

Japan Press Weekly

JAPAN PRESS
SERVICE

SENDAGAYA 4-25-6, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO 151-0051, JAPAN
Telephone: +81-3-3423-2381, Fax: +81-3-3423-2383
E-mail: INFO@japan-press.co.jp
URL: <http://www.japan-press.co.jp>

ISSN
0287-7112

Special Issue December 2010

Public Assembly Commemorating JCP 88th Anniversary

An era of political exploration — Let's talk about the vision for the future with the JCP Program

Lessons from the House of Councillors election p. 2

Shii Kazuo
JCP Executive Committee Chair
Tokyo, August 3, 2010

* * * * *

What the future of the Japan-U.S. relationship should be in the 21st century p. 21

Shii Kazuo
JCP Executive Committee Chair
Washington D.C., May 7, 2010

Japanese Communist Party 88th anniversary commemorative speech

An era of political exploration — Let's talk about the vision for the future with the JCP Program

Lessons from the House of Councillors election

Shii Kazuo

JCP Executive Committee Chair

August 3, 2010

Good evening to everyone in this meeting. And good evening to all the people viewing on the Internet. Thank you for attending this meeting.

First of all, I express heartfelt thanks to voters who supported the JCP, the JCP supporters' association members, and all JCP members for their efforts in the House of Councillors election.

Tonight, I want to touch on what the JCP should learn from the Upper House election struggle, with the title of my talk, "An era of political exploration — Let's talk about vision for the future perspective with the JCP Program."

On JCP outcome in Upper House election

In the House of Councillors election, the JCP seats fell to three from the pre-election number of four, and the number of votes polled for the JCP declined to 3.56 million (6.1%) from the 4.4 million (7.5%) three years ago. In the Tokyo constituency, we failed to get Koike Akira reelected, despite his strenuous efforts and support by people in Tokyo and many other places.

As the chair of the party, I apologize for the inadequacy of linking many people's efforts, braving the heat or rain, with the resultant votes and decrease in Diet seats for the JCP.

After the election, we received many comments, including criticisms from people inside and outside the JCP by phone, e-mail, fax, and letter, some of which were critical and other which were encouraging. The number of correspondence now exceeds 3,000, a record with the JCP.

Having read all of them, we realized many areas in which we can improve our activities, including furthering policy debate, election activities, and party build-up activities.

I am grateful to all who expressed their opinions. Here, I express my determination to incorporate these opinions into our assessment, so that the JCP,

without fail, can make a comeback in the simultaneous local elections and the next national election.

Did our argument meet people's political quest for answers?

Many people have wondered why the JCP suffered a setback in the Upper House election. Our review is still under way. Today, I want to tell you about the points in our policy debates which we must reflect upon.

Election in which voters were exploring possibilities

Japan in recent years has experienced a turbulent political situation. In the 2007 Upper House election, the people said "No" to the Liberal Democratic-Komei politics. In the 2009 general election, they judged that the LDP-Komei government should be put out of power.

The JCP interprets these changes in public mood as part of a larger process in which the people are exploring different possibilities to replace the LDP politics. It means that the people have wanted the long-lasting LDP politics to end but have yet to find out what should take its place, and their exploration is continuing.

Given this background, what role should the JCP take? In the JCP 25th Congress in January this year, we confirmed that the JCP should encourage the people's exploration for a new direction in politics as a basic stance of the JCP in understanding the current situation. In a national meeting held on April 13 to achieve an advance in the Upper House election, we understood the situation to be the general public refusing to go back to the LDP form of politics but also being disappointed by the Democratic Party of Japan. We confirmed the need to present to the people our platform for political change as the public sense of apathy due to a lack of alternatives became stronger.

We fought the Upper House election campaign while the public was looking for answers. Did our platform respond to their quest for a new direction in politics? Did it break up their feeling of there being "no-way out" and give them prospects for real change?

On our weak points in discussing consumption tax

When I look back on the election campaign, I found weak points in regard to our discussion of responding to the people's quest. Our argument was weak, though we should have carried out to the last our determination to respond to people's quest for answers and tell them about our policies to improve future prospects. The weakness was particularly apparent in our argument on the consumption tax after Prime Minister Kan Naoto declared a 10 percent consumption tax on June 17.

Many e-mails sent to us immediately after the election revealed that to me. Let me introduce an example:

“Here’s my opinion about causes in losing seats related to proposals for future activity. As regards the consumption tax issue, the JCP argument in a sense was useful in exposing the DPJ attempt to increase consumption tax rate to offset the corporate tax cut, and this argument was accepted by voters to a certain extent. However, a clear message about what the JCP will do instead did not reach the voters. The public ended up with no more than a simplistic impression that the JCP is anti-consumption tax.”

Similar critiques came one after another, and I had to think back and agree that that was a problem.

Our argument on the consumption tax had two aspects.

Our contention that the consumption tax rate increase is aimed to fund tax breaks for large corporations drove the pro-tax increase forces into a corner and influenced public opinion, thus leading to the people’s judgment of “No” to a consumption tax rate increase. This contributed to upsetting the plan to enact a bill to increase the consumption tax rate within the next fiscal year. We can and should have confidence in our position regarding this point.

This position, however, did not result in our advance in the election. This is mainly because we were weak in giving concrete policy proposals as to how the JCP would change the direction of politics to the people who do not want a higher consumption tax, but think that there may be something more to consider in regard to financial reconstruction.

Many people are exploring not only short-term matters concerning living standards but a political course for Japan to take in the future. They are calling for alternative proposals regarding how the Japanese economy should be reinvigorated and how Japan’s deficit-ridden national finance situation should be dealt with. However, our argument, particularly after June 17, began to place emphasis on just opposing the consumption tax rate increase. Although we have policy proposals and prospects for the future to respond to the people’s quest for alternatives, they receded into the background in our policy debate. The result was that many people got the simplistic “opposition” message from the JCP.

Through last year’s change in government, people have realized that their votes can change the course of politics, and this experience helped their political awareness to increase. They are disappointed at the DPJ government, but did not want a return to LDP politics. They want a further political change by the power of their votes, and are looking for a party responsive to their demands. However, what they got from the JCP was a simplistic message of dissent. The JCP opposition to the consumption tax increase was a just argument, but it fell short of impressing many voters who were seeking ways for their votes to change politics further. This is a cause why our argument on the consumption tax issue did not effect our advance.

Key is to deliver constructive messages to people on all issues

Then, how should our approach have been? So long as the plan to raise the consumption tax rate surfaced as a big issue, the JCP has of course the responsibility to actively object to the plan. However, constructive proposals

should have accompanied the objection. We should strive to get people's understanding of our basic economic policy that calls for a shift from supporting large corporations to supporting livelihoods, and that this is the way to breaking through the crisis affecting national finance. Moreover, such a message should have been stated in easy-to-understand language. In retrospect, our campaign should have included constructive proposals about the Japanese economy and the national finance, beyond the limitation of the consumption tax issue.

