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Alliance of Subordination – Half Century of Japan-U.S. Security Treaty
Illusion of ‘equality’

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This is the second part of the booklet *Juzoku no Domei – Nichibei Anpo no 50 nen wo kenshousuru* (Alliance of Subordination – 50 years of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Examined).

The “Alliance of Subordination” series originally appeared in Akahata from January 3 to September 4, 2010. Japan Press Service published the English translation on its website. After Akahata concluded the series, Shin’nihon Shuppan Co. Ltd. in November 2010 published the series as a booklet with major additions and changes from the original.

Alliance of Subordination – Half Century of Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Illusion of ‘equality’

1. U.S. ambition since conclusion of former security treaty

An “equal partnership” – This has become the keyword of the Japan-U.S. relationship this year marking the 50th anniversary of the revised Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, which was signed in Washington, D.C. on January 19, 1960. The Japanese government led by the Democratic Party of Japan calls for establishment of a “close and equal Japan-U.S. alliance.” U.S. President Barack Obama also said during his visit to Japan in November 2010, “[T]he United States and Japan are equal partners. We have been and we will continue to be.”

This is not the first time that the “equality” of the two nations has been questioned. The revision of the 1951 Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was initially proposed in order to erase “the Japanese feeling of inequality” (“United States Overseas Military Bases, Report to the President” by Frank C. Nash, December 1957). This demonstrates the unequalness of the security treaty between Japan and the United States.

Originally, the security treaty was an unequal treaty between the victorious United States and the defeated Japan that unconditionally surrendered. This is the root of Japan’s subordinate relation with the U.S. In contrast, Germany, another defeated nation, under the multilateral treaty framework of the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization, has not been subordinated to the extent that the United States wanted it to be.

Taking a look at how the security treaty was established, this article will show the notion of “equality” to be false.

Longing for same treatment as other allies

After the end of World War II, the United States did not necessarily plan to use Japan as its military stronghold at first.

For a period of time, the U.S. intended to support the enforcement of Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan to create and maintain an unarmed and neutral Japan, and Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of Allied Forces, also indicated an intention to withdraw the occupation forces. But with the rise of anti-communist containment policy as was shown by President Harry Truman’s speech (announcing the Truman Doctrine) in March 1947, the United States began to change its Japan policy. In addition to the peace treaty (San Francisco Treaty) promising Japan’s “independence”, the U.S. decided to conclude with Japan a security treaty which would enable its forces to continue to stay in Japan with a continuation of a de facto U.S. military occupation of Japan.

This amounted to going against both the Japanese Constitution and the Potsdam Declaration which called for Japan’s disarmament and foreign military withdrawal from Japan after the establishment of democracy in the nation.

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, in its report to the National Security Council dated June 9, 1949 stated that Japan is “of high strategic importance to United States security interests” because of its “geographic location” and “manpower and industrial potentials.” The report pointed out Japan’s geographic location “with respect to the trade routes of the North Pacific, the exits and entrances of the Sea of Japan, the East China and Yellow Seas, and, to a lesser degree, the ports of Asia north of the Shanghai-Woosung area, inclusive.” It also emphasized that under Soviet control Japan could “be used as a base for aggressive action directly against United States bases in the Western Pacific.” The report proposed that “to provide against future contingencies, the peace treaty should not be such as to preclude bilateral negotiations for base rights in the Japanese main islands.”

Documents of the Japanese Foreign Ministry show that for the most part the Japanese side thought that continuation of the stationing of U.S. forces in Japan would be unavoidable because of the “communist threat.” Of course, it was difficult for Japan after its surrender to raise objections against the United States.

Japanese governments officials, however, felt concern that the Japanese people could see it as an unjust continuation of the occupation.

A secret memo written in June 1950 by Nishimura Kumao, the then head of the Foreign Ministry's Treaties Bureau, was declassified in June, 2007. Stating, "without local approval, a military base may not be able to fulfill its objective," the memo stressed the following points: the number of bases must be clearly designated; the length of time for the U.S. to maintain bases in Japan must be stated; the U.S. must pay for the maintenance of its bases; and the two nations must clearly specify U.S. servicemen's privileges.

