How did the San Francisco Peace Treaty Influence Elementary School English-language Education in Okinawa?

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Introduction

Compulsory English education was introduced into elementary schools in Okinawa just after the battle of Okinawa ended in 1945. However, this ended in 1953 with a short history of just eight years. This paper examines how U.S. policy toward Okinawa influenced education policy in Okinawa and how this education policy was reflected in compulsory English-language education in elementary schools. In particular, this research focuses on how the San Francisco Peace Treaty influenced English-language education in Okinawan elementary schools. Evidence shows that the San Francisco Peace Treaty clarified the political position of Okinawa, and this position was the reason for the end of compulsory English-language education in elementary schools. Several well-known books have addressed the U.S. policy toward Okinawa: for example, Miyazato Seigen discusses how U.S. policies toward Japan and Okinawa were set up and how Okinawa was separated from Japan; Ota Masahide describes the occupation policy under the governance of successive high commissioners; Robert. D. Eldridge traces the roots of the Okinawan issue by focusing on the relationship between Japan and the U.S.; and Hara Kimie points out how the treaty left territorial issues as the seeds of future disputes by studying Article 3 in the peace treaty. Arnold G. Fisch Jr.’s research on the early U.S. occupation of

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Okinawa is well known. Nicholas Evan Sarantakes also examined the American administration of Okinawa and the problems it posed for relations between Japan and the U.S. These scholars focus on U.S. policies toward Japan and Okinawa, or the relationship between the U.S. and Japan or Okinawa; their scope is limited to the political and social fields, and their research does not extend to the educational field. As for education in U.S.-occupied Okinawa, several previous studies, including Gordon Warner, Yamauchi Susumu, Ishihara Shoei, and Uehara Yoshinori have looked at education in Okinawa under the U.S. military occupation. Warner provides a general outline of education in Okinawa during that period, but does not focus particularly on English-language education, while Ishihara examines U.S. language policy and the response of the Okinawan people. A study by Uehara concentrates on the curricula in senior high schools. Even though Yamauchi outlines the entire history of English-language education in Okinawa, the discussion of compulsory education is not a detailed one. Thus, no studies specifically consider why compulsory English-language education in elementary schools was curtailed. This paper studies the influence of U.S. policies toward Okinawa in the field of education in Okinawa with a focus on the San Francisco Peace Treaty as a summary of U.S. policies toward Okinawa.

Regarding the U.S. governance of Okinawa, the Department of the Army had two responsible parties in Washington: the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army for civil service and the Deputy Chief of Affairs and Military Government for military service. I use the terms “the Ryukyus” and “Okinawa” interchangeably in this paper. Geographically, “Ryukyu” usually refers to all the islands—the main island of Okinawa, plus Miyako, and Yaeyama, including other small islets around these islands. “Okinawa” usually refers to the main island of Okinawa; however, it is also used in place of “the Ryukyus.” “Ryukyu” was used as the name of all the islands including mainland Okinawa before haihan chiken in the Meiji era, and “Ryukyu han” then became “Okinawa Prefecture.” Thus, the name “Ryukyu” was

5. Haihan chiken refers to the abolition of the han system and its replacement with prefectures.
changed to “Okinawa” at this time. However, “Ryukyu” was favorably used in place of “Okinawa” during the U.S. occupation by the U.S. military government and the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyus (USCAR). Therefore, in this paper both “Ryukyu” and “Okinawa” are used and both refer to the islands of the Ryukyus, including the main island of Okinawa.

I: U.S. Policy toward Okinawa

In April 1943, the Ryukyu Islands were not regarded as strategically important for the U.S. This was the case when an adequate base was developed on Formosa. Ryukyu may not have become a U.S. military base in Asia if U.S. troops had landed on Formosa; however, the U.S. Army landed on Okinawa to fight the Japanese Army on March 26, 1945. Organized battles against the Japanese Army ended June 23, 1945, with Commander Ushijima Mitsuru’s suicide, and on July 2, 1945, the U.S. military declared the end of the battle of Okinawa. At the time, there was no decisive U.S. policy as to the future disposition of the Ryukyu Islands. The Department of State, the War Department, and the Navy Department had made no joint recommendation in regard to the matter.

In October 1945, the “Overall Examination of U.S. requirements for Military Base and Rights” was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) resolution 570/40, and Ryukyu came to be regarded as an important military base. Since this was before the establishment of the Cold War regime, Eldridge rejects the idea that the Okinawan issue was a product of the Cold War regime, which started to appear in 1948. If we accept his view, it can be understood that the Cold War regime was used as an excuse for the idea in JCS570/40 that the U.S. should gain strategic control over the region. The initial policy toward Okinawa as of June 6.

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6. 059–00673–00011–002, I–7: Riuchius, Code No. 0000105471, Series No. 0000003795, RG 59 Records of the Office of Assistant Secretary and Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, 1941–48, 50, NARA (NND 957300). The view was expressed by a member of the Security Subcommittee that the Riuchiu (Ryukyu) islands will be of no great importance strategically to the United States or the United Nations if an adequate base is developed at some point on Formosa. Several members emphasized the importance of disarming Japan rather than separating outlying island areas from Japanese rule (August 21, 1942).


