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Foreword

Kase Hideaki

Henry Scott Stokes and I have been close friends for many years.

In 1964 Stokes was named the first Tokyo bureau chief of the *Financial Times*, the UK's most distinguished British international business daily; he was only 26 at the time.

Known for his skillful journalism, Stokes was persuaded to become the Tokyo bureau chief of another British daily, *The Times*, in 1967. By 1978 he had moved to *The New York Times*, which he served not only as Tokyo bureau chief, but also as a reporter covering all of Asia.

His friendship with Mishima Yukio brought him into the international spotlight. Shortly before Mishima committed *seppuku*, or ritual suicide, he penned a letter to Stokes.

There is an institution in Tokyo called the FCCJ (Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan). Nearly 200 foreign journalists belong to the FCC. Stokes is two years my junior, but he is now the FCCJ's most senior member.

Readers will, I am certain, find the author's observations eye-opening. I too learned a great deal from them.

The relationship between England, Stokes' native land, and the US is a close-knit one. However, readers will surely be surprised by the huge gulf between mainstream Japanese and British perceptions of the US.

Stokes recalls how shocked he was, as a small boy standing at the roadside, at the sight of an American tank unit passing through Glastonbury, his home town.

They treated themselves, these young boys from Idaho, or Utah, or

Arkansas, or wherever they came from, as kings. I still remember the smiles those American kids had on their faces. They were in control. They could do what they well pleased. (Chapter One, P.5)

Meeting with the U.S. military for the first time, I had the very powerful feeling, a strong instinct, that these U.S. forces were taking control of our country, not the Germans whom we were supposed to be fighting. The U.S. was a dominant force in our country, which was deeply uncomfortable. (Chapter One, P.5)

Like me, Stokes is favorably disposed toward the US. But unlike the English, pro-American Japanese are not made viscerally uncomfortable by the presence of American military bases on our soil, because we have entrusted our national security to US military might.

At some point we stopped taking pride in being Japanese.

I was astounded at my realization that it was the illusion of a “pacifist Constitution,” which took control of the Japanese during the postwar era, that caused our awareness of Japan as an independent nation to diminish. Japan remains occupied by the Americans, at least psychologically. We are like drug addicts who can’t kick the habit.

March 10, 2013 marked the 67th anniversary of the firebombing of Tokyo.

That night Tokyo Skytree was illuminated with white lights to honor the victims of the air raids. And in Sumida Ward a group of concerned citizens staged a performance intended to draw attention to the terrible tragedy.

Inspired by the group’s conscientiousness, Stokes demonstrated his support by writing an introduction to the performance and distributing it to foreign journalists in Tokyo.

Stokes writes about having seen, at a young age, a “dark red glow in the sky” when out

walking one evening in Glastonbury. He was looking at the night sky over Bristol, miles away, which had been bombed by the Germans. In this book, Stokes writes that the “sight of the dark, red clouds over Tokyo, on a scale a hundred times greater, stands with me today as a memory of those years. It’s nothing on the scale of the appearance of those tanks, but it was a big deal.”(Chapter One, P.5)

He has also handed down judgment on the Tokyo Trials. He has denounced the tribunal, angrily, calling it the epitome of *injustice*.

Fairness, virtue, protocol, and principle, which western nations have respected, were ignored in order to continue this performance, which was not worthy of its name (the trials). The spirit of fair play was just degraded. Such deception was consistent. That was the truth of the Tokyo Trials. What western civilization had done was a most uncivilized action. Justice was not practiced. It was a horrible, pathetic, evil event that took place.” (Chapter Three, p.10)

Stokes concludes that it is the victor’s side who must be judged. (Chapter Three, p.10)

Within the precincts of Yasukuni Shrine is a copper bust of Dr. Radhabinod Pal, who is well known in Japan as the only justice of the Tokyo Trials to hand down a dissenting judgment.¹ Justice Pal recommended that all defendants be acquitted of all charges. For some reason, both Dr. Pal and his judgment are virtually unknown in the Western world.

Nevertheless, even without Justice Pal, it is likely that the belief that the Tokyo Trials were immensely unjust would have become widespread in Japan.

In his discussion of the Tokyo Trials, Stokes makes no mention of Justice Pal. This causes me to wonder, especially since Stokes is extremely critical of the tribunal.

¹ Radhabinod Pal, *International Military Tribunal for the Far East: Dissident Judgement of Justice Pal* (Tokyo: Kokusho-Kankokai, 1999); http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/65_S4.pdf

But even in the absence of Dr. Pal's dissenting judgment, it should be patently obvious that the tribunal was a miscarriage of justice motivated solely by the desire for revenge.

At that kangaroo court Japan was adjudged an aggressor nation. Nevertheless, in the midst of the Tokyo Trials, the armies of Great Britain, France and the Netherlands were engaging in a war of aggression, the intent being to reclaim their former colonies, colonies that Japan had liberated.

