

Toward an independent Japanese Relationship With the United States

Ito Narihiko

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by Ito Narihiko

1. The Japan-United States relationship seems abnormal. "Abnormal" because, even if it didn't begin all of a sudden, since Koizumi came to power, and especially since 9.11, a situation that can only be described as "extreme abnormality" has become the norm.

This abnormality is evident in the way that the government sent an Aegis-equipped destroyer to the Indian Ocean when pressed by an American high-ranking official to "show the flag." It is equally evident in the government's dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq when urged to get "boots on the ground." Moreover, having first promised President Bush that the SDF would remain in Iraq, it then demonstrated its loyalty to the United States by going as far as to translate the phrase "unified command" in UN Resolution 1546 relating to the system of command of the multi-national force as "integrated headquarters," and misrepresenting SDF involvement not as "participation" but rather as "co-operation."

Meanwhile, US Deputy Secretary of State Armitage, who ordered the Koizumi Cabinet to "show the flag" and get "boots on the ground," recently stated in an interview that "Article 9 of the Constitution interferes in the Japanese-American Alliance" (Bungei shunju, March, 2004). In discussions with LDP Secretary General Abe Shinzo, Armitage declared that

"the Japanese-American Alliance is going after North Korea" (Bungei shunju, July 2004), inciting calls in Japan to "revise Article 9" and "strike at North Korea."

As someone with no connection to the Japanese government, I have complete freedom to criticise the constitution of other countries, but the statements of Deputy Secretary Armitage, a senior representative of the US government, clearly represent interference in internal affairs and an infringement of sovereignty. Despite this, we've not heard a word of protest from the Koizumi Cabinet. Far from protesting, General Secretary Abe Shinzo fell in line, describing the current US-Japan relationship in terms of a "golden age." "In the past, cabinet ministers were forced to resign for even raising the issue of Article 9. If I had publicly urged the revision of Article 9 as I am now doing, I would have had to resign as Secretary General. But today we're finally free from that sort of mind control and in an environment where we can think in practical terms about what important contribution Japan might make to world peace."

But is this really so? Isn't General Secretary Abe himself still operating under the mind control of cold war ideology and under the spell of an even harsher form of mind control, that of American world rule? The phrase "to contribute to world peace" reveals just how spellbound he is.

After the Bush administration came to power, especially after 9.11, it massacred many innocent people in Afghanistan and Iraq through the use of armed force without just cause and in disregard of international law, and

violated human rights both there and abroad. To speak of "contributing to world peace" to a senior official of the Bush administration, which disturbs world peace in this way, is nothing other than to follow all-out the United States.

When I read these two men's dialogue, I was reminded of Thomas Mann's novella *Mario and the Magician*. During a summer sojourn at an Italian summer resort after the First World War around the time that Mussolini and fascism came to power in Italy, upon hearing of the tricks of a magician, Mann took his children to see the performance. There they saw a spectacle in which the magician one by one enticed members of the audience onto the stage with hypnosis and clever talk, and, cracking a riding whip, made them dance, "Now dance, dance." It was a strange and ominous sight, but the faces of the audience members who danced at the sound of the whip showed how much fun they were having. Seeing this, Mann observed that, people without independence of mind "would ultimately behave as others told them to." *Mario and the Magician* ends with a scene in which the young Mario, when mocked under hypnosis, stabs the magician. In this way, Mann described the essence of the emerging fascism.

2. I was reminded of *Mario and the Magician* when I read the Armitage-Abe dialogue because, in my imagination the image of the Bush administration, which while eloquently talking of "world peace," aims at world domination and brandishes the whip of intimidation -- "those countries that don't join the war against terrorism are our enemies" -- merges with that of the magician. In my imagination, the figures of Koizumi Jun'ichiro and Abe Shinzo, who happily follow suit, merge with those of the enthusiastically dancing audience members.

Described symbolically, this is the state of the current US-Japan relationship, but what is it like in reality? Demanding the withdrawal of

the SDF from Iraq, Democratic Party President Okada recently inquired of the Koizumi Cabinet, "Since when has the US-Japan security treaty expanded from the Far East to the Middle East?" (*Mainichi shinbun*, 19 June 2004). President Okada could also have asked, "Is the US-Japan security treaty still valid?"

In 1960, when the security treaty was revised, the Kishi Cabinet's catchphrase was "By making the revised security treaty bilateral we have made America and Japan equal." If it really was bilateral then the treaty should constrain both Japan and the United States, but, particularly under the Bush administration, what is the situation of the US-Japan relationship?

An "exchange of notes regarding the implementation of Article 6 of the treaty" was appended to the revised security treaty, by which it was agreed that "major changes in the deployment into Japan of United States armed forces, major changes in their equipment, and the use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations to be undertaken from Japan, shall be the subjects of prior consultation with the Government of Japan."

