I ordered the newcomers to Thailand and to stay behind in Bangkok so as to familiarize themselves with the country, and the others to go to southern Thailand to be ready for action in case of a sudden outbreak of war. Before their departure, I made them aware of my ideals and objectives as I had explained to them in Tokyo. Yamaguchi and Ishikawa moved in with me and my life became cheerful and lively. Nakamiya and Segawa would come to the house in the evening to report their activities.

We would argue late into the night about our principles and ideals, discussing ways of realizing them. These discussion sessions were our happiest time. Our nightly conversations ran something as follows:

In the case of hostilities breaking out in Greater Asia, Japan's ideals should be 'Asia is one' as declared by Okakura Tenshin[15] and the construction of a paradise founded upon the principles of co-prosperity and mutual happiness, transcending differences amongst oursleves. In such a utopia there would be no room for the conqueror's superiority complex and arrogance.

Every nation of Greater Asia should be liberated from the yoke of foreign control and oppression, should achieve their political aspirations based on liberty and equality and should create a sphere of peaceful community in order to promote in it the traditional culture and welfare of all Asia. The Japanese as vanguards should assume the responsibility for fulfilling that task. We should not interfere in the beliefs, customs, traditions, or ways of life of our fellow Asians, nor should we impose our belief or way of life upon them. Not only had we to persuade, but also to win the support of the Asian peoples with our sincerity, enthusiasm, love, and exemplary conduct.

For over a century the British and Dutch colonialists had, through their clever policy and material wealth, enervated the indigenous people. We were inexperienced, ill prepared and ill equipped to challenge the western colonial powers. For us, the only way to break through this citadel of colonialism was to respect their national aspirations with love and sincerity and win their hearts. Sincerity could move even heaven.

Our activities must be consistent with our practice of helping the national independence movements of the Asian people who would agree with our ideals and principles. We ought not to force our will upon them and interfere in their affairs, nor take advantage of them by manipulating them like puppets. The most important things we ought to have were no less enthusiasm, patriotism and self-sacrificing determination for independence than that which every Malay, Sumatran, and Indian possessed. Furthermore, we should ensure that no such disgraceful incidents as the ill-treatment of local people or prisoners of war committed by thoughtless Japanese soldiers would recur in Malaya, as had happened in China for which we were severely criticized.

These principles should be made known and strictly adhered to by field armies. In enforcing these ideals, we would no doubt encounter opposition, finding ourselves in a difficult position between the Japanese field army and the indigenous people, but we must deal with such problems with courage and conviction. Lastly, what was demanded of us was harmony and unity amongst ourselves, so that the native people and their leaders would be inspired by our own

exemplary conduct. Every night I gave a talk to my men, emphasizing these points and enumerating specific examples. All of them listened attentively and concurred with my viewpoints.

In early November, Pritam returned to Bangkok. We agreed to meet secretly at midnight at the same place as before. It was the eve of the *Meiji Setsu*[16], the birthday of the Emperor Meiji, the great modernizer of Japan. Pritam introduced Amar Singh, an ascetic dressed in a white robe, who looked nearly seventy. Stepping quietly towards me, Amar halted before me and stood like a statue. He stared at me with piercing eyes set deeply in his white-bearded face, holding his palms together before his chest, and then he chanted a prayer that was incomprehensible to me. I felt as if I were in the presence of a hermit or a messenger of God and was struck by the awesomeness of his solemnity. I saw in his sharp eyes and countenance an immaculate purity, a strong passion, and a tenacious will. I greeted him with respect and admiration, for I had heard so much about him.

He courteously led me to a chair. His politeness made me uneasy. After completing his simple greetings, he made a statement in a low but solemn voice, emphasizing every word. As he spoke, he became excited. His glaring eyes stared sometimes at Pritam and sometimes at me and occasionally at a corner of the ceiling as if decrying his motherland India or scowling at Britain. At times he closed his eyes and offered a prayer. As his talk reached its climax, he flung his clenched fist into the air while his eyes brimmed with tears. The holy man was now transformed into a fiery revolutionary! Hypnotized by his fervent emotion, I listened attentively to his speech.

He spoke accusingly about the British conquest of India and her inhumane administration and fraudulence. He said that from his youth he had dedicated himself to revolution for the liberation of India and the freedom of his fellow Indians. For his revolutionary activities he had spent more than ten years in prison in the Andaman Islands and in Rangoon, kept in chains. He was more than ever determined to become a revolutionary fighter. He expressed his iron resolve to dedicate himself, for the remainder of his life, to the

struggle for independence. He strongly believed that the I.I.L.'s fight for freedom and the Indian people were blessed by Providence. I was very much impressed by the old man's speech, though it was not entirely rational in its logic. Besides, I had reservations about his lack of tolerance as the leader of an independence movement, as well as his political views and planning ability.

He was not a man of reason nor of judgment, but a man of passion and action. I thought he and Pritam would make a complementary working partnership.

When Amar had finished, I asked Pritam about the situation in southern Thailand. At our first meeting, he reported with regret that he had failed to establish a cell organization in Kedah State as planned, though he had succeeded in making contact with comrades in Kota Bharu in Kelantan. By frequent replacement of the border garrisons the British were preventing infiltration of agents among the Indian troops. When I questioned him particularly about the deployment of I.I.L. agents in the southern part of Thailand and their activities in Kota Bharu, he seemed reluctant to talk so I refrained from pressing the point, saying to myself that the best way to carry out our mission was to trust each other.

That night our conversation led to a discussion on the views of the Indian people, particularly their leaders, about Japan. I sought Pritam's candid opinion on this subject because it was relevant to the fulfilment of my mission. He was at first diffident. Saying that Japanese propaganda activities were comparatively clumsier than those of America, Britain, and China (Chungking), he offered his frank view, in essence, as follows:

Most Indians were inclined to believe that Japanese colonial policy in Korea and Taiwan and her military and political operations in China and Manchuria were aggrandizing, and that Japan seemed to the Indians a bellicose and aggressive nation.

He abhorred the lootings, rapings, and atrocities committed by Japanese officers and men in China, citing evidence from American and British sources[17]. He said that this was inconsistent with the Japanese government's pronounced policy. He stressed that the Indians were much more sensitive and resentful than the Chinese about this kind of behaviour. After

reminding him of the deliberate exaggeration and distortion of these reports at the hands of the western powers, I admitted without reservation that there were lots of things to be criticized and corrected in Japanese colonial policies in Korea and Taiwan and in our military activities in Manchuria and China. Nor did I deny that atrocities had been committed by some Japanese officers and men in China. I expounded, however, the interest of Japan and His Majesty in the liberation of the Asian people and in the construction of a prosperous and peaceful Asia based on the principle of freedom and equality. Furthermore, I stressed that Japan, respecting the wishes of His Majesty, was making strenuous efforts since the fall of Nanking to amend her China policy and to stamp out brutality. Enumerating the principles in the Konoye Statement, I told him of the pamphlet, *Proclamation to All Officers and Men* prepared by General Hata[18], commander-in-chief of the Japanese Expeditionary Forces in China. Citing many fine traditional qualities of the Japanese, I pleaded with Pritam to understand us and our policy. He appeared to appreciate my explanation that Japan, in playing a leading role in the establishment of a new order in Asia, would have to face self-examination and go through reform.

We agreed that Japanese-Indian cooperation ought to be built upon freedom from exploitation and oppression, and that it must transcend mutual hostility by respecting each other's traditional culture and political aspirations and by uniting for co-existence and co-prosperity so characteristic of oriental philosophy.

We pledged ourselves to fight for these ideals and Amar listened approvingly to our conversation. When we ended our talk, he stood up slowly and prayed for the guidance and protection of Providence. The two Indians' faces glistened with beads of sweat. Startled by a cock-crow we glanced at our watches to find that it was past 4 A.M. We promised to meet again five days hence at a different location.

* * *

The situation in the Pacific basin was steadily heading towards a showdown, while we were frequently meeting in secrecy

labouring to arrive at a mutual understanding and to agree upon basic principles for collaboration. In mid-October a report from Tokyo told us of the fall of the third Konoye cabinet and, on 18 October, the formation of the Tojo cabinet. I intuitively felt that the Japanese-American talks had reached an impasse, that Imperial General Headquarters was disposed towards war with the western powers and that the decision to commence war was imminent. Reflecting the mood of the crisis, Japanese residents in Bangkok appeared uneasy. I was not in a position to know in advance what strategy Imperial General Headquarters and the Southern Expeditionary Forces were going to follow. However, judging from the anxiety of the Japanese Army to reconnoitre the situation in southern Thailand and the northeastern coast of Malaya, and drawing on opinion amongst military officers, I was able to deduce the conclusion that the Japanese military would inevitably make moves against Thailand and Malaya.

I learned by hearsay that the 25th Army under Lt.-Gen. Yamashita Tomoyuki[19] had been given the task of capturing Singapore. He had been concentrating his forces on Hainan Island and his command headquarters had advanced to southern French Indochina to prepare for the invasion. We had received intelligence that the defence of Singapore faced seaward, and given the flight range of Japanese army and naval aeroplanes stationed in southern French Indochina, there was not the slightest doubt that the assault on Singapore would go through Malaya, with troops landing in the southern part of Thailand and the Kota Bharu area.

As I sensed the inevitability of war, I was caught on the horns of a dilemma between the absolute imperative to keep Japanese military preparedness secret and the necessity of drafting concrete plans. It seemed that I could not request Pritam to propose specific plans without telling him in concrete terms of the decision of the Japanese military. But should the Japanese military plans leak out through him the consequences would be incalculable. With his keen insight into recent political changes in Tokyo, Pritam tried to find out from me about Japan's resolve, but I managed to evade his question and gave him no satisfactory reply. During the period between early and mid-October we met three times, always in

a different place. Through these meetings, we struck up a friendship founded on mutual trust. From him I acquired general information about the Indian independence movement and the ideals and activities of the I.I.L., and useful suggestions for formulating policies of future support and cooperation.

However, I was frustrated by being unable to satisfy what appeared to be an impossible demand of the General Staff to come up with concrete plans for winning Indian civilians in Malaya and British-Indian troops. Contrary to the exaggerated claim of Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu, the I.I.L. had not infiltrated Indian society. Furthermore, the general sentiment of the Indians towards Japan was not necessarily friendly.

I racked my brains night and day and at last I drew up plans with a twofold objective: firstly, to infiltrate into the enemy lines by giving support to I.I.L. agents and to win friends from amongst British-Indian troops once war broke out; and secondly, to organize Indians in Malaya as quickly as possible and expand I.I.L. activities. In short, I.I.L. activities were to be aimed at both Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army and the Indian populace.

Our *kosaku* towards Indian soldiers was that I.I.L. and Fujiwara intelligence unit (*F kikan*) agents should guarantee the lives of Indian prisoners of war, to win them to the I.I.L.'s ideals as well as to let them know about Japan's real intentions, and finally to organize an Indian national army with which we would appeal to Indian soldiers in the British-Indian forces. The *kosaku* towards the Indian people was to protect the lives of Indians suffering from war and to spread the I.I.L.'s and the Japanese military's sincere messages to induce them to participate voluntarily in I.I.L. activities and to expand I.I.L. organization all along the battlefield, and finally to reach Indians behind the enemy line.

This twofold *kosaku* must be closely coordinated like two wheels of a car. Moreover, this *kosaku* must be implemented, seizing an opportune moment, in such a way that it would have impact on Indians living in Burma and other parts of Asia as well as in India itself. For the *kosaku* to succeed, it was essential that I.I.L. and *F kikan* agents protect the lives

and interests as well as the liberty and safety of the Indians. These agents would have to be courageous in sacrificing themselves in the task of informing Indians of their objectives, enthusiasm, and sincerity.

It was imperative that we Japanese should not commit unlawful acts in the treatment of Malayan Indians and Indian POWs, but should support their patriotic movement and guarantee their lives, property, and freedom with understanding and compassion.

We ought to have a principle and a policy whereby we would help develop the I.I.L. movement into a voluntary action organized by Indian patriots themselves, that would appeal to all Indians without being prejudicial to any particular ethnic or religious group. It was necessary to educate the Japanese, particularly military and government leaders, so as to acquaint them with India, Indians, and their struggle for freedom, for their knowledge on this subject was extremely meagre. I came to realize that it would be more difficult to get cooperation and understanding from Japanese leaders and troops than to win the support of Indians, as I pondered this problem.

Beside our joint operation with the I.I.L., I had to direct other *kosaku* dealing with the overseas Chinese undertaken by Tashiro and with *Harimau* guided by Kamimoto. Then in mid-November I received an intelligence report from the Japanese Consulate General in Singapore about an anti-British movement organized by the *Kesatuan Melayu Muda* (K.M.M.), or Young Malay Union[20]. This secret society, basing its activities in Singapore, had been operating a newspaper, *Warta Malaya,* and had established cells throughout Malaya. Its members were mainly intellectuals and proletarian Malay youths. Their objectives were to liberate Malaya from the yoke of British rule and to get rid of titled and propertied Malays who allowed themselves to be used by the British. I learnt from Consul General Tsurumi[21], who had returned from Singapore to Bangkok, that this group had made contact with the Japanese consular mission in Singapore.

Harimau was a young man with strong anti-British feelings but no firm ideology. His territory was restricted to Pahang

State. Tamura and I were very pleased to receive the information about the K.M.M. and *Harimau* because we had not had any leads in dealing with Malays and their nationalist movement. With great expectations, I made plans for cooperation with these groups. I was anxious to have an *F kikan* agent stationed in southern Thailand get in touch with K.M.M. members at a point on the Malay border in order to negotiate means of collaboration. The hour for the outbreak of war, however, was approaching very fast.

Lack of space prevents me from giving an account of my agonizing experiences with the *Harimau* and overseas Chinese *kosaku*.

On the morning of 28 November, I made my periodic visit to the embassy for a talk with Ambassador Tsubogami, and afterwards stopped by in the office of the military attaché. When I entered, assistant attaché Tokunaga stood up and led me with a sign of his eyes to a reception room downstairs. I was suddenly struck with an ominous premonition — the nightmarish news that our *kosaku* had been exposed.

I had been always haunted by the fear that one of my twelve members engaged in Bangkok and southern Thailand in a wide range of espionage activities might give himself away to the Thai police or to enemy agents through his eagerness to be ready for the contingency of war. Suppressing my uneasy feelings, I sat opposite Tokunaga and waited for his message. In a hushed voice he divulged important news, contrary to my anticipated fear, that:

1. Prospects for Japan-United States negotiations were hopeless.
2. Hostilities would commence in early December.
3. Our *kosaku* in the Malay sector in which Tamura and I had been engaged would be placed under the command of General Terauchi, commander-in-chief of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. General Terauchi[22], in turn, would assign our *kosaku* to General Yamashita, commander of the 25th Army, for implementation.
4. All *F kikan* agents would be transferred to headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary

Forces whence they would be reassigned to the 25th Army to take charge of the *kosaku*.

Although I had anticipated the Japanese declaration of war, I felt an indescribable sensation running through my system when I learnt of the imminence of the decisive moment.

Immediately, two things came to my mind. The first was the matter of discussing concrete plans for our activities and the other was the problem of how I.I.L. and *F kikan* agents were to proceed to southern Thailand in time for the commencement of war. Tokunaga agreed right away to make available a Douglas transport aeroplane. I decided on an emergency meeting with Pritam. Yamaguchi persuaded the general manager of Mitsui Trading Co., Mr. Nitta, to offer his residence for the meeting that night. Otaguro relayed my message to Pritam. The office of the military attache was filled with tension, which contrasted sharply with the peaceful air of Thais and Chinese in the street. We were formulating operational plans for Malaya, but the situation in Thailand was very fluid. We could not be sure which way the country might take sides. Thanks to diplomatic manoeuvres made by the Ambassador and Tamura, Thailand appeared inclined to let Japanese troops pass peacefully through its territory, but the guarantee was not foolproof owing to the unstable political situation. Should Thailand betray Japan's confidence, Japanese residents would be detained. In such a case, *F kikan* agents would be rounded up and put behind bars in Bangkok and southern Thailand and our operation would come to a halt. It made me shudder to think about the possibility of such a turn of events.

I thought it would be best to pull out our agents from Bangkok and transfer them immediately to Saigon, whence they could land in southern Thailand together with the invasion force. This alternative, however, would entail some serious problems; it would be impossible for us to take Pritam and I.I.L. agents in Bangkok to Saigon. Nor would the Thai government allow Pritam to leave Bangkok for the south, and it would be too risky to move him to southern Thailand without government permission, as he was known to the Thai police. Even if his departure were possible, it was too

late now. Yet, we had not received an official message of declaration of war from Tokyo. Consultation with Tamura produced no new ideas. In the end, we decided to leave the matter to fate.

That night I met Pritam as planned. To my relief, Mr. Nitta was away from home. Taking care not to reveal Japanese military intentions and the decision for war, I explained to Pritam that Japanese-Anglo-American relations were extremely tense, and that Japan was facing the danger of a possible attack from the Anglo-American powers. I also told him that the Japanese military had been making preparations to respond immediately to the attack and, in this case, Malaya would possibly become a battleground. Finally, I informed him that the opportunity to implement our plans would come much earlier than we had anticipated and it was necessary to discuss them in concrete terms. As he listened, his expression changed from anxiety to content. Beginning that night, we had four nightly meetings in succession to discuss and study our plans. During the sessions I took heed of Pritam's opinions, which he expressed warmly and candidly. Happily, as we had reached agreement on ideology and had come to a mutual understanding, there was common ground between us. The plans we drafted were inevitably abstract because it was impossible to conjecture the military plan of campaign and its changes. The contents of our proposals were as follows:

'We pledge each other to uphold the following ideals and to do our utmost for their realization, sacrificing ourselves to the cause.

1. Our cooperation shall be in such a way that it will contribute to the establishment of friendly relations between Japan and India as independent nations based upon freedom and equality and to the achievement of peace, liberty and prosperity in Greater Asia.
2. The I.I.L. shall carry out armed struggle against Britain in order to achieve the immediate and complete independence of India. To this end, the I.I.L. shall cooperate with Japan wholeheartedly. Japan shall assure that she has no

territorial, military, political, economic, or religious ambitions in India nor does she demand anything from India in return for her assistance.

3. The I.I.L. shall embrace in its organization all Indian people who, irrespective of ethnic, religious and political differences, wish to fight against Britain for independence. In accordance with the spirit of Article 1, it shall promote friendship and cooperation of other racial groups living in military operational areas.
4. With the outbreak of war against Britain, the I.I.L. shall engage in the following activities:
   a) The I.I.L. shall advance, together with Japanese troops, to southern Thailand and Malaya in order to expand its activities in the said areas. It shall engage in operations to win over Indian masses and Indian soldiers from British-Indian troops by instigating an anti-British sentiment amongst them and to create a spirit of friendly cooperation with the Japanese.
   b) The I.I.L. shall organize as soon as possible an Indian Independence Voluntary Army made up of Indians from British-Indian troops and Indian residents in Malaya.
   c) Seizing an opportunity, the I.I.L. shall expand its activities specified in (a) and (b) throughout Asia.
5. The Japanese Army, in order to assist the I.I.L. to achieve the preceding objectives, shall provide the following support:
   a) Excepting unavoidable circumstances resulting from military operational needs, the Japanese Army shall recognize the I.I.L's independent actions and shall protect and support its activities.
   b) The Japanese Army shall make the Fujiwara *kikan* (a provisional name which will be formally organized with the commencement

of war) responsible for maintaining liaison between the Japanese Army and the I.I.L. and for assisting the I.I.L. thereby facilitating its task to achieve objectives.

c) The Japanese Army shall not regard Indians and Indian POWs as being hostile but treat them with friendship and guarantee their lives, property, freedom, and honour.
Paying respect to their religions, the Japanese Army shall protect temples and prohibit use of temples by troops. To enforce this policy, the Japanese Army shall make efforts to disseminate information to officers and men to this effect.

d) In order to make I.I.L. propaganda activities effective, the Japanese Army shall render assistance to the I.I.L. for the utilization of broadcasting facilities in Tokyo, Bangkok, and other occupied areas.
The Japanese Army shall provide aeroplanes for the I.I.L. to spread propaganda leaflets in enemy territories.

(e) The Japanese Army, at Pritam's request, shall provide for the I.I.L. materials and funds necessary to carry out its activities. The Japanese Army shall not obstruct the I.I.L. campaign to solicit materials and financial aid from local Indians in the war zone.'

In addition to this memorandum drafted between Tamura and Pritam, we also discussed the following items:

1. Immediately after the outbreak of war, agents of the I.I.L. and the Fujiwara *kikan* shall be transported to southern Thailand by aeroplanes furnished by the Japanese Army.
2. The I.I.L. shall prepare propaganda material containing the principles spelled out in the memorandum.
3. In order to distinguish I.I.L. agents from enemy

personnel and to guarantee their freedom of action on the battlefield, the Japanese Army shall provide an identification card. This policy shall be made known to all Japanese officers and men.

(Note: With regard to this identification, we decided after consultation with Pritam and at his suggestion to adopt the letter F, which was the initial letter of friendship, freedom and Fujiwara, in order to render our recognition easy for Japanese officers and men.)

4. Following advancement to southern Thailand, the I.I.L. shall organize its agency there and despatch a number of propaganda units to Malaya to engage in propaganda activities in order to win over Indians in British-Indian troops and Indian residents in areas under the control of British forces.

On the night of 1 December, these memoranda were translated into Japanese and English and were signed by Tamura and Pritam. We had stayed up for several nights, drafting the protocol, and were overwhelmed, oblivious of our exhaustion, to have produced a grand design for collaboration. We pledged ourselves with a firm handshake, vowing to obtain our objectives by cooperating with each other.

That very day Japanese leaders in Tokyo held an imperial conference in the presence of His Majesty and made the decision for war.

A fleet of Japanese naval forces was converging for the assault on Pearl Harbour and Japanese army and naval forces were concentrating at Hainan Island in preparation for the invasion of Malaya. Of course, we had no inkling of these military moves. In retrospect, 1 December 1941 was the turning point for Japan, engulfing her in hostilities in the Pacific.

Copies of the memorandum were delivered personally by Lieut. Yamaguchi to the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces and of the 25th Army, who subsequently gave it the seal of approval. Another copy was transmitted

to the Army General Staff. Pritam and I racked our brains to formulate the policy in the memorandum, and to dispose of a number of difficult problems such as maintaining liaison with the K.M.M. and issuing orders to *F kikan* agents deployed outside Bangkok. Pritam also despatched his men with directives to southern Thailand. The time had come for *F kikan* agents in Bangkok to leave for the battlefront.

* * *

One of the problems was what we should wear. I could hardly imagine a military officer in civilian clothes wearing long hair and bearing no sword. The military establishment in Japan simply did not permit an officer of such appearance. He would be regarded as a cowardly *samurai*. Nowadays, it was a popular custom that even war correspondents, writers, painters, and priests proudly wore a sword and a military uniform. Also, bureaucrats and businessmen despatched to occupied areas for administrative duties would dress in military uniform.

F kikan members, however, did not wear military uniform as we had entered Thailand as diplomats, trading company representatives, or hotel employees. Our mission was not to subdue the enemy and civilians with force. Nor were we to impress them with an imposing appearance; we were to face them with moral dignity and sincerity as our only weapons.

We would need neither arms nor military uniform. It was much better to dress in civilian clothes that would appear to be friendly. However, considering the contempt with which the pacification campaign was held by the Japanese military, it was certain *F kikan* members wearing civilian clothes and long hair and running back and forth across the battle zone would encounter difficulties and troubles. But to wear a military uniform would reveal our identity and would deviate from my original purpose.

Having given a considerable amount of thought to the matter, I ordered khaki riding uniforms to be made by a Chinese tailor. We decided to carry no sword but a pistol for self-protection, delivered from Saigon, only for those I.I.L. and *F kikan* agents who would travel about the battlefront.

I would carry neither a sword nor a pistol. Because of my responsibility on occasions for maintaining liaison with Japanese troops, I agreed at the advice of Tamura and his assistant to wear an insignia of military rank and a staff epaulette, and to carry a baton with an etched silver hilt, which I had bought at an antique shop. The hilt was precisely designed depicting a battle scene of an ancient and gallant Siamese general. The two-metre-long whip attached to the baton weighing 300 grams was made of the tail of a sturgeon; it had perhaps been used for whiplashing the enemy from horseback. I cut the whip short to about eighty centimetres. I ordered my men to keep their hair long.

4. Japan enters the war

On the afternoon of 1 December, a young man named Eri (a graduate of Okawa Shumei's School[23]) of the telecommunication room in the office of the military attaché rushed into the office of the assistant military attaché with a piece of paper. A message had arrived from Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo. The cablegram said that the Japanese government had made the decision to declare war against the Anglo-American-Dutch powers at the imperial conference held on 1 December. December 8 was designated D-day.

A fleet of transports anchored off Hainan Island ready for the invasion of Malaya, according to the message, was to leave on the 4th for the coast of southern Thailand. The Imperial Guard Division was also arriving and waiting along the Thai-Indochina border like a racehorse ready to run.

That day the entire forces of the Japanese Army and Navy launched unprecedented operations. Japan had crossed the Rubicon. War against the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands had now become a reality. For us in the military service, there was no alternative but to fight it out to the last man, believing in Japan's final victory. The invasion force, however, would have to sail for three days and four nights through the South China Sea to the Gulf of Siam along the coast of French Indochina, where British forces were keeping a close watch on Japanese military moves. Without providential help or a miracle, it was impossible for the Japanese convoy to pass through the area without being

detected by the enemy. Telecommunications reports from Bangkok indicated frequent reconnaissance flights by the British Royal Air Force along the coast of Malaya and Borneo. Japan was staking all on a surprise attack at the outset of war. Should the convoy be discovered on the high seas, it would be exposed to a lethal attack by the R.A.F. and the British naval fleet which consisted of two 'unsinkable' battleships stationed in Singapore. I shuddered at what appeared to be the inevitable result of such an attack. In that case, the Japanese Army under General Yamashita's command would possibly be annihilated. Thailand, who had been sitting on the fence, would very likely ally herself with the European powers should the Yamashita army be destroyed. Subsequently, a large number of British forces would enter Thai territory, endangering the lives of *F kikan* agents in southern Thailand. The moment I read the message, I felt like praying for providential intervention. Japanese residents in Bangkok who were acquainted with the consequences of defeat were of the same mind. From the moment we received the cablegram, all of us in the office of the military attaché became very edgy and nervous about all the activities around us – telephone calls, telegrams, British aerial activities reported in communications intelligence, radio, and even the sounds of passing automobiles driven by foreigners. We directed officers in the office of the military attaché and *F kikan* agents to keep a close watch on foreign missions and the activities of foreigners staying in the Oriental Hotel and the Continental Hotel. We wished we could make the sun move faster or turn the clock forward. Preparing for the worst, we had studied means of defending the embassy. We had managed to smuggle in hand-grenades, light machine-guns, grenade launchers, and small arms sufficient to arm fifty or sixty persons. Should Thailand ally herself with Britain, we were prepared to hold the embassy against a siege, entrenching ourselves in the office of the military attaché until the arrival of Japanese forces from land and sea on 8 December. We planned to mobilize war veterans from amongst Japanese residents in Bangkok for the defence. At the request of Col. Tamura, I studied, as if I were a lieutenant, for the defence of the embassy com-

pound which was about the size of an area that could be defended by a platoon.

* * *

On 4 December, official orders from Imperial General Headquarters arrived directing the Malay *kosaku*, in which Tamura and I had been engaged, to be placed under the command of General Terauchi, supreme commander of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. General Terauchi ordered Lt.-Gen. Yamashita Tomoyuki, commanding officer of the 25th Army in charge of Malay operations, to assign the mission to the *F kikan*. I was appointed a staff officer of the Southern Expeditionary Forces and *F kikan* agents were assigned to the staff of the same command. General Terauchi in turn despatched me and my members to the 25th Army, authorizing General Yamashita to assign the responsibilities to the *F kikan* in order to carry out the *kosaku* in Malaya. By the decision for war and the cablegram from Tokyo, we were thrust into action after a brief period of preparation.

I thought of communicating the grave decision of Imperial General Headquarters to *F kikan* members in southern Thailand and of smuggling them into Malay territory through the jungle, but I refrained, as the consequences would be disastrous should our plans leak out, or in the unlikely event that the smuggling operation be called off. Instead I entrusted a secret message to an agent named Shiiba who was about to leave for southern Thailand. The message said that war was about to break out and it directed that *Harimau* and his group be ready for infiltration into Malaya immediately upon the declaration of war.

We had heard no news for some time from an undercover agent of the K.M.M. about which I was anxious to know. Kaite[24] of Domei Wireless Service was to leave Singapore for Bangkok on 28 November bearing important information about the K.M.M. but was prevented from departing. Anticipating this contingency, I had wired the Japanese Consulate General in Singapore asking what sort of assistance we could expect from the K.M.M. Before receiving a reply, however, the situation took a sudden turn for the worse.

Shiiba had been sent by Imperial General Headquarters and had arrived at *F kikan* headquarters without warning on or about 1 December. Although over sixty, he looked vigorous. He appeared to be a man of enthusiasm and action rather than an intellectual type.

According to his own account, he had lived in Alor Star, Kedah, for twenty years operating a dry goods store. While living there, he had won the trust of the Sultan of Kedah to such an extent that he had access to the Sultan's advisers, who confided even details of household matters in the royal palace to him. He rendered service to the Sultan by handling the remittance of money to one of the royal princes who was studying in Sweden. Shiiba told me that the Sultan was definitely very friendly towards Japan. So, as directed by Imperial General Headquarters, I despatched him on 4 December to southern Thailand with the mission of getting in touch with the Sultan of Kedah, through whom we hoped to win other Sultans in Malaya to cooperate with Japan. However, I was apprehensive that our Sultan *kosaku* might create some delicate problems with the K.M.M., which was opposed to the sultanate, but I thought it was my responsibility to tactfully persuade K.M.M. leaders to unite all Malays and to bring about accommodation with Chinese and Indians in order to foster co-prosperity. The night of 4 December and the day of 5 December passed without incident.

On the night of 5 December, Pritam visited me and asked me whether the situation had changed. Apologizing in my mind that I had to tell him a lie, I pretended that everything was as usual and refrained from revealing to him the decision of Imperial General Headquarters. I said to him that we seemed not to have entered the decisive stage yet, though the situation was very critical and tense. He said that in that case he would leave for southern Thailand the following day to keep closer contact with his members in accordance with our agreement in the memorandum we exchanged the other day. I was in a tight corner. Suppressing my inner feelings, I said, 'I'm planning to leave for southern Thailand around 10 December. Why don't we go together around that time, because the present situation is not that critical requiring our presence there now.' I was greatly relieved when he agreed to this,

but I cursed myself for not being able to take my trusted friend into confidence. In my heart I begged his forgiveness, and hoped that he would understand my difficult position when the time came on the night of 7 December for me to tell him about the Japanese military plans. Pritam told me that he was making good progress in gathering propaganda materials, and took his leave, promising to see me again on the night of 8 December.

* * *

6 December – the day a fleet of transports carrying Japanese forces was due off the coast of Saigon. They were about to enter the danger zone that was under British aerial reconnaissance. On the same day an officer from headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces (S.E.F.) in Saigon arrived at Bangkok to discuss with Tamura the presentation of an ultimatum on the afternoon of 7 December to the Thai government requesting that Japanese armies be allowed to pass through Thai territory. The officer from Saigon returned after he and Tamura had agreed that the latter would send a smoke signal to an aeroplane which would fly early on the morning of 8 December over the embassy to ascertain whether or not the Thai government had accepted the Japanese demand. The tension-filled day of 6 December passed without mishap. That night, as usual, foreigners were having a peaceful dinner and dance party at the Oriental Hotel. The next day was 7 December.

A convoy of Japanese transports carrying Japanese troops was due to steam into the Bay of Siam. So far no ominous sign had appeared. That afternoon, we would start negotiations with the Thai government and if necessary present an ultimatum. Our move might have leaked to British and American agents. Everything would be all right if the next twelve hours passed without incident. The only question was whether the Thai government would accede to the Japanese demand by the dawn of 8 December to allow the passage of Japanese troops through its territory. We were 80 to 90 per cent sure that the Thai regime, especially Pibul, would accept. Should

they refuse, a military clash between Japanese and Thai armed forces might occur. Such an outbreak, which might involve Japanese residents including ourselves, would be very unfortunate. In this event, we would face a very complicated situation. Having resolved to declare war against the United States and Britain, the Japanese armies would have to ignore the Thai government's wishes. Even if the Thai armed forces attempted to resist us, Japanese troops would enter Bangkok by noon of 8 December. We would have to hold out until then. To prepare for an unforeseeable future, we had worked out plans to round up all Japanese men, women, and children, except war veterans, in the compound of a Japanese school. All of us sat tensely in a corner of the office of the military attaché impatiently watching the clock ticking away.

That morning an unexpected and strange happening occurred out of the blue. Around nine o'clock Mr. Vanit, a cabinet minister who was a very close friend of Tamura, rushed furiously into Tamura's office. Without any greetings he said to Tamura in great agitation: 'Last night Prime Minister Pibul disappeared in anger without telling us where he was going after hearing news that a Thai official had been insulted by a Japanese officer at the Thai-French Indochina border. This is the Prime Minister's letter addressed to you.' Having handed over the note, Vanit left in great haste. All of us in the office were flabbergasted at the news not knowing what to do. Tamura's face then reddened with anger as he cursed the thoughtless conduct of the Japanese officer. In the meantime, the Japanese convoy was steaming into the Gulf of Siam and one of its ships transporting a regiment of the Imperial Guard Division was proceeding directly to Bangkok, while the main force of the Division amassed its troops along the Thai-French Indochina border ready to advance into Thai territory at dawn. The time for presenting the ultimatum to the Thai government was only a few hours away. It was a nightmare. The incident might very likely wreck the foundation of friendly Japanese-Thai relations that Tamura had built laboriously over many years, at the very moment when such friendliness was most needed. The border mishap had happened when a section chief from the Thai

Foreign Office who had been despatched there for an investigation of the border was arrested by a Japanese officer of the Imperial Guard Division, who in his impetuousness thought him to be an agent spying on Japanese military movements along the border. Because of the language barrier, the officer slapped and kicked the Thai official without asking for his identity and then released him on 6 December. Immediately on gaining his freedom the Thai officer reported the incident to his government.

Nevertheless, it was incomprehensible that Prime Minister Pibul should disappear following this incident. Were there political motives behind his going into hiding? A doubt flashed across my mind that he might have manipulated this incident, when faced with the very grave impending diplomatic problem. In any case, how often we Japanese, having little understanding of international cultural refinement, had committed incredibly barbarous acts, acquired from the feudal period, in Korea, Taiwan, and China. As a result, we had alienated these people and won their hatred. What could I say about the thoughtless behaviour of this officer of the Imperial Guard Division, the most disciplined military unit in the whole Japanese armed forces, at the moment when Japan was about to declare war, with the construction of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as her goal? Officers had been warned against misconduct by their superiors. I was disillusioned with the prospect of having to face similar incidents in the mission I was to carry out. Tamura immediately reported the incident to General Imperial Headquarters, the Army Ministry, headquarters of the S.E.F., and the 25th Army, demanding a full investigation, the punishment of the officer involved, and an apology to the Thai government. Reporting the difficult circumstances of the impending negotiations, he warned Tokyo and Saigon that they should see to it that any officers and men misbehaving would be strictly punished in order to ensure against repetition. The mishap shocked officials in Tokyo and Saigon. Tamura also reported the incident to the Ambassador and made desperate attempts to find the Prime Minister's whereabouts before dark. We found ourselves in an awkward position; on the one hand, we wanted the time to

pass as quickly as possible when we thought of the convoy sailing across the Bay of Siam; on the other hand, we wanted to stop the clock until we could find Pibul.

Ambassador Tsubogami requested the Thai government to locate Prime Minister Pibul at once, because the Japanese government was planning to request talks in a few hours that might well decide the fate of the Thai government. As the time drew closer, Pibul's whereabouts were still unknown, and anxiety and impatience wrapped the Japanese Embassy and the office of the military attaché. In the meantime, Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo had cabled a message saying that Japan was prepared to investigate the incident immediately and to administer a stern punishment to the officer involved, to apologize for the misconduct and pay compensation, and to guarantee against future repetition. The message expressed Japan's intention to deal with the matter, hoping to resolve the case amicably. It was almost evening when the secret negotiations started between Tsubogami and Thai government officials in the Ambassador's residence. However, the talks ended without a satisfactory reply from the Thais, who were unable to accede definitely to the Japanese demand without an authorization from the Prime Minister, who administered the regime with almost dictatorial power.

* * *

Faced with this unforeseen hitch, we might have to resort to measures to cope with the worsening situation in Thailand. After twilight, we took steps to assemble Japanese residents at a Japanese language school, and war veterans reported to the office of the military attaché. Everyone in the office held his breath, waiting for the new situation to unfold. Our tense nerves made us imagine the Thais loitering in the street in front of the office to be spying on us. In order to avoid provoking the Thai authorities, we did not take measures for a siege. Fortunately, Japanese military moves, about which we were so worried, were kept secret during the night of the 7th, for we received reports that foreigners were having dinner

cheerfully and dancing as gaily as ever that evening at the Oriental Hotel. I thought that the time had come to break the news to Pritam.

Thailand's attitude towards Japan might change, however. If that occurred, Pritam and his colleagues who had close relations with Japan might very well be arrested. I decided against inviting him to the office. Instead, I sent Otaguro and Yamaguchi to his hiding place to pass on the war message. It was past midnight. As I had instructed, they told Pritam: 'Japan is going to declare war against Britain early in the morning. Because the situation in Thailand is very fluid and uncertain, I want you to wait patiently until I get in touch with you. I would like you to be prepared to leave for southern Thailand any time after nine o'clock tomorrow morning.' Upon their return, they reported to me that Pritam, who was always self-possessed, was taken by surprise and was excited. With an indescribable expression on his face, he prayed: 'The time has come. May God be with us.'

Several days before I had to resist the temptation to divulge to Pritam the Japanese decision for war. Now that he had received the message I felt really relieved of a psychological guilt. I imagined the emotion that Pritam must have experienced that night. Now after many years of perseverance he was at last able to raise the banner of the struggle for freedom. I renewed my resolve to support Pritam, no matter what difficulties lay ahead, and to enable him to achieve the objective of his noble mission with the Japanese people's friendship that I represented.

It was almost dawn and Pibul's whereabouts were still unknown. The Japanese-Thai negotiations hung in the air. There were no unusual movements amongst foreigners. An increasing number of uniformed Thai policemen were seen surrounding the Embassy. By this time Japanese forces might have landed at Songkhla and Pattani in southern Thailand and Kota Bharu in Malaya and could have advanced inland, and a Japanese transport might have entered into the Bay of Siam, and finally the Imperial Guard Division might have surged forward like an avalanche from the eastern border of Thailand, aiming at Bangkok. Military clashes between

Japanese and Thai armed forces might have taken place. At dawn, a Japanese aircraft was supposed to fly over the Embassy compound. In our agreement of the day before last, we had not thought of what signal should be sent in case Thailand chose to remain neutral. We decided to signal with a piece of cloth from the racecourse in front of the Embassy. The aeroplane came flying low over the roof of the office, and several of us ran over to the racecourse carrying the cloth signal, when the aircraft turned around, roaring over the Embassy building after flying southwards. No sooner had we spread out the signal than a dozen Thai policemen rushed up and snatched it, running away with it towards a stand. They also arrested several Japanese who were milling around watching the scene. All this happened in the blink of an eye, and an assistant military attaché pursued the policemen in a car. The aeroplane, after flying in a circle several times, went away eastwards without getting a message. Immediately following this incident, several ominous reports reached us, that 'the Japanese forces landing at piers of Bangkok Harbour have skirmished with a contingent of the Thai police force and people'; 'Fighting has been taking place between Japanese and Thai forces in southern Thailand and along the Thai-French Indochina border', and 'Thai armed forces in Bangkok have made military moves'. Staff of the Embassy and the office of the military attaché who were fluent in Thai proceeded in great haste to the various locations, where incidents were reported to have occurred in order to prevent further conflict. Although the general situation in Thailand was insecure and uncertain, there appeared to be no open hostility towards Japan. All of us including war veterans in the office glued ourselves to the radio, listening to broadcasts from Tokyo.

We heard a series of world-shaking news reports — the declaration of war against the Anglo-American powers, the Imperial decree for the war, Premier General Tojo's statement, the brilliant attack on Pearl Harbour, and successful landing operations in southern Thailand. Our faces were flushed, our eyes brimmed with tears, and our bodies were shaken with the exciting news. The national anthem and military march broadcast at the beginning and the end of the newscast stirred up

our feelings even more. At eleven o'clock, a messenger from the Ambassador brought news that Prime Minister Pibul had been located and negotiations had been successfully concluded. He also informed us that the Imperial Guard Division was approaching the suburbs of Bangkok. The air of uncertainty that had enveloped the office changed into a joyful spirit. I sent another emissary to Pritam to inform him of what had taken place, with a message that there was nothing to worry about. We could now meet each other and negotiate openly.

* * *

On 9 December, Bangkok's Lumpini Park was packed with Japanese soldiers. Strict discipline was maintained. After Premier Pibul announced a declaration of Japanese-Thai friendship on the radio, the tension and hostile feelings between Japanese and Thais diminished, restoring calm. The same day I received reports that Japanese forces had secured an airbase at Songkhla in southern Thailand, that they were advancing rapidly towards the Thai-Malay border, and that Japanese fighters had been operating from Songkhla aerodrome. A Douglas transport aeroplane kindly arranged by assistant attaché Tokunaga was waiting for us at DonMuang Airport. I set my mind to leave for Songkhla airbase the following day with Tamura's permission, and I notified Pritam of my plan, asking whether he could leave with me. He consented at once. Arrangements were made to assemble in full force at 7 A.M. in the office of the military attaché. Yamaguchi, Nakamiya, Otaguro, and Kitamura were busy preparing for departure.

December 10 was a glorious day for our setting out. A party of six including Pritam arrived in a car at the office at seven o'clock, and Amar Singh and his colleagues arrived shortly afterwards. Pritam, dressed in immaculate white Indian clothes, looked radiant and determined. We had donned our riding outfits and at Colonel Tamura's suggestion I wore a staff epaulette and a military badge signifying the rank of

major. I had changed from a diplomat to a military officer. When Pritam and his party saw us in a different uniform, they looked somewhat startled. We shook hands, pledging ourselves to fight and die together. Tamura came out of the office and exchanged handshakes with Pritam and Amar Singh wishing them success. Then he led us into a dining room and toasted our coming victory with a cup of *sake*. Lt.-Gen. Iida[25], commander of the 15th Army, came in with his staff officers. They had arrived in Bangkok by car, driving all the way from the Thai-French Indochina border. Tamura stood up and introduced Amar and Pritam to General Iida.

The General greeted Pritam courteously, praising his patriotic and heroic activities and wished him success, promising firmly that the 15th Army would support the Indian national movement in Thailand and adjacent areas that would fall under its command. Pritam thanked the General for his warm greetings, expressing the hope that God would bestow His protection upon our sincere patriotic movement.

With blessings from General Iida and his officers and from the staff of the office of the military attaché as well as from Amar Singh, our party, divided into four cars, drove to DonMuang Airport. I thought about the many nights when I had to risk my life to meet the Indians, changing our rendezvous each time for fear of being discovered. When we arrived at the airport, a customs officer who remembered my face stared at me with a surprised look. I greeted him with a bow , and he smiled back at me.

The aircraft, gleaming silver, was waiting for us in the morning sunshine. Our party was greeted by Captain Matsui, a veteran pilot who held a long-distance flight record to Iran. I had flown several times with him. I was apprehensive of the difficult flight ahead as it was his first trip to Songkhla and the flight conditions were by no means favourable, because of the bad weather, a narrow airstrip at Songkhla aerodrome, and a possible encounter with enemy planes. Captain Matsui greeted me with a deep bow, promising to deliver us safely to our destination. His ease and grace reassured me. Our luck would

hold, I thought. At ten o'clock the Douglas took off beautifully, heading south.

* * *

As the aeroplane was flying over the coast at Chumphon, Pritam stood up and came to my seat. Commenting on Matsui's fine personality, he proposed to donate a gift of 500 bahts contained in an envelope to Matsui and his crew as a token of his appreciation. Accepting Pritam's kind gesture, I passed the word to the captain. He came into the cabin from the cockpit, leaving flight control to his co-pilot. In his embarrassment he was lost for words, he stammered and finally said, 'It is my great honour to be able to deliver you people who have dedicated yourselves to the liberation of your motherland. I wish I could join you so that I could be of some service to you. Of course, that is not possible. I am honoured to accept your gift of money. I would like to return it to you as a token of my contribution to your movement. Please accept it. I pray for the success of your national movement and for the achievement of freedom at the earliest possible opportunity.' Both Pritam and Captain Matsui had tears in their eyes, as had we onlookers. I was deeply touched by this episode of friendship between Japanese and Indians that occurred aboard the flight.

Meanwhile, our aircraft was approaching Songkhla and arrived at the spot on target despite the fact that the Captain and his crew had never flown over this course and the sky was covered with scattered clouds. Off the coast we could see scores of transports anchored, some damaged with broken masts or tilted with belching black smoke. Obviously they had been attacked by British planes. We circled twice.

From the air a number of fighters, scattered all over the airfield, were seen parked, like toys in a small pasture. The airstrip was hardly visible. Many aircraft had been destroyed. Someone on the ground was waving a red flag signalling us that there were bomb craters in the airstrip. The Captain, looking serious, muttered that the signal was saying 'No landing and go back' and then prepared the plane for landing. As the aircraft

touched down, it seemed to race at full speed, splashing muddy water everywhere. In no time the plane was approaching the end of the airstrip. I thought the plane was going to crash right into a row of fighters parked just beyond the end of the airstrip, and that we were finished. However, the plane ground to a halt just in the nick of time. We heaved a sigh of relief. The Captain got up from his seat and greeted us with a smile saying: 'We have arrived. I hope you are not tired' as though nothing had happened. I admired his calmness and temerity. When we alighted from the aircraft we found that the distance between our plane and the fighters was no more than fifteen metres! The airstrip was nothing but a bumpy grass field. We saw a car splashing mud and speeding towards us from the direction of the command post. Out jumped a colonel with a flash of anger on his face, who barked at Captain Matsui in a rapid fire: 'Didn't you understand the signal we sent you? Enemy aeroplanes are coming in frequently. It is outrageous to land at this airbase with a Douglas. Enemy aircraft will attack at any moment. Get out immediately. Our fighters will not be able to take off as your plane is blocking the airstrip.' Matsui apologized courteously with a deep bow to the colonel and to us. Then he bade us farewell and took off. I could not imagine what might have happened to us if we had not been in the hands of such a veteran pilot as Matsui. I was convinced that God was really with us. We had at last reached our destination. However, it was only the beginning.

5. Southern Thailand

Seeing the Douglas transport circling overhead, Captain Tsuchimochi recognized that it was carrying our party and drove from Hajai to the aerodrome to meet us. First of all, I asked him about the activities of *F kikan* agents in southern Thailand. I learnt that Japanese residents in southern Thailand had been arrested and temporarily detained by the Thai police on 9 December on the outbreak of war, and that *Harimau* and his group had been prevented from taking immediate action as his members were also arrested. Japanese forces, however, were about to cross the Thai-Malay border tonight. I gave an order to Capt. Tsuchimochi to proceed to Hajai, accompanying Pritam and his party, and I reported to headquarters of the 25th Army, which was located in a *kampong* sheltered from enemy attack in the suburbs of Songkhla.

After presenting myself to Colonel Sugita[26], I asked him about the battle situation. He briefed me as follows: The main force of the 5th Division (six infantry regiments, one artillery regiment, and three armoured regiments) had landed on Songkhla beach at 4.10 A.M. on 8 December, and was now advancing along the Perak River from Songkhla to Taiping via the Hajai-Sadao-Alor Star road. After defeating enemy forces at Sadao on the 9th, it was still surging southwards and was scheduled to cross the Thai-Malay border at 4.30 P.M. that day. The Ando Detachment (three infantry regiments, two artillery companies, and one tank company) of the 5th Division, had landed at Pattani at 4.30 A.M. on 8 December and was charging along the Pattani River from Pattani, via Yala and

Betong, towards Taiping. That day it was due to arrive near Betong. The enemy confronting the 5th Division was the 11th British Indian Division. Since the early hours of the morning British aeroplanes had been persistently and incessantly attacking Japanese transports anchored off the coast of Songkhla.

Squadrons of the Japanese air corps had made a massive attack on an enemy aerodrome in Penang. The Takumi Brigade (three infantry regiments and one artillery company), part of the 18th Division, landed at Kota Bharu at 2.15 A.M. on 8 December and occupied the city at 1430 hours on the 9th after a fierce battle. It was now driving towards Kuala Krai and Kuantan. The enemy defending this area was believed to be composed of the 8th British Indian Brigade, the 22nd Brigade, and the 12th Border Garrison. All these reports indicated that Japanese forces were charging the foe like a furious storm.

As I was taking in these intelligence reports, we received the splendid news that the Japanese naval air force had succeeded in sinking two leading ships of the British Far Eastern Fleet, the 'Prince of Wales' and the 'Repulse', off the coast of Kuantan. Cheers burst out in command headquarters. Col. Sugita rushed out of his office to report the news to General Yamashita, commander of the 25th Army, and General Suzuki, chief of staff. Following Sugita's briefing, I presented myself to the two generals. Back again in the office of General Suzuki[27], I asked him for further instructions about my mission. He ordered me to organize the *F kikan* officially and launch operations without delay. The primary task of the *F kikan* was to assist the I.I.L. movement, as agreed upon between Tamura and Pritam in the memorandum, details of which had been reported to the General by Lieut. Yamaguchi. He added that the *F kikan* should despatch its agents to the field armies in order to take charge of Indian prisoners of war and assist the I.I.L.'s activities. Besides this, he requested me to launch a propaganda campaign to win Malays through the K.M.M. and the *Harimau* group, simultaneously with an operation towards the overseas Chinese now being undertaken by Tashiro. Furthermore, he said the *F kikan* should do its

best to rescue and protect the Malay Sultans from the British, who might kidnap them as they retreated. Finally, General Suzuki inquired if there were any ways to induce Sumatrans to cooperate with the Japanese, because the 25th Army planned to commence military operations against Sumatra in the future. In reply, I said that I had little confidence in executing a *kosaku* in Sumatra as we had no leads as yet.

The task given to us eleven members seemed formidable, especially as the *F kikan* had neither a single armed soldier nor a single vehicle. Thanks to Capt. Tsuchimochi, we were able to purchase two second-hand rusty cars from local residents. These were barely enough to commence our activities. I assigned one of them to Pritam, and I hitched a ride on a military vehicle and proceeded to Hajai, where Capt. Tsuchimochi and my men had been waiting at Tainan Company for my arrival. No words can describe the joy I felt on seeing them well on the battlefront.

Here I met three volunteers – Suzuki, Ohta, and Yamashita – who had returned from Malaya recently. Also three young men – Hashimoto, Nagano, and Ishii – together with two Taiwanese (employees of Dai Nan Co.) and two Thais who expressed their desire to join the *F kikan*. The scene reminded me of the fairy tale *Momotaro*. (Momotaro [Peach Boy], on his way to subdue goblins, meets a monkey, a dog, and a pheasant. Each of them asks if he can accompany Momotaro on the campaign.) Their assistance was of great value to the *F kikan* since none of us was familiar with the situation in Malaya, nor fluent in a local language. But these young men had been away from Japan for many years and had no experience of military service, nor any understanding of or familiarity with our *kosaku*. I realized that because of our diversified backgrounds the most important thing would be coordination of our activities, maintaining a sense of unity and teamwork.

Consequently, I summoned the members of the *kikan*. After explaining our task and outlining our plans, I expounded my belief in the mission. I especially emphasized the need for daring actions in an attempt to win adherents from the enemy camp, deeds rather than verbal commitments, sincerity in

fulfilling promises, as well as straightforwardness, kindness, and compassion. Also I asked them to be ready to share joys and sorrows with I.I.L. members and to take the initiative in adjusting themselves to Indian customs. Finally, I warned my men against requisitioning residents' property without compensation, against resorting to force and, particularly, against being arrogant in taking advantage of our military authority. Afterwards, I explained the present situation to Pritam who was making contact with his comrades scattered throughout the area and discussed with him our future activities.

* * *

Pritam and I took only a few minutes to arrive at the decision to send I.I.L. agents immediately to the main force of the 5th Division. We selected Pritam's two confidants who had accompanied him from Bangkok. I ordered Nakamiya, Yamaguchi, Shiiba, and Suzuki to go with them. Though it was raining, they left for Alor Star in high spirits, where fighting was taking place.

After seeing them off, Pritam and I made arrangements to assemble his followers stationed in the Thai-Malay border area, to organize a meeting of Indians living in Hajai, to establish an I.I.L. office in southern Thailand, and to despatch I.I.L. agents to the Ando Detachment and military units deployed in the Kota Bharu district. Capt. Tsuchimochi was setting up I.I.L. headquarters on the second floor of a house where Tashiro had lived and the *F kikan* command post in the building of Tainan. Tsuchimochi took me along to see the home designated to be I.I.L. headquarters. Several Indians in the town were already milling around. Pritam and I were satisfied with it.

We were very grateful for Tsuchimochi's thoughtfulness. Pritam wasted no time in hoisting from the verandah of the second floor the Indian national flag that he had brought with him from Bangkok. As he raised the tri-coloured flag, (orange, white, and green) with a spoked wheel at the centre, symbolizing the aspirations of the Indians for independence,

his hands trembled with emotion. As he offered a prayer his majestic figure, together with the flag, glowed solemnly in the setting sun. For a while, we stood still, filled with emotion. Then we hung down over the verandah railings a huge I.I.L. flag inscribed in Hindi and Japanese – the I.I.L.'s declaration to the world of its struggle and determination to liberate motherland India. The veil of secrecy was discarded. Dusk was gathering fast in this tropical country, which had been transformed into a new battlefield.

Pritam got into action at once to disseminate information to local Indians telling them that there would be a meeting for Indians the following day. Thus we spent the first night of the war, while large and small military units were dashing southwards, converging upon Alor Star.

* * *

On the morning of the 11th, I accompanied Pritam to Sadao on the Thai-Malay border, where he was going to rally his followers. As we sped towards the battlefront, Pritam suddenly stared at me and asked whether I had a family. I did not know why he raised the question all of sudden, but replied: 'Yes, I have a wife and two daughters aged three and one. They live in Tokyo, but my mother and brothers are living in the countryside. They don't expect to see me back alive again. How about you?' Nodding his head, he said slowly: 'I, too, have a wife. As I was involved in the nationalist movement right after I got married, I left my wife in India. My parents are still living. I suppose members of my family will be arrested or placed under strict surveillance by the British authorities, as I have now openly declared the struggle for independence against the British. I am sure my kinsfolk will suffer, but I must sacrifice my loved ones for the cause of the national liberation of India and its people. My family will understand that and will gladly undergo sufferings.' I thought that this pure-hearted revolutionary with a strong religious belief and patriotism for his country must have as passionate a love and affection for his family as he had for his motherland. I was deeply moved by his readiness to suppress his love

for his family for the sake of his country and people. I told him about the national characteristics of the Japanese, that millions of Japanese soldiers engaging in this war were in the same state of mind as he was, that their families considered it an honour to send their husbands and sons to the battlefront with cheers while suppressing their sorrows, and that parents, wives and children were working together to run family businesses at home. I said that traditionally the government and community would honour such families and look after their material and spiritual welfare.

After listening to my remark carefully, he murmured something about the sorrowful state of Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army. Then, with a deeply impressed look, he threw a glance at the Japanese soldiers passing by on lorries. Asserting that the secret of the courageous gallantry of Japanese warriors lay in their tradition, Pritam said the Indian soldiers now being defeated in battles near Sadao and Jitra could be just as strong as Japanese soldiers, if only they were organized into an Indian national army that would command the respect and support of the Indian people.

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As we sped along towards Sadao, our driver, directed by Pritam, veered into a side road. After a few turns through a rubber plantation we arrived at last at a shack. Aroused by the running of the engine, a Sikh came out of the dilapidated house. He looked like a recluse seeking religious truth who had given up all worldly desires and possessions. He appeared to be in his fifties (I later learnt that he was actually thirty-five).

Getting out of the car and finding him at the doorway, Pritam rushed towards him and embraced the man with passion, making an emotional display. Turning around, Pritam introduced him to me standing there awkwardly. His name was Sadar Singh. He invited us into his house. No sooner had he led us inside, than he praised the bravery of the Japanese soldiers who had advanced southwards defeating British-Indian troops yesterday near Sadao. He

served us with a cup of tea, and quickly changed into a fresh set of simple clothes. There was nothing in the shack except a rope bed in very poor condition, an old tea set, and the clothes he had just discarded. If he were to give up this home there was nothing of value to take with him. I was struck that a man could stoically endure such austere living, deprived of material comfort, for the sake of national liberation. On the trip we picked up two other agents deployed in this area and returned to Hajai. Here and there at the corners of the town we saw large groups of Indians gathering in front of the posters which Pritam had brought with him.

In the afternoon, Indians living in the town began to gather in the frontyard of I.I.L. headquarters. Numbering about 200, including young and old, men and women, they appeared to constitute the majority of the adult Indian population of this small town. Standing on the balcony against the backdrop of the Indian national flag, Pritam delivered his maiden speech in Hindi to the crowd.

An Indian translated his speech into Tamil and the audience clapped enthusiastically at every phrase. His voice was not loud but it was firm and passionate, manifesting his determination to win national freedom with struggle.

The people appeared to have regained a sense of security since the frightening morning of 8 December when they were abruptly awakened by firing between Japanese and Thai soldiers, and also they seemed to have regained a sense of national consciousness after the meeting.

The following day, the 12th, Pritam rallied followers in Yala and organized two propaganda units. He despatched one of them accompanied by Lieut. Yonemura and Kamimoto to the Ando Detachment that was advancing along the road between Yala and Betong. The *Harimau* group, under the command of Lieut. Yonemura, had infiltrated into British troops deployed in that area. Another unit, accompanied by Lieut. Segawa of the *F kikan*, Hashimoto, and Nagano, had left, hitching a ride on a railcar, for the battlefront in Kota Bharu, where battle had just started.

6. To Alor Star, Malaya

On the afternoon of the 12th, First Lieut. Nakamiya returned from the front for liaison, bringing back with him a car captured from the enemy. According to his report, an advance unit of the 5th Division had defeated British-Indian troops at Asun north of Jitra on the afternoon of the 11th and had since that morning commenced an assault on the enemy defending the Jitra line. Apparently the enemy had built up a strong semi-permanent encampment at Jitra fortified by the main force of the 11th British Indian Division consisting of the 6th and 15th Brigades. I surmised that they could be defeated without much difficulty, because, judging from recent fighting performance, the British command appeared to be in confusion following Japan's surprise attack. I explained the war situation and my evaluation of it to Pritam and proposed that we should advance towards Alor Star early the next morning. He agreed at once with my suggestion.

On the morning of the 13th, divided into two groups – Pritam and I in a car and the rest in a lorry – we left for the front at Alor Star. We sped straight along a rolling road through rubber estates that spread endlessly, through rows of rubber trees planted in a checkerboard pattern that passed behind us. We were excited by the prospect of the fierce fighting expected at the Jitra line that day. The reality of the war struck us as, near Sadao, we saw vehicles and equipment left behind by the retreating British forces. The scene brought home to us the fact that we were approaching the front.

Emerging from the rubber estates and entering the jungle,

was a British officer. After consulting with Pritam, I requested the estate owners to keep up their pacification campaign by explaining the war situation and the I.I.L. movement to the Indian officers in order to induce them to join the I.I.L., and asked them to take us to the estate the following morning, so that Pritam and I could personally persuade them to surrender. After a detailed discussion, the plantation owners took their leave. Shortly thereafter, Pritam insisted that he would go alone the next morning because he feared for my safety. Pointing out that Pritam was an indispensable leader for the I.I.L. while I was a dispensable soldier, I refused to give in to his plea to stay behind. I was confident of being able to win the Indian officers and men with my sincerity and principles. That night Tsuchimochi, Yamaguchi, Masubuchi, and Tashiro tried to dissuade me from going. If I had to go, they said, I should be accompanied by a unit of Japanese troops or by an armed escort and *F kikan* agents.

Thanking them for their concern, I explained to them that it was not force but moral principle by which we should strive to achieve our objectives. I wished to uphold my belief that God would listen to one only if one was sincere. Even if I died through an enemy plot, I would not consider it a shame because I had sacrificed my life for principle. Then, I forbade them to report my mission to 25th Army headquarters, for I was afraid that they would despatch a search-and-destroy party. I authorized Capt. Tsuchimochi and Ohtaguro as interpreter to accompany me and I decided to carry no arms.

Early on the morning of the 14th, we set off for Taningoh with Pritam in two cars, hoping that the estate owners had succeeded in persuading the troops to surrender the night before. If our persuasion failed that day, I feared the British troops would have no way of escaping a Japanese assault.

Our vehicles were draped with a large Indian national flag and a banner bearing the letters I.I.L. As we sped along in the crisp morning air, the flag fluttered in the wind. About ten minutes after leaving Alor Star, we saw a small car packed with Indians driving towards us. They waved a white cloth to stop us. Amongst them was one of the estate owners we met the day before. He passed the following information to Pritam, 'The officers of the battalion appear to have been

moved by our persuasion, though they have not yet arrived at a consensus. Since they are unable to fathom the mind of their commander, they are hesitant to surrender. The armed strength of the troop is about 200. It is extremely hazardous to proceed to the estate. It would be safer to stay clear of the enemy today. We will continue our efforts to induce them to surrender.' Pritam and I had no intention of accepting their advice and told them of our determination to see and persuade the Indian officers ourselves. After pondering for a while, he said: 'Well, I will take you first to my estate office.' We followed his car through rows of rubber trees, and saw on the fringes of a *kampong* a number of loitering Indians dressed in sarongs. They had discarded their uniform. As the Japanese forces thrust towards the Perak River along the highway like a gushing wind, stragglers were left behind in rubber plantations lining both sides of the road. They stared vacantly at our vehicles decked with the national flag passing by. When they saw it fluttering, they appeared to be stupefied, oblivious of fears, apprehensions, and hostilities. Upon arrival at the estate, I proposed to Pritam and the owner that I wished to have a private meeting with the British commander. They were taken aback by my proposal. I was afraid of causing a misunderstanding and perhaps bloodshed between the Indian officers and their commander, and of possibly stiffening the attitude of the British officer, if we were to negotiate directly with the Indian officers. The British officer must have been keenly aware of the unrest spreading in his command. I was convinced that he might be persuaded if I personally and frankly explained the situation to him, demonstrating the Japanese military's sincerity. I wrote a letter to him explaining the hopeless situation the battalion was in and proposing that I, representing the Japanese forces, would be prepared to negotiate his surrender and would meet him at once on the estate. Also I passed the word through a messenger that I would attend the meeting alone and unarmed, and that he could bring armed guards if he wished. The messenger was instructed to deliver my letter to the British commander through an Indian officer who was in close contact with the estate owner.

