

FILE ON REGULATIONS REGARDING CIVILIAN SWORDS

Item	Date	Synopsis
1	4 Dec 1945	XI Corps Ltr, AG 386.3F, Subject: Disposition of Japanese Swords, Arms, and Ammunition.
2	5 Jan 1946	SCAP Ltr., AG 386.3, Subject: Retention of Swords by Japanese. (Letter with inclosure establishes policy regarding retention and collection swords.)

See basic controlling Directions in Operational Directive No 28, Hq Eighth Army, 18 Nov 1945.

HEADQUARTERS XI CORPS
APO 471

AG 386.3 F

4 December 1945

SUBJECT: Disposition of Japanese Swords, Arms and Ammunition.

TO :

1. All arms and ammunition collected from Japanese civilians or Military Police, in accordance with directives this headquarters, and now under the control of the Japanese Civilian Police or unit Provost Marshals, will be disposed of as follows:

a. Swords claimed to be temple swords, masam pieces, or heirlooms, will be inspected by a sword expert to be furnished by Provost Marshal this headquarters on call.

b. Swords determined to be temple swords, masam pieces, or heirlooms will be certified as directed in paragraph 4a (3) Operational Directive 28, Headquarters Eighth Army, and returned to the Owners through the Japanese Civilian Police. (Heirlooms are Samurai Swords that have either been in the family for three (3) generations or that are hand forged and over one hundred (100) years old).

c. All other swords, sabers, arms and ammunition formerly pertaining to Japanese Military Police or civilians will be processed through Ordnance channels under the provisions of Operational Directive 28.

2. A report will be made to this headquarters when the foregoing has been accomplished.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL HALL:

PAUL OGD
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS

AS 386.3 (5 Jan 46) GC

AFPO 800
5 January 1946

SUBJECT: Retention of Swords by Japanese.

FO : GS, Eighth Army, AFPO 845.

1. Reference is made to:
 - a. SCAP Radio RAX 8001, 24 Sept 45 (Incl #1).
 - b. Letter this Headquarters, 30 Nov 45 to GS, Eighth Army, subject: "Retention of Swords by Japanese" (Incl # 2).
 - c. Letter from Central Liaison Office, Tokyo, 15 Dec 45, to this Headquarters, subject: "Retention of Swords Classified as Objects of Art in Civilian Hands", (Incl #3).

2. It is requested that the action directed in inclosure 1 to reference a be amended to conform with the policy of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers cited in reference b and c. It is also requested that any other actions in this matter contrary to the policy of the Supreme Commander, as alleged in inclosure 2 to reference c, be likewise amended.

By Command of General MacARTHUR:

/s/ Harold Fair
/s/ HAROLD FAIR
Lt. Col., A.G.D.
Asst. Adjutant General

3 Incls:

- Incl #1 - SCAP Rad RAX 8001, 24 Sept 45.
- Incl #2 - Ltr fr SCAP to GS, Eighth Army, 30 Nov 45.
- Incl #3 - Ltr fr C.L.O., 15 Dec 45, w/3 incls (Original Only)

COPY

IN THE CLEAR

24 SEPTEMBER 1945

FROM: THE SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS

TO : IMPERIAL JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

INFO: GO SIXTH ARMY ZAX 8981
GO EIGHTH ARMY.....VIA COURIER
COM FIFTH FLEET
CINCPAC
CINCAPPAC MANILA

1. Reference your GLO #75, dated 15 Sep 45, it is noted that you report that your police authorities can collect revolvers and rifles in possession of civilians whenever necessary, and that these same authorities have already commenced the collection of privately owned swords, except those having particular value as objects of art. In this connection you are now further directed, as follows:

a. All revolvers and rifles in possession of the civilian population shall be collected without delay.

b. Collection of swords in possession of the civilian population shall be continued and promptly completed. As regards swords considered to be objects of art, such distinction in this matter is approved but this designation shall only be applied in case the swords are actually with demobilized members of the military services.

2. Regarding your request that private hunting guns be retained in the hands of the civilian population, this is approved under the following conditions:

a. Licenses for retention of hunting guns shall be granted by the proper authorities only to persons who actually require such guns in order to acquire meat, hides and skins, or to destroy harmful birds and beasts.

b. It shall be clearly explained to all persons granted such a license under the regulations, that he will be held personally responsible in case of any deception in connection with the issuance of the license.