Treaties the U.S. concluded with NATO states and the Philippines limited the areas in the host countries' territories where the U.S. could place its military bases and gave the host countries jurisdiction over crimes committed by U.S. military personnel. The declassified memo by Nishimura implies Japan's wish that it wanted to be treated in the same way as other U.S. allies, if it accepted the continued presence of U.S. forces in Japan.

However, the U.S. side wanted to "maintain armed forces in Japan, wherever, for so long, and to such extent as it deems necessary" (Memorandum for the President by Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, September 7, 1950). The U.S. government already had the intention to keep its bases in Japan indefinitely.

Security Treaty signed at noncommissioned officers' club

The original Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was signed on September 8, 1951, the same day the Treaty of Peace with Japan (San Francisco Treaty) was signed.

Even though the security treaty would have a significant impact on the issue of Japan's sovereignty, the date and time for the signing were not given to Japanese government officials until the last minute. A little past 11 p.m. on September 7, they were finally told that the signing ceremony would take place at 5 p.m. the next day at the Presidio of San Francisco. The venue for the signing was a room in the noncommissioned officers club of the Sixth U.S. Army.

"If a different city or at least a different date for the signing were set to make it look like that Japan and the U.S. had negotiations on an equal footing before the signing, it would be much easier for Japanese citizens to accept (the security treaty)," muttered Tomabechi Gizo, the ambassador plenipotentiary of the peace treaty, at the signing of the security treaty ("Diplomatic History of Japan – San Francisco Peace Treaty").

The signatories on the U.S. side were the same as the ones for the peace treaty, Secretary of State Acheson and three other officials. However, Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru was the only Japanese signatory, and Tomabechi and other Japanese officials were not present. “Only Prime Minister Yoshida signed for Japan, as the other Japanese plenipotentiaries did not know of its contents” (U.S. State Department’s Intelligence Report, January 22, 1957).

Whole nation can be used for bases

The former Security Treaty states in Article 1, “Japan grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right, upon the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace and of this Treaty, to dispose United States land, air, and sea forces in and about Japan,” giving the U.S. the right to install as many bases as it wanted to anywhere in Japan. The same article also states that the U.S. forces would be used to “put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan.”

Continued use of bases from the occupation period should also be called into question. The San Francisco Peace Treaty require that occupation forces be withdrawn from Japan no later than 90 days after the coming into force of the treaty unless other arrangements were made. However, it was agreed in notes exchanged between Minister of State Okazaki Katsuo and Special Representative of the President Dean Rusk on February 28, 1952 that the U.S. would be allowed to continue using its bases in Japan without a need for new arrangements to be made.

At that time, the Japanese government did not agree to the U.S. continued use of 50 military bases in Japan. Today, some of them, including the U.S. Naval Sasebo Base in Nagasaki Prefecture and the Hiro Ammunition Depot in Hiroshima Prefecture are still in use by the U.S. forces.

Special privileges

The Administrative Agreement, giving the U.S. forces in Japan special privileges, added an even more humiliating status to Japan than did the security treaty itself.

It required Japan to pay for “procurement by the United States of transportation and other requisite services and supplies in Japan” as well as for compensation in landowners. The U.S. forces were exempted from paying customs and other taxes as well as charges for the use of civilian airports, seaports, and expressways. Moreover, Article 17 gave the U.S. “the right to exercise within Japan exclusive jurisdiction over all offenses which may be committed in Japan by members of the United States armed forces.” It gave the U.S. the same extraterritorial privileges as it had during the occupation period.

These exclusive rights remain in the current Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (Agreement under Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America, Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan). The Administrative Agreement was the origin of the extraterritorial rights given to the U.S. forces in Japan even now. U.S. forces in Germany, which was also defeated in the war, do not have the same extraterritorial rights as in Japan.

Fearing public criticism, the Japanese government did not make the administrative agreement public until February 1952, three months after the ratification of the security treaty. It did not even hold Diet discussions on the issue. After making the information public, it faced strong criticism both inside and outside the Diet.

One day, a young parliamentarian visited the Treaties Bureau director's office of the Foreign Ministry. The bureau director explained to him the process of negotiations they went through for the conclusion of the Administrative Arrangement.