Our policy proposals can reach and attract the public only when it contains constructive messages befitting a revolutionary party. Criticisms must include proposals to solve a problem. We should firmly accept this as the lesson to be learned from the Upper House election in order to improve our activities in the future.

We will continue to listen closely to opinions from inside and outside the party and make the necessary reassessment to improve all aspects — policy debates, electioneering, and party building — toward the Second Plenum of the Central Committee scheduled for September.

Lessons must be applied in our immediate struggles against the consumption tax rate increase and proportional representation seat cuts

The struggle opposing the consumption tax increase will become even more intense from now on. Though the DPJ government is discouraged by the people's severe judgment, it is sticking to the plan to hold ruling-opposition party consultations for the consumption tax increase. The LDP is independently working out details of the consumption tax increase plan, and is urging the DPJ not to be discouraged by the electoral judgment. We resolve to apply the lessons from the Upper House election to the future struggle by informing the people of our constructive proposals about the Japanese economy and national finance, with a view to forming a national majority in opposition to the consumption tax rate increase. We will continue to exert our utmost efforts.

Prime Minister Kan in the Diet on August 2 said that discussions regarding a cut in the number of parliamentarians should be promoted to see it implemented before the year ends. The DPJ Manifesto makes it clear that the target for cuts is the proportional representation component of the House of Representatives. Proportional representation is the only democratic component reflecting public will in the Lower House electoral system. To cut this component is to cut out public opinion. Moreover, it is the worst partisan calculation to use this undemocratic maneuver to prepare the way for a consumption tax rate increase. I call for a joint struggle to defend parliamentary democracy in Japan, including all political parties, organizations, and individuals agreeing on the single point of objecting to a cut in the Lower House proportional representation seats.

We think that discussion related to this issue must not be narrowed to just calculating the number of the Lower House members, but must extend to the basics of how the entire election system should consist of. It must go further to ask whether to continue the harmful single-seat constituency system which distorts public will and crowds out diverse opinions, and how a democratic electoral system correctly reflecting people's opinions should be like. We are

determined to call for the abolition of the single-seat constituency system, reform of the election system to a full-fledged proportional representation system capable of reflecting people's opinions, and the abolition of the government subsidy to political parties.

People's distrust of two-party system, JCP must show proposals for a new Japan

Two-party system begins to disintegrate just when it looks to be in place

Let me talk about the outcome of the House of Councillors election as a whole. Following last year's general election, voters in this year's Upper House election passed an important verdict. In the 2009 general election of the Lower House, people voted the LDP-Komei government out of power, thus ousting the LDP which was in power for almost all the post war years. In the Upper House election which took place ten months after the change in government, voters passed a severe judgment on the DPJ government. It was also clear that the people's decision does not mean a call for an LDP comeback to power. In the Upper House election, both the DPJ and the LDP suffered losses in the number of votes they received.

For nearly two decades, business circles have pushed for the implementation of the "two-major-party system" to impose a more efficient mal-administration that would effectively ruin people's livelihoods under the ostensible need for a "change of government." After the merger of the former Democratic Party and the Liberal Party into the DPJ in 2003, national elections took place six times. In five elections in a row, the LDP and the DPJ shared about 70 percent of the votes in proportional representation constituencies, though with changes in the number of their respective seats. In the recent Upper House election, however, both the DPJ and the LDP suffered losses in the number of votes they received, decreasing their combined share of votes to 55 percent. An NHK program on current affairs broadcast immediately after the election stated that the election results raises a serious question in regard to the mechanism of a change of government taking place only between two parties. The Upper House election result reveals public distrust of the rationale for the two-party system. This suggests that the mechanism implementing the two-party system is about to collapse just when it looked like it was firmly established.

In the last two decades, we have been struggling against the two-party system masterminded by business circles. The 2010 Upper House election result shows that it is impossible to limit the public choice to a two-party system. The result has not yet led to a JCP advance, but it is important to recognize that things are not going the way that the business circles intended.

To respond to reality facing Japan and the world, politics must get away from 'two aberrations'

Why do people show distrust in the two major parties?

We think that behind this distrust lies a serious distortion in Japan's politics, what we call the two aberrations, the extraordinary subordination to the United States and politics under the arbitrary control of large corporations and business circles. The old political framework on which the two parties rest is showing its inability to respond to reality, either in Japan or the rest of the world. Within this old political framework, issues now Japan is facing — the U.S. military base issue and economic and financial crises – cannot be resolved, whoever assumes the reins of power. Whoever becomes the prime minister, he or she is destined to resign after a short period of time. As long as the head of government is trapped by the “two aberrations,” a prospect to break out of the no-way-out situation will not emerge.

This has been proven after the DPJ government strayed from its promises and betrayed the public after the 2009 general election. The eight months under the Hatoyama Yukio government were months of serious contradictions. If the government opts to hold to the DPJ election promises over the Futenma base issue, revision of the Worker Dispatch Law, and the medical service system for age 75 and older, it should work out a policy to move away from the “two aberrations.” In several one-on-one talks with Hatoyama, I repeatedly called on him to move in that direction. However, his government lacked either the courage or the determination to take that course of action. After a lot of hesitation, the government discarded its election promises one by one, and eventually was driven into stepping down from power.

The succeeding Kan Naoto government pledged to put into practice the “Japan-U.S. agreement” on relocating the Futenma Air Station to the Henoko district and proposed to raise the consumption tax rate to 10 percent along with a corporate tax cut to follow the policy of the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren). Thus, the Kan government tried to establish itself by pledging its allegiance to the United States and to Japan's business circles. However, this widened the gap between the people and the government. The support rate for the government dropped sharply, which resulted in the severe judgment of the government by the voting public in the Upper House election.

New parties, including the Your Party, are forces that are merely aiming for political reorganization, a change of hands within the old political framework. The slogans they are using to project the party objectives show that they are trapped in the old political framework.

JCP can show proposals for solution of any issue

We, the Japanese Communist Party, have the will to root out the causes of distortion in Japanese politics.

The JCP consistently upholds that a new Japan should be made in which the people are the key players, by addressing and overcoming the two aberrations.

In a new Japan envisaged by the JCP Program, an economy will be established in which rules to defend people's livelihoods and rights are abided by, and a peaceful foreign policy based on independence and self-reliance are pursued on the basis of Article 9 of the Constitution.

This is the only way to properly address the myriad issues facing Japan and its people in the public interest. With deep confidence regarding this point, the JCP will respond to the people's quest for answers, clearly upholding our objectives to create a new Japan.

Now, I want to talk about what the JCP Program means, concentrating our attention on the two major issues.

Finances can be rebuilt by giving priority to livelihoods

Enormous fiscal deficit overshadows everything in people's livelihoods

One of the two focal questions is how to overcome the critical conditions in Japan's finances. Many people are feeling uneasy about this problem. In FY 2010 alone, the national and local financial liabilities combined reached 44.8 trillion yen, or 9.4 % of the gross domestic product. The outstanding long-term debt at the end of FY 2010 (March 2011) will amount to 862 trillion yen, 181 % of GDP.