3. Further instructions covering in detail the subject of collection, delivery and disposition of civilian arms will be issued at a later date.

OFFICIAL:

Approved by:

B. M. FITCH
Brigadier General, U S Army
Adjutant General

/s/ W. E. CHAMBERS
Brig Gen, U. S. Army
Acting A C of S, G-5

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INCL # 1

20 November 1945

SUBJECT: Retention of Swords by Japanese.

TO : Commanding General, Eighth Army, APO 545.

1. This is in reply to your letter of 19 November on the above subject, wherein you recommend issuance of a directive to the Japanese Imperial Government restricting the retention of swords by any persons to Museum pieces and temple swords.
2. The policy in this matter has been established with a view to insuring that the occupation forces would not be placed in the position of requiring confiscation of any genuine Japanese object of art, whether they be swords or any other type of national art treasure. No change in this policy is contemplated.
3. Current instructions to the Imperial Japanese Government prohibit the retention of swords by demobilized military personnel. It is desired that violations of this prescription be reported to this Headquarters for action.
4. While existing policy may result in retention by civilians of a greater quantity of swords than originally contemplated, it is considered undesirable at this time to issue any directive which may necessitate a house-to-house search by occupation troops to insure compliance therewith.

For the Commander-in-Chief:

R. J. MARSHALL,
Major General, U.S.C.
Actg. Chief of Staff

COPY

Incl # 2

TO:

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE SUPREME
COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS

FROM:

Central Liaison Office, Tokyo

SUBJECT

Retention of Swords Classified as Objects
of Art in Civilian Hands

C.L.O.

No. 1074 (1.3)

13 December 1945

With reference to paragraph 1, b of the Signal Corps Message 85-p ADV
BWB/hrw of the General Headquarters dated 24 September 1945 and Paragraph 1,
a (1) (a) and (2) of the Memorandum 388.3 (25 Oct 45) CIE, the Japanese
Government submits a request on the above subject for the consideration of the
General Headquarters as follows:

The Japanese Government, acting upon the directives provided in the above
mentioned memoranda, has been issuing licenses to bona-fide civilians to
retain swords which are considered as objects of art. However, it has recent-
ly been reported by the local Japanese authorities in various prefectures as
shown in Inclosures 1 and 2 that the local U.S. Army authorities, in spite of
the said directive, ordered them to collect and turn over all swords including
those classified as heirlooms or works of art to the nearest U.S. Army forces.
As a result, even such swords as are stated in Inclosure 3 have been turned
over, and they have not yet been returned to their owners.

The above mentioned orders seem to have caused a feeling of uncertainty
and perplexity among the local Japanese authorities and people concerned.,
especially in the area under the jurisdiction of the Sixth U.S. Army which is,
it is reported, going to be de-activated shortly.

In view of the favorable consideration granted by the Memorandum AB 0004
(12 Nov 45) CIE of the General Headquarters, on the subject of "Policies and
Procedures Relating to the protection of arts, Monuments, and Cultural and

Religious sites and Installations", the Japanese Government feels that the confiscation, or even the collection for investigation, of such swords by the local U.S. Army forces is not in harmony with the true intentions of the General Headquarters. It is therefore requested that the General Headquarters would be good enough to take the necessary steps immediately to stop the above mentioned practice of the local U.S. Army forces and to have the collected swords returned, leaving it to the Japanese Government to decide whether or not a sword is actually an object of art.

In case it is the policy of the local U.S. Army forces that such swords should be collected for investigation, it is sincerely ~~hoped~~ hoped that the investigation will be carried out by qualified Japanese experts together with experts from the American side.

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

(S. Iguchi)

Director of General Affairs,
Central Liaison Office.

Enclosure # 5.

COPY

(Enclosure 1) The text of an Order Issued by the Local U.S.
Army Authorities

HEADQUARTERS 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

A. P. O. 25
3 December 1945

SUBJECT: Swords Previously Classified as Hairlooms.

TO : Mr. Hiji Wajima, Director, Central Liaison Office, Nagoya.