"I see, so this arrangement is in essence to colonialize Japan," muttered the parliamentarian and left the room. "The Treaties Bureau director's shoulders drooped", wrote Nishimura Kumao, the bureau director himself ("Japanese Diplomatic Records, reports related to conclusion of peace treaty VIII"). This parliamentarian referred to was Nakasone Yasuhiro, who later became prime minister.

2. Request to revise the Security Treaty flatly refused

Not only the general public, but many people in the ruling circles were aware that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was an unequal treaty. Hatoyama Ichiro, grandfather of former Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, actually announced his intention to turn the Japan-U.S. relation into an "equal" relationship while he was prime minister from 1954 to 1955.

The Hatoyama Ichiro administration's intent was to ask the U.S. government to adopt "equal" Japan-U.S. relations, by exercising the right to collective defense and assuming the obligation to defend U.S. territory. In doing so, he sought to promote the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Japan. This policy stance went totally against the Constitutional principle of peace.

Collective self-defense

The memorandum by the U.S. State Department on July 28, 1955 contained a Japanese government proposal for revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs [Walter Robertson] to the Secretary of State, July 28, 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957 vol.7, pp.78-80).

In the proposal, the Japanese government requested that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty be changed to a mutual defense treaty like the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty or the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS treaty). In addition, the following items were proposed: 1) the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from Japan within six years; 2) the date of withdrawal of U.S. air and naval forces; 3) U.S. bases and forces in Japan to be used for mutual defense only (collective defense), and 4) no further Japanese contribution to the support of U.S. forces in Japan.

In order to revise the security treaty into a “security treaty without stationing U.S. forces in Japan,” Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru on August 30, 1955 met with U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in Washington D.C.

Their heated exchange was recorded by the U.S. State Department (Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington, August 30, 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. 23, pp.96-104).

Dulles said that Japan has not yet developed the capacity to defend itself. The time for revising the treaty had not yet come.

Shigemitsu said that when the Security Treaty was concluded in September 1951, Japan had no defense force but that now it had a defense force.

The U.S. Secretary of State asked whether Japan could come to the defense of the United States if Guam were attacked.

The Japanese Foreign Minister replied that Japan could do so even under the present constitution.

The Secretary said that he had not previously realized that Japan thought it could do this.

Shigemitsu emphasized that Japan wanted to be an equal partner like other countries having mutual security treaties with the United States.

The request made by Shigemitsu was turned down. In the joint statement released after their meeting, Shigemitsu was forced to agree that the U.S. ground forces in

Japan would be gradually withdrawn and that Japan would strengthen its military power with a full-scale buildup of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. Based on this agreement, the Japanese government in May, 1957 adopted the Basic Policy on National Defense for “building up rational defense capabilities in steps.” Under Article 3 of the Security Treaty which was revised in 1960, Japan was obliged to increase its military capacity. Since then, the U.S. government has repeatedly demanded increased Japanese military build-up based on this agreement.

Now, Japan’s annual military expenditure has increased to five trillion yen, with the role and tasks of the SDF much broader in scope and its capacities greatly enhanced. However, the United States still maintains its bases in Japan. History clearly demonstrates that it is a self deception to believe that the United States would remove its bases from Japan if Japan embarked on revising its Constitution and exercised the right of collective self-defense.

Relocation site for U.S. forces is Okinawa

Despite the agreement to gradually withdraw U.S. ground forces from Japan, the Marine Corps units in Japan were not reassigned to the United States but are now stationed in Okinawa, which had been separated from Japan and was controlled by the United States under the San Francisco Peace Treaty until 1972.

In August, 1953, the 3rd Marine Division was deployed to Camp Gifu and Camp Fuji-McNair as a mobile attack force in preparation for the Korean War. Since 1955, as “a result of a recent agreement with Japan which called for the removal of American ground forces”, the 3rd Marine Division's headquarters and other Marine units were relocated to Okinawa (A Brief History of the 9th Marines, 1967). With this, in Okinawa, the U.S forces used “bayonets and bulldozers” to forcefully seize residents’ lands to expand their bases in Okinawa.

