It is High Time to Wake Up : Japanese Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century

IT IS HIGH TIME TO WAKE UP: JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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The end of the Cold War, which had enveloped the globe for the latter half of the twentieth century, and the onset of globalization have brought to the people of the twenty-first century a mixture of hope, change, and disorder. While the superpower rivalry is a thing of the past, vacuums of power have brought a growing recognition of the importance of avoiding disorder not only in terms of national security, but also from the standpoint of human security that is defined as freedom from fear and freedom from want in the framework of pursuing economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security[1] At the same time, leaders have come to realize that it will be impossible to create peace so long as sound measures are not adopted to deal with the workings of the various levels of domestic politics, economic, social, and cultural among them. Furthermore, notions of security seem wholly inadequate if they ignore problems that are not contained by borders, such as the environment and human rights.

Even the Japan-U.S. alliance, always an unbalanced structure and perhaps best seen as a holdover of the security arrangements between developed countries during the Cold War era, has increasingly been influenced by the dynamics of each country's economy and social change and, hence, by the

framework of its domestic politics. For example, in Okinawa[2] the regular incidents and accidents as well as the environmental pollution created by the U. S. military and their personnel can no longer be overlooked, as often occurred previously. In January 2001 the Okinawa Prefecture Assembly unanimously passed a resolution, the first of its kind, requesting the prevention of relapses of incidents by U.S. military personnel and a reduction in the number of U. S. Marines[3]. This resolution is a symbol that the people of Okinawa have developed increased sensitivities of human rights and the environment and in this respect are perhaps becoming more in tune with international developments at the dawn of the new millennium.

Pressure from the Twenty-first Century

The close of the twentieth century saw the Cold War in Europe come to an end with the collapse of the socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the denouement to this drama is now being played out on the Korean Peninsula. The North South Summit, which even as it was being proposed was fraught with difficulties, has been realized and with it, one hopes, the Cold War structures in Asia that have now spanned fifty years are beginning to be dissolved. The Korean Peninsula is starting to shift from a military standoff to peaceful coexistence. Along with such encouraging developments, however, have come serious conflicts over human rights and ethnic and religious strife in regions where nation-states are fragile. As one surveys this new situation, the limits to problem solving through military means become quite evident. Certainly, a large-scale forward deployment strategy of the Cold War variety, such as that found in the U.S. presence on Okinawa, has proven increasingly difficult to legiti-

mize in terms of the national security of any country.

In the United States the beginning of the twenty-first century has also been accompanied by the birth of a new political administration under President George W. Bush. Signs that this new administration intends to change American foreign policy toward Japan are already visible. Examples are evident in a non-partisan report on policy vis-a-vis Japan entitled "The United States and Japan: Advancing Towards a Mature Partnership."[4] Written under the supervision of Richard L. Armitage, the newly-appointed Deputy Secretary of State in the Bush administration (who was, incidentally, also the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security under President Reagan), the report recommends that the prohibition on Japan's right to collective self-defense be removed. Japanese Government has interpreted the meaning of the article nine of Constitution that Japan is not allow to join a collective self-defense but could use self-defense right in case of homeland attack. This interpretation was a reflection that Japanese don't want to be involved armed conflicts outside Japanese territory. It was a lesson for Japanese from the Asia-Pacific War, 1930-1945. If Japan changes the interpretation to exercise the collective self-defense, Japanese Troops will be sent abroad to join military campaign in order to support U.S. forces. According to the report, such a move would allow for a maturing of the Japan-U.S. security relationship, modeled on the special alliance between the United States and Britain[5].

Proposed New U.S. Strategy Toward Japan

The main points of the report mentioned above are as follows.

1) Criticisms of Japan as irresponsible are exacerbated by the Japa-

nese practice of deferring to the United States in all military matters. This attitude was evident in the negotiations for the reversion of Okinawa in 1972 and in the process for reaching an agreement on the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station within Okinawa. To the extent that security matters are largely left to the United States, the Japanese people will never willingly accept the existence of U.S. military bases in Japan.

2) The use of collective self-defense and a maturing of the Japan-U.S. alliance using the U.S.-British relationship as a model ought to be promoted. Part of this includes discussions on the allocation of defense responsibilities between Japan and the United States.

3) This "re-redefinition" of the Japan-U.S. security relationship is due to recent developments on the Korean Peninsula and ought to be made part of a long-term Pacific Basin strategy.