Following 9.11, US forces stationed in Japan sallied forth from Okinawa, Yokosuka and Sasebo as part of the Afghanistan and Iraq offensives, and just recently, Okinawa-based US Marines were sent to Falluja where they are said to have been involved in the massacre of some 700 residents. Were these sorts of "major changes in the deployment into Japan of United States armed forces" and "use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations to be undertaken from Japan" really "subjects of prior consultation with the Government of Japan"? I haven't heard any news report to this effect.

To begin with, as President Okada points out, in its preamble the security treaty states that it

was concluded to "maintain international peace and security in the Far East," and in Article 1 the parties undertook "to settle any international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered" and "to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other ways inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

How should the Bush administration's preemptive attack, invasion and occupation of Iraq without a United Nations resolution be viewed in light of this "undertaking"? Doesn't it contravene Article 1 of the security treaty 100 percent? If "prior consultation" was to occur, then permission to "use facilities and areas within Japan" would have to be refused as a matter of course, and if, ignoring this, the American forces were to sally forth to Iraq, the act should be understood as a practical abrogation by the Bush administration of the security treaty.

The Bush administration's breach of the security treaty relates not just to Article 1 but also to Articles 4 and 6. Setting aside a comparison of the breach and the letter of the treaty, it is clear that by the Bush administration's disregard of the security treaty and the Koizumi Cabinet's tacit approval of the Bush administration's security treaty breach, the American and Japanese governments should be seen as effectively abolishing the security treaty.

3. In this way, the United States and Japanese governments have relegated the security treaty into something of the past, but precisely because this is so, it is important to examine just what the security treaty was by going back to its roots. Here, at the very least, three issues need to be pointed out.

First, American troops did not come to Japan after the US-Japan security treaty was signed,

they were already stationed in Japan as an occupation force from the end of August 1945. Just as the occupation force lingers in Iraq today under the guise of being part of a "multinational force," in order to remain in Japan, the American army, which was part of the Allied Occupation Force, made the Yoshida Cabinet sign the US-Japan security treaty.

Second, in June 1950 when John Foster Dulles visited Japan for the first time as a special envoy on the peace problem and proposed stationing US troops and maintaining US army bases throughout Japan after the Peace Treaty to Supreme Commander for the Allied Forces MacArthur and Prime Minister Yoshida, both men rejected the proposal. However, hearing of Dulles' disappointment, the Showa emperor at once had secretary Matsudaira convey to Dulles the emperor's intention to support the Dulles proposal.

We can only speculate on the basis of records and the contemporary situation why the Showa emperor supported Dulles' proposal, but in my opinion the reasons are complex. For example, Professor Toyoshita refers to the fact that in February 1950 the Soviet Union had summoned the Emperor via the Far Eastern Commission to appear as a witness at a Khabarovsk tribunal prosecuting germ warfare "Unit 731," and considers that even if the Emperor's appearance before the Khabarovsk tribunal was not possible under the Allied Occupation, it was feared that following the withdrawal of American troops in accordance with the Peace Treaty, the Soviet Army would pursue the Emperor's war responsibility (Toyoshita Narahiko, *The Conclusion of the security treaty*, Iwanami shinsho).

While this is possible, I also want to draw attention to the following passage in the account that secretary Matsudaira penned after he verbally conveyed the Emperor's secret message to special envoy Dulles.

"His Highness considered that action which brought about the best possible outcome for both Japan and the United States and promoted friendship between the two countries might ease the purge [of convicted war criminals]. It was certain that if the purge was eased, many well-intentioned, efficient and foresighted people would officially and freely be able to work. If those sorts of people were in a position to be able to express their opinions in public, then the Japanese side could make an offer of its own accord and the recent mistaken debate regarding the bases issue would surely have been avoided."

One can only guess who the Emperor meant in referring to "many well-intentioned, efficient and foresighted people," but no doubt Kishi Nobusuke was among them. In any case, the secret message was a big opportunity, and Dulles' wish "to acquire the right to station as large a military force as we want in Japan, wherever we want for as long as we want" was realised in the US-Japan Security Treaty (Chapter 7 of my Story of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, Kage Shobo).

Third, although the security treaty, which Prime Minister Yoshida signed at the 6th United States Army Headquarters on 8 September 1951 following the signing of the Peace Treaty with Japan, was so unequal that there was little prospect of its long-term operation, the Kishi Cabinet renewed it and paved the way for its long term operation.

When in July 1955 Foreign Minister Shigeharu, on behalf of the Hatoyama Cabinet, proposed to American Ambassador Allison a revision of the security treaty that included a provision for the withdrawal of US ground forces within six years, "the real objective of the United States was indefinite stationing of US forces in Japan," and consequently the revision proposal was rejected (Haruna Mikio, *The Secret Files, CIA manoeuvring against Japan* (volume 2), Kyodo Tsushinsha).