1946 was that “the Ryukyu Islands should be regarded as minor islands to be
retained by Japan and demilitarized” by admitting their close relation with Japan. The U.S. establishment of a permanent base in Okinawa or elsewhere in the
Ryukyu Islands would have likely provoked serious international repercussions
and would, therefore, have been politically objectionable. On September 27,
1946, JCS1619/8 was forwarded to the Statistical & Reports Sections with the
subject “Disposition of Ryukyu Islands.” JCS1619/6 expressed the Joint Chiefs of
Staff’s grave concerns about the State Department’s proposals for returning
Ryukyu to Japanese control. JCS1619/8 described the threat of the USSR
and it designated Okinawa as the only base area from which U.S. forces could be
projected into that area since Okinawa covered the area of the Pacific between the
Aleutians and the Philippines and west of the Marianas. It also noted that control
of Okinawa as a key base in Asia would make the U.S. available to dominate the
northwestern Pacific and the lines of communication to China as well as make it a
major element in the defense of the Philippines. The disagreement between the
JCS and the State Department continued. In this situation, it can be said that the
policy toward Okinawa was not yet decided even in 1947. Although the postwar
economy was in rehabilitation, a long-range program was difficult to plan in view
of the undetermined future international status of the islands.

In a letter from President Harry S. Truman to George Atcheson Jr. (United
States Political Adviser for Japan), dated July 10, 1947, the president
acknowledged a letter dated June 19 which included a request from Japan’s new
foreign minister, Ashida, for the return of the Southern Kuriles and Okinawa, and
Atcheson’s recommendation to maintain U.S. control of Okinawa as a keystone
for Western Pacific air force defense. The policy planning staff (PPS) of the
State Department wrote of the Ryukyus in a forty-page draft that the minimum
objectives were “The neutralization of Japan through the maintenance of powerful
U.S. bases in the Ryukyus, Bonins (Ogasawara), Volcano Islands (Io retto), and
Marcus (Minami Tori shima).” Though it was said U.S. military bases in the
Ryukyus would be necessary for the neutralization of Japan, this idea was still
fluid due to the problem of the governing ability of the U.S. Regarding the
strategic trusteeship over the Ryukyus, the State Department consistently

11. Papers of Harry S. Truman President’s Secretary’s Files, 001 Harry S. Truman Library,
Box 119, SWNCC59/1, June 24, 1946.
12. U900379B, JCS 1619/8, Disposition of Ryukyu Islands. Okinawa Prefectural Archive
(OPA).
13. Documentary History of the Truman Presidency, University Publications of America,
OPA, 0000073433, an imprint of CIS, Document 33.
Toward a Peace Settlement with Japan issued from P&O (NND770012, 00012–002, National
Archives and Records Administration [NARA], Memorandums to JCS and Others, 1947–49,
OPA, 0000098435).
disagreed with the Service Department. Upon request of the JCS, the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force dispatched a joint letter to the Secretary of State endorsing the JCS position. The letter commented on the emperor’s message as follows:

He (the Japanese emperor) recommends that the U.S. obtain such base rights as may be necessary in the Ryukyus through a long-term lease arrangement with Japan to be provided for by a separate bilateral treaty with Japan after the peace settlement.  

PPS10/1 recommended the emperor’s message that suggested a long-term lease of the Ryukyus as an idea to solve the conflict between the JCS and the State Department, which was not able to satisfy the JCS. On August 5, 1948, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) issued a report on the significance of the Ryukyu Islands, and the intelligence organizations of the Department of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force concurred in the report. According to the report, the Ryukyu Islands, especially Okinawa, would give (a) an advantage in either defensive or offensive operations in Asia; (b) a watch post to guard the sea approaches to Central and North China and Korea; and (c) a base for air surveillance over a wide area. Therefore, U.S. control of the Ryukyu Islands would (a) give the U.S. a position from which to operate in defense of an unarmed post-treaty Japan and U.S. bases in the Philippines and other Pacific Islands; (b) obviate the possibility of the Ryukus falling under the control of a potential enemy; (c) neutralize, to some extent, Soviet positions in the Kurils, Korea, and Manchuria; and (d) give the USA a position from which to discourage any revival of military aggression on the part of the Japanese. The CIA believed the Ryukus would be significant for the U.S. to defend against its potential enemy, the Soviets (and including the threat of a revival of Japan). This is proof that the CIA was involved in the foreign policy-making process.

As of October 7, 1948, the agenda of the Ryukyus remained pending in NSC13/2 and the possibility of using Okinawa as a naval base was mentioned based on the assumption that the U.S. military would remain in control there on a long-term basis. Around the same time in 1948, the Department of the Army enlisted the Ryukus among the foreign bases necessary to meet the requirements of the emergency war plan. The Ryukus were placed tenth on the list with the categorization “occupational only,” and the Army and Air Force were allowed expenditure of funds. In January 1949, the mission of the U.S. military

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16. NARA, NND 755001, RG319, OPA, 0000003837, RG319.
17. Basic Policies and Objectives of the United States in the Pacific and Far East as of May, 1949 RG335, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Army. 0000106865, 211J,
government was “to have Okinawa separate from Japan economically, socially, and politically as well as managing U.S. military rule over the Ryukyus until the political position of Ryukyu [would be] decided.”

These steps led to the period during which Okinawan educators were barred from using teaching materials that related to Japan. This idea was the background in which “Ryukyu” was favorably used in place of “Okinawa” during the U.S. occupation by the U.S. military government and the USCAR. It was NSC13/3 (May 6, 1949) where the U.S. decided on the long-term possession of the Ryukyus.

