



To understand how this ATL will go so horribly wrong, one needs to look at how the OTL occupation of Japan happened. Occupied Japan was not like other occupational governments in that it had its own head of state; the Emperor. Obvious, given the Allies concession to keep the Emperor. A rarity, given occupied territories are not sovereign and do not usually have a legal head of state.

The US, however, does not directly annex occupied lands to form a state. It turns occupied lands into a territory, a civilian dependency. In a US territory, the head of state is the US president.

Which means the Emperor has to be removed if Japan is to become a territory in preparation to become a state.

That comes with all the baggage of Japanese resistance. Assuming Operation Downfall results in the complete dissolution of the Japanese government, the Emperor is effectively deposed once Japan is defeated.

The removal of the Emperor would cause massive outrage, but wouldn't translate that much into insurgency in the short term. There will be the immediate beginning of an insurgency, nonetheless. These insurgents are nationalistic and right wing in nature. Once the food situation stabilizes, the insurgency starts to steadily grow.

Given the fanaticism of Japanese nationalists to their religion and emperor. Their first goal would be to break Hirohito out. Since a breakout of the accused has never occurred in Germany or elsewhere in Japan, they don't prepare for it. Thus a high chance of rebels attacking and breaking out Hirohito. The rebels would also take the Empress consort and their children as well. The imperial family would be taken to a rebel stronghold in the mountains to lead them.

Suffice to say, this is a major embarrassment to the US and a sign of what is to come.

When Japan becomes a territory, the insurgency gets a boost and a new faction: the communists. The old rebels loyal to the Emperor becoming known as the Restorationists. The communists get support from Mao. They attack both the US and the Restorationists; not knowing Mao also aids the restorationists and has been doing so for years as a way to counter the US.

When Japan becomes a state, the violence reaches new, unseen heights and is practically a civil war at this point.

Regarding outside of Japan; the US essentially shot itself in the foot because of trying to annex Japan. European countries like France accuse the US of hypocrisy when the US decries colonialism while annexing a country. The USSR gets a free propaganda boost with the US showing itself clearly to have imperialist ambitions.

It also affects anti communists as well. Part of America's decolonization policy was to ensure the smooth transition from colonies to independent anti-communist states. Third world anti-communists would largely decry the US' actions as imperialism. Anti-communist groups backed by the US would be weaker and there would be growth of anti-communist countries that have bad relations with the US as a result. Consequently, communism gets more of the third world.

In America, outrage. As a former enemy country, many Americans would be vocally opposed to admitting Japan; if not showing hatred for Japan outright. Regarding the ongoing fighting, Americans don't want to continue that war. There's practically no element in society that want Japan as a state other than the politicians who made it one. Elections proceed to oust virtually those who voted for Japan to be state.

In 1964, after the massive win for the Democrats and LBJ, the latter drafts a new amendment that would allow a state to leave. Using the Democrat majority and his persona, LBJ gets Congress to pass the amendment, coined the Leaving Amendment. The states soon ratify the Leaving amendment in mid 1965. LBJ is doing this now because he doesn't want US resources bogged down in Japan when the War in Vietnam is brewing

Negotiating a ceasefire, a referendum is held for independence. Expectedly it passes with +90% in favour. With immediate effect, Japan becomes independent as the Republic of Japan with the state government assuming control. US troops begin to leave and the rest remain in bases.

The civil war resumes and the republican government is quickly toppled. The Restorationists command the majority of the land and public will. Hirohito, understandably wants to see the communists crushed so he can be completely restored as well have US troops completely leave Japan.

In exchange for a few concessions, Mao negotiates with Hirohito for the communists to lay down their arms and for China to help expel US troops. China sends troops to Japan and

stations them right outside US bases. Given China has nukes, this leads to standoff which ends when the US agrees to completely leave Japan.

The concession Hirohito gave into in question being: amnesty for all communist rebels prior to 1965, recognizing the PRC over the ROC, and to make a speech apologizing for all Japanese war crimes while asking for forgiveness. The everpragmatic Mao knows this would win him support back home as well as inoculating China against any resurgent Japan.

Thus in 1965, Hirohito is restored as Emperor. The state is a one party state headed by former restorationist leaders. Japan is unaligned but leans heavily on China and the USSR for its economy. However by the 80s, Japan's economy would experience the boom it did in the 60; putting Japan on the path to become as wealthy as it is in the OTL.