After he set out, hot coffee, toast, and boiled eggs were

served on a table in the frontyard of the house. It was a welcoming party hosted by the estate owner. I requested him to accord the same warm reception to the British officer who was expected to arrive and I asked Pritam to excuse himself from the meeting. Pritam accepted my request without demur. In a short while, the officer accompanied by an orderly arrived in a car. When I saw him coming alone, I had a hunch that the negotiations would succeed. Walking towards the vehicle, I introduced myself, extending my hand for a handshake. Colonel Fitzpatrick appeared to have been injured while retreating through the jungle; there were countless scratches and cuts on his hands and legs. And he looked very exhausted. I invited him into a room and offered him a chair and a cup of hot coffee. When I saw that he looked less tense, I told him why I had come. As he listened to my statement, his face once more became distorted with agony and tension. I gave him an account of the war situation, emphasizing the futility of continued resistance which would only add more casualties to his troops. Pointing out that the Indian officers and men were inclining towards surrender, I suggested that he give up in an orderly fashion on his own responsibility, stressing that I would be prepared to treat prisoners of war in accordance with the spirit of *Bushido*[28]. Finally, I told him that I came with neither escorts nor arms as a demonstration of my sincerity.

After a long pause, he unconditionally accepted my advice to surrender. Having ascertained the armed strength of his troops, I asked Col. Fitzpatrick to sign the instrument of surrender and he did so at once.

The estate owner and Indians watching the negotiations felt as much relieved as I did. I asked the estate owner to collect several lorries abandoned by retreating British troops and to round up some drivers, and Col. Fitzpatrick and I drove to the place where the soldiers were stationed, with Pritam following in a car decked with an Indian flag. We arrived at a small but clean village and stopped on the outskirts, where a row of neat one-storeyed houses stood around a grassy square. A large crowd of Indian officers and men in the square stood staring, stupefied at the sight of a Japanese staff officer stepping out of the first vehicle and

at the large flag of India draping the second one. Seizing the moment of their surprise, I stated in a loud voice through an interpreter: 'Gentlemen, I am Major Fujiwara of the Japanese Army. I have come here to strike up a friendship with Indian officers and men. Your commanding officer has surrendered and has signed the instrument of surrender. I am here to greet you with Pritam Singh of the I.I.L.' Pritam translated the declaration into Hindi. The British commander watched in silence. Then there was a roar of joy from the Indian soldiers.

Turning around, I requested Col. Fitzpatrick to gather all his men for roll call, complete disarmament, and special treatment of the sick. He summoned four company commanders and ordered them to carry out my instructions. My attention was drawn to a small-statured Sikh captain who appeared to be a senior officer, judging from his disciplined and spirited conduct.

He seemed to be around thirty years old and his eyes suggested sharp intelligence, straightforward character and strong will. As if responding to my favourable impression and attention, or perhaps having understood our objectives from talks with the estate owner, he saluted Pritam and me with friendliness yet with a serious and brisk air, as he marched before us after receiving the order from the battalion commander. His conduct towards his superior officer was polite and exemplary. I took more and more interest in him, watching him closely. The captain gave a snappy order to the assembled officers and men, instructing them with cordiality. They nodded at his every word indicating their understanding. After receiving his directions, they gathered heavy weapons and ammunition neatly in one place, and lined up again in formation and surrendered their personal arms including knives and razor blades. Then the captain proceeded to inspect each soldier's possessions.

The other company commanders followed the captain's lead. I told them that they did not have to go to such extremes, ordering the inspection to stop. He took roll call once more and ordered the sick to rest in the shade. He performed these actions efficiently and energetically without wasting time, completing them in less than thirty minutes. Running to the battalion commander, the captain reported to

him that he had executed his order, and the colonel in turn informed me that he had completed all measures for the formal surrender of his troops.

After declaring to the colonel and the captain that disarmament had been completed and accepted, I told them that the custody of Indian soldiers would be administered through Pritam representing the Japanese-sponsored I.I.L., and then I introduced him to the commander, who in turn presented the captain to us.

The captain was Mohan Singh, who was to become the founder of the Indian National Army (I.N.A.). We had proved to ourselves that our sincere conduct could impress even enemy soldiers so much that they responded to it. We had taken the first giant and successful stride.

Pritam led the estate owner, Indian representatives of the village, and Indian officers to a room of the house and toasted our success. At the table he explained the purpose, plans and past history of the I.I.L. movement and praised my efforts in persuading the Indian soldiers to surrender in such exaggerated terms that I felt embarrassed. Following his speech, I explained the sincere motive of the Japanese military in supporting India's national independence movement, praising Pritam's patriotism with which he had dedicated himself to the cause since pre-war days.

We drove back in lorries to I.I.L. headquarters in Alor Star. Indian soldiers who had been watching us from the roadside or hiding on the edge of the village came out without hesitation and stopped the lorries. The number of soldiers on the trucks increased as we drove along until they could hardly hold them. It was a strange sight. It was past noon when we arrived at Alor Star.

Here the British commander was given quinine and treatment for his wounds. He took a nap and then bade farewell to Captain Mohan and me before leaving for the headquarters of the 25th Army.

* * *

Largely due to the hostility between the Japanese and the Chinese since the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Chinese

residents of Alor Star had fled the city or locked their doors, and few had returned for fear of violent reprisals by the Japanese military. Malays and Indians also harboured mixed feelings of envy and resentment towards the Chinese because of economic exploitation.

Following the British retreat a state of lawlessness prevailed in the town. Gangs of Malays and Indians looted Chinese homes in broad daylight, carrying away with them furniture and anything they could lay their hands on. Security was non-existent. I was determined to restore law and order, to guarantee the lives of civilians and protect their property. The *F kikan,* however, had not a single armed soldier and each of our two dozens agents had his own responsibilities elsewhere. On an impulse I thought of using Captain Mohan Singh. Pritam was astounded by my bold proposal to give a free hand to the newly surrendered Indian soldiers to maintain the town's security. I was of the opinion, however, that it was necessary to demonstrate our trust in the other party, if we wanted to win its confidence and respect. I told Pritam that I was resolved to entrust the town's security to Mohan, and that I would take responsibility for the consequences. I set forward plans to use handcuffs and truncheons stored in police headquarters in place of arms. I informed Capt. Mohan, requesting his cooperation to protect the lives of civilians, and he instantly agreed to take on the task. Capt. Akram (Mohan's adjutant), who epitomized sincerity, gentleness, and honesty, was charged with the responsibility for maintaining security commanding a troop of seventy soldiers. In less than an hour law and order were restored to Alor Star, which came as a surprise to the Japanese troops. Immediately, their trust in the *F kikan* began to grow and they showed signs of confidence and friendliness towards the Indian soldiers. We received furthermore a number of good reports. For instance, Lieut. Nakamiya, after several days of diligent effort successfully rescued frightened members of the family of the Sultan of Kedah, who had taken refuge in a *kampong* southeast of Sungei Patani. Also propaganda units under the command of Major Patnak of the medical corps had successfully infiltrated the enemy and each unit had returned with a dozen prisoners. We learnt that this kind of *kosaku* was most

effective, and in this way about a hundred Indian soldiers deployed near Sungei Patani surrendered to I.I.L. propaganda units. Moreover, several civil and electrical engineers returned to the town and restored the supply of water and electricity services. Having heard through I.I.L. agents that the Indian troops of Capt. Mohan Singh were being treated with hospitality, British Indian Army stragglers accompanied by Indian civilians flocked to I.I.L. headquarters. They were placed in the custody of Capt. Mohan. Every time a group of surrendered Indian soldiers arrived, members of I.I.L. headquarters brought the news to me in rejoicing. Under the command of Capt. Mohan every Indian soldier was free to move around without being watched by Japanese guards and no one was reported to have fled. On the contrary, the number of prisoners increased. Around the evening of that day, civilians began to return to the town in droves, and Indians visited I.I.L. headquarters one after another and through Pritam presented petitions to the Japanese military, brought the latest information, and expressed their support for the I.I.L. *kosaku.*

Capt. Mohan directed that some soldiers should set up living quarters and a kitchen in the dormitory of the police station behind I.I.L. headquarters. They went about their task maintaining strict discipline. While receiving guests and directing soldiers, Pritam and Capt. Mohan repeatedly conferred with each other. Meanwhile, the younger brother of the Sultan of Kedah[29] was running hither and thither seeing to the restoration of the town's law and order and security, with old man Shiiba diligently assisting him. Thanks to their efforts, the town of Alor Star regained its normal liveliness in no time.

That evening, our hearts were saddened by two incidents. We received news of the death of Lieut. Segawa, who had been sent to Kota Bharu. He died gallantly in action while engaging in a pacification campaign to win Indian soldiers. Two Malays brought his ashes all the way from southern Thailand. Segawa was twenty-three years old, a promising officer who was assigned to my command in Tokyo. He was a responsible, staunch, and enthusiastic officer. I was grieved by

the sad news of his death as I had loved him as if he were my own younger brother, and together we had pledged to pursue our task and to share our common destiny. There was no time to lament over his death in the midst of our busy work, and I tried to keep my composure and attend to my responsibilities. From intelligence brought to me by a Malay courier from a Japanese Army unit, I learnt that the friendliness and cooperation of Malays and Indians in the Kota Bharu district was beyond our expectation, attributed perhaps to the pacification campaign conducted by K.M.M. and I.I.L. agents.

The second incident was a scene of looting by Japanese soldiers which I witnessed during a patrol around the town in the afternoon. I saw two Japanese soldiers (they were carrying boxes containing the ashes of their fallen comrades hanging from their necks) coming out of the Tengku's residence carrying silverware and Malay trinkets and shoving aside the pleading servants.[30]

I was so distressed by their thoughtless conduct that I stopped and reprimanded them, ordering them to report the incident to their superior officer. In the evening I received a report from him saying, 'The soldiers whom you caught this afternoon felt shame for their misconduct and took their own lives to atone for their crime.' They must have lost self-control in the abnormal atmosphere of the war and committed the offence on an impulse, acting out of character, and then, driven by remorse, they had committed suicide. This would not have happened if I had overlooked their conduct. I felt as though I were responsible for their deaths. Their parents, brothers, and sisters in Japan must have been awaiting anxiously for the day when they would return in triumph. These same soldiers had fought bravely only two days before in the battle of the Jitra line. I was tormented by an unbearable anguish and remorse.

Yet, on the other hand, gallant Japanese soldiers in Manchuria and China, spurred by a wartime psychological state of mind, had committed countless crimes. Such behaviour brought about tragedy to indigenous people, tarnished the prestige of the Japanese Army, and caused bitter feelings. I was convinced that in this war no single Japanese soldier should

commit such crimes. General Yamashita, at the outset of the war, had instructed his officers and men, in no uncertain terms, against indulging in such misconduct. Despite his strict orders, Japanese soldiers had permitted themselves to commit this kind of crime, according to reports brought to my attention. Therefore, I wanted the commanding officer to discipline his men. I had taken the measure out of my strong conviction that my mission was to protect the lives of innocent civilians and to win their trust in Japanese troops, and my desire produced this unexpected tragedy. In my heart I praised the noble act of the two soldiers who had atoned for their fault with their own lives thus giving a warning to their comrades, and I asked their forgiveness for my disciplinary action. I reported their suicide to the brother of the Sultan.

* * *

That evening, Capt. Mohan, Pritam and I had a chat. Capt. Mohan and I became very close friends, as though we had known each other for many years, despite the fact that we had been enemies until that morning. During the first half of the evening we talked about the fortunate circumstances under which Capt. Mohan and his men had surrendered, praising each other's honesty and sincerity. I broke the two items of sad news to them and they gave me their sympathy. During the latter half of the night, I explained honestly, from the Japanese Army's standpoint, the true motives of the Japanese military in giving support to India's independence and gave an account of the history of our cooperation with the I.I.L. Also I offered my personal observations on how to achieve Indian independence. Pointing out the tragedy and dishonour of a subjugated people, I emphasized that Indian independence could not be obtained without an arousal and struggle of the Indian people themselves. Furthermore, I stressed the Greater East Asia War was the only and last chance for the Indian people to rise to achieve freedom and glorious independence. In addition to principles already made known to the world for realizing Japan's war objectives, I expounded frankly my four

personal viewpoints as to why Japan had been strongly supporting India's national independence: firstly, Japan and India had a common enemy to fight to achieve their objective; secondly, Japan's historical relations with India which was the motherland of Japan's religion and culture; thirdly, geographical and ethnic ties in Asia, and fourthly, the Japanese people's angry indignation at the subservience and indignity under which the Indians were suffering.

Capt. Mohan vented his anger at the British, criticizing their control of India and their discriminatory treatment of the Indians by citing several examples. He deplored the misfortune and dishonour of his people who had no freedom and independence. He asserted, in agreement with my conviction, that he was second to none in his strong desire for the liberation of his motherland, for which the Indian people themselves would have to rise up. He concurred with my belief that the Japanese military were sincere in their support of India's national independence. In connection with this question, he explained to me in great detail why Japanese policies and military activities in Taiwan, Korea, Manchukuo, and China were not creating a good impression on Indians. He apologized for his impudence for raising the question to me, who was his benefactor and an officer holding a senior rank in the Imperial Army. Though he was still a prisoner of war, he dared to make his view plain for the sake of better relations between Japan and India in the future. His criticism was similar to that which I had heard before from Pritam. After having listened carefully to his opinion, I counter-argued to defend the Japanese position, as I had done with Pritam once before.

Capt. Mohan stressed that irrespective of how Indian national independence could be achieved, it could not be obtained without the cooperation and support of the Indian National Congress, which was the driving force for the Indian national independence movement. I learnt from the discussion that the Captain's position was different from that of Pritam and myself, and that he was in favour of refraining from positive cooperation with the Japanese military for India's independence movement. I countered with the argument that

it was necessary for the Indian National Congress to change its political line in accordance with the changing situation. Furthermore, I said emphatically that when an external event broke out advantageous for the radical line advocated by Chandra Bose, or when he and the I.I.L. movement gained sufficient strength to spark off action for national liberation, the Indian people would join it and the Indian National Congress would seize the opportunity for supporting it. It was a frank and heated dialogue. I was convinced of Capt. Mohan's patriotism and his righteous indignation against British colonial control.

I came to the conclusion that he could be won over if we continued frank discussions, though his decision could not be immediately forthcoming. It was past three o'clock in the morning when we adjourned. I was so involved in the discussion that I did not feel any weariness even though I had been through twenty-four hours of constant tension and drama. We went to bed promising to continue our dialogue the following evening.

* * *

The 11th British Indian Division, which had been routed from the Jitra line in the face of the Japanese onslaught, seemed to have reached the conclusion that it would be unable to reorganize in the area north of the Perak River, and fled hurriedly south of the river, leaving behind military facilities and materials stockpiled in Sungei Patani. In Taiping, it seemed the British did not plan to put up organized resistance. If the Japanese armies could capture a main bridge across the river before the British troops destroyed it, fighting would spread rapidly to the central part of Malaya and fierce amphibious operations would also take place against Penang.

Responsibilities of the *F kikan* increased almost without limit. We were faced with a great opportunity to win the indigenous people and British Indian soldiers with all resources at our disposal. But we were in need of manpower to safeguard the lives of Indian prisoners of war, to provide shelter and sanitation, and to supply food for them. It fell upon me to

induce Capt. Mohan's decision to collaborate with the Japanese Army by all the means in my power.

In addition, we would need to expand an I.I.L. network quickly in the areas north of the Perak River and find an officer to replace Lieut. Segawa who had been killed in action in Kota Bharu. Providing protection for the Sultans of Kedah and other states and maintaining liaison with the K.M.M. demanded a great deal of our time. We were acutely aware of the shortage of manpower. I was so busy that I was often performing there or four tasks at the same time. Otaguro was the only person who could act as interpreter and our language deficiency posed a great problem. *F kikan* had no extra personnel who could be spared to maintain security and facilities, let alone to prepare meals for our agents. We picked several men as cooks from amongst natives who volunteered to work for the *F kikan*. Consequently, our meals were invariably either Chinese or Malay dishes.

I feared for the health of my men, who were exhausted from their extremely demanding activities. On the 16th, I was able to secure two persons who could alleviate this manpower shortage. One of them was Lieut. Kunizuka, an interpreter attached to the 5th Division. He had graduated from the Yamaguchi Higher School of Commerce and worked with a trading firm in Kobe. He was fluent in English and was very witty and energetic. The other man was Ito who worked in the Japanese Consular mission in Songkhla, Thailand. He had studied at the Okawa School founded by Dr. Okawa Shumei and had an adequate knowledge of conversational English and Thai. He was a very handsome and sincere young man. He gave up his job and volunteered for the *F kikan*. I assigned them the responsibilities of taking charge of Indian prisoners of war encamped in Alor Star and Sungei Patani and of maintaining liaison between the *F kikan* and Capt. Mohan. The number of prisoners had increased to about 700. I ordered them to live and eat together with the prisoners, sharing the latter's hardships. They were not given rifles. Though they might excel in zeal and ability, their lack of experience made the task overwhelming for the young men, but I had no choice. Capt. Mohan assured me there would be

positive cooperation from the Indian soldiers and agreed that the POW camps should be self-governing.

The two young men soon became very popular amongst the soldiers whom they won over with their enthusiasm, friendliness and sincerity as well as their charm and humour. They slept side by side with the soldiers and partook of *roti* and curry together with them. They worked diligently all day for the men, showing no sign of weariness. From the first day, they started to pick up Hindi. On 16 December, led by *F kikan* agents, a group of Indian POWs captured by the 5th Division at the Jitra line joined Capt. Mohan's group. On the faces of the POWs chatting with their comrades there appeared signs of happiness and relief at their arrival at this prison camp where there were no restrictions on their movements.

I arranged a lunch meeting of *F kikan* and I.I.L. members and Indian officers and non-commissioned officers under Capt. Mohan's command on 17 December. I ordered Indian dishes to be prepared that they would like, requesting Mohan to organize the cooking. All morning the backyard of police headquarters was a scene of great commotion while the meal was being prepared. Exactly at noon, we all stopped work and joined the luncheon in the battlefield. All sorts of strange dishes, served on all kinds of plates that had been scrounged in great haste for the occasion, were displayed on the table, which was covered with flower petals. Music unfamiliar to my ear came from a makeshift orchestra playing on instruments rounded up for the entertainment.

I had planned the luncheon simply as a friendly gesture but it aroused a deep-felt emotion amongst the Indian officers. Standing up, Capt. Mohan said in an opening speech to the table: 'As an officer of the British Army, I never dreamt that an important staff officer of the victorious Japanese Army should entertain Indian officers and non-commissioned officers who surrendered only the day before yesterday. I cannot think of an occasion when Indian soldiers have ever had dinner together with British officers with whom we have fought side by side. Despite our firm request that Indian dishes be put on the menu at the officers' club, it was turned down by the British Army. Major Fujiwara's warm reception,

disregarding whether we have fought one against another and whether one had conquered the other, is clear evidence of Japan's sincerity towards India, together with his demonstration of friendship to us over the past few days. No words can express our deep-felt appreciation. I am sorry that we are not able to accommodate his particular request for some special Indian dishes, because of inadequate facilities and the unexpectedness of his invitation.' He spoke every word with emotion and every Indian officer at the table greeted his statement with resounding applause. For me and for my staff, this was the first occasion to share a meal together and to partake of Indian dishes since our arrival in Bangkok in October. Seeing that we were puzzled by the absence of cutlery on the table, the Indian soldiers showed us how to eat with our fingers. Kunizuka and Ito, who had been initiated only yesterday into the Indian way of eating with fingers, quickly stuffed their mouths with pieces of curry-covered *roti* as if they were long accustomed to it and were applauded by the Indians. Yamaguchi, who was turning his eyes up and down at the burning sensation of the curry, drew a burst of laughter. The dining hall was filled with the air of Japan-India friendship.

Sweet rice fried in oil, burning hot curry, and chicken with skin and bones – they were not my favourite dishes. My hands were smeared all over with curry and Capt. Mohan and the other Indian officers at the same table enjoyed watching me struggle. I was so embarrassed by my own awkwardness. Unable to bear seeing me in such difficulty, Capt. Mohan sent for a fork for me. I was touched by his thoughtfulness, but I turned down the fork, because I thought I would enjoy eating the meal Indian-style, even though I was clumsy at it.

* * *

Day after day Capt. Mohan was extremely busy holding discussions with Pritam, conferring with his fellow officers, and attending to problems of lodging, meals, and sanitation for the Indian POWs in minute detail. Their personal affairs were treated with concern. We helped them transport tents,

food, kitchen utensils, clothes, and drugs from British army stores in Jitra and Sungei Patani, because the Japanese military, being too preoccupied with operations, did not have time to locate and administer them. On my own authority I ordered Capt. Mohan, who knew the location of warehouses, to transport and store captured munitions which we needed, because I was aware that army headquarters or army depot command would require all kinds of documentation if we requested them through the proper channels.

Kunizuka and Ito helped Capt. Mohan in his task, preventing trouble with Japanese troops, and the Indian officers cooperated closely. The non-commissioned officers and men faithfully obeyed the orders of their superior officers, maintaining such strict discipline that they did not seem like prisoners, and there were no cases of a breach in military discipline. Since the lunch on the 17th, a sense of comradeship had grown between *F kikan* agents and Indian officers and men. As we exchanged salutes and greetings, I felt as if they were my own men, and in my warm relationship with the Indian officers, it was as though I were their regimental officer.

Gopal Singh's propaganda unit and Capt. Tsuchimochi's liaison unit, which had been engaging in a pacification campaign at the battlefront amongst stragglers in the Taiping area, sent a group of Indian POWs to the camp in Sungei Patani. Lieut. Nakamiya escorted the Sultan's family safely to the palace in Alor Star after having rescued its members and his feat was applauded not only by the Malays but also by Japanese troops. Assigning to Shiiba the task of looking after the Sultan's family, Nakamiya left for the front at the Perak River, together with an I.I.L. propaganda unit, after no more than half an hour's rest. I despatched Lieut. Yamaguchi, my assistant, from Sungei Patani to Kota Bharu by air to take charge of operations in that area in place of Lieut. Segawa.

Pritam, taking time off from consultations with Capt. Mohan and work at I.I.L. headquarters, went out to the suburbs of Alor Star in order to encourage I.I.L. field workers there. Our tasks at *F kikan* and I.I.L. headquarters kept us occupied.

Beside these activities, for four days beginning on the 16th, Capt. Mohan and I had a series of discussions, through which I formed the opinion that he was an officer of outstanding personality. I was able to ascertain his convictions and he, in turn, acquired a better understanding of me. We became very friendly. I was greatly impressed by his fervent patriotism and earnest desire for national liberation. He was a born revolutionary leader and a man of action, with understanding for his fellow officers and men, combined with a strong will-power. Yet he was discreet and prudent, not rushing into action nor going along blindly with others. We were in complete agreement that this war was a golden opportunity to liberate not only India but also other nations from the bondage of colonialism and that Indians should seize the chance to achieve national independence. We should strive for co-existence and co-prosperity based on freedom and equality transcending national antagonism, there was nothing between the Japanese and the Indians that caused them to be inimical to each other but they were destined to be bound in friendship. It was most unfortunate for Japanese and Indian soldiers to have to fight each other with arms, and finally, it was necessary for patriotic young men of pure heart to unite together in order to achieve these great ideals. After expressing his admiration for Chandra Bose, who had fled from British India to Germany, Capt. Mohan opined that Indians living in Asia would rise if a revolutionary such as Bose could be persuaded to come to Asia to lead the movement.

My interest was drawn to the fact that all the Indians whom I had come across had a great admiration for Bose, amounting almost to a religious devotion. At every opportunity I reported to the Army General Staff the Indians' interest in Chandra Bose. At this time, the German armies were sweeping across the Near East and the German government was reluctant to release Bose from Berlin to go to Asia. At the same time, the Japanese government took a cold and shortsighted attitude towards the problem of nationalist movements in Asia including India. I was disappointed that the Japanese government did not have on its side a great revolutionary leader who could rally his own people at this juncture when Japan was

fighting the decisive war for national survival and for the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

In response to Mohan's expressed wish to invite Chandra Bose, I offered my view that because it was difficult to bring him to Asia now, it would be better to promote the I.I.L. movement in Asia first, developing the Indian nationalist movement on a worldwide scale, and coordinating it with Bose's activities in Europe. I promised to communicate Mohan's wishes to Bose through the Army General Headquarters, and encouraged Mohan and the young officers to aspire to be a second and a third Bose.

After days of discussion, Capt. Mohan seemed to have made his decision to dedicate himself to the cause of liberating India. However, he wished to study Japan's intentions carefully, particularly *vis-à-vis* the Indian National Congress, and to get a consensus of his officers and men. Because I was of the opinion that such an important decision could not be made overnight, on the spur of the moment, I told him that he should deliberate on the matter carefully until all the officers and men were of a mind to work voluntarily for national liberation. Otherwise, the movement would not succeed. Pritam also shared my view.

At Colonel Sugita's suggestion, I proposed to Pritam and Capt. Mohan that they meet Lt.-Gen. Yamashita to ascertain for themselves from the General the intention of the Japanese military to support the Indian independence movement. Both of them welcomed my suggestion. On the afternoon of the 20th, I took Pritam, Capt. Mohan and four other Indian officers and visited General Yamashita at his command headquarters in Alor Star. Lieuts.Yamaguchi and Kunizuka accompanied us.

The General received our party with warmth. He led us into an operations room and explained carefully the military situations now being developed throughout the Pacific, pointing out the areas on a map with his big hands. He expressed the firm desire of the Japanese military to support the Indian national independence movement without reservations. He further added that he was ready to render support to the I.I.L. through the *F kikan,* urging the Indian officers to

make any wishes known to him. General Suzuki, chief of staff, and Col. Sugita were also at the meeting.

Pritam and Capt. Mohan each thanked the General for his generosity and friendliness. The meeting lasted for forty minutes. The Indian officers were deeply impressed by General Yamashita's fighting spirit embodied in his huge stature, and his ready sympathy for the Indian national movement.

The General's chatty good humour put the visitors in a relaxed mood, which strengthened their trust in and affection towards him. Smiling, he asked Capt. Mohan and Pritam whether each had a 'beloved wife in India'. Seeing that they were squirming, not knowing quite what to answer, the General said: 'I understand how you feel about fighting a war in a foreign land, being separated from your beloved wife. I wish you to form a lasting friendship with Major Fujiwara in the place of your wife so that you can devote yourself to the development of a united Asia and to India's independence. I am certain Major Fujiwara will become your better half.' At this everyone looked at each other and burst into laughter. As we were about to leave, the General gave us a gift of money (¥10,000) and two bottles of Japanese *sake* with a word of encouragement. On our way home, the Indian officers talked away excitedly, praising the General's personality and saying that British generals would never carry on such friendly conversations. I was elated that this meeting with the General could prompt Capt. Mohan's resolve to collaborate with the Japanese.

Two days earlier, I had learnt of the British retreat from Penang. Japanese detained in prison there had been released by their Indian and Malay gaolers. One of the released Japanese, with the assistance of native people, made his way to our headquarters and brought us the news, which was quite unexpected because we thought that the British had fortified Pulau Penang and would defend it to the last.

Having completed talks with Capt. Mohan and having seen to it that Indian POWs were taken care of, I plunged into another operation.

7. Founding of the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) Taiping

The rapid drive of the Japanese forces did not permit us the luxury of staying in Alor Star much longer. On the evening of 20 December, I.I.L. and *F kikan* headquarters moved to Sungei Patani. Just as we were about to leave Alor Star, Maj.-Gen. Manaki[31], deputy chief of staff of the 25th Army, who was in charge of military government, walked into our headquarters. I led him into a room.

In an impatient voice, the General requested my cooperation on two items. One was the *F kikan*'s assistance in a propaganda campaign to persuade Chinese civilians to return to town, because a great majority of them were still in hiding, though the local Malays and Indians had resumed their former positions thanks to *F kikan* and I.I.L. persuasion. The other request was that I do him a personal favour by transferring Shiiba to the staff of the military administration in Kedah. He then thanked the *F kikan* for rescuing the Sultan of Kedah and for restoring peace in Alor Star with Capt. Mohan and his men on the 14th and 15th, when the city's security was in jeopardy. I made a counter-proposal requesting the General's consideration of the following:

1. The Army should make an immediate declaration to treat favourably any Malays, Chinese, and Indians who did not engage in hostile activities against the Japanese military and to guarantee not only their lives and property, but also their freedom.

2. The Army should authorize Chinese and Indians to hoist their national flags. In the case of the Chinese flag, a streamer with the Chinese characters 'peace and national construction' should be attached, indicating support for the Wang Ch'ing-wei government.
3. The Army should utilize I.I.L. offices as much as possible for the military administration of Indians and should be guided by their opinions and allow them freedom of action.
4. The Army should mobilize military administration staff to carry out a pacification campaign at the front.
5. The Army should enforce strict discipline upon soldiers to prevent improper behaviour.

I stressed the importance of winning the confidence of the Chinese and the General concurred with my view. I made a commitment to him that I would cooperate with the military administration to pacify the Chinese until a fully fledged military government was organized, and agreed to despatch Tashiro to Penang to assist the military administration there and Shiiba to the Kedah military government. The loss of Tashiro and Shiiba, which I regretted, meant that we were more overloaded with responsibilities than ever. I volunteered to cooperate with the field army knowing that it often neglected the pacification campaign in favour of a *blitzkrieg.* After our meeting I immediately dashed off along the Taiping road. We were to spend four days in Sungei Patani with the object of organizing the I.I.L. in Sungei Patani and Kulim, as well as protecting the POWs and winning over the Chinese.

I took the opportunity of visiting Rahman, eldest son of the Sultan of Kedah (later to be prime minister of Malaysia), whom Lieut. Nakamiya had rescued, in his detached palace in Kulim south of Sungei Patani. Rahman received me warmly, thanking the *F kikan* and Lieut. Nakamiya for saving his family and protecting civilians in Alor Star. Aged about thirty-two, he was a tall man of sophistication and culture. I learnt that he had studied at Cambridge University. Unable to resist his invitation, I stayed in the palace overnight and

talked with him to my heart's content about the future of Asia, cooperation between Japan and Malaya, and race relations between Malays, Indians, and Chinese. In the end, he agreed to broadcast personally from the Penang radio station appealing to the people in Malaya and Sumatra to cooperate with the Japanese forces. As a token of his warm regard, Rahman presented me with his favorite cane. Its hilt was decorated with gold and engraved with his name. This gift has remained a family treasure through the years, a precious reminder of those days when we first met.

Our pacification being successful, the Chinese overcame their suspicion and fear and returned in flocks from their hiding places. Chinese national flags appeared over their doors indicating their cooperation with the Japanese. The scene was like the Double Tenth National Holiday and its happy mood relieved the tension of war. Thereafter, the Chinese were safeguarded against looting.

On 23 December, Japanese forces captured Taiping and were surging to the southern bank of the Perak River.

* * *

Pritam and I made a three-day tour of Penang. Suzuki, who was familiar with the place, drove and acted as our guide. Meanwhile, I had given an order to transfer *F kikan* headquarters from Sungei Patani to Taiping. Looking across the channel from Butterworth, Penang was very picturesque, reminding me of Kobe against the backdrop of Mt. Rokko. Capsized ships at the pier brought home the reality of war. On landing and walking through the streets of Penang, which had looked so beautiful from a distance, we saw the scars of war inflicted by Japanese bombings. There were roof tiles scattered all over the streets and the stench of dead bodies buried under collapsed buildings filled the air. We saw several thousand cars assembled on a patch of ground at the central park. The Japanese military government had taken over for its temporary headquarters the large Oriental Hotel on the beachfront. The hotel was crowded with Japanese, who were lucky enough to have been rescued from prison by Malays and

Indians just before being shipped out to India. Being familiar with Penang and fluent in the local language, these Japanese were extremely useful to the military administration. They had lived in Penang for ten to thirty years, many as small shopowners such as photographers, barbers, innkeepers, and proprietors of general goods stores. They had lived a chequered life, few having received higher education. They had suffered British suppression and constant surveillance by Malay and Indian policemen as the international situation deteriorated and had endured a life of humiliation amongst the indigenous people. During the past twelve days, they had experienced the outbreak of war, imprisonment, air raids by Japanese bombers, the rout of British troops, deliverance, and finally the landing of Japanese soldiers. In short, they had been through a cycle of consternation, fear and panic, and jubilation. After being tossed around by the fortunes of war, they were at last rescued. Their speech and behaviour still showed their state of excitement.

In contrast to their inferior status before the war, they were now in a position to look down on the natives. Malays and Chinese were seen paying respect to them. When I saw the joyful state of my compatriots, I was filled with emotion. Yet I could not help wishing them to be modest, courteous, and friendly towards the indigenous people. For I was afraid that if they misbehaved as members of the military government and abused their power, their conduct could have incalculable and irreparable effects. Military government officials, consisting of Lt.-Col. Kawase assisted by two or three others, were totally unfamiliar with the local situation. Under such circumstances, it was absolutely essential to obtain the cooperation of the populace, a problem which required immediate attention by the army authorities. When I saw Lt.-Col. Kawase, who had been my instructor when I was an apprentice-cadet at the Military Academy, I gave him my candid opinion, begging him to provide protection and to render assistance to the I.I.L. movement. Pritam, who left our party at the pier, launched at once a propaganda campaign for the I.I.L.

The following day, 25 December, escorted by Pritam's

messenger, I attended a meeting for the formation of an I.I.L. organization in Penang. A large assembly hall was filled with over 10,000 Indians, and several Indian national flags fluttered in the sea breeze. Pritam and I took our seats at the centre to a standing ovation from the crowd. A small Indian clad in white walked quietly towards me and politely extended his hand. With Otaguro interpreting, I learnt that he was N. Raghavan, a lawyer, representing the Indian community in Penang. The moment we met I knew him to be a refined gentleman commanding respect, judging from his intelligent and friendly eyes, his carefully phrased and deep booming voice, and his modest and unassuming appearance. After greetings he introduced a relative, Mr. Menon. He, too, seemed to be a friendly and gentle person. When we were all seated, Pritam gave a rousing speech to the audience.

After explaining the history and objectives of the I.I.L., he spoke of the Indian POWs living under the I.I.L.'s custody and the civilians leading a happy life in Alor Star and Sungei Patani. He expressed his determination to organize an Indian national army with Indian volunteers in the near future in order to shake off the yoke of colonialism. The masses responded to the speech with a resounding roar and wild enthusiasm. When he finished, I took my turn at the rostrum. In essence I gave the audience the same theme I had expounded at the Alor Star meeting, saying that the Japanese military would be glad to help the Indian National Army when it was ready to fight for national freedom.

At the end Raghavan took his turn and delivered an eloquent speech in his solemn but resonant voice, which captured the attention of the audience. He spoke of appreciation to the Japanese military for its assistance to India's freedom movement and for its friendship in protecting Indian POWs in concert with the I.I.L. He underlined his readiness to cooperate wholeheartedly with the I.I.L., stressing that all Indians wished to liberate India and to achieve freedom, and that every patriotic Indian was ready to sacrifice his life for Mother India. The meeting ended with overwhelming support. Thousands of people volunteered to join the I.I.L. and offered

gifts of money to the movement and for the welfare of the POWs.

That night Raghavan and other influential members of the Indian community in Penang invited Pritam and I to dinner. At the table I had an opportunity to talk freely with Raghavan and Menon once again. After our discussion, my first impressions about Raghavan were strengthened and our relationship developed into friendship and trust during the evening. I was encouraged that we had the support of Raghavan as a leader of the I.I.L. movement in Malaya.

(Mr. Raghavan became the Minister of Finance for the Provisional Government of India that was created by Chandra Bose. He is reported to have my picture in his study. After India's independence, he served in ambassadorial posts in Indonesia, Czechoslovakia, the People's Republic of China, France, and Argentina before retiring from diplomatic service. In the spring of 1965, Mr. and Mrs. Raghavan visited me in Tokyo.)

* * *

After the successful meeting in Penang we headed for Taiping, where the *F kikan* and the I.I.L. had established their headquarters at Astor House facing a beautiful park. The Chinese national flag was to be seen everywhere. Pritam, as usual, occupied himself with arousing the Indian residents to his campaign.

Capt. Tsuchimochi, who had been waiting for my arrival, brought a vexatious report to my attention. It concerned criticism amongst staff officers of the 25th Army against the *F kikan*'s propaganda activities towards the Chinese that had been conducted at General Manaki's request in accordance with the understanding agreed upon between the two of us. Their contention was: 'Malaya will be incorporated into the territory of Imperial Japan. Malayan Chinese who have been harbouring especially strong anti-Japanese sentiments ought to hoist the Japanese flag of the Rising Sun [*Ni no Maru*]. It is outrageous to permit them to put out the Chinese flag, it must

be replaced by the Japanese flag.' Their criticism was partly based on emotional factors, but it won the day.

Even under British rule the Chinese were permitted to put out Chinese flags on the Double Tenth National Holiday. Japan, which declared the liberation of Asian peoples for the construction of a new order, should by an act of magnanimity have allowed Chinese to hoist their national flags. It was a most serious act of betrayal on our part to deny them the privilege which had been granted by General Manaki, who was in charge of military administration. I was afraid of the consequences of his breach of faith, which would deepen Chinese suspicion and fear towards the Japanese military. I paid a visit to General Manaki and emphasized this point, accusing the 25th Army of the act of betrayal. General Manaki, however, refused to reverse his decision, perhaps because he was under pressure from his hardline staff officers.

I suggested as a compromise that Chinese be permitted to put out their national flags together with *Ni no Maru*, but he rejected this too. I was convinced that the Chinese would not be won over with such a narrow-minded and oppressive attitude. I could not bear to betray the faith the Chinese had in us, and consequently I made it clear to Manaki that the *F kikan* henceforth would have nothing to do with the campaign to win their cooperation. My only consolation was that the 25th Army staff officers did not demand that Indians be included in the ban on national flags. My heart was heavy with foreboding of the loss of Chinese support.

This unreasonable measure had a profound psychological effect in creating and heightening anti-Japanese sentiment and fear on the part of the Chinese. Influential Chinese leaders fled overseas and those remaining were reluctant to cooperate with the Japanese, shutting themselves off behind closed doors. The British Army and the Communist Chinese made use of the psychological state of the Chinese minds, organizing an anti-Japanese force, which engaged in subversive and espionage activities[32]. As a result, the chasm of distrust between the Japanese military and the Chinese became unbridgeable. In the end, immediately following the fall of Singapore, there were tragic massacres of Chinese in Singapore, Johore Bahru,

and Penang, which have remained an unerasable blemish on the honour of the Japanese Army and a sorry event in Japanese history.

The same day, Lieut. Yonemura who had been working with the Ando Detachment, which was advancing along the Pattani-Yala-Betong road, reported back to headquarters. He informed me that *Harimau* under his command had succeeded in removing the dynamite that British troops had laid to destroy a dam located in the upper reaches of the Perak River, but that his men were unable to defuse explosives set by the British to blow up a bridge over the river. Yonemura looked exhausted. I learnt that *Harimau* and his followers, disappointed at the result of this operation, had infiltrated behind enemy lines. Also on the same day, General Yamashita issued an order for the 5th Division and the Imperial Guard Division, who had joined forces, to prepare for an amphibious operation across the Perak River, in order to capture Kuala Lumpur. This battle order posed a new task for the *F kikan*. With little time to rest, Lieut. Yonemura headed in haste for the front with I.I.L. agents.

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The following day Masubuchi brought a Malay with him to see me. This was Onan Siraji[33], vice-president of the K.M.M. (*Kesatuan Melayu Muda*), whom I was anxious to meet. Delighted by his visit, I led him into my office. Onan spoke falteringly about his contact with the *F kikan* as follows:

'In late December Ibrahim, president of the K.M.M., upon receiving the message you [Fujiwara] sent from Bangkok, issued an order to his comrades-in-arms to cooperate with the Japanese troops. While K.M.M. leaders were studying means of getting in touch with the *F kikan,* war broke out and they were unable to despatch a K.M.M. agent to Bangkok. On the day the war started, the British police raided the office of the *Warta Malaya* where the K.M.M. leaders were holding a meeting and arrested all of them. Consequently, we could not carry out active cooperation with the Japanese. There were, however, many K.M.M. agents stationed in Kota Bharu and

they should be working closely with the Japanese, because they received Ibrahim's message.' I expressed my commiseration for the arrest of K.M.M. leaders and for the hardships he had experienced while eluding the British police, and promised to free the arrested leaders. Thanking me for my words of encouragement, he left for the Taiping-Ipoh area determined to launch K.M.M. recruiting activities.

That afternoon Pritam presided at an assembly of Taiping Indians and opened an I.I.L. office there. The I.I.L. movement was now spreading like wildfire throughout the northern part of Malaya.

The 27th was the day when the 5th Division and the Imperial Guard Division were to cross the Perak River as ordered by General Yamashita.

The main force of the 5th Division planned an amphibious operation near Panjang in order to push along the Kampar-Slim road towards Kuala Lumpur. Parts of the Division were to take a maritime route, leaving in boats from Lumut Harbour, in order to attack the British Indian Army from flank and rear. The Imperial Guard Division was to cross the river at Kuala Kangsar and to drive along the Ipoh road towards Kuala Lumpur. The retreating 11th British-Indian Division would presumably put up stiff resistance in the narrow strip of jungle near Kampar and Slim.

On 31 December, Masubuchi walked unannounced into my office, accompanied this time by a Sumatran. His name was Mohammad Saleh, he was Atjehnese and a teacher of Islam.

He proposed to collaborate with the *F kikan*, apparently having been inspired by the Japanese *blitzkrieg* in northern Malaya and by the grand spectacle of Indian and Malayan collaboration, through the *F kikan*, with the Japanese military for the liberation of their people and for the achievement of their freedom. He was resolved to fight for the Atjehnese and Islamic ideals. Following Salleh's visit, Lieut. Nakamiya and Tashiro who had been working in Penang came to see me, together with two Sumatran young men. Both of them were Atjehnese working in Kedah. The taller of the two was Said Abu Bakar who was a teacher at an Islam school and the shorter man was Tengku Hasbi. Masubuchi explained that

upon hearing news of the Japanese drive into Malaya, Said Abu Bakar decided to dedicate himself to the cause of national liberation and freedom of religion, believing that the time had come to gain his objectives by working with the Japanese military.

The religious holiday of *Hari Raya Haji* provided him with the opportunity to come to Penang. After consulting with Tengku Hasbi, he made contact with Japanese troops that had landed at Pulau Penang. He attempted in vain to get employment at the Penang Broadcasting Station which was being administered by a Japanese army propaganda unit. While looking around for other means of contacting the Japanese, they heard about Nakamiya and Tashiro of the *F kikan,* who after landing at Penang had been engaging in a pacification campaign amongst Indians and Chinese. They finally located the *F kikan*'s office and were outside the building looking for someone, when Lieut. Nakamiya came across them. At last they had found the right person to talk to. For some time Nakamiya had been very anxious to get a lead to a *kosaku* in Sumatra and he grabbed the two young men eagerly and brought them to my office in Taiping.

Offering them chairs, I tested their determination by asking them whether they were prepared to undergo the danger of crossing the Malacca Straits (still under British naval control) and lead an anti-Dutch movement, overcoming enormous difficulties in which they would face certain death. In response to my question, Abu Bakar replied instantly: 'Our ideal is to free our people from Dutch control in order to achieve our freedom and happiness. I believe that the Japanese Army is an army of justice that is helping us realize our wishes. I want to work with the Japanese military for my people and religion. This is our only desire, for which we have long awaited the arrival of the Japanese forces. It is the desire of all Atjehnese.' Flushed with excitement, Abu Bakar who looked in his early twenties could hardly control his emotion. Admiring their determination and enthusiasm, I told them that anyone working for a nationalist movement and wanting to be a revolutionary should be 'prepared to sacrifice his life for the state and people, though it may bring irretrievable misfortune

to you.' Though surprised by my unexpected reply, Abu Bakar said proudly: 'I am glad to accept suffering at any time for the cause of my religion and people and I do not regret it in the least. To arrive at this decision, I will solemnly swear before Allah. All Atjehnese share with me this belief.' Once again I asked him: 'I deeply admire your conviction and determination. Can you recruit Sumatrans sharing the same ideals in northern Malaya?' When Abu Bakar replied: 'There are many spirited young Sumatrans in the district along the Perak River and in the Penang area', I pressed him further: 'Why don't you work hard to recruit your compatriots? I also want you to mobilize not only Atjehnese but also Menangkabaus and Bataks.' Abu Bakar responded with a request: 'I will do so right away. We now want to become members of the *F kikan* and we will take an oath of allegiance to the Japanese Army.' I inducted the three including Salleh into the *F kikan* and appointed Masubuchi to take charge of maintaining liaison with the Sumatran youth group.

Furthermore, I ordered Masubuchi to request the army propaganda unit to step up its radio programme aimed at Sumatra. Said Abu Bakar and his comrades-in-arms took part in this broadcasting. Tengku Rahman, son of the Sultan of Kedah, also appealed on the radio to Malays living in enemy-held territory to rise against the British and to collaborate with the Japanese. Though the station had only a one-kilowatt generator, these messages reached a multitude and brought a tremendous response amongst Malays and Sumatrans, of which we learnt shortly.

Yamaguchi who had been despatched to Kota Bharu returned with two K.M.M. agents. According to his report, Nagano and Hashimoto (who had accompanied Lieut. Segawa), giving support to I.I.L. propaganda units, had been very active at the front in collaborating with the Takumi Detachment. Also I learnt that I.I.L. and K.M.M. offices had reopened in Kota Bharu, and that Indians and Malays were cooperating with the Japanese military in speedy reconstruction.

Our staff was further strengthened by the arrival of Ishikawa from Japan, where he had returned for a physical

examination and was drafted into military service just before war broke out. He brought with him a heart-warming message from my family.

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The very last day of December 1941, Capt. Mohan visited me in the evening without advance notice, accompanied by Capt. Akram and Kunizuka. I greeted them at the doorway. I was struck by Mohan's sickly appearance and the tension written on his face as I extended my greetings. His touch was hot when we shook hands, his lips were dry and his breathing difficult.

Shocked by his haggard appearance, I said accusingly: 'Captain, you have a high fever. What is the matter with you? What makes you come here while you have such a high temperature? Why do you risk your life?' He replied: 'I have not seen you for some time. I am suffering from malaria. I know I am forcing myself to come here with this high fever, but I want to tell you as soon as possible about a very important decision I have made and wish to discuss with you.' I stared at him, astonished at his stubbornness. Though I was anxious to hear what he had to say, I begged him first to take some anti-malaria pills and have a rest because I was worried about his health.

Masubuchi and Capt. Akram looked after him at the bedside. It appeared that Capt. Mohan had contracted the disease during the attempted retreat from the Jitra line. Being very conscientious he had had very little rest since the surrender, but had been involved in discussions night after night with Pritam and me and in seeing to his soldiers' needs for food, medical care, etc. He must have become ill as a result of overwork. I took my hat off to him for his eagerness to discuss something with me disregarding his high temperature.

After a few minutes rest, he rose from the bed, had a talk with Pritam, and then walked into my office. With a smile he said: 'Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness a little while ago. I am fine now.' He appeared to be a little better, with more vigour and colour, though he still looked haggard.

I made him sit on a sofa for comfort. Capt. Mohan spoke slowly: 'After several serious discussions with my officers and men, we have reached a unanimous decision to rise to action in order to liberate our motherland, providing that the Japanese military accepts our conditions, which I hope it will. The conditions are as follows: firstly, Capt. Mohan be authorized to organize an Indian National Army [I.N.A.]; secondly, the Japanese support the I.N.A. without reservation; thirdly, the I.N.A. and the I.I.L. are mutually independent of each other, though they cooperate; fourthly, the Japanese military is to entrust Capt. Mohan with the responsibility of looking after Indian POWs; fifthly, the Japanese Army is to treat Indian POWs with goodwill and release Indian soldiers who wish to join the I.N.A.; and finally, the I.N.A. be regarded as an ally.' Personally, I concurred with his proposed conditions, but the matter was so serious that I had to refrain from committing myself until after I had received General Yamashita's approval.

I explained this to Mohan and then I volunteered my opinion of his proposals. With regard to I.I.L. and I.N.A. relations, I emphasized that the two organizations should be like two wheels of a vehicle or two wings of a bird, and that a revolutionary army would never succeed until it was founded upon the fullest support of the people. I believed that Capt. Mohan understood this point in naming his army an Indian National Army rather than an Indian Independence or Volunteer Army. Furthermore, I suggested that the I.N.A. ought to recruit soldiers not only from Indians defected from the British Army but also from the Indian populace, and that it should be an army consisting of elite soldiers selected for their willingness to sacrifice their lives for their country, because the I.N.A. was a revolutionary army. Capt. Mohan listened to my suggestions with approval. We agreed that the relationship between the I.N.A. and the I.I.L. should for the time being be based on partnership, that the I.N.A. would organize and grow under the I.I.L.'s guidance, and that the I.N.A. would be composed mainly of Indian POWs. In order to strengthen the I.N.A. quickly, Capt. Mohan

would send out his exceptionally qualified underground agents behind the enemy lines to win recruits.

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With regard to his proposal that the I.N.A. be treated as an ally, we reached an understanding that though I would in essence accept his demand, a formal acceptance of the I.N.A. as an ally would involve some technical difficulties under the present circumstances. As for organizing the I.N.A., we arrived at the consensus that an official announcement of its formation should be withheld until after it was well established. Capt. Mohan was to set up I.N.A. headquarters at Ipoh in a few days.

Following the understanding reached between us, I went immediately to see General Suzuki and Colonel Sugita at General Yamashita's command post and reported Capt. Mohan's proposals and the gist of our conversation. Sharing my view about the difficulty of accepting the I.N.A. officially as the army of an ally, General Suzuki approved Capt. Mohan's other conditions and secured General Yamashita's authorization. Seizing my opportunity, I also presented to them a detailed report about the *F kikan*'s encounters with Onan Siraji of the K.M.M. and Said Abu Bakar of the Sumatran Youth Association. Suzuki and Sugita were delighted that contact had been successfully established. I returned to my office immediately and reported to Pritam and Capt. Mohan that headquarters had accepted their proposals.

Pritam and Capt. Mohan were pleased with the result. By coincidence, Col. Tamura came on a visit from Bangkok. Feeling rather like a dutiful child giving an excellent school report to his kind father, I related our progress to him. Then, I introduced Capt. Mohan to Tamura, the midwife of this *kosaku*. He was elated with our first steps towards success. Tamura was accompanied by his secretary Izeri, who was also our better half while in Bangkok. All of us toasted our achievements. For some inexplicable reason, however, staff officers of the 25th Army gave Tamura the cold shoulder,

despite the fact that Tamura as military attaché in Bangkok prior to the outbreak of war had worked diligently to keep Thailand aligned with Japan. He had been active in gathering intelligence about Malaya and Burma, obtaining strategic goods, and preparing and supporting the *F kikan*'s operations in Malaya and the Minami *kikan*'s[34] campaign in Burma. The colonel, who achieved such a great task, was bitter at the cold reception, but we received him warmly and he became relaxed and good-natured, like an old man visiting a favourite son.

I suggested to Capt. Mohan that he rest that night at my headquarters before leaving for Alor Star, but he insisted on returning in order to pass on the outcome of the negotiations to his troops as soon as possible, emphasizing that it was necessary to get the I.N.A. organized and commence activities at once. As he was leaving, he shook my hand firmly, saying: 'I am slow in arriving at a decision. Once I make up my mind, however, I will carry it through. My wife, whom I married recently, is living in India. Should the British authorities learn about my decision, they will persecute my family. I am, however, glad to sacrifice my life and my beloved family on the altar of my own country. As General Yamashita said the other day, for loss of my own wife, I am delighted to have you as my respected friend with whom I am ready to share what destiny brings. I wish you to understand the determination of my soldiers to fight for national liberation, even though they know that their families will suffer a great deal. I.N.A. soldiers who are dedicating their lives to the noble cause of freeing their fatherland are a new breed of fighters. They will be different men compared to when they were fighting in the British Indian Army. They will undergo a complete transformation.' Every word and phrase struck my heart and I resolved to myself that I would do everything in my power to help the I.N.A. soldiers achieve their dream, even if it meant sacrificing my own life. Despite his high fever, Capt. Mohan, accompanied by Capt. Akram and Lieut. Kunizuka, left for Alor Star. It was past midnight. Thus Pritam's glorious ideal of a crusading army determined to liberate India was given life on 31 December 1941, in Taiping,

the capital of Perak State, Malaya, which should be recorded forever in the history of India's independence.

Pritam and I were gripped with emotion as we stood in a daze, watching Capt. Mohan's vehicle vanishing into the darkness. Unable to speak, I shook Pritam's hand firmly to express my feelings. He immediately set about sending news of Capt. Mohan's decision to the chairmen of local I.I.L. offices in northern Malaya.

New Year's Day, 1942. The 11th Indian Division which had been defeated in the Battle of Kedah plain was now reinforced by the 12th Brigade coming up from the south and by the 28th Brigade being deployed near Ipoh. This combined 11th Division destroyed all bridges and retreated to a narrow strip of territory between Kampar and Slim, where the enemy planned to resist the Japanese advance. The Kawamura Brigade of the 5th Division[35], encountering strong British resistance north of Kampar since 28 December, was striking the enemy hard. Fierce fighting was soon expected in this area.

That morning all *F kikan* members together with Col. Tamura gathered in the frontyard of headquarters where we unfurled the Japanese flag on an acacia tree and bowed with a prayer in the direction of Japan. The rising sun in the centre of the flag blazed in the morning sunshine, as if blessing our future success.

We had given birth to the I.N.A. and had made successful contacts with the K.M.M. and the Sumatran youth group, and *Harimau* should have infiltrated behind the enemy line. Battle was about to commence on the front at Kampar and Slim. Once Japanese forces broke through this line, the fall of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaya, was inevitable and control of the Malacca Straits would also fall into Japanese hands.

The *F kikan* was facing a great opportunity to expand its activities throughout Malaya and Sumatra. We drank a glass of champagne to our success, then I ordered my men to advance to Ipoh.

8. Battle front at Slim

After our New Year celebration we bade goodbye to Col. Tamura and headed across the Perak River to Ipoh. It was a comfortable drive in a '41 Chevrolet, a gift from Lt.-Col. Kawase of the Penang military government. We set up a combined headquarters for the *F kikan*, the I.I.L., the I.N.A., the K.M.M., and the Sumatran Youth Association in a middle school in the city. Our headquarters now possessed more than twenty vehicles of all kinds including several motorcycles, a far cry from the two small cars we had on leaving Songkhla. I.N.A. soldiers were lodged in another building, which was decked with the Rising Sun, the Indian national flag and the Indonesian flag. Three I.I.L. propaganda units were engaging in a campaign at Kampar to induce Indian soldiers of the British Indian Army to defect and join the I.N.A. Lieuts. Yonemura and Nakamiya and Capt. Tsuchimochi respectively accompanied the three units for liaison purposes. The agents had done their work well, for Indians in the city began to file into headquarters less than one hour after it opened. Pritam solicited the cooperation of Indian residents of the city to round up printing-type in Hindi, as he planned to drop propaganda leaflets from the air. On 2 January, a mass meeting of Indians was convened and an I.I.L. office was established with great success.

Amongst the Indians visiting headquarters was a young Chinese gentleman. He explained the reason for his visit in stammering Malay, his face evincing fear and apprehension. He introduced himself as Lin and said he came from a very

wealthy family. According to his story, his life had been threatened by Chinese in the Malay Communist Party on the grounds that he was not cooperating with their anti-Japanese movement. When Anglo-Japanese relations became strained, the British authorities in Ipoh helped the Chinese organize an anti-Japanese self-defence corps, and Lin was forced to join the organization for self-protection and was one of its executive board members. He was very much afraid of reprisal by the Japanese Army at any time, as some Chinese had reported his membership of the anti-Japanese movement to the *kempeitai* (Japanese military police), and he still feared Communist intimidation. He said he would make no excuse for his cooperation with the British Army, but he was merely a businessman having neither pro-British nor anti-Japanese sentiments. He was at his wits' end when he heard from an Indian leader of the good reputation of the *F kikan* and now came to its headquarters for help. As the saying goes, 'even a hunter refrains from killing a wretched bird when it has flown into his bosom for refuge.' After all, he looked a very innocent gentleman. I thought that the Chinese should not be punished just because they had taken part in an anti-Japanese movement in a land which happened to be controlled by the British government sympathetic to Chiang Kai-shek, while their country was at war with Japan. That he had joined against his will should be taken into consideration. He might not be telling the truth but I decided to take him under my wing. Even if his story proved to be false, I thought I could convert him to be pro-Japanese by my sincerity. After lengthy negotiations, I obtained authorization to take him into my custody, asserting that Lin was essential for carrying out propaganda for the *F kikan* and that he was not anti-Japanese. Lin cried loudly when he learnt of the *F kikan*'s favourable action on his behalf. He subsequently offered the *F kikan* several rooms in his house for the use of its members. Perhaps he was still afraid of the *kempeitai*. I accepted his offer with the condition that he be remunerated for rental. After a week of staying there I was satisfied that I had made the right decision.

Lin repeatedly thanked me for having saved him from the

kempeitai and was deeply impressed by the disciplined behaviour of *F kikan* agents. His twelve children became attached to us. He regarded *F kikan* members as benevolent father figures, and he proposed out of gratitude that he would cooperate with the *F kikan* even at the risk of his life.

I advised him, however, against positive collaboration with the Japanese because I was afraid that this would make him a target of communist terrorism once again. Later, that April, I had to intervene again to deliver him from the *kempeitai* who had arrested him for his passive collaboration, perhaps because he followed my advice too faithfully. After I left Malaya, afraid of the *kempeitai*'s misunderstanding, he cooperated actively with the Japanese military administration in Perak. After the war, he was indicted for his collaboration and was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, which he spent in Penang Prison. I suspect that the Communists set him up.

(Mr. Lin was released in 1955. He used to write me letters. His wife was kidnapped and murdered by the Communists while he was serving his term in prison. Very few people suffered as much as he did in the tragedy of war. I cannot help but sympathize with him and his twelve children, as I look back on those days.)

On 3 January Capt. Mohan and Akram together with scores of I.N.A. propaganda agents arrived at Ipoh. He appeared in good spirits, though somewhat tired due to his high fever. He showed me a book in English about the history of the French Revolution as if to demonstrate his determination in silence.

In contrast to the crestfallen army which had surrendered to the Japanese on 14 December, the I.N.A. was transformed into a revolutionary army ready to fight, and the morale of its troops was entirely different. The same day Onan of the K.M.M. together with twenty members he had recruited from the Taiping-Ipoh district arrived at headquarters.

Capt. Mohan himself handpicked his candidates for I.N.A. propaganda agents from amongst the officers and men. For several days and nights he educated them in the ideology of national independence and trained them in the know-how of winning compatriots behind the enemy lines, and he organized

them in several small groups. The training continued the day they arrived at Ipoh. They disguised themselves as stragglers and civilians to carry out their mission in enemy-held territory. They carried with them British Indian Army uniforms, into which they could change if necessary. They also possessed the F insignia and an *F kikan* identification card in order to pass through the area under Japanese control, and possessed leaflets to be handed out to Indian soldiers in order to induce them to join the I.N.A. After the I.I.L. propaganda units had successfully infiltrated behind the enemy lines, Tsuchimochi, Nakamiya, and Yonemura returned to headquarters without resting in order to guide these selected I.N.A. propaganda agents into enemy territory. They brought with them more than a hundred Indian POWs from the battlefront at Kampar. When their vehicles stopped in front of headquarters, our Indian soldiers rushed out of their quarters and helped their comrades off the lorries as if taking care of invalids. Capt. Mohan also ran out and gave them a kind word of encouragement. They were somewhat uneasy at first but appeared very much relieved when they realized that what they had been told by the propaganda units was true. It was a very touching scene.

The fierce battle gradually shifted southward to Sungkai. That night the first I.N.A. propaganda unit, accompanied by Nakamiya, left for the front. Capt. Mohan and I saw them off with some stirring remarks and fatherly advice. A senior officer who was spokesman for the group vowed solemnly to us and to his comrades that he was ready to sacrifice his life in carrying out the mission. It was time for departure. As their lorries began to roll, there was an instantaneous burst of cheers from those who were leaving and those who were staying behind. Over the next few days, the second and third I.N.A. propaganda groups each accompanied by an *F kikan* officer left for the front. Nakamiya, Tsuchimochi, and Yamaguchi made several trips back and forth between the front and headquarters. They first took the units to Army command headquarters at the front to get information on the latest battle situation and then studied the topography to find where they might break through. Then they visited a

commanding officer of the front line to secure permission for the passage of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. agents. They advanced to an area which was least guarded and moved to the first front line. There were very few places where they could infiltrate the enemy line because the area was covered by a dense jungle, through which ran a highway flanked by a rubber plantation on either side. Trench mortars of the British Indian Army bombarded the area incessantly and accurately, preventing them from taking shelter in the rubber trees. Taking advantage of intervals in the bombardment, our brave officers and men crawled on the ground, hiding behind the stumps and roots of rubber trees, and reached a skirmishing line. They shook hands with a squad leader and soldiers of the Japanese troops.

Members of I.N.A. propaganda units were excellent at studying the enemy lines. As soon as they detected an opening, they dashed into enemy territory when the firing stopped, bidding goodbye to the Japanese liaison officers. They would seek out an Indian group without a British commander or British soldiers. The liaison officers would then retreat to the rear after confirming the successful infiltration, and return to headquarters with Indian POWs who had surrendered to Japanese troops. There were three problems in connection with this liaison operation.

Firstly, it was necessary to guide the propaganda agents to the battlefront without getting them shot at by Japanese soldiers for being mistakenly identified as the enemy.

Secondly, it was necessary to convince Japanese commanders and staff officers of the important nature of our *kosaku*. There were many officers who had serious reservations about the loyalty of I.N.A. agents, because they had fought with the British Indian Army against Japanese troops and might have been planted by the British. When, as sometimes happened, enemy mortar shells fell on a Japanese command post or an artillery position soon after our agents had crossed into enemy territory, they suspected that information had been passed on to the other side. Then *F kikan* agents would have to allay their suspicions.