This was the end result of the Hatoyama Ichiro administration’s attempt to achieve an “equal” partnership under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

3. Resentment toward U.S. arrogance

Since Foreign Minister Shigemitsu’s request for a “security treaty without the stationing of U.S. forces in Japan” was rejected by the U.S. State Department, the Japanese government stopped asking for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Japan. In contrast, the Japanese people began struggling against the arrogance of the U.S. treating Japan as a colonial possession. This struggle of opposition spread

throughout the country, and threatened the viability of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

Requested by the U.S. forces, the Japanese government began to seize people's lands throughout Japan in order to construct U.S. military facilities.

Between 1953 and 1955, the United States demanded 478 sites for the military, and the Japanese government actually provided 129 areas (Procurement Agency Director-General Fukushima Shintaro, House of Councilors Budget Committee meeting, July 21, 1955).

In protest against these forced expropriations, people launched opposition campaigns across Japan such as Uchinada Struggle in which people stood up against the plan to construct a U.S. live-fire testing site on the coast of Uchinada Town in Ishikawa Prefecture, Myogisan Mountain Struggle in Gunma Prefecture in opposition to land expropriation to build a U.S. military training field, and Sunagawa Struggle in Tokyo which was an action in opposition to the expansion plan of the U.S. Tachikawa base in Tokyo associated with the introduction of U.S. fighter jets to the base.

Okinawa and anti-nuclear weapons movement

On January 30, 1957, at Camp Weir, the Somagahara maneuver area in Gunma Prefecture (currently the Ground SDF Somagahara maneuver area), a Japanese housewife was collecting spent rifle cartridges in order to sell them as scrap metal. Specialist 3d Class William S. Girard gestured to the housewife to come closer and then shot her to death.

The U.S. Army first claimed its primary right to exercise jurisdiction under the Japan-U.S. Administrative Agreement on the grounds that Girard had been on "official duty." However, the clear state of inequality drew strong criticism in Japan. The United States in the end was forced by public outrage to turn the case over to Japan with a secret agreement that the Japanese court "mitigate the sentence to the maximum practicable extent."

In Okinawa, struggles were launched in opposition to the U.S. forces using "bayonets and bulldozers" to forcibly seize Okinawans' lands. In 1956, Senaga Kamejiro of the Okinawa People's Party (1959-1972) was elected Naha City mayor.

On March 1, 1954, the Japanese tuna fishing boat Daigo Fukuryūmaru (Lucky Dragon Number Five) and its crewmembers were exposed to radioactive fallout from the U.S. H-Bomb test explosion at Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific. This

incident prompted demands for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In 1955, the inaugural World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima. This event gave further momentum to peace and anti-nuclear weapons movements worldwide. The introduction of nuclear weapons by U.S. vessels or aircraft into Japan came under severe public scrutiny.

4. ‘Stationing of U.S. forces in Japan is unconstitutional’ – ‘Date Ruling’ is still alive

Sunagawa Struggle

There is a district court ruling which was overturned in the Japanese and U.S. government secret talks. This was the Tokyo District Court decision on March 30, 1959 that the stationing of the U.S. forces in Japan is unconstitutional. This ruling, known as the “Date Ruling” after the presiding judge Date Akio, has again been brought to public attention.

It was given 10 months before the new Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was concluded in January 1960. Shocked by this ruling, U.S. Ambassador to Japan Douglas MacArthur II pressed the Japanese judicial authorities to take the district court ruling directly to the Supreme Court and get it scrapped without delay. In April 2008, international affairs researcher Niihara Shoji uncovered in U.S. declassified documents an American embassy secret telegram detailing the process of U.S. intervention.

Encouraged by Niihara’s disclosure, a former defendant in the case Sakata Shigeru, 80, who is a former Kawasaki City Assembly member of the Japanese Communist Party, and others in April 2009 formed an association to “utilize the ‘Date Ruling’.” They filed an Access to Government Information Act request for documents on the “Sunagawa Incident” and obtained the Foreign Ministry’s record of talks between Foreign Minister Fujiyama and Ambassador MacArthur II dated April 1, 1959 and this was widely covered by the mainstream media.

It has been 55 years since the start of the Sunagawa Struggle in opposition to the expansion of the U.S. Tachikawa base located in Sunagawa Town (presently incorporated into Tachikawa City), which continued for 15 years. Tachikawa City in October 2010 began to exhibit documents and other materials relating to the struggle.