4) It would be worthwhile to ease the burden borne by the Okinawans from a political, though not necessarily a military, perspective. This is designed to win support from the Okinawan people for U.S. military bases and is premised on the argument that the bases continue to be necessary and thus efforts to facilitate coexistence are required.

These points are consistent with those advanced by former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Kurt M. Campbell in his article "Energizing the U.S.-Japan Security Partnership,"[6] which included commentary on the full implementation of the new Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines to be operational in contingency or humanitarian crises, the joint use of facilities with Japanese Self Defense Forces (JSDF), the re-examination of agreements related to the roles and missions of respective armed forces, and the regulation of training exercises.

The broader context in which these points ought to be considered involves the effort by the United States over the past decade or so to design a new diplomatic and military strategy for the post-Cold War era. After replacing the administration of President George Bush (Sr.), one that had remained locked in a Cold War mindset in many respects, the Clinton Administration took the new framework of the international political economy into careful consideration as it attempted to create its post-Cold War vision. While the Clinton Administration promoted globalization and revived the American economy, its foreign policy lacked consistency and was occasionally even indecisive. It was characterized by the separation of economic and security issues and the tight specification of conditions for action. The former succeeded in creating a framework in which domestic political concerns might be given priority. Unfortunately, it failed to facilitate the integration of American interests. The latter clarified American diplomatic action domestically and internationally at the same time that it made flexible responses difficult.

The New Bush Administration

The shape of the foreign policy from the new Bush Administration has been outlined by newly appointed National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice in an article she wrote entitled "Promoting the National Interest."[7] It has also been illuminated in statements made by the new Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, before the Senate Armed Service Committee, and by the new Secretary of State, Colin Powell, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The first characteristic is a return to political realism and a definition of foreign policy goals based on the pursuit of national interests.

The second characteristic is alliance diplomacy marked by a system of divided responsibilities. Bush's Missile defense plan is a new strategy that makes the United States the guarantor of global peace and stability as well as a "world policeman" against International terrorism. In many respects this signifies a return to a "normal" superpower mentality, such as that oriented toward balance of power thinking that dominated American policymaking in the years between World War II and the start of the Cold War. With an eye toward tradition, the foreign policy of the Republican Party emphasizes stability rather than action and caution rather than participation. The new security team will thus likely break with Wilsonian ideals that were based on moral principles and on the benefits of promoting international accord. Under the Bush Administration the United States is attempting to shift back to using power as the centerpiece of its realist approach. One might, then, expect that top U.S. diplomats would assert national interests in their dealings with allies and that the Administration would face the urgent and bedevilling issue of arriving at a well-defined set of priorities that commands widespread respect, at least within the key foreign policy makers of the Administration. It should also be expected that diplomatic transactions of many varieties would be coordinated within strict calculations of the costs and benefits to the United States.

This approach is likely to bring about controversial and competing responses within Japan. In the case of the negotiation for Okinawa reversion in 1972 the Nixon Administration requested economic contributions from Japan under the Nixon Doctrine. Likewise, the new Bush government will probably request more substantial contributions on security issues (such as the recognition of the right of collective self-defense). The return of a realist

foreign policy undoubtedly will bring about changes in the new administration's policy towards Japan. Bilateral rather than multilateral alliances will be stressed, and allies will be asked to bear the costs of preserving American values and sharing the benefits of peace, prosperity, and freedom.

It is difficult to imagine that Japan, which is frequently viewed by American policymakers as an immature ally, will accept these requests docilely. It is also highly unlikely that these requests will promote serious discussions between the countries in which the tradeoffs requested are shown to be clearly in Japan's interests, let alone that such talks will convince the Japanese people of this. This is largely due to the fact that the Cold War provided fertile ground for the development of a Japanese foreign policy which did not accept military responsibilities. For this reason, the realist diplomacy of the new administration is likely to force Japan to re-examine its diplomacy. In this regard it would be useful if the Japanese government eliminated its de facto restrictions on the debate of security issues and, instead, promoted lively discussions on a variety of levels.

With this in mind, it seems clear that changes in policy for the U.S. military bases in Okinawa, maintained under the name of Japan-U.S. security, hinge on the question of whether or not Japan will be able to overcome the inertia that has spanned fifty years of post-war diplomacy. Stated in a different way, it depends upon how Japan, in the twenty-first century, copes with the negative legacy of the Yoshida Doctrine in 1950s that single-mindedly stressed catching up to the United States economically.