Even if they were persuaded of their basic loyalty, they still feared that the agents, under arrest and ruthless inter-

rogation by the enemy, might reveal Japanese troop positions and deployments. We assured them that such breach of trust would never occur. It was not an easy matter for a lieutenant to convince a regimental commander, a brigade commander, or a staff officer of the loyalty of the I.N.A. and I.I.L. agents when everyone was fiercely excited at the course of the battle. To be truthful, even I, chief of the *F kikan,* entertained a modicum of doubt about the agents' loyalty. While I was prepared to accept the possibility of betrayal, I had to gamble on their honesty to achieve our long-term objectives.

Our apprehension proved in less than ten days to be unfounded. After the battle of Slim was over and the front shifted to Kuala Lumpur, Capt. Mohan and I were able to confirm that not a single I.I.L. or I.N.A. agent who had been despatched to the Slim front, had betrayed our trust. No information had been passed on to the enemy. When I learnt of this loyalty, I was very impressed by the agents' resolution and was ashamed of myself for having even for one moment doubted them. I was now confident of the I.N.A.'s glorious future, and I was struck by the might of a national spirit which transformed Indian soldiers, who only a fortnight before were loyal servants of the British Crown, into brave men fighting a psychological war in the cause of independence.

The third problem was that it was necessary for our liaison officers to travel back and forth the 200 miles between battle zone and headquarters every so often, a journey not without danger. The propaganda units faced another difficult task, that of bringing back Indian defectors from the area under enemy control to headquarters. Passing through Japanese-held territory, particularly at night, could be extremely hazardous. To stumble into a group of skirmishers and have Indian POWs shot at by mistake by Japanese soldiers could bring our future mission to naught.

Capt. Mohan and I studied these problems carefully and came up with some counter-measures which were stipulated and directed to I.N.A. agents through Capt. Mohan, as follows:

> Once infiltrated into the enemy lines, search out an Indian group without British officers. Search out

a single soldier or a small group.
If possible, look for compatriots of your former unit. Talk about the good treatment Indian POWs are receiving from the Japanese Army.
Tell briefly about the I.I.L. and the I.N.A. once you find a trustworthy Indian soldier.
Once Indian soldiers agree to surrender, persuade them to bring along their fellow soldiers.
Tell them how to surrender as follows:
Hide in the nearby jungle once they defect.
If defection is difficult because of close surveillance by British officers, wait until Japanese troops break through the British lines, or run away taking advantage of confusion.
Shoot rifles into the air, if they have to fire at Japanese troops.
When the time comes, hide in the jungle seizing on the confusion of British forces.
Don't obey the British commander's order to retreat.
Leave and hide arms in the jungle.
Come out of the jungle with a white flag after the Japanese force has passed the battlefront.
Show to Japanese troops the I.N.A. propaganda leaflet.

We instructed I.I.L. and I.N.A. agents to prepare and hand out leaflets spelling out these principles in case they were unable to communicate these defection guidelines verbally.

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Having established K.M.M. headquarters in Ipoh, Onan, the vice-chairman, came to see me with proposals for their activities. Firstly, he requested that Ibrahim, K.M.M. chairman, and his colleagues be freed from Changi Prison in Singapore where they were being detained. Secondly, he requested that the Japanese military assist the K.M.M.'s campaign to promote Japanese-Malay friendship and a Malay nationalist movement in Malaya. Thirdly, the K.M.M. wished to cooperate with Japanese troops. I agreed with his first proposal, promising the collaboration of the Japanese military. I suggested, however, that K.M.M. agents themselves should

seize an opportunity to infiltrate into Singapore and rescue their comrades. As for the second proposition, I had no disagreement with his request to campaign for Japanese-Malay friendship, but demurred at a Malay national movement that would exclude Chinese and at an ideology that would reject the Sultans and members of the Malay ruling class, because such a movement would be contrary to the ideals of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and the basic principles of Japanese military administration in Malaya. I sympathized with the Malay national feeling that many Malays held against Chinese and Indians who dominated the Malay economy. Nevertheless, I was of the opinion that part of the responsibility for the Malays' inferior status could be attributed to their low political and cultural standards, their indolence and their weak physical condition, though British colonial policy was responsible for keeping Malays where they were today. I told Onan very frankly what I thought, urging him to examine realistically why Malays were inferior to other ethnic groups. Also I suggested that Malays should come together to create a great youth cultural movement in order to correct their own defects. I promised Onan that I would ask the Japanese military to assist and protect such a movement if he would follow the guidelines I suggested. Onan agreed. As for the third request, I thought that a small group of K.M.M. members having little military training was hardly of much use to us. We agreed that his men would be best used for a propaganda campaign to promote friendship and cooperation with the Japanese military; disruption of British military communications in areas unguarded by British troops, and collection of discarded weapons.

I reported what we had agreed to General Suzuki and General Manaki. Both were in favour of organizing a Malay youth cultural movement, underlining that it should not be an exclusively Malay association. However, they reserved their final approval until after they had examined the K.M.M.'s detailed plans. I gave an account of the generals' views to Onan, who promised to put forward a carefully thought-out programme.

I assigned Lieut. Yonemura to the K.M.M. as liaison officer. Subsequently, Onan summoned twenty-five K.M.M. recruits

for training along the lines I had suggested. Yonemura, assisting Onan, did his best to educate them using pidgin Bahasa Malay, which God knows where and when he had learnt. With his language skill, wit and kindheartedness, he won the affection of K.M.M. members. After three days of quick training, he organized five or six groups of two, in readiness for a propaganda campaign. Their mission was primarily to win the support of Malays in Kuala Lumpur and Malacca and, of secondary importance, to cut British telephone lines. They were to penetrate into the enemy lines in the coastal area where the Imperial Guard Division was advancing. Their morale was very high and they were well motivated, though their training was inadequate and their constitution not necessarily the best. Lieut. Yonemura took them to the battlefront and helped them infiltrate enemy territory with the cooperation of Japanese troops.

Parallel with this activity, the Sumatran youth group, under Masubuchi's guidance, had been successfully recruiting members. Said Abu Bakar drafted about twenty volunteers from the Perak River district, the majority of whom were Atjehnese. These young men were not united as a political group like the I.I.L. and the K.M.M., but all had a strong national consciousness. Their passion, ferocity, and action were much superior to those of the K.M.M. youths. We gave this group political training at headquarters in Ipoh. Masubuchi ate and slept together with these youngsters and gave them instruction with affection and enthusiasm. Sometimes I also joined in the education programme and talked to them. With one voice they talked proudly of Atjeh State's forty-year war of independence against the Dutch that had ended unsuccessfully in 1913. They were determined to use this God-given opportunity to fight with the Japanese Army in Sumatra and expel their Dutch colonial masters.

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By 3 January the Ipoh I.I.L. office had managed to acquire sets of type in Hindi and Urdu plus a hand-operated printing press, though in poor condition.

The battle of Slim was approaching moment by moment. It would be impossible for I.I.L. and I.N.A. propaganda units to cover the entire front before fighting commenced. In response to a request proposed by Pritam and Capt. Mohan, I decided to drop leaflets from the air – an idea I had had in mind for some time. Capt. Mohan prepared a 'Letter to Fellow Indian Soldiers' appealing to them to desert and join the I.N.A. In this letter we outlined the purpose of the I.N.A. and included the guidelines for surrender that we had given to I.N.A. agents. The I.I.L. also produced handbills stating its political objectives and urging participation in the movement. We had these leaflets printed in forty-eight hours and delivered them to the Third Air Corps which had advanced to Ipoh to take charge of air operations in Malaya. Maj.-Gen. Endo Saburo[36], commander of the Air Corps, had been my instructor when I was a student at War College and Col. Tokunaga, his chief of staff, was a former assistant military attaché in the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok. When I visited the command post to request cooperation in dropping the circulars, they were receptive to the idea, expressing their sympathy with my aims. These leaflets were dropped from the air over the 11th Division of the British Army deployed in Trolak and Slim.

We learnt a hard lesson from this leaflet dropping operation. Largely because of Japanese military tradition, the pilot was willing to risk his life on a bombing sortie or a reconnaissance mission, regardless of danger, the prime example being a *kamikaze* suicide attack. For him it was unworthy to fly on a leaflet dropping mission. He tended to belittle the importance of psychological warfare and propaganda operations. Soon after, Capt. Mohan came to see me with a complaint that, according to information obtained from interrogating Indian POWs, bundles of handbills were found to have been discarded in the jungle by the Japanese instead of being properly scattered.

According to his investigation, the ratio of prisoners who surrendered as a result of the air-dropped leaflets in comparison with those persuaded by infiltrated agents was four to one. He said it was inexcusable that these valuable circulars were just dropped in bundles in an area where very few Indian soldiers

were to be found. I was not able to offer him a satisfactory explanation when he demanded that the situation be remedied.

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A general offensive operation was scheduled for 7 January against the British deployed in the Trolak-Slim district. The day before I went to the front with Ishikawa in order to encourage *F kikan,* I.N.A. and I.I.L. agents and to see their achievements. As we approached a village in Kampar, Lieut. Yonemura came running up and stopped our vehicle with outspread arms. 'Sir,' he said, 'Tani [that is, *Harimau*] has been operating behind the British position at Kampar after crossing the central mountain range. Before he sets off on his next assignment, he wishes to meet you. I myself am about to leave for headquarters in Ipoh.' Yonemura was like an elder brother who has helped bring about a meeting for a younger brother who wished to see his father after having travelled a long and difficult journey. His eyes were bloodshot from working day and night and his cheeks were hollow with exhaustion. I was taken by surprise but delighted with his news. Jumping quickly out of the car I said: 'What! Tani has been waiting for me? I want to see him. Where is he?' Yonemura took me to a house just off the main road. I had until now not had an opportunity of meeting Tani, whom I had given important responsibilities and in whom I had great faith. In late November, I went as far as Songkhla to see Tani but had to cancel the appointment and returned to Bangkok as I felt that I was being tailed. With the outbreak of war, Tani, together with Yonemura, operated in the Yala-Betong area and then penetrated from the Perak River behind British lines. So I had not had a chance to see him.

Some time in early November Tani sent to Col. Tamura in Bangkok an unsealed letter written in faltering *katakana* (Japanese script) asking that it be delivered to his mother in Iizuka in Kyushu, Japan. Having been raised in Malaya since he was a year old, though Japanese, he had not learnt a single word of the language. In April 1941 he had been contacted in

southern Thailand by Kamimoto, and the latter had taught some *katakana* to Tani so that he could write intelligence reports. In his letter, Tani wrote:

Dear Mother:

I beg you to forgive my past unworthiness. Yutaka [Tani's given name] has been thinking every day about you living far away in Japan. Relations between Japan and Britain are very tense which may break any day in the near future. Under the command of Col. Tamura and Major Fujiwara, Yutaka, being given an important assignment, is going to work for Japan. I want you to congratulate me. Yutaka is born again as a Japanese and is ready to dedicate his life to the fatherland.

In the near future I am leaving for an infiltration mission into the enemy territory. Together with Malays, I will do my best for the operation. I may not have an opportunity to see you alive again and to write another letter to you. Mother, before I die I beg you to forgive me for having been an undutiful son , and I wish you to inspire me to be ready to sacrifice my life for the country. Dear Mother, accept my last wishes. I hope you live a long happy life. Give my best regards to elder sister.

It was a heart-warming letter, probably written with Kamimoto's assistance, and Col. Tamura and I wept when we read it. Tani's parents had returned to Japan, having disowned him on the grounds that he had joined a band of Malay outlaws, as they could not bear the shame he had brought on the family. I immediately forwarded the letter to the Army General Staff expressing the hope that his mother's reply could be delivered to Tani as soon as possible, before war was declared. That evening I wrote a note of encouragement in *katakana* to Tani. Touched by his sincerity in the letter to his mother, I composed a long statement conveying my wishes that he should try to be a true friend of the Malays and dedicate himself to their liberation, emphasizing that he and his Malay and Thai followers should not commit

crimes against the lives and property of the indigenous people as they were to become members of the Japanese Army. This was the only communication which I had had with Tani. It seemed providential that we should now meet at the battlefield. My only regret was that I could not give him a reply from his mother, which he had been anxiously awaiting. (As a matter of fact, Major Ozeki of the Army General Staff personally delivered to me his mother's letter the next day. How I wished it had come two days earlier.)

Lieut. Yonemura took us to a room in the house. In the frontyard, several muscular Malays were squatting on the ground and bowed when they saw us. I returned their greetings with a salute, assuming them to be Tani's followers. No sooner had I walked in than Yonemura ushered a young man clad in dirty Malay dress into the room. I stood up and stepped forward to the door to greet him. Yonemura introduced us: 'This is Major Fujiwara, chief of the *F kikan,* and this is Tani.' *Harimau* of Malaya, who had rampaged Kelantan at the head of several hundred bandits was, contrary to my expectation, a fair-skinned young man of small stature. His appearance was so gentle and timid that he hardly gave me the impression of being a Japanese. I would have taken him for a Malay, if I had not known of his identity. Not allowing him time to greet me, I embraced him, saying: 'Tani, I am Fujiwara. It is good to see you here. I really appreciate the work you have done.' Tani bowed deeply for a long time showing his respect, as if paying homage to the Sultan.

I had expected that he would jump at me excitedly exclaiming 'I am Tani,' therefore, I was unprepared for his humility. I took pity on his past, in which circumstances had forced him to behave and live as though he were a Malay. Gesturing with my hand, I asked him to take a seat. According to Yonemura, Tani was in a state of extreme physical weakness because of malaria. Though running a very high temperature he had forced himself to command his company from a stretcher as they travelled across the mountains of the Cameron Highlands. With the highest peaks over 7,000 feet, it is the best summer resort in Malaya. When I asked him how

he now felt Tani said: 'I am fine now. You don't need to worry about my health as I have some rhinoceros horn' (which taken in a boiled drink is supposed to be a special remedy for fever). When I commended his achievement in saving a dam on the Perak River, he replied with a modest blush: 'Oh, that is not much. I am sorry we were unable to remove the dynamite set on a bridge across the Perak River as we arrived late by just one day. Afterwards, we marched along mountain ranges and penetrated the enemy lines but the Japanese advance was so fast that we could hardly keep up with it. As a result we were not able to support Japanese troops as much as we wished. In this area, we have cut the telephone lines of the British Army and have campaigned to pacify Malays taking shelter in the jungle. Is that any help to the Japanese Army?' I thanked him for the task he had performed. Then I said: 'Tani, the letter you wrote to your mother has been delivered to her. According to a telegram from the Army General Staff, your mother's reply will be here in a few days. She seems to be well. I am certain that she not only forgives you but also considers it an honour that you have been serving the nation. What you have achieved is no less outstanding than the contribution of the officers and men fighting on the battlefield.' Looking up at me with tears in his eyes, he spoke with deep emotion: 'Thank you very much. I will work harder. I am ready to sacrifice my life. I am glad and honoured to die as one of your agents and as a worthy Japanese.' In reply, I assured him that I would personally tell his mother of his splendid achievements.

Thanking me for my warm wishes, he whispered something in Bahasa to Yonemura, which the latter translated to me: 'Tani would like to serve you some Malay food. He also requests permission to go behind the British lines by using an uncharted pass via Tanjong Malim and Bentong.' I accepted his invitation to *makan besar,* if he could prepare it in less than an hour, and approved his proposed future moves.

I asked whether the Malays waiting outside were his followers, and Tani replied in the affirmative. When I proposed that I wished to thank them, too, for their services, he was

very pleased, saying: 'They have followed me faithfully since we left southern Thailand. I know they will be delighted with your gesture.' He immediately fetched several of his men waiting outside into the room. Shaking hands individually, I introduced myself and thanked them for their collaboration with the Japanese Army, saying that Japanese and Malays should cooperate like brothers. Tani translated my statement carefully into Malay. Obviously moved, they bowed repeatedly to me, and left the room at Tani's order. After enjoying the Malay dishes fixed by Tani and his men, we once again left in haste for the battlefront at Slim.

South of Kampar countless lorries were seen driving along the road without let-up, heading for the forthcoming battle. As we neared the front, we saw two columns of lorries jammed like sardines along the road through the jungle, ready to assault like an avalanche onto Kuala Lumpur once the Japanese forces broke through at Kampar. As the curtain of night fell, the traffic became more congested.

Major Kunitake[39] of the 25th Army staff was trying to control the flow of traffic with his hoarse voice, and the periodic chatter of machinegun fire from the British side reverberated wildly through the rubber plantations. Interspersed were the irregular sounds of trench mortars and exploding grenades which shattered the darkness. We made our way through the traffic, which was so congested that I had to alight and personally direct the car through. When we came at last to Ando Detachment headquarters, a general offensive was to commence in several hours. It started at 5.00 A.M. Our strategy was to attack the enemy line from the front with units of infantry, artillery, engineering, and tank corps. Other infantry units were infiltrating from both sides of the road to the enemy's rear at Trolak. This strategy was so successful that in less than three hours the Japanese force was able to break through the British position at Trolak for seven kilometres. Seizing the enemy's confusion, a Japanese tank company commander outpaced the retiring enemy soldiers, drove as far as Slim Bridge and occupied it. This was the only path of retreat and the British were in utter

disarray. The major part of two infantry brigades and three artillery battalions abandoned their weapons and vehicles and vanished into the jungle on both sides of the road. No sooner had the Japanese received news of the British rout than some units converged on Tanjong Malim. We advanced at once to Slim with these troops. On arriving at Slim Bridge, I was greeted by liaison units sent by Lieut. Nakamiya and Capt. Tsuchimochi. Then, groups of Indian soldiers carrying white flags, wearing white arm bands, or waving white clothes, appeared from the rubber estates on both sides of the road being led by I.I.L. and I.N.A. propaganda officers and local Indians. In less than two hours more than 300 surrendered. Perhaps because they had heard about the treatment of Indian POWs from I.N.A. propaganda agents, their faces showed no sign of fear or anxiety. An I.N.A. agent whispered something into the ears of a group of POWs, pointing a finger at me, and they nodded with a smile. When I greeted them with a friendly look, they clicked their heels and saluted me. There was no feeling of hostility between us though we had fought against one another. I was flabbergasted at the success of the pacification campaign which Capt. Mohan and I had planned. I had never dreamt that we would succeed to such a remarkable extent. To the assembled audience I carefully explained our objectives.

An I.N.A. officer in charge of a pacification unit told me: 'I.N.A. agents forming pacification units have infiltrated deep into the enemy lines. There are numerous Indian soliders who are being forced to fight at the insistence of their British commanders and who have retreated along the side roads. They have some doubts about the Japanese treatment of POWs, but they will surrender *en masse* if we despatch pacification units right away.' Accepting this recommendation, I gave an order to Nakamiya's and Tsuchimochi's groups and I.N.A. units to proceed to the front, while Ishikawa, Takimura and I remained behind to take charge of the POWs.

Lt.-Col. Tsuji, who had shown little understanding of the work we were engaged in and who had embarrassed me with demands to perform almost impossible tasks, happened to be

at the scene of the Indian soldiers surrendering to the I.N.A. and the *F kikan*. He was very much surprised and also pleased. At this moment the prospect of British disaster in Malaya must have flashed across Tsuji's mind. In good spirits, he encouraged me to go ahead with the same strategy not only in Malaya but also in Sumatra in order to undermine enemy resistance. Also he urged me to make known to him anything we needed to carry out our mission. His statement was the first word of encouragement I had heard from a staff officer of the 25th Army in appreciation of our task since the outbreak of the war. We had, however, no time to indulge in such pleasant conversations because the *F kikan*, I.I.L., and I.N.A. would have to move forward to Kuala Lumpur as quickly as possible. I was convinced more Indian soldiers would surrender but I had to return to Ipoh in order to prepare the task of advancing *F kikan* headquarters to the front. I ordered Ishikawa to tell the POWs to round up some lorries. We picked the best from amongst the numerous trucks abandoned in the rubber plantation by the enemy. Leaving the I.I.L. and I.N.A. to deal with other matters, I proceeded to Ipoh with about 300 prisoners in several lorries. In the meantime, I had directed Ishikawa and Takimura that future Indian captives be sent to Kuala Lumpur.

I motored back to Ipoh sharing seats in my car with Indian officers and non-commissioned officers. The convoy started the journey without the protection of a single Japanese soldier or an *F kikan* agent but I was not in the slightest fear of the Indian soldiers. Less than a half hour after leaving Slim I fell into a deep slumber as a result of exhaustion and lack of sleep over the past few days and nights. When the Indian officers woke me up, I found that our party had arrived at Ipoh headquarters after several hours of motoring and it was almost evening. Later, Capt. Mohan told me that the Indian officers who drove with me were astounded by the audacity of falling asleep, snoring with a thunderous rattle and leaning on the shoulder of an Indian officer who had just surrendered to the Japanese. The story of my mettle soon got around. When Capt. Mohan told me of the episode, I thought they were right. I was, however, indifferent as to whether they were

former enemies and regarded them as my comrades-in-arms from the moment I met them.

* * *

In view of the rapid changes in the battle situation, I planned to leave for Kuala Lumpur early on the morning of 8 January, but I changed my mind and decided to stay one more day in Ipoh for an important meeting with an unexpected visitor, who had been waiting for me at *F kikan* headquarters in Ipoh. There was also a new mission to be undertaken to send agents across the Malacca Straits to Sumatra. The welcome guest was Major Ozeki[38], my former colleague in the Eighth Section of General Staff, who was in charge of our overall operations in Tokyo. I understood the purpose of his visit to Malaya was to solicit my opinions in planning the framework of our future operation, because he had evaluated our achievements in favourable terms. For a second, the harsh feelings and defiance that I harboured against him on receiving my unexpected orders from Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu in early September the year before, flashed across my mind. However, I put these feelings aside. Recognizing the bright prospects of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. movements, I had been for some time formulating ideas about how to expand and support them and what ought to be Japan's policy towards them. Up until this time the *kosaku* had not succeeded to the extent that I could forecast its future outlook, nor had my ideas been conceptualized in concrete terms. After outlining our progress to date, I presented my ideas, as personal opinions, to Major Ozeki, in a heart-to-heart talk which lasted into the small hours at Lin's house.

I told him that I would present my beliefs formally to Imperial General Headquarters through the chain of command, once I was certain of my mission's success. My observations and wishes that I outlined to Ozeki were as follows:

1. Japan's noble ideals for co-prosperity and co-existence embodied in the ideology of Greater East Asia would be achieved with the co-operation of 350 million Indian people.

The Greater East Asia War was likely to become a war of attrition between Japan and the Allied Powers. In order to conclude this war as soon as possible, Japan ought to defeat Britain first. India's defiance and revolt would be the decisive factor for the collapse of Britain. We must not be drunk with victories in Malaya, the Philippines, and at Pearl Harbour. In the near future, the war situation would change, when it would be necessary to draw up plans to include India as an ally of Greater Asia. It would be too late to formulate such plans when the time arrived. Japan's military capabilities would extend beyond limit with the pacification of Burma. It was not capable of extending them to India. Even if Japan advanced into India to fight only against the British, the Indians might resist. Such resistance would be inevitable in view of a popular image the Indian people possessed towards Japan, and of sentiments that had been nurtured by colonial rule. Japan should adopt a policy to sever India's relations with Britain in order to make her cooperate with Japan without resorting to military means. To achieve the objective, Japan should not resort to trickery but support India's independence based on freedom and equality and call upon Indians to cooperate for the construction of a new order in Greater Asia. Neither should Japan entertain any ambitions in India nor meddle in her political movement. Nor should she impose her wishes upon India.

2. Based on these principles, Japan should establish a fundamental policy towards India's independence movement and should declare Japan's basic attitude to the world.
3. Policy formulated in Imperial Headquarters should be presented as a single united policy of the government and Imperial Headquarters.
4. The Fujiwara *kikan*'s mission in Thailand and

Malaya should be expanded throughout Asia, especially in Burma, and should be extended directly to India.

5. Japan's policy towards India should be formulated on a global scale. For that purpose, Japan should get in touch with Chandra Bose in Berlin in order to carry out the policy from both East and West.
6. Taking various conditions into consideration, the implementation of the policy in the East should be given priority. From this standpoint, it was desirable to invite Chandra Bose to Asia.
7. Japan's policy towards Indians in Asia should be executed in such a way as to support the Indian movement, respecting their autonomy. For that purpose, it was necessary to assist the political and military aspects of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. movements that their leaders had been projecting. The political policy should be aimed at uniting the several millions of Indians in Asia with the I.I.L. movement, and the military policy, based upon the political policy, should be designed to create a strong I.N.A. composed of Indian POWs and volunteers recruited from all over Asia. The combined strength of the I.I.L. and the I.N.A. should be redirected to India to generate a massive nationalist movement in India.
8. Not only Indians but also I.I.L. and I.N.A. members were now watching to see how Japan was going to build a new order in Greater Asia in Burma, the Philippines, and other parts of Asia under Japanese occupation. The decision of 350 million Indians whether to support or oppose Japan would depend upon how Japan was going to implement her policy. Japan ought to put into practice what she had preached about ideals of the new order in Burma, the Philippines, and other occupied regions.
9. The Fujiwara *kikan* should be reorganized and

expanded at some point in order to implement these ideas. I would do my best to prepare the ground for enabling Japan to implement these noble principles.

Major Ozeki listened carefully to my exposition, promising his cooperation for the realization of these ideas once he returned to Tokyo.

* * *

After my talk with Ozeki, I stayed up all night to draft another *kosaku* plan. Having seen the activities of the I.I.L. and the I.N.A. as well as the K.M.M., the young Sumatrans were getting impatient and could hardly restrain themselves from going into action. Incorporating suggestions offered by Abu Bakar I drew up a plan for their activities in Sumatra, which were to commence on 8 January, upon being approved by Lt.-Col. Sugita and General Suzuki. The outline of my plan was as follows: the *kosaku*, especially in northern Sumatra, was to create a friendly and collaborative movement amongst the indigenous people towards the Japanese military to facilitate the invasion. Furthermore, we would expect them to safeguard transportation, telecommunications facilities and important refineries and oil fields as well as bridges from destruction by the Dutch when our troops landed. Also our plan called for cooperation from the local people in providing intelligence, food and drinking water and collecting weapons and ammunition abandoned by Dutch soldiers.

In order to achieve these objectives, we planned to despatch several groups of young Sumatrans as secret agents to Sumatra from the western coast of the Malay peninsula. Their mission was to spread news of Japanese victory in Malaya and Japan's intention of liberating oppressed peoples. They would describe the state of various independence movements and the extent of collaboration by these nationalities with the Japanese military, and explain the Japanese Army's desire for cooperation. When Japanese troops invaded Sumatra, they would carry with them the 'F' insignia indicating friendship and cooperation. In addition, we decided to beef up the

propaganda programme beamed from the Penang broadcasting station by a propaganda unit of the 25th Army. The following morning, I presented the plan to Abu Bakar, confirmed our support for it and then presented it to Colonel Sugita for authorization.

Thus passed my last day in Ipoh. After last-minute instructions to the staff of I.I.L., I.N.A. and *F kikan* headquarters to get ready to advance to Kuala Lumpur, I attended a farewell dinner party given by the Lin family.

9. Kuala Lumpur

Aided by the enemy's chaotic retreat in the face of the Japanese Army's *blitzkrieg* since the battle at the Thai-Malay border, our *kosaku* had been very successful in rapidly infiltrating the 11th and 9th Divisions of the British Indian Army. The situation had now developed to such an extent that the *F kikan* could reasonably expect the same degree of success in inducing greater numbers of Indian soldiers to defect from a corps-size army.

All of us were in confident mood with these bright prospects, when an intelligence report brought to my attention by Colonel Sugita greatly disappointed us. Apparently the British Army command, after the Battle of Slim, had changed its basic strategy in deploying troops in the Malay peninsula; it had pulled out a good part of the British Indian Army, which was the target of our propaganda, back to Singapore. The 28th Brigade of the 11th British Indian Division and the 9th Division had retreated to Johore and in their place the 53rd Brigade of the 18th Division from Britain and the 27th Brigade of the Australian 8th Division had advanced to defend Batu Pahat and the Kluang-Gemas line respectively. It was believed that a brigade of the 11th British Indian Division had fallen back to Malacca, where it was joined by the 45th British Indian Brigade newly despatched from Singapore to Muar. This British-Indian force was the only remaining object of our propaganda. Consequently, we shifted our arena of activity from the central highway area to the coastal region.

According to British intelligence reports which had fallen into Japanese hands, it was clear that the British high command was extremely edgy about the *F kikan*'s pacification campaign, indicated by the fact that I was on its 'wanted' list with a price of tens of thousands pounds sterling on my head. This confirmed the great impact we had made on the British Army and the burden of responsibility that was placed on me. Henceforth, I could expect the British to take positive counter-measures against our *kosaku*. Members of my *kikan* advised me to stop running about without guards because I was now a 'wanted man'.

Analyzing the enemy's large-scale shift of troops in the southern part of the Malay peninsula and the topography of the region, the high command of the 25th Army arrived at the following conclusion about the British Army's new strategy: the British Army planned to block the drive of the Japanese forces in order to turn the tide of the war either at the Malacca-Muar-Gemas line or at the Batu Pahat-Kluang line. Alternatively, the British planned to hold out on these two fronts enabling them quickly to reinforce their defence in the decisive battle for Singapore.

In either case, no major resistance was expected at Kuala Lumpur. While the Japanese troops were surging towards Kuala Lumpur after the great victory at Slim, the Takumi unit of the 18th Division since landing at Kota Bharu had been driving southwards along the eastern coast of the peninsula, pushing back the 9th British Indian Division. On 2 January it took possession of Kuantan Airport; now, joined by reinforcements, it was converging upon Kuala Lumpur. The main force of the 18th Division was to land at Songkhla in a few days.

General Yamashita, taking advantage of the impatience of the British Army to fight the Japanese forces at the Malacca-Muar-Gemas line, deployed his army in a two-pronged formation – the Imperial Guard Division on the coastline leading from Port Swettenham, Malacca, Muar to Batu Pahat, and the 5th Division and a tank corps on the road running through from Kuala Lumpur, Seremban, Gemas, and Kluang – to prepare for the decisive battle.

When I learnt of the strategy, I decided, after consultation with Capt. Mohan and Pritam, to advance *F kikan* and I.I.L. headquarters to Kuala Lumpur on 9 January.

Takimura was waiting for me at Slim in the midst of the bloody battlefield, where more than a hundred POWs had assembled. They were busy cooking amongst the rubber trees where grim fighting had taken place. *Rotis* were being fried and the aroma of curry permeated everywhere.

After partaking of their homemade dishes, I gave an order to Sgt. Takimura to take the POWs to Kuala Lumpur, and then I dashed to Tanjong Malim. When we arrived, the sun had already set. The town was crowded with Japanese troops driving towards Kuala Lumpur. An advance unit of the assaulting Japanese army had occupied Tanjong Malim the night before and were still pounding the retreating enemy hard. That night we slept in a dormitory of railway workers in the town. Past midnight I received a report from Yonemura that more than 100 surrendered Indians had been assembled in Kuala Lipis.

Early in the morning I left for Kuala Lipis, situated just off the route of the Japanese troop advance, a quaint fairy-tale-like place snuggled against a hillside. Ishikawa of the Yonemura unit that had taken custody of the POWs came to me excitedly with complaints that a group of air force men commanded by a lieutenant had just arrived in a lorry and robbed Indians of their watches and other personal effects. Ishikawa's attempts to restrain the Japanese were ignored as he was a young civilian. Ishikawa was indignant at this misconduct of the Japanese soldiers, feeling a strong sense of shame for the crime against the Indians. He grabbed one Japanese soldier and obtained the name of his officer.

The Indian soldiers were worried and unhappy about the incident. Immediately I apologized to them, promising to retrieve their personal effects and to see that justice would be done against the soldiers. Pritam conveyed my words to them. The Indians understood the explanation and it alleviated their anger and anxiety.

We gave an order to Ishikawa and the Indian POWs to follow our party, and drove back to Kuala Lumpur. As usual,

the retreating British Army had destroyed every bridge, large and small, and vehicles of the Japanese engineering corps carrying construction materials were driving up and down the road.

The speed of the Japanese pursuit depended largely upon how fast the engineering corps could repair destroyed bridges, and they achieved a record-breaking rate during the Malay campaign, despite unsatisfactory conditions and lack of adequate building materials. During a sixty-day period, through the 1,200-kilometre length of the Malay peninsula, the engineers repaired or rebuilt 253 large and small bridges.

We followed the pursuing army south. During our journey we witnessed a remarkable sight along the road. Indian POWs, thirty to fifty in a group, carrying small white flags inscribed with the letter 'F', were marching in formation towards Kuala Lumpur without an escort of Japanese soldiers or *F kikan* agents. The groups became larger and larger as more Indian soldiers joined them, emerging from both sides of the road. Each time we came on a crowd we stopped our vehicle and gave them a word of encouragement. Indian officers or non-commissioned officers carrying a white flag usually produced a card which said in handwriting: 'This is to certify that this Indian soldier, wishing to join the I.N.A., is travelling to Kuala Lumpur at the direction of the Fujiwara *kikan*. It is requested that special protection and facilities be provided for him. Fujiwara *kikan*.'

Besides this they had in their possession I.N.A. leaflets dropped from the air or handed out by I.N.A. agents, or propaganda handbills circulated by Japanese troops. To Japanese soldiers who had fought for ten years in China and Manchuria, such scenes of mass surrender were a new experience. It was an unusual phenomenon in the war history of any nation. At first, pursuing Japanese soldiers passed by this strange sight staring in amazement, but soon they voluntarily picked up Indian POWs and gave them a lift to *F kikan* headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. Japanese commanders and staff officers who had at first been sceptical of the *F kikan*'s operation began to appreciate what it was doing, and the reputation of the *F kikan* increased and its nature

became understood not only by the indigenous people but also by Japanese troops.

On the morning of 11 January, we entered Kuala Lumpur. The day before the Japanese occupation of the city, British troops had demolished the station, the aerodrome, and principal military installations prior to their retreat. We set up our headquarters in what had been housing quarters for railroad officials not too far from the State Office building. I began to feel a chill and a sharp headache about the time we reached the outskirts of the capital.

While my men were looking for a place for our headquarters, I was trying to endure the pain in the *padang* in front of the State Office building. Gopal Singh of I.I.L. headquarters was shocked to see me in obvious discomfort. I told him that the illness was just a passing physical phenomenon and attributed it to lack of sleep and over-exertion for many days, but my explanation did not lessen his anxiety. He asked Chandran to fetch a doctor. It was an extremely difficult task but after a search all over the city, I.I.L. agents managed to find an Indian doctor. My temperature was close to 40°C and he diagnosed malaria, advising me to take a rest in the headquarters which had been set up. I shall never forget the solicitude and kindness with which Gopal and the I.I.L. agents treated me. Largely due to their dedicated nursing, my fever went down after two days of rest.

On the 13th I.N.A. and Sumatra Youth Association headquarters were set up at Kuala Lumpur.

After the battle at Slim, Indian soldiers who had surrendered elsewhere began arriving at a camp in Kuala Lumpur one after another. Their number soon exceeded 1,000. Amongst them was a company, carrying leaflets dropped from Japanese aeroplanes, that arrived on foot from Port Swettenham. We set aside the former British military barracks in Kuala Lumpur as an Indian POW camp. Most barracks were roofed with *atap* but their facilities were fairly good. Other buildings were much better and more durable, especially the two-storeyed building designated as headquarters which was a brick-built structure. Scattered around the barracks were seven or eight houses for officers. If we could construct a few more buildings, the barracks would accommodate about 3,000. The 25th Army

was to have used this building complex but it offered the buildings for the I.N.A.'s use. The number of surrendered Indian soldiers throughout Malaya was estimated to exceed 2,500.

In order to strengthen and expand I.N.A. activities, Capt. Mohan conveyed to me that he would like to transfer all Indian soldiers to Kuala Lumpur, for the sake of maintaining command, training, security, morale and military discipline, supply, and sanitation. He also proposed to set up I.N.A. command headquarters at Kuala Lumpur, which I thought was logical. Consequently, measures were taken to transport Indian soldiers, scattered in various camps at Alor Star, Sungei Patani, Ipoh, and Penang, to the capital.

Capt. Mohan always paid minute and thoughtful attention to provisions for his men and proper care for the wounded and sick. He was a military commander worthy of the name. Perhaps, impressed by Capt. Mohan's warmth, his men's trust and admiration for him became stronger. Furthermore, his compassion for subordinates was matched at the I.I.L., where gifts and contributions from Indian residents to I.N.A. troops flowed in gradually. Sikhs in the city, particularly a group led by Budh Singh, a white-haired old man, donated a large quantity of foods that the Indians would like and clothes, as well as beautiful flowers for the wounded and sick soldiers.

At the time of the battle of Slim, Capt. Mohan, convinced of the loyalty of his I.N.A. troops, put forward three new proposals, requesting my cooperation. They were: firstly, to arm and train a number of I.N.A. soldiers; secondly, to organize a powerful propaganda unit in order to induce, on a large scale, Indian soldiers in the British Army to join the I.N.A., which could possibly cause the British to give up Singapore without a fight; thirdly, to beam propaganda from the Saigon broadcasting station to both Indian soldiers in enemy territory and Indians in India itself.

Seeing Capt. Mohan's urgent need to implement these plans, I promised to support them in any way I could. After securing authorization from Col. Sugita of the 25th Army I arranged for the transfer to the I.N.A. of captured light weapons sufficient to arm two companies.

We despatched Capt. Ehsan Qadir, an able officer, to Saigon

to set up the broadcasts. As the Japanese were in hot pursuit of the enemy only a handful of officers of the 25th Army and personnel necessary for military administration remained behind in Kuala Lumpur. The I.N.A. set up a large army camp which faced a main road and their soldiers stood guard at the front gate. Outside the barracks, a barbed wire fence was erected as token security. Within the compound, the only Japanese were Lieut. Kunizuka who was popular amongst I.N.A. soldiers and Ito, a liaison officer, who lived alongside the Indians. Despite these light security measures, there were no cases of desertion nor incidents with city residents. Visitors to the camp such as staff officers from Imperial General Headquarters and the Southern Expeditionary Forces, and war correspondents, used to exclaim in disbelief: 'Major Fujiwara, are you sure of their loyalty? How did this happen?' It was only natural for them to raise such apprehensions, but amongst ourselves we had had no time to entertain such thoughts but took the matter for granted.

To come to think of it, ever since our arrival at Ipoh, I had been at a loss for a reply to the unkind remarks which were frequently uttered by visiting senior officers: 'What! I keep hearing about the Fujiwara *kikan* and see indigenous people all over the place wearing "*F kikan*" arm bands or carrying *F kikan* certificates. I have been wondering who the hell can be chief of the Fujiwara *kikan* whose reputation is sweeping across Malaya. I thought it must be Col. Takeshi Fujiwara of the thirty-first class of the Military Academy' (a graduate of War College and twelve years senior to my class at the Academy). 'It is you, *Major* Fujiwara.' Their reaction was invariably surprise mixed with scorn. The *F kikan*'s reputation had now spread throughout Malaya.

Right after the occupation of Kuala Lumpur, the Third Air Corps set up its headquarters. I despatched Lieut. Yonemura to the command post to report the outrageous behaviour of some members of the Air Corps which had occurred at Kuala Lipis, with a request that the culprits be punished. The following day, an adjutant of Maj.-Gen. Endo, commander of the Air Corps, visited *F kikan* headquarters with the lieutenant who was responsible for the 'Lipis Incident'. Gen. Endo had imme-

diately punished the lieutenant and had sent him, with the adjutant, to express his regret to me and to Capt. Mohan. The officer representing Gen. Endo offered to return the articles stolen from the Indian soldiers.

Impressed by Gen. Endo's administration of the punishment, I got in touch with Capt. Mohan at once and passed on the apology. Capt. Mohan was very much obliged, appreciating the justice with which General Endo had dealt with the matter. He said in embarrassment:

'In the battlefield, it is not unusual that soldiers of a military unit of any nation commit wrongdoings. It is extraordinary that a general of a victorious army should apologize for the misconduct of his men to a junior-ranking POW officer. This fair treatment by the Japanese military will strengthen our respect for and trust in them, and will have an incalculable effect in enforcing discipline upon I.N.A. soldiers, too.' Later, Capt. Mohan asked me privately: 'I wonder what sort of punishment that lieutenant received from General Endo. I hope it was not too severe. Please convey to the General that I would wish him to be lenient with the lieutenant.'

I communicated his wishes and thoughtfulness to the adjutant, who was very much pleased with Capt. Mohan's magnanimity. In the course of our conversation, the aide-de-camp happened to mention the difficulty the Air Corps was facing with regard to restoring aerodrome facilities in Kuala Lumpur, which had been destroyed by Japanese and British bombings. The airfield was essential for the impending operations. Noting the adjutant's troubled expression, Capt. Mohan looked at me as if to ask 'What is your conversation about?' When I explained the difficult situation to him, Capt. Mohan instantly offered his assistance, saying, 'The I.N.A. will be glad to help you right now.'

General Endo was much delighted with this offer. Lieut. Nakamiya visited the Air Corps command post to brief them on the customs and traditions of Indian soldiers and expounded on the I.N.A. to officers of the headquarters and the aerodrome, requesting their understanding of and respect for them. I also appointed an *F kikan* agent as liaison officer, though we could hardly afford to spare him as we were

short-handed. Each day more than a thousand I.N.A. soldiers went to the airfield to carry out repairs and maintenance from 9.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. Japanese officers at the airport and Indian soldiers soon struck up friendly relations and efficiency improved rapidly. There was not a single case of even minor trouble. In order to express his appreciation, General Endo presented the troops with a gift of money, food, and daily necessities which pleased them no end. Due to the I.N.A.'s cooperation, the aerodrome became operational in a matter of a week. I.N.A. officers and men who worked on the reconstruction held General Endo in high esteem and on the last day they paraded on the airfield as a sign of their respect, which pleased him very much.

At this time, G-2 of the 25th Army passed on to us intelligence gleaned from discarded enemy documents that British commanders had been warned about the *F kikan*'s operations and advised to take counter-measures. Capt. Mohan also informed me that the British Army had put a fabulous price-tag on me, *F kikan* and I.I.L. agents and I.N.A. officers, and warned me to be cautious in my activities. The *F kikan*, however, did not have a single armed soldier; we were hardly armed ourselves except with captured pistols. There was hardly time to pause for breath let alone exercise prudence as we, in small groups of two or three, had to operate in the length and breadth of the battlefield. Nevertheless, at Capt. Mohan's suggestion, we posted surrendered Indian soldiers at *F kikan* headquarters and at our dormitory as a security measure. Our messengers, typists and orderlies were all Indians. We felt no apprehension whatsoever, though newspaper reporters and officers and men of other army units were amazed at our apparent recklessness.

After the war when I was detained as a suspected war criminal in prison in Kuala Lumpur, a British director-general of intelligence interrogated me for three days and then told me: 'The British Army took the *F kikan*'s operations very seriously. Even by January 1942, we had established a special agency in Delhi to study espionage and counter-espionage operations. We had accumulated enough material relating to

the *F kikan* to fill this room [20 *tsubo*, or 79 sq. yds.].' Recalling then the reports gathered by the 25th Army and Capt. Mohan, I was not surprised.

* * *

With the occupation of the central part of Malaya, a good portion of the Malacca Straits had been brought under Japanese control.

The training of young Sumatrans under Abu Bakar's command had been completed and their morale was rising high. The young men were all in the age range twenty to twenty-seven, with the exceptions of forty-year-old Musa and eighteen-year-old Usman Basjah. They looked up to Masubuchi and Lieut. Nakamiya with admiration and respect for their kindness and sincerity, as if they were their father and big brother.

On 14 January I had an opportunity to discuss their future activities with Abu Bakar and Hasbi. When I asked them about the situation in Atjeh, Abu Bakar explained it to me as follows:

> The Atjehnese hate Holland and *Uleebalang* [the Sultan] who, having thrown in his lot with the Dutch, has oppressed the people. As a result, a majority of them do not trust but resent him.
>
> The Atjehnese are fanatically devout Muslims and are ready to fight any battle in the name of Islam. They are not afraid of dying for their religion. Many organizations in Atjeh are Islamic-based associations, of which the largest one is *Pusa* [*Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Atjeh*], the League of Atjehnese *Kiai*. The president of the organization is Tengku Mohammad Daud Beureu'eh, from Sigli, who is the leading *kiai* and a *penghulu*. The authority of the *kiai* and *penghulu* is very powerful amongst the Atjehnese.

On hearing his rundown of the situation, I was encouraged by the bright prospects of the mission's future. Then I pressed

him with a question: 'I think it is important for the Japanese military to get in touch with leaders of the *Pusa*. What do you think?'

Abu Bakar concurred with my opinion without hesitation. In response to his reply, I asked him whether his group would be able to sneak into Sumatra in order to make contact with leaders of the *Pusa*. As if expecting the question, he answered proudly: 'Certainly, we can. We will do it. Today I have come to see you to request it. All of us would like to take part in it. I will lead the undercover operation.'

I admired his courage but expressed some concern, saying: 'This mission is going to be very hazardous and difficult.' In reply he pleaded with me earnestly: 'Yes, I anticipate difficulties ahead. But perhaps not as many as you think. The mission will succeed because we are familiar with the terrain. We will gladly sacrifice our lives for this cause, if it will bring happiness to our people and honour for our religion. Please let us take on the task.'

Touched by his courageous words, I said: 'The Japanese Army, once it occupies Sumatra, will guarantee Atjehnese happiness and respect their religion. I will do my best to realize the promise. Do you wish to work as members of the *F kikan* whose activities are symbolized by freedom and friendship?' Abu Bakar replied: 'We are honoured to become members of the *F kikan*.' This conversation convinced me that the *F kikan*'s serious operations in Sumatra could now be launched.

Then, I listed the ways in which we wished the Sumatrans to help the Japanese Army, for Abu Bakar to convey to his compatriots, particularly to members of the *Pusa*.

1. Once you land in Sumatra and reach your native villages, you are to disseminate information to the people about Japanese military victory in Malaya and friendly collaboration of Indians and Malays with the Japanese military. Also spread propaganda that would undermine the morale of the Dutch.
2. You are to stir up people in Atjeh in such a way as to induce their cooperation with the Japanese

Army and their assistance to Japanese landing operations.

3. You are to prevent public and private installations and facilities, bridges, aerodromes, oil wells, oil refineries, oil tanks, factories, railroads, telecommunications, harbours, and ships from being destroyed by the Dutch.
4. You are to provide food, fruits, and water when Japanese troops land and cooperate with them in guiding the troops, providing intelligence, collecting discarded weapons and vehicles (including bicycles).

Abu Bakar pledged firmly that he would do his best to meet our expectations. After further consultations it was agreed that the first two groups (including six Minangkabaus, Bataks, and Natals) would leave from Kuala Selangor on 16 January. Abu Bakar was appointed leader of the groups. On that day I went to Kuala Selangor to bid him farewell, arriving there about noon. Already the party, accompanied by Masubuchi and Nakamiya, had gathered there and had obtained boats. Masubuchi prepared a farewell party with the cooperation of a village chief who provided a sumptuous buffet of Malay dishes. We toasted the mission's success with glasses of *sake*.

In reply to my send-off speech, Abu Bakar for his group spoke proudly of his determination. I was not able to see them off that evening at the beach as I had to attend an I.I.L. assembly, so I shook hands with each, wishing him well, and returned to Kuala Lumpur leaving Masubuchi and Lieut. Nakamiya to look after the party.

That night the party sailed in two boats across the Malacca Straits towards Sumatra, with the Southern Cross as their guide.

* * *

No sooner had Pritam Singh entered Kuala Lumpur than he had a series of conferences every day with influential Indian leaders of the city in order to unify political activities of the Indians. On 15 January, I received several leading Indians including Dr. Lakshmi. They expressed their deep apprecia-

tion to the *F kikan* for having protected Indians and Indian POWs and for having supported the Indian national independence movement. They also spoke candidly about their wishes with regard to supporting India's national independence movement and to protecting Indian interests. We had a very useful conference lasting two hours during which I explained about Japan's real intentions and her objectives in military administration. The meeting ended with their pledge to support the I.I.L. and to cooperate with the Japanese military. That evening I attended a party given by Indian community leaders which gave me an opportunity to make friends.

I was as much impressed by Dr. Lakshmi's insight and gentle and sincere personality, especially in his enthusiastic compassion for the protection of Indian residents, as I was moved by Budh Singh's unselfish and earnest support for the I.I.L. and I.N.A. and his compassionate concern for I.N.A. soldiers. Beginning on 16 January, we held a meeting for Indians in Kuala Lumpur followed by similar gatherings in Seremban, Kluang, Malacca, and other principal towns in central Malaya, and we also established an I.I.L. office in each city. Now the I.I.L. movement spread extensively throughout the central part of Malaya like wildfire, so that the independence movement now covered the entire territory of the Malay peninsula. At the same time, monetary contributions from Indian residents to I.N.A. soldiers poured in day after day.

Pritam, Capt. Mohan and I became optimistic, and began to entertain great hopes for the future of our movement. We also engaged in a serious study of how to expand our activities, with Malaya as our headquarters, to Burma, to the whole of Asia, and finally to India.

While disposing of the *F kikan*'s immediate and wide-ranging problems and taking note of the opinions of Pritam, Capt. Mohan, and leaders of the Indian communities, I devoted myself to the task of formulating a draft for Japan's future policy towards India. I was convinced that the time had come for me to present my views to General Terauchi and to Imperial General Headquarters.

In order to obtain approval for my ideas from as many

senior officers in higher commands as possible, when I presented them officially, I took particular care to win supporters and sympathizers who would understand my position by sending personal letters to staff officers in charge of intelligence at headquarters in Saigon and in Tokyo, and by inviting staff officers visiting the battlefront from Saigon and Tokyo to come and see the I.N.A. In this way, I put forward my viewpoint.

* * *

During this period, while the I.I.L's political movement centred on Kuala Lumpur was expanding and being strengthened, a fierce battle was developing in the Gemas district in preparation for opening hostilities at the Muar River. I.N.A. propaganda units, in collaboration with the *F kikan*, began a pacification campaign using all available resources against the 45th British Indian Brigade which was deployed in the Muar area. I also sped to the battlefront at Muar on 17 January, where the Imperial Guard Division had now positioned its troops along the northern shore of the river. They had driven overland across Thailand and Malaya from the French Indochina border, starting out on the morning of 8 December. The town of Muar across the river was engulfed in flames and presented a scene of appalling inferno, with black smoke belching into the air. The Muar River estuary at its mouth was more than a thousand metres wide. A ferry boat of the 400-ton class, sunken with its mast visible above the water, could be seen in the river. When night fell, the Iwakuro and Kuniji regiments of the Imperial Guard Division began quietly to cross the river, when out of nowhere a British destroyer entered the mouth of the river and opened up salvos of bombardment, which exploded in the area where Japanese troops were attempting to land. The concentration of firepower was so intense that several huge columns of water spouted high into the air and halted the Japanese.

On the 17th a fierce battle took place on the southern shore of the Muar River and there was savage fighting near Bakri

the following day. The Japanese forces made a daring frontal assault and threw back the repeated and desperate counter-attack of the 45th British Indian Brigade. They succeeded in breaking through the enemy position defended by the 15th British Indian Brigade, and a unit of the Japanese Army went around the rear of the British-Indian troops and cut off their path of retreat. After this defeat, the 45th British Indian Brigade took up a last stand at Parit Sulong on the 22nd and was decimated.

Indian officers and men of the Brigade defected in flocks from their British commanders after the battle of Bakri and took refuge in the jungle where I.N.A. propaganda units were awaiting their surrender. At the time I entered the town of Muar, two to three hundred Indians had been taken into custody by propaganda units and assembled in a school in the suburbs of the town. Lieut. Nakamiya, Lieut. Yonemura and a few other *F kikan* agents busied themselves with finding billets and provisions for Indian soldiers being sent from the front and taking care of the wounded and sick. They were absolutely exhausted, having gone without sleep and rest for several nights in order to look after the Indian soldiers. They looked like saviours. I thought their devotion sublime. Indian soldiers felt reassured by the kind concern of I.N.A. propaganda units and *F kikan* agents. When the Indian soldiers saw me, they all saluted as if to make friends. When I ordered, through Ishikawa, all the Indians to assemble, they gathered around me at once. This reminded me of the happy days when, as a lieutenant in charge of training draftees, I used to gather around me first-year recruits at lunch time for a lecture on moral principles. To cheer them up, I explained to them the significance of our work and they agreed by nodding at my every word, their dirty faces smeared with mud and dust. At lunch time I shared in their curry dishes. This peaceful scene appeared incongruous, in sharp contrast to the bloody battle now being waged before us in Bakri.

On the 22nd I drove as far as the battlefront at Parit Sulong and returned to Kuala Lumpur that night in order to work out plans for Sumatra, across the Malacca Straits.

While the pacification campaign was under way in Muar,

Japanese forces occupied Batu Pahat and the Kluang airfield on the 25th.

* * *

As a result of the rapid expansion of the war front into the south, it became necessary to advance the Sumatra *kosaku* for which I planned to smuggle the remaining third group. I decided to send off the young Sumatrans personally.

Taking Masubuchi's advice into consideration, Lumut harbour was selected as the point of departure for the third group, which was to land on the eastern coast of Medan and infiltrate into Atjeh. On the afternoon of 25 January Masubuchi and I set off for Lumut in a brand new Studebaker presented to me by Dr. Lakshmi. We arrived at noon the following day having passed through the familiar battlefields of Slim, Ipoh and Taiping. Seven Sumatran youngsters were waiting in readiness for their departure that night.

Through Masubuchi's courtesy, the most splendid *makan besar* was prepared that evening. The young men maintained their composure, seemingly oblivious of the danger facing them. I wished them well, praying for their success. Nja Neh and his comrades individually thanked us for the dinner party, expressing their determination and resolve to stir up their compatriots in Sumatra even at the risk of their lives in order to bring about cooperation between the Atjehnese and the Japanese military. We drank to their success for two hours, and then they stood up and strode down to the beach. Night had already fallen and it was pitch dark outside; the water in the harbour was smooth as glass and shone with the reflection of pale moonlight. The Southern Cross was gleaming brightly, as if pointing to the destination of the party. Beyond the harbour, the Malacca Straits gave a weird impression of some huge black monster.

A small motorboat capable of holding ten people was moored in readiness at the water's edge. We helped the young men load ten days' provisions and water as well as explosives and hand-grenades. We exchanged farewell handshakes on the beach, and I felt their enthusiasm and confidence like electri-

city running through my body. I promised to meet them again in several days on a beach in Sumatra. They committed themselves to the boat with the lightheartedness of young fishermen going out for a night's fishing. The humming of the engine broke through the stillness of the sea, and suddenly the young men shouted '*Banzai*', raising their arms. I was taken aback by their gesture and wondered when they had learnt it.

The motorboat swiftly turned 180 degrees and sped towards the habour exit, when again they shouted '*banzai* for the Emperor' to us standing on the beach. Their waving hands quickly vanished into the darkness and the boat rapidly became a tiny speck and then disappeared. We were left with only the sound of the engine linking us. Masubuchi stood entranced on the edge of the water, staring out to the sea searching for the sound. I returned to Kuala Lumpur by car. I prayed for their success and wondered what sort of fate awaited them.

My thoughts went back to Said Abu Bakar and his party who had left Kuala Selangor on 16 January on a secret mission, and I wondered whether they had reached Sumatra safely. They might have been intercepted by a Dutch naval patrol, or they could be adrift on the high seas. Even if they had landed successfully, they could have been arrested and executed by the Dutch police or detained in prison. I was anxious to get information about the situation in Sumatra as no single piece of intelligence had reached the Japanese Army since the commencement of hostilities.

10. Expansion to Burma

On 24 January the Takumi Brigade reached Kuala Lumpur via Maran and Mentekab, having completed operations on the eastern coast of the Malay peninsula. Here I met for the first time Nagano and Hashimoto, two young members of my *kikan* who had for nearly two months served the Takumi Brigade as guides, risking their lives by pacifying the indigenous people and gathering intelligence. They had been away from Japan for many years, living in Pattani in southern Thailand and Kota Bharu before the war. They had no military experience and training. Military action on the eastern coast of Malaya was quite different from that in the central part along the main highway and on the western coast; it consisted of a series of fights through unexplored jungles and difficult terrain. These young men acted as guides of the Takumi Brigade because Lieut. Segawa had fallen in action in Kota Bharu shortly after the opening of hostilities. I had been concerned for their safety and apprehensive as to whether they could carry through their responsibility. At first glance I could see in their appearance and dress evidence of the tremendously hard and difficult fighting they had been through. I interrupted their attempt to report about their experiences and offered them chairs. After thanking them for their long hardships, I asked them to recount their activities. Being sincere, simple, and modest, they refrained from reporting their own achievements, but instead praised the gallantry of Col. Nasu and his men and their kindness to the guides. It was not difficult, however, to detect from their modest reporting that they had

accomplished a splendid task. Immediately afterwards I visited the headquarters of the Takumi Brigade and met Maj.-Gen. Takumi and Major Suzuki, staff officer (and my classmate at the Academy), as well as Col. Nasu, regimental commander. These men whom I knew closely spared no words in praising Nagano's and Hashimoto's fearlessness and the great contribution they had made to the operations. The two guides, both fluent in Bahasa Malay, always penetrated, together with Malays, deep into enemy territory beyond the Japanese skirmish line to further the pacification campaign for Malays and Indians and gather intelligence, thus contributing enormously to the military operations of the Japanese force. The British Army had retreated carrying away with them materials which would be useful for amphibious operations by the Japanese troops, but Hashimoto and Nagano were always waiting at the river with a stockpile of materials for the crossing obtained with the cooperation of indigenous people. The Japanese Army was also welcomed with fruit and drinking water by local people.

It was also revealed that after the rescue of the Pahang Sultan's family, the two guides escorted the royal party to military headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. I could not help but admire their great achievements and modest personality, and Maj.-Gen. Takumi gave me a testimonial in recognition of their services.

K.M.M. agents who accompanied Hashimoto and Nagano from Kota Bharu brought with them a message inviting me to visit the city, and I was keen to pay a visit to the people of Kota Bharu to demonstrate my appreciation for their cooperation if I could. The pressure of work did not permit me to leave *F kikan* headquarters, however. I promised the K.M.M. agents that I would visit Kota Bharu after Singapore had fallen, and sent them back to the eastern coast.

I would like to recount some stories of my men that I shall never forget.

My staff consisted of six young officers (including Lieut. Segawa who was killed) and one non-commissioned officer. With the exception of Capt. Tsuchimochi, all of them had been through one or two years' special training in intelligence

at the Nakano School after graduating from college. The other members were fourteen Japanese who had lived in Malaya and Sumatra for many years; the majority of them joined the *F kikan* provisionally just before or after the outbreak of the war. As I said at the outset of this book, I myself was a young officer with no experience and no talents. The reader should by now have acquired a fairly good idea of the nature, scale, and difficulty of the assignment imposed upon members of the *F kikan.* I am certain that the reader appreciates as he turns the pages how our mission developed into a grand-scale operation. Needless to say, our successes and bright prospects can be largely attributed to the enthusiasm and genuine patriotism of the I.N.A., I.I.L., K.M.M. and the Sumatran youth group. Nevertheless, my officers and men of the *F kikan* deserve mention for their extraordinary dedication. *F kikan* agents were united in one family in which they respected each other. There was no distinction between uniformed officers and civilians. Irrespective of rank, or whether they were military officers or civilians, junior members always showed respect to older persons, who in turn tried to set an example to the younger agents. We shared our daily living, eating and sleeping together and joining in each other's happiness and sorrow. Free communication between superior and inferior officers ensured that my wishes and desires were put into effect, and orders and directives were carried out smoothly.

Our behaviour was guided by a strict discipline and propriety. Not once did I, as chief of the *kikan,* shout at my members, nor did I have to give detailed instructions. It was sufficient for me to express clearly my wishes and intent. Thereafter my men took the initiative in planning and acted without waiting for my detailed directives. Their various activities were well coordinated, each individual agent assuming several responsibilities for carrying out policies, and cooperating with others in order to accomplish more. They were modest in claiming achievements as their own and tried to solve problems amongst themselves thus taking many troubles off my shoulders.

Lieut. Yamaguchi, my adjutant, was an excellent co-

ordinator, implementing my wishes and policy intentions, and harmonizing relations with army headquarters and Japanese military units as well as between ourselves. Masubuchi, our senior member, Tashiro, and Kamimoto were very helpful in assisting Lieut. Yamaguchi and other officers officially and privately. Masubuchi was as a benevolent father to us. The sincerity, keenness, compassion, and harmony of *F kikan* agents naturally permeated to members of the I.I.L., I.N.A., K.M.M., and the Sumatran youngsters who were cooperating with us, with the positive effect of strengthening their trust in us. Capt. Mohan often pointed this out with praise. Not only staff officers of Imperial General Headquarters, but also reporters who visited my headquarters, told me of their unanimous good impression. I was very glad to hear such favourable comments about my men. I had hardly any problems in commanding my staff. My only concern was for the health and safety of my men, and the happiest moment of the day was when we shared dinner together – those of us not at the front. Lieut. Kunizuka and Ito who were living in I.N.A. military barracks often came and joined us at the table.

Some of my men when they were not otherwise occupied were obliged to keep me company at the dining table, which sometimes lasted more than two hours. On these occasions, I sometimes took the opportunity to express my views in a small talk, or they could brag of their exploits and air their candid opinions.

We had about ten drivers, cooks, and boys working for the *F kikan* who were Chinese, Malays, and Indians. We regarded them almost as fellow members rather than employees of the *F kikan*. In addition, guards, messengers and I.N.A. non-commissioned officers serving as typists were on our staff. We were not like a military unit, but rather, a family in which an amiable atmosphere prevailed; we did not have to hide anything from each other nor did we need to show off or maintain a formal appearance. I was very lucky to have such a splendid staff.

In addition, the leaders of the I.N.A., I.I.L., K.M.M., and the Sumatran youth group with whom I cooperated were men

of sincerity, warm feeling, and good heart. For this I was most grateful, for it enabled me to pursue our noble objectives.

I was of the opinion that our successes and achievements should belong to field armies, and that we should be satisfied with performing our task without thanks. As a result, we did not keep records of our activities nor did we write formal documents and reports. I insisted that if we had time for paper work, it would be better spent in action. All of my men agreed and hardly had time to count their own achievements.

The document kept by Lieut. Yamaguchi about the *F kikan* contained only a detailed balance sheet of the official fund and a few lines of daily report on our activities. If I had been more meticulous about keeping records, these memoirs would have been much more satisfactory. I, however, consider our lack of records as something the *F kikan* could be very proud of.

* * *

More than 600 Indian soldiers came into our custody, while the number of I.N.A. soldiers in barracks in Kuala Lumpur rose to 3,500. After defeating British troops at Batu Pahat and Gemas, the Japanese armies were converging upon Johore Bahru in hot pursuit. The resistance of the British forces in Malaya ceased as they pulled back to Singapore. The capitulation of Johore Bahru would come in a few days, and General Yamashita's headquarters had advanced to Kuala Lumpur. Military operations in the Malay peninsula were approaching the finale and the Japanese forces were about to make their assault on Singapore, the stronghold of the British Empire in Asia.