In the fall of 1949, more than $50 million for building U.S. military bases was included in the budget for the fiscal year 1950. At the time, Major General J. R. Sheetz, who was the U.S. Military Chief in the Ryukyus, ran an effective administration that was evaluated well by Okinawan people, and this government started building the bases in Okinawa with U.S. fiscal support. Even though Sheetz personally was popular and his governance well evaluated, the finances acquired to build the bases may have worked advantageously for his governance. After a short period of governing by Sheetz, land confiscation by the U.S. military base began in full swing in 1950, with the Okinawan people resisting. For the U.S., geological and economic factors, such as Okinawa’s dependence on external assistance, made Okinawa a convenient site for a major air base in the Far East.

In connection with NSC13/3, the United States Navy shaped its policy in the development of the Yokosuka base. Meanwhile, it proceeded to develop the possibility of Okinawa as a naval base on the assumption that American forces would remain in control there on a long-term basis.

In June 1949, the Navy Department, which had examined the possibility of Okinawa for development as a naval base, determined that it was not suitable as a year-around naval base because of unfavorable meteorological and hydrographic features. The Ryukyus was evaluated as “very valuable to U.S. as a major air base in the Far East.” The U.S. policy toward Okinawa was “at a politically expedient time to press for a U.S. trusteeship under the UN; meanwhile to foster and materially assist the expeditious development of native education, industries, agriculture, trade and commerce.”

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18. NARA, UND780072, OPA, 335–00024–00002–004.
19. OPA, 335–00024–00001–003. The memorandum of May 1949 (335–00024–00001–003) describes the situation of Ryukyu as “completely dependent economically on external assistance; lacking in politically and technologically trained native leaders; possesses few important natural resources and almost no industrial potential; very valuable to U.S. as a major air base in the Far East.”
21. NARA, NND943011, OPA, 211Ba052, Memorandum for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 8, 1949.
and improved living conditions.”  

The general policy toward Okinawa during this time can be read as one to develop and maintain the facilities on a long-term basis by reason of the importance of the islands to the interests of the U.S.  

In all the above, Okinawa was viewed from a military viewpoint; however, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) designated the Ryukyus as an area not to be detached from Japan and an area not to be placed under a trusteeship. The rational offer noted that the islands had been closely associated with Japan for many centuries and that their population was culturally and racially Japanese. The document concluded that for the U.S. to take over any part of the Ryukyu Islands would be contrary to its policy of opposing territorial expansion whether for itself or for other countries. It also expressed concern that from a practical point of view, control of the Ryukyus would require a considerable financial outlay by the U.S. for the support and development of governing three-quarters of a million people with a totally alien culture and outlook. Further, it raised the concern that the establishment of a permanent base in the Ryukyus might provoke serious international repercussions from other global leaders, including China and the Soviet Union.  

There were two ideas: one that put Okinawa under an exclusive strategic rule as a crucial military base in Asia by separating it from Japan, and another that kept Okinawa out of the trusteeship by not separating it from Japan. Although the confrontation between the State Department and the military continued from 1946, the political position of Okinawa was not clarified, largely due to the lack of a policy toward the USSR. Officially, the political position of Okinawa was finalized by the San Francisco Peace Treaty.  

It was in NSC 13/2 (February 1, 1949) that America’s long-term possession of Okinawa was approved by President Truman. The approval of NSC 13/3 (May 6, 1949) decided that the Ryukyu Islands south of 29°N would be possessed long-term by the U.S.  

In the Office Memorandum of the U.S. Government as of April 27, 1950, which was prepared in connection with the “Reappraisal of U.S. Foreign Economic Policies and Program,” the following summary was provided to John Foster Dulles, consultant to the secretary in charge of the treaty project, and, in context it can be read as U.S. policy.

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22. SWNCC No.54: Basic Policies and Objectives of the U.S. in the Pacific and Far East (OPA, 0000106870, NND780012, NARA).
24. OPA, 0000073423, 00119–001, Trusteeship. Pacific Islands, Harry S. Truman Library, President’s Secretary’s Files, Box 119, SWNCC 59/1.
The United States intends to retain on a long-term basis the facilities as are deemed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be necessary in the Ryukyu Islands south of 29°N, Marcus Island, and the Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan. The military bases at or near Okinawa should be developed accordingly.\footnote{26. NARA, NND 867207 OPA, 059–01228–00001–006.}

The notice clearly shows that the idea of holding the Ryukyu Islands for a U.S. military base on a long-term basis was insisted by the JCS.

Finally, the political stance of the Ryukyus was decided by Article 3 in the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed on September 8, 1951. It was decided that the Ryukyus would be put under the trusteeship of the U.S. as a single administrative power and the U.S. would possess part or all the authority of administration, legislation, and judicature against the residents and territories, including the territorial waters.\footnote{27. No. 1832, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, etc. Treaty of Peace with Japan (with two declarations). Signed at San Francisco, 8 September, 1951. https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20136/volume-136-i-1832-english.pdf.} Okinawa was not a trust territory that the \textit{Merriam-Webster Dictionary} defines as “a non-self-governing territory placed under an administrative authority by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations,” but rather a trust territory that the \textit{Collins English Dictionary} defines as “a territory placed under the administrative authority of a country by the United Nations.” Twenty-one years of U.S. military occupation was a long and challenging time for Okinawa under extraterritoriality, but the door to reversion to Japan was opened because Japan’s sovereignty over the Ryukyus was approved.

