



Peace Depot Newsletter

No. 4 May 1, 1999

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The Danger of the Increase in Closed- Door Meetings

— as a Result of the New System for Japan-US Military
Cooperation

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In mid-March, the Peace Depot initiated an emergency project involving attendance at all the Special Committee sessions of the House of Representatives. Our purpose was to listen to the debates over the three controversial bills related to the updated Japan-U.S. defense cooperation guidelines and to report about them to concerned public throughout Japan in order to stimulate public discussion and action. The fundamental position of many researchers and campaigners affiliated with the Peace Depot, including myself, is that the bills violate the spirit of the Article 9, the very core of the Peace Constitution of Japan, and should, therefore, be discarded.

However, this position is supported by only the Social Democratic Party and the Japanese Communist Party. Therefore, campaign efforts have been directed to influencing the largest opposition, the Democratic Party of Japan, and the (New) Komeito (Clean Party), as well as to encouraging the SDP and JCP. In fact the Komeito eventually joined closed-door meetings among three parties -- the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Komeito -- that were held to work out minor amendments to the bill in order

to ensure majority passage of the bill in the House of the Representatives. The amended bill was passed and sent to the House of Councillors on April 27, 1999. One positive development is that the largest opposition did not support the amended bill and requested more far-reaching amendments.

The most fundamental change related to the new Guidelines as a result of the bills is "bilateral planning." The bills are designed to establish a new system which will enable Japanese and U.S. forces to make bilateral plans for military operations at a preparatory stage under normal circumstances prior to any contingency "situations."

Discussions in Japan on legal matters related to the new Guidelines rarely refer to this point explicitly. This is because of the importance of the Japanese Constitution, which is supported by the majority of the Japanese Public, in the political arena. Statements and discussion, even by the ruling LDP, avoid challenging the Constitution and tend to be formal and "impractical." They clearly distinguish between

"emergency of Japan" and "situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security."

In contrast, there is no reason for U.S. forces to make a similar distinction. They use superficial expressions in diplomatic documents in accordance with the precondition of "within the limitations of the Japanese Constitution." However, they do not separate "areas surrounding Japan" from "Japan" in their day-to-day preparatory activities. From a military point-of-view, such a distinction might be considered unreasonable and a potential constraint to operational flexibility.

The U.S. Secretary of Defense was briefed about the Interim Report on the New Guidelines before its release. The briefing Memorandum, obtained through the U.S. Freedom of Information Act, states that the first reason to amend the Guidelines is to provide political authority for "bilateral planning." According to the same document, "Because the existing Guidelines, adopted in 1978, do not provide authority for bilateral planning, the Government of Japan cannot specify the nature and level of assistance they would be able to provide in a contingency. The new Guidelines will provide the political authority for bilateral planning."

"The Bill for Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan" is silent on what can be done before actual "situations in areas surrounding Japan" are recognized and acknowledged. On April 13th, at the Special Committee of the House of Representatives on the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, the Minister of Home Affairs NODA Takeshi replied to TANAKA Makiko (Liberal Democrat Party) that, "it is natural to make master plans for actions, consulting local authorities concerned" when "situations in areas surrounding Japan" are actually recognized and acknowledged. TANAKA replied, "it is impossible to cope with "situations" if plans are made after they occur. Concrete plans should be made at a preparatory stage in advance." That is true. It is the "Comprehensive Mechanism," as it is termed in the new Guidelines, under which plans at a preparatory phase are to be made. "The Bilateral Planning Committee" (BPC) has been established under this mechanism and it is to be noted that only military personnel from both countries participate in this committee.

On March 26th, at the Special Committee of the House of Representatives, DOI Takako (Social Democratic Party) demanded that matters which the BPC had discussed thus far should be released to the public. However, the Director General of the Defense Agency NOROTA Hosei replied, "I cannot answer about it due to the nature of its matter."

In order for "The Bill for Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan" to function, it requires that "bilateral planning" be conducted under normal circumstances prior to any contingency "situations" and at closed-door meetings, which are not legally well-defined. It is solely military personnel who will undertake this planning. We need to pay the utmost attention to the increase in such closed-door meetings. These

meetings will involve discussion of many realistic contingency situations along with the measures to cope with them, measures which are inevitably unconstitutional. It is very cynical and destructive that restrictions imposed by the Constitution have led to increased secrecy in the conduct of Japanese military affairs and in the Japan-U.S. security relationship.