The triangular Okinawa Problem – view from Japanese politics

What precisely is the Okinawa problem as seen from the perspective of the Japanese government? Essentially, the Okinawan problem has been a problem of crisis diplomacy. It has been a problem that has arisen whenever difficulties occurred in the provision of the bases that Japan, under the Japan-U.S. Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty, agreed to make available for the United States armed forces. The core of Tokyo's policy for Okinawa has consisted of long-term and stable base guarantees for the Americans. Indirectly, the problem is one of transferring a massive volume of money to Okinawa, which has a disproportionate share of the U.S. forces stationed in Japan, in order to alleviate the dissatisfaction of residents toward the bases and to compensate them for economic opportunities they might have had were the bases not there. The money sent Okinawa's way is not, to be sure, officially called compensation or reparation. The government speaks of it as part of its economic promotion policy. The amount of funds that have been provided over the years since Okinawa's reversion in 1972 now exceeds ¥6 trillion, and yet Okinawa is still a long way from being able to stand on its own feet economically. Ironically, while saying that it wants Okinawa to be independent of the central government's largess, Tokyo shows no signs of reflecting on why that has not happened to date. In fact, this is precisely because Tokyo has traditionally viewed its economic promotion policy as the price it has to pay to lighten Okinawa's heavy burden of U.S. bases. Not to be overlooked in this regard are the moves within Okinawa toward protection of vested interests rather than autonomy. The interplay of the desire to be rid of the bases and the wish for money from Tokyo has complicated efforts to reach any forward-thinking decision on Okinawa's future in the post-Cold

War era.

The Japanese government has two counterparts in dealing with the Okinawa problem. One, of course, is Okinawa itself, its government and people. These negotiations are a part of domestic politics. The other is the United States government. Involved here is the Japan-U.S. relationship, which is the centerpiece of the country's foreign policy and rests on the foundation of the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty. Although the two sides are on different levels, the Japanese government must negotiate with each simultaneously. Thus, an important feature of the Okinawa problem is that it is a domestic affair and, at the same time, a diplomatic issue between Tokyo and Washington. Seen from Naha, Okinawa's capital, the same feature is perceived. There are relations with the central government to consider, on the one hand, and with the U.S. Government and military, on the other. By the same token, Washington perceives it must deal with both Tokyo and Okinawa to keep its bases and operations extant. Governor Keiichi Inamine who defeat Ota, shares the same feeling as Ota that U.S. military presence on Okinawa should be reduced and demands Japanese Government to negotiate the Japan-U. S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that gives U. S. military personnel and their family a privileged status. One might also usefully observe that, although this is a triangular relationship, the legs of the triangle differ. Not being a sovereign state, Okinawa cannot stand on an equal footing with either Tokyo or Washington. Vertical relations prevail for the most part between Tokyo and Naha, and this creates an inverted triangle with Tokyo and Washington on top and Naha at the bottom. Furthermore, Naha's ties with Washington tend to be much more remote than its ties with Tokyo. Only on rare occasions do the length of the triangle's legs and the

tension between the three angles become close to equal. However, the pattern has changed somewhat. In April 1997, when then Okinawan Prefecture Governor Ota Masahide visited Washington for the first time since a highly inflammatory 1995 incident regarding the rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three U.S. servicemen, Okinawa's ties with the U.S. Government became closer than they ever had been before. This, one might say, gave the triangle something of an isosceles form. And since then, the Naha-Washington leg has remained shorter than before

It is also interesting to note that, just when this isosceles triangle began to form, the Okinawa problem surfaced in domestic politics and in Japan-U.S. affairs. The developments at the time were tending to maximize Naha's voice in its negotiations with Tokyo and Washington and made the relationship more like those of an equilateral triangle. This trend was to increase Okinawa's bargaining power in the triangle. Tokyo responded with steps to lessen direct contacts between Okinawa and the United States and to restore the old vertical ties. After all, these ties offered the best conditions for assuring the stable provision of the required bases. And, Tokyo's economic-promotion policy was what kept the vertical links intact. The promotion measures involved are indispensable for the Okinawan economy, which has become so addicted to central government spending that to cut off the money flows would induce acute withdrawal pains. So long as this structure of dependence is preserved, the attitudes of the people of Okinawa will remain heavily under the influence of Tokyo's policy measures, however outspoken Okinawan activists might become about the U.S. bases. From this perspective, I would suggest that, while each of the three plans unveiled for Okinawan promotion and development since the reversion has referred to

the goal of a self-reliant economy, it is doubtful whether the drafters of any of the plans gave the matter any serious additional thought. To this day, the Okinawan Economy has been highly dependent to Japanese economic assistance.