II: Education Policy in Okinawa

2–1. Before the San Francisco Peace Treaty

Based on early U.S. policies toward Okinawa, and from the viewpoint of reviewing militaristic education, organized group activities were prohibited in Okinawan education. Nakamura Toshimasa, a teacher at the time, said that when he engaged students in group activities, U.S. military jeeps would enter the schoolyard and U.S. soldiers would accuse the instructors of introducing militaristic education. He said these things often happened since his school faced the road.\footnote{28. \textit{A Centennial Commemorative Publication of Agarie Elementary School} (Nago, Agarie elementary school, 1983).}

At the same time, the policy separating Okinawa from Japan was enacted. This policy was issued by General Headquarters (GHQ), the Supreme Commander for
the Allied Powers, on January 29, 1946. Based on this U.S. policy, it was considered that separating Okinawa from Japan should also include the field of education. *Bunkyō* no. 1892, issued by Okinawa Bunkyōbūchō Yamashiro Atuo on November, 7, 1946, listed the songs “I’m a soldier” and “Play soldiers” as examples of “Militaristic songs and Japanese songs which should be prohibited” at elementary schools and kindergartens. As the Text Compilation Staff General Editor, Nakasone Seizen comments that the editing policies were to exclude (1) militaristic materials, (2) ultra-nationalistic materials, and (3) typically Japanese materials.

From the viewpoint of U.S. rule over Okinawa, English-language education as a compulsory subject began in 1945. The first textbook editorial policy issued in 1946 stated the objective of education as learning about the situation of East Asia and the world, especially deepening the understanding of the influence of the U.S. In keeping with the goal of maximizing U.S. interests, English-language education was emphasized as follows:

1. 1 hour per week from 1st to 4th grade
2. 2 hours per week for 5th and 6th grade
3. 3 hours per week for 7th and 8th grade

As of January 1949, the U.S. policy was to have the Ryukyus separate from Japan. The increasing emphasis on English-centered education—and particularly language proficiency—throughout Japanese students’ schooling shows how intensely the governing U.S. bodies regarded the educational separation of Okinawa from mainland Japan.

From 1945 to 1950, the three branches of the U.S. military agreed on the militaristic value of Okinawa; however, in Washington, there was no direct answer for the future of Okinawa. As a result, Okinawa was in a situation in which it had to deal with orders made on the spot from GHQ in Tokyo. With a lack of budgetary ability and an undetermined long-term view, Okinawa became a forgotten island on which military discipline worsened, crimes and accidents.

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committed by U.S. soldiers became commonalities, and the people who lost everything in the war eked out a living on the rationed goods of the military. In this disheartening situation, the education program was pursued with realism and a satisfactory degree of success considering the drastic shortage of buildings, equipment, teachers, and transportation facilities.

What changed the situation were the victories of the Communist Party in China and the threat of Russia from 1949 to 1950. After the Korean War began in June 1950, a budget for base-building began to be provided to Okinawa. Until its military value came into focus, Okinawa was almost abandoned when compared to Japan in which GHQ was immediately stationed after the war. The document titled “Ryukyu no Kyoiku” (Education in Okinawa) shows that the U.S. contribution to education was also lacking in Okinawa compared to mainland Japan. A U.S. delegation visited the Japanese mainland twice, in March 1946 and September 1959, to promote educational reform. GHQ organized the groups by representatives of education-related organizations in Japan and held meetings with administrative officials, principals, and teachers to implement the policy recommended by the mission. In addition to such full-time personnel, specialists from various fields attended conferences and workshops, ranging in time from a week to nine months. The result was a conference attended by more than four thousand principals and teachers about how to spread educational reform and the new democratically-based educational principles.

However, in Okinawa, even though the same educational reform was introduced, there were no U.S. educators to help Okinawan educators understand the new educational principles. The article describes the situation as follows:

In the Ryukyus, on the other hand, while the structure of Japanese educational reform was accepted as a guide, there has never been a comparable staff of educators to work with the Ryukyuans to give them an understanding of the philosophy behind the proposed changes, and to help them draft the necessary laws, regulations, and standards to implement the changes.

The U.S. staff in charge of education were so busy procuring school materials in Okinawa, where everything had been destroyed by the ground war, and they rarely had time to deal with the content of education. Advisors from GHQ or SCAP advisors visited Okinawa to give advice on education; however, it was impossible to secure the staff to work on the island permanently following the initial presentation. As a result, even six years after the war (1951), reform had

36. Ibid., 2, lines 4–16.
been made only at a policy level and was not realized in education. While educational reform progressed remarkably in mainland Japan, it did not progress at all in Okinawa.

In response to the administrative discrepancy, the Kyoiku Sasshin Iinkai (Educational Reform Committee)\(^{38}\) was appointed to draft the Fundamental Law of Education. Okinawan educators who were irritated with the slow recovery in education began to want to model educational practices after Japanese ones, not only in the educational system but also in the educational administration.\(^{39}\) In the first meeting on November 11, 1950, of the principals in Okinawa under the auspices of the Bunkyōbu, the Okinawa gunto government—four groups of islands were local government entities: Amami gunto, Okinawa gunto, Miyako gunto, and Yaeyama gunto—resolved to make a plea to unify the Ryukyuan educational administration with that of mainland Japan. Specifically, the resolution sought to put Okinawa under the administration of the Ministry of Education of Japan. The appeal was made not only to the Japanese government but also to the U.S. government. A request from Okinawan people living in mainland Japan was also submitted to General MacArthur.\(^{40}\) In opposition, the U.S. government replied that it would be impossible to put the Okinawan Bunkyōbu directly under the administration of the Ministry of Education of Japan, so the discussion concluded without result.