It was about this time an apprehension crossed my mind that if the British abandoned the defence of Singapore and retired to Sumatra or Java, they might remove the tens of thousands of Indians whom the I.N.A. was anxious to recruit.

Lieut. Nakamiya advanced to Johore Bahru taking command of several groups of *F kikan* agents in order to

support I.N.A. propaganda units, while Capt. Tsuchimochi took charge of Indian POWs surrendered to us following the battle of Muar. Lieut. Kunizuka and Ito as usual remained in I.N.A. headquarters serving as liaison officers. The I.N.A.'s two companies being trained under the command of Capt. Mohan were being transformed into a revolutionary army with ever-increasing fighting capability. With his robust health and immense will power and conviction, he had the appearance of a revolutionary leader.

One of the surprising things was how one or two *F kikan* agents had been able to administer the supply of provisions to I.N.A. soldiers and maintain their health without relying upon supplies from the Japanese Army and upon the medical corps. We made good use of goods spirited away from abandoned British military storehouses. Occasionally, when we found ourselves short of something we went to 25th Army headquarters with a requisition only to be bawled at by an ignorant staff officer, particularly when we requested milk (milk was to the Indian a necessity as *miso* to the Japanese). In those days, the Japanese considered milk as a luxury drink only for patients. It was therefore outrageous that POWs should demand milk. We were really in a bind.

About this time the 15th Army of the Japanese Armed Forces was concentrating its troops at the Thai-Burmese border in order to cross the Salween River into Burmese territory. The 15th Army occupied Tavoy on 19 January. Making an attack on the enemy's unguarded position with a feint movement by a small Japanese military unit, the 15th Army broke through the border and drove to a strategic point at the Salween River. Advancing from the Mesod district, the 55th Division occupied Kawkareik on 22 January and closed in on the enemy at Moulmein. Meanwhile, the 33rd Division drove north of Kawkareik and was preparing its drive to the Salween River. The British Army in this area consisted of the 11th Brigade and a part of the 17th British Indian Division.

In the East far beyond the South China sea, the Japanese Army, under the command of Lt.-Gen. Homma[39] operating in the Philippines, occupied Manila on 2 January and was making an assault on MacArthur's armed forces in Bataan beginning on 27 January.

Japanese army and naval units occupied important points in Borneo. Also in the Southeastern Pacific theatre, they conquered Celebes and strategic points in New Britain. Japanese military operations in the Pacific and South Seas were proceeding extremely rapidly.

In view of this situation, I thought that the time had come to present Imperial General Headquarters with my ideas about the Empire's policy towards India. In order to keep faith with Capt. Mohan and Pritam, I was resolved to persuade the central army authorities to officially adopt my ideas as policy. It was a tall order for a junior officer with the rank of major but I had to fulfil it no matter what lay ahead. The night I returned to Kuala Lumpur, I began to draft a statement in private. Late that night I received a telephone call from 25th Army headquarters in Kluang; it was from Lt.-Col. Otsuki, a senior staff officer of General Headquarters in Saigon in charge of intelligence and propaganda, with whom I had been in communication.

The gist of the telephone conversation was that I was requested to report to 25th Army command at Kluang to explain the progress of my work and to bring with me a written statement concerning policy towards India and be ready to elucidate it. I replied that I would arrive and report in the morning of the day after next. I was so delighted with the news that I could hardly control my heartbeats. I had an intuition that able Col. Otsuki, whom I respected very much, was coming all the way from Saigon to inspect the situation because he shared my viewpoint, and I was encouraged by it. That night I put heart and soul into completing the draft, which I read several times to polish it up. I was so engrossed in my task that I was hardly aware that dawn had lifted when all of a sudden I heard the noisy sound of a lorry engine in the frontyard and the lively chatter of voices.

When Lieut. Nakamiya returned from the front for liaison, it was already dawn. Leaving the draft on the table, I went downstairs to greet him, shaking my fist. Lieuts. Yamaguchi, Nakamiya and Kunizuka were all excited with my great aspirations expressed in the draft and with my determination to request the central army authorities to act upon it. They helped me produce the final copy in their careful handwriting

on an official form. It was almost noon when we finished the statement.

I carried with me three copies of the draft addressed to General Yamashita, General Terauchi, and Imperial General Headquarters respectively, and hitched a ride with Kitamura in a Studebaker. From their expressions I knew what the officers seeing me off were thinking: 'Sir, we wish you success in your presentation for the sake of the I.I.L., I.N.A. and India herself. I responded to them with my eyes: 'You can count on me. With my conviction and enthusiasm I will see to it that it is accepted.'

We sped to the 25th Army command post at Kluang at 60 m.p.h. and arrived behind schedule at dawn, due to a punctured tyre. I was hardly aware of weariness because I was in high spirits, even though I had stayed up all night for two days in a row. The 25th Army command post was situated in a hastily-built barracks on a rubber estate. When I walked into Col. Otsuki's office, I found there unexpectedly Lt.-Col. Kondo (my classmate at the War College) and Lt.-Col. Okamura (my senior officer at the Osaka 37th Infantry Regiment), both of whom were staff officers of Imperial General Headquarters.

Jumping out of bed, Col. Otsuki shook my hand and congratulated me for my successes since last September. The two colonels from Imperial General Headquarters were glad to see me and congratulated me on my achievements.

I learnt from them that Lt.-Gen. Tominaga[40], chief of the Personnel Bureau of the War Ministry, and Lt.-Gen. Tanaka[41], chief of the Operations Bureau of General Staff, together with an entourage of their staff, were visiting headquarters, having arrived the day before. They had come to inspect the war situation on behalf of their senior officers, War Minister General Tojo Hideki[42] and Army Chief-of-Staff General Sugiyama Hajime, respectively. Most of the staff officers accompanying the generals were my acquaintances and senior classmates, which encouraged me. I felt inwardly 'I've got it!' After reporting to Col. Otsuki about our *kosaku's* achievements, I explained the detailed report that was to be presented to General Terauchi.

It took over an hour to complete my report and explana-

tion. The other two colonels proposed to step out of the office but I insisted that they stay, requesting their presence as a third party, because I was hoping that they would convey my opinions to Generals Tominaga and Tanaka. The two colonels listened very attentively to my presentation, and they appeared to share my views. Col. Otsuki not only agreed with my point of view completely but also requested the other two colonels from Imperial General Headquarters for their cooperation in order that my recommendations would be accepted.

Because I was assigned to the command of General Yamashita, I had to present my formal reports and opinions through 25th Army headquarters. In principle, I was not in a position to be able to present my reports and opinions directly to a staff officer of Imperial Headquarters or of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. I was of the opinion, however, that the objectives that I wanted to achieve were not confined simply to the small geographical area of Malaya and Sumatra that was under the command of the 25th Army, but extended across Greater Asia and ultimately to India. My true intent had to be understood and supported by officers of the top echelon in the War Ministry and Imperial Headquarters. What I feared most was that my true intent might be distorted during the process of presentation through the normal chain of command beginning with 25th Army headquarters and Southern Expeditionary Forces, and that the maze of bureaucracy would cause valuable time to be wasted.

I was very lucky to get a chance to present my opinions directly to the two senior officers from the War Ministry and General Headquarters who happened to be visiting Kluang. After finishing my report to Col. Otsuki, I went to see Col. Sugita at Yamashita headquarters to present my views with a request for his support. Though Sugita appeared to be understanding and to agree with my viewpoints, he pointed out that to adopt them officially as a national policy would require numerous steps of authorization. When I came out of Sugita's office, I saw Generals Tominaga and Tanaka standing outside the barracks enjoying the fresh morning air in the rubber estate. My salute to them and their response occurred

simultaneously. Gen. Tanaka addressed me almost in a shout: 'Are you stationed here? What are you doing?' Taken aback by the general's sudden initiative, I was for a moment lost for words to reply. Mustering my courage and seizing the opportunity, I answered: 'I am engaging in a *kosaku* against India, and also in a propaganda operation to win over civilians in Malaya and Sumatra.'

In a changed tone of voice, full of warm feeling, he asked: 'How are you doing? Doing well?' In response I said: 'Yes, sir, I am doing fine, so much so that I am getting confident of success. I have come here to request the expansion of my work on such a scale as to include the whole of Asia and all of India and the authorization of its immediate implementation by the central army authorities.' General Tominaga was listening to my desperate plea with an understanding look. Intuitively I knew that the two generals were interested in my ideas as they must have heard about my work and opinions from Col. Okamura. 'So you are making a success. What have you achieved?' General Tanaka asked. Encouraged by his query, I replied without hesitation and in one breath: 'The I.N.A., consisting of several thousand soldiers, has been organized in Kuala Lumpur and is being transformed into a revolutionary army. Our activities will expand with rapidity once our *kosaku* in Singapore succeeds. The I.I.L.'s political movement is now blanketing all Malaya. The foundation to expand this policy to Burma, other parts of Greater Asia, and to India is now being laid.'

Turning to Gen. Tominaga and exchanging glances, General Tanaka said: 'Fujiwara, how about letting us see the I.N.A. you are supporting? What do you say, General Tominaga?' The latter agreed with the proposal at once. I could hardly believe my ears at their proposed visit to Kuala Lumpur to inspect the I.N.A. and to meet Capt. Mohan and Pritam as well as to listen to my opinions, because I would have been satisfied if they had just said: 'Fujiwara, let us hear your side of the story.' I felt as happy as a king. Summoning Col. Kondo, Tanaka immediately ordered him to arrange a flight to Kuala Lumpur. Excusing myself from the generals, I dashed over to Col. Otsuki's office to report what had happened. He

attributed the success to the two colonels from Imperial General Headquarters and encouraged me to win the generals' support when they came to Kuala Lumpur. Staff officers of the Yamashita headquarters were delighted, their eyes wide open in wonder, at my amazing success with the two generals and their staff.

We flew to Kuala Lumpur arriving past noon, and the two generals and the staff officers of the War Ministry and the Army General Staff were driven to rear command headquarters as previously arranged by their adjutants. I motored back to *F kikan* headquarters with Lieut. Yamaguchi who met me at the airport. He congratulated me by saying: 'Sir, you've made it.' While the young officers of the *F kikan* rejoiced in my success, they could scarcely hide their anxiety as to whether the two generals would be favourably impressed. I sent for Pritam and Capt. Mohan at once to explain what had transpired in Kluang. They, too, were delighted, appreciating what I had gone through. We planned a schedule for the generals to enable them to appreciate our aims without excessive pomp and ceremony.

We made arrangements for the generals to see, first of all, I.N.A. barracks and review the troops, to meet Pritam and Capt. Mohan at I.N.A. headquarters, followed by a meeting between the staff officers of Imperial General Headquarters and Capt. Mohan at the 25th Army rear headquarters, and finally to present my report to the two generals. Pritam and Capt. Mohan set to work at once. An inspection and a review started at about 4.00 P.M. Despite the lack of advance notice, I.N.A. officers and men impressed the generals with their smart turnout and drill, good discipline, and serious behaviour.

Following the review, the two generals met Capt. Mohan at I.N.A. headquarters, who in a precise voice and with dignity expressed the single-mindedness of his officers and men, explaining the present state of the I.N.A. and thanking them for the Japanese military's support given to the I.N.A. through the *F kikan*. As had been previously agreed between Capt. Mohan and myself, the former refrained from touching upon concrete problems at this meeting. In response, the generals praised Mohan's and Pritam's resoluteness. After they left

I.N.A. headquarters, Capt. Mohan, Capt. Akram and I followed the two generals immediately and paid a visit to the staff officers of Imperial General Headquarters at rear army headquarters. Lieut. Kunizuka accompanied our party as an interpreter. The purpose of our visit was to enable Capt. Mohan and the staff officers to have a free and frank discussion without setting any specific topics and to give them an opportunity to sound out Capt. Mohan's principles. The two generals, I surmised, were to size up whether Capt. Mohan, whom I supported, was worthy of receiving assistance from Japan as a matter of national policy. I did not doubt the tremendous significance of the forthcoming meeting.

Since my first meeting with Capt. Mohan in Alor Star, I had complete trust in him and faith in his ability to command a revolutionary army wisely. I was also well acquainted with the Japanese staff officers from Imperial General Headquarters who were going to meet Capt. Mohan, as senior officers of superior intelligence and quality. The discussion was conducted in a friendly atmosphere. I sat in on the meeting with keen interest, holding my breath as I waited for them to begin. During their conference, Capt. Mohan made a great impression on the staff officers.

Col. Okamura: 'To my shame I must confess that I have no knowledge about the national character of the Indian. Have you studied the national character of the Japanese? I believe it is extremely important that we understand each other if Japanese and Indians are going to collaborate.'

Capt. Mohan: 'I, too, have very little knowledge about the national character of the Japanese. I have, however, read with interest a book written in English entitled *Bushido*. The book explained the Three Imperial Regalia – the sword expressing valour, the jade signifying benevolence, and the mirror meaning justice. I understand that these three Imperial Regalia symbolize the *Nippon seishin*. Since my encounter with Japanese armies in the first battle at the border, I have witnessed the bravery of Japanese soldiers. Also I have seen for myself their goodwill, harmony, justice and courage through the examples of Fujiwara and his *F kikan* agents.

'We Indians also respect goodwill, justice, and faith. I believe

we share common national traits through our common cultures nurtured in the Orient.'

Col. Okamura: 'May I be so bold as to ask this question? I understand that it is difficult in India to promote united action for Indian independence because of religious rivalries, the traditional caste system, and antagonism between different ethnic groups. I would like to hear your opinion.'

Capt. Mohan: 'I do not agree with such a viewpoint. I am on the opinion that patriotism must transcend loyalty to one's religion and ethnic group. The caste system, which is a remnant of old tradition, and is an inhumane and anti-social contradiction, is gradually being rectified. The solution of the problem is not so difficult; foreigners tend to exaggerate it. The British have overstated the case and have helped promote it in order to control India. Based on this conviction, I have organized the I.N.A. and have been training its soldiers, ignoring religious and ethnic differences, in the primary objective of liberating the motherland through struggle. There has never been a case of trouble amongst my men who are moved by patriotism and loyalty to the nation. The fact testifies eloquently and endorses my principles.'

Col. Okamura: 'I hear that the Burmese are hostile towards Indians living in Burma. Japanese forces are now driving into Burma aimed at liberating the Burmese. This problem is a matter of serious concern to us. Would you care to state your opinion on this question?'

Capt. Mohan: 'We must recognize why the Burmese possess ill feelings towards Indians. We Indians have some sort of superiority complex over the Burmese. We Indians are very successful in business compared with the Burmese and control real estate and commerce. Furthermore, the British do not employ Burmese in the military and police services as they are afraid this would help their independence movement. They also use Indian soldiers and policemen to suppress the Burmese independence movement. I believe this is the reason why the Burmese harbour ill sentiments towards Indians. These conflicting interests and emotional antagonism between them are very serious, but I don't believe that they are so difficult as to be insoluble. The problem could be easily solved if great

leaders of both nations discuss it candidly from the standpoint of Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity principles, having once freed themselves from the yoke of British control.'

The preceding excerpts are just a few examples of their dialogue. Capt. Mohan succeeded in persuading the staff officers of Imperial General Staff with his conviction, intelligence, enthusiasm, and personality. After Capt. Mohan and Capt. Akram had taken their leave, Col. Okamura went to report something to the two generals in another room. Then they invited me into their office.

Offering me a chair, Gen. Tanaka questioned me in his loud accusing voice: 'Fujiwara, you have brought us all the way to Kuala Lumpur. According to a report brought to me by one of my staff officers, Capt. Mohan whom you hold in such high esteem is just a small fly.' For a second, I felt indignant at the general's unexpected comment. The next moment, I realized that what Gen. Tanaka was saying was quite different from what he was thinking, judging from the good impression he had received of the I.N.A. at the review and of Capt. Mohan at their meeting. I became aware that he was playing the game of *haragei*[42] (art of stomach language) in order to test my conviction. In reply I said firmly: 'Sir, that is not true. I now have more trust and respect for Capt. Mohan than ever, after listening to his statement in the conference just ended. If there is such a staff officer who has some misunderstanding about him, I would like to hear directly from him the reason why he has a contrary opinion.' Gen. Tanaka barked at me in his cold voice: 'It is a report given to me by my trusted staff officer. Do you dare to challenge it?' 'Yes, sir,' I said and added proudly: 'I insist that the report is false as far as I am concerned, no matter that it is presented to you by your staff officer in whom you have confidence. I have known Capt. Mohan through fifty days of living together, sharing life and death. I am positive that my observation is right.'

At my positive assertion, Gen. Tanaka moderated the tone of his voice saying sarcastically: 'Capt. Mohan was after all a British officer. He is neither a statesman nor a revolutionary. Besides, he is still too young. Compared with prominent leaders in India, he is unknown to the Indian people. He is

only a pawn in a chess game.' I told myself not to be discouraged by his remark and defended my position: 'True, he is only a captain as you say, who is not only young but also has not been through the baptism of revolutionary experience. There are many revolutionaries with a military background. Many famous revolutionaries were unknown young men at first. An obscure young man can become a great revolutionary if only he has unselfish patriotism, revolutionary enthusiasm, strong power of execution, intelligence and virtue. I think he would become such a revolutionary leader. You, sir, described Capt. Mohan as just a pawn in a chess game, but I don't agree with you on that score. Of course, I don't mean to suggest that he is a rook or a bishop. Conceding that he is a pawn, as you say, we can promote the pawn depending upon his quality and diligence, and a pawn can checkmate a king.'

Gen. Tanaka said 'Yes', while Gen. Tominaga was watching me with a kind look. I pressed further:

'It is not necessary for me to expound the need to support India's independence and to cooperate with India in order to achieve the objectives of the Greater East Asia War, to build a new order in Greater Asia that is Japan's ideal. Nevertheless, Japan has been negligent in formulating a policy aimed at cooperating with the leaders of India nor has she made any effort towards it. That is the reason why we do not have a great leader like Chandra Bose on our side.

'Fortunately, we have been able to get the collaboration of Capt. Mohan and thousands of I.N.A. officers and men as well as hundreds of thousands of Indians in Malaya. If Japan openly proclaims to the world her policy towards India and implements it throughout Greater Asia, as I have suggested, she will be able to rally some tens of thousands of Indian soldiers and several millions of Indians in Asia in an anti-British-Indian national independence struggle. There is no alternative now for Japan but to cooperate for liberation, independence, and a new order in Greater Asia. Pritam and Capt. Mohan are resolved to sacrifice their lives for the liberation of the fatherland and they have no selfish motives or ambitions. They are prepared to hand over command of the I.N.A. and the I.I.L. at any time if they are able to acquire a greater leader. They

are, as a matter of fact, most anxious and eager to invite Chandra Bose.'

Gen. Tanaka for a while kept silent and said suddenly: 'I don't need to hear your opinions any further. Give me a report containing concrete proposals for the policy.' Though taken back by his scornful remark, I mustered my courage and explained in detail the outline of my policy which I had elucidated to Col. Ozeki of Imperial General Staff at Ipoh. When I had finished, Gen. Tanaka snapped a single sentence at me: 'I have heard your report for information.' He did not give any sign of agreement which I hoped for. Unsatisfied with the result, I was fidgeting when Gen. Tominaga interjected by saying 'Thank you for your presentation. Have a drink' and offered me a glass of whisky. Gen. Tanaka also took a whisky with a word of appreciation to me. I was not sure whether I had succeeded or failed, but I had a hunch that I had scored a point judging from the two generals' reactions. My conviction was strengthened when Gen. Tominaga asked me whom I would recommend for chief of a more powerful organization that would replace the *F kikan*, should Japanese policy towards India be expanded as I had suggested. I said that I wished to see the appointment of a man of sincerity and broad knowledge, possessing political wisdom. I was convinced that Gen. Tanaka, in view of the importance of my report, was trying to test my faith by deliberately pretending to be unconvinced. To come to think of it, they would not in any case give their consent on the spot on such an important matter to a junior officer like me without consulting the War Minister and chief of the Army General Staff. When I had taken leave of the generals, thanking them for their visit, staff officers of Imperial General Headquarters gathered around me asking what had transpired. I answered: 'They really grilled me.'

Col. Okamura reassured me by saying, 'You can count on success if Gen. Tanaka grilled you,' and praised Capt. Mohan's personality which belied his young age. I felt more confident of success, though I still had a little apprehension. On my way home, I stopped at Capt. Mohan's house to thank him. He asked my opinion about his performance at the conference

that day, and I said he had done splendidly beyond my expectation. Knowing my liking for alcohol, he asked his adjutant to bring a bottle of whisky as a gesture of appreciation. Our friendship, in which we trusted and respected each other, having nothing to hide, was a pure and happy one.

When I returned to headquarters past midnight, my staff were still awake waiting for my return. Imbued with optimism, we shared a celebratory drink and I told them what had transpired in the meetings that day.

Early the following morning, the two generals departed from Kuala Lumpur airport for Saigon. Lieut. Yamaguchi and I saw them off and they gave me a few words of encouragement.

Beckoning to me from the generals' party, Lt.-Col. Kondo gave me the following message: 'Gen. Tanaka appreciates the importance of your work, with which he is much pleased. He wishes you success for your diligent devotion to the task. He considers your report as being very useful and proper. Since your task is extremely important, he would like to see it progress with the utmost care.' Then he added: 'Your report has won the generals' sympathy. I am positive that it will be approved by the central army authorities.' I was very grateful for the thoughtfulness of Col. Kondo and Col. Okamura as they had each acted as a friend in time of need. After the aeroplane had taken off I felt exhausted, being released from tension.

* * *

On the evening of 30 January, an advance unit of the 5th Division captured Johore Bahru. The British had destroyed the only bridge between the peninsula and Singapore.

Onan of the K.M.M. had been training his members in preparation for action in Singapore. On 4 February I learnt that a general offensive against Singapore would commence on the 9th. The same day I received two orders from 25th Army command headquarters. One was a copy of Gen. Terauchi's order to Gen. Yamashita, and the other was the latter's directive based upon Terauchi's. Gen. Terauchi's order said:

'The Commander of the 25th Army is requested to despatch a unit of the *F kikan* to Burma. Under the command of Gen. Iida, commander-in-chief of the 15th Army, the *F kikan* is to expand and promote the I.I.L. and I.N.A. movement in Burma.' Gen. Yamashita's order said: 'Chief of the Fujiwara *kikan* is directed to despatch a number of agents to Burma in order to help expand I.I.L. and I.N.A. activities.' The instructions constituted one of the steps I had recommended and also represented Pritam's long-cherished desire, which Capt. Mohan also supported. Gen. Terauchi had thus already adopted my suggestion to expand our operations to Burma. The mission in Burma would be of great significance for us because Burma, with more than two million Indians, was India's next-door neighbour. Viewing the situation from a larger perspective, our advance into Burma would mark a turning point for greater expansion of our activities. Because the decisive battle of Singapore was approaching soon and the invasion of Sumatra was also expected, the decision to send agents to Burma would impose an extra burden on the *F kikan* which was already short-staffed. Field conditions in Burma could be expected to be far more difficult than those in Malaya in view of its large territory, underdeveloped transport system, and general backwardness. We had not yet planned the operation, which would be carried out in the wake of the advancing army. I would have to send able members to Burma, even though it meant undercutting our manpower for our activities in Malaya and Sumatra. Consequently, I selected Capt. Tsuchimochi, a senior officer of the *F kikan*, as my representative, with Ishikawa, Kitamura, and Takimura in whom I had complete faith. I was painfully aware that I was placing an unreasonably heavy burden of responsibility upon the four agents, but there was nothing the *F kikan* could do to alter the reality of the situation. We just had to rely upon the 15th Army's positive cooperation.

I met Capt. Mohan and Pritam and explained the war situation in Burma and the contents of Gen. Terauchi's order, with which they were very satisfied. As a result of our conference, we agreed upon sending to Burma, for the time being, an I.I.L. propaganda unit headed by Gopal Singh,

sixty I.N.A. propaganda agents commanded by Capt. Ram Sarup, and the four *F kikan* liaison officers led by Capt. Tsuchimochi. We made preparations right away for them to be able to leave Kuala Lumpur by train on 9 February.

At this stage, the state of the war in Burma was something as follows: On 31 January, having occupied Moulmein, a strategic city in southern Burma, and holding a position on the shore of the Salween River, the 15th Army was preparing for its next drive. British troops in this area had retreated west of the Salween River and parts of their army had retired overland to Rangoon. According to intelligence reports, reinforcements from India had arrived at Rangoon and seven divisions of the Chinese army were reported to have moved southwards from Yunnan into Burma.

At Supreme Headquarters in Saigon, Japanese strategists had been studying operational plans for the seizure of Rangoon and vital points in central Burma. Quite apart from this military offensive, the Japanese military had been involved in giving large-scale support to the pro-independence Thakin Party of Burma. This policy originated some time in the autumn of 1940.

With many leading nationalists under arrest by the British, Aung San and twenty-five young revolutionaries of the Thakin Party had been smuggled out of Burma by land and sea with the assistance of Japanese agents and under the protection of Imperial General Headquarters, and had received clandestine training at Sanya, Hainan Island. To support the independence movement, the Japanese military had set up the Minami *kikan*, a powerful organization consisting of scores of personnel from the Army and the Navy, under the command of Col. Suzuki Keiji[44]. At the outbreak of war in December 1941 the Minami *kikan* together with Aung San[45] and his young patriots advanced to Thailand where they called on Burmese living in Thailand to create the Burmese Independence Army, and drove into Burma alongside Japanese forces. The Burmese Independence Army received an enthusiastic welcome from their compatriots in southern Burma, and young Burmese flocked to join, its membership increasing day by day.

The Burmese Independence Army, consisting as it did of

great numbers who had no military training, did not play a significant part in military operations, but it aroused the national consciousness of the Burmese, awakening their anti-British, pro-independence, and pro-Japanese feelings. There was a very delicate problem between the Burmese nationalist movement, on the one hand, and the *F kikan*'s I.I.L. and I.N.A. activities in Burma, on the other, because the potential antagonism of the Burmese towards Indians living in Burma would inevitably surface. The Burmese and Japanese military authorities in Burma tended to disapprove of the loyalty of Indian residents in Burma to India, who instead, according to them, should have been loyal to Burma. Because the Japanese military planned at first to establish a military government in Burma and grant independence after an interim period, the Burmese appeared to be apprehensive about the I.I.L.'s independence movement in Burma. I was of the opinion, however, that these aspirations were not mutually exclusive, maintaining that the problem could be solved if high officials of the Japanese Army in Burma, leaders of Burmese nationalists, and Indian leaders were to get together and come to an understanding and take appropriate measures. The work to be undertaken in Burma by the I.I.L., I.N.A., and Capt. Tsuchimochi would be extremely difficult because of these delicate political considerations. For several days before their departure, I spent hours with Tsuchimochi explaining the problems in detail and laying down guidelines. Capt. Tsuchimochi and his three men prepared themselves for the challenge and promised to carry out their mission in spite of the enormous difficulties.

Capt. Ram Sarup had been selected by Capt. Mohan as he was a bold officer and a man of discretion with compassion for his men. He was proud to have been given the command of this difficult task. When he came to see me to bid farewell, he said that he and his group were honoured to have been given the first opportunity to 'drive into Mother India'. They were to depart on 10 February due to a change in train schedule.

At 2400 hours on 8 February, forces of the Yamashita Army commenced a general assault on the stronghold of

Singapore across from Johore Bahru. I.N.A. propaganda units and *F kikan* agents advanced to the front, in order to engage in a pacification campaign with all resources available. I too had to speed to Johore Bahru to take command of the operation, so I would not be able to see the agents off to Burma on the 10th. On the 8th, I went to the I.N.A. barracks to say goodbye to Capt. Ram Sarup and his men, and gave him my watch as a memento. All those present at the scene applauded. Also that night I had a drink of *sake* with Capt. Tsuchimochi and his team at a farewell party. Since the previous September we had been through thick and thin as comrades and brothers, and now we were parting company and going different ways – some north to the battlefield of Burma and the others south to the decisive battlefield at Singapore. When I thought to myself that this was the last occasion we would be together, I was filled with emotion and was reluctant to bid them farewell, staying until midnight. The same night Capt. Mohan, and Pritam too, no doubt, were holding a party for their men, sharing the same emotion with them.

In the early hours of 9 February, after a final handshake with Capt. Tsuchimochi, I departed for the front with Nagano.

11. Singapore

The only bridge connecting the Malay peninsula with Singapore Island had been destroyed by the British. The British forces, having lost sea and air superiority, were now completely isolated. The defence of the island consisted of the fort of Changi to the east and the fort at Blakang Mati on the western side of the city. While the island boasted of being impregnable, with seaward defences in the east and south, it was vulnerable against an attack in the north from the Malay peninsula. The Japanese military estimated that the British Army defending the island was 30,000 strong.

The Japanese forces attacking Singapore numbered approximately 50,000 including men engaged in transportation and supply services. Actual combat forces were no more than 20,000 strong. Of the three divisions available (5th, 18th, and Imperial Guard), only the 5th Division was a fully equipped army. In addition, the 25th Army had under its command two regiments of tank corps and three regiments of heavy artillery units. Except for the 18th Division, the other fighting units had suffered heavy casualties during fierce engagements on the Malay peninsula, though morale was still sky-high. The air corps possessing 140 aeroplanes was the decisive factor favouring the Japanese Army.

Gen. Yamashita's plan was to attack the enemy to the west of the Causeway while at the same time mounting a diversionary attack to hold down British forces at Seletar. On 7 February, he deployed the Imperial Guard Division to the east of Johore Bahru, ordering a unit of the Division to take

Ubin Island early on the 8th. Then artillery units bombarded the enemy position at Seletar from a fake encampment on the front. While the British forces were preoccupied with fighting on this eastern front, the main strength of the 25th Army seized their opportunity and at 2400 hours on 8 February commenced amphibious operations from the western front of the Causeway with the objective of occupying Tengah airfield. Imperial Guards who had engaged in the diversionary operation then crossed the Johore Strait on the night of the 9th from the western front of the Causeway, driving towards Bukit Mandai. The area between the hills of Bukit Timah and Bukit Mandai was an extremely important strategic position for the defending British forces against the Japanese attack from the north. The actual city of Singapore lay only a short distance from Bukit Timah, and reservoirs controlling the lives of a million Singaporeans were situated to the southeast of Bukit Mandai. Before the British troops could attempt an organized resistance at this strategic line, the Japanese forces drove furiously to capture it.

On the morning of 10 February I arrived at the *Istana Besar* of Johore and climbed to the top of an artillery observation post. Black smoke belched from scores of burning crude oil tanks in Seletar and Bukit Panjang, which had been bombarded by Japanese artillery and aerial attacks since 8 February, and numerous dense clouds of smoke could be seen rising high up into the sky over Singapore in the distance. Hundreds of shells from British anti-aircraft guns exploded into the air trying to shoot down Japanese aeroplanes flying through the black smoke in the blue sky. The booming sound of Japanese and British artillery filled the air and shook the ground. Singapore looked like a nightmarish inferno.

Straightaway I boarded a craft of the amphibious units in order to proceed to the command post of Gen. Yamashita near Tengah airfield. Enemy trench mortar shells from Bukit Mandai landed a short distance from our boat.

Half-grown rubber trees covered the area near Tengah and the ground, the tree trunks and the leaves were black with soot.

The Japanese forces, having succeeded in their surprise

amphibious operations, captured Tengah airfield the previous evening and were forcing their way to Bukit Timah. They had not occupied Bukit Mandai yet, however. In the rubber plantations around Tengah, enemy stragglers left behind the Japanese lines were fighting their way out in retreat everywhere. Gen. Yamashita's command post was in a plantation located at the western end of Tengah airfield.

Large-calibre fortress guns at Blakang Mati bombarded the neighbourhood of Tengah airfield with their huge shells which looked like drums. Staff officers of the 25th Army went around to the divisions to urge them on. They were very critical of a false report that the Imperial Guards had occupied Bukit Timah. They were at a loss as to how to continue the attack on Bukit Timah. Maj.-Gen. Manaki, deputy chief of staff, hastened to the Imperial Guards to supervise their fighting. Part of the Imperial Guards and the 5th Division had been attacking the enemy at the Ford Automobile Company works in the north of Bukit Timah and in the east. Yamashita, however, ordered the Imperial Guards to leave the battlefield to the 5th Division and to attack the enemy further east at Nee Soon.

As the battle line moved southwards, coordination between Japanese fighting units in Singapore and the tank and heavy artillery units left behind in Johore became difficult. On top of this, the British counter-attack all of a sudden became intensified. Upon recognizing Yamashita's diversionary tactics as such, the British reinforced their defence at Bukit Timah by transferring troops from Changi Fortress and the sea coast of Seletar, where they had concentrated their forces in anticipation of a Japanese attack in that area. In the evening of that day (the 10th) I moved as far as Bukit Panjang and set up a command post in the police station at an intersection. The battle situation was changing moment by moment.

The Japanese had underestimated the British strength at 30,000. Japanese artillerymen and tanks were left far behind in Johore largely because the Causeway still remained unrepaired. As the British counter-attack mounted in intensity every moment, the Japanese forces faced a very serious crisis. The battles at Bukit Timah and Bukit Mandai were decisive

ones that might very well determine the outcome and fate of the war between the Japanese and British armies.

The following day was National Founding Day commemorating Japan's 2,602nd year. Gen. Yamashita ordered leaflets to be dropped from the air urging British troops to surrender. Japanese soldiers made desperate efforts to capture Singapore on this auspicious day in order to relieve His Majesty's concern and to fulfil the nation's expectations. Enemy resistance increased from the morning of that day. The Imperial Guards, after many hours of struggle, finally captured Bukit Timah that evening, but the British position on the Nee Soon front remained unchanged. Maj.-Gen. Manaki was desperately urging the soldiers to fight even harder.

On the evening of the 11th, the 5th Division captured Hill 255 which faced Bukit Timah across a highway, and the 18th Division was fighting bitterly at close quarters on the western side of Bukit Timah. The enemy defence along this line was beginning to buckle and Japanese troops were gaining ground. They were reaching a position where they could overlook the city of Singapore a short distance away, but the British counter-offensive was also reaching a climax. Thanks to heroic work in repairing the Causeway, it became possible to cross on the 12th and tanks and heavy artillery moved forward to a position facing Bukit Timah.

To help in this great battle, I worked out the final plans for our activities. We had to win as many Indians as possible from the British Indian Army before the British forces retreated from Singapore to Java and Sumatra. In case the British defenders were determined to fight to the last, it was necessary to recruit Indian soldiers from the British forces and Indian citizens in Singapore to our side in order to undermine British resistance, thus avoiding bloodshed between Japanese and Indians.

To prepare for this decisive battle, Capt. Mohan had organized and trained in Kuala Lumpur a propaganda unit under the command of Capt. Allah Ditta, while we formed three powerful I.I.L. pacification units. The main force of the Allah Ditta party was to accompany an Imperial Guard unit to capture Ubin Island and to take charge of propaganda

activities against British-Indian troops in the Changi district. Lieut. Yonemura and Kamimoto went along with the Allah Ditta party. Moreover, part of the Allah Ditta unit accompanied the main force of the Imperial Guard Division in order to engage in a campaign to induce Indian soldiers in Bukit Mandai to surrender. Another unit remained at headquarters as a reserve.

The Imperial Guards' attack on the British-Indian position at Nee Soon which began on the 11th had not succeeded by the morning of the 13th. The tank corps was at a standstill and anxiety prevailed in the battlefield.

The British force facing the Imperial Guards was an Indian regiment. After discussing the situation, Lieut. Nakamiya and Capt. Allah Ditta moved fearlessly to the very front line. Maj.-Gen. Manaki, who happened to be visiting the front to supervise the battle, and Japanese and enemy soldiers watched their daring act with bated breath. Capt. Allah Ditta of the I.N.A. propaganda unit dashed to a skirmish line. Shielding himself behind a large rubber tree, he stood like a guardian god at a temple gate and shouted in a loud voice urging the Indian soldiers on the other side to join the I.N.A. His daring and solemn action with which he spoke of his conviction from the bottom of his heart for national liberation and freedom produced a visible impact upon the Indian officers and men.

They stopped shooting and listened to his speech in silence. They were carried away by his appeal and responded with a cheer. At that moment the resistance of the British-Indian regiment crumbled and its soldiers discarded their arms and joined the I.N.A. The incident spread like lightning to Indian soldiers deployed in the rear. Surrendered British-Indian troops were issued a certificate by Nakamiya and ordered to proceed to the intersection at Bukit Panjang. The I.N.A. propaganda unit and Nakamiya's units went off to another war zone near Nee Soon. The surrendered Indian soldiers formed into companies and marched away from the front, with a single Japanese escort, passing between the units of Imperial Guards. This unexpected incident stunned Japanese officers and soldiers. I came across the surrendered Indian

regiment flocking towards *F kikan* headquarters at Bukit Panjang, when in the afternoon of 13 February I was on my way to Nee Soon to view the pacification campaign. Just then, Maj.-Gen. Manaki and a staff officer of the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces, who were on their way back from the front, stopped me and told briefly about the incredible scene they had witnessed, praising the impact of *F kikan* activities. I turned around in haste to return to Bukit Panjang in order to make arrangements for receiving the Indians. We quartered them in a British camp north of the town which was in good condition. Together with the Indians who surrendered in the Bukit Timah district, the number of defected soldiers had nearly reached a thousand by the evening of the 13th.

The battlefront shifted in the evening to the line between the Keppel Fort and the racecourse and the fighting was still very fierce. Japanese and British artillery were firing with such intensity that I wondered whether the shells might collide with each other in the air. The British barrage was concentrated upon a forked junction at Bukit Timah and they caused heavy casualties on the Japanese side. Japanese soldiers were so terrified that they named the intersection 'Murderous Fork Road'. Japanese artillerymen began to complain of a shortage of ammunition. The 18th and 5th Divisions had suffered casualties of more than thirty per cent and the British forces still put up a stubborn resistance. If the British Army were to resist to the last man, resorting to street fighting in Singapore, the Japanese forces would face the horrifying prospect of catastrophe. We were now fighting with our backs to the wall, and the situation was so precarious that anxiety was beginning to envelop 25th Army headquarters. Gen. Suzuki, chief of staff, invited me to his headquarters. After explaining the seriousness of the battle situation, he strongly demanded that the resistance of the British Indian Army be brought to an end with an all-out effort by the *F kikan* in cooperation with the I.N.A. and I.I.L.

To comply with his wishes, I decided to lead a propaganda operation, together with the I.N.A. and I.I.L. pacification units who were waiting in reserve in Bukit Panjang, deep into

the front at Bukit Timah Road, where the most fierce fighting was taking place. The time had come for all of us, including members of the K.M.M. who were to filter into the city in order to undertake a rescue operation to free their comrades.

Just then Lieut. Nakamiya returned from Nee Soon after having completed his mission there. He joined us as we set off for Bukit Timah Road.

Though we were nailed down for four hours at 'Murderous Fork Road' by concentrated bombardments by British artillery, we had been able to penetrate by dawn to the foot of a hill not far from Raffles College by dodging the enemy's concentrated fire and by taking advantage of a lull in enemy shellings. The broad flat road was strewn with leaves and branches which had been stripped from the trees which lined the street by shelling. The scene of destruction was just like the aftermath of a typhoon.

Shells from both sides were crossing above us. Shells from the British side were flying high overhead and exploding way behind our position. Actually we felt greater danger to our safety from Japanese bombardments. Guided and inspired by Lieut. Nakamiya's bravery and judgment, our party of thirty came through alive without a single casualty. There were no Japanese units in this area, but everything stood still as if it were the dead centre of a typhoon. A Chinese came from behind the hill and gave us detailed information about the position of the British forces. Lieut. Nakamiya directed Onan and his K.M.M. members and I.N.A. units to penetrate into an area behind the botanical garden.

At this time the centre of battle had shifted to a rolling hill to the north of Bukit Timah and the Keppel Fort. The battlefront at Bukit Timah had become an empty zone free from the rain of shellings and machine-gun fire. Seizing the opportunity, we motored back to headquarters in Bukit Panjang at full speed. It was nine o'clock in the morning when we arrived.

All the members of the *F kikan* had arrived from Kuala Lumpur, and Kamimoto was waiting for me with a sad and painful look. He brought me the news that *Harimau* (Tani) had gone down with malaria again in late January and was in a

serious condition. According to his report, *Harimau*'s health had deteriorated while he was leading Malay volunteers in guerilla activities behind the British position near Gemas to destroy enemy trains and cut telephone lines. I ordered Kamimoto to take him to an army hospital in Johore as soon as possible and to attend to him.

None of my men was dispensable, particularly *Harimau*. When I thought about his past chequered career and heroic dedication, I did not wish to lose him through illness. Perhaps I could reconcile myself to his dying in action but I could not resign myself to his death resulting from illness. I demanded the impossible of Kamimoto, ordering him 'not to let *Harimau* die', then I handed him a letter from *Harimau*'s mother that I had been carrying with me in my pocket, requesting him to read it to *Harimau*. I had received the letter from a staff officer from Imperial General Headquarters at Ipoh. It was written in a good handwriting by an elder sister on behalf of *Harimau*'s mother and every line conveyed a heart-warming, gentle compassion and love, and the valiant words of encouragement that *Harimau* had been anxiously waiting to hear. The gist of the letter was as follows:

> Dear Yutaka:
>
> I cried when I read your letter, which I re-read several times. Mother and I are delighted to learn that you have been born again as an honest man and a Japanese who honours justice, and that you have resolved to dedicate yourself to the service of your country. Mother now feels very proud of you. She not only forgives you but also respects you. We hope you will render distinguished service. Mother and all of us in the family are in good health.
>
> We are praying every day for your success in war. Do your best for the country without worrying about mother and us.

Kamimoto, a warm-hearted man, who had been working together with *Harimau* in enemy territory since April of the previous year even before the establishment of the *F kikan*, wept when he read the letter. Saying that *Harimau* was sure to

regain his health when he saw the letter and that he would see to it that he got well, Kamimoto departed for Gemas.

Shattering this emotional atmosphere, a heavy bombardment fired from Blakang Mati by fortress artillery flew overhead and exploded around us, shaking the ground and cracking the reinforced concrete walls of the jail of the police station, which the *F kikan* was using as its office.

* * *

The fierce battle lasted all through the night of the 14th and the situation had not changed by the morning of the 15th. Wounded soldiers were carried to the rear by tanks. The 18th Division captured the Keppel Fort and a 150-metre hill, and the 5th Division controlled a graveyard, while the Imperial Guard Division made an incursion into the eastern part of the city and succeeded in occupying Kalang airfield. Japanese aircraft operating from Kluang to and fro like a piston engine made bombing sorties over British positions. The British forces tenaciously held on, throwing all available firepower at us. Their shellings were so intense that I wondered if the barrels of their guns and rifles might not split.

In contrast, the Japanese were facing an acute shortage of ammunition. The lack of firepower was supplemented with hand-to-hand fighting and it was painful to see them dying. The Japanese air force that was demonstrating its superiority over Singapore and the balloons which hovered over the city were the only things keeping up the morale of the Japanese troops. Anxiety prevailed in the command post of the 25th Army. Just then, the news that a British *parlementaire* had proposed surrender struck the battlefield like an electric shock wave, followed by another report that negotiations for surrender between commanders of both armies would be held at the Ford Company building at Bukit Timah at 4.00 P.M. We were excited at the news. The cracking sound of Japanese gunnery at the front appeared to have regained its intensity, perhaps resulting from the spread of the cheerful report. Immediately, I passed the information to I.N.A. and I.I.L. units and proceeded to army headquarters in a hurry.

At six o'clock in the evening, a dramatic meeting between Gen. Yamashita and Gen. Percival took place. After one hour of negotiations, Gen. Yamashita pressed the British commander hard with a demand that the latter say 'yes' or 'no' to unconditional surrender. With that final demand, the British general accepted unconditional surrender.

The circumstances leading up to Gen. Yamashita's stern demand that Gen. Percival surrender were as follows.

No sooner had negotiations started than Gen. Percival requested permission to ask several questions, through Major Cyril Wild[46] (an interpreter, who had reached the rank of colonel when the war ended, and after the war was determined to hunt out Japanese war criminals to have his revenge). Gen. Yamashita granted his request, whereupon Gen. Percival put questions such as: 'Will the Japanese forces stay out of the city proper of Singapore and can some British troops remain in the city to maintain security, can the British forces be granted sufficient time – about twenty-four hours – to communicate to all fighting units to cease hostilities, and can British officials take their wives and children with them to a detention camp?' He asked all sorts of routine questions endlessly, while fighting was going on as the night was descending upon us. It appeared that he was attempting to transform the negotiations for surrender into negotiations for a truce, and Yamashita's staff officers at the meeting began to have serious misgivings about the lack of progress in the negotiations. They complained to Yamashita, who until then had been replying to Percival's questions with magnanimity. He came to the conclusion that he must put the demand to the British commander whether he would 'accept an unconditional surrender or not,' and that his questions should be dealt with by 'staff officers of both armies as routine business'. Yamashita was concerned with a dwindling supply of munitions and increasing casualties, and he could not afford to let the negotiations drag on much longer if he was to avert the crisis that his armies were facing. The situation was so critical that Yamashita, in order to end the war, made his high-handed demand to Percival for surrender. In the midst of joy and excitement, I felt pity for Percival who was unfortunate enough to accept surrender.

An observation balloon that had guided Japanese artillery shellings over Bukit Panjang now trailed a bunting inscribed with the characters for 'The enemy has surrendered'. When the Japanese soldiers saw it, they embraced each other and cried. Thunderous roars of '*banzai*' echoed through the hills that were enveloped in the darkness of night. Singapore, the impregnable fortress and the citadel of the British Empire, had fallen at last. It was like a dream. Everyone appeared in a state of trance and paralysis after being released from tension, and then they rejoiced with excitement at having miraculously survived the battle. At the same time, each thought of his comrades who had fallen in battle and became struck with sadness. Everyone had mixed feelings of excitement and sadness, not knowing what to think or what to do.

While everyone was in a deeply emotional state of mind, the 25th Army issued orders for taking control of Singapore. The *F kikan* received a new order to accept Indian POWs and to gather information about political prisoners who had been detained by the British Army. Immediately, I ordered Lieut. Yamaguchi to go to Kuala Lumpur to deliver the order to I.N.A., I.I.L., and K.M.M. headquarters, requesting them to advance to Singapore. To Lieut. Nakamiya, I gave an order to set up offices for the *F kikan*, I.I.L., I.N.A., K.M.M. and the Sumatran Youth Association, and I asked Lieut. Yonemura, who was on Pulau Ubin, to visit *Harimau* who was in hospital in Johore. Finally, I immersed myself in drafting an outline for the implementation of the new order. From time to time I suffered a strange auditory illusion that fighting was going on somewhere in the battlefield, which was utterly quiet. It was the same hallucination, in which one feels the sensation of the pitching and rolling of a ship and hears the sound of the screw, after having disembarked after a rough sailing.

* * *

On the morning of 16 February, with authorization secured from the chief of staff, we set up our headquarters in Singapore. That day it took only five minutes to drive along Bukit Timah Road, compared with the eight hours it had taken us on

the night of the 13th to advance from the intersection of Bukit Panjang to a hill to the west of Raffles College. Houses and trees on both sides of the road were scarred by bullets and trees were split open, reminding us of the fierce fighting that had taken place. We were painfully touched to see brand-new graveposts, decorated with helmets, canteens, and strange red tropical flowers, that had obviously been set up the night before by the survivors to bury their fallen comrades, for whom they wept as they reported the victory to them.

By Gen. Yamashita's special order, ordinary soldiers were banned from entering the city; only military police and auxiliary military police were permitted into the city to maintain security. At the city limits, checkpoints were set up to regulate not only the traffic of military units but also that of individual soldiers.

There was not a soul to be seen on the streets, apparently almost all of the one million residents were hiding behind closed doors in fear and apprehension. As a result of the week-long bombardment countless houses had been destroyed and the stench of decaying bodies buried under ruined buildings filled the air.

Lieut. Nakamiya had selected for our headquarters one of the official residences of British police officers, located not too far from Raffles College in the western part of Singapore. The house exactly met my specifications – not a luxurious house but a detached building in the suburbs yet reasonably accessible. This official residential area had obviously been the first front line of the battle, judging from the equipment, munitions, and food scattered about in the houses and gardens, and the trenches which had been dug all around the residences, so much so that one had to pick one's way carefully in walking through the neighbourhood.

In the afternoon, 25th Army headquarters, the I.N.A. office, and the Sumatran youth group arrived in Singapore one after another.

A meeting between representatives of the Japanese and British forces was held that evening in British Army headquarters at Fort Canning to discuss details of transferring the control of Singapore to Japanese hands. It was decided

that the *F kikan* was to receive Indian POWs in Farrer Park the following day, the 17th.

According to a report by representatives of the British, the number of Indians was estimated at 50,000, in addition to another 50,000 *orang puteh* (European) prisoners. Japanese members of the committee were astounded at their own underestimate of the strength of the British forces in Singapore, which was believed to be 30,000, of which 10,000 to 13,000 were Indians. In short, the manpower of the British Army was several times larger than the Japanese. If the British had come to know about our shortage of manpower and munitions and if they had held out for a few more days, they could have defeated the Japanese forces. The thought really sobered us. Also I was anxious about how our small group of ill-prepared *F kikan* agents comprising four officers and a dozen civilians could cope with the housing, feeding, and sanitation of 50,000 Indian POWs. The *F kikan*, nevertheless, had to carry out the assigned task, and I racked my brains as we drove back to headquarters as to how to tackle this difficult problem. Lieut. Yonemura and Tashiro, as directed by me, went to the British Investigation Bureau to seize documents concerning political criminals arrested on charges of harbouring subversive ideas and activities. This was a new assignment given us by order of 25th Army headquarters. Lieut. Nakamiya was dashing round the city inspecting barracks which could be used for the surrendered Indians. Lieut. Yamaguchi was busy cleaning up and reinstating the neighbourhood of *F kikan* headquarters that was cluttered with scattered British equipment and arms.

After receiving reports from my staff, I gave them orders for the following day's activities. I instructed Nakamiya and Yonemura to find military barracks sufficient to accommodate 50,000 Indians and to inspect their facilities, to apportion billets, and to study means to requisition food and sanitary equipment. Officers of I.N.A. headquarters were supposed to assist them. I ordered Yamaguchi to arrange an acceptance ceremony to receive Indian POWs at Farrer Park. All the members of the *F kikan* scoured the city to accomplish the tasks given to them. Afterwards, I met with Capt. Mohan and Pritam to discuss the particulars of the ceremony for taking

over Indian POWs the following day. We agreed that the formalities should begin at 1300 hours on the 17th when a representative of the British Army would hand over Indian POWs to us. Following the transfer, I, representing the Japanese Army, was to deliver a speech, followed by Capt. Mohan, and Pritam, in that order, and I would then meet a group of Indian officers, and then Indian POWs were to be allocated to barracks according to our plan. We were in agreement that our speeches to the 50,000 Indian officers and men were of extreme importance, and it was vital that we get hold of a good microphone. In order to record this historical scene, I requested photographers from the Army Propaganda Unit to attend. I worked on drafting my speech, which had to be ready by the following morning. After being read by Capt. Mohan and Pritam, I planned to present it to Col. Sugita for his approval. That night I sat up until past midnight working on my speech, in which I stressed the following points:

1. One of Japan's war objectives was to liberate the peoples of Asia.
2. Japan would wish to see the achievement of India's national independence and would offer sympathetic and sincere aid as well as pledge that she had no territorial ambition in India.
3. The fall of Singapore offered an excellent opportunity for Indian independence.
4. The Japanese Army was proud of the activities of the I.I.L. and the I.N.A. and had been helping them. Their distinguished services in helping Indians stranded on the battlefield and Indian stragglers have received the highest praise.
5. The Japanese Army would treat Indian soldiers as equal friends.
6. The Japanese Army would not treat Indian soldiers as prisoners who joined the I.N.A. for the liberation of the Fatherland but would grant freedom to that movement by offering every possible assistance to it.
7. The Japanese Army would deal with the surrendered Indians through Capt. Mohan.
8. The Japanese Army would do its best to

> improve the supply of provisions to Indian soldiers. It should be understood, however, that in the case of an inadequate supply of provisions, it was due to unavoidable circumstances attributed to insufficient accumulation of foods and other goods resulting from an unexpectedly rapid development of the military operations.

While Lieut. Kunizuka was translating the speech into English, Capt. Mohan came to my office in great haste.

With a worried look, he said: 'According to a report from my men, one of the agents of the I.N.A. propaganda units has been arrested by a British officer. He may be executed for treason. I cannot leave him in the lurch. I wish to discuss with you how to rescue him.' I was pleased and touched by his concern and was resolved to extricate the agent, who was as much Capt. Mohan's man as my comrade. We learnt the name of the British officer who was detaining the I.N.A. agent. I anticipated some danger accompanying the operation because the British Army, that had been our enemy fighting against us until the day before, had not been disarmed even though the instrument of surrender had been signed. Nevertheless, we could not afford to vacillate because further delay might endanger his life. I decided to meet the British officer personally in his camp for negotiations, although Capt. Mohan restrained me from going alone, fearing for my safety. I persisted in my determination, saying that sending a young officer or requesting the *kempeitai*'s assistance would complicate the matter and would require more time. Accompanied by Capt. Mohan who volunteered to come along with me and by I.N.A. bodyguards, I went to the British unit guided by an I.N.A. propaganda agent who had witnessed the arrest. Admonishing my men to refrain from resorting to force unless provoked by British soldiers, I walked into the office of a British regimental commander.

I lodged a strong protest, saying to him: 'It is unreasonable to arrest and detain one of the I.N.A. agents whom the Japanese Army supports, because the British Army signed the surrender instrument on the 15th, yesterday.' Accepting my protest, the commanding officer released the I.N.A. agent

amicably, and I was glad to have been able to deal with the matter without further complications. Capt. Mohan embraced his rescued comrade and shed tears. It was a touching scene.

When we returned to headquarters, Capt. Mohan thanked me for my intervention. Although it was already past midnight, he and I studied a report by Lieut. Nakamiya on the logistics of accepting 50,000 Indian soldiers the following day. We agreed to house the majority of them in military barracks in Nee Soon and the rest in those in Kallang, while receiving the sick and wounded at a hospital wing which was to be erected at Nee Soon barracks.

I granted permission on my own authority for Indian POWs to carry with them as much bedding, clothing, food, and cooking utensils as possible and placed more than 100 lorries at their disposal to transport these goods without interference. Headquarters was in commotion from early morning to inspect accommodation and prepare for the ceremony in Farrer Park. Once more I sent for Pritam and Capt. Mohan and went over the draft of my speech. Upon securing their agreement, I visited Col. Sugita at Army headquarters for his approval. At the same time, I gave him a report of the preparations and plans for receiving Indian soldiers into custody, for which I was promised priority for the use of British military barracks and special consideration for supplies and sanitation. At 10.00 A.M. Capt. Mohan, Pritam, and I proceeded to Farrer Park, which was packed with units of Indian soldiers arriving from all directions. By noon the ground was filled. It had previously been used for horse racing. Standing on the first floor of the stand was Lt.-Col. Hunt, who was receiving reports from Indian troop commanders of their units and the number of soldiers.

Thanks to Lieut. Yamaguchi, a platform and a microphone had been set up in the central balcony. My attention was drawn to a tall, good-looking Sikh colonel, who, standing beside Col. Hunt, was giving instructions to troop units.

Capt. Mohan who was with me walked up to the Sikh colonel and talked with him for a while as if reporting to a respected senior officer. Looking down at Capt. Mohan, the colonel listened intently and sympathetically to his words.

Judging from this, I gathered that the colonel was the most senior Indian officer in the British Army in Singapore, who commanded respect and trust from his fellow officers. In a short while, Capt. Mohan brought the colonel over and introduced him to me. He was none other than Colonel Gill. After talking with him for a while, I was satisfied that my first impression was correct; he was a wise and dignified officer. I told him of Capt. Mohan's noble contributions and begged his strong support for Mohan's patriotic activities.

Also, I asked him straight out to act as my interpreter to translate my speech into Hindi. Col. Gill agreed without hesitation. At 1400 hours the assembling of troop units was not yet completed. Considering the time that would be required to march back to barracks and billet the soldiers, we could not afford to delay the ceremony further. I told Col. Hunt that I would now accept Indian soldiers who had already gathered and would receive afterwards those who had not assembled. At once, the acceptance ceremony started. Indian soldiers were ordered, through the microphone, to squat down facing the stand, and officers were requested to gather in the front rows. When Col. Hunt stood in front of the microphone, the attention of the Indian troops was focused on him. In a simple speech, Col. Hunt said simply and perfunctorily: 'Indian POWs are going to be handed over from now on to the Japanese Army and you will conduct yourselves according to the Japanese Army's directives', and then he gave a list of the surrendered troops, which were estimated at over 50,000. With the completion of the ceremony, all Indian officers and men came into our custody. Acknowledging acceptance, I asked Col. Hunt to leave the Park. In accordance with our plans, I stood first on the platform to deliver my speech. Fifty thousand pairs of eyes were turned upon me and stillness reigned in the Park. Lieut. Kunizuka, English translator, was standing beside me and Col. Gill, Hindi translator, was standing next to him. Representing the Japanese Army, I stood on the platform ready to declare to the 50,000 Indians the ideals of our mission. I felt tremendously excited as I faced this historic moment. Clenching the draft of my speech in one hand, I saluted the Indian soldiers in order to express

my friendship and sincerity. Sitting on the ground, they responded spontaneously with bow, salute, or prayer. At that moment I felt a heart-to-heart communication between them and myself. Speaking into the microphone and looking over the crowd, I addressed them with an opening phrase: 'My dear fellow Indian soldiers!' Their attention was drawn to my words. Then, I introduced myself: 'I am Major Fujiwara, chief of the *F kikan*. Representing the Japanese Army, I have come here to accept you Indian soldiers from the British Army and to bring you and the Japanese Army as well as the Indian peoples together.' As my speech flowed, which Lieut. Kunizuka translated into English, the officers in the front rows nodded their heads in agreement. As Col. Gill translated it into Hindi, tens of thousands of Indians sitting behind the officers nodded in approval. I had established a close communication with the Indian soldiers. They became enthusiastic as I expounded Japan's ideals of building a co-prosperity sphere in Asia and declared Japan's readiness to aid India's national independence. When I told them of my conviction that the fall of Singapore would provide a historic opportunity for Asian peoples who had suffered under the yoke of British and Dutch colonialism to liberate themselves from bondage, they went into a frenzy. The Park reverberated with such echoes of applause and shouts of joy, that I had to stop my speech until the tumultuous commotion subsided.

When I recounted the tale of the great achievements of Pritam's I.I.L. and Capt. Mohan's I.N.A. and declared the Japanese Army's all-out support for them, the audience shifted its attention to those standing behind me and greeted them with a resounding applause. I continued: 'The Japanese Army will not treat you as POWs but as friends. There was no reason for the Japanese Army to fight with you. We were sorry that we had to fight with you in the battlefield. Today, we no longer have to fight and are ready to be united in friendship by the will of God.'

I concluded my address by declaring that glorious national freedom and independence should be won with their own hands, by the rising of people for national self-determination, and that the Japanese Army was prepared to treat them as

friends, to recognize their freedom struggle, and to render assistance to them, if they voluntarily pledged their loyalty to the national liberation and independence of Mother India and joined the I.N.A. As I finished my speech, the whole Indian audience stood and shouted enthusiastically and thousands of caps were tossed into the air. They manifested their will to fight for India's liberation and independence by raising both hands. A dramatic emotion filled the Park. My speech lasted forty minutes and it provided a historic opportunity for the birth of the great I.N.A. Together with addresses given by Capt. Mohan and Pritam, my Farrer Park speech has remained a historical proclamation to be recorded in the history of India's independence movement. Later in a military court martial held in Delhi, it was this speech that the defence often quoted, arguing that Indian officers and men were freed from their loyalty to the British Crown by Col. Hunt's order and were handed over to the Japanese Army like a flock of sheep. They rose for Mother India which was the only object of their patriotism left for them. I.N.A. officers and men were not POWs when the Japanese Army declared them free; they did not collaborate with the Japanese Army against their will, the defence lawyers maintained.

Next Pritam and Mohan took their turns at the microphone and spoke in Hindi. They described the aims and activities of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. to date and expressed their resolve that they were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the nation and people by leading the struggle for national liberation and freedom. They spoke of the humiliation of the Indian people who had no freedom and independence and of their tragic past of subjugation for more than a hundred and so years and urged their compatriots to seize the opportunity and rise for the motherland. Every single word and phrase, spoken from their hearts, evoked an enthusiastic reaction from the audience.

Continuous applause, flying caps, waving hands, and the crowd surging forward to the stand turned the Park into a scene of wild excitement. Echoes of sound reverberated. Tens of thousands of officers and men pledged themselves to Capt. Mohan in the cause of national liberation. The Farrer Park meeting thus ended in success.

I told Col. Gill and Capt. Mohan that I wished to meet them and all the officers in an adjoining hall. Col. Gill immediately called together all the officers to meet me. As we sat in a circle I invited them to put to me frankly any questions they wished to ask, and I would be prepared to reply. They questioned me closely regarding Japan's real aim in helping the Indian independence movement, the substance of Japan's aid, relations between the I.N.A. and the Japanese Army, the organization of the I.N.A., and equipment problems. I responded to their queries with the memorandum exchanged between Col. Tamura and Pritam and the minutes of the conference between Capt. Mohan and myself.

As for specific questions relating to organization, equipment, and cooperation, I had to concede frankly that they would have to be ironed out through future negotiations. Through this meeting I was able to arrive at an understanding and friendship with the Indian officers. When the conference was over, Col. Gill gave an order to allocate barracks to the soldiers.

The 50,000 Indian soldiers who had packed the Park marched off to their respective billets with the assistance of *F kikan* and I.N.A. agents. By evening they had completed billeting.

At the conclusion of the assembly, Capt. Mohan and I returned to headquarters, as I had an appointment with Goho[47] and Menon[48], representatives of the Indian community in Singapore. They were familiar with the nature and mission of the *F kikan* and with me since they had heard about us from Pritam. They were well acquainted with the I.N.A. and I.I.L. and with the successful meeting at Farrer Park, and I also knew them by reputation. From the moment of our first meeting, we were able to talk on intimate terms as though we were old friends; we did not need to explain things in detail. I was deeply impressed by Mr. Goho's sincerity, willpower, and executive ability with which he tried to protect the freedom, honour, and interest of his compatriots at the risk of his life, and by his political wisdom, magnanimity and compassion. At this meeting, we discussed their support for I.I.L. activities, Goho's appointment as chairman of the I.I.L. office in Singapore, and an assembly of Indians which was

scheduled for the 19th. In the evening of the 17th I invited Goho, Menon, staff officers of the I.I.L. and I.N.A., and Col. Gill to dinner, which was a happy occasion like a family reunion. Goho, Gill and I were tied by trust and friendship. My most significant day as chief of the *F kikan* since the commencement of hostilities passed in this manner.