On July 8 1957, people waged a major protest rally. In September of the same year, 23 workers and students were arrested for trespassing onto the base during

their protest actions, and seven of them were indicted on charge of violating the Special Criminal Act, a domestic law protecting the status of the U.S. forces in Japan under the former Security Treaty.

The Tokyo District Court made an objection to extraordinary U.S. military privileges. It ruled that the stationing of the U.S. forces in Japan is unconstitutional because they are "military forces" prohibited by Article 9 of the Constitution and that the penal provisions of the Special Criminal Act which are much more severe than the Minor Offense Act is invalid.

“The ‘Date Ruling’ was a landmark ruling because it pointed out the danger of the Security Treaty a year before its revision,” pointed out 75-year-old lawyer Enomoto Nobuyuki. After taking part in the base expansion protests as a student, he became a lawyer and joined the defense team.

The Supreme Court in December 1959 reversed the Date Ruling and remanded the case to the district court, saying that the Security Treaty is of a political nature and therefore does not lend itself to judicial review. However, the Supreme Court could not directly claim that the Security Treaty is constitutional. “Therefore, the ‘Date Ruling’ is still in place,” said Enomoto.

Behind the ‘Date Ruling’

Underlying the Date Ruling were the protracted struggles against the expansion of U.S. bases throughout Japan at that time. Sakata stressed, “Because of the nationwide protests, the judge was enabled to muster up the courage to make the decision that he did.” Enomoto said, “Since the court ruled that the Security Treaty was deemed to be unconstitutional and harmful to the country, many people courageously carried out protest actions against the revised treaty in 1960.” Thus the popular struggles and the court ruling supported each other.

The U.S. ended up, cancelling the planned expansion of the Tachikawa base in December 1968. In November 1977, the base was returned to Japan. The former base site is now the Showa Kinen Park, annually visited and enjoyed by 3.8 million people.

The United States once refused to revise the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, but nationwide movements against U.S. military bases and nuclear weapons gradually called attention to the undiminished public anger regarding the inequality in Japan-U.S. relations.

On January 7, 1957, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Walter S. Robertson, who was in charge of Far Eastern affairs, sent a memorandum to the Secretary of State

to point out the possibility that Japan may turn into a neutral state. Robertson in the memo proposed that the U.S. place “security arrangements with Japan on a durable basis of mutuality and self-interest rather than the present one-sided arrangement.”

Subsequently, the two governments began to take steps towards a “revision” of the Security Treaty.

5. Kishi’s concept of revision

“At that time, I realized the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty should be placed on an equal footing.”

This is how Kishi Nobusuke described what he felt when he saw the U.S. rejection of Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru’s call in August 1955 for the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Japan (Record of remarks by Kishi Nobusuke, Hara Yoshihisa).

However, what he said as prime minister at a meeting with U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower on June 19, 1957 was totally different.

Kishi said, “Mr. Shigemitsu asked that the Security Treaty be revised into an ‘equal’ agreement because he believed that Japan was in a ‘subjugated’ position under the Treaty. I do not share that feeling” (“Memorandum of a Conversation, White House, Washington, June 19, 1957”, FRUS, 1955-1957: volume XXIII, part 1. Japan, p.371).

To create ‘equal partnership mood’

Then, what did Kishi have in mind in revising the security treaty?

In a telegram dated April 13, 1957 sent by the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to the Department of State, Kishi stated the following aspiration to Ambassador MacArthur:

1) reaffirmation of the purpose of the bilateral treaty in which it would be emphasized that the United States did not intend to utilize its armed forces stationed in Japan and other Far Eastern areas unless overt aggression occurred in those areas; 2) amendment of the provision for expiration of the treaty so that it would be in effect for 5 years from date of revision and terminable thereafter upon 1 year’s notice by either party; 3) a continuing buildup of Japanese defense forces

accompanied by withdrawal of U.S. forces to the maximum possible extent, including a complete pullout of ground forces and the release of some U.S. bases to Japan.