Generally, Tokyo's economic promotion policy has had three aspects. The first was a trend toward increasing financial support, as symbolized by the regular additions made to funds for development expenditures in Okinawa. The second was the promise that more rewards of this sort could be expected. An example was Tokyo's readiness to implement new promotional measures in exchange for the relocation of the U.S. Marine Futenma Air Station within Okinawa Island. And the third was the threat of taking back some of the rewards, a threat that has been used effectively whenever the central government wants the prefecture authorities to alter their policies. The central government resorted to this option in February 1998 to rein in the administration of Governor Ota Masahide. In this context the issue of Futenma relocation is one example of the lopsided triangular relationship described above. An indication of this is that SACO the Special Action Committee established under the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee, the highest ministral-level channel, to recommend an U.S. military base consolidation plan on Okinawa decided that a new site should be found within Okinawa, without much attention to other conceivable alternatives.

The View from Washington

What, then, is the Okinawa problem as seen by the U.S. government? To rephrase this, what problems might the U.S. armed forces perceive in a situation where they are virtually guaranteed freedom of use of the forward-

deployment bases they have set up on Okinawa, which lies in a strategically important position, and where they also receive generous host-nation support for base expenditures in what is known as Japan's Omoiyari-Yosan or "compassion budget" (the U.S. side refers to this as "Host Nation Support"). In a nutshell, they want the U.S. troops on Okinawa and the mainland to be seen as welcome guests and good neighbors. This is the view of an article[89] written by Major General Wallace C. Gregson (USMC) and Lieutenant Colonel Robin "Sak" Sakoda (USA), two staff who worked at the office of the Secretary of Defense under the Clinton Administration.

Now that the Cold War is over, the overseas presence of U.S. military can be maintained only if the forces do not have an adverse cultural and political impact. If the residents in the vicinity of the overseas U.S. bases do not appreciate and support the forces there, the United States will have to rethink its forward-deployment policy, which has been a fundamental part of its military strategy ever since World War II. This, the article suggests, means that there is a need to create bases that can be more readily accepted by local residents. The concept of a sea-based facility, which is recommended by SACO, with its inherently small footprint ashore, would meet this need. Of course, any military facility must satisfy the operational requirements expected of it, but the authors argue that political, technical, and environmental issues must also be taken into account. Be this as it may, the Japanese government will be the actor that pays between $2.4 billion and $4.9 billion[10] for the design and construction of the new facility, that implements environmental countermeasures, and that seeks to keep local residents content. The problems faced by the U.S. military, the authors seem to feel, will be settled if Japan supplies a base that meets the military needs of the Pen-

tagon while it uses its economic promotion policy to secure local support.

The SACO agreement states plainly that the Futenma facility's new site must "fully maintain the capabilities and readiness of U.S. forces in Japan while addressing security and force protection requirements." Since the agreement, Washington has consistently demanded that the new base satisfy its military needs. That is, matters of scale, place, and associated facilities all must be determined from the viewpoint of sustaining the U.S. military's strategic capabilities.

The Japan-U.S. Mutual Cooperation and Security Treaty obliges Japan to make bases available for American troops, and thus far Tokyo has never said anything about how the bases should be used. Indeed, it does not even have official opportunities for doing so. Except in the event of a military contingency on the Korean Peninsula (under a secret understanding in 1960), prior consultation between the Japanese and U.S. governments is required in only three cases. One is if the United States wants to launch an attack directly from its bases in Japan, except in a situation for the defense of Japan. Another is if the United States wants to introduce nuclear weapons to Japan. Under a secret understanding both governments interpret "introduction" to mean the emplacement or storage of nuclear weapons on Japanese soil, not their transit through Japan or their presence on ships making port calls. And the third is if the United States wants to deploy forces into Japan. The prior consultation agreement is the only direct opportunity Japan has for influencing the actions of the U.S. armed forces; in all other cases, it has no explicit power to restrict them.