Tokyo Forum Sets Up Drafting Committee

SHIGENOBE Yukari and KAWASAKI Akira

The third meeting of the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, jointly sponsored by the Hiroshima Peace Institute (HPI) and the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA), was held at the Pocantico Convention Center in the suburbs of New York on April 10th and 11th, 1999. Twenty-one (21) representatives from 17 countries, including new 4 members, participated in the meeting. Three members, including one of the co-chairpersons, AKASHI Yasushi, the former President of the HPI, and Jasjit Singh, the President of Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, were absent. The other co-chairperson, MATSUNAGA Nobuo, the vice-president of the JIIA, presided over the meeting. Mr. AKASHI resigned as President of the HPI in order to run in the election on April 11th for Governor of Tokyo, but still remains a co-chairperson of the Forum. (He failed to win the election.) According to the Forum, Mr. Singh stated that he would not participate in meetings unless India's position is fully accepted with regard to its reasons for having conducted nuclear tests last year.

The first draft drawn up by the sponsors of the final report due in July was presented to the meeting. Based on the draft, the meeting spent many hours considering what should be included in the final report in the terms of concrete proposals and actions. On the first day, the members discussed how to cope with nuclear proliferation in South Asia, and on the second day, the issue of worldwide nuclear disarmament, such as the promotion of nuclear disarmament between the U.S. and Russia.

Prof. Sergei Yevgen'evich Blagovolin, Vice-President of the World Economics and International Relations Institute, Russia, said that the air bombing in Yugoslavia by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has further delayed the Russian parliament's ratification of START II. A member from Ukraine pointed out that, seeing NATO's air bombing, many people in Ukraine and Belarus were coming to support the opinion that their countries should take back nuclear weapons and missiles which had been transferred to Russia and rearm themselves. A participant from China criticized the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) initiative by Japan and the U.S.

Considering that it is unrealistic to pursue nuclear abolition with a time limit, many participants focused on concrete steps

such as how to reduce existing nuclear weapons and missiles such as in START II, and how to prevent Russia's fissile material and nuclear technology from going to other countries. However, one insisted that the non-proliferation regime couldn't be maintained unless ultimate nuclear abolition is pursued.

Regarding the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan, most of the participants agreed that both countries should not be given the status of a nuclear-weapon state, although they pointed out some problems such as the inequality of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) giving the five nuclear-weapon states special privileges. On the other hand, many members supported an opinion that nuclear proliferation would go on in South Asia and/or other areas unless the nuclear-weapon states greatly reduce their nuclear weapons.

After these discussions, a drafting committee consisting of seven members was set up for the final report due in July. Michael Krepon, the President of the Stimson Center, was elected chairperson of the committee. He will work with committee members from Russia, South Korea, the U.K. and others. Mr. Krepon said, "Minority opinions different from majority ones would be stated in some form. The question is, under worsening world and local situations, how meaningful we can make contents of the final report, which would be the last large-scale proposal for nuclear disarmament in the 20th century. That is a very difficult task, but I will do my best."

Mr. MATSUNAGA stated as follows: "Great political will is essential for nuclear disarmament between the U.S. and Russia. Current relations between both countries seem to hamper it. However, we should never give up;" "(Regarding the final report) it is necessary to make a strong message that nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament will progress if this is put into action. One of the great characteristic trends of international relations after the Cold War is the increasing roles and importance of NGOs and international organizations. We must produce an excellent plan such as a model."

"In the last two meetings, participants simply gave their own opinions. Based on those opinions, this meeting clarified important topics and deepened the discussions. Now, I have an impression that understandings common to us are gradually being formed," said MIZUMOTO Kazumi, assistant professor of the HPI and secretariat for the Forum. According to MIZUMOTO, "a draft is to be almost finished by the end of May. After consultations with the participants, the draft will be revised and then brought before the final meeting in July. Its contents will include: current problems in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament; issues of nuclear weapons at regional levels such as the Middle East, Northeast and South Asia; nuclear disarmament, primarily related to the U.S. and Russia; fissile material; verification; and improvement of non-proliferation regime. People have already taken responsibility for each topic."

The final meeting will be held on 23rd to 25th July, 1999 in Tokyo.

Proposal Needed to Break Disarmament Deadlock

UMEBAYASHI Hiromichi

Anti-nuclear non-governmental organizations in foreign countries do not appear to have much interest in the Tokyo Forum, nor do they expect much to come of it. This is because they have witnessed the less-than-positive attitude of the Japanese government toward nuclear disarmament. However, the Japanese government is not directly responsible for the forum. Indeed, as a member of a Japanese NGO, I believe the forum will be able to achieve a great goal.