In the meeting with Eisenhower in June 1957, Kishi said, “[U]nder the treaty, the employment of your forces in Japan is subject to the unilateral determination of the United States; we would like to have this subject to consultation with the Japanese side.” This proposal bore fruit in the Japan-U.S. joint communiqué issued on June 21, 1957: “It was agreed to establish an intergovernmental committee to study problems arising in relation to the Security Treaty including consultation, whenever practicable, regarding the disposition and employment in Japan by the United States of its forces.”

This is the starting point of the “prior consultation” agreement between the two countries in regard to the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan or using U.S. forces in Japan for purposes other than the original intent of the treaty.

In short, Kishi intended to produce “equality” by setting certain rules such as the “prior consultation” framework and the one-year notification for termination of the treaty, while allowing the continued stationing of U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel in Japan, excluding ground combat troops.

However, this was not enough for the U.S. side. In negotiations for the revision of the Security Treaty which started in October 1958, the U.S. side pushed forward the logic of giving priority to the military to counter the Japanese political-principle-first position in regard to equality and reciprocity.

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff made the following recommendations: (1) Treaty should provide right for US to station its forces in Japan; (2) Administrative Agreement should remain unchanged; (3) Joint consultation should take place only during emergency not only with respect to operational use of bases but also with regard to deployment of US forces and equipment into Japan; (4) Treaty should provide the right for US use of its forces in Japan in the event of Communist aggression directed against another free Asian nation wherein Japan’s safety is threatened (Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Japan, September 30, 1958, FRUS).

These recommendations were all realized under the current security treaty structure with the use of secret agreement.

6. Deceptive nature of ‘prior consultation’

Prior consultation is at the very heart of the revision of the treaty, said Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada Hisanari to U.S. Ambassador to Japan Douglas MacArthur II on December 13, 1959, just before the revised Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was signed.

Why is it “the very heart”? Yamada stated, “If the public in Japan believed that the U.S. would, without Japanese consent, introduce nuclear weapons into Japan or use our forces and bases here to initiate combat operations in hostilities in which the United States but not Japan is engaged in, there would be immediate defections within the LDP, the collapse of the Kishi government, and the treaty would be defeated in the Diet on this issue” (Telegram from the Embassy in Japan to the Department of State, December 14, 1959, FRUS).

The “prior consultation” formula which was proposed by Prime Minister Kishi was the most important tool needed to give the illusion that the amendment to the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty turned the Japan-U.S. relation into an equal relation.

In fact, the subjects for prior consultation included “major changes in the deployment of the U.S. forces in Japan, major changes in their equipment, and the use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations” other than for the defense of Japan. This was confirmed in the notes exchanged between Prime Minister Kishi and U.S. Secretary of State Christian A. Herter.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry booklet entitled, “New Japan-U.S. Mutual Cooperation--The Security Treaty”, states that the “prior consultation” is to prevent the U.S. from bringing nuclear weapons into Japan without notice as well as respond to the Japanese people’s anxiety about the possibility that Japan would involve itself in wars against its national interest.

This was the government propaganda line used to deceive the public.

U.S. refuses to accept Japan’s veto power

As for its policy to bring nuclear weapons into Japan, the U.S. government stated, “We must be free to introduce atomic weapons into the countries where our forces are stationed and reasonably certain that no special ban will be placed on their use in the event of hostilities” (United States Overseas Military Bases, Report to the President by Frank Nash, December, 1957).

In the Report of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (dated September 10, 1958) which gave the conditions to hold negotiations for a revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the U.S. forces stated that introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan “remains a highly desirable military objective toward which to work.”

The U.S. forces, however, considered that “the ‘atom bomb’ in any context still remains in Japan a matter of the utmost emotional intensity” and that “it would be altogether unrealistic to expect to obtain Japanese agreement for the introduction of nuclear components into Japan.” Therefore, the U.S. forces aimed “to seek to maintain the status quo with respect to weapons in Japan.”

U.S. military ships and aircraft carrying nuclear weapons have repeatedly entered Japan ever since the 1950s. For the U.S. forces, maintaining the condition in which they can bring nuclear weapons freely into Japan without Japan’s consent was absolutely required when revising the Japan-U.S. military treaty.