Awakened by the example set by Japan, the peoples of Asia rose up and fought valiantly to preserve their independence. This fact alone bears witness to the monumental unfairness of the tribunal.

Stokes argues that the victor nations' historical view with respect to World War II is a mockery of history, and that Japan was not an aggressor nation. On the contrary, Japan was the "light of hope of Asia."²

Furthermore, he is certain that Japan has been the victim of baseless accusations concerning the alleged Nanking massacre and the coercion of military prostitutes (comfort women).

I am often invited to speak abroad, and have noticed that there is very little accurate information about the Nanking "massacre" or the comfort women emanating from Japan. To make matters worse, some of Japan's textbooks include material that supports the aforementioned accusations. This combination of circumstances compounds the difficulty of persuading foreigners that the accusations are false.

According to Stokes, the historical perspective embraced by the victor nations arises from the conviction on the part of Caucasians that they are superior and that persons of color are, therefore, inferior. He wonders why the majority of Japanese subscribe to

² http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/94_S4.pdf

that historical perspective.

The white race looked down on people of color, perceiving them as subhuman, until Japan upset Western supremacy during World War II, paving the way for the liberation of the Asian and African peoples.

That condescension was truly reprehensible. Soon after Truman dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he was quoted as saying to Cabinet members, with a smile on his face, "When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast." This attitude was not peculiar to Truman; it is shared by the great majority of Europeans and Americans.

Stokes indicates that Japan liberated Asia, and the resulting tidal wave swept over the African continent, ultimately engendering the racial equality that we enjoy today. Japan's involvement in World War II resulted in the dawning of an entirely new era of human history.

After they hear him speak, people who attend Stokes' lectures, which take him all over Japan, often make comments like "I have seen the light!" and "My perception of myself as a Japanese has changed."

It is my hope that the majority of readers will find that their distorted historical perspective, forced on them by the victor nations, will be corrected after they have finished this book. May it receive the wide audience it deserves.

INTRODUCTION

It was 1964, the year the Summer Olympics were held in Tokyo, when I first set foot on Japanese soil as the first Tokyo bureau chief for the *Financial Times*. I have now been in Japan for 50 years and am the oldest member of the FCCJ (Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan).

Growing up in England, I was told time and time again that the Japanese are a barbaric, cruel race. This sort of propaganda is similar to what the Japanese were hearing then: "Death to the *kichiku Bei'ei*, the American and British monsters!"

World War II ended, but British hostility toward Japan did not diminish. It only grew stronger. After all, Japan was responsible for Great Britain's losing every one of its Asian colonies. Raised in that environment, I suppose it was only natural that I too should grow up disliking Japan.

When I first arrived in Japan I never doubted for a moment that Japan had committed war crimes, as adjudged by the Tokyo Trials. I was also convinced that the Japanese had perpetrated a massacre in Nanking.

But the longer I stayed in Japan, the more I learned about 20th-century Japanese and Asian history. At some point I found myself analyzing the past century's events not from an Allied or a Japanese standpoint, but from a third-party perspective. I realized that the opinions I had previously embraced were wrong. My friendship with Mishima Yukio was extremely influential during that process.

In the Greater East Asian War, Japan was fighting for its survival. Gen. Douglas MacArthur said as much in a speech he delivered before the US Congress after the conflict had ended. The Tokyo Trials were a total sham, serving only as a theater for unlawful retribution. And as for the Nanking "massacre," there is not one shred of evidence attesting to it. However, the Chinese are hell-bent on using foreign journalists and corporations to spread their propaganda throughout the world. There is no point in

even debating the comfort-women issue.

I find it very disappointing that so few Japanese attempt to discredit the false accusations and set the record straight. In today's international community those who maintain that there was no massacre in Nanking are shunned. They are filed in the same pigeonhole as the Holocaust deniers. This is regrettable, but it is the reality we face. Therefore, we must be prudent. But unless the Japanese state their case and restate it, again and again, these false accusations will go down in history as fact. Japanese efforts in this direction have been pitifully inadequate.

There is no need for the Japanese to be overly considerate or adulatory. It is enough for them to state Japan's position, and let the Americans and the Chinese state their positions. Of course there will be disagreement. There is no way to avoid disagreement; that is the way the world works. If the Japanese adopt an empathetic stance, they will be taken advantage of immediately.

There is one more thing I would like to mention — something that I cannot emphasize enough. That is that most of the instigators are at the root of the thorny issues Japan faces now (Nanking, Yasukuni Shrine, comfort women, etc.) vis-à-vis China and Korea, are *Japanese nationals*. It is up to the Japanese to decide how to deal with this particular problem.

The Japanese have yet to extricate themselves from the curse of the victor nations' historical perspective forced on them by the Allies. I will be grateful if this book serves in any way to help them break free.

In closing I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to Fujita Hiroyuki for his tireless work translating and editing my manuscripts and dictation.

Henry Scott Stokes

November 25, 2013