A "Black Ship" for Japanese Diplomacy

If the period from the Nye Initiative in February 1995 to the reaching of the SACO Agreement in December is taken as one cycle of the Japan-U.S. Okinawa problem, all the recent events can be viewed as indications that a new cycle has begun: the bipartisan report, the start of a new administration in the United States, the incident of indecency against a high school girl, the problem created when Lieutenant General E. B. Hailstone (USMC), Okinawa Area Coordinator, slandered the Governor of Okinawa and members of the Prefecture and National Governments by referring to them as "all nuts and a bunch of wimps," and the passage of a resolution by the Okinawa Prefecture Assembly demanding a reduction in the number of the U. S. Marines in Okinawa at present. It is my thesis that the potential explosiveness of the Okinawa problem could be the "Black Ship" that will push the Japanese government into a maturing of the Japan-U.S. security alliance.

The SACO agreement, including the relocation of the Futenma Marine Air Station within Okinawa Island, will not solve the problem of U.S. military bases in Okinawa. This agreement between Japan and the United States will instead have the effect only of delaying the development of unavoidable crises. One might say, it does little more than turn back the timer on a bomb that has already been set to explode in the midst of Japan-U.S. relations.

The reoccurrence of an unfortunate incident such as that in September 1995 might not only lead to an even more destructive blow against the U. S. military presence in Okinawa, but, on a higher level, Japan-U.S. relations might well lapse into crisis. In order to avoid this, it is necessary to reconsider thoroughly the U.S. military presence in Okinawa, which has been con-

stant now for more than half a century.

A "Twist" in the Japan-U.S. Security Relations concerning Okinawa

Douglas MacArthur, who directed the occupation of Japan during its most critical period, once stated that maintaining military bases in Okinawa was an absolutely essential component of efforts to demilitarize Japan. After having brought the Occupation to an end with the condition contained in the San Francisco Peace Treaty that Okinawa would remain under U.S. control, Japan successfully returned to the international community in the post-war period. In the latter half of 1950 the U.S. withdrew ground combat troops from the Japanese mainland. However, the 3rd Marine Division, a part of the ground forces stationed in Japan, was transferred to the newly constructed Camp Schwab in the northern part of Okinawa Island. In 1972 the Japanese and Okinawans' request resulted in the return of certain administrative rights over Okinawa, but also expanded the U.S. military's free use of its bases throughout Japan including Okinawa. Rather than transforming the U.S. military presence, the new arrangement principally simply returned to landowners or transferred to the JSDF fifteen percent of the bases. Between 1996 and 1997, both the Japanese and American governments concluded the "return" of the Futenma Air Station responding to Okinawa's demand, and at the same time, agreed to revise the Defense Guidelines so that Japan approved the use of civilian harbors and airports by the American military. Both governments viewed the Okinawa problem as a part of the reassessment and expansion of the policies of Japan-U.S. Alliance that led to the creation of the new guidelines. The return of the Futenma is conditioned on the building a new alternative facility that meets the military requirements

within Okinawa Island. In this way, the relations between Okinawa and the Japanese mainland were soon "twisted" by the existence of the U.S. military bases, and that problem was exacerbated in the ensuing decades.

Within a sovereign country, even if there are some regional differences due to special characteristics, if placing a specific region under an excessive burden is the only way to achieve an important policy such as national security, then, as a matter of course, that country is likely to have its arrangement with that region constantly questioned. In this regard the people of Okinawa have been calling for a change from the present situation where Okinawa is continuing to get the "negative assets" of the Japan-U.S. relations, to one where it gets "positive assets." At the same time, we must recognize that, taking advantage of the call from Okinawa asking for this change, the U. S. consistently has made demands on the Japanese government throughout the post-war era.

Even in the perception of security issues, there have been decisive differences between Okinawa and the mainland in terms of the details of the formation of the military bases, and the scale and character of U. S. forces. This is linked to either having or not having experienced the actual situation, and has brought about an "intellectual twist" between the mainland and Okinawa over security issues and the Okinawa problem.

The characteristics of the U.S. military bases on Okinawa and the mainland fundamentally differ. With the exception of the U. S. Air Force Fighter Wing at Misawa (Aomori Prefecture) and the Marine Attack Squadrons at Iwakuni (Yamaguchi Prefecture), the mainland bases are used for administration, communications, transportation, logistic support, repairs, and recreation. This is true of Yokota Air Force Base, Tokyo (Headquarters of USFJ),

the Yokosuka Naval Base, Kanagawa Prefecture (home port of the Flagship of the 7th Fleet and Aircraft Carrier Group), the Sasebo Naval Base, Nagasaki Prefecture (home port of the Amphibious Ready Group), and Camp Zama, Kanagawa Prefecture (the Army's logistic depot).

