

lowing the exposure of a financial scandal which drove the preceding Ashida Government out of office and which has even hit the opposition parties, of which Yoshida's was then one. Consequently Mr. Yoshida will have to tread a very careful path in view of the continued investigation into the scandal. But so far from giving the air of one who is cabinet-making in the midst of such circumstances, Mr. Yoshida was in a leisurely frame of mind, and to my remark that I did not wish to take up too much of his time he replied that he was not really a busy man but that he just "pretended" to be one. He left most of his political affairs to his lieutenants and spent as much time as he could at his country villa at Oiso, about one hundred miles from Tokyo, "in order to look after his health" – the last remark made with a good-natured but cynical smile.

7. The conversation was not so rewarding in terms of information derived from it as in the opportunity of observing Mr. Yoshida at close quarters. He gives the appearance of a genial, easy-going country squire and certainly not an energetic, ambitious politician – General MacArthur's characterization of him to me as a placid, old-fashioned type of Japanese, ignorant of politics and economics was borne out by my impressions of him yesterday. He told me that his main political responsibility was to conduct a thorough house-cleaning in Japanese politics. He said that a lot of unwholesome filth had been left behind by the military during the last stages of the war that still had to be cleaned up. In addition to this there was the post-war corruption which had caused the downfall of the Ashida Government, and he was left also with the task of cleaning it up.

8. He wanted me to know that the Boeki-Cho (Board of Trade) had earned a bad reputation under preceding administrations; he intended to reform it thoroughly by putting it directly under his own office and thus removing it from the control of the Department of Commerce and Industry. He wished to "internationalize the Boeki-Cho". Because of his emphatic repetition of this remark I gathered that he hoped to see Japanese trade diverted to various interested Allied nations.