Regarding the use of U.S. bases in Japan for combat operations, the U.S. forces also stuck to the position that “there must be no obligation, implied or explicit, to grant Japan a veto power over the employment of U.S. forces” (report of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). The free use of U.S. military bases in Japan was set as an absolute requirement.

7. Secret pacts ensure U.S. privileges

‘Record of Discussion’

As mentioned above, the U.S. absolute condition -- introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan and free use of bases in Japan -- might very well have directly led to the collapse of the Kishi government and the rejection of the treaty in the Diet.

Therefore, both governments chose to make a secret agreement. This was made in the “Record of Discussion” which JCP Chair Fuwa Tetsuzo exposed to the public in 2000. Foreign Minister Fujiyama Aiichiro and U.S. Ambassador MacArthur II made the agreement on June 20, 1959. They initialed the “Record of Discussion”, together with other secret agreements, on January 6, 1960.

TREATY OF MUTUAL COOPERATION AND SECURITY
RECORD OF DISCUSSION
TOKYO, JUNE --- 1959

1. Reference is made to the draft exchange of notes concerning the implementation of Article VI of the Treaty, the operative part of which reads as follows:

"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 other than those conducted under Article V of the said Treaty, shall be the subjects of prior consultation with the Government of Japan."

2. The notes were drawn up with the following points being taken into consideration and understood:

A. "Major changes in their equipment" is understood to mean the introduction into Japan of nuclear weapons, including intermediate and long-range missiles as well as the construction of bases for such weapons, and will not, for example, mean the introduction of non-nuclear weapons including short-range missiles without nuclear components.

B. "Military combat operations other than those conducted under Article V" is understood to mean military combat operations that may be initiated from Japan against areas outside Japan.

C. "Prior consultation" will not be interpreted as affecting present procedures regarding the deployment of United States armed forces and their equipment into Japan and those for the entry of United States military aircraft and the entry into Japanese waters and ports by United States naval vessels, except in the case of major changes in the deployment into Japan of United States armed forces.

D. Nothing in the exchange of notes will be construed as requiring "prior consultation" on the transfer of units of United States armed forces and their equipment from Japan.

Why was this agreement named a “Record of Discussion”? The intention here was “to permit the Japanese Government to deny the existence of any secret agreements” (Comparison of U.S. Base Rights in Japan and the Ryukyu Islands, a report submitted by the security staff of the U.S. State and Defense Departments in 1966).

In regard to the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan, the “Records of Discussion” stipulates that the introduction into Japan of nuclear weapons or their deployment and stockpiling in Japan shall be subjects of “prior consultation”. However, it goes on to state, “‘Prior consultation’ will not be interpreted as affecting present procedures regarding the deployment of United States armed forces and their equipment into Japan and those for the entry of United States military aircraft and the entry into Japanese waters and ports by United States naval vessels”. In short, the U.S. was to continue without prior consultation “the practice of U.S. naval vessels carrying nuclear weapons calling on Japanese ports” that had been established under the old Security Treaty.

The exchange of notes between Kishi and Herter defines “the use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations to be undertaken from Japan” as subjects of “prior consultation”, but the “Record of Discussion” stipulates that nothing will be “construed as requiring prior consultation on the transfer of units of United States armed forces and their equipment from Japan.” Thus, the United States created a loophole to freely use military facilities in Japan as sortie strongholds for military combat operations abroad without requiring Japan’s consent using the pretense of “transfer of units”.

To sum up, while the interpretation of the exchange of notes between Kishi and Herter was used as a propaganda tool to publicize the need for “prior consultation” regarding the introduction of nuclear weapons and other major changes in equipment and use of bases in Japan for combat military operations abroad, the agreement on the actual practice of “prior consultation” was kept secret.

True intention of ‘revision’

A secret agreement was also made in relation to military combat operations on the Korean Peninsula.

The former Japan-U.S. Security Treaty required Japan to support the United Nations forces in Korea. The revised treaty ostensibly stipulates that the use of U.S. military bases in Japan should be based on the new treaty (exchange of letters on official documents exchanged between Yoshida Shigeru and Dean Acheson, January 19, 1960).

