



A HOT COLD WAR: KOREA 1950 - -1953



MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE VICTORIA INC.

**THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE HELD AT
THE POMPEY ELLIOT MEMORIAL HALL,
CAMBERWELL RSL BY MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE, VICTORIA.**

21 NOVEMBER 2015

Proudly supported by:



Australian Aims During The Occupation Of Japan: From Occupier To Protector

Dr. Jim Wood

From surrender in Singapore to Occupation in Kure

Almost 4 years to the day (15 February 1942) that Singapore, the bastion of the British empire in the Far East, surrendered to the Japanese Army, Australian troops, the vanguard of a 37,000 British Commonwealth Occupation Force (Japan), disembarked at the war devastated Japanese port city of Kure on 13 February 1946.

from 'occupying power' to 'protective Power' and, in 1950, to 'vanguard'

From 1946-1952 Australian Forces were responsible for the military occupation of Hiroshima Prefecture, site of the first atomic bomb attack in history. During this time the role of Australian forces changed from that of an 'occupying power' to a new role of 'protective Power' and, in 1950, became the vanguard of the Australian forces deployed, under UN command, to operations in Korea.

a wartime, and post war, dependence upon the US

One consequence of the Japanese onslaught across Asia from December 1941, and the destruction of the British and other military forces there, was that the Australian Government, in late December 1941, effectively transferred control of Australia's foreign and defence policies from a pre-war dependence upon the UK to a wartime, and post war, dependence upon the US.

re-establish some control over Australian forces and involve them directly in the offensive against Japan

Nevertheless by late 1944, early 1945 it was evident to the Australian Government that the strength of the new relationship with the US was waning and following the death of prime minister John Curtin in July 1945, his successor, J.B. Chifley, in a major statement on 27 July 1945 sought to re-establish some control over Australian forces and involve them directly in the offensive against Japan.

Party Principal

guarantee Australia an effective voice in the peace settlement

Chifley's aim was that Australia's 'military effort should be maintained on a scale which, with the Commonwealth's earlier record in the war, would guarantee Australia an effective voice in the peace settlement'.

- On 18 August 1945 P.M. Chifley announced in Parliament an Australian offer to provide a composite Australian force, under Australian command, to participate in the Occupation of Japan, subject only to the control of the US Supreme Command, Allied Forces Japan.
- Australia desired to act as a separate belligerent

To this end a *RAN naval squadron and an expeditionary force composed of land and air forces, all to operate under Australian commanders, would be placed at the disposal of MacArthur.*

The Realities

The Potsdam Agreement

Yet the Potsdam Agreement, publicly announced, without any prior warning to the Australian Government, included arrangements whereby portions of the south-west Pacific should pass from US to UK command, that the UK Government would act on behalf of the other nations at the signing of the Surrender in Tokyo Bay, and a plan whereby a corps comprising one Canadian, one British and one Australian would be formed under US Command and to be completely equipped with US equipment.

Australia's National Security Objectives (Slide)

Demilitarisation of Japan; Military Control of Japan; Democratisation of Japan

[REDRESS]

- Other objectives included: Repatriation; Restitution (War Crimes); Reparations

Comments: 6 ½ million service and civilian personnel overseas.

Australia's Status As A Military Power

- Australia's status as principal in the BCOF arrangements
- 18 August 1945 - Australian offer to provide a force to participate in the occupation of Japan
- MacArthur-Northcott Agreement:
- the Australian Government would act on behalf of the British Commonwealth Governments
- C-in-C BCOF to be an Australian with direct access to SCAP on policy matters
- establishment of JCOSA in Melbourne
- Signatory – Japanese Surrender – Tokyo Bay
- Peace Treaty

Comments:

- Australia at War with Japan until ratification of the Peace Treaty, w.e.f. 28 April 1952;
- under the MacArthur –Northcott Agreement 'operational control of the three service elements included was assigned to appropriately senior US local commanders. The C-in-C BCOF, who remained responsible for the administration of the whole force, was to have direct access to SCAP on policy and operational control of the force was to be vested in the Commanding General, Eighth US Army, whole the whole area of Japan.'
- Surrender signed 2 September 1945, USS Missouri, Tokyo Bay, for Australia, by General Blamey
- Successive drafts of the proposed peace treaty contained draft 'prohibited creation of a Japanese regular force or establishment of an aircraft industry.'

BCOF ORBAT

- HQ BCOF; HQ BRITCOM BASE
- Naval Shore Base (HMS Commonwealth); Naval Force T
- HQ Brit-Ind Division: 5 UK Bde and 268 Ind Bde; Aust 34 Bde Group; 2 NZ EF Bde
- HQ BRITCOM AIR: Two Station HQ, two RAF, one RIAF, one RNZAF, one Comms sqns, one sqn, RAF Regiment; 81 Wing (RAAF), three fighter sqns, (76,77 and 82); 5ACS and from May 1946, 381 (B) Sqn

Comments: idea of leaving a British Commonwealth footprint, range of (naval, military, air) services, 2 Infantry divisions, HQs and Staffs, senior command/staff – Aust.