Mohan, commander of the I.N.A., was now to command a total of 55,000 Indian soldiers including those surrendered to the Japanese during the campaign in Malaya. For the first time in the long and tortuous history of the Indian national movement, the Indians now possessed a revolutionary army – the prerequisite for an independence struggle. Amongst the surrendered officers were Colonel Gill and Major Bhonsle (both Sandhurst graduates) and about twenty senior officers, creating a potential difficulty with regard to Capt. Mohan's leadership. On the recommendation of I.N.A. officers, who understood the delicate problem, he was promoted to Major-General in command of the revolutionary I.N.A. I also paid respect to him as 'general'. In post-war years, he was addressed as 'General Mohan Singh' which he relished, despite the fact that the British Army branded him a traitor and deprived him of his rank.

* * *

At noon on the 18th, under the auspices of more than thirty influential Indians in Singapore, a reception was held at the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in honour of staff officers of the *F kikan*, I.I.L. and I.N.A. and senior ranking Indian officers who had surrendered the day before. When we arrived we were met by some ladies and gentlemen including Messrs. Goho and Menon who had been waiting for us. A gentleman at the reception table presented us with garlands of flowers and a beautiful lady pinned a spray of simple flowers on our chests. We were for a moment at a loss to find ourselves in this atmosphere. We had been fighting a war without let-up day or night for the past sixty days until the day before, and without a chance to wash ourselves. At the request of our host, I extended my greetings: 'It is a rare

occasion that ladies and gentlemen of an occupied territory hold a friendly party for military officers so soon after occupation. This proves the bond of friendship uniting us Japanese and Indians and represents the fruit of the sacrificial and patriotic services Pritam and Capt. Mohan have rendered to their motherland. I believe it is against God's will that we have been separated from each other. I am a military officer, who, after sixty days of fierce fighting and *blitzkrieg*, has just arrived here. We are impudent to attend this party covered in dust and improperly attired, but we have not had an opportunity to partake of such a splendid feast for many days. Availing myself of your kindness and understanding, I will have lots of food to make up for sixty days of skimpy meals. I hope you will pardon my poor table manners, but I do not wish you to think that other Japanese are also bad-mannered.' They burst into laughter, clapping their hands at my humorous speech.

When I returned to headquarters after the party, Onan and Ibrahim, chairman of the K.M.M., who had been rescued from Changi Prison by Lieut. Nakamiya and K.M.M. agents on the 16th, were waiting for me. Ibrahim, wearing a pair of rimless glasses, was a young man of about thirty years old, who appeared to be a self-composed person of intelligence. He did not look worn out despite the fact that he had been detained in prison for two months.

Ibrahim thanked me for the *F kikan*'s kindness and assistance in freeing his compatriots, expressing his desire to collaborate with the Japanese Army in future under its kind support and guidance.

Congratulating him on his liberation, I proposed to him that we should work together for friendship between Japan and Malaya, and that we should discuss the K.M.M.'s future activities on another occasion. I said I would be prepared to help as far as possible to get publication of the *Warta Malaya* resumed and to help his K.M.M. comrades. After he had left, I at once visited Maj.-Gen. Manaki, deputy chief of staff, and asked his understanding and assistance to guide the K.M.M. to be the leading cultural association for the improvement of the standard of Malay culture, shedding its character as a political

association. At that time the Japanese Army was taking an obstinate and short-sighted policy that banned indigenous people's associations engaged in political, economic, and cultural activities. It was hard for me to understand the real intention of the Army expressed in this unreasonable military administrative policy, despite Japan's preaching of the noble ideals for the liberation of Asiatic peoples and the establishment of a new order and a co-prosperity sphere. Such a milittary administration policy could be attributed to the arrogance of Japanese officers intoxicated by the Malay campaign victory or to their reaction against uncooperative Chinese who had been engaging in anti-Japanese activities under various names. This kind of betrayal had cost us dearly in China and Manchuria, alienating the trust of the peoples. Devoting ourselves to maintaining the high principles expressed in the Imperial decree for the declaration of war and in various government statements, my men and I had asked the support of Malays and Sumatrans for these ideals. Because I could not stand the Army's bad faith, I spelled out my belief to Maj.-Gen. Manaki, making a strong request for the proper guidance and protection of the K.M.M. After more than half an hour of argument, Maj.-Gen. Manaki gave in and agreed to recognize the K.M.M. as a cultural association charged with the task of enlightening Malay youths. With the bitter experience of the Chinese flag incident fresh in my memory, I made sure several times that Gen. Manaki confirmed his commitment. On the other hand, he instantly approved the republication of the *Warta Malaya* and preferential treatment for employing K.M.M. agents. Following the meeting with Gen. Manaki, I visited the chief of the army propaganda department and secured his consent for the free use of equipment and a building necessary for printing the *Warta Malaya.* I was glad that I was able to keep my promise to comrades of the K.M.M. Encouraged by this result, I was determined to keep faith with my comrades, no matter how difficult it became, as long as I was in charge of this mission. The time had come for the *F kikan* to cut off its direct association with the K.M.M., because it now came under the jurisdiction of the military administration for the K.M.M. to operate in peacetime. I introduced Ibrahim and Onan to

Gen. Manaki, pleading with him for his understanding, support and guidance. Also I promised them that I would remain a good and understanding friend of the K.M.M. and serve it in a private capacity, although our official relations were now terminated.

On the 19th the Singapore Indian General Meeting was held in Farrer Park, which I shall never forget as long as I live. Tens of thousands of Indians filled the Park, where a platform was erected decked with flowers and bunting. Amongst the guests was Mme. Lakshmi who looked regal. Chairman Goho gave a fiery speech that aroused the emotion of the audience with his passion and loyalty to the motherland and to his compatriots. Following his oration, Pritam, Capt. Mohan, and I spoke one after another. In this manner the I.I.L. office in Singapore was organized, completing its network covering Thailand and Malaya. At Capt. Mohan's suggestion, it was decided to establish a central office in Singapore for I.N.A. activities for which Lieut. Yonemura was given the task of organizing. Singapore now became the nerve centre of all I.I.L. and I.N.A. activities, which were entering a new stage.

Coinciding with these I.I.L. and I.N.A. developments in Singapore, Premier Tojo was reported to have made a historic speech in the Imperial Diet in Tokyo pledging to liberate the peoples of Greater Asia and to grant independence to the Philippines, and to support India's independence. My ideas that I had been pressing upon senior officers since my arrival at Taiping were partially translated into policy, though his speech was somewhat abstract.

The condition of *Harimau*, being treated at an army hospital in Johore Bahru, was deteriorating largely due to overwork. I made arrangements for his transfer to an army hospital in Singapore and visited Gen. Manaki again, this time to plead with him to appoint *Harimau* an official of the military government, to which he consented. One day I paid a visit to *Harimau* in the hospital with a gift of flowers. He was lying in bed amongst a row of other Japanese soldiers. Outside his bedroom were five Malays sitting on their haunches, as if they were servants attending on a noble. Their eyes were bloodshot due to sleepless nights of looking after their master. When I

called his name at his bedside, *Harimau* opened his eyes and tried to sit up by reflex as he recognized me. Restraining him quietly, I offered him a word of cheer and appreciation: 'How do you feel? I really appreciate your work, which was a very difficult task. You did a splendid job. I hope you will recover as soon as possible.' In reply he apologized saying: 'I am sorry to have become ill without accomplishing much work.' I said, responding to his modest apology, 'You have overworked. Has someone read to you the letter from your mother? I am glad you received the letter'. He nodded his head with emotion, shedding tears. Then I told him: 'Tani, today I talked to Gen. Manaki of the military government requesting him that you be appointed an officer of the military administration when you recover from your illness. Gen. Manaki has agreed to it.' Staring at me, he cried out in disbelief: 'You mean I will be appointed a government officer!' His joyful reaction was so overwhelming that I was quite taken back. He must have been told by his mother that a government officer carried prestige and power.

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It was about this time a tragic and unfortunate incident was taking place in Singapore, that cannot be erased in the history of the Japanese Army. Some time in the afternoon of 21 February Chairman Goho of the Singapore I.I.L. office visited me with a blanched face. His wife was the daughter of a local Chinese. Hardly pausing to exchange greetings, he complained to me: 'Major, do you know that the Japanese Army is arresting Chinese in Singapore without discrimination and is committing massacres? The brutality cannot be described in words. Has the Japanese Army lost its mind? What is this frenzied act for when the British Army has already surrendered and hostilities ended?' My agents and I had been so busy caring for 55,000 Indian POWs, supplying POWs (more than 10,000 every day) for reconstruction work in Singapore, formulating plans for the *kosaku* in Sumatra, and seeing to the needs of the K.M.M. and *Harimau* and his followers, that we were unaware of the incident. Goho pleaded: 'Residents in

Singapore and Malaya possess infinite respect and friendliness towards the Japanese Army for its bravery and for its policy of liberating and protecting the indigenous peoples. It is true that Indians and Malays harbour deep hostility towards the Chinese, who as middlemen in collaboration with the British have been exploiting us, and that some of us are applauding the Japanese for their mass killing of Chinese. Inwardly, however, our respect for the Japanese Army and its godsent soldiers is turning into fear as we witness the horrifying scenes and hear tales of massacres. Major, it is a tragedy for the Japanese Army. Can you stop it?' The matter was so serious that I could hardly believe it. After having listened to what he had seen and heard, I sent him home promising that I would take care of it.

I ordered Tashiro, Lieut. Yonemura, and a few other agents to investigate the situation, which turned out to be much worse in cruelty than Goho had reported to me. This was the sort of happening that I had dreaded and now it had erupted in the worst form. Immediately, I visited Col. Sugita at army headquarters and demanded to know whether the massacres had been ordered by the Army. With a sad look, Sugita revealed that his moderate position had been overruled by staff officers having an extreme opinion, and an order to carry out the massacres had been issued much against his wishes. I pointed out emphatically that this brutal measure would produce results inimical to the honour of the Japanese Army and to the smooth implementation of our policy to win the hearts of the native people. I requested him to exercise prudence and deal with it immediately as the purge of Chinese would have a serious adverse impact on our *kosaku* towards Indian soldiers. The bloody mopping-up operation ceased temporarily the following day. There was no room for the Japanese Army to counter-argue the charge of the inhumane mass murders in which countless Chinese were executed indiscriminately on the beaches, in rubber plantations, and in jungles without investigation or trial. There was no justification for the massacres even if some Chinese had fought against us as volunteers and collaborated with anti-Japanese elements. Much later, when I became a staff officer of the

15th Army in Burma, a young officer of the 18th Division (which was transferred from Malaya to Burma) told me of his nightmarish experience in the brutal murders in Johore Bahru, in which his Division had taken part, saying that he was still tormented by the incident[49].

(In post-war years I was imprisoned in B Block of Changi Prison together with Maj.-Gen. Kawamura, brigade commander of the 5th Division [commanding officer of the garrison army in Singapore], Lt.-Gen. Nishimura[50], commander of the Imperial Guard Division, Lt.-Gen. Mutaguchi[51], commander of the 18th Division, and Col. Oishi[52], chief of the *kempeitai*, all of whom were the commanding officers involved in the mopping-up operation as directed by the 25th Army. I myself was interrogated several times about this *sook ching* by British officers but I was not able to answer their questioning since I had no inside information as to how the decision was made and who issued the order. I shall never forget the tragic scene in which these men walked up the thirteen steps to the gallows, keeping their composure and suppressing their indignation against the men responsible for planning and ordering the massacres, whose whereabouts at that time were unknown, and for whom they were executed.)

The Army's suppressive measures were also conducted in another way. Some time in mid-March 1942 when the military administration was already in operation following the fall of Singapore, I had visitors at my headquarters in Singapore who represented the Chinese community leaders in Alor Star and Taiping (the district in Malaya where the *F kikan*, at Gen. Manaki's request, had taken charge of pacifying the Chinese). Carrying several rice sacks (100 kilogram capacity each) into my office, they offered them to me, saying: 'We have been ordered by the Japanese Army to forfeit our entire wealth. Because we are unable to meet the demand, we have collected and brought with us precious metals and jewels. We would like to present them to the *F kikan* if we have to hand them over to the military government.' I was at a loss in comprehending their purpose of offering them. This policy of coercing them to contribute their wealth, taking advantage of their frightened state of mind following the *sook chings* that had swept across Singapore and Malaya, was a case of misgovernment.

It would only incense hostility at army headquarters if I preached the injustice of the massacres to hot-headed staff officers who were intoxicated with victory. Even worse, Indians and the I.N.A. might get a by-blow of their anger. Being aware that I was a coward, I told the Chinese on my own authority to take the sacks back to Taiping, and they took their leave, thanking me for having received them and listened to their pleas.

These oppressive measures against the Chinese brought dishonour that stained the splendid record of the Japanese military campaign in Malaya. They could not help but create some impact on our mission.

* * *

In early March I received a telephone call from Army headquarters: 'Important cover agents have arrived at Penang from Atjeh, Sumatra and military authorities there have sent them to Singapore. Could you send an escort to headquarters immediately so that they can be handed over to *F kikan*?' When I received the news from Lieut. Yamaguchi, I was delighted, because I felt intuitively that *F kikan* agents had successfully infiltrated Sumatra from Malaya and the Atjehnese were prepared to rise in response to the Japanese Army's appeal.[53] These secret agents arrived at our headquarters accompanied by Lieut. Nakamiya. One group comprised Teuku Muda and three others who were sent by the *Pusa*[54] on 13 February, and another team consisted of four persons including Tengku Abdul Hamid Azwar, despatched by the *Pusa* on 20 February. Each of the groups risked coming so as to report to Japanese military authorities of the Atjehnese resistance movement against the Dutch and of Atjehnese loyalty to the Japanese, and to request the Japanese Army's immediate assistance. Tengku Abdul Hamid's group had drifted on the sea for thirteen days before arriving at Penang. For the first time, we received up-to-date information about the situation in Atjeh and the latest intelligence concerning Dutch troops deployed in Sumatra. According to their reports, the situation in Sumatra was as follows: In about May 1940 when Holland was occupied by Germany, a nationalist movement amongst

Atjehnese began to revive. After the tripartite alliance of Japan, Germany, and Italy was concluded, the Dutch government, in response to mounting tension in the Pacific, attempted to mobilize Indonesians for defence by enacting all sorts of wartime legislative bills. These measures had created an adverse effect in arousing the people's hostility. Upon hearing news of the Japanese landing in Malaya on 8 December, leaders of the *Pusa* and *Pusa* Youth took to the road and engaged in a speaking tour at its various offices throughout Atjeh, appealing to the people to 'welcome Japanese soldiers and extend aid at their request' when they landed anywhere in Atjeh. Hanri Masaki and Teuku Njak Arif played a leading role in this. In mid-December five leaders including Teungku Mohammad Daud Beureu'eh met secretly at the residence of Teuku Njak Arif and pledged an oath of allegiance to the Islamic religion and to their race and nation and vowed to rise against the Dutch in the name of the *Pusa*, while remaining loyal to the Japanese government. Arif was appointed chief adviser. On the other hand, the chairman of the *Pusa* Youth, Teungku Amir Hoesain Almujahid, canvassed Atjeh on a speech-making tour, visiting the *Pusa's* offices and instructing his followers to be loyal to the Japanese Army, to be cooperative with it when Japanese troops arrived, and to be ready to fight against the Dutch Army. The occupation of Penang by the Japanese Army stepped up anti-Dutch resistance, which was further spurred by the broadcast of Atjehnese living in Malaya and of Tengku Abdul Rahman of Kedah. Reacting to the unrest in Atjeh, the Dutch authorities tightened up their suppressive measures day by day. As a result, hostile feelings between the two parties had intensified.

On 16 January a party of *F kikan* agents, including Said Abu Bakar who had set out from the beach of Selangor in two boats, arrived at Sungai Sembilan and Bagan Siapiapi. They had thrown overboard arms and equipment given by the *F kikan* in order to pretend that they were refugees. Upon landing they were arrested and sent to the police station in Medan where they were questioned and their belongings examined. During ten days of interrogation, they insisted that they were refugees, refusing to divulge information about their

mission. Said Abu Bakar, while being held in detention, managed to smuggle a postcard to his close friend, Ali Hasjmy, a teacher at Kounaloi Islamic school in Seulimeum county and a member of the *Pusa's* youth department as well as a leader of the *Pusa* Scouts.

As a result of a conference among leaders of the Greater Atjeh Association and the *Pusa,* they decided to send Ahmad Abdullah to Medan in order to make contact with Said Abu Bakar. On 1 March Japanese aircraft made their first air raid on Medan. While frightened police were scampering for shelter Ahmad and Said, seizing the opportunity, made successful contact. Said passed the information I had given him to the *Pusa* leaders in Atjeh, who were encouraged by the contact with the Japanese Army. Subsequently, the *Pusa* leaders launched activities according to my directives given to them through Said. Said and his party were transferred to the police stations in their respective hometowns after having received a letter of reference from there, which was issued through the mediation of the *Pusa.* Upon re-examination, they were released, i.e. Atjehnese to Atjeh, Minangkabaus, Bataks, and Natals to their homes in central Sumatra where they resumed their activities. Early on the morning of 13 February, Said Abu Bakar was freed from the Kutaraja police station. Immediately, he went to the home of Djamil, his friend and Islamic teacher, and roused him up out of bed. Together they visited Teungku Muhamad Nur, Said's classmate, and they told him in detail of their secret mission in a school building in Taman Pelajaran.

Appreciating Abu Bakar's loyalty, Djamil said: 'The Atjehnese resistance movement has been picking up momentum day by day and our preparations for rebellion are well under way. We are positive that we can implement the Fujiwara *kikan's* directives. You are the intermediary between the Japanese Army and the Atjehnese and you are a messenger sent from Allah to the Atjehnese. The Dutch government's undercover investigation amongst Atjehnese is very skilful and strict. We must not communicate by letter but through a trustworthy agent. In case one of us is caught, we must be prepared to sacrifice ourselves to prevent

others from being implicated in trouble for the sake of the ultimate good of all. I want you to go to Tunong and Indrapuri to recruit promising comrades, and I will to to Kutaraja to do likewise. I shall demand of potential members before joining the *F kikan* that they swear the following statement. "I will be loyal to my religion and my country as well as to the Japanese government. I swear that I will carry out my mission faithfully and will not betray fellow compatriots" or "I will not divulge the names of the members of the *F kikan* and I will take the responsibility for my mission to the end." '

After this meeting, Abu Bakar hit the road to recruit comrades in the Seulimeum and Indrapuri districts. He met Teungku Abdul Wahab, Ahmad Abdullah, and Ali Hasjmy in Seulimeum and Teungku Haji Ahmad Hasballah, professor of mathematics, in Indrapuri and gave each one of them instructions and received their pledge to carry out their orders. Thence, Abu Bakar went to Piyeueng and met the chairman of the Tapaktuan. As a result, he obtained the cooperation of influential leaders of the district, each of whom, swearing that they would see to it that the *F kikan* instructions were implemented, immediately started preparations. Abu Bakar also sent out an agent to Tapaktuan county in western Atjeh in order to deliver the *F kikan's* messages to Ce' Amat, a wealthy and influential man of the area. Amat was pleased to receive them. Abu Bakar's agent also succeeded in winning influential members of Tapaktuan, Mangeng, and Pakeh.

Parallel with Abu Bakar's activities, twenty other agents, infiltrated from Malaya into the central and northern parts of Sumatra, also engaged in similar propaganda activities. Less than ten days after their release, they had succeeded by late February in winning Atjehnese to the *F kikan* and in preparing the ground for an uprising at the *F kikan*'s direction. In central Sumatra a pro-Japanese propaganda campaign was being conducted clandestinely and was spreading very rapidly amongst Minangkabaus and Bataks.

By this time suspicion by the Dutch authorities against the Atjehnese was growing and suppressive measures were stepped up. In order to prepare against a Japanese invasion, the Dutch government began to destroy stored husked rice, rice paddies,

telecommunications, and oil wells. Such a destructive policy of the Dutch authorities incensed the people, contributing to their determination to resist the Dutch in order to prevent such destruction. The situation in Atjeh was developing into a serious crisis in which an all-out confrontation between the unarmed masses on the one hand, and the Dutch Army and police, on the other, was very likely. Should the arrival of Japanese assistance be delayed, Atjehnese were going to suffer loss of life and property. In order to communicate this critical situation, the two groups of secret agents had been sent by the *Pusa* with a request for immediate help from the Japanese Army.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Army had begun to plan the invasion of Sumatra. The Imperial Guard Division, which had taken part in the Malay campaign, was given the task and was preparing for embarkation at Singapore. The main force of Imperial Guards was to land on 13 March on Kutaraja Coast and the rest on a beach near Medan.

I had hoped to join the invasion of Sumatra with the Japanese Army in order to see for myself the brave fighting of my agents and to play my part in helping the Sumatran people and in bringing them and the Japanese Army together for collaboration. Unfortunately, I was transferred to another army and had to go in another direction.

In a few days at the request of Imperial General Headquarters I had to leave for Japan in order to attend the I.I.L. conference in Tokyo. In addition, I had the difficult task in Singapore of looking after 50,000 Indians who were to become the core of the I.N.A. and I had to commence a serious study of its organization. I called upon the chief of staff at Army headquarters and gave my opinions on these problems. Both of us agreed that Masubuchi, who had a sympathetic understanding of the Sumatrans and who commanded the respect of *F kikan* agents, was best qualified to accompany the Imperial Guards, as the Sumatrans would honour him like a benevolent father. It was also understood that Masubuchi would be appointed in the future to an important post in the military administration of Atjeh, and that he was to be directly responsible to the division commander of Imperial Guards in order

that staff officers of the Division would give active support to *F kikan* activities.

Upon returning to *F kikan* headquarters, I asked Masubuchi to take on the responsibility, requesting that he stay in Sumatra for many years for the sake of the happiness of the Sumatran people and the Sumatran *F kikan* agents. Masubuchi, in reply, said: 'I have been impressed by your warm friendship and by your enthusiasm for winning friendship through *kosaku* activities. I am resolved to sacrifice my remaining life any time for any mission and I am glad to accept the responsibility for whatever task you give me. Sumatrans are a delightful people whom I shall love as long as I live. It is a matter of deep satisfaction to me that I can dedicate the remainder of my life to the interest of compatriots in Sumatra. I will do my best, on your behalf, to achieve the objectives. This may be my last meeting with you. It has been only six months since last October when we became acquainted, but I have had during this brief period nobler and deeper experiences than I had in the past fifty years. I want to reciprocate your kindness by sacrificing my life in order to achieve the objective you have given me.' Filled with emotion, his eyes brimmed with tears. I appointed Hashimoto and Saruwatari, dedicated men, as Masubuchi's assistants. The four of us together visited Lt.-Gen. Nishimura, commander of the Imperial Guard Division, and Col. Obata, his chief of staff, at their headquarters, where we explained in detail the situation in Sumatra and the activities of *F kikan* agents fully, requesting their cooperation and assistance. On 5 March, Masubuchi, together with the agents sent from Sumatra and the *Pusa* and twenty other Sumatrans, left our headquarters to embark on ships of the convoy bound for the invasion of Sumatra.

Now the *F kikan's* activities had been expanded to cover a vast area encompassing Malaya, Thailand, Burma, and Sumatra, with Singapore at the centre.

12. Tokyo Conference

While Pritam was organizing a conference of I.I.L. chairmen in Malaya and Singapore to deal with future problems, and while Capt. Mohan was working strenuously day and night to concentrate I.N.A. forces in Singapore in order to strengthen and expand the I.N.A., a telegram addressed to me arrived from Imperial General Headquarters via headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. The telegram said that Rash Behari Bose[55] in Tokyo (son-in-law of Mr. Soma, owner of the Shinjuku Nakamuraya Confectionery Store) would like to hold a meeting, under the auspices of Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, of about ten Indian representatives of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. in Malaya and Thailand in order to discuss political questions concerning India's liberation and to promote friendship with the Japanese, and that they should come to Tokyo before 19 March. I was requested to accompany the group and Col. Iwakuro[56] was also to return to Tokyo. When I read this I knew that the time had come for Japan to come up with a policy towards India, and that a powerful new organization was going to be established under the leadership of Col. Iwakuro to represent the Japanese government in implementing Japanese policy. This would be the realization of the desires that I had entertained all along. Their materialization could well be attributed to Generals Tanaka and Tominaga who had visited Kuala Lumpur some time before.

Immediately I showed the telegram to Pritam and Capt. Mohan and discussed it with them.They welcomed the message and we decided to send six I.I.L. and three I.N.A. officials.

Furthermore, it was agreed that a conference of I.I.L. chairmen in Malaya and Thailand and leading I.N.A. members be held in Singapore to nominate representatives and to discuss the I.I.L.'s future activities and policies. I was convinced that this was an opportune moment to bring together the I.I.L. faction and the Indo-Thai Cultural Association (a cultural group headed by Swami and Das). I had been concerned about this rift between them since October the year before. I put my wishes frankly to Pritam, who was persuaded by my enthusiasm and agreed to include Swami as a member of the goodwill mission visiting Tokyo. I sent out letters of invitation at once to Swami and Das as well as to Amar Singh of the I.I.L. in Bangkok.

A conference of I.I.L. representatives was held on 3 March at Goho's residence. Col. Yamamoto of the Sixth Section, Imperial General Headquarters, Col. Sugita of the 25th Army, and I were invited as observers. At the meeting members of the delegation going to Tokyo were nominated; Pritam Singh, Goho, Menon, Raghavan[57], and Ayer[58] of the I.I.L., and Capt. Mohan Singh, Col. Gill, and Capt. Akram (Capt. Mohan's adjutant) of the I.N.A. were selected.

An understanding was reached between Swami and Pritam Singh that they would cooperate with each other, ironing out minor differences for the sake of the higher objective of liberating the motherland. No decisions were made as to specific statements to be made by delegates at the Tokyo conference. The object of the meeting, it was understood, was to meet with Indian compatriots coming from various parts of Asia, to ascertain the intention of the Japanese government and military leaders and to promote friendship between them.

* * *

On 10 March I left Kallang Airport for Tokyo together with the goodwill delegation. Otaguro accompanied me, and Col. Iwakuro was to join the party at Saigon. I carried with me the ashes of Lieut. Segawa who had died in action in Kota Bharu in order to deliver them to his parents. Our party was to stay

overnight in Saigon. While there, I paid a visit to Lt.-Col. Otsuki of the Southern Expeditionary Forces and confirmed the accuracy of my assessment of the cabled message which requested my presence in Tokyo.

Col. Iwakuro had held a number of important posts in the War Ministry and had been to the United States before the outbreak of the war with the aim of preparing the ground for a peaceful solution to the Japanese-American conflict. He was one of the officers in the Army who possessed political acumen and was unique in having many influential friends in political and civilian circles. He was an ideal person to mobilize the resources of government and non-government sectors to create a favourable situation. He would be able to gain support for the Indian policy and for dealing with political questions concerning the Indians. I visited Col. Iwakuro at his billet near the Menam River, as I wanted to acquaint him with the history of our activities and with my convictions, before our arrival at Tokyo. I explained to him in detail the opinions that I had given Col. Ozeki of Imperial General Headquarters at Ipoh, and told him of my draft plan concerning Japan's policy towards India that I had presented to my superior officers at Kluang. I emphasized the need to establish a great national principle that we could proudly declare to the world, and that would appeal to 350 million Indians, instead of resorting to various schemes that we had employed in China.

Furthermore, I maintained strenuously that the *Iwakuro kikan* should not turn into an espionage agency but instead it should strive to play the role of a Japanese ambassador to India, which was to become an independent nation. I urged him to stand firm against high officials in Tokyo should they try to make use of the *Iwakuro kikan* just as a means to achieve certain short-term military objectives, and I requested that he correct their wrongness if they entertained such ideas.

The colonel agreed with my opinion. I was glad that such an able senior officer as Col. Iwakuro sympathized with my view on this extremely important task. I was proud to have a man of such great insight as the leader to implement Japan's

policy towards India. It was an extremely difficult but important job to get positive support from the military, government and Diet circles that had little sympathy for this kind of operation, and to promote public support in Japan for it. Col. Iwakuro was a very well qualified person for this purpose.

By this time, propaganda messages had been beamed to India from the Saigon radio station, whence a team of Indians under the command of Capt. Ehsan Qadir had been broadcasting with the support of the Japanese Army press department. The transmissions from the Saigon station were far more effective than those from Tokyo. While staying overnight in Saigon, Goho sent a live message to compatriots in India informing them of the situation in Malaya and Singapore.

* * *

Owing to the flight schedule it was necessary for us to split into two parties; our group of seven consisting of Col. Iwakuro, Capt. Mohan, Lt.-Col. Gill, Raghavan, Goho, Menon, and myself was to fly immediately to Tokyo, while the other party comprising Otaguro, Swami, Pritam, Ayer, and Capt. Akram was to leave from Saigon on another flight two days later. On 11 March we departed Saigon but were delayed two days on Hainan Island due to engine trouble. There was no comfortable accommodation for the delegation on this island, even though we tried with the cooperation of navy people to locate a suitable place to stay. A staff officer of the naval unit, not being too enthusiastic about permitting foreigners to remain at the base, finally assigned us a dormitory used for coolies, a long way from the airport. I was very embarrassed by the discourtesy of this naval staff officer to the delegation. I scoured the island for fresh eggs and fruit which would make the delegates a little more comfortable, but all my efforts were in vain. The beds were of poor quality, made of ropes, and were not available in sufficient number. I slept on the floor, giving up my bed for an Indian delegate. It was not so uncomfortable for me to sleep on the floor as I had got used to discomfort in the battlefield, but it would be

painful for the Indian delegates who had lived in comfort and luxury in Penang or Singapore. I felt very sorry for them. Nevertheless, they did not complain but appreciated my concern. After overnight stops at Taipei and Shanghai, we arrived at Haneda Airport, Tokyo.

I have heard that Raghavan, when talking about me to other people in post-war years, often refers to this act of thoughtfulness to illustrate my personality. I just did what was expected of me in that situation and I was surprised that my behaviour should impress a foreigner.

Our aeroplane returned to Taipei on its way to pick up the Swami party. From Haneda we drove to the Sanno Hotel which had been reserved for our party by Imperial General Headquarters. Osman from Shanghai and Khan from Hong Kong had arrived. The Tokyo climate in mid-March was unbearably cold for the guests from tropical countries, especially for Menon, the oldest person in the party, who was shivering with cold. Officers from Imperial General Headquarters now took charge of the Indian delegation, relieving me of my responsibility. I felt an emptiness in me as if I had lost a precious jewel, because I had been looking forward to taking my friends, with whom I had shared my destiny, on a sightseeing tour of the cherry blossom.

The next day Col. Iwakuro and I reported to Imperial General Headquarters, where I was given an opportunity to present a report of my activities to the chief of the Army General Staff and senior officers concerned with my *kosaku.* Seizing the occasion, I eagerly pressed my views in detail about India upon them. I insisted on four conclusions I had drawn: Firstly, Japan should decide on and publicly state her policy toward India at the earliest possible time, on the basis of Premier Tojo's 20 January declaration on India in the Diet; secondly, the Government and people should take steps to implement this policy with sincerity and fairness; thirdly, the administration of the southern occupied area should be carried out with impartiality and it should be a model for the new order in East Asia; and fourthly, Japan should support to the limit the Indian movement without impairing its autonomy and freedom and without resorting to unreasonable interference

and scheming. I further suggested that the new *Iwakuro kikan* replacing the *F kikan* be given the status of a diplomatic mission or embassy rather than a proxy agency of Japanese policy. I felt my report had made an impression on the men at headquarters.

Following this, I met Lt.-Col. Kadomatsu and Major Ozeki of the Eighth Section which was responsible for India and for my *kosaku,* and was given an opportunity to express my views. Col. Iwakuro also sat in on the discussion. I was shown the draft of Headquarters' plan for India, which I judged embodied the ideas I had submitted earlier. I was disappointed, however, to see the title of the document, which was 'Indian Stratagem Plan', according to which political policy towards India would be controlled directly by Headquarters and the *Iwakuro kikan* would take charge of its operation as only one of the agencies in the field. With Col. Iwakuro's support, I passionately pleaded for revision of the tone of the document and policy. After two days of discussion, I felt I had succeeded, at least in part. The title of the draft was changed to 'Indian Policy Project', and I felt some of the Machiavellian tenor had been expunged from the contents of the document. I was very glad that my trip to Tokyo had been significant. In accordance with Headquarters' plan, the delegation was taken on a tour of Tokyo. Although I was relieved of the responsibility for entertaining the party, I attended on their needs all day long to comfort their weariness and listen to their wishes.

In the meanwhile, an embarrassing situation had cropped up; friction became apparent between Rash Behari Bose and the Indians resident in Japan on the one hand, who had been working for India's independence with the support of Imperial Headquarters, and those who had come from Southeast Asia, on the other. According to the I.I.L. and I.N.A. delegates, the Indians resident in Japan, having lived there for such a long period and having been protected by the government and people, did not seem to have independence in their statements and conduct but acted like puppets of Japan. The visitors were particularly dissatisfied with Rash Behari Bose who, having lived a life of exile in Japan for decades and having

married a Japanese woman, had lost some of his Indian identity. On the other hand, the Indians in Japan were irritated by the derogatory attitude of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. delegates towards themselves, particularly in view of the fact that until recently the Southeast Asian Indians had been loyal to Britain and were deficient in revolutionary qualifications. I took the matter seriously enough to attempt to mediate between the two parties. The situation was aggravated by the conduct of Kimura Nikki, who was assigned to the goodwill mission by General Headquarters. His remarks and behaviour, being characteristically Japanese, were partly the cause of friction, for example, his interference in minute details out of kindness, the complacency with which he made decisions and forced them on the delegates without consulting them beforehand, and his arrogance in showing off his expertise about India – although he did not mean to be malicious.

Pritam Singh, Swami and their company were due to arrive in Tokyo on the evening of 19 March. That morning violent winds swept over Honshu (the main island) and became increasingly fierce as the afternoon wore on. The sky over Tokyo grew black with sand and dust and toward evening rain began to fall. Because of this bad weather, I assumed that the flight would have been cancelled, but I received a report that the flight had left Shanghai for Tokyo. The logical course would then be to land in Kyushu or Osaka and lay over until the weather cleared. Then I had a call from Haneda Airport with word that the aircraft had reported over the Ise Bay headed east at 1500 hours. This was the last communication from the plane. By nightfall the storm had become a howling typhoon. I sent word to all air bases in Osaka, Yokkaichi, Gifu, and Hamamatsu to launch a search for the plane. I tried to fight off a growing premonition but noticed the gloom on the faces of the I.I.L. delegates. I pinned all my hopes on the possibility that the plane had landed somewhere. I was unable to sleep that night, waiting for a cablegram from an airport, and by morning there was still no news. The faces of Pritam, Capt. Akram, and Otaguro appeared before me when I fell into an exhausted doze at dawn. The shadow of premonition that had been with me since the night before loomed larger.

By noon it was apparent that no plane had landed at any of the airports in central Honshu. Mrs. Otaguro had come all the way from Kyushu with her baby to meet her husband. I felt I had to tell her and the waiting Indians that they had to expect the worst, which grieved me intensely.

By the evening I received a report that an aeroplane in difficulties had been heard flying northwards from Nagoya over mountains in rainy cloud the night before. Our thin hopes snapped and turned to despair. I ordered all airports in prefectures in the Tokai, Hokuriku, and Kanto districts to search for the plane.

Judging from reports gathered from all quarters, it seemed that Colonel Morimoto of the Central China Liaison Office of the China Board had boarded the flight at Shanghai and demanded that the plane proceed to Tokyo regardless of the stormy weather. The colonel was expected at a meeting that night. At about noon, the plane had landed at Tachiarai airport to refuel. The airport authorities had reported the storm was worsening and recommended the plane to lay over until the weather improved. Col. Morimoto ordered the pilot to take off for Tokyo for his own convenience. In short, the cause of the crash was the selfishness of the Japanese officer who had boarded the plane and demanded the flight. Japan's responsibility for the loss of the great Indian patriots was serious, particularly at a time when their contributions were most needed for the development of India's national liberation. I was so shattered to learn of the death of my respected comrades-in-arms with whom I had cast my lot, that I had no words to express my sympathy for their 350 million Indian compatriots. I was filled with sorrow and self-reproach when I thought about those killed, especially Pritam and Capt. Akram, whose great achievements and friendship appeared in my mind like a kaleidoscopic picture.

In addition to the tragedy of losing four great friends and one beloved subordinate, another sorrow struck me. It was the loss of a manuscript which Capt. Mohan had been writing daily. One day immediately before our departure from Singapore, he confided in me: 'Since the days in Ipoh I have been writing a diary entitled *The First Japanese Officer I Met.*

I write whenever I have spare time at night. It is a record of my activities and observations since my first meeting with you in Alor Star and of our cooperation for inaugurating the Indian National Army. I dictated it, and had it recorded by my adjutant in shorthand. The draft has run to several hundred pages long. I wish to present it to you as a gift, to be kept for posterity as the history of the establishment of the great Indian National Army. Lately, I have been so busy that I have not had much time to dictate it. I hope to complete the manuscript during my spare time in Tokyo and I will entrust it to Capt. Akram.' I very much appreciated the trust and friendship which he accorded to me, and his prudence and thoroughness while he was busy dealing with the most difficult task of creating the I.N.A. I had been awaiting the completion of the manuscript with great anticipation, because his record would be the most valuable document as a memoir of the establishment of the Indian National Army and as a symbol of the unity between the Japanese and Indian peoples. This precious record was forever lost together with the five martyrs. As I write my own memoirs, I am choked with emotion at the tragic memory of the martyrs and of the lost manuscript.

* * *

On 20 March, the meeting began at the Sanno Hotel in a sorrowful atmosphere. Col. Iwakuro and I were invited to attend the morning session on the first day. Besides the four delegates of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. from Southeast Asia, representatives from Hong Kong, Shanghai, the Philippines, and Japan participated. Rash Behari Bose chaired the conference. I thought it strange that Sahay, a leading member of the Indian independence movement and of the Indian community in Japan, and Pratap were not present. The front wall was decorated with the national flags of Japan and India. First the chairman announced with grief the presumed death of the four I.I.L. and I.N.A. delegates, and extended greetings to the participants. Then, he expressed his appreciation for Japan's support for India's independence as declared in the Tojo statement

and for the God-given opportunity for achieving independence made possible by the Japanese victory, as well as for the self-sacrificing activities rendered by members of the I.I.L. and I.N.A. delegations from Southeast Asia. He made it clear that the objectives of the conference were to get acquainted with each other, to discuss frankly political questions concerning India's independence, and finally to search for means of consolidating all Indians in Asia into a political unity for the liberation of India. Despite Bose's passionate speech, I got the impression that it did not impress the delegates, especially those of the I.I.L. and I.N.A., as much as he would have liked. Nevertheless, each delegate seemed to have resolved to carry out the will of the four martyrs. Views were exchanged formally and informally and arguments discussed. As a result, they officially recognized the I.I.L. as the organization representing the interest of the Indian independence movement for all Indians in Asia. Finally, they passed a resolution that a public meeting of the I.I.L. general assembly for all Indians living in Asia be convened in mid-May at Bangkok[59]. The agenda was to cover the organization of the league and a re-evaluation of the means to carry out the objectives of the movement.

It was thus decided that joint I.I.L.-*Iwakuro kikan* activities would be officially launched at the Bangkok conference. The I.I.L. and I.N.A. delegations were not able to ascertain the real intent of Imperial General Headquarters in supporting the Indian independence movement, and they left for a tour of Kyoto and Osaka.

While we were searching for the whereabouts of the crashed aeroplane I received a sad cablegram that added to my grief. It was from the chief of staff of the 25th Army informing me of the death of *Harimau* (Tani), who had been lying seriously ill in an army hospital in Singapore. Known as the *Harimau* (tiger) of northern Malaya, he had attacked express trains to steal gold bullion, striking fear into the people, but he had transformed himself into a sincere patriot just before the outbreak of war. Observing my strict orders, he and his followers had since then never robbed to line their own pockets nor had they once committed violence against local

civilians. He had carried out subversive activities behind the British lines but died shortly after the fall of Singapore at the age of twenty-eight. Backing up his splendid activities had been the sincerity and friendship extended to him by Kamimoto and Lieut. Yonemura. Kamimoto, in particular, by his own example, had exerted an enormous influence on Tani, by shielding and guiding him since April 1941. I shall never forget Kamimoto's great personality and his indifference to life in which he sought no honours but faced death without fear. Immediately, I took action to register Tani's name as an official civilian employee of the Army. The following day I was invited to the press club of the War Ministry to talk about *Harimau*'s checkered life and his heroic activities before and after the war. My talk was very well reported, receiving the space of a quarter of a page in mass circulation newspapers. Tani was enshrined in the Yasukuni Shrine in Kudan, ending his life as a dutiful son and a patriot.

Col. Iwakuro was drafting his plans for carrying out his new mission and negotiating to persuade able civilians to join his staff in order to create a powerful *kikan*. For these reasons, he had to remain in Tokyo for the time being. The majority of *F kikan* agents excepting myself and a few temporarily employed civilians were reappointed to the *Iwakuro kikan*, while I was transferred to headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces in Saigon. I had to maintain my present responsibility, however, until the *Iwakuro kikan* arrived in Southeast Asia. Consequently, I was in a hurry to return to Singapore in advance of the goodwill mission. In order to assist the ever-expanding activities of the *F kikan*, Lieuts. Hara, Kaneko, Fujii, Matsushige, and Tsukamoto and several non-commissioned officers all outstanding graduates of the Nakano School of Intelligence had been assigned to the *F kikan*. I left Tokyo for Singapore on 1 April. Just prior to my departure I received a tragic report confirming that the missing aeroplane had flown off course in the stormy weather and crashed into Mt. Yakedake in the Japan Alps in Nagano prefecture.

En route for Singapore I met *Harimau*'s mother and elder

sister at Fukuoka Airport. Declining to accept my condolences, they said they were proud of Yutaka who had served and died for his country and were satisfied with his distinguished work of which I told them. I was moved by their brave front.

I met Col. Otsuki at Saigon headquarters and reported the situation in Tokyo to him. I decided to turn over the *F kikan* to the *Iwakuro kikan* in late April after having completed our preparations for the Bangkok conference. Of the new agents assigned to me to reinforce the *F kikan*, I sent Lieuts. Kaneko, Fujii and Tsukamoto to Capt. Tsuchimochi in Rangoon and Lieuts. Hara and Matsushige and Sgt. Higashiyama to *F kikan* headquarters in Singapore. I myself arrived in Singapore on 5 April.

While I was in Tokyo, the war in Southeast Asia was making progress: on 8 March the Japanese Army occupied Rangoon and was deployed in central and northern Burma, and on 1 March the 16th Army landed in Java and forced the Dutch Army to surrender on 9 March. Imperial Guards of the 25th Army landed in northern Sumatra on 13 March and Japanese forces launched their final assault on the Bataan peninsula on 5 April.

* * *

Every *kosaku* gets its discretionary fund and the *F kikan* was no exception. There were rumours in the past that secret funds of the special agencies were spent erratically and unjustifiably, because they were not required to submit receipts or keep accounts. The notoriety gained credence as a *kosaku* was often conducted in *geisha* houses.

As far as the *F kikan kosaku* was concerned, I was determined to keep an even stricter record of the expenditure of the discretionary fund than of the general account, so as not to be criticized on this score. Needless to say, money was necessary for a *kosaku* but it was wrong to win the hearts of other people with money. I emphasized repeatedly to my men that the attitude of mind was more important than the amount of money spent as the determining factor in the

success or failure of the *kosaku*. I instructed Lieut. Yamaguchi, my adjutant in charge of general affairs, to keep receipts for even the smallest items of expenditure and to file them, ordering him to keep an accurate record of our spending from the secret fund. I told him that he would not need to record a diary of our *kosaku*. He and I also agreed to separate official expenditure from private spending whether related to the acquisition of food and materials or *kosaku* money given to agents of the I.I.L., I.N.A., K.M.M., *Harimau*, and the Sumatran youth group.

Lieut. Yamaguchi was the most suitable officer to meet my demands; he was trustworthy, methodical and responsible, and was capable of handling office work.

Before the outbreak of the war, the *F kikan* received ¥250,000 as discretionary funds, which was not requested by me but given arbitrarily by Imperial General Headquarters. I was not sure whether or not the fund would be sufficient to carry out my mission and in fact I had never seen such a large sum of money in my life, the starting monthly salary of a lieutenant being only ¥73 in those days. When I received the money, I realized I was saddled with a responsibility from which I could not escape.

All our *kosaku* during the Malay compaign was funded with this secret money, which paid for feeding several thousand Indian POWs, assisting the I.I.L., I.N.A., K.M.M., Sumatran youth group, and *Harimau*, purchasing kitchen utensils for *F kikan* agents, and despatching agents to Burma. Lieut. Yamaguchi was a penny pincher; he was so stingy that he gave the Sumatran young men only 30 guilders each as a fund for their smuggling operation. Even to this day I am embarrassed by his niggardliness. We had substantial funds left in our coffers after our extensive operation was completed. Why? The reason was 'Churchill's provisions'. We made use of British army supplies that we captured – food for I.N.A. soldiers, vehicles, petrol, billets for I.N.A., medicines, and everything else, although we had to acquire locally certain provisions such as fresh foods and spices.

I felt anxious when after the fall of Singapore we had to accept 55,000 Indian POWs and accommodate, feed and

clothe them. The island was crowded with several thousand Japanese troops and more than 50,000 European POWs. Singapore had always been dependent upon Sumatra for its supply of fresh foods, which was now cut off because Sumatra was still under enemy control. I.N.A. soldiers began to complain of the lack of fresh foods and certain flavourings, which were not only difficult to obtain but very expensive. In the end, I went to see Col. Sugita at headquarters, appealing for his assistance. Thanks to his good offices, I received an additional ¥50,000 from the Army accounting department.

I was going to Tokyo on 10 March to attend the Sanno conference and I was to hand over my *kosaku* to Col. Iwakuro. Consequently, I ordered Lieut. Yamaguchi to make up the balance sheet of the secret fund and collate the file of receipts so that I could take them with me. As a result, we found that we still had ¥75,000 left on the plus side after allowing for estimated expenses during my absence and costs incurred for the Indian delegation to attend the Sanno conference.

After arriving at Tokyo, I learnt officially that the *Iwakuro kikan* was to be organized in order to implement Japan's India policy on a grand scale. Under Col. Iwakuro's command, plans were hastily formulated by tapping all resources available from the Army, Navy and Foreign Affairs Ministries. Of course, a *kosaku* fund would be allocated. I gave my advice to the colonel in my capacity as a staff officer in charge of operations of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. We proposed a budget of ¥700,000 per month for the *kosaku*.

Normally the amount requested for a special agency discretionary fund was cut by the authorities by 30 per cent or even 50 per cent. Anticipating such reduction, an inflated budget was usually submitted. Col. Iwakuro, however, made up a precise budget based upon careful planning. No officer was more influential than he in the Army Affairs Department in the War Ministry, because he was a former chief of the Department prior to the outbreak of the war and had been at one time chief of the Eighth Section of the Army General Staff, which was responsible for propaganda, espionage, counter-intelligence, and intelligence analysis.

I accompanied Col. Iwakuro to help him put forward his

application for a discretionary fund. On this occasion I produced the *F kikan*'s statement of accounts and the file of receipts and submitted them to Maj. Katogawa, my classmate at War College, who was now in charge of examining the budget. Then, I proposed to return the balance of ¥75,000 in the secret fund. Reputed for his sharp tongue, Maj. Katogawa exclaimed, laughing out loudly: 'You are the first one who has ever returned the leftovers of a secret fund. You are too bloody honest! You don't need to return it. Spend it as you see fit.' But I insisted that I would return the money because it was a matter of principle. In the end, he agreed to accept ¥35,000, the balance to be spent, ¥10,000 each, at my request, on the bereaved families of the four martyrs lost in the aeroplane accident at Mt. Yakedake.

Then, Col. Iwakuro spelled out his budget for the secret money for his *kikan* and I offered a supplementary explanation as I was familiar with the I.N.A. and I.I.L. Because the applicant was Col. Iwakuro, who was Maj. Katogawa's former boss, the latter approved the budget at once without objection, despite his reputation for strictness in examining budgets. It was unprecedented. I thought this exceptional case was partly attributed to Col. Iwakuro's influence, but I was also conceited enough to believe it was partly due to the supportive explanation offered by myself who was honest to a fault. On my way back, the evil thought crossed my mind that I ought to have spent the secret fund liberally instead of being as stingy as we were.

I am positive, however, that the true friendship and mutual respect that we former *F kikan* agents have maintained to this day in the post-war years is attributable to our efforts to uphold strict fairness.

13. Dissolution of *F. kikan*

During the four weeks of my absence, the team of Lieuts. Nakamiya and Yamaguchi managed to deal with the difficult and extensive activities of the *F kikan* without delay or failure. The I.N.A. and I.I.L., while their leaders were away, were making good progress without friction in this difficult and early stage of their establishment. The news of the grievous loss of the four leaders including I.I.L. leader Pritam Singh shocked their followers, but it also strengthened their determination to fight for their freedom. However, the news of my transfer and the *F kikan*'s disbandment, at a time when the I.I.L.-I.N.A. movement was going to face a critical period, created misgivings and anxiety because of their warm and trusting relationship with us. Their uneasy feelings were largely dissipated by my explanation that Col. Iwakuro was a senior officer with outstanding personality and ability, and that the new measures were an indication of the Japanese Army's positive commitment to expand and promote the I.I.L.-I.N.A. movement for India's liberation.

Shortly after my return, I planned a week's tour of various parts of Malaya, where I had started my brilliant exploits, to bid farewell to comrades with whom I had travelled the difficult road.

On my journey northwards, I visited I.I.L. offices in Batu Pahat, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Taiping, Penang, Alor Star and Sungei Patani, and on my way back Seremban. Everywhere I visited I was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd of I.I.L. members who came out to say goodbye. Taking the

opportunity, I told them of the situation following the fall of Singapore, about the death of the four martyrs, the Tokyo conference, and the *Iwakuro kikan* which was to replace the *F kikan*, and thanked them for their friendship and trust shown to me and my men. I also called on each state governor to present petitions from Indians who had requested my assistance in protecting their personal honour, freedom, and property. The battlegrounds in Muar and Slim where thousands of soldiers had died or been wounded were already covered with fast-growing trees and grasses leaving no trace of the grimness of the struggle. Bouquets of flowers, decorating grave markers, symbolizing affection for fallen comrades, reminded me of the tragic death in action of my fellow soldiers. Every tree and every blade of grass brought home to me the bloody fighting of those days. The day after my return to *F kikan* headquarters from my farewell journey through Malaya, the delegation that had attended the Tokyo conference arrived at Kallang Airport. The party of ten delegates that had left on 10 March for Tokyo in thundering roars now returned with six members. There was a touch of sadness amongst compatriots who greeted their return. No sooner had Capt. Mohan arrived than he was wrestling with the problem of organizing and strengthening the I.N.A. on a full scale. The I.I.L. movement was launched on a new operation. I felt sad at the thought of bidding farewell to I.I.L. and I.N.A. agents and comrades in Malaya and Sumatra in less than ten days as I saw their activities prospering.

On 20 April I received an official telegram instructing me to return to Saigon headquarters. I notified Capt. Mohan and comrades of the order. The day of our separation was only a few days ahead. My men and Indian and Malay comrades listened in tearful silence to the news.

Since October the year before, we had fought together for the liberation of people and for their honour, sharing our ideals and pledges, and overcoming difficulties at the risk of our lives. We were united with trust, loyalty, and close friendship transcending military rank and racial differences. The first giant stride had been taken toward the realization of our ideals. I could hardly bear to leave behind those with

whom I had worked from the beginning, at the very moment when our work was entering into the second stage of construction after having achieved the initial objective of creating the movement.

* * *

Uprising in Atjeh, Sumatra. After the arrival of twenty members of the *F kikan* led by Abu Bakar to Sumatra, their propaganda messages spread like wild fire all over Atjeh through the help of the *Pusa*. Dutch suppression and preparations for the destruction of important public facilities engendered the most intense anti-Dutch sentiments amongst Atjehnese. The news of successful contact between the *Pusa* and the Japanese Army broadcast by the Penang station, and the fall of Singapore announced on the air by the Tokyo station, encouraged an Atjehnese uprising. Insurrection broke out on the night of 23 February with an attack under the command of Tengku Abdul Wahab upon a Dutch-controlled post office. Indonesian soldiers of the Dutch Army stationed in Seulimeum had by this time switched their loyalty to the *F kikan*. On the following morning the riot was transformed into a violent rebellion when people attempted to prevent the Dutch Army from destroying bridges, by removing dynamite fuses set on twenty of them. The order to rise had been issued on the 21st and preparations were under way. Three hundred armed volunteers wearing the *F kikan* arm band took part in the operation and succeeded in removing the dynamite. Elsewhere they blocked narrow roads, cut telephone lines and blew up the railway track at Indrapuri. On the morning of the 24th fierce fighting occurred between Atjehnese and Dutch soldiers who had arrived. As a result, both sides suffered a dozen casualties. On the night of 7 March 800 *F kikan* members attacked a Dutch army barracks near Krueng Jreue Bridge, during which several comrades were arrested and thrown into jail in Kutaraja.

In response to the uprising in Seulimeum, *F kikan* agents planned a revolt at Lhoknga Airport, the largest airbase in northern Sumatra. In accordance with my directive given

to Said Abu Bakar, he was determined to save the airport facilities from demolition by the Dutch. For this operation, twenty *F kikan* agents who were close followers of Said Abu Bakar had been chosen and eighty Indonesian soldiers guarding Lhoknga airfield had been won over to our side. Leaders of the Indonesian soldiers were two Menadonese, Melo, Walangintan, and a Batak, Pangsitorus. The scheme called for a simultaneous revolt in and out of the barracks at midnight on the 23rd. Someone, however, betrayed the Indonesians with the result that the Dutch took the initiative and arrested Melo. He refused to confess despite severe interrogation and was brought early on the morning of 12 March before a firing squad behind Sigli prison. Members of the firing squad happened to be *F kikan* agents. He fell feigning dead when they fired at him; none of the bullets hit him. He was thus saved from execution by the quick wit of his comrades. In order to meet his rebellious situation in Atjeh, the Dutch Army in Kutaraja was reinforced.

In response to this Dutch reinforcement, Atjehnese leaders held a meeting on 4 March at Lubok and resolved to stage a united insurrection throughout Atjeh. In accordance with an Islamic ritual, they pledged: 'I swear to Allah, I swear to Allah, and I swear to Allah. I take a vow to be loyal to the Islamic religion, to the people and to the motherland. I will not violate the three pledges I have made, and will stand together to resist the Dutch.' Then, they made the following resolutions:

1. A united and simultaneous insurrection shall be staged throughout Atjeh.
2. This rebellion shall be undertaken in order to protect the religion, the people and the motherland. We will pledge our loyalty to Japan.
3. A manifesto shall be sent to all chairmen in every district in Atjeh.
4. A manifesto shall be sent to the Dutch government.
5. A synchronized attack shall be made on Dutch military barracks during the night.

On 6 March, they issued the statement throughout Atjeh

with a warning that any Indonesian officials working for the Dutch government would be regarded as Dutch citizens unless they immediately resigned their posts. The manifesto was sent out even to government offices and police stations and posted in the streets and pasted on armoured cars of the Dutch Army. On 7 March vigilance committees in cities and towns went on strike and defected to join the *F kikan*. They posted *F kikan* agents at bridges, oil refineries, oil tanks, communications facilities and all public buildings that the Dutch Army had planned to blow up, and removed dynamite from them. Also on the same day Teugku Njak Arif notified the Dutch Resident, demanding 'Return the government of Atjeh to the Atjehnese. Otherwise, we Atjehnese will declare war against the Dutch.' At the same time, they cut telephone lines everywhere in Atjeh and blocked roads with fallen trees. Facing this unrest, Dutch troops and government officials gathered together in military barracks around Kutaraja.

A general rebellion throughout Atjeh was planned on the night of 11 March. To prepare against an initial surprise attack by the Dutch Army, Atjehnese fortified all villages and made preparations for the assault. At about 2300 hours on the 11th fighting occurred near Lam Nyong Bridge in Kutaraja and the Atjehnese repulsed the Dutch troops. At about 0200 hours on 12 March shooting broke out between *F kikan* agents and Dutch soldiers when the latter set fire to oil depots at the airfield at Lhoknga and *F kikan* agents tried to save the base intact. Finally, at 0400 hours several thousand *F kikan* members surged into Kutaraja with a roar of cheers attacking government buildings and barracks, where they engaged in fierce fighting with the enemy.

During the confusion of this fierce battle, Japanese troops entered Kutaraja at 0700 hours and received a thunderous roar of welcome from the people who were shouting '*Banzai*'. It was a dramatic scene.

In the Lamno district *F kikan* members had been preparing an attack on the Dutch since 1 March and fighting broke out in Lamno Market at 0800 hours on 11 March, and they also ambushed retreating Dutch troops at a ferry crossing in Kuala Lambesu. As a result the insurgents suffered more than a

dozen casualties.

In the Calang district, *F kikan* members under Teuku Pulo attacked Dutch troops stationed there at midnight on 9 March. The battle continued until the 11th, resulting in scores of casualties on both sides. On 19 March Japanese forces occupied the area.

In the Tapaktuan district, all residents of the district at Abu Bakar's directive came together under the leadership of Bulanpitieh and organized a G.A.F.I. (*Gabungan Fucheyama Indonesia*, meaning Association of Indonesian Mt. Fuji) and prepared for rebellion. When Said Abu Bakar visited the district to give them the directive, he forgot to explain that F stood for the *Fujiwara kikan*, and they took the liberty of interpreting F to mean Mt. Fuji and adopted it in their name. Teugku Rasjid had become chairman of the G.A.F.I. Resolutions adopted by the G.A.F.I. included the following points:

1. it would execute the *F kikan*'s orders;
2. it would fight against the Dutch government;
3. it would pledge loyalty to the Japanese government; and
4. it would stage a simultaneous uprising in the Tapaktuan district against the Dutch government.

On 15 March, when they heard that Dutch soldiers were going to destroy important resources and public facilities, people in the district rose up all at once, their first target being the Dutch military barracks at Blang Pidië. Dutch troops arrived in scores of lorries. The fight turned into a fierce bloody battle, leaving more than thirty G.A.F.I. members dead.

On 17 March Atjehnese struck a Dutch army barracks at Apaan and the revolt spread everywhere on 18 and 19 March. During battles fought in this district, the Atjehnese suffered more than 100 dead and ten wounded. Thanks to their gallant fighting, the town of Tapaktuan was saved from fire, and oil tanks, business firms, and military barracks were secured intact, and later turned over to the Japanese Army.

Elsewhere, in response to the general uprising in Great Atjeh province, people in the Sigli district revolted. On the night of 11 March, at the signal of a drum from the mosque,

several thousand *F kikan* members descended upon Sigli simultaneously attacking army barracks, the prison, the official residence of the deputy Resident, and other strategic places. In less than half an hour they had accomplished their objectives. Just when an important battle between Dutch troops reinforced on the 13th and several thousand *F kikan* members was about to commence, the Japanese Army arrived at Sigli. The Japanese troops in collaboration with *F* members arrested the Dutch soldiers and entered the city in the midst of a thunderous welcome. Elsewhere *F* members removed explosives set by the Dutch Army, hence the Japanese Army did not have to go through the same difficulties as they had in Malaya, where the British Army demolished bridges with dynamite. Also the Japanese Army was able to take over vital resources and facilities intact.

While the Dutch defence position was on the verge of collapse in the face of Atjehnese national resistance directed by Abu Bakar, Imperial Guards successfully landed at Peureulak, Krueng Raya Durueng, and Sabang. Masubuchi arrived in Sumatra together with twenty-four comrades.

The majority of Dutch troops had already retreated into the mountains. The state of excitement produced at the coast by the arrival of Japanese troopships, spread throughout Sumatra. As previously arranged, coastal dwellers brought out fresh water, fruit, drinks, chicken and meat and waved Japanese flags in a roar of welcome. Every village and town in Atjeh, coordinated by leading *F* members, prepared a welcome for the Japanese Army. People had gathered bicycles and vehicles and put them at the disposal of Japanese troops, they had cleared roads and secured bridges, now guarded by sentries, and had been ready to hand over vital raw materials to the Japanese Army.

F members were busy repairing railroads and telephone lines for the advance of Japanese troops. More than 100,000 *F* agents fanned out in all directions and returned with arms discarded by the Dutch Army. They launched an operation to capture stragglers and brought information to the Japanese Army about the retreating Dutch troops. Due to these activities by *F* members, peace and order returned to Atjeh

three days after the Japanese landing.

All Atjeh seethed with excitement in welcoming the arrival of Japanese troops. The *Pusa* Youth troops took charge of maintaining security in Sigli and other towns. On the 15th, Masubuchi arrived at Sigli to visit Said Abu Bakar. After Masubuchi met Teungku Mhd. Daud Beureu'eh, chairman of the *Pusa,* he and Said Abu Bakar, accompanied by *F* members, sped to Kutaraja arriving at 2300 hours. That night he had an emotional encounter with the leaders of the *Pusa* who had distinguished themselves in the battle of Seulimeum.

At 2300 hours on 15 March, Masabuchi and other *F*-members arrived in Kutaraja. They, together with Teungku Mhd. Joenoes and Teuku Njak Arif, immediately established *F* committee headquarters. Following the directives of the Committee, branches of the Association for the maintenance of security were set up throughout Atjeh. Atjeh now looked like an *F* kingdom. There were some Atjehnese who, pretending to be *F* members, raided Dutch, Chinese, and Menadonese homes, looting and stealing their property. *Uleebalang* (the aristocratic class) who had been traditionally loyal towards the Dutch government fled from their villages fearing the villagers' retaliation, while the remainder showed no positive interest in joining the *F* committee in order to collaborate with the Japanese Army[60].

The fortuitous meeting between the *F kikan* and Said Abu Bakar at Taiping had now produced such a tremendous success within the short space of seventy-three days. With the establishment of the military government, however, the policy was followed of utilizing the existing government organization, and aristocrats who had been loyal towards the Dutch government were reappointed. These people became very jealous of the popularity of *F* members, whom they attempted to remove from their position of power because they were afraid that *F* members might expose their anti-Japanese attitude. They engaged in a campaign of slander to discredit Said Abu Bakar and the *Pusa.* The military police and military government officials who were not familiar with the situation were easy prey to their scurrilous and clever propaganda.