When the Liberal Democratic Party was established resulting in the Hatoyama Cabinet in December 1955, Hatoyama, who was President of the Liberal Party became President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). In December 1956, at the LDP's first presidential election held after President Hatoyama announced his intention to resign, Ishibashi Tanzan was elected as party president, and at the end of the year the Ishibashi Cabinet was formed. During the era of these two presidents and prime ministers, the LDP was by no means dependent on the United States. The Hatoyama Cabinet sought to normalise Japan-Soviet relations and the Ishibashi Cabinet sought to normalise Sino-Japanese relations, and both aimed at an independent foreign policy.

According to University of Arizona Professor Michael Schaller, who compiled recently declassified material related to CIA covert operations and funding in Japan, if "Hatoyama was a source of disappointment" to the Eisenhower administration, then "Ishibashi inspired fearfulness." Because of this, Dulles "pushed the perception that Kishi was our only good bet left in Japan [and] when Kishi made his grand tour of the United States in June 1957, Dulles had him provided with CIA funds." Furthermore, "the CIA used American entrepreneurs and had them deliver funds to Kishi and Sato Eisaku" (*Fiftieth Year Truth, Manipulated Political History, American Secret Documents Disclose the CIA's Japan Covert Operations Fund*, This is Yomiuri (August 1995)).

According to Professor Schaller, this is how the LDP's dependence on the United States began. Formerly in China, parties that served a foreign state and profited thereby were called "comprador." In terms of this concept, the Kishi Cabinet became Japan's first "comprador" cabinet. Among successive LDP cabinets thereafter, while there were several prime ministers who attempted to revise the

"comprador" line that the Kishi Cabinet began, none succeeded in fundamentally changing it, and by the time of the Koizumi Cabinet, relations had already reached the height of abnormality.

4. When illness reaches this stage it is obvious that treatment is needed, but who should provide it and how? The manifestation of extreme abnormality can be seen throughout Japan, but of course the perception of "manifestation of extreme" differs according to locality, occupation and age. That may be the reason why criticisms of the abnormality and calls for treatment do not coalesce. Therefore, first it is necessary that several views about what is abnormal with the Japan-US relationship be shared. For example, because I live in Kanagawa prefecture, what first comes to mind in terms of "extremes of abnormality" are the military bases in Yokosuka and Atsugi.

It is already over a half century since the Occupation and the establishment of the American military bases. Moreover, every time foreign aircraft carriers enter port -- ports near the capital cities of so-called "friendly countries" considered "home ports" -- they let loose their aircraft to airports located in densely populated areas, and frighten residents with noise and the risk of crash. Far from considering the havoc caused, there is talk of making them the home ports of nuclear-powered ships in several years time. What would American citizens think if some country was to do the same under their nose in New York or Washington?

It goes without saying that this type of "extreme abnormality" has its origins in the Japan-US Security Treaty. The security treaty continues as before to threaten the lifestyle of Japanese citizens, and interferes with the normalisation of the Japan-US relationship. There can be no friendship when a foreign army lingers. Therefore, from any perspective, the normalisation of the Japan-US relationship

is first and foremost a matter of creating fair and equal friendship and solidarity, and changing the security treaty into a Japan-US Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

With which neighbouring countries and neighbouring peoples is Japan currently creating relations based on fair and equal friendship and solidarity? Unfortunately, Japan does not have relations based on trust or friendship with China or North or South Korea or South East Asian countries. This is because successive Japanese governments have been spoilt by the Japan-US Security Treaty, or depended upon it, and have not reconciled with the past, specifically the invasion, occupation and oppression carried out by the Japanese empire. And far from ameliorating this situation, on the contrary senior American and Japanese officials talk of "the Japan-US alliance pursuing North Korea" and Japan-North Korean relations are far from being normalised. In this regard, although much of the Japanese media described recently deceased former President Reagan as "the man who ended the cold war," the senior statesman of the American diplomatic scene, George Kennan, observes: "Because Reagan adopted a strict military expansion and confrontation line, he excited the hawkish factions within the Soviet Union and the cold war was prolonged." "Peaceful resolution of conflict" is the complete opposite of a policy of confrontation (William Blum, *The Myth of the Gipper -- Reagan Didn't End the Cold War*). In short, if the Japan-US relationship is not normalised, the Japan-North Korean relationship will also not reach true normalisation, I think that the normalisation of the Japan-US relationship offers the key to the normalisation of relations between Japan, its neighbouring countries and other Asian countries. How might this be advanced?

I think that the only way to start is by ordinary Japanese citizens telling their American friends that the Japan-US relationship is in an extremely abnormal state, and discussing what

must be done to create a truly trusting and friendly relationship. Among the Democratic candidates in the current American presidential elections are people like Congressman Dennis Kucinich who propose incorporating Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution into the American Constitution and changing the Department of State into a Department of Peace. The normalisation of Japan-US relations is also a matter of every citizen of the US and Japan consciously rebuilding their own country's

rock-bottom politics.

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