

HISTORY'S HIDDEN TURNING POINTS



SPECIAL REPORT

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The true watersheds in human affairs are seldom spotted quickly amid the tumult of headlines broadcast on the hour

BY DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

THE GRANDCHILDREN of people who changed and remind ourselves of the differences between history and current events, he.

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THE MAN WHO GAVE JAPAN THE BUSINESS

Don't blame the Japanese. We did it to ourselves. —W. EDWARDS DEMING

He wears a hearing aid in each ear, walks stiffly and lets his 6-foot frame sag a bit at the close of a hard day on the seminar circuit. Yet there is nothing wrong with the vision of this bespectacled 90-year-old. W. Edwards Deming has seen the future and it works—at least for Japan. Deming is the father of Japan's quality revolution. He is a turning point of business history made flesh, an American guru who sports in his lapel the Second Order Medal of the Sacred Treas-

Listen up, Mr. Do's and Don'ts

A US News & World Report cover story reported that Dr. W. Edwards Deming's leading role in the Japanese quality and business miracle ranks as one of only nine "Hidden Turning Points in World History"...

The Nine Hidden Turning Points in World History:

1. The Mission of the Apostle Paul (1st century, A.D.), which profoundly defined and expanded Christianity worldwide.
2. The Great Black Death Plague of Europe (starting in 1347).
3. The numerous unheralded discoveries of America (including the Phoenicians, c. 600 B.C., and the Norsemen, c. 1000 A.D.), prior to Columbus in 1492.
4. The Japanese total rejection of firearms for over 250 years, in favor of the traditional samurai weapons (swords, etc.) from c. 1600 to c. 1850.
5. Napoleon's conquest of Europe (c. 1806).
6. Mark Twain's "Great American Novel", *Huckleberry Finn* (1885), which paved the way for many of the great authors that followed him (e.g. Jack London, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway, etc.).
7. America's misplaced support (starting in 1927) of China's Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, directly contributing to US involvement in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.
8. The introduction of "The Pill" as a reliable form of birth control (1960).
9. **Dr. W. Edwards Deming (1900-1993), the American Einstein of Business, guides the Japanese post-war quality miracle and economic rebirth, starting in 1950.**

Dr. Deming was the American quality and systems genius who helped the US win W.W.II with his statistical quality control methods. In 1950, General MacArthur asked Deming to assist the Japanese in rebuilding their war-shattered economy. Within two years, Deming had taught his quality theories and methods to business leaders representing over 80% of Japan's total GNP. Meanwhile, the US focused only on quantity production, turning a deaf ear to Deming's repeated attempts to introduce his quality wisdom to post-war corporate America.

The rest, as they say, is history. Deming became (and still is) a national hero in Japan - the annual Deming Prize remains Japan's highest business honor. It wasn't until the early 1980's that American companies such as Ford, Hewlett-Packard Proctor & Gamble and many others re-discovered Dr. Deming and began applying his proven quality methods, heralding a rebirth in American quality, productivity, and profitability.