Therefore, it can be said that before the San Francisco Peace Treaty, U.S. policy toward Okinawa was to separate it from Japan and maintain it as a strategically important U.S. military base in Asia. Accordingly, the U.S. government did not want the educational system in Okinawa to be under the administration of the Japanese Ministry of Education as found above in the reply of the U.S. government in Okinawa. This position did change, however, with the ratification of the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

2–2. After the San Francisco Peace Treaty

The San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed in September 1951. With its conclusion, the political position of Okinawa was decided. On September 15, 1951, the Okinawa Times ran an editorial titled “Education under the trusteeship,” and concerning education, it stated as follows:

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38. This was set up in August 1946 under the prime minister’s jurisdiction. Its predecessor was an educational organization set up to cooperate with the United States Education Mission to Japan (author’s translation taken from the Britannica Daihyaka Jiten).

39. Okinawa no Sengo Kyoikushi, 103.

The level of consistency that can be secured with Japan is concerned with several points: the period of the trusteeship, basic administration policy, education, economy, and transportation. And through these issues, expressing people’s hope will be a good opportunity to make this situation positive. Conversely, if we just pass the time without any hope, we will regret it forever and our descendants will blame us. If our nationality remains Japanese, it is natural to remain consistent with Japan in education, and we should steadfastly maintain knowledge of history, geography, policy, economics, and the culture of Japan so that we will not be at a loss when the reversion to Japan is realized. We will never allow ourselves to be called “The Wandering Ryukyus.”

The patriotic opinion expressed in this editorial was shared by Okinawan educators. Yara Chobyo, the head of Bunkyōbu under the Okinawa gunto government, became the head of the Okinawa Association of Teachers in May 1952, and he stressed the importance of shutaisei (independence) from the U.S. It was the Association of Teachers led by Yara that guided the movement of Okinawa’s reversion to Japan. Anticipating the day of reunification with Japan, Okinawan educators made efforts to have children learn Japanese in preference to English. Okinawan educators did not stop preparing for the day of return to Japan even though they had several years of struggle under the U.S. occupation.

The fourth Bunkyō Shingi Iinkai (Bunkyō meeting) was held on September 18, 1951, and the first item discussed was “trusteeship and Okinawa’s education.” Regarding Okinawa, the following requests were presented.

1. Follow Japan in its educational system, administration, and content, and employ Japanese educational law.
2. Follow Japan in teacher training and teaching certification and make it possible to exchange teachers as was done in the prewar period.
3. Treat students as Japanese when they go to upper schools in Japan and have them stay or find employment in Japan after their graduation.
4. As for the educational or cultural projects of the Ministry of Education, treat Ryukyu as a prefecture and have teachers attend the projects as well as obtain educational research materials distributed by the Ministry of Education.

The above is the same content that was resolved in the principals’ meeting held in 1950. This appeal was made from Okinawa to the Japanese government and from the Japanese government to the U.S. government. The important objectives were

41. “Education under the trusteeship,” Okinawa Times’s editorial, Okinawa Times Shu 1951, September 15, 1951.
42. Okinawa no Sengo Kyoikushi, 1977, 56.
(1) the construction of school buildings, and (2) making every day educational activities more independent and more fruitful by legislating educational regulations to provide legal grounds for educational activities. We can see jishusei (autonomy) in the second objective, on which Yara placed the most importance. It was difficult to “make every day educational activities more independent” under the occupation, but Okinawan educators considered this a key objective.

On April 1, 1952, the Ryukyu government was officially established and a ceremony was held at the University of the Ryukyus. At the time, Governor Ridgeway stated that the U.S. would leave reunification matters between Japan and the Ryukyus to residents in the future. Civil Administrator James. M. Lewis also stated his opinion that the self-governance of the Ryukyus should be attained by the public election of a Ryukyuan governor. On April 1, 1952, Governor Ridgeway stated in his message to residents in the opening ceremony of the Rippoin (the legislature of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands) that the legislature was authorized to make laws necessary for executing the powers of the Provisional Central Government as set forth under Article III of Civil Administration Proclamation No. 3, “Establishment of Provisional Central Government” (April 1951). According to the article of the Peace Treaty, the Ryukyu Islands shall be:

[C]ontinuously politically separated from Japan for the time being. However, political separation does not mean cutting off traditional cultural or economic ties. On the contrary, it is the U.S. civil government’s policy to put restrictions on only the necessities of military security and remove all unnecessary restrictions between the Ryukyus and Japan on travel, communication, business, etc. (translation by author)

Governor Ridgeway stated that except for the military, matters between the Ryukyus and Japan should be left to the residents, and that residents would be restricted only on the necessities of military security. Since education was not a matter of military security, it was understood that the U.S. civil government’s attitude was to leave the matter of education to the Ryukyus. In response to the message of the governor, in the 4th Resolution of Rippoin on April 29, a letter of appreciation was submitted. It said upon receiving the message that unnecessary restrictions between the Ryukyus and Japan should be removed, and that they were very delighted and considered it as a step toward the Ryukyu’s complete reversion to Japan. Governor Ridgeway’s message meant that the value of the Ryukyu was only in their connection to U.S. military objectives, and all the