During the election campaign, Prime Minister Kan tried to justify the plan for the consumption tax increase by saying that Japan would be fiscally bankrupt like Greece in one or two years. We have criticized his argument as a scare tactic used to intimidate the public and increase their sense of crisis, without mentioning the fact that 70 % of bonds in Greece are bought by foreigners whereas in Japan 90 % of bonds are bought domestically.

It goes without saying that the present fiscal crisis cannot be left as it is. It is a major cause of the political and social "no-way-out" feeling of the people. The need for better social services and living standards has become more apparent than ever. However, the public seems to have been convinced that the problem of the deficit-ridden national finances must be dealt with first. Regarding the government plan to increase the consumption tax rate, the enormous deficit makes them think that they should accept the tax increase so that their children and grandchildren may not be burdened with having to deal with the fiscal deficit. Thus, this issue overshadows all aspects of people's livelihoods. How can it be overcome?

Source of crisis – Wasteful public works projects and huge military budget

To resolve this issue, I think that the need is to examine the cause of the fiscal crisis, and ask why successive governments have failed in their fiscal reconstruction plans and instead have deepened the crisis. Today, I want to examine this question by tracing back the history of the problem.

First, I want to stress that the social services budgets have not caused the fiscal crisis as has been argued. Japan's long-term debt accounts for 180 % of GDP, the worst among the world's major countries, while public funds expended on social services is the lowest among major countries. In a comparison of percentages of public funds spent on social services in relation to GDP, Japan spends 6.1%, while Britain spends 13.5%, Italy 11.0%, Germany 10.8%, and France 9.4%. How can

Japan, with such a meager social budget, run up such an enormous national debt? No one seems to be willing to explain this.

In a lawsuit filed by Mr. Asahi Shigeru, the plaintiff brought his case to the court demanding a drastic improvement in the livelihood protection he received, taking Article 25 of the Constitution as the basis of his claim. The epoch-making Tokyo District Court ruling of 1960 stated:

“The ‘wholesome and cultured living’ stated in the Constitution is the right of the people, and the state has a duty to guarantee it in tangible form. It must not depend on the size of the national budget; rather, it must guide and control the budget.”

“Guide and control” in this context means that tax money paid by people should first be expended on social services followed by allotment to other budgetary items. This is the spirit of Article 25. To blame the social services budget for fiscal deficits is a twisted logic that contradicts the intent of Article 25.

The fiscal deficit was in large part caused by the huge number of large scale and wasteful public works projects during the 1990s and the huge military expenditures.

In the Japan-U.S. Structural Impediments Initiatives in 1990, the United States put pressure on Japan to map out a basic program on public investment in which Japan was urged to spend 430 trillion yen for a period of ten years on public works projects. Under the Murayama Tomiichi Cabinet, the basic program was enlarged to 630 trillion yen. With this as a leverage, the budget for public works projects, which had remained at the level of 20 trillion yen per year until the middle of the 1980s, suddenly and extraordinarily jumped more than double. In 1993-95, the budget was at the level of 50 trillion yen a year.

Wasteful and large-scale development projects were promoted across Japan. Developers built unneeded seaports and unnecessary dams. To developers, straits were just regarded as sites for building huge bridges or digging undersea tunnels, and the sky overhead urged them to build more airports. This kind of “general contract constructor” syndrome frenzy covered all of Japan.

Later, the government could not continue to afford such wasteful spending, and the size of the budget for public works projects shrank. However, the negative legacies of gigantic development projects remain in many places.

The policy of wasteful spending is retained, as typically seen in the outer Tokyo loop highway which is said to cost 100 million yen per meter. Thus, a major issue for the national and local governments is to clear up such negative legacies by minimizing the public share in the burden caused by excessive development, end the ongoing wasteful policy, and turn the focus of public works projects to benefit livelihoods, welfare, and the environment.

The other cause of the fiscal crisis is the huge military expenditure. Japan’s military spending continued to increase, and its budget at the end of the 1990s was 5 trillion yen a year. Our call for a cut in military spending often meets with people’s concern that the cut may harm Japan’s defense and may be unrealistic. However, the bulging military budget includes some shopping list items which are

not explicable in terms of the need for Japan's defense. The excessive spending can only be explained by the arms industries intent to increase production and thereby increase profits.

A typical example is the government purchase of tanks. A "90-model tank," which the Self-Defense Forces continued to buy from FY 1990 to FY 2010, had been developed on the assumption of Soviet landing operations in Hokkaido. As the model had to be larger and more powerful than Soviet tanks, it was very heavy, weighing 50 tons and costing 1 billion yen each. The weight limit on Japan's highways is generally 40 tons, and on bridges, 25 tons. It has been repeatedly questioned if the heavy tanks can actually operate on roads and bridges in the country. The government, however, said that the tank can go under water if it can not use a bridge, and that it can be loaded on a trailer when taken apart. Using these sophistries, the government decided to purchase the 90-model tank.

However, the tanks were actually deployed after 1991, when the Soviet Union had collapsed. Why did the government continue to buy the type-90 tanks, which were developed to counter a Soviet attack, when there was no longer a viable threat of a Soviet attack? This is unrealistic and unjustifiable.

In the Lower House Budget Committee in 1995, I asked why the tank was needed. In a scenario of the Ground SDF, the tanks are used to counter enemy troops after they come ashore. In a contemporary war, enemy tanks would land ashore only after heavy bombardment had reduced the coast to ashes. What country, do you think, would dare attempt to do such a thing?

Probably, it was for the first time that such a direct question as "What is the tank for?" was asked in the Diet. The then director general of the Defense Agency, who was apparently convinced that armed forces should possess tanks, was completely at a loss. He referred to the hypothetical case of a third world war, which embarrassed many of the members attending the meeting.

These wasteful expenses have continued even to this day. Though unable to explain the need, the government went on procuring the type-90 tanks. 341 tanks in total were procured for about 300 billion yen between FY 1990 and FY 2009. With the procurement of the type-90 tanks ending in 2009, the government began to procure a new model, the type-10 tank, from FY 2010. In the FY 2010 national budget, 12.4 billion yen is earmarked for 13 tanks. Prime Minister Kan will also be unable to explain what the tanks are for, if I ask him.

A tank is not the only item on the shopping list which "Japan's defense" can not explain. There are many such unnecessary items. The government allows military expenditures to be exempted from budget screening scrutiny. The JCP considers this to be the biggest target for a thorough examination of government waste.

Three wrong policies for 15 years affecting livelihoods, economy and national finances

The more public works projects and military expenditure increase, the more the national debt increases. In November 1995, the government declared a "fiscal crisis", warning about the combined national and local long-term liabilities outstanding at 400 trillion yen, amounting to over 80 % of GDP. A report on basic

issues in national finances, published in December 1995 by the Fiscal System Council dared to say that the present fiscal situation in Japan can be compared to having a big time bomb which is expected to explode in the near future.