In reality, however, Fujiyama and MacArthur II secretly reached an agreement that “in the event of an emergency resulting from an attack against the United Nations forces in Korea, facilities and areas in Japan may be used for such military combat operations as need be undertaken immediately by the United States armed forces in Japan” (Memorandum agreed upon between Fujiyama and MacArthur II, June 23, 1960).

On the one hand, the Kishi administration orchestrated “equality” between Japan and the United States and on the other it secretly ensured special privileges for the U.S. military, including the right to freely engage in combat operations abroad as during the U.S. occupation of Japan, thus establishing the basic structure of Japan’s subordination to the U.S. This is what the “revision” of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty was really all about.

8. Bases without defense obligation

Nishimura Kumao, former head of the Foreign Ministry Treaties Bureau who had negotiated with the U.S. in concluding the original 1951 Security Treaty, described the new Security Treaty as a treaty in which Japan provides military facilities to the U.S. while the U.S. provides its forces to defend Japan (On Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, 1959).

Although the former Security Treaty gave the U.S. forces the right to bases in Japan, the U.S. obligation to defend Japan was unclear in the provisions. The revised Security Treaty clearly assigns the U.S. a role of defending Japan and therefore requires Japan to provide military facilities for the U.S. forces. This is how Nishimura characterized the new treaty. Present Japanese and U.S. officials concerned also share this common understanding.

Wallace C. Gregson, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, who is engaged in the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, said on February 1, 2009 in Tokyo that the United States is obliged to defend Japan under Article 5 of the Security Treaty. He added that Japan, under Article 6, provides the U.S. with facilities and base rights so the U.S. can fulfill its commitment.

However, does this view really illustrate the true characteristic of the treaty?

At a secret meeting held in the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations from January 26 to 29, 1970, in the so-called “Symington Subcommittee”, U.S. Under Secretary of State Alexis Johnson testified:

“The bases and facilities provided by Japan under the provisions of the treaty are especially important to our ability to maintain our commitments to the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China.”

“[O]ur rear area logistic depots, the communications sites, the large and well-equipped naval facilities and airfields, hospitals, and so on, have also been important factors in our ability to support and maintain our forces in Southeast Asia.”

He went on to say:

“The primary responsibility now for the defense of Japan, direct conventional defense of Japan, is entirely Japanese. We have no forces, either ground or air, in Japan that are directly related to direct conventional defense of Japan. This is entirely now a Japanese responsibility.”

As stated in Johnson’s testimony, with the exception of nuclear forces, the U.S. conventional forces stationed in Japan have no responsibility to defend Japan. They are positioned in Japan to supplement in the U.S. Southeast Asia strategy of forward projection.

In concluding the new Security Treaty, the two governments agreed that they would hold “prior consultation” if the U.S. forces in Japan carry out combat operations which are not related to the defense of Japan. However, such prior consultation has never been held. Johnson said that there is an “understanding” between the two governments. This “understanding” is the secret agreement, “Record of Discussion” of June 20, 1959.

The Security Treaty in Article 5 requires the two countries to fight together in case of an “armed attack against either party in the territories under the administration of Japan.” Article 6 states that the U.S. forces are stationed in Japan “for the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East.” These are the key points in the treaty.

However, the “Far East” is not a clearly defined geographical term. While the Japanese government explained that the “Far East” covers the northern part of the Philippines, Japan, and its surrounding areas, it allowed the U.S. to send its troops from bases in Japan to the Vietnam War from the mid-1960s.

After the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Command History of U.S. Pacific Forces admitted:

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“The primary mission of U.S. forces based in Japan since the end of World War II had been to contain the Soviet Union.”

“[T]he end of the cold war ... did not decrease the geostrategic importance of the Japan-based forces.”

“U.S. forces in Japan ... were available to support contingency operations elsewhere in the USPACOM.”

“Their ability to respond quickly to regional crises ... would remain a primary factor in meeting challenges to U.S. national security objectives and honoring U.S. alliances.”

Today, U.S. forces based in Japan are being dispatched worldwide, including to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Without even making an attempt to verify if such military operations meet the parameters of the Treaty, the Japanese government continues to unquestioningly fulfill its obligations to provide bases for the U.S. forces. Can this be characterized as “mutual cooperation” based on equality?