43. Ibid., 105.
priorities should be placed on them.

A memorandum from the Deputy Governor to the Deputy Civil Administrator (April 26, 1952) summarizes the following news article regarding the Japanese policy toward reversion:

d. Since Japan recognizes the right of the United States to retain military bases in Japan under administrative agreement reached pursuant to terms in the Security Pact, it is unreasonable to argue that a segment of recognized Japanese territory be detached from Japanese Civil jurisdiction for strategic reasons. (No. 1, part d)

No. 2, which mentions the difficulty of Okinawa’s immediate return to Japan and gradual reversion, would entail the following:

a. Restrictions over intercourse between the Ryukyus and Japan should be modified. There should be free travel, remittance of money, and flow of students and goods.

b. *All economics, educational, and cultural administrative agencies should be made to conform with the Japanese pattern.* Another report favored having these matters placed under Japanese jurisdiction, with the exception of military affairs.45

It is clear that the U.S. government wanted to maintain U.S. military bases and U.S. control over military affairs in Okinawa and Japan. The memorandum also clearly states negotiation efforts by the Japanese government so that all economic, educational, and cultural administrative agencies could be made to conform with the Japanese pattern and placed under Japanese jurisdiction.

After the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the decision of the political position of Okinawa, Okinawa was allowed once again to conform with the Japanese pattern for education, which had been strongly requested by Okinawan educators. The following section discusses how the change in policy affected compulsory elementary school English education.

**III: The Transition of Compulsory Elementary School English-Language Education**

Shimoji (2001)46 reports that the U.S. government focused its efforts especially

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45. Memorandum for Deputy Civil Administrator, April 26, 1952, OPA, T00019769B, Ryukyu Shinpo, March (00000253, 00000254), United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyus Islands, Office of the Deputy Governor (APO719).

on education policy; however, education is consistently placed last in the reports of the U.S. government on Okinawa. For example, in the document *Historical Report* (Ryukyu U.S. Military Government Section) from January 1 to December 31, 1949, there are seventeen total objectives presented. The top three appear as (1) General, (2) Basic Directive, and (3) Military Government Administration, with “Education and Information” being listed last (17). This lack of prioritization for education goes against existing beliefs that educational oversight was a top priority for U.S. forces.

Building from this idea, *A Monograph on the Okinawan Educational System* underscores the inequality in the wage situation, during which highly-educated teachers received lower pay than people serving as dishwashers on the base. The monthly salary range for teachers in July 1947 was as follows:48

- High School principals: 550 yen
- Technical High School principals: 420 yen
- Primary School principals: 363 yen
- High School teachers: 316 yen
- Grade School teachers: 263 yen.

The wages for jobs on the base were about the same or more than the wages of elementary school principals. The pay for ordinary teachers was two to three times less than that of workers on the base. Many teachers therefore left teaching to take jobs on the base. In contrast to the pay scale for teachers, an average salary of 450 to 500 yen per month was paid to the workers on U.S. military bases, for example, bakers, fishermen and cashiers; telephone operators, file clerks, and gardeners received monthly salaries ranging from 325 to 375 yen; and the lowly kitchen helper received a monthly rate of 291 yen. Considering the fact that six years of study beyond the elementary level was required for teachers, and little or no formal education was needed for the majority of the occupations listed here, the inequality in pay was even more pronounced. The response of the U.S. military to the head of the Bunkyōbu, Yamashiro Atuo, when he appealed for a pay review, was terse: “You should read the document of February 7, 1947, which directed you to obey our directions unconditionally.”49

Furthermore, after the establishment of the University of the Ryukyus, though the U.S. government intervened in administration, there was no budget from the U.S. government in the fiscal year 1965. Arnold G. Fisch, Jr., who worked at the

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47. HMD 833537, 554–00141–00004–001.
Center of Military History beginning in 1979, writes that military affairs came before civil affairs for the military government in the Ryukyu Islands.\textsuperscript{50} It is clear in its policy toward the Ryukyus that the U.S. valued it only as a military base, so it seems natural for the U.S. to have prioritized military affairs in the Ryukyus over civil affairs.

In Okinawa, Gunto Jorei (a regulation issued by Okinawa Gunto) Dai 16 go, Okinawa Gunto Kyoiku Kihon-ho (Education law issued by Okinawa Gunto) was issued on March 31, 1951. The second chapter of the document allows for Kantoku-cho, the Okinawan authorities supervising education under the U.S. military government, to have preference in deciding the subjects of study in elementary schools. Article 18, Provision 4, explains that elementary education should “cultivate the ability of the Japanese language and easy English necessary for daily life so that pupils can understand and use them appropriately.” This shows that it was the government of the Okinawan people that regulated elementary school education.\textsuperscript{51}

The San Francisco Peace Treaty was concluded in September 1951 and it was made effective on April 28, 1952. The execution rule in chapter 2, section 2, of the School Education Ordinance issued on April 1, 1951, regulates the subjects as follows.\textsuperscript{52}

\begin{quote}
Article 22: In elementary school, standard subjects are Japanese, English, Social Studies, Math, Science, Music, Arts and Crafts, Home Economics, Business, P.E., and Special Education Activities.\textsuperscript{53}
\end{quote}

At this point, English was listed as the second educational priority, following Japanese. The Ryukyu Education Law was written before the Ryukyu government was established on April 1, 1952. The head of the Bunkyōbu held public hearings many times for the councilors of each island, representatives of municipalities and communities, and principals. The majority of them insisted that the content of the law should be the same as that of Japan. The drafter of the law, whose name was mentioned only as McCormick, said that it followed the rules of Japan, but some parts were changed according to the situation of Okinawa.