Since then, successive governments have promoted what they called fiscal rehabilitation. However, the national debt continued to increase in the 15 years from 1995 to date, with the percentage of outstanding debt to GDP being at the world's highest level. Why did the successive governments' calls for fiscal reconstruction fail altogether, and the fiscal crisis deepen more than ever before? One reason is that the structure of waste has been maintained. Moreover, the following three wrong policies were to blame for the situation.

The first mistake was an increase of 9 trillion yen in the burden imposed on the public which the Hashimoto Ryutaro Cabinet initiated in 1997, including the consumption tax rate increase and an increase in the payment for medical services. We firmly opposed the policy, predicting that the increased burden, if implemented, would not only seriously damage people's livelihoods but would also put the economy, which was then on a weak recovery track, back into a serious recession, particularly damaging the household economy. As we had warned, it turned out that both the economy and national finances were badly damaged. The enormous sum of increased burden on the people triggered a major depression. Though heavier taxes were levied, tax revenues substantially declined. The succeeding Obuchi and Mori Cabinets resorted to wasteful public works projects in the name of the need to jumpstart the economy, and give preferential tax cuts to large corporations. These steps snowballed into increasing the national debt. People may remember Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo referring to himself as the world's king of debts.

The second mistake was the "structural reform" policy pursued by the Koizumi Cabinet. Calling on the public to endure the pain, the government implemented policies that took a heavy toll on people's livelihoods. Social services budgets were cut by 220 billion yen each year, with the result of the medical care, nursing care, pension, well-being of the handicapped people and livelihood protection systems being changed for the worse. There were a series of tax increases: an end to the special tax deduction for spouses, increased taxation on pensions, an end to temporary tax cuts, and the lowering of the consumption tax exemption limit on sales.

Deregulation in labor laws, including the Worker Dispatch Law, brought about an increase in the number of "working poor". Under the series of policies harmful to people's living standards, people's incomes fell, the household economy froze, and economic growth stopped, while big business and the rich further accumulated wealth. The financial crisis persisted and became even more serious. The inconsistencies behind such a fragile economy became apparent in the autumn of 2008 with the so-called Lehman shock, which caused an enormous loss in tax revenues and increased the national debt. This called for another pork-barrel public projects to start. The Aso Taro Cabinet introduced an unprecedented 15 trillion yen wasteful public works projects in the name of boosting the economy which only accelerated the financial crisis.

The third mistake was that the government on the one hand continued policies imposing heavier burdens on the general public while giving special favors to

large corporations and the very rich as seen in continued tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy for the last 15 years in a row. These "favors" were given in the form of corporate tax cuts and lowered maximum limits in the income and inheritance taxes. Tax-breaks on research and development (R&D), preferential taxation on securities, and other steps enlarged the regressive tax system, which resulted in a large loss of tax revenues.

Let me sum up the results of the 15 years under the "fiscal reconstruction policy" of reducing the burdens on large corporations at the expense of people's living conditions.

— The national and local long-term debts outstanding increased 2.1 times from 410 trillion yen in FY 1995 to 862 trillion yen in FY 2010.

— In these 15 years, Japan's GDP shrank from 497 trillion yen to 475 trillion yen, instead of showing any increase. Thus, Japan has become a country of minus economic growth.

— The ratio of long-term liabilities to the GDP sharply increased from 82 percent to a critical level of 181%.

These indicators show that policies harmful to people's livelihoods will damage both the overall economy and national finances, and make the fiscal crisis more serious. Isn't this clear from the fact that all the "fiscal reconstruction" policies of the successive governments failed without exception? We must call for an immediate and drastic change from such failed policies.

Possible exit from crisis — Priority to livelihood; redress distorted revenue-expenditure structure

I've given a brief historical background to the present fiscal crisis: what has caused the fiscal crisis, why it worsened, and who is to be blamed for it. Based on this analysis, we can find a way to overcome the crisis. From our perspective, a change from policies supporting large corporations to ones giving top priority to people's living standards and promoting stable economic growth will enable an exit from the fiscal crisis.

The JCP position is that two pillars are necessary to initiate this course of action.

First, it is essential to carry out an economic growth strategy giving top priority to protecting and improving people's livelihoods. During the House of Councillors election campaign, we introduced a 5-point proposal to protect people's livelihoods from the economic crisis.

The proposals are: establish rules for decent work; establish rules for fair trade relations between large corporations and small- and medium-sized enterprises; change policies to help rehabilitate agriculture, forestry and fisheries; change policies from slashing social services to a fully-fledged improvement of these services.

In order to realize these policy proposals, excessive internal reserves and profits retained by large corporations should be returned to society and the national budget should be compiled to benefit people's living conditions. By proceeding

with these reforms aimed at an economy abiding by proper rules and regulations, it is possible to overcome the economic crisis and achieve stable economic growth led mainly by the household economy and domestic demand. This is the basis of our economic growth strategy placing top priority on improving people's livelihoods.

When sound and stable economic growth is achieved, tax revenues will also increase. The Japanese economy on a stable growth track will help to curb the ratio of long-term liabilities in relation to the GDP. This is the first pillar in our strategy.

The second pillar, which is concerned with reform in regard to revenues and expenditures, is to eliminate all wasteful spending and to make no exceptions when abolishing regressive taxation policies.

We have called for not regarding military expenditure as a sacred cow. As typically seen in the waste associated with the procurement of the type-90 tank I've referred to earlier, defense spending includes many items which cannot be explained by any need for the "defense of Japan" and is nothing other than sheer waste. The size of the "sympathy budget" for the U.S. forces stationed in Japan and the Japan's share of the cost for building U.S. military bases in Guam are without parallel in the world. The JCP demands that all these dubious items in the military budget be scrutinized and cut.

We have also maintained that the excessive tax reductions for large corporations and the very wealthy must be examined.

The bigger a corporation is, the less it pays in corporate taxes because of tax breaks for R&D and deductions for foreign taxes. The income tax rate on those who have more than 100 million yen in annual income is lowered due to preferential taxation on securities transactions and dividends. The first task should be to put an end to the preferable taxation system for large corporations and the rich. As our Party Program states, the JCP aims to "establish a taxation and social security system based on the principle of shouldering burdens according to ability to pay" by putting an end to the present regressive tax system favoring large corporations and the very rich.

By boldly redressing the distorted structure of revenues and expenditures while carrying out the economic growth strategy with priority on livelihoods, it is possible to control the downward ratio of outstanding debt to GDP, or the size of the national economy even though the total debt amount may not decline immediately. The biggest issue regarding the debt problem is that the national debt has run as high as 181% in relation to the GDP. Stable economic growth accompanied by a reform in the revenue-expenditure structure will help to reduce the national debt, which in turn will show a way out of the fiscal crisis and contain the danger of fiscal bankruptcy. This is the JCP roadmap to a healthy exit from the fiscal crisis.

To put these reforms into practice, it is absolutely necessary to drastically change the government's position of favoring large corporations to one of giving top priority to living standards. As we have already seen, history has shown that the policy of seeking "fiscal rehabilitation" at the expense of people's livelihoods

damages both the overall economy and national finances, and leads to a worsening of the fiscal crisis. I am convinced that the JCP policy proposal is the only way out of the fiscal crisis.