Looters who represented themselves as *F* members had provided the *Uleebalang* with an additional weapon for harasment. Wheedled by the *Uleebalang's* nasty slander campaign, the Japanese military police and military government officials began to suppress *F* members, and criticism of them reached 25th Army headquarters in Singapore. I had to read these sad reports when I returned to Singapore from Tokyo.

I was distressed by the lack of understanding on the part of the Japanese military authorities of the genuine and enthusiastic loyalty of the Atjehnese to their religion and country and of their outstanding achievements and sacrifices. The time for dissolving the *F kikan* was closing in and all political, religious and cultural activities in Sumatra would have to be transferred to the military administration. The military, however, was about to take a perverse policy, denying these associations and activities of the indigenous people. I visited Maj.-Gen. Manaki once more and gave him a full account of the outstanding achievements of the Sumatran comrades, of the inexcusable suppression of the *Pusa*, and the possible frightening outcome of such suppressive measures. As a result, Maj.-Gen. Manaki promised to halt the policy of suppression against the *Pusa* and give official *F kikan* members preferential treatment. In return for his commitment, I promised to dissolve the *F* organization voluntarily and to bring together the religious and national activities of the Atjehnese under the *Pusa*. Immediately I sent Lieut. Nakamiya to Sumatra to investigate the situation, to offer condolence to bereaved families, and to express our appreciation to *F* and *Pusa* members as well as to consult with Masubuchi, Sumatran military government officals, Said Abu Bakar, and *Pusa* leaders about dissolving the *F* organization and handing over the responsibility for guiding and supporting the *Pusa* to Masubuchi. Nakamiya successfully completed his mission in two weeks, and returned with a photograph of a memorial service held for the victims who died in the battle of Keumiroë Bridge. He reported to me with indignation about the unreasonableness of the Sumatran military government authorities, while at the same time praising the magnificent achievements of *F* members.

Prior to my departure from Singapore I took a day off from my busy work and flew to Medan in late April to express my personal appreciation to my fellow comrades in Sumatra and to bid them farewell. Masubuchi came to the airport to greet me. I noted weariness deeply ingrained in his face, which told me of his fatigue deriving from his difficult position, sandwiched between the hard-nosed Army and *F* members, in representing the interests of his comrades. I at once proceeded to headquarters of the Imperial Guard Division in Medan where I called upon Col. Obata, chief of staff. I conveyed to him the understanding reached between Maj.-Gen. Manaki and myself some time before, with regard to protecting interests of *F* members, and pleaded with him for its faithful execution.

Col. Obata had been my instructor at the War College and my senior officer only five weeks earlier as chief of the Second Section (intelligence) of the Southern Expeditionary Forces. His lack of sympathy for my work at first was disappointing. I tried to correct his misunderstanding by explaining the situation, until he accepted my argument. My attempt would not have been successful if it were not for our teacher-student and senior-junior relationship. Taking advantage of a recess in the meeting with Col. Obata, Masubuchi and I went to a hotel in Medan, where several comrades including Said Abu Bakar had been waiting for me. It was our first meeting in 100 days since Abu Bakar sailed across the Malacca Straits full of great ambition. When he met me, he was like a humble and dutiful son standing before a kind benevolent father; he was modest and friendly. I could hardly believe my eyes that this was the same Said Abu Bakar who had accomplished a great historical achievement. I could not utter a word for a few moments, and just held his hand. Overwhelmed with emotion, his eyes were filled with tears and so were Masubuchi's as he watched the touching scene. Fighting off my tears, I managed to utter 'Thank you very much for your work. I am sorry for the trouble you have gone through.' During our conversation, he did not even say a word about his great feats and the indescribable difficulties he had been through to achieve them, nor did he voice complaints against the Japanese military

authorities. Relying on reports I had obtained about his activities, I praised his achievements and efforts. He accepted my appreciation by nodding his head at my every word.

I told him of my discussion with military government officials in Sumatra concerning their lack of understanding towards our comrades, in which matter he appreciated my mediation. When I revealed to him that I had to dissolve the *F kikan* and return to General Headquarters in Saigon in a few days, Abu Bakar jumped to his feet in disbelief with an expression of disappointment and regret. I comforted him with words of encouragement by saying: 'Masubuchi is going to stay in Sumatra as the leader of *F* members and as your friend. You can rest assured that I have reached an understanding with Japanese military government officials that any problem concerning *F* members will be dealt with through Masubuchi. I hope you will do your best for the reconstruction of Sumatra under Masubuchi's benevolent leadership.' Although he wanted me to accompany him to Kutaraja to meet his comrades who had gathered from all over Atjeh, I had to decline his invitation as my flight schedule meant that I must return to Singapore that day. Requesting him to convey my message of appreciation to all of the comrades, I boarded the plane with reluctance and much regret. Aboard the aircraft I prayed for success for *F* members, prosperity for Sumatra, and the Japanese Army's understanding of the selfless devotion of the Atjehnese.

The Japanese military administration in Malaya, Sumatra, Java, and Burma often went against the principles enunciated in the Imperial Decree for the declaration of war and Tojo's speech in the Imperial Diet in January. Lack of understanding and sympathy disappointed the indigenous peoples and even engendered their anti-Japanese sentiments, after the initial enthusiastic reactions with which they greeted Japanese troops as the arrival of a holy army. They hoped to achieve independence and to fight with them against the enemy. There were unavoidable factors that caused friction was, such as military demands for operational purposes and acquisition of strategic materials. Neither can we deny that the Japanese Army ignored the national sentiments of the indigenous people,

considering them of minor importance, while it became arrogant with the initial victories, taking the cooperation of local people for granted. Nor can we deny that the *F kikan, Minami kikan* (responsible for the *kosaku* in Burma), and other *kosaku,* impatient for success, made use of the national consciousness of the indigenous peoples, arousing false hopes, which helped create a disagreeable relationship.

The tragic *sook ching* of Malay Chinese, the Atjehnese Anti-Japanese rebellion in Sumatra (which was nipped in the bud through Masubuchi's desperate suasion), the revolt of the Burmese Defence Army in 1944, and other similar incidents can be traced in their origins to lack of understanding and sympathy on the part of the Japanese for the national aspirations of local people. If Japan had practised from the outset of occupation what she preached about constructing a new order in Greater East Asia and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, if she had listened with sympathy to their national aspirations, and if she had clearly defined her war objectives, the course of the war would have been different.

It seems to be the fate of all men engaging in *kosaku* in any period of history, irrespective of nation, find themselves in a dilemma of trying to support conflicting demands of their own army and indigenous people. The most conspicuous example was the case of Lawrence of Arabia who suffered from the unsympathetic attitude of his government for Arab nationalism.

Masubuchi, who was respected by comrades as their father-figure during the war, committed suicide following Japan's surrender, thus making himself part of Sumatra forever.

* * *

After my return to Singapore I busied myself in saying good-bye to K.M.M. members and Chinese leaders who came under Tashiro's protective wing, and in taking care of *F kikan* agents. I issued to each member of the K.M.M. a certificate stating that he had cooperated with the Japanese Army and helped him find a job or establish a business, and provided many of them with travelling money to return to their hometowns or

villages. I was able to help Ibrahim and his colleagues with the publication of the *Warta Malaya*, and in the leadership of the K.M.M.'s cultural activities. Also I helped them to be appointed as advisers of Syonan city (the Japanese name given to Singapore) to represent the interests of the Malay community in the city. Through the understanding and kindness of Matsumoto Shigeharu[61] of Domei Wireless Service who was stationed in Syonan, Ibrahim was promised all-out help from Domei in the city for the publication of the *Warta Malaya*.

Keng and Ting whose cooperation was sought through Tashiro's offices were not able to achieve much due to adverse circumstances. Their homes located near Kallang Airport had been demolished by Japanese aerial bombardments. For the loss of their homes by Japanese aerial attack, I offered them another house and a sum of money in compensation, terminating their relations with the *F kikan*.

Toshiro, who was an *F kikan* member returned to Bangkok, because he had expressed such a desire. I helped Kamimoto, Ohta, and Suzuki find positions in the Malay military administration and Masubuchi and Hashimoto in the Sumatra military administration.

All of them except Kamimoto had lived in various parts of Southeast Asia for scores of years. Not all of them necessarily possessed wisdom or cultural refinement for the *kosaku*. They had joined the *F kikan* voluntarily just before the war when we had needed every man available. Certainly they were not selected by a very strict screening. No doubt some of them had hoped to reap profit in Malaya. Once they joined the *F kikan*, they agreed to support my principles and rid themselves of self-interest and selfish desires, dedicating themselves to the realization of the *F kikan's* noble objectives. Despite their long-accustomed way of life in Southeast Asia, they had never once broken strict military discipline nor disrupted the *F kikan's* unity. Though I was unworthy, they had served me loyally without once complaining, and had greater achievements than we did. No outstanding meritorious deeds of regular army officers could be compared with theirs. Irrespective of their status, whether military officers or civilians, they stood together as a family. No other organization could

be compared with *F kikan* for its efficiency, where each produced 100 per cent of his capability. They were proud of being members of the *F kikan* and bragged about its virtues to their friends and reporters.

The time had come for me to part company with these members. Choked with emotion, they bade me farewell saying with one accord that they would never again experience such an exciting life.

Half of my *F kikan* comrades lost their lives during the war in the cause of the nationalist movements. Masubuchi committed suicide in Kutaraja and Tashiro killed himself in the Cameron Highlands at the end of the war and each was buried in the land they had loved. Taking their lives with their own hands, in atonement for troubles brought upon indigenous people subsequent to Japan's surrender and defeat, was a noble act we military men could hardly match.

When Masubuchi killed himself with a pistol in his official residence, Abu Bakar and Atjehnese comrades mourned bitterly over his remains. Japanese administrative officials also wept when they watched this touching scene. Kamimoto, who had been with *Harimau* before the commencement of war, was later transferred to the *Hikari kikan* in Burma and was put in charge of a Manipur *kosaku* in Nagaland. Following the disaster in Imphal, he became ill. While being transferred to the rear by submarine, enemy planes attacked and sank the vessel. He was a model for a saying which reads something like 'A man who has no desire for life, money, and honour is a hard person to deal with.' He was a very unusual person possessing fighting spirit and generosity, volunteering for *kosaku* in the hinterland of Malaya and Burma. First we lost Pritam Singh, a central figure in the India *kosaku*, in an aeroplane accident over Mt. Yakedake, and then the three persons who took charge of the *kosaku* for *Harimau*, the Sumatran youth group, and overseas Chinese in Malaya.

One day before my departure from Singapore, a group of I.N.A. officers and men came up to me on 28 April with two proposals. One was an invitation to a farewell party to be held in my honour that evening, and the other plan was a review of 50,000 I.N.A. officers and men who were to line up both sides

of the road from *F kikan* headquarters to Kalang Airport to see me off the following morning. I accepted the invitation to the party but declined the second proposition because I felt I was not deserving of such an elaborate send-off. Unable to turn down Capt. Mohan's firm insistence, I agreed to a simpler ceremony, in which a military band and a regiment were to line the road and I was to receive send-off party of all I.N.A. officers at Kallang. The party was held in I.N.A. headquarters that evening, with important staff officers of the I.N.A. attending. After a speech by Capt. Mohan that touched my heart, he presented me with a framed letter of appreciation written in English. Our hands were shaking with emotion as I accepted the gift from him, and our eyes glistened with tears.

The letter of appreciation praised me as the mother of the I.N.A., emphasizing my contributions to saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of Indian soldiers and civilians and protecting their honour. It praised my dedication to supporting India's independence and freedom, and my wholehearted devotion to the I.N.A. It also said that my name and achievements would be recorded as a monumental work in a leaf of the history of India's independence. Choked with emotion I could hardly find words to express my appreciation for this splendid gift. I was so glad that our small contributions and sincere efforts were rewarded with such an enthusiastic response.

During dinner, Capt. Kearny told me that I would be welcomed throughout India after independence as a national hero as long as I had this letter of appreciation, and that my statue would be erected in Delhi!

I believed that the honour of receiving this letter of appreciation should be shared by all members of the *F kikan*, not to be monopolized by myself, and that it should be kept by the *Iwakuro kikan* as successor to the *F kikan*. Consequently, it was left in *F kikan* headquarters. Because of this decision, it was burnt together with other classified documents when the war ended in August 1945. I felt terribly sorry for I.N.A. officers and men at the loss.

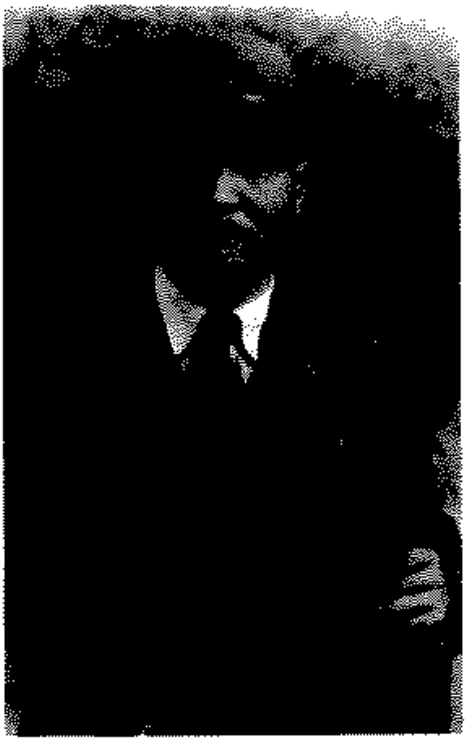
The party lasted until the small hours as I said goodbye to all. The following morning, escorted by Capt. Mohan, I left

F kikan headquarters for Kallang Airport, driving along the road lined with a military band and soldiers. The time had come at last for me to say goodbye to all the members of the *F kikan,* I.N.A., I.I.L., K.M.M., and the youth group of Sumatra and Malaya. Several hundred I.N.A. officers, I.I.L. staff members, and K.M.M. officers came out to see me off. One after another they put garlands of flowers around my neck to wish me well until I was almost buried in them. When I saluted my friends from the aircraft ramp, every one of them was weeping and I could not control the tears rolling down my cheeks.

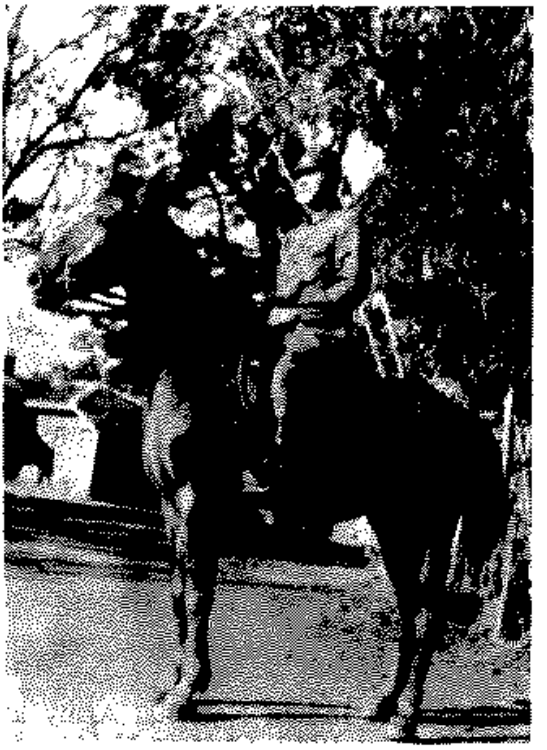
Matsumoto Shigeharu, Domei's chief correspondent, who boarded the aeroplane to accompany me, was so impressed by the dramatic scene that he stood there stupefied. Shortly after his return to Tokyo, he wrote an article in the *Shin Joen* (a woman's monthly magazine) in which he described this emotional and touching scene. I was a lucky person. Through my experience I had learnt that genuine friendship and loyalty can transcend national boundaries and barriers, enabling us to join together in harmony. We took off from the runway in the bright morning sunshine; I was physically separated from my friends on the ground. The plane headed towards the South China Sea, carrying me away to Saigon, but my thoughts were still with my friends in Singapore.

Thus my mission as chief of the *F kikan* ended. I was resolved to support the I.I.L. and I.N.A. in my capacity as a staff officer at the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces in Saigon in order to pay back the warm friendship I had received from them. During my flight, memories of Malaya ran through my mind like a kaleidoscope.

1. Fujiwara Iwaichi at the Fujiwara Asia Research Institute in 1954.



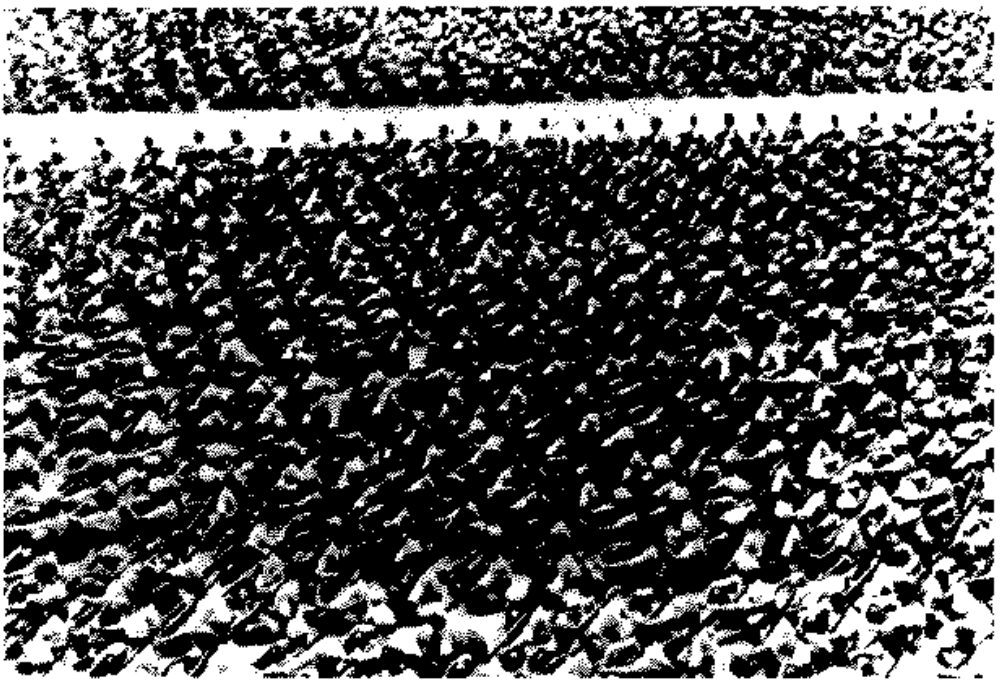
2. The author at Singapore in 1942 as Chief of the *Fujiwara kikan.*



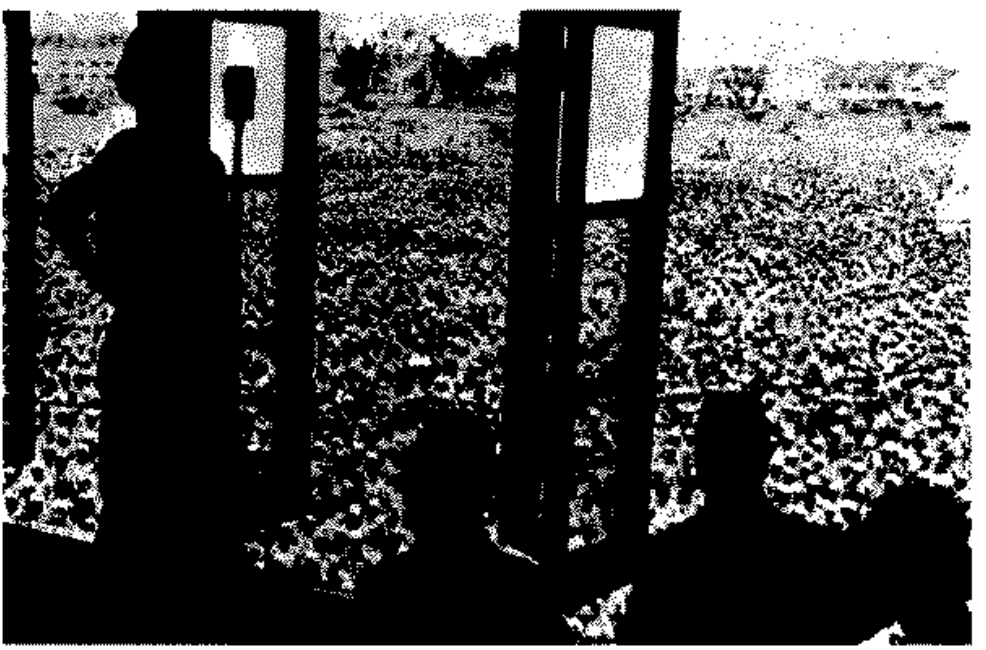
3. At Maymyo, Burma, February 1944, Fujiwara Iwaichi as Staff Officer at the 15th Army Headquarters before the beginning of the Imphal Campaign.

4. With Captain M. Akram, adjutant to General Mohan Singh, at *F. kikan* headquarters in Ipoh Middle School, Malaya, 5th January 1942.

5. Talking with officers and men of the Indian National Army at *F. kikan* headquarters at Ipoh, January 1942. Captain M. Akram on the left.



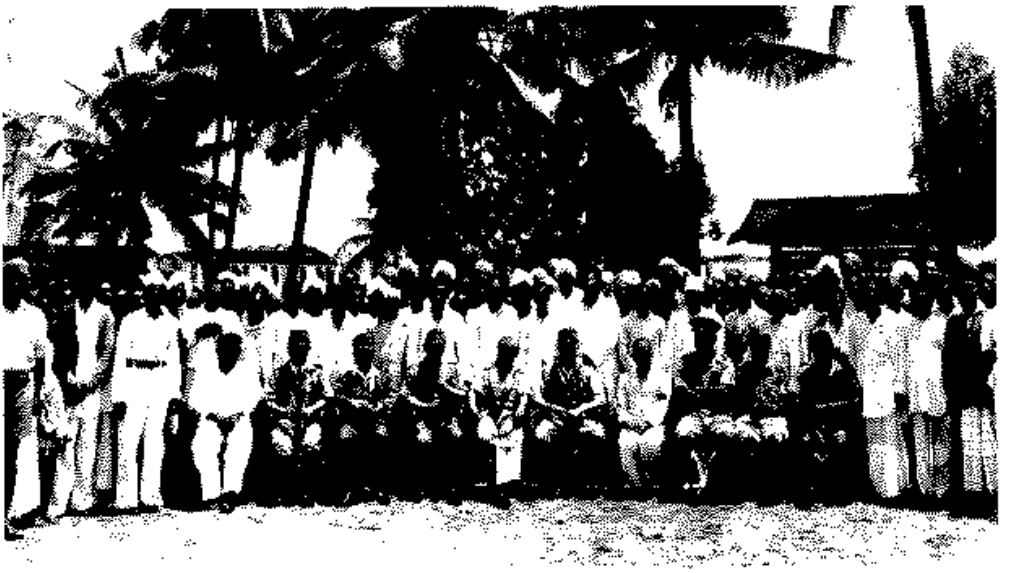
6. The hand-over ceremony, at Farrer Park, Singapore, 17 February 1942, of 45,000 Indian troops by Lt. Colonel Hunt to Major Fujiwara.



7. General Mohan Singh speaking to Indian soldiers in Farrer Park, Singapore, 17 February 1942. Major Fujiwara second from right.

8. Conference at Mr. S.C. Goho's house in Singapore, 3 March 1942. Major Fujiwara *(second row, centre)* with representatives of the Indian Independence League and leaders of the Indian National Army, General Mohan Singh, Mr. Pritam Singh, Lt. Colonel N.S. Gill, Mr. S.C. Goho, General M.Z. Kiani, and Captain M. Akram.

9. Lt. Colonel N.S. Gill, General Mohan Singh and Captain M. Akram in Singapore, March 1942.

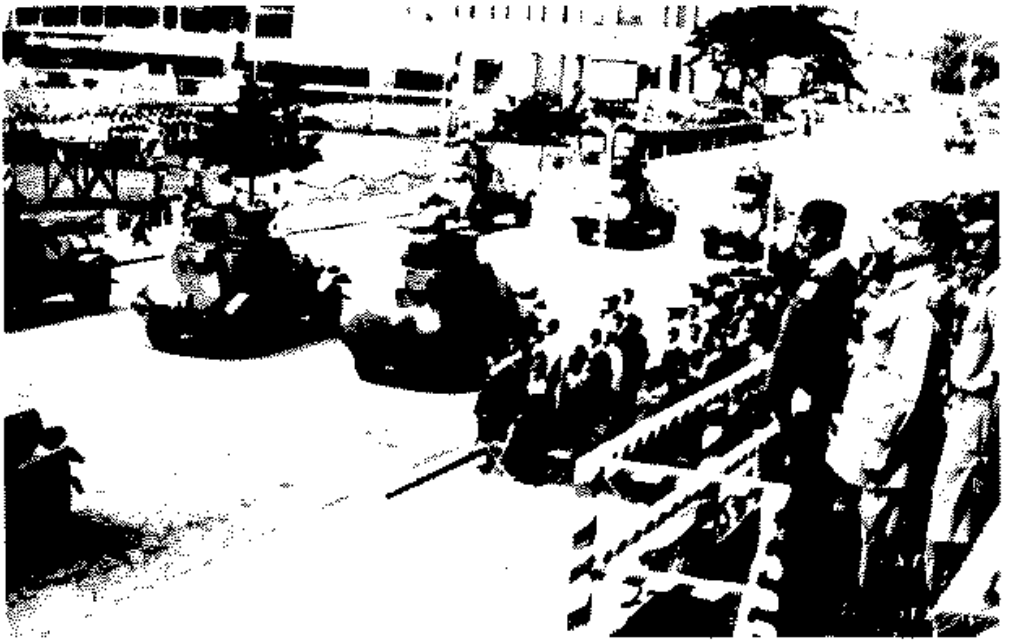


10. Batu Pahat, Malaya, April 1942. Farewell visit to Indian Independence League branch office. Major Fujiwara *(seated, centre)* with Mohan Singh, Saito Toshitsugu, Yamaguchi Gento and Kunizuka Kazunori.

11. Delegates returning from Tokyo conference greeted at Kallang airport, Singapore. *Left to right:* Major Fujiwara, S.C. Goho, General Mohan Singh, and N. Raghavan.

12. First meeting in June 1943 of Mr. R.B. Bose and Mr. S.C. Bose at the residence of Mr. M. Toyama, the leader of the Black Dragon Society and R.B. Bose's protector in his exile in Japan.

13. Arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose at Singapore, 2 July 1943. S.C. Bose *(centre)*, R.B. Bose *(immediately behind S.C. Bose)*, M. Senda *(right of S.C. Bose)*, Lt. Kunizuka Kazunori *(left foreground)*.



14. S.C. Bose at a military review in front of the City Hall, Singapore, July 1943, with Premier General Tojo Hideki and General M.Z. Kiani.

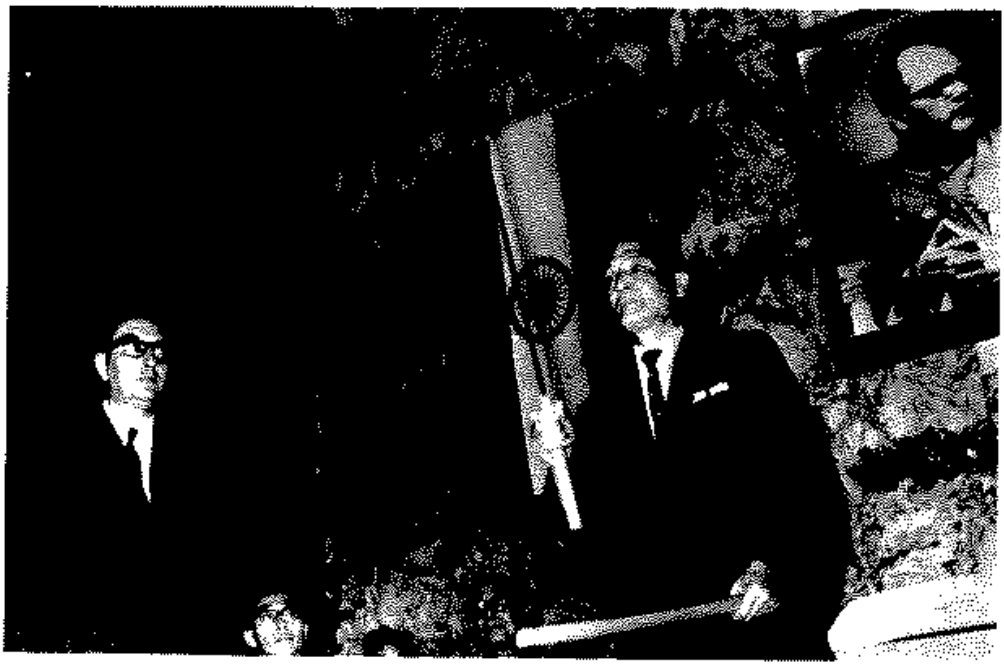
15. General Shah Nawaz Khan, Regional Commander, I.N.A., 1st Division with staff officer Major Okamoto Iwao of 33rd Division.

16. The author revisiting, in March 1977, the former I.N.A. headquarters south-west of Imphal, with the Secretary General of the I.N.A. Committee, Hilamani Singh, and Committee president, Coirang Singh.

17. Reconstruction, for NHK television film *Challo Delhi*, of the 1945 military tribunal to try I.N.A. officers. General Shah Nawaz Khan, Lt. Colonel P.K. Sahgal and Colonel G.S. Dhillon. Filmed in the Red Fort, Delhi, April 1978.

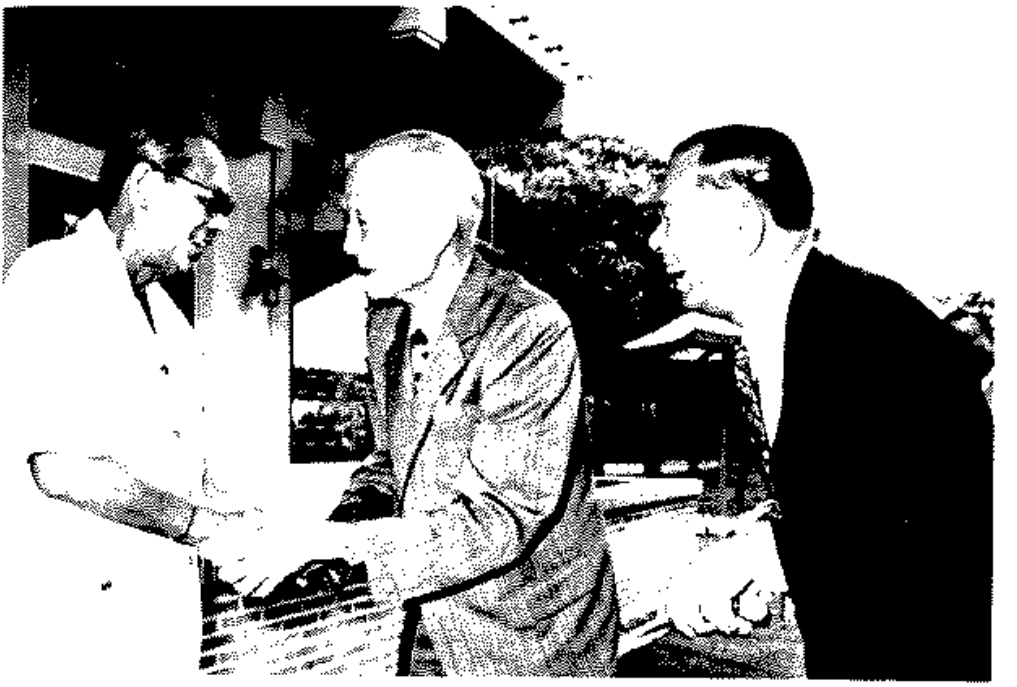
18. General Fujiwara at reunion with old colleague General Mohan Singh in Ambassador Hotel, New Delhi, February 1967.

19. On 21 March 1967, General Fujiwara, General M.Z. Kiani, Brigadier Habibur Rahman Khan and other I.N.A. officers in Rawalpindi on the invitation of the Indian Defence Minister Aya Khan to his official residence.



20. Ceremony on 23 January 1967 at the Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, when General Fujiwara returned Netaji's military sword. Dr. S.K. Bose *(standing, left)*, nephew of S.C. Bose.

21. Visit by General Fujiwara on March 1970 to Teungku Daud Beureu'eh, Chief of the Islamic Scholars Federation, together with author's old colleague Mr. Said Abu Bakar *(left)*.



22. Renewing old friendship with the first prime minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman.

23. The author, at a memorial service southwest of Imphal, as head of a delegation to recover the remains of fallen soldiers.

Part II

Preface

I had wanted to write a sequel to Part I but had been unable to do so until 1966, largely due to my negligence and poor writing ability. Added to these reasons are my wife's death while I was out of work, economic hardships in making both ends meet while raising two small daughters without a house to live in, and my commitment to writing the *History of the Greater East Asia War* which was being undertaken by a group of former military officers.

Through the courtesy of my senior officer, Inaba Shozo, and Hara Shobo Publishing House, my memoirs are going to be published. I regret very much not having written the sequel in 1948, when I completed the first part. For after I left the *F kikan* my association with the I.N.A. continued not only until the end of the war but also to the day when India became independent, and even to this day.

Until March 1943 I was a staff officer of the Southern Expeditionary Forces in charge of the India *kosaku*. In that capacity I was involved in a tragic incident whereby Gen. Mohan and Col. Gill were arrested and removed from the I.N.A. Then, I became a staff officer of the 15th Army in north Burma and took part, together with I.N.A. soldiers, in the Imphal operations, which ended in disaster.

Immediately after the end of the war I witnessed the terrific labour pains of India's independence from a cell block in Delhi, where I was brought to a British court martial to testify as a witness for the defence of three I.N.A. officers. After a successful Indian defence of the I.N.A. officers and the

British setback in the military trial, I was transferred to Singapore in March 1946 and detained in Changi Prison and in Kuala Lumpur Prison as a war criminal for more than one year, during which I was subjected to rigorous interrogations for no reason at all.

Thanks to friendship shown to me by local people and I.I.L. and I.N.A. comrades, and to the exemplary conduct of *F kikan* agents who were introduced in Part I, I was unexpectedly released in June 1947 and was permitted to return to Japan, despite everyone including myself having expected the worst. During the period of confinement, I was able to witness and hear across the prison wall and through a small window of the prison cell news of the fierce independence struggles and the war cries of indigenous peoples in India, Burma, Indonesia, and Vietnam as well as the dawn of free Asia.

Then, in 1954, I toured Southeast Asia to visit my former comrades-in-arms in Bangkok, Rangoon, and India and saw with my own eyes the independence of India. I visited General Mohan Singh on his farm in Ludhiana near the India-Pakistan border and was welcomed by him and former I.N.A. soldiers. Gen. Mohan Singh and I spent several days and nights reminiscing about our wartime experiences. Escorted by Gen. Mohan, I visited the Golden Temple in Amritsar, and was received by an enthusiastic crowd of more than 10,000 well-wishers. I shall never forget the warm reception they accorded me, during which a Sikh representative spoke highly of my contribution and presented many gifts. I was embarrassed when on the train the following morning I read newspaper headlines about my visit: 'The Founding Father of the I.N.A.' and 'Marshal Fujiwara Visits Golden Temple'.

All these years I have also been visited by historians from the United States, Britain, India, and Pakistan wishing to interview me to gather information about the I.N.A. Even today I very frequently get inquiries.

In the early summer of 1961 I was able to hold memorial services in Tokyo for the deceased members of the *F kikan*. I had been thinking about holding such services for some time. Every living member and every bereaved family except Kamimoto's participated in the services, coming from all over the

country. *Harimau's* younger brother and sister came from Fukuoka and even Said Abu Bakar, the central figure in the Sumatra *kosaku*, travelled all the way from Penang. I was choked with emotion on meeting Abu Bakar for the first time in twenty years.

I wish to close my memoirs by adding several episodes, hoping to write a complete history of the *F kikan* and the I.N.A. some other day.

I beg the reader's tolerance.

14. The Mohan Singh Incident

Seven months had passed since I returned to the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces in May 1942. On 20 December, when the splendid year of victory was just about over, the most tragic and regrettable incident in the history of the I.N.A. independence movement occurred; it was the arrest and detention of Gen. Mohan Singh, commander of the I.N.A. To me personally, it was a bitter experience to see him removed from the I.N.A., because we had sworn blood brotherhood.

In July 1942 the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces moved from Saigon to Syonan (Singapore). In passing I may say that the changing of Singapore's name to Syonan was indicative of Japan's arrogance as, drunk with initial victories, she disregarded the great principles of the Greater East Asia War, and pursued an intolerant policy following the example of the British Empire. The renaming of the city was a product of the policy pursued by military leaders who had no principle and objective in the war.

Coincidental with this arrogant policy was a change in the tide of war – the Allied Powers began to mount an offensive against Japan. The Allied counter-attack beginning with the Battle of Guadalcanal, which commenced in the summer of 1942, drove the Japanese Army into a desperate situation.

Similar signs of Allied counter-attack were appearing in the hinterland of Burma, where the Japanese had successfully completed their campaign without meeting significant resistance: the allied forces of the United States, Britain, and

China had been preparing for a counter-offensive on the ground; the Allied Powers, whose supply route to Chungking via Burma was disrupted, had been establishing and consolidating an aerial supply route to Kweilin via Assam; and their raids by B24s on strategic points in Burma had been increasing day after day.

Intoxicated with victory, the Japanese Army did not take seriously the Allied Powers' preparations for the counter-attack on Burma. Instead, taking advantage of the confusion and defencelessness of India, it planned and prepared for an India operation aimed at Assam, striking across the Arakan Mountains. The Southern Expeditionary Forces and the I.N.A. held discussions on the possibility of advancing the I.N.A. to Burma for this grand-scale operation. The Mohan Singh incident occurred against this background. Its remote cause can be attributed to the Sanno conference and the immediate one to the Bangkok meeting. Since then trouble had been brewing.

As I have already mentioned, there was a psychological conflict between the Southeast Asian group and the Indian group resident in Japan. Moreover, the Southeast Asian group began to harbour apprehension and mistrust when their request to see Premier Tojo was turned down with a polite excuse. They distrusted Rash Behari Bose's lack of enthusiasm for arranging the appointment with Premier Tojo.

In this atmosphere of distrust the Bangkok conference was convened on 9 May and Behari Bose was elected chairman of the I.I.L. and appointed commander-in-chief of the I.N.A., which was now placed under the command of the I.I.L. This series of developments engendered a potential disharmony. In addition, discontent and mistrust developed when the Japanese and the Southeast Asian group reacted at cross purposes to the resolutions adopted at the Bangkok conference.

The Bangkok conference lasted nine days and Indian representatives from all over Asia attended. After Behari Bose was elected chairman of the conference, sixty-three resolutions were adopted, in accordance with British parliamentary procedures. They concerned I.I.L. organization, authority of

various groups, the I.I.L.-I.N.A. relationship, I.I.L. command, the I.I.L.-Japanese government relationship, I.N.A.-Japanese Army cooperation, and budget.

The basic tone of the resolutions was consistent with the principles contained in the memorandum exchanged between Pritam and myself prior to the war and in Capt. Mohan's wishes that he proposed in Taiping. They emphasized the importance of Indian autonomy in the conduct of the independence movement, and of alliance and cooperation based upon equality between the Japanese government and military on the one hand, and the I.N.A. and I.I.L. on the other. Respecting the independence of the Indian delegates in discussing these resolutions, the *Iwakuro kikan* sent only an observer and refrained from interference in the procedures. The resolutions thus adopted were presented to Colonel Iwakuro by the executive committee of the conference with a request to obtain the Japanese government's consent to them and its reply.

The *Iwakuro kikan* accepted the resolutions without demur and passed them on to the Army central authorities. When the latter received the Indian resolutions, it suddenly expressed disapprobation of them, and became abusive. 'What the hell is the *Iwakuro kikan* doing? There is a limit to letting the Indians get their own way. It is bloody unwise to permit the I.I.L., which is still an unknown quality, to adopt such resolutions unilaterally and have them presented to us!' The *Iwakuro kikan* received an angry telegram from Tokyo which contained no concrete replies the I.I.L. had expected.

It cannot be denied that the *Iwakuro kikan* was partially responsible for this development. Although I can sympathize with the *Iwakuro kikan* that had been reorganized and started with a brand-new staff, it failed to get the confidence of the I.I.L. and lacked understanding of the peculiar characteristics of the Indians and the Indian national movement. Moreover, it had not established the rapport of comradeship. The fault also lay with the Indian side's lack of discretion. The seed of the conflict lay in the unilateral action with which the Indian delegates discussed the agenda and adopted the resolutions, that required a joint understanding and cooperation between

the Japanese and Indian sides, without consulting the *Iwakuro kikan.* Likewise, friction arose from the fact that the *Iwakuro kikan* reported the proceedings of this important conference in a single telegram to Tokyo. The basic cause of the thorny problem lay in the attitude of the Army central authorities; they failed to establish the fundamental principles of foreign policy which justified the war. On the contrary, they still could not bury the old practice of espionage, nor could they rid themselves of the imperialistic administrative philosophy of the western powers which had permeated them since the Meiji period.

The *Iwakuro kikan* found itself on the horns of a dilemma. There was no way out of this predicament but to appeal to Behari Bose to soothe the I.I.L.'s ruffled feathers, thus whitewashing the breach and disagreements for the time being. Tokyo's vacillating attitude with a vague promise of gradual improvement did not rectify the situation. A premonition that had flashed across my mind when I heard of the tragic aeroplane accident over Mt. Yakedake was now becoming a reality.

* * *

The unsatisfactory outcome of the Bangkok conference proved to be a stumbling block in the way of the *kosaku*'s progress. It had been agreed with Gen. Mohan that Indian POWs who chose not to cooperate with the Japanese Army were to be organized into a labour force under his command in order to carry out Japanese reconstruction works. It was only natural that Gen. Mohan, wanting to expand the I.N.A., administered them and trained them as a source of I.N.A. manpower instead of organizing them into a labour gang. The Japanese Army, through the *Iwakuro kikan,* disregarded Gen. Mohan's authority over the POWs on the pretext of creating an elite voluntary army; and, because of the Japanese Army's interference, he was not able to organize a fully-equipped 30,000 strong field army. Gen. Mohan also insisted that a declaration be made to the world on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday of the I.N.A.'s existence and its determination to

wage an armed struggle, but the Japanese opposed it on the grounds that it was still too early to make such a statement.

Gen. Mohan suffered from a dilemma finding himself between the demanding I.N.A. officers and the reluctant Japanese. The problem would affect the morale of the revolutionary army and undermine his command. The *Iwakuro kikan*'s explanations as to why it could not meet the I.N.A.'s demands were ambivalent and unsatisfactory to I.N.A. men. Whenever it was unable to offer a satisfactory explanation, it called upon Behari Bose for explanation as an evasive measure.

Gen. Mohan's distrust and suspicion towards the Japanese represented by the *Iwakuro kikan* loomed larger as did his distrust of Behari Bose, who appeased the Japanese so much that Gen. Mohan accused him of being a Japanese puppet. In the past, when the *F kikan* was in charge, whenever we were confronted with what appeared to be an insurmountable problem Gen. Mohan and I used to have a heart-to-heart discussion until we found a solution. Regrettably, there was no such intimate rapport between the *Iwakuro kikan* and Gen. Mohan, thus the chasm of misunderstanding widened.

The conflict deteriorated to such an extent that Gen. Mohan was reported to have said, 'The Japanese have no other intention but utilizing the I.N.A. as an espionage agency.' He became obdurate in his hatred of the *Iwakuro kikan.*

Added to this problem were Gen. Mohan's strict policy and leadership, which were necessary to re-educate Indian soldiers of the former British Army and to create a revolutionary army. There were many officers in the I.N.A. officer corps who had been more senior in rank than Gen. Mohan (he was previously a captain). These elements combined together produced antagonism and animosity. There was similar friction between Gen. Mohan who controlled military command and the I.I.L. civilian staff. Also there was a touchy relationship between the I.I.L. senior staff headed by Raghavan and the *Iwakuro kikan* over the question of which organization should take the initiative in broadcasting propaganda programmes to India, and in personnel matters. All these unfortunate problems had accumulated, heading towards a catastrophe.

Meanwhile, the Southern Expeditionary Forces had been

making preparations to transport an advance I.N.A. unit to Burma as agreed upon between the Japanese and the Indians. The *Iwakuro kikan* was anxious to solve the internal conflict that had been brewing between the *kikan* and the I.N.A. and within the I.N.A. by speeding up the I.N.A. unit's transfer to Burma, hoping that a change in circumstances might produce a better environment and atmosphere. Gen. Mohan, however, became even more obstinate, insisting that he would consent to the I.N.A. unit's transfer to Burma only when the Japanese accepted his demands. It was an impasse.

His enthusiasm since the Bangkok conference for organizing and training the I.N.A., which had consumed his entire energy, in anticipation of its advance to Burma, cooled off; the morale of his officers and men proportionately deteriorated and training became lax.

* * *

To make the situation even worse, an unfortunate incident took place that made the rupture definite; Col. Gill, a senior I.N.A. officer, had organized a counter-intelligence operation in Bangkok with the assistance of Col. Iwakuro, who commissioned him to that post because Iwakuro was concerned with Gill's relations with Gen. Mohan Singh. To Col. Gill, Bangkok was familiar ground for intelligence activities as he had been stationed there before the war, as I had, disguising himself as a merchant dealing in cotton fabric.

One of Col. Gill's ranking officers in the Burma-India border area was arrested by the Japanese military police on a charge of passing information to the British Army and Col. Gill was suspected of being a mastermind of the espionage operation. This was the first unfortunate incident since the establishment of the *F kikan*, and it cast an even darker cloud of distrust between the *Iwakuro kikan* and the I.N.A. staff, which had been deteriorating already. Concerned with the gravity of the incident, Col. Iwakuro demanded that Behari Bose get rid of Col. Gill and have him arrested. The disposition of the case irritated Gen. Mohan Singh, aggravating his relations with the Japanese.

Lieuts. Yamaguchi, Yonemura, and Kunizuka and Ito

Keisaku, former members of the *F kikan* who continued to serve the *Iwakuro kikan*, came to my billet in the evenings one after another to report on the deteriorating relations. Many a time we stayed up all night discussing the problem, deploring the worsening situation which we were unable to stop. Out of deference to the *Iwakuro kikan*, I paid a few visits to Gen. Mohan Singh in his bedroom early in the morning on the pretext of going horseback riding. Every time I visited him, he looked haggard but received me with a smile. Sometimes he confided his worries and complaints to me with tears in his eyes. It was painful for me to have to listen to him and it grieved me a great deal. I tried to offer comforting words, asking him to control his strong feelings and to be patient. It was predestined that anyone who engaged in this kind of grand *kosaku* would experience all sorts of difficulty and agony. I reasoned with him that the knot of difficulties would have to be untied with patience over a period of time through willingness, conscientiousness and conviction. Gen. Mohan seemed to share my feelings and accepted my reasoning, but I failed to disarm his distrust of the *Iwakuro kikan* because of my inability and unworthiness.

Each night I was unable to sleep, tossing and turning in agony, for the I.N.A. that Gen. Mohan and I had created and nurtured together since the days in Alor Star in December 1941 was about to collapse. Should the Japanese Army resort to the dismissal and arrest of Gen. Mohan, a bloody clash might very well occur between Gen. Mohan's loyal I.N.A. and the Japanese Army, depending upon how he reacted. It was frightening just to think about such a prospect. I was in the most painful situation.

Inwardly, I set my mind to sacrifice my life to save the Japan-India relations from further deterioration. I revealed my resolve only to Lieut. Yamaguchi and disposed of my personal affairs and handed to him my will and a lock of my hair.

The worst possible day arrived on 20 December, when Gen. Mohan was summoned to appear before headquarters of the *Iwakuro kikan* and was stripped of his command of the I.N.A. by Behari Bose. Anticipating this day, Gen. Mohan accepted the dismissal with dignity and left the headquarters after

bowing to Col. Iwakuro and Behari Bose. As he stepped out of the lobby, he was arrested by Japanese military police who were waiting for him and whisked away to Senda's residence[62]. All this while, he maintained his composure giving no sign of agitation.

I had made arrangements, with the permission of Col. Iwakuro, to have him spirited away to the Senda residence when I received a report of his impending arrest, because I wanted to make a last-minute attempt to persuade Gen. Mohan in order to avoid a clash between Japanese and Indian soldiers and to save the I.N.A. from dissolution, as well as to bid him farewell. Knowing that Senda had been in sympathy with Gen. Mohan and our understanding friend, I asked him to serve as interpreter and to provide his house for the meeting.

No words can describe my feelings and the scene when I met Gen. Mohan face to face, which was followed by an embrace in silence and in tears. Old man Senda watched us emotionally without wiping away the tears that rolled down his cheeks.

Regaining our composure after a while, we sat down. I begged his forgiveness for my inability and unworthiness to prevent the unfortunate incident. Interrupting my words by waving his hand, Gen. Mohan expressed his appreciation for my faithfulness to the I.N.A. and for my comradeship, wishing our friendship to last forever and deploring the circumstances that had led to the present crisis.

I then made a desperate attempt to dissuade Gen. Mohan from dissolving the I.N.A. which he had created to bring about India's independence, and begged his assistance to avoid a bloody, tragic clash. At the same time I promised to do my best, on his behalf, to realize his earnest desires and to bring Subhas Chandra Bose from Berlin to Asia as early as possible in order to turn over command of the independence movement to him. I ended by emphasizing that Gen. Mohan would be welcome back to the I.N.A. when that day came.

My tearful persuasion lasted for two hours and Gen. Mohan finally acceded to my pleas. While he declined to persuade I.N.A. officers and men by himself on the ground that he had been dismissed and arrested, he consented that I pass his

message to them on his behalf. Never again to see his officers and men, Gen. Mohan, accompanied by his adjutant, Rattan Singh, was taken to exile on St. John's Island, a desolate island in Johore Waterway, situated to the northeast of Singapore Island.

After bidding him farewell at the lobby of Senda's residence, Senda and I proceeded to Col. Iwakuro's office and I reported the gist of my meeting with Gen. Mohan, requesting his permission to convey Gen. Mohan's message to I.N.A. officers and men. Thanking me for my efforts, Iwakuro authorized me to do so. I hastened to the I.N.A. barracks in Seletar and delivered Gen. Mohan's message to Lt.-Col. Bonsle and other I.N.A. officers who were waiting in sadness and silence. I asked their forgiveness for my inability and unworthiness to save the tragic situation, urging them to exercise discretion.

After Gen. Mohan's departure, Col. Bonsle was promoted to general to reorganize and to command the I.N.A. It was very fortunate that a clash between the Japanese and Indian armies arising out of this tragic incident was prevented.

The impact of this affair was felt in the I.I.L. Discontent in the I.I.L. leadership circles surfaced, directed against the *Iwakuro kikan*'s meddling in the I.I.L.'s autonomy and against Behari Bose's lack of ability to deal with the Mohan Singh affair. As a result of their opposition, Malaya I.I.L. chairman Raghavan, Singapore I.I.L. chairman Goho, Menon, and Thivy were all removed from office.

I lost many friends with whom I had worked together sharing difficulties since October 1941. I shall never forget the bitterness of the experience as long as I live.

15. The Imphal Campaign

The year 1942 ended with the tragic Mohan Singh affair, and the repercussions were still felt in the new year.

Meanwhile in Burma the situation was ripening day by day for a decisive battle between Japanese and British forces following the landing of British guerilla units under the command of Gen. Wingate in northern Burma[63]. More than a dozen Chinese (Chungking) divisions were deployed in the east bordering Yunnan province, a few Sino-American divisions in the Hukawng Valley in the Burma-India region, three British-Indian divisions in Imphal along the northwestern Burma-India border, and four British-Indian divisions in Akyab on the southwestern coast, were poised for an attack aimed at recapturing Burma. Behind the British-Indian troops were several divisions of airborne units as the second wave of assault. The strength of the Allied Air Forces consisted of 1,000 aeroplanes that controlled the air space over Burma.

To meet this Allied counter-attack, the Japanese Army had created in March 1943 the Burma Area Army in Rangoon, and the 15th Army consisting of three divisions in north Burma came under the command of the Area Army. I became a staff officer of the 15th Army and joined hostilities on the northern Burma front.

In order to take the initiative against the enemy's counter-offensive, Lt.-Gen. Mutaguchi of the 15th Army proposed to launch an attack on Imphal. After many a month of arguing the pros and cons of the campaign, Supreme Headquarters in Tokyo finally authorized preparations in September and

ordered its commencement in January the following year. In the meantime, the strength of the Japanese forces had been augmented gradually; there were five divisions under the command of the 15th Army to defend central and northern Burma, and three divisions in southern Burma and the 28th Army, a newly-established army corps, to take charge of operations on the Akyab coast.

While the war situation in Burma was growing critical, anti-British political activities in India had reached a state of ugly insurgency. The anti-British passive resistance movement led by Gandhi and Nehru of the Congress Party adopted the 'Quit India' resolution at the Bombay conference in August 1943 and staged a nationwide disobedience demonstration. Britain immediately declared the Congress Party illegal and arrested its leaders and radical elements and threw them into jail. Arrested persons were estimated at more than 10,000 and another 10,000 people were believed to have died in the rebellion. India was in political turmoil.

Prior to the Bombay conference, Subhas Chandra Bose, great leader of India's independence movement, arrived at Singapore on 2 July to a great fanfare[64]. Bose with his imposing stature and militant spirit had landed on Sabang Island at the northern tip of Sumatra on 6 May after a long submarine journey across the Indian Ocean, where he was transferred from a German submarine to a Japanese one off the coast of Madagascar[65]. From Sumatra he proceeded in secrecy to Tokyo, where he had discussions with Premier Tojo, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, and high officials of the Army and the Navy to ascertain Japan's intentions of supporting India's independence movement.

At the time of the Sanno conference in Tokyo in March 1942, Prime Minister Tojo had cold-shouldered the request of the delegation from Southeast Asia and Gen. Mohan for an appointment, and had shown little interest in the resolutions adopted at the Bangkok conference. Now he was charmed with Bose's personality, taking to him at first sight, partly due to Shigemitsu's emphatic recommendation. Tojo made all sorts of promises to Bose, putting an aeroplane at his disposal and giving him V.I.P. treatment. On 16 June he took Bose to the

House of Representatives and in his presence declared Japan's principles and eagerness to support India's independence. Japan's policy towards India, which had remained ambivalent, became articulated with the emergence of Bose.

Two million Indians living in East and Southeast Asia received the great Indian leader in Singapore with acclamation and frenzy. The I.I.L. and I.N.A. movements, which had remained stagnant and divided since the Mohan Singh affair, were resuscitated and restored to unity of purpose with the arrival of Bose. At a general conference of I.I.L. representatives in Singapore on 4 July, they passed a resolution declaring the establishment of the 'Provisional Government of Free India', and unanimously elected Bose chairman of the Government. Thus, supreme leadership of the anti-British independence movement in Greater East Asia was now handed over from Rash Behari Bose to Subhas Chandra Bose, who became known as *Netaji* (leader). On 5 July Netaji Bose reviewed 15,000 I.N.A. troops in a square before the Singapore Municipal Building and delivered the following historic speech. He was now in possession of a revolutionary army, that had been lacking in his fifty years of independence struggle. His ecstasy and emotion must have been beyond anyone's imagination.

> 'This is the proudest day of my life. This is the glorious day that I declare to the world the birth of the *Azad Hind Fauj* [Free India Army]. I wish to offer my thanksgiving to God for the realization of my wishes. This Army is not just an army to liberate India from the yoke of British colonialism, but it is the Army that is going to be the national army of free India when we have achieved independence.
>
> It is extremely significant that this Army has been organized in Singapore, which was once the citadel of the British Empire. As I stand on this platform, I am very aware that the British Empire has collapsed.
>
> My dear comrades! My dear fellow soldiers! Your battle cry is "*Chalo* Delhi". I do not know how many of us will survive this war, but I am positive that we will win this war in the end. Our mission

will not end until we have made a triumphant entry into the Red Fort in Old Delhi.

During the long period of our anti-British resistance struggle, we have had all sorts of means to fight with, but there is one most important thing we did not have. That is an army. I have gnashed my teeth with indignation at not being able to possess an army. I now have a strong and elite army. You are privileged and honoured to have been able to volunteer and join this army of historical significance. You have now removed the last barrier standing on the road to independence. You ought to be proud of yourselves to be pioneers and vanguards for this noble cause.

Let me repeat what I said. The Japanese Army drove through Malaya like a tidal wave in order to capture the fortress of Singapore. Its battle cry was "*Chalo* Singapore, *Chalo* Singapore". Japanese soldiers realized this battle cry. Following the Japanese model, let us shout once more "*Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi" and "*Chalo* Delhi!" until the day we recapture Delhi. My fellow soldiers! There is no greater honour than to become the first soldier of this army for freedom. Honour, however, always goes with responsibility. I myself am aware of it. I pledge to you that I will be always with you in times of darkness, hope, sadness, joy, tribulation, and victory.

Right now I have nothing to give to you except hunger, privation, attack after attack, and death. If you give me your lives and follow me, I am positive that I can deliver you to victory and freedom. I am not concerned how many of us survive to see a free India; I am satisfied only to see India freed and to make her free with our total commitment and dedication.'

Fifteen thousand officers and men and tens of thousand Indian spectators spontaneously burst into a chorus of '*Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi', and '*Jai Hind* Netaji Bose'. The thunder-

ous voice of acclamation spread throughout the city reaching as far as the harbour like a tidal wave. Soldiers as well as civilians were frenzied with emotion. They and Netaji Bose were united, establishing a heart-to-heart communication. This historic scene was wired to Britain and India, creating enormous impact in both countries.

'*Chalo* Delhi' became a password for the I.N.A.. which was preparing to join battle in Burma where the decisive battle was about to begin. The First Division under the command of Gen. Kiani was chosen to go first. This Division consisted of three guerilla regiments, named Gandhi, Nehru, and Azad. It had been a long tortuous road for the I.N.A. The task was about to begin.

* * *

About a month and a half after the arrival of Bose at Singapore, I had an opportunity to meet him. It took place on 26 August at his official residence in Kallang on the outskirts of Singapore. The deep emotion I experienced on that occasion is unforgettable. I had gone to Singapore to attend a meeting of staff officers in charge of intelligence, which was convened by the Southern Expeditionary Forces. (Maj.-Gen. Kunomura, chief of staff of the 15th Army, was to attend a conference of chiefs of staff.) Taking advantage of our visit to Singapore, Maj.-Gen. Kunomura, on Gen. Mutaguchi's behalf, paid a courtesy call on Netaji Bose. Kunomura asked me to accompany him on the understanding that the I.N.A. would take part in the forthcoming Imphal operations. Senda of the *Hikari kikan* sat in on the meeting as interpreter.

Earlier, in May 1943, Colonel Iwakuro had been reassigned as superintendent of military administration, 25th Army, in Sumatra and had been succeeded by Col. Yamamoto Hayashi. The *kikan's* code name was changed to *Hikari* (Light). Col. Yamamoto had been a military attaché in Germany since October 1941 and in that capacity he had been associated with Netaji Bose. It was he who made the arrangements for Bose's submarine journey to Asia[66].

Bose's residence in Kallang was set in spacious grounds

which extended to a beach of white sand. The neatly trimmed lawn, bathed in tropical sunshine, set off the bright red and yellow cannas and roses.

Several dignified officers were waiting at the entrance, which had been sprinkled with water, a considerate gesture by our host which impressed us. I felt sadness in my heart when I noticed that Gen. Mohan and Lieut. Rattan Singh were not amongst the officers greeting us at the doorway.

Many of the officers were old friends of mine, including Col. Rahman, who received us as if we were their own relatives visiting from afar. Rahman ushered us into a spacious reception room, where a group of senior officers of my acquaintance were standing in line with friendly expressions. A tall man in military uniform, looking very dignified and noble, stepped out of the line towards me. Without Rahman's introduction, I knew that he was Netaji Bose. He was effusive in his greeting as if welcoming an old friend. In his appearance I saw the nobleness of a philosopher, a steely will, passionate fighting spirit, and great wisdom and refinement. At first glance, he appeared to me a man of extraordinary ability. Through Senda's introduction, Netaji Bose exchanged greetings with Gen. Kunomura first. Then he walked towards me and shook my hands firmly. As he gave me a cordial look of profound appreciation and his voice spoke my name, I felt his warmth running through my body like an electric wave. He embraced me and invited me to sit on a sofa as if he would carry me there. My old I.N.A. officers gathering around us watched me with deep emotion.

When everyone was seated, Netaji spoke highly of me. I was very much touched, especially when he showed his deep compassion and high esteem and appreciation for my friends, Pritam and Gen. Mohan.

> 'Major Fujiwara, I have been anxiously waiting for this opportunity to meet you since I was in Berlin [he must have been acquainted with my name through communication from Pritam]. I am really glad to see you. I have heard about your distinguished contributions to the I.N.A. from Gen. Mohan [he seemed to have met Gen. Mohan in exile and

heard about the I.N.A. from its founding], I.I.L. and I.N.A. comrades, Lieut. Kunizuka [former *F kikan* member and the *Hikari kikan* interpreter], and Senda. Pritam, Gen. Mohan, and you are the founding fathers of the I.N.A., a revolutionary army, that we have been unable to organize but you have formed and handed it to me. I wish to express my appreciation to you on behalf of the Indian people. I regret that Gen. Mohan is not able to honour us with his presence today. I think highly, however, of the objectives and achievements of Pritam and Gen. Mohan and appreciate them very much.'

I responded to his statement by saying: 'Pritam, Gen. Mohan, and I.I.L. and I.N.A. comrades are very happy to see you here safely in Singapore, because they have been anxiously waiting for your arrival. Pritam, Gen. Mohan and myself are glad to labour in the background and are ready to hand over the leadership when we get such a great leader as you, Netaji Bose. I am positive that the late Pritam and ill-fated Gen. Mohan share my thoughts. Please accept my apology and regret for Pritam's accident and Gen. Mohan's misfortune, which are partly attributed to my unworthiness.' Interrupting my words, Netaji comforted me, saying 'Please do not worry about the Mohan Singh case, which I shall deal with discreetly. I am encouraged to learn that you will be with us in Burma for promoting cooperation between the Japanese and Indian armies. I will count on you.' In reply, I assured him firmly and resolutely that I would do my best to meet his expectations.

Afterwards, there were serious talks between Gen. Kunomura and Netaji about mutual cooperation for the Imphal operation and the war of liberation. I can still recollect his bright eyes and tense appearance as he listened to Gen. Kunomura's explanation about the 15th Army's operational plans. Later, they engaged in an informal talk in their fluent German.

