

The beginnings of Finnish-Japanese military cooperation date to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. The Japanese military attaché in Stockholm Gen Motojiro Akashi initiated then contacts with Finnish independence movement leaders. Akashi, very clever officer wrote later his memoirs 'Rakka Ryusui' which were translated into English.

As the Soviet threat was rising dangerously Tokyo named in 1938 Gen Toshio Nishimura [adopted son of former Prime Minister Gen Giichi Tanaka] its military attaché in Helsinki for Finland and Sweden. After Russian aggression on Finland in 1939-1940 Nishimura moved to Stockholm and organized attache bureau there. He was soon replaced by Gen Makoto Onodera in Sweden and Gen Hiroshi Onouchi in Finland. Onouchi worked there until the end of 1944 and enjoyed very good relations with the Finns.

J.W.M. Chapman – Japan in Poland's Secret Neighbourhood War [Japan Forum No 2/1995] writes [p. 260]

Until the Soviet-Finnish peace in the autumn of 1944, Onodera had been heavily involved in collaborating with the Finnish General Staff in the penetration of the USSR by agents. The Japanese mission was forced out of Finland, but Onodera pulled off a remarkable coup by obtaining several million yen from Tokyo to induce the whole of the deception section of the Finnish General Staff to move to Sweden to continue its work, which was generally regarded as highly effective in reading Soviet coded signals. [note 131] The opportunity appears to have arisen as a result of the fact that the Russians were intent on ensuring that the apparatus elaborately created with German funds and support to monitor the USSR since the 1930s in conjunction with the Finns, Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians and, to a much lesser extent, the Swedes would be smashed. However, because Onodera had the funds and a long-established set of contacts since his years in Riga and because the Swedes quietly indicated their support for maintenance of these networks, the proposal went ahead and contributed significantly to Onodera's standing in Tokyo's eyes. [note 132].

[note 103] The covert elements among the members of the bureau of the Japanese military attaché in Berlin had been heavily involved since 1920 in support of sabotage and subversion operations directed against the USSR. This had been Oshima's main employment as assistant military attaché in Berlin and Vienna in the early 1910s, but according to Professor Miyagi, who interviewed Oshima in old age, he deliberately avoided talking about these aspects of his career because of the damage it might do as a defendant at the Tokyo Tribunal. Colonel Usui Shigeki [JAAF officer; CO of 98 Sentai (Ki-21 bombers); KIA 23 Dec 1941 during the first Rangoon major air strike] undertook these tasks under Oshima in the mid--1930s and was credited by Schellenberg as collaborating with the Security Service to plant information about an anti-Stalinist conspiracy among the Soviet military which had a direct impact on the subsequent purges that seriously weakened Soviet defences from 1937 to 1941.

In 1942, the Japanese Army provided secure bases for Abwehr-funded sabotage operations against Siberia and there was collaboration between Colonel Lahousen (Abwehr II) and Colonel Yamamoto Bin over the infiltration of agents into the Caucasus. See Abwehr II L/A Nr. 990/42 Gkdos of 1 May -1942 about discussions on cooperation involving the Caucasus, India, Iran, Iraq and the USA. Colonel Onouchi, the Japanese military attaché in Helsinki, was collaborating with the Finnish General Staff in mounting agent penetration in Carelia and employing Finnish and Estonian agents inside the USSR Soviet code material collected in Manchuria by the Japanese and Poles were exchanged by Onouchi's assistant, Hirose Eiichi, with the Estonian organisation, originally supplied with funds and intercept equipment by the Germans,

under Erkki Pale, working for Colonel Hallamaa and the Finnish General Staff. Much of this information was already being routed to Onodera, but he paid Pale 300,000 kroner in September 1944 to take his group to Stockholm when Finland sued for peace.

An example of Finnish radio monitoring of Soviet forces' activity may be seen in Onouchi (Helsinki) Tel. No. 217 of 9 June 1943 and it is also interesting to note Helsinki Tel. No. 229 of 17 June 1943 in which it was noted that 'it is very hard to read American and British diplomatic systems' so that it would make sense to derive information about Anglo-American policy by monitoring the codes of small countries with less difficult systems.' See NAW/RG 457/SRA 331-S & 163 and J. Cederberg & G. Elgemyr, 'Operation Stella Polaris', in W. Agrell & B. Huldt [eds.] *Clio Goes Spying*; *Lunds Studies in International History*, Vol. 17, 1983, pp. 120–149. [note 131] Author's interview with General Onodera. The transfer, codenamed Operation Pole Star, was facilitated by the good relations that had existed until November 1944 with Colonel Onouchi, who returned home. Onodera had had long-term contacts also with Colonel Hallamaa, the head of the decrypt section of the Finnish General Staff, as well as with General Paasonen, the head of intelligence and the Estonian volunteers, headed by Colonel Richard Maasing, who had collaborated with the Finns and the Germans. The move was also known to the Swedes and the transfer was conducted with their tacit support. Paasonen had been at the St. Cyr Military Academy in France with General de Gaulle and both he and Hallamaa moved to France at the end of the war. Cf. n. 103 above.

There appears to have been an intelligence connection between the Finns and the French for some time past and there were also connections between the Swedes and the Comte de Fleurieu, named as head of Anglo-American intelligence in Sweden by Himmler at the end of 1942. The Germans and their friends in Stockholm seem always to have been wary of the French military and were quite frequently seeking to check up both on Swedish diplomats in France and on French diplomats on leave from Sweden. It is perhaps significant that General Onodera was interrogated only by the French in 1946 before he left Naples for Japan.

#### Stella Polaris Sources

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I can just add that all these Japanese officers [Akashi, Nishimura, Onodera and Onouchi] also cooperated with Polish Intelligence with excellent results.

Regards  
Andrew