Way out of fiscal crisis is possible only with JCP Program calling for end to two aberrations

The JCP Program neither denies the role of large corporations nor shows hostility to them. What must be corrected is their outrageous behavior in seeking quick profits above all else in the so-called world of “capitalism without rules.” What we seek is a society in which large corporations assume social responsibility to provide job security, treat small-and medium-sized enterprises fairly, and protect the environment and local communities by bearing the proper social burdens in taxes and providing social services commensurate with them.

An immediate goal of the JCP Program is “an economy abiding by rules” under which large corporations observe rules and regulations in order to co-exist with workers and people of all walks of life. We think that this will lead to a sound development of the Japanese economy and enable large corporations to develop by using a broader perspective.

We demand that large corporations assume their due social responsibility in getting out of the fiscal crisis. It is obvious that the self-centeredness of business circles and large corporations is mainly to blame for the fiscal crisis. It stands to reason that they must assume their due responsibility.

An exit from the fiscal crisis becomes visible when the “two aberrations” are corrected and a new Japan is sought in which the people are the key players as called for in the JCP Program. Improving social services and living standards while promoting fiscal rehabilitation are possible without resorting to consumption tax increase. With confidence in the benefits of this course of action, we express our determination to work to resolve the serious issue of fiscal crisis facing Japan through common struggle with the people.

How to settle U.S. base problem – Diplomacy, not military strength, holds the key

Task is to turn Okinawans’ consensus into national consensus

How to settle the U.S. military base issue is also a major problem facing the Japanese government.

On May 28, the DPJ government concluded a Japan-U.S. agreement on “transfer” of the Futenma base to Henoko over Okinawans’ heads. However, the rift between the government and Okinawans has widened. Following the crushing DPJ defeat in the House of Councillors election, the confusion and no-way-out situation of the DPJ government is deepening.

A blueprint for the new base construction, which is expected to come out by the end of August, is substantially behind schedule. Okinawa Governor Nakaima

Hirokazu said, "To implement the plan by overriding the Nago mayor's objection, the only way is to use the 'bulldozers and bayonets' approach by which the U.S. military expropriated land in Okinawa soon after the end of WW II. However, this way of doing things is impossible in today's Japan." Obviously, relocation of the base within Okinawa Prefecture will never obtain the consensus of Okinawans.

The Okinawa Prefectural Assembly on July 9 unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a review of the Japan-U.S. agreement on relocating the base to Henoko. The resolution states: "The Japan-U.S. agreement completely ignores the Okinawan people's general consensus that they are altogether opposed to the base being relocated within the prefecture. The agreement was reached over Okinawans' heads, ignoring our will. It is untenable for its undemocratic manner and an insult to the people of Okinawa." With these harsh words, the resolution strongly criticizes the agreement and calls for a review.

The general consensus of Okinawans calling for the closure and withdrawal of the Futenma base and in opposition to any relocation within Okinawa has become ever more solid.

The JCP has consistently stated that the Futenma base issue should be settled through negotiations with the United States for unconditional removal without the option for relocation. It is encouraging that this call is becoming a majority demand of Okinawans.

What is the point at issue? It is how to make the Okinawans' call for an "Okinawa without military bases" a call of all Japanese people.

The need now is for the people of Okinawa and the people of mainland Japan to further develop the struggle in solidarity. Let's endeavor to accomplish this.

Not 'deterrence' but diplomatic efforts to create climate of peace in East Asia needed

The key to such efforts is how the people can overcome the argument that the U.S. Marines are necessary as a force of deterrence. This argument is no longer accepted in Okinawa. The next step is for the whole nation to dismiss the validity of this argument.

During the election campaign, the JCP explained that the real role of the U.S. Marines in Okinawa is being forward deployed troops ready for military intervention, as in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and that they have nothing to do with the "defense of Japan". We also criticized those who cite the North Korea question and the "threat of China" to justify "deterrence". This belligerent approach in the name of "deterrence" is not only dangerous but unrealistic. I think that our analysis has pointed to the heart of the matter.

Soon after the House of Councillors election, the *Wall Street Journal* in its July 12 issue carried an article that began as follows, "Okinawans seeking to oust the U.S. Marines from their midst have a prominent new advocate in Washington." According to this article, Barney Frank, veteran Democratic congressman and chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, is quoted in TV and radio programs as making the following comment: "It's unclear to me what they're

doing there. 15,000 Marines aren't going to land on the Chinese mainland and confront millions of Chinese soldiers." He described them as a prime exhibit of what he considers a wasteful World War legacy. "They are handed-over (sic) from a war that ended 65 years ago." This is frankly put by the aptly named Mr. Frank. This news article gave me the impression that there is at least American politician who has backbone.

We think that the argument that the Marines are a deterrence force is false. However, some people may still argue: "Aren't the Marines necessary for Japan's defense, though we feel pity for Okinawans, when we look at the north-east Asian situation and the behavior of North Korea? The call for their withdrawal is unrealistic, isn't it?"

I want to tell people who have such worries: What is now called for in Japan is not to resort to the dangerous war approach called "deterrence" but to establish a foreign policy aimed at creating a peaceful environment in East Asia and to carry it out.

In Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has already been established as a community seeking peace, and is actually playing a significant role in settling international disputes peacefully. In the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), concluded with the ASEAN at the center, Canada, Turkey, and the European Union (EU) joined in 2010. Thus, its members are now 54 countries, covering about 70 % of the world population. However, disputes and tension still remain in Northeast Asia. The question is how to carry over the peaceful current taking place in Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia. I propose the following three points as part of an effective diplomatic strategy to achieve peaceful relation.

First, the vicious circle of military responses against any military action that only increases military tension should be completely rejected. For example, the United States and South Korea responded to the sinking of a South Korean patrol vessel with a large-scale joint military exercise, with the Japanese Self-Defense Forces taking part in the U.S.-South Korea military exercise for the first time with an observer status. Shouldn't Japan refrain from encouraging the vicious circle of responding militarily to any supposed military provocation, with the determination to always seek the peaceful settlement of disputes?

Secondly, there is a need to develop a framework of dialogue and confidence-building for settling disputes peacefully. We maintain that it is important to resume and lead to success the six-party talks by overcoming difficulties, try to resolve the pending issues of North Korea's nuclear development program, its abduction of Japanese citizens, issues related to missiles and historical controversies, and develop this framework into one that can establish peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is now displaying an interesting development. The forum is a framework for dialogue and confidence-building in the ASEAN region. The 17th ARF meeting was held on July 23 in Hanoi with 27 countries and organizations participating, including North Korea. All the members of the six-party talks sat at the same table, though exchanging sharply diverging opinions. The ARF meeting published the chair's statement which includes a call

for a peaceful settlement of the sinking of the South Korean patrol vessel. In the ARF spirit, confidence-building is the first step, preventive diplomacy the next, and measures are then taken to settle disputes. To accomplish this, all parties concerned are requested to sit at the same table. Isn't it important to develop such a framework that can establish face-to-face ties?