According to the enforcement rules of Ryukyu Kyoiku Ho (Ryukyu Education Law, Ryukyu Islands USCAR Declaration 66), issued on March 2, 1953, the subjects are regulated as follows in chapter 2, “Elementary School,” section 3.

\begin{quote}
50. Fisch, \textit{Military Government}.
53. Ibid., 525.
\end{quote}
Article 23: The standard subjects of elementary school are Japanese, Social Studies, Math, Science, Music, Arts and Crafts, Home Economics, P.E., English, and Independent Research.\textsuperscript{54}

At this point, English was still listed as one of the subjects; however, its order was shifted to second from last, which is quite different from the previous rule in 1952. In this Ryukyu Education Law (USCAR proclamation No.66), English still existed as a subject. This law was drafted by the head of the education division of the U.S. civil government, who asked the opinions of the Okinawan people through Yara, the head of Bunkyōbu. Bunkyōbu drafted their own Education Law, which they thought more democratic, but it was rejected by USCAR after it was approved by Rippoin.

In October 1953, the Ryukyu government Bunkyōbu began to draw up a standard curriculum and finalized the curriculum from elementary school to senior high school, following that of Japan almost exactly. English disappeared from the standard curriculum of elementary school from 1954, which was drawn up by Bunkyō-kyoku (formerly Bunkyōbu). In short, it can be said that English disappeared as a subject officially after the fiscal year 1954. This was because Bunkyō-kyoku in Okinawa regulated the objectives and content of the Education Law following those of Japan. As Warner states,

\begin{quote}
In the face of international acceptance of English as a second language and the knowledge that the majority of the scientific, technical, and professional journals of the world are printed in English, amendments to regulations for the enforcement of the School Education Law were passed on April 6, 1955, and the GRI Education Department decided to eliminate the study of English from the regular course of the primary schools.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

It is clear that Warner wanted to continue English education in elementary school. However, as Okinawan teachers were at the heart of the movement of reversion to Japan, there was no enthusiasm to continue English education in elementary schools in Okinawa. The introduction and disappearance of English education in the curriculum tells the story of a brief yet important chapter in Okinawan educational history.

The first official curriculum after the war was presented in February 1946 by Bunkyō Jiho 1 (educational guidance issued by Bunkyō). At that time, English was a compulsory subject from the first grade of elementary school, and this

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 550.
\textsuperscript{55} Gordon Warner, \textit{History of Education}, 125. Also Bunkyō Jiho 1, February 1946.
continued until it was abolished in the basic \((kijyun)\) curriculum in 1954.\(^\text{56}\) Table 1 summarizes the curriculum of elementary school English-language education from April 1946 to October 1953, according to Bunkyō Jiho issued by Bunkyōbu. In the fiscal year 1946, English class was taught from 1st to 4th grades for one hour a week, for 5th and 6th grades two hours a week, and for 7th and 8th grades three hours a week. There had been several changes, and finally in October 1953, English was dropped from the curriculum; however, it was the following fiscal year of 1954 that English disappeared officially.

The following are the changes in class time for English in elementary schools in Okinawa (mainland), which have been summarized according to the Bunkyō report:

Table 1. Number of Hours of English per Week for Elementary School Students, 1946 to 1953.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1946</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep. 1946</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1949</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>3–4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1951</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1953</td>
<td>20 m</td>
<td>20 m</td>
<td>30 m</td>
<td>30 m</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1953</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On Miyako Island:
- April 1949: 1 hour of lessons for 5th and 6th grades only
- April 1953: 1st–2nd grades, 10 minutes, 2 times a week
  3rd–4th grades, 10 minutes, 3 times a week (temporary)
  5th–6th grades, the same as last year
- October 1953: No mention of English class

In April 1952, Yongunto Seifu (the system in which the local government is set up in each gunto of four, Amami, Okinawa, Miyako, and Yaeyama) was dissolved and the Ryukyu government began. In October 1953, Bunkyō-kyoku began making a basic curriculum with educational objectives. These educational objectives were set up by mostly introducing the objectives of mainland Japan. That is why there was no English in the curriculum in the Bunkyō report of October 1953. Below is the “Course of Study” for elementary schools that was shown the next month, November 1953. The curriculum from November 1953 and the curriculum from 1954 share the same content, and there is no English in either. Table 2 shows the curriculum circulated in October 1953 for 1954.

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\(^{56}\) Okinawa no Sengo Kyoikushi, 452.
Table 2. Elementary School Course of Study, 1953 and 1954.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese language</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Activity</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per week</td>
<td>(24)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(29)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total hours in a year</td>
<td>(840)</td>
<td>(875)</td>
<td>(980)</td>
<td>(1,010)</td>
<td>(1,050)</td>
<td>(1,050)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What can be found in this curriculum is that English disappeared and, at the same time, the focus was put on Japanese. Japanese is studied nearly twice as often as some subjects, and more than twice as often as other subjects. This was a reflection of the ideas of Yara, the head of Bunkyōbuchō, as well as Okinawan educators, that Okinawa asked for its identity from Japan and wished to return to Japan in the future. Having children receive instruction in Japanese was a primary concern in order to fulfil the wishes of Okinawan educators. Compulsory English-language education in elementary schools in Okinawa ended in the fiscal year 1954.