1. Previous instructions issued by this headquarters regarding the retention of swords classified as hairlooms or works of art are rescinded by command of the Supreme Commander of the Allies in the Pacific.
2. No swords, dirk, dagger, or other weapon of a similar nature will be retained or sold by any Japanese National.
3. All weapons in this category and now in the possession of Japanese Nationals in Gifu, Shizuoka and Aichi Prefectures will be seized by Civil police and turned over to the nearest U.S. Army force.
4. Chiefs of Prefectural Police will utilize all police agencies to seize and secure all such items. When such items have been secured a report and inventory will be submitted to the nearest U. S. Army Headquarters.
5. All weapons surrendered will be tagged with the name and address of the owner.
6. Owner of weapon will be given a receipt by collecting agency.
7. Collecting agencies will prepare inventories to be turned over with weapons. Inventories will indicate former owner of weapon.
8. Items which are of an entirely agricultural nature or have a primary use as cutlery are excluded from this requirement.
9. A report by prefecture will be submitted to this Headquarters, Attention AG of 3, S-2, when all weapons have been secured by civil police and turned over to U.S. Army authorities, and no further weapons remain in the possession of Japanese Nationals.
10. The Japanese Civil Police will be held responsible for the enforcement of both the letter and the spirit of this directive.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL BROWN:

W. A. SWEETEN
Lt. Col., ASD
Adjutant General

COPY

(Enclosure 2) The List of Prefectures Where the Orders Have Been Issued

Orders similar to the one, the text of which is shown in Enclosure 1, have been issued to the local Japanese authorities by the local U. S. Army authorities in the following prefectures:

Sixth Army Area

Kyoto (Otsu The 136th Army Corps)
Fukushima
Egawa
Toyama (Matsuyama the 2nd Bn.)

Eighth Army Area

Nagano (Headquarters of the 97th Artillery Div.)
Chiba
Akita
Aomori

Enclosure #2 to Reference 3

COPY

(Enclosure 3) Swords Designated as "National Treasure" or "Important Objects of Art"

There are more than 1,600 swords which are designated by the Minister of Education as "National Treasure" or Important Objects of Art" in accordance with the provisions of related Laws and Ordinances. Among these swords the following are reported to have been turned over to the local U.S. Army Forces:

- (1) Swords belonging to Mr. Masataro Shibata, Otouchi-Che, Nishiuma, Okata-gun, Akita Prefecture
 - (a) "Masatsune" (National Treasure List, P. 78) which was formerly owned by Mr. Arima, Tokyo.
 - (b) No name (Important Objects of Art List P. 17) which is said to have been made by "Ishin".
- (2) Swords belonging to Mr. Kiyoharu Ishikawa, Tsuchiura City, Ibaraki Prefecture
 - (a) "Tadayoshi" (Important Objects of Art list P. 27)
 - (b) No Name (Important Objects of Art List P. 27) which is said to have been made by "Seiko"
 - (c) "Harimune" which was designated as "Important Object of Art" in 1942.

Note: The National Treasures List (Japanese Text) and the Important Object of Art List (Japanese Text) have been submitted by the Ministry of Education to Lt. Comd. Stout of the Art and Monument Section, C. E. H. of the General Headquarters.

Enclosure #3, Reference C

COPI

BASIS: Ltr, SCAP, APO 800, file 386.3 00 Subj: "Retention of Swords by Japanese, dated 5 Jan 46.

AS 474 (SM) 1st Ind

Hq. 8th Army, APO 343

TO: CG, XI Corps, APO 471

Forwarded for compliance with paragraph 2, basic letter insofar as it pertains to 97th Division or any other unit under your command.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL HALL:

3 Incls:
n/c

M. H. WILKE,
Capt., A. G. D.
Asst. Adjutant General

AS 474 (5 Jan 46) F 2nd Ind

HEADQUARTERS, XI CORPS, APO 471, 29 January 1946

TO: Commanding General, 1st Cavalry Division, APO 801
Commanding General, 97th Inf Division, APO 445

Inasmuch as policies regarding retention or collection of swords are established in basic communication with inclosures, additional copies are furnished herewith for distribution to units of your command.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL HALL:

3 Inclosures:
n/c

W. H. SHEARD
Lt. Col., AGD
Asst Adjutant General

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