The third point to note is that Japan and China has established a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests", and the United States and China has also established a "strategic partnership", and subsequent economic and personal exchanges have become deeper. China is the biggest holder of U.S. bonds and the biggest trade partner with Japan. Isn't it obvious that wars between these partners should never be allowed to take place? It is necessary to face reality and try to do away with the notion of rivalry based on military strength.

The Japanese government must break away from its dependence on the war approach called "deterrence" and instead formulate diplomatic strategies to help create a peaceful environment in Northeast Asia. Japan has a wonderful treasure that can be used as a compass to find and stay on this course. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution can be the best asset to help create peace and stability in Japan and in east Asia.

Now is the time to question the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty from global context

In the 50th year since the revision of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, I think that the time has come for us to question the viability of the Security Treaty system.

In Okinawa, the people are already questioning if the treaty should be maintained into the future. In an opinion poll covering Okinawa Prefecture, a mere 7 % of respondents called for the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty to be maintained while 68% called for it either to be replaced by a treaty of peace and amity or abolished in its entirety.

A noteworthy comment reached us from the United States. It was a statement made by George R. Packard, president of the U.S.-Japan Foundation, at a public hearing of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 15, 2010. Though giving a positive assessment of the past history of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, Mr. Packard suggested to the Senate committee "that we can't assume it will survive into the indefinite future." He said this for the following reasons:

"First, the original treaty of 1952, predecessor to this one, was negotiated between victor and vanquished, an occupied nation, not between two sovereign states.

"Two, Japan, which had never in its history accepted foreign troops on its soil, today, 65 years after the end of the war, has had to accept the indefinite stationing of close to 100,000 American troops, civilian employees, and dependents at some 85 facilities in a nation that is smaller than the state of California. Some 75 percent of the U.S. forces are based on the small island of Okinawa in the Ryukyu Chain.

“Three, the U.S. — the continued presence of such a large U.S. military footprint brings with it environmental damage, crime, accidents, noise in crowded cities and red light districts.

“Four, the American presence is governed by a Status of Forces Agreement, SOFA, which has never been ratified by the Japanese parliament and which increasingly strikes thoughtful Japanese as an extension of the extraterritorial arrangements that characterize Western imperialism in Asia in the 19th century.

“Five, the cost (for the U.S. forces stationed in Japan) has run, ... up to \$4.3 billion a year. It is called by the Japanese ‘Omoiyari yosan’, or sympathy budget, a term which should embarrass both sides.”

Mr. Packard gave the following conclusion:

“It is only natural that a new generation of Japanese who did not live through the Cold War will increasingly question why they should put up with foreign troops in bases on their soil. The U.S. has reduced its military footprint in South Korea, Germany, and the Philippines, and it should not be surprising that a new generation of Japanese is growing restive in this situation.”

In this statement, we find analysis similar to ours: the Japan-U.S. military alliance has abnormal features which have no parallel in the world, as the 25th JCP Congress decisions in January 2010 pointed out. It is unlikely that Mr. Packard has read the JCP Congress decisions. However, unprejudiced reasoning would lead one to the same conclusion. The statement at the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee could have some impact and influence.

Now, let us turn our attention to the whole world. During the last 50 years, the world population under the control of military alliances rapidly shrank from 67% to 16%. In the 21st century world, military alliances can be said a legacy from the last century, an anachronism.

Last May, we attended the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference held in New York to call, as a political party of the A-bombed country, for the success of the conference toward achieving a “world without nuclear weapons.” I was deeply impressed that the so-called “advanced countries” and “big powers” were not the only participants playing an important role in the conference.

The NPT Review Conference President Libran Cabactulan, who played a big part in bringing success to the conference, is a veteran diplomat of the Philippines. The Review Conference’s Main Committee (I) Chair Boniface Chidyausiku is a diplomat of Zimbabwe. Sergio Quieroz Duarte, the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, who also made every effort for a successful conference, is a Brazilian diplomat. A treaty to ban nuclear weapons, proposed by Costa Rica, a small country with a population of 4.6 million, is having a major effect on the whole world. I was moved by those diplomats from developing countries who worked hard to make the historic international conference a success by carrying out heated, lively discussions head to head with their counterparts from nuclear weapons states, urging for a decision to achieve a “world without nuclear weapons.”

The world is rapidly changing. Military alliances are becoming things of the past. A 21st-century world is not one that a handful of great powers can control. It is a world in which all countries are becoming key players in world politics on equal footing. In such a world, neither the size of a country nor its economic strength, much less its military strength, is of paramount importance. The value of a country will be measured by the argument it presents. Any country that calls for social and political justice will be respected, be it big or small. No one will take a country seriously if it has nothing to say on its own initiative. In such a world, therefore, diplomatic strength, not military strength, will matter very much. This is the world we will live in.

How is the Japanese government acting in the present world? Even after the change in government, its policy still regards the military alliance with the United States as inviolable. Whenever anything happens, its first response is military, never thinking of a diplomatic approach. Japan faces a fundamental question of legitimacy if this continues to be the approach of its government.

With the 50th anniversary of the revised Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, let us arouse a major popular discussion squarely asking if the Security Treaty should be maintained in the context of the major world current for peace. Let us do our best to establish peaceful diplomacy with the view of creating a climate of peace in East Asia as well as creating popular consensus to abrogate the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

The JCP position toward the United States is not “anti-U.S.” The JCP argues that the extraordinary relations of control and subordination should be corrected, and that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty should be abrogated and replaced by a Japan-U.S. treaty of friendship in which relations of friendship and equality will be created between the two countries. We are convinced that these goals of the JCP resound deeply with the founding spirit of the United States which fought and won its own revolution for independence from British colonial rule.

Let's have confidence in achieving a progressive future

The 88-year history of the Japanese Communist Party does not have any period in which it developed smoothly without interruption. Many twists and turns accompanied any progress. However, our predecessors, holding confidence in and a principled perspective working for a progressive future, carried on with their struggles under whatever difficulties they had to face. The JCP history is colored by their undaunted struggles based on their self-awareness as pioneers in struggling for progressive change of which the JCP is proud.

Immediately after the founding of the party in 1922, the JCP was faced with the most severe repression of progressives among capitalist countries at that time. Many of our predecessors lost their lives due to the repression. However, the JCP continued to call for people's sovereignty and for peace and opposition to war and colonialism. These goals, which our predecessors upheld at the risk of their lives, became the foundation of the postwar Constitution of Japan which shows its vitality even today. We take pride in this accomplishment.

I also want to remind you of the postwar JCP struggle for independence as a progressive political party. The various forms of interference by the Soviet Union and China caused the JCP to split temporarily. The JCP established its policy of independence by overcoming these difficulties and laid the foundation for the present programmatic policy line. By rejecting the violent and barbarous interventionist attacks made by the hegemonic forces of the Soviet Union and by the Chinese Mao Zedong clique, the JCP defended the independence of Japanese progressive movements. The courageous struggles against Soviet and Chinese hegemonic interferences in the 1950s to the 1960s were unparalleled in the world. We must remember that we owe what we are today to those predecessors who struggled hard to overcome various hardships and pioneered in establishing the JCP position of independence.