Dec 46 – 37021 pers, almost 12,000 Australians,

Apr 48 – 12,000, 8203 Austs – Jun 48 6850 (6250 Austs), Dec 48 – 1 bn, 1 sqn, 2 ships.

MacArthur's 'only combat force'

The British Commonwealth Occupation Force

- Roles, Tasks; 'This abomination of desolation';
- SIGNIFICANCE

Comments: Australian leadership, overseas deployment, developing nature and location of the COLD WAR in Asia; range of new, complex operational tasks, including destruction of war stores - poisonous gas

Australia As Protector Of Japan

That: for the purpose of planning and consultation with SCAP; it may be assumed that, in the event of an attack on Japan, BCOF will act in full co-operation with American forces.

Comments: Situation in China, Mao-tse-Tung + Soviet forces in the Kuriles, Siberia, North Korea when Japan demilitarised; an existing formal basis for future operations, subject to Australian Government confirmation; proximity;

Complications

Peace Treaty? Police Force/Coast Guard? Resurgent Japan? Internal (communist/Korean riots May 48,)/external threats? Status of US Forces Japan

Comments: US planning a first strike of Soviet bases, use 7 BCOF air squadrons to 'destruction';

Occupier To Protector

- MID 47- IN EVENT WAR WITH RUSSIA, US MOBILISATION STORES, BCOF AIR USED TO 'DESTRUCTION'; 17 APR 48 – READINESS TO MEET ANY EVENTUALITY; US DIRECTIVE: ARM RAAF MUSTANGS; JUN 48 – DEFEND BCOF FORCE IF ATTACKED
NOV 48 – FULL COOPERATION WITH U.S. BUT REQUIRES AUST APPROVAL

Situation Korea

- CAIRO DECLARATION 1943 – KOREA FREE AND INDEPENDENT; REAFFIRMED POTSDAM; 6 AUGUST 1945 RUSSIA DECLARES WAR ON JAPAN; US AND SOVIET TROOPS INTO KOREA; DEC 48 SOVIET TROOPS WITHDRAWN; JUN 49 US TROOPS WITHDRAWN

Comments: A small US Advisory Group remained in Korea

The Slippery Slide

- DEC 49 MENZIES GOVERNMENT; MAR 50 REVIEW OF BCOF FUTURE; 17 APR 50 SEEK BCOF WITHDRAWAL; AUST MILITARY OBSERVERS KOREA; 25 JUN NORTH KOREAN ATTACK; 29 JUN *BATAAN SHOALHAVEN*; 30 JUN RAAF 77 SQN COMMITTED; 26 JUL 3RAR RAISED, COMMITTED, 27 September 50;
- Comments: Australia first non-American nation to respond to the UN call for assistance;
- 12 October 1949 'there were only 1,000 infantrymen in the entire Australian Regular Army, most of whom were in Japan;
- 67 Bn redesignated 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, (3RAR) with an effective strength of 400-500 men;
- Menzies re: Introduction of a National Service Scheme; 'Great and Powerful friends, 'Yellow Peril' became the 'Red Menace';
- BCOF admin and support units committed and new units raised, LAA battery, Iwakuni;
- Sep 50 - almost 2000 Aust service pers + 61 civilians + 122 families in Japan, 1050 pers in Korea.

Japan And The Un Command

- UN RESOLUTIONS 25 AND 27 JUN
- 22 RESPONSES INCL 16 COMBAT
- TWO UK BNS + 3RAR = BRITCOM BDE
- US JAPAN AGREED JAPAN'S USE AS TRANSIT LOCATION FOR FORCES ENGAGED IN FAR EAST
- HQ BCOF/ HQ BCFK and BCOF (until 31 July 1952)
- UN SOFA 1954
- HQ UN COMMAND (REAR)

Comments: Peace Treaty Japan and US and Allies 8 September 1951, HQ UN Command established in Tokyo by MacArthur remained in Tokyo until 1957 when it was moved to Seoul, and some 7 UN bases so designated in Japan, in addition to US bases on Okinawa that was not returned to Japan until 1972 .

The Peace Treaty With Japan

- AUSTRALIA SIGNED TREATY 8 SEP 51 ; TREATY AUSTRALIA-JAPAN CAME INTO EFFECT ON DAY OF RATIFICATION 28 APR 52;
- 'THE STATE OF WAR' THAT EXISTED BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN LEGALLY TERMINATED 28 APR 1952.

The Forgotten Force

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY CONTRIBUTION
TO THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN 1945-1952

James Wood



ARMY MILITARY HISTORY SERIES: ISSUES