The Kijun Kyoiku Katei (Standard Course of Study) that was announced in November 1953 was the result of the work of interdisciplinary committee members and over seventy individual planning sessions. Its characteristics and procedures to be completed are described as follows:

1. It was born from the request of teachers working in schools.
2. It showed the criteria to be relied on as the region of Okinawa.
3. It should only be used as a reference, and standardization should be avoided. 57

The Standard Course of Study clearly says that it was completed by Okinawan teachers with a vested interest in improving the educational situation of the

57. Ryukyu Shiryo, 543.
islands.

Therefore, Okinawan educators were able to decide and compile the school curriculum. From the start of Bunkyōbu in 1946, the members of the organization were Okinawan educators who worked under the control of an officer of the U.S. military government. English-language education was one of the important occupation policies for the U.S. military government at the time. If at all possible, they intended to provide education in English; however, Okinawan educators, including the Bunkyōbu, were against it. In November 1950, Okinawa Gunto Seifu was established and for the first time, a governor in each region (Okinawa, Miyako, Yaeyama, and Amami) was directly elected.

On December 25, 1950, USCAR was established. In place of Yamashiro Atuo, Yara Chobyo became the head (Bunkyōbushō) of Bunkyōbu. Since the textbooks were the same as those of mainland Japan, the Henshū-ka, the section for textbook editing, was abolished. The Kenkyū-chōsa-ka (the research survey section), which dealt with the curriculum, was soon established. In February 1951, Bunkyō Shingi Iinkai (the Committee on Education) was set up to deliberate educational matters, especially important laws on education. The mission of Bunkyō Shingi Iinkai is explained as follows:

At the turning point of education, not only we (educators) but also the general public feel the necessity of the organization for guidance on education. For educational reform, we have to refer to Japanese educational laws and the Japanese system; however, at the same time we should be creative enough to do so from an original Okinawan viewpoint.\

The members’ first goal was to enact the Fundamental Law of Education and School Education Regulations. In the discussion, committee member Maeda Giken argued that while the Fundamental Law of Education should follow that of Japan, school education ordinances should be flexible according to the situation of Okinawa. Regarding language education, he proposed that the current English-language education was excessive and that the issue of Japanese-language education and English education should be discussed.

In the discussion of Gunto Gikai on April 1951, Yara explained the content of Okinawa Gunto Gakko Kyoiku Jorei (Okinawa Gunto School Education Regulations). In the beginning, he explained that Bunkyōbu followed the Japanese School Education Law to make the School Education Law of Okinawa, and the draft of the Okinawan School Education Law was discussed in Bunkyō Shingi Iinkai set up in Bunkyōbu. Yara argued strongly for the continuing emphasis on Japanese as the “national language needed for daily life,” even within

58. Okinawa no Sengo Kyoikushi, 45.
a U.S.-occupied state. His advocacy, both from a practical and cultural viewpoint, helped convince the governing bodies of the need to return to a Japanese-centered language education. As can be understood from this discussion, Bunkyōbu and Bunkyō Shingi Iinkai wanted to follow the Japanese Education Law and use Japanese to educate Okinawan children.59

The memorandum of the Deputy Governor for Deputy Civil Administrator (April 26, 1952) says that all economic, educational, and cultural administrative agencies should be made to conform with the Japanese pattern. It is also clear that education in Okinawa was conducted by Bunkyōbu and the laws regulated on education in Okinawa were set up by Bunkyōbu, which was organized by Okinawan educators in the end. Therefore, it can be said that compulsory English education in elementary schools was ended by Okinawan educators. Around the time that the San Francisco Peace Treaty was conducted, the USCAR’s concern was not necessarily on education in Okinawa but on other concerns, such as Okinawa’s governance and the land seizures that accompanied the construction of U.S. military bases. USCAR allowed Okinawan educators to follow the Japanese Education Law and return to a Japanese-centered linguistic and cultural education. English was removed as a required course of study and placed in the elective courses of the senior high school curriculum, leaving it to the discretion of the local school board as to whether English instruction could and should be offered in elementary and junior high schools.60

Conclusion

Compulsory elementary school English-language education was inseparable from U.S. occupation strategy and policy in the late 1940s. The harbingers of its ending were the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the clarification of Okinawa’s political position according to the treaty. Two political concerns operated in the background of the ending of compulsory English-language education in elementary schools: first, the approval of Japan’s potential sovereignty over the Ryukyus; and second, the stationing of the U.S. military in Japan and the Ryukyus for security. The terms of the U.S. occupation over the Ryukyus were not clarified; however, Okinawan educators who wished for reunification with Japan made efforts to have their pupils learn Japanese. They also requested that both the Japanese government and the U.S. military government make Okinawa’s educational policies and administrative development follow those of Japan. In contrast, the desire of the U.S. military to maintain their occupation in Okinawa

59. Minutes of the 7th Okinawa Gunto Gikai, April 28, 1951, OPA.
60. “Civil Affairs Activities in the Ryukyus Islands,” vol. 1, no. 2, Ryukyu University Library, Sengo Shiryo 30 (June 1953): 56.
posed problems for Okinawan educators wishing to follow the Japanese education system. It was only after the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty that Okinawa’s following of Japanese education was approved by the U.S. government. Even though there were great efforts by Okinawan people and educators who wished to reunite with Japan to restore education, without the approval of Japan’s potential sovereignty, following Japan’s educational system would have been impossible. Therefore, it can be said that compulsory English-language education in elementary schools ended in 1954 due to the approval of Japan’s potential sovereignty over the Ryukyus as well as the clarification of its political position, both of which were determined in the San Francisco Peace Treaty.