Alarmed at the advance the JCP made in the 1970s, reactionary forces in Japan developed anti-communist campaigns on a large scale which led to the 1980 agreement between the then Socialist Party of Japan and the Komei Party to approve the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and exclude the JCP from their plans for a coalition government. Even against this backdrop, the JCP upheld high the banner for progressive unity, and initiated cooperation with non-party people by establishing the National Forum for Peace, Democracy and Progressive Unity. The SPJ-Komei Agreement marked a turning point in which all parties except the JCP supported the LDP platform endorsing the two aberrations, with the result that "exclusion of the JCP" covered the entire parliamentary scene. Thirty years have passed since then. It is clear today that the old political system, despite various moves to prolong its life, is facing an impasse and is in a no-way-out situation. Japan can now be described as on the eve of the birth of a new direction in politics.

At this juncture, we have a clear strategy and vision for the future, with the Party Program offering penetrating analysis of the domestic and international situation in the 21st century based on our long experience as a party based on sound principles. If this vision is accepted by a majority of the public, the required energy to remake Japanese society and create a new history can be harnessed. We are convinced of this. Let us work to share our perspective with all the people and open the way toward the creation of a truly democratic government, a democratic coalition government in which the people are the key players involved in the decision-making process.

In this era of political exploration when many people are searching for a new direction in politics, let us share with them our vision for Japan's future. We want to make the JCP bigger and stronger in order to accomplish this task to move history forward in a progressive direction. I'd like to ask you all to cooperate in this endeavor.

With this, I conclude my speech to commemorate the 88th anniversary of the party.

Long live the Japanese Communist Party!

Thank you for listening.

-Akahata, August 5, 2010

What the future of the Japan-U.S. relationship should be in the 21st century

Shii Kazuo
JCP Executive Committee Chair
Washington D.C., May 7, 2010

I am very honored to have this opportunity to speak before you, distinguished lawyers and peace activists. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you all for attending my talk. Today, in the hope of establishing true friendship between our two countries and peoples, I will give a talk on Japan-U.S. relations entitled: "What the Future of the Japan-U.S. Relationship should be in the 21st Century."

"We can't assume the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty will survive into the indefinite future"

How should we understand the present situation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty which was concluded in 1952 and revised in 1960?

When it was revised 50 years ago, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower reportedly said that the relationship between the two countries was transformed into a "completely equal relationship." But what is the reality?

I read a speech delivered by George Packard, president of the U.S.-Japan Foundation, on April 15 at the public hearings at the U.S. Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. It was very interesting. Arguing that "we can't assume the treaty will survive into the indefinite future," he gave five reasons for this.

First: the original treaty of 1952 was negotiated between a victor and an occupied nation, and not between two sovereign states.

Second: Japan had never in its history accepted foreign troops on its soil. But today, 65 years after the end of World War II, it has had to accept the indefinite stationing of close to 100,000 American troops, civilian employees, and dependents at some 85 facilities in a nation that is smaller than the state of California. Some 75 percent of the U.S. forces in Japan are based on the small island of Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands.

Third: the continued presence of such a large U.S. military footprint brings with it environmental damage, crime, accidents or noise in crowded cities and red light districts.

Fourth: the American presence is governed by a Status of Forces Agreement, SOFA, on which the Japanese Diet has not had any substantive discussion and which increasingly strikes Japanese as an extension of the extraterritorial arrangements that characterized Western imperialism in Asia in the 19th century.

Fifth: Japan's host nation support has run up to \$4.3 billion a year. It is referred to by the Japanese as the "sympathy budget," a term which should embarrass both sides.

Mr. Packard went on to say:

"It is only natural that a new generation of Japanese who did not live through the Cold War will increasingly question why they should put up with foreign troops in bases on their soil. The United States has reduced its military footprint in South Korea, Germany, and the Philippines, and it should not be surprising that a new generation of Japanese is growing restive in this situation."

Mr. Packard grasps the present situation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in a comprehensive way, and hits the mark regarding the feelings of many Japanese people. We have a different position from his on some important points, but I sincerely welcome such frank remarks by a person who plays an important role in Japan-U.S. relations.

We must examine the future of the Japan-U.S. relationship by looking straight into its reality which is far from an "equal partnership," even 65 years after the end of the war.

Contradictions centered on Okinawa: What is the Okinawa question? Where can we find a solution?

Okinawa is the focus of the glaring contradictions in the Japan-U.S. relationship.

Mr. Packard said that there are 85 military bases in a nation smaller than the state of California. The majority of these U.S. bases are concentrated in Okinawa. In terms of area, 18 percent of the main island of Okinawa, and 10 percent of the whole of Okinawa Prefecture is occupied by U.S. military bases.

Are there any states in the United States where you see such a concentration of military bases? According to figures we have prepared based on reports issued by the U.S. Department of Defense, Okinawa has a higher rate of military base concentration than any of the 50 U.S. states. Let me give you some examples in the order of highest rates of concentration: Arizona 6 percent; Hawaii and North Carolina 5 percent; Nevada, New Mexico and California 4 percent; and most other states less than 1 percent. Thus, Okinawa is the place with a much higher rate of U.S. base concentration than any U.S. state.

What is the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station, the current focal point of debate? Let me show you a leaflet published by Ginowan City which hosts the Futenma base. In a word, this is a base that would not be allowed to exist under U.S. standards. Around the Futenma base live 90,000 local people with 121 public facilities. In the United States, Federal Aviation Regulations require establishing "Clear Zones" (restricted areas) extended from the ends of runways to restrict land development to ensure safety. But at Futenma, where in the United States would be designated as Clear Zones, more than 3,600 local people live in 800 residences, in addition to 18 public facilities, including nursery schools and hospitals. U.S. regulations would not allow such a dangerous base to operate in its own country. How can it be allowed in Japan?

On April 25, Okinawan people gathered in a big rally calling for the closure and removal of the Futenma Air Station, and opposing the relocation of the base within Okinawa. Ninety thousand people, as well as Okinawa's governor and all 41 municipality (cities, towns and villages) heads or their deputies attended. This was to clearly show the consensus of Okinawans demanding the closure and removal of the Futenma base and opposing the construction of any new base any place in Okinawa. I attended this rally and felt at first hand that the situation in Okinawa has reached the point of no return and that the people's anger has reached the boiling point.

A girl student from a senior high school just near the Futenma base made an appeal at the rally, which struck home to all participants.

She said, "The windows in the classrooms are 6 centimeters thick. When we look out the window, the military aircraft completely fill the window frame and appear close enough to touch. This is our daily life at the Futenma High School. Whenever we go out on the school ground, we have to put up with low-flying aircraft creating lots of noise. The noise has no mercy on us either during classes or examinations. School roads are fenced off by the long wall of the base. We see the Stars and Stripes flying over the base. Who are fenced off by the wall, the base or we, the Okinawans?"