In contrast, on the long, narrow island of Okinawa are Kadena Air Force Base, which is the keystone base of the U. S. Pacific Air Force, Camp Butler and six other Marine bases where 15,000 marines are stationed, and an Army station where the Special Forces group is deployed. Because these forces are next to 1.3 million residences, accidents and incidents are bound to occur. In addition, the Americans hold the perception that the military bases on Okinawa are like having "too many eggs in one basket" (K. M. Campbell). Thus, despite its evident benefits, it is not clear that American military strategists view the Okinawan setup as ideal.

In comparison to the American sense of discomfort with regard to the situation on Okinawa, Japanese politicians and the Japanese government have tended to be most insensitive. For example, the Japanese foreign minister did say his regrets on the 1995 rape incident after President Clinton apologized on his marines' "heinous crime. Perhaps they find it difficult to change their perception that, so long as they follow the decisions of the U.S. Government, they need not have any purpose of their own in terms of diplomatic and national security policies. The consciousness of the Japanese Government and its stance as a "dependent variable" in negotiations with the United States remains unchanged. Japan, which uses the money it provides to the United States in the form of a large Omoiyari-Yosan and uses the considerable resources it provides Okinawa in the form of economic promotion policy as a substitute for an independent security policy, continues to do

nothing new in the way of strategic foreign policy formulation.

Along with the increase in U.S pressure on the Japanese Government to promote the maturation of bilateral relations, it is quite possible that a more flexible force structure in North East Asia including Okinawa, will bring about such measures as reducing the number of Marines, consolidating bases throughout Japan, a reassessment of the training and other fundamental functions of the bases. If negotiations are conducted as a result of U.S. initiatives, it is likely that the Japanese economic and financial burden will simply increase. Such an outcome might produce a "solution" to the Okinawa problem that is devoid of any real substance beyond a few minor cuts in the personnel stationed here. Plainly, such an outcome would not translate into any meaningful changes to a situation in which residents are exposed to injuries inflicted by crimes involving military personnel and to potential accidents associated with the operations and exercises of the U.S. military.

General James L. Jones, Commandant of the U. S. Marine Corps, made the comment that "part of the training of the Marines in Okinawa will be transferred to Guam" (Stars and Stripes, August 31, 2000). But while the rationale is to reduce the burden on Okinawa, it is possible that the travel expenses of the troops will be borne by the Japanese government. In the past in operations involving the transfer of live ammunition drills from northern Okinawa to numerous practice areas on the mainland, the Japanese Government has paid for the travel costs of the troops. It is also conceivable that the Japanese Government will be asked to bear the cost of moving facilities, bases, and practice areas to places such as Guam. With all this in mind, it seems abundantly clear that Japan might be better served by taking the initiative in bringing demands from Okinawa into negotiations with the

United States.

Withdraw the U.S. Marines from Okinawa

The most effective solution to the Okinawa Base Problem would be to withdraw the U.S. Marines from the island, though perhaps not the other troops and personnel. The Marines make up 63% of the troops and utilize 75.5% of the area of the bases. The mission of the Marines on Okinawa is part of U.S. forward deployment strategy to defeat aggression far from U.S. homeland. They are not train to play a role in defense of Japan. Because many of the crimes committed by U.S. servicemen and injury from exercises have been linked to the Marines, their withdrawal would be the most effective way to create a feeling among the residents that the situation has significantly improved.

Advances in what has been called a revolution in military affairs have included matters ranging from the use of military reconnaissance satellites to the ability to move a unit of troops, lightly equipped, from the continental U.S. to far-flung sites, speedily and effectively. In this regard, strategies have also been developed to hone the ability to develop military operations offshore in any region where conflicts are anticipated so that supplies of missiles, firepower, ammunition, fuel, and water can be readily secured. Thus, even if marines have to be reassigned east of Guam, the use of new strategies for combat troops makes it possible to move military personnel into an area of conflict whenever signs of trouble appear. In this regard, the Japan-U.S. negotiations over the removal of nuclear weapons during the Okinawa Reversion provide a good reference point. The U.S. military insisted to the very end that nuclear weapons had to be stored on the island of Okinawa or U.S.

and Japanese national security would be threatened. However, the nuclear weapons stored in Okinawa were becoming outdated and, ultimately, President Nixon made a political decision to remove them in hopes of improving Japan-U.S. relations.