I felt refreshed, as if I were looking up into a clear blue autumn sky, because our meeting with Netaji cleared my suppressed hard feelings that had accumulated and stuck in

my mind since the Mohan Singh affair. I was glad that on 20 December last year in the Senda residence I had made a desperate attempt to dissuade Gen. Mohan from dissolving the I.N.A. and prevent a bloody clash between the Japanese and Indian armies. Fate had once more brought me to the I.N.A., to fight in the Imphal operation.

* * *

I met Netaji for the second time in early February 1944. Shortly before the commencement of the Imphal campaign, Netaji paid a visit to Gen. Mutaguchi at the latter's headquarters in Maymyo to discuss joint operations between the two armies. He was accompanied by Sahay and Senda.

Imperial General Headquarters issued an order on 7 January for the Imphal operation. The 15th Army was busy with preparations for the campaign so that the order to launch operations could be given on 11 February, National Founding Day. Three divisions under its command, deployed in the southern plateau of Chin, the Kabaw Valley, and the east bank of the Chindwin River, were ready to advance on 8 March (the main force on the 15th).

A part of the I.N.A. First Division, which was to join with the 15th Army in the campaign under Gen. Mutaguchi's command, had already advanced to the front, while the main force of the Division had begun to drive northward from Rangoon. The First Battalion under the command of Major Rathuri of the Nehru Regiment (officers and men named this the Subhas regiment to show their respect and loyalty to Netaji), by order of the Burma Area Army, joined the offensive of the 54th Division in Akyab that had begun on 4 February in order to check the British Indian Army in the coastal sector. The regiment had already won a reputation for valour in an engagement against the enemy's 81st Division in the Kaladan Valley.

Coordinating this operation, the main force of the regiment (under Col. Shah Nawaz as commander) was proceeding towards Mandalay following orders to launch a decoy operation aimed at capturing and securing Chittagong. This

was to mislead the enemy into believing that the main thrust of our action was directed at Chittagong, attacking from Haka and Falam in the Chin Hills area. Preceding the regiment's arrival, Col. Shah Nawaz visited the Maymyo headquarters on 10 February while the main strength of the I.N.A. First Division was making preparations in Rangoon for the Imphal campaign.

In addition, there were I.N.A. intelligence, propaganda, and special task force units each consisting of about a dozen officers and men, who received special training. They had been already deployed at the front engaging in intelligence activities and in nationality *kosaku* to win minority groups in the border region.

The Provisional Government of Free India also advanced its command post from Singapore to Rangoon on 4 February to lead this grand-scale operation for the liberation of the motherland.

Earlier, the *Hikari kikan* had been expanded and reorganized for the Imphal operation. Lt.-Gen. Isoda Saburo was appointed chief of the *kikan* and Col. Yamamoto chief of staff[67]. To digress, I wonder at the wisdom of frequent changes of the *kikan*'s chief in charge of nationality *kosaku*, though there may be some reasons for them. The most essential thing in the *kosaku* is harmony amongst the men taking part, as everyone knows.

To return to the subject, let me recount the story of Netaji's visit to 15th Army headquarters. Though Netaji and Mutaguchi were meeting for the first time, they were in an expansive and confident mood, as though they had already taken India. Responding to Netaji's insistence that the I.N.A. should be in the van of the Imphal campaign, Mutaguchi ebulliently said to Bose, 'The occupation of Imphal is only the beginning. It will not take much time. Leave it to the Japanese Army. Your task begins after that. The Japanese Army wants to advance to Dimapur, and, if the situation warrants, to the Brahmaputra River. That is the time for the I.N.A. to go in.' Netaji responded jubilantly, 'If the Japanese Army succeeds in the Imphal invasion and helps push the I.N.A. forward to the Assam plain, the Indian people, as well as officers and men in

the British Indian Army, will rise in response to the I.N.A. Revolution will spread all over India, especially in my home state of Bengal. I hope the Japanese Army advances as far as the Brahmaputra River.' But the operational plan for Imphal, as ordered by the Burma Area Army, called for the establishment of a defence line only at the mountain range in the border area for the defence of Burma. Gen. Mutaguchi, however, had been of the opinion that the Imphal campaign would reverse the whole course of Japan's deteriorating war situation everywhere[68]. Although they were speaking off the cuff over the dinner table, it could not be denied that their determination to capture Assam, following the success of the Imphal campaign, developed during this exchange of conversation. Especially to Netaji, it was only too natural to persist in advancing to Assam.

The dinner at Mutaguchi's official residence did not break up until 11.00 P.M. after which Bose invited me to his guest house for an important discussion, which lasted until nearly dawn. Bose's main concern was the administration of occupied areas during the campaign. He wanted the administration of these areas to be entrusted at once to a committee of the Provisional Government of Free India. Protection of lives, property, temples, and public buildings in the occupied areas should be handled by the committee. All Indian POWs should be turned over to the I.N.A. by the Japanese Army. Special currency issued by the Provisional Government of Free India would be used rather than Japanese military currency. The I.N.A. should have priority in taking over captured arms and ammunition. Supplies to the I.N.A. from the Japanese Army should be increased. He sought my cooperation by outlining these requests in detail. I was surprised at Bose's detailed demands since he was without military experience, and at his prudence, wisdom, and enthusiasm. I was impressed by his stern insistence on maintaining the autonomy and honour of the independent government's revolutionary army. I also saw in his willingness to stay up all night in keen discussion the qualities of a great leader and revolutionary. According to his staff close to him, Netaji used to sleep only three or four

hours each day. He would listen to every important overseas broadcast and to minor complaints and petitions, official or private, from soldiers or civilians. He often stayed up late into the night to deal with these matters. He was an extraordinary man.

* * *

On 8 March the 33rd Division launched an attack from the southern Chin Hills and the Kabau Valley, while the I.N.A. Shah Nawaz Regiment, taking the place of the 33rd Division, had advanced a part of its unit to take charge of operations in the Haka and Falam sector of the southern Chin Hills which stood 8,000 feet above sea level. The Argyle Brigade, a British guerilla unit, was already operating in this area.

Taking advantage of the situation created by the offensive of the 33rd Division and the advance of the Shah Nawaz regiment to the Chin Hills on the night of 15 March, which checked the movement of the British Indian Army in Imphal, the 15th and 31st Divisions, which constituted the main strength of the 15th Army, crossed the Chindwin River and advanced rapidly towards the northern side of Imphal and Kohima, respectively. Impeding their advance was the mountain chain stretching from the Arakan range in the south to the Naga and Patkai hills in the north, at this point standing 10,000 feet above sea level. They climbed the steep and difficult mountain paths like monkeys. It was like Yoshitsune's attack on the *Heike* from behind the *Hiyodorigoe*. Mutaguchi had staked everything on this surprise attack in order to complete the Imphal operations in three weeks. The 31st Division, which constituted one-third of the strength of the 15th Army, was diverted from Imphal to Kohima, a strategic point leading to the Assam plain. The 33rd and 15th Divisions (whose strength was actually one-half of a fully-equipped division) were deployed for a frontal assault on Imphal which was defended by three British-Indian divisions.

The 15th Army was over-confident of its ability to knock out the enemy with two divisions by a surprise pincer movement from the north and south, and was anxious to advance

to Assam. One reason for this unusual strategy was that the 15th Army was uncertain of maintaining adequate supplies and entertained a secret wish for capturing and making use of ammunition stored in Imphal. Other elements contributing to this strategy were the precarious situation in which the 18th Division had been fighting a difficult battle in the Hukawng Valley since last November and an anticipated offensive by the Chungking army from Yunnan province.

This surprise attack appeared to have succeeded. In early April, the 33rd Division captured Kohima and the 31st and 15th Divisions respectively controlled a narrow strip of territory in the north and south at the entrance of the Imphal plain. Everyone expected that Imphal would be successfully captured by the Emperor's birthday, 29 April.

Having gained confidence with the successful Imphal campaign, the 15th Army began to draft plans for the operation in Assam. On 8 April, the 15th Army ordered the commander of the 31st Division to advance and capture Dimapur, while it commanded the main strength of the I.N.A. First Division to advance and collect troops in the Kabaw Valley in order to prepare for a grand-scale guerilla operation in the Assam plain, in which the I.N.A. was to play a major role.

Contrary to the premature optimism of the 15th Army staff, however, signs of a fiasco and reversal were already apparent in mid-April. We failed to cut off the Wingate Airborne Division that had been dropped in northern Burma on 5 March in the rear, and the 33rd Division failed to annihilate the encircled 17th Division in a narrow strip of land near Tonsan, and hesitated to drive towards Imphal, creating a turning point for a drastic reversal of the situation. Making use of time thus gained, the enemy reorganized and strengthened its position in the Imphal lowland to begin a counter-attack on the Japanese. Supplies of manpower and ammunition from the air and land were kept up at a high pitch and the British Indian 5th Division was flown to Imphal from Akyab. On the Kohima front the 33rd Army Corps consisting of the British Second Division and the British Indian Seventh Division arrived by rail and by air.

The lightly armed Japanese Army with some howitzers,

each having less than a hundred shells, but without air superiority, and the heavily armed British Army supported by superior air cover, were about to engage in hostilities. The 31st and 15th Divisions carried with them only three weeks food supply, having no hope of further supplies of food and munitions. In contrast, the enemy had been receiving supplies, when and where it wished, from the air, despite the fact that it was encircled by Japanese forces. The key to turn the war in our favour was lost forever.

Bloody and fierce fighting to capture even a small amount of territory was repeated all along the front day and night between the Japanese Army determined to capture Imphal only a short distance away and the British Army determined to throw back the assault. The situation became stalemated and then it reversed in the enemy's favour. The situation facing the 31st and 15th Divisions was especially disastrous. Practically every commanding officer from top to bottom fell in action and the number of casualties amongst soldiers was spiralling. The situation caused grave concern amongst 15th Army staff officers.

The 15th Army originally planned to capture Imphal with its own forces, turning aside the insistence of the I.N.A. that it spearhead the Imphal campaign and letting I.N.A. guerilla units fight in Assam. It was now compelled to solicit the I.N.A.'s participation in the Imphal operation. (The Japanese wanted to make sure that the I.N.A. would win their first battle and considered it too dangerous to put the I.N.A. against the British in Imphal as it was organized and trained only for guerilla warfare. Consequently, it was decided out of a paternalistic concern that the Japanese Army would assume the task of breaking through the enemy position at Imphal and have the I.N.A. participate just before the success of the campaign.)

Earlier, on 11 March, when the 33rd Division was about to annihilate the British Indian 17th Division in Tonsan, I received a visit from Col. Shah Nawaz at the 33rd Division's command post in Kigong. It was our first meeting in a year since we saw each other in Malaya. The small-statured colonel, with a gentle but handsome face, was smartly dressed

in military uniform. Stroking a pair of hand-grenades strapped to his chest, he insisted that his regiment be given the opportunity to lead the siege of Imphal. Being won over by his keen spirit, I authorized him to advance one of his battalions to Port White and drive to the front by overtaking the main force of the 33rd Division. The order was retracted due to the miscarriage of the 33rd Division's operation to annihilate the enemy 17th Division, as already described.

In the meantime, the battle situation had begun to turn for the worse. On 20 April the main force of the I.N.A. First Division under the command of Gen. Kiani was ordered to join both wings of the Yamamoto Detachment in Palel. The Gandhi Regiment under Col. Kiani (a cousin of General Kiani) deployed its troops in the southern wing of the detachment, and the Azad Regiment under Col. Dhillon joined the northern wing. Because the senior adjutant of the Yamamoto Detachment, Maj. Itoh, had been killed in action, I was detailed to the detachment as I had long been associated with the I.N.A., and I was to fight with the main force of the I.N.A. First Division for over two months. I could not have asked for more, for each I.N.A. officer and man was my comrade from the days in Malaya. Furthermore, Maj. Ogawa, who was assigned for liaison, was my respected senior officer. Maj. Ogawa and Gen. Mohan were in sympathy with each other. He protected and supported Gen. Mohan covertly and overtly, thus commanding the respect and trust of I.N.A. officers and men. He was a man of simplicity, integrity and humanity. His opposite number in charge of liaison for the Shah Nawaz regiment was Maj. Kemawari. Both officers were outstanding men in the *Hikari kikan*. Netaji spoke highly of them. It was very fortunate for the I.N.A. to have these two officers in this battle of unparalleled ferocity. That the I.N.A. did not collapse in eighty days of battle in Palel and in the subsequent disastrous retreat was credited to the two officers. However, both were killed in action with the I.N.A. in central Burma. I am sorry that I can no longer see these gentle but courageous officers today.

In order to evade enemy reconnaissance aircraft over Kiangu Road, the Kiani and Dhillon regiments, taking

advantage of the darkness of the night, hastened to the Palel front through the Kabaw Valley, chanting their battle cry of '*Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi'. I proceeded to the Yamamoto detachment's headquarters overtaking columns of these valiant I.N.A. soldiers.

Upon arrival at the front, the Kiani regiment were ordered to attack the enemy's major airfield in Palel. The regiment marched through deep valleys of the Chin Hills which swarmed with wild monkeys, crossed ridges, and finally made an onslaught upon Palel airbase. It was 29 April, the Emperor's birthday. This successful surprise attack cheered up everyone at headquarters of the detachment, the 15th Army, the Provisional Government of Free India, and the Burma Area Army.

The Yamamoto Detachment, however, was unable to reap further success, because it was prevented by a superior enemy entrenched in the steep mountain pass of Tegnoupal. The lightly armed Kiani regiment with no more than trench mortars had no means of stopping the enemy's coordinated attack from the ground and air, and was forced to retreat to the southern wing of the detachment. After that, the regiment held its ground for eighty days in torrential rain without supplies, defending both wings of the Yamamoto Detachment. In this holy war for India's independence, I.N.A. soldiers even ate water buffalo meat, knowing that it was a strict taboo for Hindus. The Kiani regiment was the only unit in the Japanese and Indian forces that had driven to the strategic point of Palel throughout the long offensive and defensive battles. Without the cover provided on both sides by the I.N.A. regiments, the Yamamoto Detachment, extremely exhausted, would not have been able to hold out on the front for eighty days.

Meanwhile, the main force of the Shah Nawaz regiment in the Chin Hills was ordered on 16 May to proceed to Kohima and reinforce the 33rd Division which was waging a difficult battle. This drive to a new battlefield would involve several hundred kilometres of an extremely difficult march across the Chin Hills, nearly 8,000 feet high, northward through the Kabaw valley, and across ridges over 10,000 feet high inhabited

by Naga tribesmen. The I.N.A. primarily organized for guerilla warfare, lacked a supply unit which was a prerequisite for a field army. Originally, it was to depend upon supplies from the Japanese Army, which was unable to supply its own troops let alone satisfy the needs of the I.N.A. This lack of provisions contributed to the difficulty of the drive to Kohima.

Despite this herculean task, the morale of officers and men of the regiment was high, welcoming the opportunity to advance to the foremost battle lines in Kohima close to motherland India and to spearhead the drive into Assam. Even wounded soldiers in hospital volunteered to join in the march. It was quite a contrast to the case of the Tanaka regiment, which was ordered to move from the Chin Hills to Bishenpur to reinforce the 33rd Division. Its hesitancy in obeying the order created a problem of military discipline.

About this time the situation in Kohima, in contrast to the high spirits and expectation of I.N.A. officers and men, including the regimental commander, was deteriorating even further; the enemy facing the 31st Division had been augmented to four divisions and the 31st Division had been cut off and isolated under an incessant bombardment from the air and ground. The 31st Division had not been supplied with food or ammunition for sixty days since the beginning of the campaign. Unhusked rice from dry paddy cultivated by Nagas on the mountain side was the only source of food keeping its soldiers alive. In the midst of this severe fight and adversity, there occurred an angry exchange of cablegrams between Mutaguchi and Sato, commanding general of the 31st Division, which led to an unusual and unfortunate case of command discipline, i.e. Gen. Sato's unilateral order to retreat, insubordination, and dismissal.

Not knowing the details of the incident, the Shah Nawaz regiment advanced towards the tragic battlefield with their cry of '*Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi'. Clouds over the Arakan mountain ranges heralding the arrival of the wet season brought the torrential rain day after day. In addition to lack of supplies, I.N.A. soldiers were bogged down in the mud and were extremely exhausted.

When the regiment reached the southern sector of Kohima

in early June, having endured these difficulties, the unusual case of command discipline had already taken place. The main force of the 31st Division, upon receipt of Gen. Sato's unilateral order to retreat, had started to withdraw along a difficult mountain path in heavy rain. On 4 June, Gen. Sato met Col. Shah Nawaz and explained the details of the incident. Offering words of consolation, Gen. Sato asked Shah Nawaz to turn around and head for Tamu to join up with the I.N.A. First Division.

It was painful for I.N.A. officers and men to return along the difficult road when they had just reached the point, a short distance from Assam, that they had dreamt of. Responsibility for this fiasco lay with 15th Army headquarters and to the I.N.A. it was a very serious breach of trust. Col. Shah Nawaz, however, made not a word of complaint, but turned around to join battle at the Palel front, once more along the tortuous hellish route, while the 31st Division was retreating in refusal to obey the order, 'Join battle on the right wing of the 15th Division.'

* * *

With Gen. Sato's insubordination and order to retreat, the Imphal campaign collapsed all along the front. His insubordination led to the dismissal and replacement of all three division commanders under the 15th Army, an unprecedented and unhappy event in the history of the Japanese Imperial Army[69].

Despite Gen. Mutaguchi's encouragement and command, a general offensive launched by the 33rd Division from the Bishenpur sector and by the Yamamoto Detachment from the front failed, producing only countless casualties; the enemy did not budge, the Japanese Army and the I.N.A. suffered casualties and sickness and the Division's manpower dropped to several thousands, all of whom were half-sick. The rainy season had arrived, and torrential rain transformed the road and valley into a muddy river. All supply routes were cut off and oxen and donkeys died of exhaustion in the rain.

On 23 June, Gen. Mutaguchi suggested that his army be allowed to withdraw. Upon receipt of the recommendation, General Kawabe[70], commanding general of the Burma Area Army, issued an order to the 15th Army to cancel the campaign and to retreat to the Mawlaik-Kalewa line. The desperate battle which had lasted four months since March ended in our disastrous defeat. With it the I.N.A.'s hopes and ambitions for '*Chalo* Delhi' collapsed.

When Gen. Kawabe told his decision to Netaji Bose, the latter angrily declared, 'Even if the Japanese Army has given up the campaign, the I.N.A. will continue it. The march of a revolutionary army to win the independence of the fatherland through struggle must not be terminated but must be kept up. Casualties, lack of supplies, and starvation are no good reasons for giving up the drive. It is the true characteristic of a revolutionary army to drive into the fatherland with one united spirit without giving up.' While Gen. Kawabe was much impressed by Netaji's unflinching fighting spirit, he persuaded him with reason and compassion that the road to revolution was difficult and steep, and that another revolutionary opportunity would come.

Gen. Kiani, I.N.A. division commander, who was with me at the front, expressed an opinion similar to that of Netaji Bose to Maj. Ogawa and me, maintaining that the I.N.A. would follow Netaji's order, acting independently of the Japanese Army. I had no words to reply to his insistence. Shortly afterwards, however, an order arrived from Netaji directing Gen. Kiani to 'withdraw all troops' with every means available. With that, I was able to persuade Gen. Kiani.

With an authorization from Gen. Yamamoto, commander of the Detachment, I made arrangements for the I.N.A. to retreat two days ahead of the Detachment. This was the only thing I could do for my comrades as a token of friendship.

Hereafter, our retreat began from all along the front, fighting a rearguard battle against the onslaught of the enemy, fighting our way across muddy waters and through quagmires, and fighting with starvation, malnutrition, malaria, amoebic dysentery, and beriberi. Japanese and I.N.A. officers and men, skinny and half-naked, staggered along with the help of canes.

Many of us walked on bare feet smeared with mud and blood, and our faces were ashen, swollen from malnutrition and scaly because of skin disease.

Once one crouched on the ground out of exhaustion, that was one's end. Along the edge of the jungle on both sides of the road, the bodies of fallen soldiers lay in an endless line. Many of them had already decomposed because of the humidity and the torrential rain had bleached their bones white. Others were turning into skeletons with maggots eating away their flesh, and still others lay dying, with their vacant eyes staring into space. It presented an appalling spectacle.

There was no means of transporting the sick because every soldier was half-sick and could hardly take care of himself. There was nothing to offer but an encouraging word. Sick persons unable to walk but with some strength left committed suicide lest they be a burden to their fellow soldiers. A number of them, completely drained of energy, were drowned in a muddy river. Bodies of I.N.A. soldiers who died near a river were tossed into the waters by their comrades according to Hindu rituals. It was painful to watch.

The British Army, while bombarding us, dropped leaflets calling on us to surrender from this hellish retreat. Not only Japanese but also I.N.A. soldiers refused to surrender but chose death as revolutionary fighters, except for a small number of wounded who were unable to walk.

I was impressed by the influence of Netaji Bose, a great revolutionary leader of the century. I was once again astounded and moved by the whole-hearted loyalty of the people, having been awakened and inspired to the cause of national liberation.

16. Court Martial

I heard the Imperial Decree for surrender on 15 August as I lay in bed at an army hospital in Fukuoka. I was hospitalized with malaria contracted during the Imphal campaign.

Officers, men, and nurses in the hospital wept as they listened to the imperial message. Day and night I was concerned with the future of the nation and was agonized with what course I should take. Memories of the *F kikan kosaku* carried out in Malaya, Sumatra, and Burma, of the desperate battles fought in Imphal, and of fallen friends and comrades-in-arms flashed across my mind like a kaleidoscope. I was concerned also about the misfortunes that might befall members of the *F kikan* and tens of thousands of the indigenous people who had cooperated with us. I said to myself that I ought to assume responsibility for them, and I anticipated that the British and Dutch authorities would seek me out as their sworn enemy, designating me an important war criminal.

I asked chief nurse Nakano for a dose of potassium cyanide, which I kept in an inside pocket. I was prepared to take the poison in case of arrest. Once I had set my mind to this, I felt more at ease. I was able to deal with the situation contingent to defeat without worrying about anything else, as a senior staff officer of the 57th Army.

Some time in mid-October I received an unexpected subpoena through General Headquarters of the Allied Powers. It was from headquarters of Allied Forces of Southeast Asia under the command of Admiral of the Fleet Mountbatten. It

was not, however, the expected subpoena designating me a war criminal; it was a subpoena to appear as a witness in a British court-martial being held in Delhi to try I.N.A. officers. Furthermore, it came at the request of a team of Indian counsel for the defence of the I.N.A. officers. The subpoena also requested the appearance as defence witnesses of such persons as Premier Tojo, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, War Minister Sugiyama, Navy Minister Shimada, Marshal Terauchi, General Kawabe, and General Iwakuro. Because these people had been either designated Class A war criminals or named witnesses, for the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, former ambassador Sawada, Vice-Foreign Minister Matsumoto, Secretary Ohta representing the Foreign Ministry, and Maj.-Gen. Katakura[72], former senior staff officer of the Burma Area Army, representing the Army, were to appear as witnesses in place of the high-ranking military officers and foreign office officials.

When I received the subpoena, I deliberated whether to accept or refuse it and decided at last to accept, because I was convinced that it was my duty to testify for I.N.A. comrades, for Japan and *F kikan* members, and for the future of Japan-India relations.

I wanted to emphasize that our India *kosaku* was not merely an espionage operation; it was a project in order to realize great principles of national foundation in accordance with His Majesty's wishes, for which I had put them into practice. Also I wished to testify that I.I.L. and I.N.A. comrades rose to action of their own volition, motivated by pure patriotism, and that they were not Japan's puppets. This was the only way I could pay back their friendship.

Though I set my mind to accept the subpoena and testify, there was some uneasy feelings in the corner of my mind, lest I might, now that Japan was defeated, be slandered for my apostasy by some of my former comrades and be accused by the main faction of the Indian National Congress (Gandhi and Nehru), who had preached non-violence and shunned aid from a foreign power and by the Indian masses, of having instigated the I.N.A. to armed struggle. Also I was certain of being executed by the British Army as a war criminal, after

my testimony was over, on the charge of appeasing POWs and inciting them to rebellion against the British Empire in violation of international law regarding the wartime treatment of POWs. These considerations often shook my resolve. I was moreover tormented by the thought that I might have to testify, much against my wishes, about conflicts that occurred in the process of carrying out the *kosaku,* thus embarrassing the Japanese Army and my superior officers.

The night before my departure I flushed the potassium cyanide I had hidden in my pocket down the toilet. I made up my mind to get rid of my own delusion.

One thing that made me sad was the lack of courage amongst our leaders to speak out for the *kosaku*. The India *kosaku* was an important *kosaku,* comparable to the Wang Ch'ing-wei *kosaku*[73] for which the nation and the Army rendered their support with all resources available. After the war was over when war criminal investigations started, especially after I received the subpoena, no one who held higher positions in the central army authorities had courage enough to assume the responsibility and come forward and speak out for Japan's principles regarding the *kosaku*. On the contrary, some of them were reported to have evaded the responsibility, passing it to me, saying that Major Fujiwara alone was responsible for the *kosaku*. As I shall describe, this mudslinging recrimination amongst Japanese was quite in contrast to the well-coordinated and firm attitude maintained by the Indian defence team. I could not help but feel sorry for the Japanese behaviour.

* * *

Our party left aboard a General Headquarters military transport from Tachikawa airbase, leaving behind us our fatherland, and wives and children whom we might not see again. On 18 October our plane landed at Delhi airport after stops at Shanghai, Chungking, Kunming, and Ledo (located east of Assam, centre of an oilfield, operational base for the Sino-American Army during the Burma campaign, and mid-staging base for aerial supply route to Chungking) and crossing the Himalayas and the river Ganges. Various thoughts ran across

my mind during the flight. When our plane flew over the tragic battleground of the Arakan Mountains, I was tormented by the disastrous situation Japan now faced and the wailing souls of fallen soldiers.

Under a heavy guard of British officers, our party sped through the dusk of the city to the Red Fort (the former imperial palace of the Mughal Empire and the citadel of the British Indian Army during the British period), where we were detained.

The Red Fort symbolized the splendid history of the Mughal dynasty that was the pride of the Indian people, and the tragic history of 200 years of British aggression and control under which the Indians had suffered. The walls of the Fort that witnessed these scenes of history stand nearly 100 feet high and the dark reddish walls extend to a large meadow like a great snake. The tall imposing gate seemed to reach the sky, giving us a weird and bloodcurdling feeling. It reminded me of the gate of Hell where the king of Hell was waiting.

The court-martial was to be held inside the Fort, where the British had established the headquarters of the British Indian Army, prison, military court, and so forth necessary to administer and control India.

Immediately after the first military trial was over, a record of the court proceedings was published. In a paragraph of the introduction contributed by Nehru on the front page, he described, in a flowery and elegant style, the historical relationship between the Fort and the I.N.A. court-martial. I wish to quote his statement.

> 'There is no more suitable place than the Red Fort in Delhi to hold this trial. Each stone of this historical building tells a story reminding us of the past – the ghost of the past, the Mughal dynasty, the ghosts of Shah Jahan and Shah Babur, the ghost of proud knights riding high on horseback, parade, steps of warriors, sounds of silver bells strapped to ladies' feet, foreign tributary missions to pay their respect to the Mughal emperor in his splendid palace, governors-general who came to report to the Emperor with their gifts. There were

life and vitality there because it was the centre of an expansive and fabulously rich empire.

Eighty-eight years ago, there was another trial in the Red Fort in Delhi. It tried the last emperor of a great dynasty. With this trial, a chapter in India's history was over [the downfall of the Mughal Empire and establishment of British control].

The second trial which was held in the last week of the year 1945 [the first court-martial] may well end the second chapter of India's history [period of British control]. Yes, that chapter is about to end.'

We were detained, behind barbed wires, in a canvas tent set up in a corner of the inside wall of the Fort. I was surprised and relieved when I heard Japanese voices calling our names. They were Lt.-Gen. Isoda, chief of the *Hikari kikan*, Colonels Kagawa and Takagi, staff officers of the *kikan*, and Ambassador Hachiya, envoy to the Provisional Government of Free India. They had arrived first.

Without exchanging greetings, I asked Cols. Takagi and Kagawa about the court-martial. Their excited report dispelled an uneasy feeling in my chest and I felt relieved that I had accepted the subpoena.

Their story was something as follows: 'It is terrific. All India is a cauldron of boiling water; the people are demanding the suspension of the trial, release of the officers on trial, transfer of India's administrative control, and withdrawal of the British. They are maintaining that the I.N.A. is India's patriot and hero, not Japan's puppet. It is the I.N.A. that has made use of Japan. Leaders of the Indian National Congress have organized a large team of defence counsel ready to fight to obtain India's independence at once. Five hundred million rupees have been collected in a campaign. Cols. Shah Nawaz and Dhillon, regimental commanders of the I.N.A. First Division, and Lt.-Col. Sahgal are defendants in the first trial[74], which began on 5 October. Through successful bargaining by the defence counsel, the trial has gone into recess for two weeks during which the defence hopes to gather sufficient evidence and subpoena witnesses.' Concluding their remarks, Cols. Takagi and Kagawa patted my shoulder to encourage me.

The I.N.A. and Indian people, in different circumstances from the Imphal campaign, were rising up in the battle of '*Chalo* Delhi, *Chalo* Delhi'. I realized that the Greater East Asia War had not ended with Japan's defeat but was continuing.

* * *

It became one of the most important and difficult post-war problems for the British Empire to decide how to deal with 19,500 former I.N.A. officers and men. The disposal of the question might well decide the success or failure of British control of post-war India. The trial was the most ominous event since the Sepoy incident of 1857. Its outcome would surely produce enormous impact and have a decisive influence on Indian officers and men in the British Indian Army, the watchdog for the administration of the British Empire over India.

The British government of India though it would demonstrate the prestige and power of the British Empire by executing betrayed I.N.A. officers following a military trial and by attempting to teach the Indian people, particularly Indian officers and men of the British Indian Army, a lesson in order to establish an unshakable control of India. The British thought it could be done.

The decision produced a consequence opposite to their wishes; the British miscalculated and blundered despite their unrivalled experience in the administration of alien peoples, their cold and realistic judgment, and their implementation of policy. They might well not foresee the historical significance of the Greater East Asia War and history's inevitability, as pointed out by Toynbee and Lattimore in the post-war years. Being arrogant with victory and being angered by the betrayal of Indian soldiers whom the British thought were loyal, they failed to see what was inevitable.

Gandhi, Nehru, and other leaders of the Indian National Congress seized on the blunder of the British Empire. They took advantage of the trial whereby the British were determined to punish severely 20,000 I.N.A. officers and men, whose relatives and friends were also serving in the British Indian Army – in the long history of the Indian independence

movement, Indian officers and men of the British Indian Army had never betrayed the British Empire because of which its administration had remained unshakable. Congress leaders tried to win British Indian Army officers and men to the Congress side and to mobilize the Indian masses in an anti-British movement. The trial was a God-given opportunity that would tip the scales of the movement decisively. It was as if Congress had laid a snare and the British had been caught.

Congress thus immediately demanded an open trial and its right to counsel the defendants. On 14 September Congress held its Executive Committee in Poona and adopted and declared the resolutions that 'I.N.A. officers and men are heroes who fought for the independence of India and they should be released at once'. Following the adoption of the resolutions, Congress appointed the famed Dr. Bhulabhai Desai, one of its senior members, chief counsel and organized a powerful team of defence counsels selected from first-class lawyers. Congress also launched a campaign to enlighten and mobilize the Indian masses, especially Indian officers and men in the British Indian Army. It was this team of defence counsels who summoned us.

Two days after our arrival, arrangements were made for us to meet the defence counsels for the first time. I shall never forget the deep impression made on me at the meeting.

Ushered by a handsome boyish-looking British captain and guarded by bayonetted Gurkha soldiers, we were taken to a reception room situated outside our camp. We found there, beside the defence lawyers, I.N.A. chief of staff Gen. Bonsle, Cols. Shah Nawaz and Dhillon, Lt.-Col. Sahgal, and a dozen I.N.A. comrades, together with their families. Disregarding the British officer and the guards, they greeted me with cries of '*Jai Hind, Jai Hind*', and 'Major Fujiwara.' (They did not know that I had been promoted to Lt.-Col. just before the end of the war and they were accustomed to addressing me as 'Major'.) They were delighted at the reunion, shaking hands and embracing me. They also proudly introduced me to their families. It was our first reunion in ten months since the days when we had fought in Burma. I was elated by the confidence and high spirits of the Indians.

Unconsciously, I asked a stupid question: 'Will the trial go

well?' Col. Dhillon assured me at once, pounding his chest, 'Don't worry. India will gain independence within a year. If they execute any one of us, no Englishman will leave India alive. Nehru came to us the other day and asked us which would we choose, life or independence, saying that he would help us realize whichever we choose. We replied unanimously and immediately, "independence".' And Dhillon consoled us for our despondency in defeat.

The British captain watched our exchange in silence without changing his expression or moving his eyebrows. I could not help admiring the gentlemanliness of the British.

After this dramatic reunion, we were introduced to Dr. Desai and several counsels waiting in a reception room of our detention camp. Dr. Desai was a tall old gentleman with a long white beard. As if greeting old friends, he received us with a friendly and warm look and shook hands with Ambassador Sawada and all of us in the party, urging the other counsels to do the same. After thanking us for journeying all the way from Japan, he said:

> 'I am sorry that Japan has lost this war. According to news I have read, Premier Tojo, Gen. Yamashita, and other leaders and generals have been arrested, while a number of generals have committed suicide. I sympathize with them. I am sorry that Japan has been experiencing the bitterness of defeat for the first time. Every race, however, has experienced this kind of misfortune. You don't have to be discouraged by one defeat, because your people are superior. I haven't the slightest doubt that Japan in the near future will become a leading nation in Asia and will once again prosper.
>
> It is Japan that has provided India with the opportunity for gaining independence which India will achieve shortly. Thanks to Japan, the timetable for India's independence is shortened by thirty years. It is true not only for India but also for Burma, Indonesia, Vietnam, and other countries of Southeast Asia. Four hundred million Indians are very much conscious of it and will never forget.

The Indian people will not shy away from helping Japan's efforts for reconstruction. I am positive that other Southeast Asian peoples will do the same.'

Dr. Desai's warm and encouraging statement made in the presence of a British officer was something like a shot in the arm for us Japanese, who had lost self-confidence, feeling dejected and despondent, believing that Japan's reconstruction could not be achieved in thirty, fifty, or even a hundred years.

Upon leaving, Dr. Desai also said: 'We will see to it that you get the best treatment, because you are high officials from Japan and guests of honour in India. In this matter, we have had a number of negotiations with the British authorities but they have not acceded to our request. I am sorry that you have been receiving this shabby sort of treatment. I hope you understand. If the British authorities treat you with impropriety and if you are inconvenienced, please do not hesitate to ask our help. We will make representations on your behalf to improve the situation.'

His statement was sweet music to us who, having lost the war and our armed forces, were in captivity and with our lives in enemy hands. I felt encouraged when I learnt, through I.N.A. comrades and Dr. Desai, that not only the I.N.A. but also Congress and the Indian people as a whole had a deep understanding and appreciation for Japan's India *kosaku*. At the same time, I felt ashamed of my stupidity and the apprehensions I had harboured since receiving the subpoena towards Indian friends and Congress in regard to their attitude towards Japan's India *kosaku*.

* * *

Perhaps due to a strong representation lodged by the defence counsel, the treatment at camp was not bad. A pair of canvas tents was set up for every two persons. One was used as a bedroom and the other for bath and toilet. Two more canvas tents were erected for dining room and kitchen. A brand-new cot was spread out on the earthern floor. Attendants were put in charge of dining room and bedrooms and janitors for

carrying water to bathroom and toilet were assigned to us. Baths were available in the morning and evening. About the time we had our morning bath, a barber came around for shaving. Meals were either western or Indian dishes similar to those served in a hotel. At three o'clock in the afternoon, we were served British-style tea, sandwiches, and biscuits. For us who had been eating substitute foods like soy beans and corn meal in Japan and who had been always hungry, the menus were luxurious. On account of lack of exercise and these sumptuous meals, we suffered from upset stomachs.

Beside reading newspapers from cover to cover and chatting, we had nothing to do all day. From time to time, I.N.A. members and their families and counsels visited us across the barbed wire fence, and they brought with them daily necessities and drinks. I was rather embarrassed to be asked for my autograph by I.N.A. families for small sons and daughters of their relatives. They must have got interested in me as my name appeared in newspapers reporting proceedings of the trial in which witnesses testified of their experiences in the *F kikan*.

To my surprise, even boys in the camp, barbers, visitors and guards greeted us with respect and friendship saying '*Jai Hind*', as if they were attending on guests of honour. The phrase '*Jai Hind*', together with '*Chalo* Delhi' had become the I.N.A.'s password and slogan since July 1943, when, after appearing in Singapore, Netaji Bose had presided over the first cabinet meeting following his appointment as president of the Provisional Government of Free India. '*Jai Hind*' had become a salutation amongst the Indian people and it had become the fashion to use it as part of daily speech. This is one illustration of the respect and support the Indian masses had for the I.N.A. I hope the reader will try to address an Indian with '*Jai Hind*'. The Indian will reply with '*Jai Hind*' as if greeting an old friend.

Every morning we woke up to the strains of an inspiring I.N.A. song sung by several hundreds of I.N.A. officers and men detained in the Fort. They refused to be silenced despite repeated warnings.

December and January are winter months in Delhi, when it

gets so cold in the morning that one needs a fire to warm up. Soldiers of the British Indian Army wore a woollen overcoat. Being afraid of a charge of ill-treatment being filed by Indian defence counsels, the British Indian Army issued winter clothes for I.N.A. officers and men lest they suffer from cold. They, however, refused to change their soiled military uniforms that they had been wearing since the campaign in Burma. They wanted to stand trial and win independence wearing the military uniform of the glorious I.N.A. and their insignia of rank given them by Netaji Bose. For them it was a dishonour to wear clothes issued by the British Army.

In late December, a major of the British Indian Army, who introduced himself as Gen. Mohan Singh's younger cousin, visited me. After offering me comforting words with respect and friendship, he told me told that Gen. Mohan would be arriving in Delhi from Singapore in a few days, and that he would act as the general's messenger. Lowering his voice, he said that he was sorry for Gen. Mohan. If he had not been involved in that unfortunate affair in the autumn of 1942 and had led his I.N.A. into India, the invasion would have been successful as the British Indian Army would have responded to the I.N.A.'s propaganda operation. We had been, he said, waiting for the I.N.A.'s arrival. India in those days was defenceless and in a state of panic. His words, spoken in a rapid staccato, have stuck in my mind to this day. He appeared to be saying that Gen. Mohan had been unwise to lose his patience and temper. To come to think of it, Gen. Mohan has his place in history as the founding father of the I.N.A. but has lost his place of honour as other I.N.A. officers and men have been honoured for their participation in the Imphal campaign for the liberation of India. Moreover, some Indians were critical of Gen. Mohan for his role in the affair, which caused the loss of a golden opportunity to drive into the motherland. For the major who was Gen. Mohan's kin, it was a matter of regret.

As the major had promised, several days later Gen. Mohan visited me across the barbed wire fence behind the reception room adjacent to our quarters. It had been three years since that incident when we had last seen each other. Choked with

emotion, for a while I was not able to utter a word. There were tears in our eyes. If it were not for the barbed wire, we would have embraced each other. We extended our arms through the wire and shook hands firmly. A scene of that sad meeting at the Senda residence flashed across my mind. I was glad that he had listened to my pleas not to disband the I.N.A. and had avoided a bloody conflict between the Japanese Army and the I.N.A. The General's discretion had enabled the I.N.A. to take part in the Imphal campaign led by Netaji Bose and had brought the I.N.A. within reach of independence today. Though the military campaign had ended in a fiasco, the political war of anti-British and pro-independence agitation was close to victory.

I congratulated the general on his safety and the golden opportunity India was now facing. He sympathized with Japan's defeat, saying that he entertained no malice against the Japanese Army with regard to his dismissal. When I offered him my assistance to testify in court for his defence, he thanked me saying that he did not wish to put me in trouble. When I asked him whether the British would put me on trial for war crimes after I had completed my testimony here, the general strongly denied that the British would be able to bring a charge against me and promised that he would do anything to prevent it. He left saying that he would put his younger cousin, the major in the British Indian Army, in charge of liaison, and that he would send a bottle of whisky, my favourite drink.

* * *

With the progress of the first I.N.A. court-martial, the Indian people's anti-British and pro-independence agitation spread like a fire, gaining in intensity. India turned into a raging elephant. The court-martial, originally intended to consolidate British control over India, turned into a trial to pass judgment on the criminal act of British control over India for 200 years and to give it the *coup de grâce*.

The anti-British struggle, backed by a nationwide mass protest movement, accusations in the Legislature, and a publi-

city campaign mobilized by meetings and the press was carried out by the carefully prepared defence with heated arguments in court.

Transcending differences in religion, race, class, language, political affiliation, and military-civilian rivalry, 400 million Indians, with their wisdom, talents, and energy, were united together in rebellion. It was an unprecedented spectacle in India's history. It was truly a great national war of the Indian people in which their destiny was at stake.

Violent mass protest movements erupted in Delhi, Calcutta, Lahore, Madras and other principal cities on 5 November when the trial re-opened. On the same day, in Calcutta where Netaji Bose was born, 100,000 people staged a huge demonstration, carrying with them placards bearing slogans such as 'Save I.N.A. National Heroes', 'Suspend the I.N.A. Trial and Release the Defendants Immediately', 'British Go Home from India At Once', and 'Return to Indians India's Administrative Right'. They clashed with police everywhere and bloody tragedies spread in the city. Also there were riots in Madras resulting in a countless number of casualties.

Britain was unable to assess the substance of the situation nor could she predict its outcome, and one the 6th, issued a firm statement: 'Four hundred ringleaders selected from amongst I.N.A. officers and men now detained will be put on trial in the next six months'. The announcement added fuel to the anger of the Indian masses. The mass protest movement was transformed into a general strike and insurrection.

Demonstrations staged for six days beginning 21 November turned into a general strike causing several hundred casualties. Led by students from Calcutta University (Netaji Bose was an alumnus of the University), citizens and public works employees joined in the strike. The situation in Calcutta spread to Delhi, Bombay, Patna, Lucknow, and other cities.

Demonstrators in Delhi surged onto the Red Fort, which was declared a special protected area and was heavily guarded. Angry cries of demonstrators outside the high walls surged forward like a tidal wave and echoed against them. We who were imprisoned inside the Fort listened breathlessly to the shouts of joy which alerted our attention to the movement out-

side. When the cries swelled up to a higher pitch and came closer, the sounds of machineguns echoed round the walls of the Fort. With bloodshed, the anger of the masses exploded, changing into a furious outcry. A suffocating tension filled the Fort. Servants attending on us in the camp, their faces distorted with excitement, ran outside the Fort. When they returned to us, panting, they whispered into our ears, 'So many people have died and been wounded. Post offices have been burnt down and police stations are burning and vehicles of the British Army are set on fire.' Then, they ran out again as if they were our faithful reconnaissance team. The violent demonstrations continued until sunset. In newspapers the following day it was reported angrily on the front page that the demonstration was halted through Nehru's persuasion and that casualties were more than a hundred.

In the Legislative Hall every day, leaders of Congress one after another accused the British of the injustice of the I. N.A. trial and the immoral act of armed suppression of the mass demonstration. Their accusation was also directed against the injustice of war crime trials about to open in Japan. Congress leaders charged Truman with responsibility for murdering several hundreds of thousands of civilians by dropping the atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they condemned the U.S. Navy for sinking the Japanese hospital ship 'Awa Maru' clearly marked with a Red Cross for which, they said, it should stand trial for war crimes, they accused Britain, Holland and France of having violated international laws of warfare by re-arming Japanese troops against their wishes to suppress the wars of independence against the British, Dutch, and French armies in Indonesia and Vietnam, where the Japanese Army had surrendered and been disarmed; and they criticized Britain, the United States, the Netherlands, and France of having no right to hold either a trial for war crimes or a court-martial.

Every newspaper including *The Hindustan Times* (supporting Congress), the *Dawn* (supporting the Moslem League), and *The Statesman* (supporting the government) gave extensive news coverage to the I.N.A. trial and carried editorials about it. They reported the careers of the three defendants and their

I.N.A. activities including Col. Shah Nawaz who was in the dock in the first trial. They published a special pictorial issue in honour of their gallantry demonstrated in the Imphal campaign. On the other hand, they reported sarcastically the inconsistent testimonies of prosecution witnesses. They also printed the report of a disgraceful scene in court in which an ignorant witness who had been bribed by the prosecution revealed his falsehood in a cross-examination by the first-class defence counsel. In a Sunday edition, they printed a front-page cartoon which depicted Dr. Desai and the Indian defence counsel as well as the three defendants sitting on the bench and replacing Chief Judge Maj.-Gen. Blacksland and other judges as well as the prosecution headed by N.P. Engineer. The clear implication was that it was India that was trying Britain and it was Gandhi who was trying Churchill. Newspapers reported scenes of a fierce mass struggle that was turning into an angry mass violence in cities spreading throughout India. The publication of Uttam Chand's memoirs in *The Hindustan Times* provided excitement for the reader. He disclosed Netaji Bose's adventurous escape from a bedroom of his house in Calcutta on 16 January 1941. Uttam Chand was a cotton cloth merchant in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, who had helped Netaji flee to Berlin. The memoirs were written in a Delhi jail after his arrest by the British police at the end of the war.

In the midst of this situation, the first court-martial entered its final stage in late December. The prosecution tried desperately to establish the case of treason against the British Crown by the three defendants and of murder and tortures by I.N.A. officers and men. The defence and the defendants counter-argued, pointing out the falsehood of the charge. 'The Provisional Government of Free India is a legitimate government recognized by Japan, Germany, Manchukuo, China (Nanking), Thailand, Burma, and the Philippines.' 'The defendants, immediately after the fall of Singapore, were handed over by the British Army to the Japanese Government at Farrer Park. Therefore, they were released from loyalty to the British Crown. They joined the I.N.A. of their own volition, and as officers of a regular army of the legitimate government

they fought in a holy war for the liberation of their fatherland. It was a war against the British Empire declared by the legitimate government of free India in accordance with international law.' 'The I.N.A.'s war of liberation is similar to the American War of Independence which fought against British control and exploitation.' 'It was a justifiable act, acceptable amongst the military establishment of an independent nation, for the defendants to have executed men who violated wartime military discipline in the battlefield, according to the principle of the I.N.A.'s military criminal codes.' 'The I.N.A., as an army of the independent government, took part in a joint operation with the Japanese Army. It was not a puppet army. During World War II, parts of the British Army fought under Gen. Eisenhower's command against Germany. The I.N.A. was not a puppet army as the British Army was not under the U.S. Army.' 'It is unjustifiable and illegal to try in a British military court the regular officers of an independent government which has the right to fight.'

At the conclusion of the trial, chief counsel Dr. Desai delivered an eight-hour speech over two days, declaring that a 'subjugated people have the right to fight.'

As I recall, Justice Pal of India alone courageously argued against the legitimacy of the Tokyo Trial held at Ichigaya and insisted that Class A Japanese war criminals were not guilty. The position of the Indian defence counsel at the Delhi court-martial and the idea expressed in the accusation aired by Indian legislators were similar to those maintained by Justice Pal. They were the conscience of India.

On 30 December, the first court-martial concluded. Judges sentenced the defendants to 'life imprisonment on the charge of provoking war against the British Crown.' Being afraid of repercussions amongst the populace, they did not make the sentence public. On 3 January, in an official gazette, General Auchinleck, commander-in-chief of the British forces in India, announced 'the term of life imprisonment passed on the three defendants by the military court is justified, but, as directed by the government of British India and exercising the power conferred upon me as commander-in-chief, I shall suspend the sentence.' It was an announcement

for suspended sentence and release. The decision reflected a last-minute awareness on the part of the British government of the critical situation in India; the British commander became aware that execution of the sentence might very well engender the worst situation, pushing the Indian mass protest movement beyond the point of no return, jeopardizing the lives of British in India, and even losing British interests in India. Gen. Auchinleck was very conscious of the fact that even officers and men of the British Indian Army who were responsible for maintaining India's peace and security were becoming awakened to national independence, and that they could not be relied upon any more. He was afraid of the British Indian Army turning from a watchdog of the British Empire to an arm of the Indian National Congress.

The British government had succumbed to the demands of the Indian masses and had chosen the path of giving up the power of administration. The wily British government realized the irreversible course of the situation and began secretly to formulate the second-best alternative – an honourable withdrawal while maintaining and protecting British interests in India as far as possible. The military trial in the Red Fort, contrary to their original expectation and calculation, created the decisive factor for British withdrawal from India.

The historical significance of the trial was clearly expressed in the article contributed by Nehru and published on 17 January, as quoted in its preface, '. . . The issue of the trial is neither the legality of the court nor eloquence. It is a power contest between the administrator who controls India and the will of the Indian people. Its outcome is a victory for the Indians . . . Will the trial, held in the last week of the year 1945, terminate the chapter of British control following that of the Mughal dynasty? Yes, the trial presages the end of that chapter.'

* * *

The news of the release of the three defendants spread throughout India on the evening of 3 January. The country

was satisfied with the British retreat for the first time in 200 years. The people rejoiced and the whole city of Delhi was in a festive mood.

On the evening of the 4th a welcoming party for the freed defendants was organized under the auspices of the Indian National Congress in the Gandhi Ground. The spacious square was filled to overflowing with a multitude of people. When the three officers headed by Col. Shah Nawaz appeared on the platform, the crowd was frenzied with joy. Spectators applauded thunderously at every word of appreciation spoken by the three officers.

The streets of Delhi were decorated and the main buildings were decked with colourful illuminations that brightened up the evening sky.

Losing no time, the three officers spearheaded a mass anti-British movement; beginning in Lahore which was their home town, they individually visited the principal cities, and in response to the townspeople's welcome, they expressed appreciation for their support and determination to gain independence. Everywhere they visited, people received them with an enthusiasm no less frantic than in Delhi. They now became heroes of the independence movement and the idols of the Indian people.

In particular, the welcome party and parade held in Calcutta, Netaji Bose's hometown, in honour of Col. Shah Nawaz was most elaborate and splendid. Surat Bose, Netaji Bose's elder brother and a leader in Bengal political circles, served as chairman of the celebration. With 500 young men riding on bicycles in the forefront, a unit of horseback riders dressed in colourful local costumes came next. Following them were 4,700 young men wearing white Gandhi caps and traditional Indian dress, and 300 young girls dressed in white saris. Next came a trolley bus carrying a 16-foot statue of Netaji Bose in military uniform as I.N.A. supreme commander, accompanied by Col. Shah Nawaz standing in an open car. Finally, 5,000 people dressed in various costumes paraded. It was a splendid and colourful scene. A multitude of spectators estimated at over 100,000 lined both sides of the street, shouting in rejoicing 'Netaji *Jai Hind*!' and 'Shah Nawaz Khan *Jai Hind*!'

Concerned at the seriousness of the situation, the British government in London despatched the Richard Commission composed of members of the House of Commons to investigate and probe the future course of the British Empire.

It was difficult to suspend the military trials at once for the sake of maintaining the Empire's honour and prestige. The dismissal of the court-martial, the British feared, would not only tarnish their prestige but would also provide an opportunity for the Indians, riding high on the crest of victory, to demand more political concessions, because India's objective was to win independence and the suspension of the I.N.A. trial was only a means in the strategy for that struggle. It became more and more a difficult question for the British authorities as to how to dispose of the I.N.A. trial.

Gen. Auchinleck issued another statement, 'The British government will not henceforth prosecute I.N.A. officers and men for their treason against the British Crown, and the trial will be limited only to cases of torture, murder, and other forms of inhumane act. The number of I.N.A. officers and men to be prosecuted will be very small.' With this statement the British hoped to quell the mass rebellion and to wind down the court-martial, wishing to maintain the prestige of the Empire. That expectation was wholly unrealistic and the British were to receive another severe blow.

On 11 February, the second military trial sentenced Major Abdul Rashind of the military police to a term of seven years imprisonment on a charge of ill-treatment, but exonerated him of the charge of treason.

Upon hearing the sentence, the Indian masses once again erupted into a rage. On the 12th, a protest demonstration was first organized in Calcutta, which quickly transformed into a city-wide general strike. Police firings left nineteen dead and more than 200 wounded, and calm was at last restored on the 26th. While this insurrection was going on, an unprecedented incident in the history of British control in India broke out on 21 February. It shocked the British authorities. Indian naval officers and sailors aboard ships moored in the ports of Bombay, Karachi, and Calcutta joined in the insurrection.

In Bombay, rebellious officers and sailors aboard twenty ships including the 'Navata', the flagship of Admiral Godfrey,

seized them and captured an ammunition depot of the naval base in the port. Also in Karachi a rebellious group seized the flagship 'Hindustan'.

Rebels in Bombay and Karachi loaded guns of the captured ships, declaring that they would fire at the British if the latter dared to suppress them by military means. The British authorities were in a bind.

The motive for the rebellion was reportedly dissatisfaction against the unequal treatment between Indian and British officers and sailors. The Indian mutineers had been repeatedly demanding improvement and then they took advantage of the Indian masses' general uprising resulting from the I.N.A. military trial and of declining British prestige.

In support of this insurrection, citizens in Bombay went on a city-wide strike on the 22nd, and transport and factory workers staged a demonstration in sympathy with the strike. The whole city was paralyzed and security was maintained with difficulty by the police. On the 23rd, when British soldiers were mobilized to quell the strikers, the situation turned for the worse. The demonstration transformed into a riot in which naval crews also joined. They set on fire British public buildings, food storehouses, and police and official cars and clashed with soldiers and policemen who tried to control the mobs. The incident resulted in a death toll of about 210 with 1,017 wounded. Pictures in the newspapers showed scenes of the uprising that looked like a street battle.

Concerned with the gravity of the situation, Prime Minister Atlee broadcast his determination to suppress the strikers with force, and despatched a fleet of destroyers straightaway. Meanwhile, the insurrectionist army issued a statement that it would surrender unconditionally provided that Patel, the most senior member of Congress, mediated in the conflict. Nehru and Patel rushed to Bombay to mediate between the two parties and brought about a return to normalcy.

The prestige of the British Empire had gone down to rock bottom in having to request the mediation of Congress in order to restore the situation – the very Congress that had instigated the insurrection, taking advantage of the I.N.A. trial.

Gen. Auchinleck issued a statement declaring that he would

prosecute ringleaders of the insurrection, but not a single Indian now believed in British ability to prosecute because the British authorities had been compelled to pass over treason charges against the I.N.A. The decline in British prestige and the uprisings all resulted from the I.N.A. court-martial.

Following these riots, Lt.-Col. Lakshmi arrived in military uniform at Delhi airport on 5 March. She was one of the beautiful lady representatives of the Singapore Indian community who had greeted me in February 1942 shortly after the fall of Singapore, and was later commander of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which took part in the Burma campaign. Having heard of her arrival, tens of thousands of citizens of Delhi swarmed to the airport to welcome her. They greeted this graceful and beautiful national heroine exuberantly. Col. Lakshmi came from an established family in Madras and her mother, Mme. Amu Swamina Atan, was a member of the House of Councillors and a well-known educator. Besides this, Col. Lakshmi's engagement to handsome Lt.-Col. Sahgal, one of the three released heroes of the first I.N.A. trial, added colour to the airport reception. Every newspaper published a large photograph of the touching scene of the engaged couple embracing each other at the foot of a ramp.

Two days after Lakshmi's colourful arrival, on 7 March, th British Army held a victory parade in Delhi commemorating the British victory over Japan. Governor-General Wavell and Admiral of the Fleet Mountbatten, commander-in-chief of the Allied Powers in Southeast Asia, were to review troops of the British and American armies on Victory Arch Broadway.

Citizens of Delhi, however, boycotted the occasion and flew national flags at half mast. Stores, schools, factories, and cinemas closed. Posters bearing the slogan 'Oppose Victory Memorial Day' plastered the downtown section of the city. The message was clear; the Indians had no reason to celebrate the victory in a war for which heroic and patriotic I.N.A. officers and men had been tried, hundreds of thousands of Indians had been drafted into the Army disregarding the opposition of Congress, and they had been used as an instru-

ment to perpetuate British control in Asia. To India and Indians, it was a detestable victory.

About the time the parade started, tens of thousands of citizens marched in a counter-demonstration towards the Victory Arch Broadway. Demonstrators and police who tried desperately to halt the march clashed repeatedly. Six persons died and scores were wounded, their blood ominously staining the streets of Delhi. It was the most violent protest of the Indian people against the British Empire.

Finally, the British government in London saw the writing on the wall. They sent to India a mission headed by Cripps, Foreign Trade Secretary, accompanied by Secretary of Indian Affairs Lawrence and Navy Secretary Alexander. After conferring with leaders of Congress and the Moslem League, the Cripps mission reached the conclusion, 'India's independence is inevitable.'

Meanwhile, the British Army had suspended the third I.N.A. court-martial in mid-session and released all I.N.A. officers and men from detention.

Advised by the Cripps mission, the British government authorized on 6 May the drafting of a new constitution, to be deliberated by the Constitutional Conference. As an interim measure in transferring administrative power, the British government recognized the establishment of a provisional government, and Nehru and leaders of Congress joined the cabinet.

On 15 August 1947, in accordance with the India Independence Decree, transfer of power from Great Britain to the Indian people was completed, fulfilling their 200 years of earnest longing for independence.

I realized once more the historical significance of the Greater East Asia War and of the frustrated Imphal operation, as I had watched, from a corner of the Red Fort until 25 March 1946, the drama of the independence struggle of this century being unfolded. Also I witnessed with my own eyes the fierceness of national spirit, the frightfulness of suppressed nationalism, the preciousness of independence and freedom, and the tortuous road to regain lost freedom and to restore independence. Yet I felt I was privileged to have been able to

take part in the creation of this great historical event in Malaya, Sumatra, and Burma as chief of the *F kikan* and a staff officer of the Southern Expeditionary Forces and the 15th Army. I prayed for the souls of Japanese and Indian soldiers who had died in the Imphal campaign.

It is a matter of great regret that Netaji Bose died, that India failed to achieve unity but split into India and Pakistan, which Netaji had feared, with the consequence that several million Indians and Pakistanis died through bloodshed and many became homeless, and finally that India and Pakistan became mortal enemies over the Kashmir question. I wish to note the conviction that Netaji Bose revealed to me during the Burma campaign, 'When India gains independence, it will be necessary to administer her with dictatorial power for ten years. Otherwise, it is not possible to unite Hindus and Moslems and create a unified India.' Because of the division of the Indian subcontinent, on account of religious differences and the Kashmir question, I.N.A. comrades who fought for India's liberation now regard each other with hostility. If Netaji Bose had lived longer, the tragic partition of India might have been averted, India might not have suffered humiliation in Tibet nor in the Sino-Indian war at the hands of the Chinese Communists, and the history of post-war Asia might have been different.

Netaji Bose died in an aeroplane crash outside Taipei airport on 18 August, three days after the war was over[75]. It is tragic that Netaji Bose and Pritam Singh, killed on Mt. Yakedake, should each have perished aboard a Japanese Army aircraft. Netaji Bose's ashes have remained in a small Buddhist temple in Koenji, Tokyo for thirty-five years and because of the complex political situation they are still awaiting return to the country he loved. His spirit hovers over India without a place for permanent rest, watching her struggling to travel a difficult road. I am very sad.

17. Interrogation

With the cessation of the third I.N.A. military trial, the mission of the Japanese witnesses was finished. During the four years of the India *kosaku* there were a number of problems and troubles like the Mohan Singh affair. Despite these difficulties, we were able to defend the I.N.A. officers without giving an inch of ground to the British and the prosecution, largely due to the kindness shown us by the Indians. The trial was suspended, ending in a complete victory for the Indian side. The British could not execute a single officer of the I.N.A. Moreover, the Indians achieved the independence they had so earnestly desired for 200 years, recording the episode of Japan-India cooperation in a page of India's history. The wartime Japan-India cooperation has established an everlasting foundation for future collaboration and friendship between the peoples of the two nations.

The Tokyo group returned home, leaving me behind. I realized that my days were numbered for designation as a war criminal. I knew that the British were going to seek the revenge that they could not take on the I.N.A., and I anticipated that my trial would be held either in Singapore or in Malaya, where it would not be disrupted by Indians. As I expected, I was transferred to Singapore by way of Calcutta and Rangoon. I was first sent to a camp in Jurong, which was set up for detaining war-crime suspects and witnesses, and then to Changi Prison.

The prison, located on the eastern coast of the island, became the scene of naked vengeance between the civilized people of the East and the West, who prided themselves on

bushido and knighthood respectively. At the beginning of the war, the British had detained Japanese living in Malaya and Singapore and sent them to India when the war situation became hopeless. Following the fall of Singapore, the Japanese Army interned without mercy not only 50,000 British and Australian POWs but also British civilian officials and their families, who were detained in Changi prison like sardines and drafted into labour gangs. Now the British Army, drunk with victory, had detained several thousand Japanese officers and men as well as civilian employees in this prison to take vengeance on them.

I was interned in this prison under heavy guard as if I were a villain. At this time more than 3,000 Japanese officers and soldiers as well as civilian employees were detained, divided into A, B, and C blocks. I was issued what appeared to be a prison uniform – a worn-out short-sleeved shirt and short trousers but no shoes. On the back of the uniform were the letters POW (meaning war-crime suspect) with a number. My number was in the 6,000s.

Conditions in the prison were hellish: we suffered ill-treatment from guards who treated us like beasts, poor quality food just to keep us alive above starvation level, unfair and severe interrogations, a kangaroo court in the name of God, and executions by hanging one after another in the prison courtyard. The situation was horrifying and appalling. Officers and men, reduced to skeletons, were debilitated, their skin turned to what looked like wrinkled paper by sunburn. They brooded over their uncertain future, their crumbled military establishment, and their country defeated and reduced to ashes, and above all worried about their families.

Fortunately, I had seen compatriots in post-war Japan who were determined to reconstruct Japan under the occupation by obeying His Majesty's message of surrender, by repenting their mistakes, and by persevering and bearing the unbearable under occupation (although their determination sagged later, to my disappointment). I had also witnessed the fierce struggle of 400 million Indians to achieve independence and the fighting spirit of I.N.A. officers and men at the Red Fort. And lastly I had seen the inevitability of not only India's

independence but that of other Southeast Asian countries, and had experienced their gratitude, understanding, and friendship towards Japan.