This was a sharp indictment against the fact that the native people have to suffer from a lack of freedom while the U.S. forces are enjoying unlimited freedom.

At the root of their deep anger is the fact that the local people have reached the limit of their tolerance after 65 years of occupation.

Why are there so many U.S. military bases in Okinawa, with 18 percent of the mainland of Okinawa being occupied by U.S. military bases? Let me explain how the U.S. military bases came into being in Okinawa. Toward the end of World War II, the U.S. forces landed on Okinawa and occupied it after the bloodiest ground battle in Japan. Then the U.S. forces drove the local people into 16 camps, confiscated not only military land but also private land, and built military bases. In the place where we now see the Futenma base, there were previously residences, public offices, a post office, graveyards and sugar cane factories. After the San Francisco Treaty was concluded in 1951, the U.S. military pushed away resisting residents with bayonets and bulldozers, and crushed private houses and destroyed farm land to further expand their military bases. The Hague Convention relative to the Laws and Customs of War on Land prohibits the seizure or confiscation of private property under occupation. In this sense, the U.S. bases in Okinawa were from the beginning born in violation of international law.

The Okinawan people have had to endure untold suffering for the last 65 years under these military bases. There are many incidents and accidents burned into the hearts of the Okinawan people. For example: in 1955, a 6 year-old girl was raped, killed and the body left on a beach. In 1959, a U.S. jet plane crashed on a primary school and went up in flames, killing 17 people including 11 children. In 1965, a trailer dropped from a U.S. plane crushed a girl in her own yard. In 1995, the brutal gang rape of an elementary school girl enraged Okinawans. In 2004, a U.S. helicopter crashed on the Okinawa International University adjacent to the

Futenma Air Station, narrowly avoiding a catastrophe. These are just some of the tragedies which no Okinawans can forget about.

Serious damages from the military bases over the years and the related tragedies culminated into the April 25 rally with the participation of 90,000 Okinawans.

The Japanese government is now pushing forward with a plan to construct a new base off Henoko in Nago City for the U.S. Marine Corps. But the plan to construct a new base at the sacrifice of the sea with its beautiful coral reefs and endangered species of dugongs is only adding fuel to the fire of people's anger. The mayor of Ginowan City where the Futenma base is located declared, "If they try to relocate the base within Okinawa, we will demand the removal of all the U.S. bases." The mayor of Kadena Town said, "We want to question the continued existence of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty itself." Kadena is a town where as much as 83 percent of its land area is occupied by the vast U.S. Air Force base.

The Japanese and U.S. governments must face up to the reality that any agreement between them on the construction of a new base in Okinawa will be impossible to carry out. If they attempt to force it through, people's anger will inevitably build up to demand the removal of all U.S. military bases and the abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

At Tokunoshima Island in Kagoshima Prefecture, which is a candidate site for relocation of some Futenma base functions, held a rally on April 18 with 15,000 participants, or 60 percent of the residents, attending. All of the three municipality heads of Tokunoshima unanimously expressed their rejection of a new base on the island.

There is no place in the country, either in Okinawa or any other place that would accept the relocation of the Futenma base to their locality. The only solution to the problem is the unconditional removal of the base, or the removal without any conditions of transfer. This is the only alternative. It even accords with the U.S. policy, as former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said, "We don't want to be in places where it's not terribly hospitable."

The pretext that we must abide by the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty cannot explain this situation. In 1969, the governments of Japan and the United States agreed on the reversion of Okinawa to Japan even under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. The San Francisco Treaty has a stipulation in Article 3 that Japan renounces its administrative right over Okinawa. So under the treaty it was impossible to have Okinawa returned. But with the strength of the movement of the whole of Okinawa in solidarity with the people on the mainland, we achieved Okinawa's reversion, overriding the treaty. We believe that Japan-U.S. relations are at the same historical crossroads as in those days, and a historical decision is being called for.

The Okinawa question is not a problem associated only with an island in the Far East. It confronts the governments of Japan and the United States with a fundamental review of the mutual relationship. The sense of democracy of the Japanese people as well as that of the United States is being tested by this question.

U.S. founding spirit and the JCP position

In our view, we have entered the era where the future of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty is being directly called into question. As Mr. Packard said, the younger generations of Japanese will increasingly question the meaning of foreign troops on their soil. The U.S. Forces in Japan explain away their stationing as the defense of Japan, but aircraft carriers homeported at Yokosuka and the U.S. Marine Corps units based on Okinawa are being used for attacking Iraq and Afghanistan. Is an alliance that takes such a tremendous toll on Okinawan people indispensable for us? No one can provide a persuasive response to this question any more.

The Japanese Communist Party is not an anti-U.S. party. We sincerely hope for true friendship with the United States and its people. But true friendship will not be born of the relationship of domination and subordination. It will only be possible with an equal relationship. In order to realize such a relationship, the JCP Program calls for the abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the root-cause of the present unequal relationship, and the conclusion of a Japan-U.S. Friendship Treaty.

Of course, this will not come about overnight. The majority of the Japanese people must first agree on this change. Such a consensus will be built through pursuing a peace diplomacy to create a peaceful atmosphere in East Asia.

In Southeast Asia, a military alliance, the SEATO, was disbanded and in its place the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional community of nations for peace which is open and has no hypothetical enemy outside, was established. We want to expand this current to Northeast Asia. In that case, we must solve the issue of North Korea. The JCP calls for the Six-Party Talks to be reactivated with the aim to resolve such issues as nuclear programs, missile development, abductions and other historical questions. We consider it important to develop the Six-Party Talks into a framework for peace and stability in North East Asia. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution provides us with the guiding principle as well as the legal means in promoting such a peace diplomacy.

Our great predecessor Karl Marx sent a congratulatory message to President Lincoln in 1865 when he was reelected as president, in which he described the United States as follows: “the very spot where (...) the idea of one great Democratic Republic had first sprung up, whence the first Declaration of the Rights of Man was issued, and the first impulse given to the European revolution of the eighteenth century.” We have deep respect for the U.S. history of revolution for independence and democracy. With this in mind, we visited the Lincoln Memorial today.

We further recall that Lincoln expressed, in his reply to Marx the following year, his desire to have “respect and good will throughout the world” by doing “equal and exact justice to all states.” I would like to stress that the United States will earn true respect worldwide only if it establishes equal and just relationships with all states including Japan, as Lincoln so eloquently called for.

On July 4 last year, I was invited for the first time by the U.S. embassy in Tokyo to attend the reception in commemoration of the U.S. independence day. I attended it because I thought this is a great day for humanity to commemorate. It

is our firm belief that your founding spirit for liberation from British colonial rule, and for independence through revolution resonates with the spirit of the JCP that is now working hard to achieve real independence from the United States, and establish a Japan with an equal and friendly relationship with the United States.

We firmly believe that toward that direction lies the future of Japan-U.S. relationship in the 21st century.

-Akahata, May 10, 2010