The U.S. Marines Corps, traditionally through lobbying, have strongly influenced the U.S. Senate and Congress, and it can be anticipated that any proposal to reduce their numbers on Okinawa would be strongly resisted. Certainly, there is also the possibility that even after the unification of the Korean Peninsula, the Marines will remain as the last U.S. ground combat troops in the region in order to compensate for the lack of more imposing military forces elsewhere. However, if the Japanese government made a political argument to the United States that removing the Marines to some site east of Guam would lead to a strengthening of future bilateral relations, that might at least lead to the formation of a plan to reduce the size of the Marine forces in Okinawa on a large scale.

The Deadlocked plan for relocation of the Futenma Air Station

At the time of the September 1995 rape, the forced leasing of land for use by the U.S. bases had surfaced as an issue in Japanese domestic politics. The linking of these two problems suddenly created an explosive situation that no one had anticipated. Bipartisan demands to reduce the excessive burden of the bases rapidly grew in intensity. In addition, a demonstration, held in October 1995 and attended by over 85,000 people, was the largest since the Reversion in 1972. As the protest activity of the Okinawan residents grew daily, the U.S. government became deeply concerned. If this crisis were not handled appropriately, the Japan-U.S. security relationship it-

self was in danger of collapse. For the Japanese and U.S. governments, redefining the Japan-U.S. security arrangement and dealing with the Okinawa problem were two sides of the same coin.

In 1996 the Japanese and American governments concluded an agreement for the relocation of the Futenma Marine Air Station with the condition that new facility within Island be provided and that all the functions of the airfield be maintained. The agreement for the relocation of Futenma was an "urgent response measure to a crisis," so to speak. In truth, it was a "crisis decision." This was clearly evident from the fact that the "return" was announced publicly even at a stage when the site to which the airfield would be transferred had not been formally decided. In fact, by the end of 1999 the mayor of Nago City, Kishimoto Tateo, and the Prefecture Governor, Inamine Keiichi, reached an agreement, with a few conditions attached, to construct a new facility in Nago City. The conditions for accepting the base included such things as its joint use by the military and by commercial airlines, a fifteen-year limit on the military's use of the base, various environmental considerations, and a regional economic development strategy. Since last year, preparation work on a bureaucratic level for the transfer has steadily been progressing. However, since the U.S. Government strongly opposes the fifteen-year limit that the Prefecture and Nago City have demanded, it cannot be said that a complete solution to the problem has yet been found.

From the military perspective, the establishment of the fifteen-year limit on the use of the base before it has been constructed is an unrealistic idea. Although fully aware of this, the Japanese government decided at the cabinet meeting to put the time-limit issue on the table for discussion with the United States anyway because this was the easiest way to deal with the

crisis at hand. This demonstrates that even after the arrival of a conservative Prefecture government in Okinawa, the Japanese government continues to think along the lines of an "urgent response measure to a crisis."

Unfortunately, however, this approach strains the problem, making the threads even more tightly tangled. The opinions of the local people in Nago are split down the middle. Even among people in groups supporting the plan, conflicts of interest over the construction have arisen. Furthermore, the fifteen-year limit issue has become hypothetical, making it difficult to see the entire problem clearly.

The fact that incidents caused by Marines have continued unabated since the 1995 rape led the Okinawa Prefecture Assembly to pass its unanimous resolution demanding the reduction in the number of the Marines on the island. These changes should promote a reassessment of the Futenma Air Station relocation plan. If the relocation to Nago were rammed through, the situation could rapidly become extremely unpredictable, and a chain of crises and new political conflicts of a very serious nature might ensue. From an Okinawan point of view, promoting the relocation of facilities within the prefecture at a time when the reduction in Marines is being discussed, creates the possibility that it will become a source of problems in the future. Thus, both the Japanese and American governments should review the SACO agreement and look for an alternative base reduction plan, a SACO II process. In other words, crisis decision-making should be converted to non-crisis decision making in order to accommodate local demands.