I was encouraged by a comment AKASHI Yasushi, then president of the Hiroshima Peace Institute, made at a press conference held after the second meeting. He said, "Many participants share the sense that the NPT regime will not be maintained if nuclear disarmament continues at the current pace." I hope such a sense will appear in the forum's Final Report, along with proposals emphasizing nuclear disarmament as a premise of nuclear non-proliferation.

In October 1998 the council of the Pugwash Conferences expressed concern about the current impasse in the process of nuclear disarmament. That impasse, I presume, is a common perception throughout international society. To break the deadlock, the New Agenda Coalition--now comprising Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden--calls on declared nuclear weapons states to "demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of their respective nuclear weapons." It is a remarkable demand, and one that I hope the Tokyo Forum will discuss fully.

The Final Report will be directed toward the whole of international society, not just the Japanese government. But the forum may give special consideration to the role of Japan as the only country to have been devastated by atomic weapons, in the same way that it confers special importance on the role of nuclear weapons states.

The Final Report of the Canberra Commission was submitted by the Australian government to the U.N. General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. I hope the Tokyo Forum will urge the Japanese government to use the Final Report to bring about a breakthrough in the deadlock over nuclear disarmament. For that to happen, the forum should demonstrate its work at its third meeting in New York, which will take place, with fortuitous timing, just prior to the opening of a preparatory committee for the NPT Review Conference in 2000.

(from Vol.1, No.2, *Hiroshima Research News, HPI*)

Some Items from the recent issues of *Nuclear Weapon & Nuclear Test Monitor*

(from January 15 to April 15, 1999)

NWNTM, a bi-weekly Japanese periodical co-published by the Peace Depot and the Pacific Campaign for Disarmament and Security (PCDS), provides information on nuclear disarmament to about 700 subscribers at present. Please refer to the main articles and resources as follows.

Articles

January Issues

◆Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status was recognized by the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

◆Governor of Kochi Prefecture expressed his intention to propose the introduction of "Kobe Nuclear-Free Formula"

◆Outcome of the second meeting of the Tokyo Forum on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

◆The late Mr. Kimura's diary between April and October 1945 mainly about a-bomb investigation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki is published

February Issues

◆Debate between the Pentagon and the Congress on closedown of domestic military bases

◆1st session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) started

◆Debate on working program for nuclear disarmament at CD

◆Nimitz's visit in September 1997 was preparation for future deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier at Yokosuka, a crew member says in his log book

◆U.S. conducted 6th subcritical test

March Issues

◆5 nations playing critical roles in nuclear disarmament seek to join CD

◆Debate between Kochi Prefecture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) on nuclear-free ports

◆"Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan Act" has no legal legitimacy

◆Current situation of the Korean Peninsula and the Four Parties Talks

◆Nuclear doctrine remains thorn in NATO's side

April Issues

◆Report of the Heritage Foundation on the National Missile Defense shows danger and contradiction

◆Grass roots democracy at Vermont, the U.S., moves its upper house to adopt a resolution urging the U.S. government to negotiate with other nuclear states for nuclear abolition

◆Local authorities' agenda for peace

◆Appeals for nuclear disarmament by three high school students from Nagasaki

◆Recent public opinion polls at the U.K. show strong interests of British people in nuclear abolition

◆Core program of the Citizens' Peace Conference in The Hague is released

◆Vermont's grass roots democracy makes an advance toward nuclear abolition as it did for the abolition of slavery

Resources (in Japanese)

◆Translation of the UNGA resolution "Mongolia's International Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status"

◆Results of public opinion polls at 9

countries on nuclear disarmament

◆Daily chronology of the Operation "Desert Fox" against Iraq

◆Four major "strands" of "The Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP)"

◆Minutes of the Budget Committee of the House of Representatives related to the Guidelines and local authorities

◆Statement from the Japanese government on examples of cooperation items which the Article 9 of "Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan Act" may request

◆Essay "Framework Convention on Nuclear Abolition" by IMAI Ryukichi, a member of the Tokyo Forum

◆Resolution on non-nuclear, peaceful use of ports at Kochi by the Kochi prefectural assembly

◆Letter of inquiry related to partial amendment of Kochi Prefecture Port Facilities Administration Regulations from the governor of Kochi to MOFA

◆Reply of MOFA to the governor of Kochi

◆Cooperation items by local authorities and their contents which the new Guidelines request

◆Member list of the Special Committee on the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation

◆Translation of the provision of request for nuclear abolition for town meetings at Vermont

◆Translation of the joint resolution for nuclear abolition adopted by the Vermont upper house

◆Core program of the Citizens' Peace Conference by the HAP

◆Daily chronologies of Japanese Diet and national/ global events related to nuclear issues

◆Daily chronologies of Okinawa issues