I told my agonized and despondent friends of what I had experienced and seen in India and cheered them by quoting Dr. Desai's words that there was no reason to despair about Japan's future. I encouraged them to rouse their hopes and fighting spirits higher than those of the I.N.A. in order to fight the British Army in court. In collaboration with my colleagues, I coached younger soldiers and civilians in how to answer interrogation and how to fight the battle in court with tact. Our guards were completely taken in by our story that we were rehearsing a popular Japanese drama. In protest against ill-treatment by the guards and poor food rations, we repeatedly resorted to hunger strikes. These measures were most effective in inspiring the inmates.

I spent more than a year in Changi Prison and Kuala Lumpur Prison. During the period of my confinement, nearly 300 of my senior and fellow officers were put to death by hanging. They faced death with a last shout of 'Long live His Majesty'. The sound of the trapdoor of the gallows echoed throughout the prison. I can hardly describe the feelings of the 3,000 inmates who listened to the sound, praying, holding their breath and concentrating their attention on it. No one however eloquent could convey our painful and agonizing experiences and our humiliations in a hundred volumes. Nor can I depict them with my limited command of language. I wish to spare giving full details of my experiences in the prison, but I would like to record a couple of scenes of my own interrogation, because they clearly illustrate the appreciation of the *F kikan* from both sides.

* * *

I have described above the circumstances in which Gen. Yamashita and Gen. Percival engaged in surrender negotiations at Singapore. Standing beside Gen. Percival was a handsome young staff officer who served as interpreter. It was Major Wild (he rose to colonel at the end of the war).

The colonel, who had once served in Japan as a military

attaché, was fluent in Japanese. He became a POW following the surrender of the British Army and was sent to forced labour (together with his fellow British and Australian prisoners), to construct the famous Thai-Burmese railway, which was popularized in the film 'Bridge Over the River Kwai'. Consequently, he held a grudge against the Japanese Army. He became an officer in charge of hunting down Japanese war-crime suspects in Malaya. His reputation conjured up fear amongst the inmates.

Some time around 3 November, Emperor Meiji's birthday, I was summoned from B block. Since detention, I had been subjected to a series of interrogations concerning the massacres of Chinese and other incidents which had nothing to do with the *F kikan*. Gen. Yamashita, former commander of the 25th Army, was in the custody of the American Army in Manila; Gen. Suzuki, chief of staff, was killed in action in the battle of Leyte; Col. Tsuji, staff officer of the 25th Army in charge of operations, was in hiding somewhere and his whereabouts were unknown; Major Asaeda was detained in Siberia and Major Hayashi was killed in an air crash over Hakone. I was the only staff officer then stationed in Southeast Asia (I was a staff officer of the Southern Expeditionary Forces, not of the 25th Army). For this reason I was questioned about the massacres of Chinese and other things of which I knew nothing. Furthermore, interrogations were usually conducted in the prison compound.

That particular day I was ordered to leave the prison for interrogation. Actually, there was nothing I could do to prepare except to put on a pair of shoes which had been given to me by a British soldier. I was escorted outside the prison gate. The blue sky of the outside world that I had not seen for some time and the bright green tropical trees hurt my eyes. Two plainclothes detectives each wearing a pistol in his holster were waiting for me. Without uttering a word, they handcuffed me, pushed me inside a rattletrap car, and sat on each side of me. Their faces seemed familiar but I could not recall where I had met them. The automobile sped through the city streets. I asked them where they were going to take me, but they remained silent.

In a short while, the car stopped in front of an old building

facing the harbour. I thought it was the Bureau of Investigation. The two detectives pushed me into a room on the second floor and locked the door. I fell asleep on a dilapidated sofa in despair, because I was so weak from malnutrition. To them I seemed rebellious and they woke me up with a violent jerk and led me into another room.

Sitting in a U-shape in that large room were ten officers. They focused their attention on me as I walked in. I realized the seriousness of the interrogation which was about to begin and thought that they were going to hang me on a false charge. Then, a stern-looking colonel with a moustache, dressed in military uniform and sitting opposite, stared at me with a cold smile, 'Fujiwara! You dare not forget me.' Instantly, I recognized him as Major Wild, though he had then no moustache, whom I had met at the Ford Factory. I replied without trepidation, 'No, I do not.' He ordered me with a gesture of his eye and chin to sit in front of his table. We sat face to face, one smartly dressed and the other shabbily. The differing status in victory and defeat struck me hard; I felt humiliated.

Harsh questioning about the *F kikan* began. With a haughty arrogance, the first question dealt with the *F kikan*'s search of the Bureau of Investigation, conducted by Lieut. Yonemura, as directed by the 25th Army, to gather information concerning political prisoners detained by the British authorities. As the interrogation proceeded, it became clear that they were concerned with the murder of Chinese detectives, who had worked for the Bureau of Investigation, by the Japanese Army, and the British seemed to believe that Lieut. Yonemura and his men were responsible for the murders. Of course, it was a false charge. I intuitively knew that the British were going to make Lieut. Yonemura and his men scapegoats for the massacre of Chinese committed by the 25th Army.

Concluding that this questioning session was a continuation of war, I tried to defend Yonemura and the *F kikan* as best I could. Having lost patience with my tenacious defence, Col. Wild demanded in a rapid fire and in a very angry voice, 'Give us Yonemura's curriculum vitae, his personal description, and his present address', 'tell us the mission you gave to Yonemura in your order', 'who were *F kikan* agents under Yonemura's command, their career histories, their personal

characteristics, and their present addresses as well as the weapons they carried with them'? I denied the charge, insisting that they would not have committed such murders. If they committed the crimes they would have reported to me, because we were so close like a family. Nevertheless, I felt uneasy, wondering if they had committed the crime.

I parried his question: 'With the dissolvement of the *F kikan* in May 1942, I was reassigned to another post. I have not seen him since. He may have died in action. *F kikan* activities were carried out at my direction. I received reports about everything and I knew about them all. Ask me about anything. I will answer frankly and honestly. I am responsible for everything my men did. It is a waste of time to investigate what the rank-and-file did.' I had seen every day the British method of war crime investigation to frame someone as a criminal for vengeance, and I did not want Yonemura and other members of the *F kikan* to suffer the same agony I was suffering. I had no idea what sort of vengeance the British were planning in prosecuting *F kikan* agents. It was enough that I alone suffered and it was easy for me to fight alone.

It was a life-and-death argument and counter-argument, interspersed by the voice of an interpreter. His translation provided me with a breathing space. A detective or a prosecutor who apparently understood Japanese was busy taking notes. The sound of a typist at work added to the already tense atmosphere. I had no way of wiping off my running perspiration with only a short-sleeved shirt.

The questioning about the murder of Chinese detectives came to a sudden end with Col. Wild's slip of the tongue, 'Lieut. Yonemura was accompanied by a lady interpreter and bayonetted soldiers.' Making capital out of his blunder I retorted to his question, 'The *F kikan* has no female members. Nor do we have armed soldiers. I made a point of using no women in the *kosaku*. The crime must have been committed by soldiers of the field army.' With that reply, Col. Wild dropped his interrogation concerning this murder case rather reluctantly and shifted his questioning to the *kosaku*.

Desperate with answering his questions, I was not aware of the passage of time. Col. Wild stood up with a wink to his colleague and walked out of the chamber. It was lunch time. The same detectives pulled me out of the room, locked me in an enclosure in the backyard of the building, and left. I felt dizzy with heat and exhaustion because I had not had a glass of water since morning. They probably would not give me a meal or a drink.

I was squatting on the ground, hungry and weary, when a Malay policeman looking carefully around him approached the fence and called my name, 'Major Fujiwara.' I nodded at his call. Behind the policeman stood his shabbily dressed wife. Both nodded to each other as they had pre-arranged. Malay policemen and detectives were living in housing quarters built within the compound of the building. They left and returned after a while with a large bowl of curry and rice, and water in a filthy glass. They begged me, 'Major, eat it quickly before an *orang puteh* [British] returns.' They were friends in need. For the past six months I had been obsessed with a pitiable delusion of wanting to eat rice to my heart's content, to such extent that I even dreamt about it. I tried to discipline myself to get rid of my own base thoughts but I could not help it. I was being degraded into a hungry beast. Many a time I drank toilet water in my cell to fill my hungry stomach.

They served a large bowl of rice into my hands. The policeman seemed to have heard about the *F kikan* and of course I did not know him at all. I raised the dole of rice over my head by way of expressing my gratitude to the couple. I devoured the rice like a hungry child. They stood guard while I was eating. I was so grateful for their kindness. The British perhaps could not comprehend the fellow-feeling between the Japanese and the indigenous peoples of Southeast Asia nurtured during wartime. The British were conducting the war crime investigation and trial with great publicity in order to break this unity and impress upon the local people that the Japanese were devils.

In the afternoon, interrogation continued without let-up until evening. With the best effort I could muster, I stuck to the truth, holding to my principles. In the end, Col. Wild,

staring at me with a stern look, said, 'You have been evading our questions since this morning. The *F kikan* is no more than a bunch of murderers and robbers.' At this unreasonable remark, I stood up in a fit of rage with a threatening look. Col. Wild fearing that I was going to jump on him and shouted at me, 'Don't you forget you are a prisoner.' That remark brought me to my senses, and I sat down again realizing that it was stupid of me to get mad at him. I countered his statement, 'Col. Wild is very rude and abrasive in his remarks. What evidence do you have to reach that kind of conclusion? For seven to eight hours since this morning I have been answering your questions with sincerity and have stated nothing but the truth in order to clarify the nature of the *F kikan.*' With a sarcastic and cold smile, he produced a file from his brief case and said, leafing through the pages, 'Lieut. Yasuda of the Japanese Army has testified that the *F kikan* committed murders and robberies.' Realizing that he was enticing me with a clumsy trick to admit what he wanted me to tell, I made a cutting retort, 'Send Lieut. Yasuda here for a personal confrontation. I will prove in one minute that he is a liar. I would like to see any local people who have grudges against the *F kikan.*' Closing the file and putting it back into the brief case, Wild attacked me with a question, 'No matter how you justify it, you used the notorious burglar, murderer, and ruffian *Harimau.* Do you deny that?' Suppressing my indignation, I asserted, '*Harimau* may have been a bandit charged with murder and robbery during the British period, with which the *F kikan* had nothing to do. After he became my associate, pledging to be born again as a Japanese, he never committed a single act of crime — murder or robbery — except killing and robbing enemy soldiers.' My statement shut him up and he closed his brief case and stood up.

I halted him as he walked away. 'Colonel, wait. I have something I want you to listen to.' I appealed to him with all the strength I had. 'You and I as military officers have fought this war by our nation's supreme command. Whether one wins or loses is a natural consequence of war. Both our countries are civilized nations, priding themselves on knighthood and

bushido respectively. The *F kikan* and my men have upheld the spirit of *bushido*. Officials of your country know that I took special care when the *F kikan* occupied official residences of the Bureau of Investigation after the fall of Singapore. I am extremely mortified that I, a staff officer of the Japanese Army, should receive this kind of humiliation and insult in return for the thoughtful care I took. I demand my immediate release. I am disappointed in the British spirit of knighthood when I have seen the ill-treatment in Changi Prison and unreasonable trials. I demand improvements.'

I do not know whether he paid any attention to my pleas. He walked out of the chamber without saying a word. I thought I had won the battle with Wild.

I returned to the prison accompanied by the same detectives. Their attitude, however, had changed a great deal from that morning. In the course of our conversations, I learnt that they were old acquaintances of mine on whom I once took pity right after the fall of Singapore. They gave me a cigarette. I felt dizzy from one puff as I was hungry and very tired. They also treated me to a dish of fried rice by stopping our car in front of a Chinese restaurant in a *kampong*. A kindness is never wasted.

I grieve very much when I think about the younger officers and men suspected of war crimes, who without understanding the language were trapped by interrogations and were compelled to put their signature to a confession prepared in English. As a result, many of them were unjustly sentenced to imprisonment.

* * *

The *F kikan* was proved innocent. I was counting the days to my release when in early November I was handcuffed and roped and transferred to Kuala Lumpur Prison under a heavy guard of Gurkha soldiers. I was forced to carry my personal belongings bundled in a blanket with handcuffed hands and to sit on the floor of a waiting room in a railway station. I cannot describe my mortification at being exposed to public disgrace.

Besides 800 native prisoners, there were seventy Japanese

war-crime suspects detained in this prison. Most of them were military policemen and civilians associated with prison affairs including two military policemen who had been sentenced to death. It was quite different from Changi : persons cleared of their charges were drafted into labour gangs and housed in a large room. Food was plentiful. Hard labour outside the prison (chopping firewood and picking coconuts) was something I enjoyed as I had been shut off from the outside world. Moreover, everyone liked to work outside because we were able to get a ration of white bread and cigarettes from sympathetic boys and cooks. For us who had no freedom, this small liberty was precious. Persons who have never been without freedom have no idea how precious it is.

I was interrogated several times about things that had nothing to do with the *F kikan*. After a while, I was cleared of suspicion and transferred to a large cell block. Every night I enjoyed playing handmade *go*, Japanese chess, and *mahjong* and spent days talking about things in Japan. The peaceful days sped by. A new year came and then it was already March. Often I dreamt about going home. Suddenly, I was summoned to report to the prison office. When I got there with a heavy heart, a military policeman wearing a red hat was waiting and took me to the Bureau of Investigation in Kuala Lumpur.

I was led to a large chamber on the second floor, where the bureau chief of investigation with the rank of colonel was sitting. Beside him were a blonde typist and a Chinese interpreter. The policeman stood outside the door.

The tall, bald-headed bureau chief appeared to be over fifty. In a gentle voice, he introduced himself. He said he wanted me to reply frankly as he would like to question me over the next three days about the *F kikan kosaku*.

He asked me detailed questions about the *F kikan*'s activities, about the India *kosaku*, the Sultan *kosaku*, the Sumatra *kosaku*, the K.M.M. *kosaku*, the *Harimau kosaku*, and the overseas Chinese *kosaku*. Judging from the contents of his questioning and from his attitude, it was manifest that he was not intending to indict me for war crimes, but was aiming at finding the reasons for the *F kikan*'s success. Most of his questions dealt with how I got in touch with leaders of local

people, the I.N.A., and the I.I.L. and how I evaluated their statements and their personalities. The Investigation Bureau chief seemed to me more interested in getting information which would be helpful for evaluating the colonial policy of the British Government in general and for implementing its future policy. Understanding his objective, I replied to his questions with friendliness and honesty.

On the last day of the interrogations, after completing his questioning, he said reflectively, offering me a cup of tea and a cigarette, 'Your *kosaku* was truly a great success. I take my hat off to your successful *kosaku*. Since the beginning of 1942 the British authorities have paid careful attention to your *kosaku*, against which we established a large-scale counter-intelligence agency in Delhi in order to collect information and to implement counter-measures. We have gathered enough references concerning these activities to fill this room.' I gathered that the interests of British intelligence policy against my *kosaku* were not confined to Malaya, Thailand, and Burma, but, more importantly, they were extended to India.

In a more serious tone of voice, he asked me earnestly, 'I have learnt a great deal from your replies, but there is something I am not quite convinced of from your explanations. I wish you to help me clarify it. You are an infantry officer. After graduating from the War College, you became a staff officer of the field army and then served briefly in Imperial General Headquarters as an officer in charge of intelligence, propaganda, and espionage activities. I understand that you are an amateur having neither a special training in undercover activities nor any practical experience, and that you have absolutely no proficiency in local tongues and can hardly speak English. Moreover, according to your testimony, you had never been either to Malaya or to India before the war and you had no previous contact with local people associated with your *kosaku*. Finally, officers under your command were junior officers never having served overseas and with no practical experience in this kind of *kosaku*. How can I believe that you have achieved a glorious success with such a poor organization consisting of ill-trained and ill-prepared members? How can

I? I want you to offer me a more convincing explanation.' Embarrassed by this question, I said, 'What I have told you is the truth. I have no other way to explain it.' Unsatisfied with my reply, the bureau chief pressed me, 'Do you think I am satisfied with that answer? I demand that you explain the special techniques you used to accomplish the success.' Being at a loss for a reply, I said, 'There are no special techniques. We are all amateurs.' Displeased with my unsatisfactory reply, he demanded once more, 'Your explanation confuses me even more. You understand the point of my question? Think about the reasons for your success.'

I wanted to give a satisfactory answer to this kind bureau chief and understood the point of his probing, but I could not think of a reply which would satisfy him. I pondered for a while and finally expressed my principles that I had maintained.

> 'I believe our success can be attributed to our practice of humane and sincere principles, transcending differences in nationality and hostility. I was at my wits' end when I was given this difficult assignment shortly before the war, when we started out with nothing and with an extremely poorly-trained staff. Then, I became aware of one thing. The British and the Dutch had made remarkable achievements in the development of industry and in the construction of roads, schools, hospitals, and houses, in their respective colonies. They were, however, developed and built for their own benefit, not for the welfare of the indigenous people. Excepting the sultans and a few privileged people they wanted to make use of, the colonial powers had pursued a policy of neglect, to keep the rest of the indigenous people in ignorance and poverty in order to control and exploit them easily. They made no pretence to understand native national aspirations for freedom and independence, but suppressed and emasculated them. Intoxicated with a superiority complex, the colonial powers had no love for the local people. The indigenous people and Indian

soldiers were as much hungry for love and freedom which are innate to all mankind as a baby crying for its mother's milk. I made a pledge with my men that there was no other way but to put into practice our love and sincerity, which were the weaknesses of the colonial powers, transcending differences in nationality and hostility. We were determined to put sincerity, love, and enthusiasm as our mottoes into practice. The indigenous people who were hungry for love reached out for the mother's milk that we offered. I believe this is the reason for our success.'

I derived this conclusion from a two-month undercover tour which I made, beginning in March 1941, of French Indochina, Thailand, Sumatra, Java, and the Philippines. I had travelled in these countries under an assumed name for the purpose of collecting information for psychological warfare in order to prepare for the Greater East Asia War. The British government authorities had refused to issue a visa for me to enter Malaya. I had concealed this information and did not admit it even to the bureau chief.

He listened calmly and earnestly to my explanation, with no change in his facial expression. Agreeing with my principle, he said, 'I understand. I wish to pay my respects to you. I have served for twenty years in Malaya and India, but I have never had the same love and compassion that you have towards the indigenous people.'

I admired his honest attitude, wondering how many Japanese officers would admit such humility. He reminded me of the British officer who had escorted us in Delhi. I found the essence of the British ideal of knighthood in the bureau chief and the British officer.

Suddenly becoming informal, the bureau chief asked me whether I had a family and what kind of job I would seek. When I replied that I would like to 'tell young people about my thoughts and experiences in this war, while working as a farmer', he asked me whether I had a large tract of land. I replied, 'No, I hope my friends and relatives will be able to provide it for me.' Reassuring me, the colonel said, 'In that case, you may perhaps come back to Malaya again.'

After this friendly conversation, the colonel took two tins of cigarettes out of a cupboard and offered them to me. Announcing that he had finished the questioning, he left the room, wishing me good luck. I returned to prison full of admiration for the splendid personality of the bureau chief. Convinced I would be released and allowed to return home, I felt cheerful for the first time in one and a half years.

In late March I was once more sent back to Changi Prison. I felt uneasy that the British, after having completed their interrogations, might hand me over to the Dutch authorities because of my activities in Sumatra.

In Changi Prison, I learnt that Col. Wild had died in an aeroplane crash over Hong Kong. I was struck by the frailty of life. All the inmates felt relieved when they heard the news.

The past one and a half years had taught me that one has to be consistent in victory and in defeat, in maintaining a humanist outlook and following a course of action dedicated to the highest universal principles. This reminded me of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's humanism when he declared immediately after the termination of war, 'Do not return violence with violence but with kind-heartedness and generosity', thus enabling one million Japanese soldiers and civilian residents in China to be repatriated safely to Japan.

In early May I was freed. The air of the world outside the prison tasted very sweet. I was put in command of 200 soldiers released from Changi Prison, aboard a ship bound for Japan on 26 May. It was like a miracle returning from the kingdom of the dead to the land of the living. On 2 June we landed at Sasebo, Kyushu, my country that I had expected never to see again. I stepped off the ship carrying one rucksack, containing a watch, boxes of chocolates, and a can of lighter flints, gifts presented to me by Mrs. Goho of the I.I.L.

The streets of Sasebo looked so horrible in destruction that I could hardly bear to see the war-stricken city. Nevertheless, I felt a nostalgia for my native country as if I were coming back to my mother's bosom.

At last, I was home alive. I was glad that not a single agent of the *F kikan* had been indicted for war crimes. This splendid record can be attributed to the good work of *F kikan* agents,

a countless number of local people, and I.N.A. soldiers. I should not forget their acts of goodness, and ought to repay them.

Before closing this book, I wish to offer a prayer for the souls of Netaji Bose, Pritam Singh, Masubuchi, Iwata (Tashiro), Kamimoto, and other fallen comrades, and pray for peace, harmony and prosperity in Asia.

18. Addendum

On 29 April 1961, I was able to arrange a memorial service for the deceased members of the *F kikan,* which I had wanted to hold for fifteen years. Bereaved families and living members of the *F kikan* attended the services from all over the country. The programme lasted three days, comprising memorial services, entertainment of bereaved families, and exchange of friendship between surviving members and bereaved families. Said Abu Bakar, central figure in the Atjeh *kosaku* (who had penetrated into Sumatra by crossing the Malacca Straits), came all the way from Penang, Malaysia to attend.

I purified myself in a hotel at the foot of Mt. Fuji and drafted a eulogy, staying up all night and putting all my feelings into it. I wish to include this memorial speech, dedicating my memoirs to the dead souls.

* * *

Messrs. Masubuchi, Iwata, Shiiba, Kamimoto, Otaguro, Ohta, Yonemura, Segawa, Takimura, Tani, Yamashita, Pritam Singh, and all fallen comrades in Southeast Asia. I beseech you to see and hear us. Your wives, children, elder sisters, Fujiwara, and the rest of us who have pledged with you brotherhood for a higher and nobler cause are assembled here, kneeling before you. All of us are in tears not knowing how to express our own individual feelings. It has been a long time since we saw you last and we are glad to see you here again.

On 10 December, nineteen years ago, we all mustered in Tai-Nan Kung Szu in Songkhla ready for action. I can still recall that scene vividly now. I have the illusion that this memorial gathering is as the battle array at Songkhla. Every scene, every exciting memory and emotion connected with my attempt to achieve our objectives, for which I have fought in Thailand, Malaya, Sumatra, and Burma, flashes clearly across my mind like a kaleidoscope, as if it occurred only yesterday or even today. Twenty years have passed since those days.

I, Fujiwara, who prided myself on vitality in those days, have become an old man with white hair and a bald head. Other members who were young and handsome are now in middle age and have become fathers.

Your wives, sisters, and brothers have survived the difficulties of the post-war years and they are flourishing; and your children also have grown up and they look like their fathers. I hope you are pleased with them.

We *F kikan* members went our different ways with different assignments after the dissolution of the *F kikan.*

We have not had a chance to see each other as we struggled to make both ends meet in the difficult days of the post-war years. For this reason, I was not able to see you when you passed away, except Tani. I regret it very much and I am very sad about it.

Therefore, I still recall your courageous figures and your kind voices as if you were still fighting in Southeast Asia as leaders of the indigenous people. I am unable to accept the fact that you are already dead.

I must face the cold reality, however, that you are no longer with us, and that we are not able to speak and get together with you. To whom can I express my sadness?

If I had been present at the time when Masubuchi, Iwata, and several others died, I might have saved their lives, or I could have died together with you.

You sacrificed your lives for great principles and for the freedom and independence of the indigenous people of Southeast Asia with whom you shared life and death and joy and bitterness. Because I know you were only too glad to sacrifice

your lives for these objectives and to die a heroic death as the only way of realizing your ideals, I may be rebuked for what I have said as being the idle complaint of an ordinary and cowardly man.

I want to share the good tidings with you. Our objectives have been realized. The ideals of the *F kikan*, which was named taking the initial letter of the three words – Fujiwara, friendship, and freedom – have become reality. Letters of friendship from comrades in Southeast Asia are pouring in. In these letters, they express their deep personal attachment to you.

Recently a friend who has returned from a tour of Malaya told me that local people irrespective of their nationalities – Chinese, Malays, and Indians – still admire the *F kikan* and are proud of having collaborated with it.

The *F kikan*'s achievements have been highly valued both in Japan and abroad. Its activities have been written about in books and articles and newspapers and have been filmed and televised.

In foreign countries such as India, Pakistan, and the United States, scholars have been doing research about the I.N.A. and have requested my assistance in gathering information.

The *F kikan*'s reputation has been acclaimed and our achievements have been recorded brilliantly in history. I am truly pleased with the results.

We as Japanese could not have asked anything more than what we have achieved; we have helped bring about a great historical turning-point, which is inscribed on a leaf of recent history, and have helped promote a deeper understanding and friendship between the Japanese and the peoples of Southeast Asia. We are grateful for having been able to take part in the creation of history and we are very fortunate to be part of it. These great successes are attributed to your sacrifice and dedication.

Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia, Burma, and India all have achieved national independence. The white man's control over Asia lasting several hundred years has collapsed and has come to an end. An unprecedent historical achievement has been realized and its impact has been spreading to the Middle

East, Africa, and Latin America like a prairie fire.

Japan lost the war, but she won an eternal truth that transcends victory or defeat in war. Japan, which was reduced to ashes, has now achieved reconstruction, emerging as a much more powerful nation than she was before the war. The world has marvelled at her recovery.

Compatriots of Southeast Asia, despite war damage inflicted by the Japanese, are closer and friendlier to the Japanese and Japan than even before the war. They have contributed to the reconstruction of Japan.

Is there any other *kikan* or military unit that is united in unselfish sincerity, willingness, deep friendship, and unshakable principle, and that is single-mindedly dedicated to achieve a noble ideal? We can be proud of our uniqueness. We have been admired and envied.

As one of the reasons for admiring the *F kikan*, local people first of all mention the *F kikan*'s lofty humanism and its practice of it. In those days we upheld His Majesty's wishes as the supreme symbol of humanism and tried to translate the Imperial wishes into practice in our actions towards our friends and enemies. Honesty, willingness, propriety, and conviction are the *F kikan*'s principles.

As the saying goes, 'Sincerity moves heaven'. Our principles generated this great historical achievement.

Led by these principles, you sacrificed your lives in the battlefront and treated comrades, local people, and prisoners with the same principles. You, engaging in propaganda activities to win them, were as merciful as Bodhisattva and as courageous as the God of Fire.

Scenes in which they respected and trusted you like parents are still vivid and fresh in my memory. Your voice addressing me as 'chief', though I was unworthy, still rings in my ears.

As I recall those days when we were united in friendship, my heart is filled with joy and peace.

I am ashamed to have lived and survived to this day while you died so valiantly.

Keeping the *F kikan*'s principles in mind and reminding ourselves of your friendship, we have managed to get through the difficult days of the post-war years, each dedicating his

service to the reconstruction of the fatherland.

Despite many inconveniences of post-war years, we have kept up our warm friendship with former *F kikan* members and comrades in Japan and Southeast Asia. This is the least I can do to carry out your wishes and honour our camaraderie.

I have, however, neglected the three most important things that I should do for you. For that neglect, I beg your forgiveness. First of all, I have been negligent in sharing the sadness of the bereaved families and in assisting them in their hardships. I have been able to get in touch with the bereaved families of Messrs. Masubuchi, Otaguro, and Iwata, but I have been unable to get information until recently on how the other bereaved are doing. Secondly, I have not been able to hold a memorial service for you, though I have never failed to pray for your souls at Yasukuni Shrine. Thirdly, I have not been able until this day to hold a gathering for living members of the *F kikan.*

The reasons for not having been able to do so are my imprisonment in Singapore and Malaya in the immediate post-war period and the illnesss and death of my wife. All these reasons notwithstanding, I am largely to be blamed for the negligence.

Over the past ten years I have given thought to holding this memorial service and have talked with Mr. Yamaguchi about its possibility.

Thanks to Mr. Yamaguchi's endeavours and cooperation by surviving members of the *F kikan* we are here today assembled before you. Your family members are also attending the service, coming from a distance and from many parts of the country.

With the little wealth I have, I can only hold this humble memorial service, but I hope you will understand our sincerity and be satisfied with this simple service.

I pray that you will join in spirit in our happy gathering scheduled for tomorrow, as you did at a dinner in Kuala Lumpur.

I will do my best to uphold your honour and achievements by assisting, cooperating, and encouraging the surviving members of your families to overcome the many difficulties in

this world, and I will pray for their prosperity.

I have another item for which I wish to express my appreciation to you and *F kikan* members. That is, through your understanding and special concern, the spirit of my late wife Miho is permitted to join in the memorial service. I am certain she is very pleased about it. Members of my family and I are overwhelmed by this thoughtfulness.

I have so many things I wish to tell but I cannot express them in words. May your souls rest in peace and protect us forever – your bereaved families, *F kikan* members, comrades of Southeast Asia, our nation, and countries of Southeast Asia.

I wish to close this eulogy with reverence.

29 April 1961
Fujiwara Iwaichi,
Former Chief of the *F kikan*
Members of the *F kikan*

POSTFACE

I met General Fujiwara for the second time in the spring of 1964, at Nerima, outside Tokyo, where he commanded the First Division of the S.D.F. Ground Forces. Visiting Japan as the guest of the Gaimusho, I was intrigued by the possibility of seeing once again Japanese soldiers whom I had known many years before in far different circumstances. By that time I had a thick growth of beard, but Fujiwara recognized me nonetheless. 'The General doesn't seem to have aged much in the past eighteen years,' I said to the Gaimusho official who was with me. Fujiwara turned to his regimental commanders who were sitting with us and said, 'Yes, I remember, this chap interrogated me in Singapore, eighteen years ago.' I laughed; perhaps a little too loudly. He did not, and the regimental commanders were a little nonplussed, caught between the duty to be pleasant to a guest and so laugh with him, and the embarrassment of not wanting to appear amused at a past incident involving their general which they did not know about and which he seemed to find no laughing matter.

I was puzzled. The interrogation he referred to took place in Singapore in 1946 and was done by Hugh Cortazzi – now British Ambassador to Japan – and myself. Its purpose was purely historical. We knew Fujiwara – then a lieutenant-colonel – had been connected with the Indian National Army and we wanted to examine the sources and motives of that movement and its Japanese links. We may have been naive – at the age of twenty-two, of course we were – but for us the point of the interrogation (conversations would be a better

word) was not political and it had nothing to do with war crimes. The war was over and we were exploring and recording the immediate past. That was why, in the course of the conversations, we asked Fujiwara to write us an account of the battle of Imphal as he saw it. He had been on the 15th Army staff, involved both with operations and intelligence and knew the topography and events of the battle better than most. He wrote us a number of essays which we translated and later published in Bulletin No. 240 of the South East Asia Translation and Interrogation Centre. I still have the original Japanese manuscript, neatly and closely penned. I admired Fujiwara's trenchant and forthright exposition of his experiences and opinions and though our views on the history of Asia might be poles apart, I did not find it hard to understand the patriotism which had inspired him. We parted – I thought – on very good terms indeed. Hence my puzzlement at Nerima.

The answer lies in *F kikan*. The book was published in Japanese two years after my visit, and when I read it I realized at once why his welcome at Nerima had been correct but cold. He did not recall the individual interrogations. What he did remember was his own sense of injustice that the activities of his *kikan* had been confused by his British captors with those of Japanese army units who had massacred thousands of Chinese in Singapore in 1942. The British had not apprehended those really responsible and his temporary attachment to Yamashita's 25th Army naturally made them focus their questions on him. In particular, the interrogation he recalls with anger and resentment was at the hands of Colonel Wild who had acquired a reputation for toughness among the Japanese detainees in Changi and who browbeat Fujiwara until he realized he was barking up the wrong tree.

It is this part of Fujiwara's book that, I think, needs some interpretation. Not that his account of the exchange between Wild and himself is inaccurate, but he did not, at the time, understand what made Wild speak and act as he did. Wild had lived in Japan before the war. It would be wrong to think of him as instinctively anti-Japanese. What happened to him during the war changed him. There was, of course, the ironic twist of history that both recognized: they had been on

opposite sides of the table on 15 February 1942, when Percival surrendered Singapore to Yamashita. But, however painful, it was not the humiliation of that day that animated Wild. As a Japanese-speaking officer prisoner he had been involved in the conflicts between excessive Japanese demands made on British POWs and the justifiable resentment and suffering of those POWs on the Burma-Siam Railway. That, and the experience of wilful neglect of prisoners by Japanese medical services and camp commandants, and the knowledge of the Singapore massacres, had marked Cyril Wild for the life that remained to him. Fujiwara could not have known all this at the time, but it was certainly with these bitter experiences in his imagination that Wild confronted the Japanese he questioned in Changi.

But this is only one episode among many in *F kikan*. Mostly it is an account of one man's contribution to the independence of India, and to a debate that will go on for a long time among historians: to what extent are the Japanese to be considered as the liberators of Asia from European colonialism. In this debate, Fujiwara's book is a historical document of prime importance, even though the reader's interpretation of it will naturally vary according to his background. Indian and American scholars have accepted a view that the role of the Indian National Army in the achievement of India's independence was vital, particularly the political use of the impact of the Delhi trials in which Fujiwara took part. And one would have to be devoid of all passion and imaginative sympathy not to sense the pathos of that moment of encounter, across the barbed wire, between Fujiwara and Mohan Singh, whose destiny had been locked with his since their fateful meeting in the jungles of Malaya three years before.

I do not, myself, believe that the I.N.A. played such a crucial part. Anyone who recalls the mood of the British people under their new Labour Government in 1945 knows that there can have been no possibility – nor even the intention – of employing military force to repress Indian nationalism. To say this is not to undervalue Fujiwara's own role in the formation of the I.N.A. Without him it is doubtful whether it would have existed. Nonetheless, the mood of post-war Britain

has to be taken into account for a true historical perspective. The British were triumphant, but weary of war. That unwillingness to hold down India by force was the most important single factor in the British withdrawal, more so than anything that happened in India itself.

It is a tribute to Fujiwara's integrity and honesty of purpose that he has invited me to add these few words to his book, knowing that it would be a caveat to his text. These are virtues of his which, in spite of our callow youth, Hugh Cortazzi and I both recognized when we first knew him in 1946 and which in later years, as I have come to know him better and enjoy his friendship, have become even more evident. Fujiwara was, we wrote in our introduction to his essays, not only extremely capable and intelligent, but also a man 'who obviously intends to have a say in his country's future.' It was an accurate prediction. That is why I hope General Fujiwara will one day extend his account of the past in two ways: by telling us of his youth in the turbulent 1930s and how he views the development of post-war Japan – in particular, what he thinks of the link between Yukio Mishima and the S.D.F., in forging which he played a major part. Fujiwara still has a great deal to contribute to our knowledge of modern Japan and I hope he will be spared to do so. *Ad multos annos.*

Louis Allen

NOTES

1. During World War II Colonel Kadomatsu served as a staff officer in Amboina (Indonesia), Burma, and Thailand. He was arrested as a war criminal and sentenced to death in 1948, but his sentence was reduced to life imprisonment. He wrote his memoirs entitled *Death by Hanging,* published in 1950.

2. Colonel Tamura Hiroshi was the son of a diplomat and went to a grade school in Honolulu. Because of his fluency in English he was trained in intelligence. From 1928 to 1931, he lived in the Philippines as an undercover agent. During the 1930s he served twice in Thailand as a military attaché, first in the period between 1936 and 1938, and for the second time from 1939 to 1942. As chief military attaché, in the Japanese legation, Tamura was credited with bringing Thailand to have closer relations with Japan, resulting in the conclusion of the Japan-Thailand Treaty of Alliance in December 1941. At the end of the war, Tamura was Lt. General in charge of the administration of Allied prisoners of war. He was tried as a war criminal and was sentenced to imprisonment. He was released from prison in 1952.

3. Konoye Fumimaro was prime minister three times during the 1930s. He yielded his office to General Tojo Hideki in July 1941 as a result of his failure to break the impasse in Japan-U.S. negotiations. When he was named to stand trial as a Class-A war criminal, he committed suicide in December 1945.

4. The Thakin Party was a Burmese political party organized in the early 1930s that became nationally prominent following the Rangoon University strike of 1936 in which such future political élites as Thakin Nu and Thakin Aung San participated.

5. The Nakano School of Intelligence was established in January 1938 as a training school to train junior officers, recruited from amongst cadets of the Reserve Officer Training School, in espionage activities. By the end of the war, more than 3,000 officers and non-commissioned officers had been trained at the school.

6. Yoshida Shoin was an educator and a patriot who founded *Shoka sonjuku,* a private school, which produced a number of future statesmen of Meiji Japan. He was executed by the Tokugawa government in 1859 for his involvement in a movement to change government policy.

7. Takaoka Daisuke was a member of the House of Representatives and president of the Japan-India Association. During World War II Takaoka was chief political advisor to the Iwakuro *Kikan* as chief of the Political Affairs Division.

8. *Mantetsu* (South Manchuria Railroad Company) was a semi-government corporation which monopolized the development and management of economic affairs of Manchuria. It was established in 1906 and had developed as a giant consortium by 1936 having 80 affiliated companies under its control. With the invasion of Soviet forces in August 1945 into Manchuria and subsequent occupation under their control, *Mantetsu* was dismantled. *Mantetsu* carried out extensive research on Southeast Asian affairs.

9. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was concluded in 1902 and renewed in 1912. It was, however, replaced by the Four and Nine Power Agreements signed at the Washington Conference of 1921-22. The Anglo-Japanese Treaty for Alliance had been the corner-stone of Japanese foreign policy until its dissolvement.

10. General Sugiyama Hajime was the only officer who had

served in the three highest offices of the Army hierarchy, as chief of general staff, war minister, and inspector general of military education. As a young officer, he served in the Philippines and Singapore in 1912 and also in India for two and half years as a military attaché from February 1915. After Japan's surrender, General Sugiyama committed suicide together with his wife. His biography was published in 1969. Memos of government-military liaison conference proceedings that he kept as chief of general staff were published in two volumes in 1967. Fujiwara's statement that Sugiyama went to India and was stationed in Malaya in 1920 is a mistake.

11. The Meiji Shrine was built in honour of Emperor Meiji (1869-1911), founder of modern Japan.

12. Both Tainan Koshi and Hidaka Yoko Trading Companies were cover organizations established by the military for intelligence activities.

13. Hakozaki Shrine is famous for its giant framed letters, 'Surrender of the Enemy', presented to the shrine by a Hojo regent when he prayed for divine support to expel invading Mongol troops in 1274.

14. Tsuji Masanobu, as a staff officer of the Yamashita Army, helped carry out the operation for the invasion and conquest of Singapore. He was, however, responsible for the massacres of Chinese following the fall of Singapore. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, Tsuji went underground to elude the British military authorities that sought him for his criminal activities. He returned to Japan in 1948 and remained in hiding until 1950 when he was declared free of the charge of war crimes. In 1952 he successfully ran for the House of Representatives and in 1959 for the House of Councillors. In 1961 he went to Laos and disappeared without trace. In 1968 he was declared dead. His account of the invasion of Malaya was published in English, *Singapore, The Japanese Version.*

15. Okakura Tenshin (Kakuzo) founded the Tokyo School of Arts and became its principal. He visited China, India and European nations on a number of occasions introducing Japanese arts and culture to foreign countries. His most famous book in English for this purpose is the *Book of Tea*. From 1904 he served as director of the Oriental Division of the Boston Museum. He was a close friend of Rabindranath Tagore.

16. *Meijisetsu*, November 3, was a national holiday in honour of the Meiji Emperor.

17. Victory-drunk Japanese soldiers committed mass murders of innocent Chinese following the fall of Nanking on 13 December 1937 in what is called the 'Rape of Nanking'. More than 42,000 Chinese were said to have been killed, over 20,000 cases of raping reported, and 12,000 stores looted within the city limits alone.

18. General Hata Shunroku was commander-in-chief of Japanese forces in central China when his troops occupied Nanking and committed the massacres. He later became the war minister, commander-in-chief of the Japanese Expeditionary Forces in China, and inspector general of military education. After the war, he was tried by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East for responsibility for the crimes in China and given a sentence of life imprisonment. He was, however, released in 1954.

19. General Yamashita Tomoyuki, after conquering Singapore, was transferred to a new post in Manchuria in July 1942, and was appointed in September 1944 to command the 14th Area Army in the Philippines. After Japan's surrender, he was tried and sentenced to death. He was executed in February 1946 in Manila.

20. The *Kesatuan Melayu Muda*, was organized in 1938 by Ibrahim b. Haji Yaacob as Malaya's first leftwing Malay

political association. With money supplied by the Japanese, he purchased the daily *Warta Malaya* for use in anti-British propaganda. Ibrahim and his associates were arrested by the British police in the early morning of 8 December 1941 and were imprisoned in Changi Prison. After the capitulation of the British forces in February 1942, Ibrahim was rescued, but his political organization was dissolved by the Japanese military. In 1944 Ibrahim was asked to head a voluntary army, *Giyugun*, formed by Malays. Following Japan's defeat, Ibrahim fled to Indonesia, where he remained until his death in 1979. W.R. Roff. *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Yale University Press, 1967); E.D. Robertson. *The Japanese File. Japanese Penetration in Malaya* (Heinemann Educational Books, 1979), Chapter X; Cheah Boon Kheng, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941-45: Ibrahim Yaacob and the Struggle for Indonesia Raya", *Indonesia*, 28 (October 1979) 85-120.

21. Tsurumi Ken became the governor of Malacca during the Japanese occupation and served in that capacity until 1944.

22. General Terauchi Hisaichi commanded the Japanese forces in the Southern region throughout the wartime. He died of cerebral haemorrhage in June 1946 in Malaya.

23. Okawa Shumei was a leading ultra-nationalist. He was involved in a number of assassination attempts and aborted coups. He was named a Class-A war criminal at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East but was removed from the dock on the grounds of insanity.

24. Kaite Yoshi acted as an intermediary between Ibrahim Yaacob and Tsurumi for the purchase of the daily *Warta Malaya* by Ibrahim.

25. General Iida Shojiro became the commanding general of the 15th Army in November for the invasion of Burma.

26. Colonel Sugita Ichiji was a staff officer of the 25th Army in charge of intelligence.

27. Lt. General Suzuki Sosaku was also superintendent general of the military administration in the southern region until October 1942. He died in action in the battle of Leyte in April 1945.

28. *Bushido* (the way of the warrior) taught gallantry, self-sacrifice, loyalty, patriotism, obedience, frugality, honesty, and kindness as well as propriety as the ideal behaviour for soldiers.

29. According to Tunku Abdul Rahman, Putra of Kedah, the family of the Sultan of Kedah fled Alor Star on the urging of the highest Malay authorities in Alor Star. Abdul Rahman, who felt that his father should stay in the capital for the sake of maintaining the morale of his subjects, 'kidnapped' his father who was on his way to Penang. The young prince then secluded his father in the village of Siddim where he remained until the Sultan was brought to Kulim on December 10. According to a Japanese account, Tunku Abdul Rahman and his father were rescued by Lt. Nakamiya of *F kikan* and were persuaded to cooperate with the Japanese.

30. Tunku Abdul Rahman was said to have been impressed by Fujiwara's prompt action against looting Japanese soldiers and by F *Kikan's* protection of his family. He served for a while as a district officer in Kedah during the occupation period.

31. Major-General Manaki Takanobu was chief of military administration until the end of February 1942, when he was succeeded by Colonel Watanabe Wataru. Manaki was appointed chief of staff of the garrison army in Borneo, which became the 37th Army in September 1944. Upon being promoted to Lt. General in March 1945, he became commanding general of the 2nd Division stationed in Saigon.

32. The British authorities released many leftist and communist Chinese from Changi prison when the Japanese began landing operations against Singapore. They fought most tenaciously. Some joined Dalforce, a guerrilla unit, and many Communists organized the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army.

33. Onan Siraji was one of the few KMM leaders who were not arrested by the British. He also joined the *Giyugun*, assisting his brother-in-law, Ibrahim. Together with Ibrahim, however, he escaped to Indonesia after the war. Onan is now living in America.

34. *Minami kikan* was organized under the command of Colonel Suzuki Keiji for intelligence and espionage operations in Burma. It was this *kikan* which helped to smuggle the 'Thirty Patriots' out of Burma to Japan. They included Aung San and Ne Win, who received para-military training in the Japanese army and accompanied the 15th Army for the invasion of Burma in 1942. The *kikan* was dissolved in August 1942.

35. Major General Kawamura Saburo was commander of the 9th Brigade of the 5th Division. His units took charge of maintaining the security of Singapore following its capitulation. After the war, he was charged with responsibility for the massacres of Chinese in the city and was found guilty in a British military court. He was executed in June 1947. His letters addressed to his family, written in Changi Prison, were published in 1953.

36. General Endo Saburo served as a staff officer in Manchuria and on the General Staff. After the campaign in Malaya, he became superintendent of the Air Force Academy.

37. Major Kunitake Teruhito visited Singapore in September 1940 as a courier on an intelligence mission.

38. Major Ozeki Masaji served as instructor at the Nakano School of Intelligence.

39. General Homma Masaharu was commanding general of the 14th Army. He was retired from active service because of his failure to conquer American forces on Corregidor according to the schedule demanded by the General Staff. After the war, he stood trial charged with the responsibility for the 'Bataan Death March' of American and Filipino prisoners of war and was given the death sentence. He was executed in April 1946.

40. General Tominaga Kyoji was a protegé of War Minister Tojo. During the war years, he assisted Tojo as Vice-War Minister until June 1944.

41. General Tanaka Shin'ichi was relieved of his post as a result of his disagreement with War Minister Tojo over operations in Guadalcanal. He was transferred to the headquarters of the Southern Expeditionary Forces in December 1942 before being appointed as commanding general of the 18th Division in Burma. Later he became chief of staff of the Burma Area Army.

42. General Tojo Hideki was concurrently the war minister and prime minister, and served as such until July 1944. He was tried by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East and was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out in December 1948.

43. *Haragei* is a stratagem often resorted to by Japanese. It is an act of bluffing to test the reaction of the other side by asking a question or saying something that one does not intend to do or does not believe in.

44. Colonel Suzuki first went to Burma in July 1940 as a *Yomiuri* correspondent to collect intelligence on the Burmese nationalist movement and to investigate the

conditions of the Burma Road, which had to be cut off. In order to achieve these objectives, Suzuki was authorized by the General Staff to provide the nationalists with arms to fight the British, thereby paralyzing the Burma Road. He became head of the *Minami Kikan* which helped the Burmese nationalists create the Burma Independence Army. He was relieved of his post as a result of his disagreement with the policy of the higher military authorities, which insisted on delaying the recognition of Burmese independence, while Suzuki urged granting independence at an early date. See also Note 34 above.

45. Aung San, leader of the Burma Revolutionary Party, was smuggled out of Burma in August 1940 to Amoy, where he was rescued by the Japanese military. He and his comrade, Hla Myaing, joined the *Minami Kikan* organized by Colonel Suzuki Keiji in January 1941 for intelligence activities in Burma. With the *Minami Kikan's* assistance, he helped smuggle the 'Thirty Patriots' out of Burma. They received a military training in Hainan and returned to Burma with the invading Japanese army. Aung San became the Minister of Defence in the Ba Maw government in 1943. However, he became disillusioned with the Japanese and defected to the British in 1944. He became leader of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and negotiated with the British government for Burma's autonomy. He was assassinated on 19 July 1947 by hired assassins in the pay of the ambitious U Saw.

46. Major Cyril Wild was in a trading business and lived in Kobe before the war. During his captivity, he worked on the Siam-Burma Railway. After the war Wild was determined to track down Japanese war criminals, and for that he was most feared by the latter. They were said to be relieved when they heard the news of his death in an airplane crash in Hong Kong in 1947.

47. S.C. Goho was chairman of the Singapore branch of the Indian Independence League.

48. K.P.K. Menon was vice chairman of the Singapore branch of the Indian Independence League. He was arrested by the Japanese military police and tried in November 1944 for questioning Japanese sincerity in granting real independence and for criticizing Subhas Chandra Bose as a dictator, fascist, and unreliable leader. He was released and returned to India after the war.

49. Massacres of Chinese in Singapore alienated Chinese from the Japanese, keeping their cooperation with the latter to the minimum. No one knows exactly how many Chinese died in the massacres lasting for two weeks. The Chinese side claims that as many as 50,000 died.

50. General Nishimura Takuma was tried for the massacres of Chinese many of whom died on Katong beach and Punggol beach which were within the area under the command of his Imperial Guard Division. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was also found guilty of authorizing the execution of wounded Australian soldiers following the battle of Bakri, Johore, and was sentenced to death. He was executed in June 1951.

51. General Mutaguchi Renya became commanding general of the 15th Army which launched the operation against Imphal in 1944. The campaign ended in a fiasco, and as a result he was retired from active service in December 1944.

52. Colonel Oishi Masayuki was commander of the Second Field Army Military Police unit. In that capacity he commanded the purge of Chinese. He was given the death sentence.

53. For a futher account of the revolt in Atjeh, see Anthony Reid, *The Blood of the People* (Oxford University Press, 1979), particularly chapter IV.

54. Pusa (*Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Atjeh,* All-Atjeh Ulama

Association) was a reformist organization aimed at standarizing Islamic education in Atjeh.

55. Rash Behari Bose as a boy of 15 was a revolutionary. He escaped from India in May 1915 as he was wanted by the British police for his attempted assassination of viceroy Hardinge. He came to Tokyo and sought the protection of Toyama Mitsuru, leader of the Black Dragon Society. He was married to a Japanese woman, daughter of a well-known restaurant owner in Tokyo. He became president of the Indian Independence League in Asia and served as chairman of the Tokyo Conference. Indian delegates from Malaya and Singapore did not trust Rash Behari Bose, suspecting him of being a stooge of the Japanese military as he had lived for a long time in Japan. As a result, a disagreement developed between the Tokyo leadership and the Southeast Asian group. He yielded his post to Subhas Chandra Bose, becoming supreme advisor to the Provisional Government of India.

56. Colonel Iwakuro Hideo succeeded Fujiwara in February 1942 as head of an agency (Iwakuro *kikan*) to assist the Indian National Army. Iwakuro's and his *kikan's* relations with Indians deteriorated over the issues of control over the Indian P.O.W., expansion of the I.N.A., and autonomy of the I.N.A. Eventually, Mohan Singh was arrested by the Japanese military police because of his disagreement with the Japanese.

57. N. Raghavan, a lawyer in Penang, was a member of the Council of Action of the Indian Independence League and president of the Malaya branch of the Indian Independence League. He quit the Council because of his disagreement with Rash Behari Bose and retired to Penang. He was persuaded by Subhas Chandra Bose to join his Provisional Government as a minister.

58. S.A. Ayer was director of the Department of Publicity, Press and Propaganda of the Provisional Government. He

was to fly with Subhas Chandra Bose to Russia following Japan's defeat but was forced to stay behind because of overloading of the plane. This enforced stay saved him from the airplane crash which killed Bose.

59. For details of the Bangkok Conference, see Joyce C. Lebra, *Jungle Alliance* (Asia Pacific Press, 1971), particularly chapter VI.

60. For a different interpretation of the disarray between *F kikan* activists of Pusa youths and the *uleebalang* (ruler of a statelet), see Reid, *Blood of the People*, pp. 89 ff.

61. Matsumoto Shigeharu was editorial chief of the *Domei* Wireless Service. He is now chairman of the Board of Directors, the International House of Japan. The *Domei* managed the publication of the *Syonan Sinbun*, a daily newspaper. It also supplied news for *Syonan Jipo* (Chinese language newspaper), *Malay Sinpo* (English language daily published in Peninsular Malaya), *Perak Sinbun*, and *Penang Sinbun*. The publication of the *Warta Malaya* was authorized under the management of a Japanese officer.

62. Senda Murotaro was president of Senda Trading Company, which had extensive business and trade in Burma and India. Senda was appointed as *shiseichokan* (administrative officer) serving as an advisor to the *Hikari Kikan*.

63. Major-General Orde Wingate commanded specially organized and trained Chindits behind the Japanese lines in February 1943. Though the operation caused little damage to Japanese positions, it created an impact on General Mutaguchi who had the onerous duty of mopping up after the Chindits. Mutaguchi had opposed an invasion of north-east India which was called off in October 1942, and now he reversed his earlier opposition to the plan.

64. Ambassador Oshima Hiroshi had for some time urged Tokyo to invite Subhas Chandra Bose to Japan. The government in Tokyo finally decided to bring Bose to Tokyo in April 1942. The realization of the plan was delayed for various reasons such as (1) normal bureaucratic delays, (2) reluctance on the part of the German Foreign Office to release Bose, who was a potentially valuable bargaining instrument in dealing with the British, (3) the presence of Rash Behari Bose in Tokyo who, leaders in Tokyo felt, was the logical person to work with, (4) scepticism entertained by Premier Tojo of Bose's utility value, and (5) too many obstacles to the plan – inadequate supply lines, the British deterent strength in the Akyab sector in early 1943, and a shortage of trained Indian troops for a joint campaign, as well as an offensive launched by American troops in the Pacific.

65. Bose and his assistant Hasan left Brest (Brittany) in February 1943 in a German submarine for a rendezvous with a Japanese submarine off the coast of Madagascar, which was successfully accomplished on Arpil 26.

66. The *Hikari kikan* was a successor to the Iwakuro *Kikan.* Colonel Yamamoto Hayashi later served as the principal of the Nakano School of Intelligence.

67. General Isoda Saburo served as military attaché in Washington when war broke out. In an exchange of diplomats he returned to Japan in August 1942. In January 1944 he became chief of the *Hikari kikan* replacing Yamamoto, who became his chief of staff.

68. There are many books about the Imphal campaign. The following books give official accounts of the campaign. Major-General S. Woodburn Kirby, *The War Against Japan,* vol IV, *The Reconquest of Burma;* Sir J. Butler, ed. *History of the Second World War,* United Kingdom, Military Series, London 1965; Boeicho Boei Kenshujo

Senshishitsu, *Imparu Sakusen — Biruma no boei* (Asagumo Shimbunsha, 1969).

69. General Sato's dismissal, triggered by a disagreement between him and Mutaguchi over the operation, and the former's disobedience to the latter's order, led to the unprecedented replacement of commanders of the 15th and 33rd Divisions while battle was still going on. The Imphal campaign was called off in July 1944.

70. General Kawabe Masakazu was appointed as commander-in- chief of the Burma Area Army in March 1943, when the Area Army was created. He was an admirer of Subhas Chandra Bose. While other senior officers of the Area Army were disciplined for the disastrous Imphal operation, he was subsequently promoted to full general several months after his reassignment.

71. A subtle interpretation of the trial's impact on Indian politics between 1945-7 was given in K.K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army. Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement* (Meenakshi Prakashan; Meerut, India, 1969), chapter XIII.

72. General Katakura Tadashi first opposed the Imphal operation as a senior staff officer in charge of operations of the 15th Army. Largely because of his opposition, the operation was called off in October 1942. As a result, he was transferred, at the insistence of Mutaguchi, to the Burma Area Army headquarters. In April 1944 he was appointed as chief of staff of the 33rd Army in Burma.

73. The Wang Ching-wei *kosaku* refers to the operation inducing the defection of Wang Ching-wei, number two man in the Nationalist Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek. Wang defected to the Japanese in 1938 from Chungking, wartime capital of the Nationalist government. Under the auspices of the Japanese, Wang established a government in Nanking. He died in Nagoya in 1944.

74. The British selected Shah Nawaz Khan, Sahgal, and Dhillon to punish the Indian people as a whole, as they represented three principal communities in India. Shah Nawaz was a Muslim, Sahgal a Hindu, and Dhillon a Sikh.

75. Netaj Bose was said to have expressed his desire to go to the Soviet Union to continue revolutionary activities. He was treated in an army hospital in Taipei for his third degree burns. All attempts to save his life failed and Bose died at 10.00 p.m. on 18 August 1945. His ashes have been kept in the Renkoji Temple in Tokyo ever since, despite repeated appeals presented by Bose's friends to bring them to India. The latest appeal was presented to the President of the Republic of India in February 1979 by Fujiwara. A myth remains among Bengalis that Bose is still alive.

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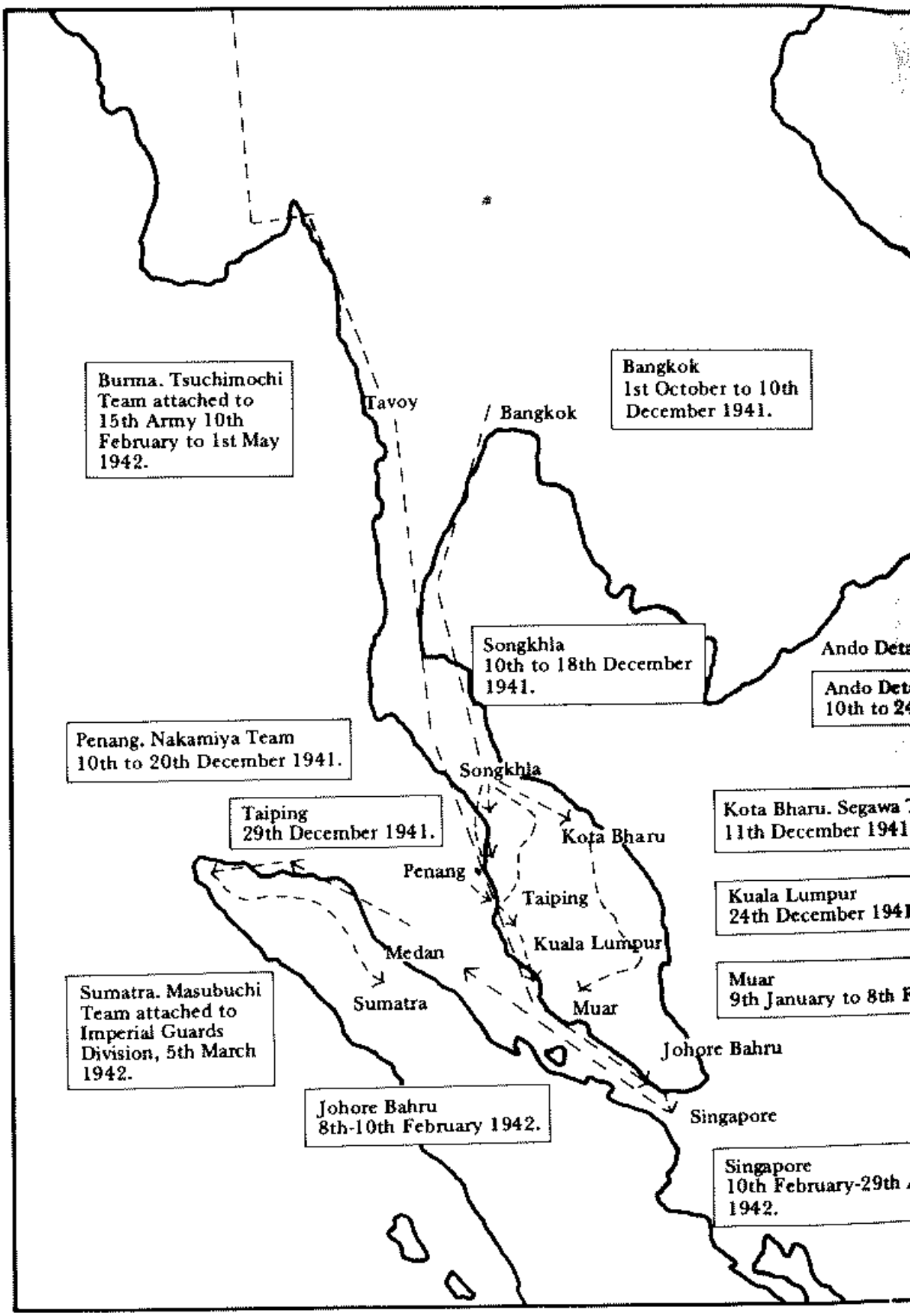
Burma. Tsuchimochi Team attached to 15th Army 10th February to 1st May 1942.
Tavoy
Bangkok
Bangkok 1st October to 10th December 1941.
Songkhla 10th to 18th December 1941.
Ando Det
Ando Det 10th to 24
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Songkhla
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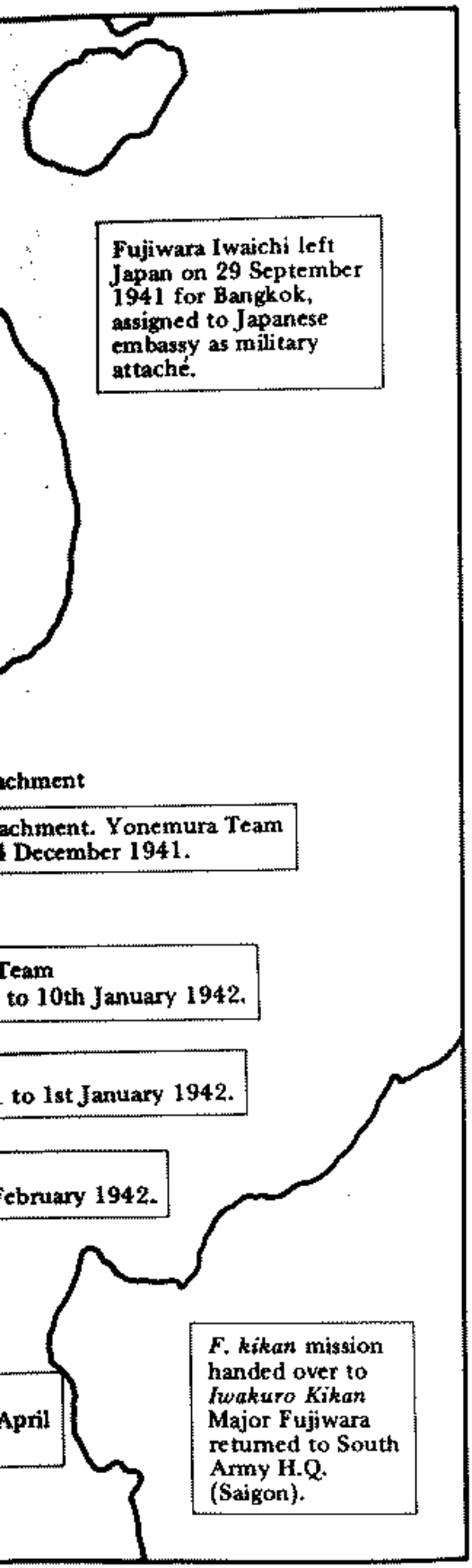
Kota Bharu
Kota Bharu. Segawa 11th December 1941
Penang
Taiping
Kuala Lumpur 24th December 1941
Kuala Lumpur
Medan
Muar 9th January to 8th F
Sumatra. Masubuchi Team attached to Imperial Guards Division, 5th March 1942.
Sumatra
Muar
Johore Bahru
Johore Bahru 8th-10th February 1942.
Singapore
Singapore 10th February-29th 1942.



Operations of F. kikan teams and agents in Southeast Asia during the Japanese army campaigns of 1941 and 1942.