Towards a Credible Japanese Diplomacy

The Okinawa problem is inherently a part of a larger problem concern-

ing Japanese foreign policy. We must overcome obstacles in asking for a change in Japanese diplomacy, which has long evaded its own security responsibilities. Should we have expectations for politicians who do not consider foreign policy or security issues as translating into votes? Surely, we cannot expect much from bureaucrats who entrust themselves to following precedent. Neither can we expect much from the commentators or academics in Tokyo who are not much troubled by the Okinawa bases and who in any event tend to fall back on the timeworn national security theories long on their desks.

Without regard to potential future changes in Japanese foreign policy that might or might not come to pass, the Okinawa problem is serious since it might catch fire at any moment. The incidents, accidents, and problems that could spark such a blaze continues to occur. For example, if a situation were to occur in which a large number of lives or property in Okinawa were threatened in an instant or in which the U.S. troops who have been the assailants become the assaulted, the domestic political ramifications in each country would most certainly be considerable. The reaction to this situation could be so strong, that it could spread beyond the control of either government. It would not only cause serious disorder in Okinawan society, but might even prove to be fatally damaging to Japan-U.S. relations. Okinawa, with this close proximity to the base problem, is likely to be at the forefront of key national security issues for Japan. It is thus essential to the national security of Japan that the viewpoint of Okinawans is taken into account when problems are clarified.

This year is the fiftieth since the signing of the Security Treaty in 1951. In this time, except for the 1960 Security Revision, national security issues

have not been a point of great concern for most Japanese. In spite of the arrival of an American Government that promises to develop a post-Cold War, realist diplomacy, has there been any forward-thinking, all-encompassing calculation in Japan of what Japanese national interests are? Is the Japan-U.S. alliance the only valid measure to ensure the national security of Japan? Are there no other choices? Has there been any promotion of a dialogue on this critically important matter?

This leads to the conclusion that it is now necessary to move toward an independent Japanese diplomacy.

First, it is necessary to have Japan awakened from its continuous diplomatic slumber to establish international credibility. If Japan cannot free itself from deadlock and a foreign policy subordinate to the U.S., then other nations will simply not find it credible. For too long Japan has been oblivious to the Asian "history problem," and as such has been isolated. It must now face this problem head on and make maximum efforts to restore friendly ties in the Asian region. A backward-looking Japan may even fail to gain respect from an American ally that is shifting to a realist foreign policy. Consequently, a credible Japanese foreign policy must be supported by a logic of its own that has the consent of its own people.

To continue further, it is time to set about experimenting in order to create a multi-layered international system in Asia. As it is an experiment, there will naturally be trial and error. Of course, there must be caution so as not to bring about a result that no one in Asia wants. However, in this experimental period the goal would not be to change the international circumstances by force or by fiat. Instead, it would be to utilize better the changes in the international system that have already occurred and that continue to

occur. For example, the changes on the Korean Peninsula are linked to efforts toward the creation of a stable long-term peace in northern East Asia. What is required above all is flexibility of thought. Even in terms of the future of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements, it would be very useful to examine closely the new order in this region. The absolutism of the past Japan-U.S. alliance not only has made Japanese foreign policy initiatives impossible, but it may become an obstacle to the peace and stability of the region. It is clear that we must transform the Japan-U.S. alliance to support initiatives to construct a multilateral cooperative security system in East Asia, to encourage a conflict-resolution culture to take root, to lessen markedly the burden borne by the Okinawans, and to maintain the Japan-U.S. friendship.

[NOTE]

1 UNDEP, *Human Development Report 1994* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) pp. 22-33.

2 Josef Kreiner, ed., *Ryukyu in World Histroy,* (Bonn: Bier'sche Verlagsanstalt, 2001).

3 *Okinawa Times,* January 19, 2001.

4 INSS Special Report, *The United State and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership,* (Washington, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, October 11, 2000) pp. 1-7.

5 Ibid, p. 2.

6 Kurt M. Campbell, "Energizing the U.S.-Japan Security Partnership," *The Washington Quarterly,* Autumn 2000, pp. 125-134.

7 Condoleeza Rice, "Promoting the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs,*

January/February 2000, pp. 45-62.

8 Wallace C. Gregson and Robin Sakoda, "Overseas Presence: Maintaining the Tip of the Spear" *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol.83, No.4, April 1999, pp. 52-53.

9 United State General Accounting Office, *Overseas Presence: Issues Involved in Reducing the Impact of the U.S. Military Presence on Okinawa*, (GAO/NSIAD 98-66), March 1998, p. 37.

10 U.S. Department of Defense, *United States for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, February 1995.