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What Will the 21st Century Be Like?

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FUWA Tetsuzo

Japanese Communist Party Central Committee Chair

(Part One)

- Compared to the Start of the 20th Century2**
- *A century serving a clear outlook on the period to come*
- *'Scientific vision' is common asset of the world of natural science*
- *Using 'scientific vision' to observe social affairs*
- *'Inchon Declaration' – Post-capitalism will be the world trend*
- Terrorism and Subsequent Retaliatory War.....7**
- *The question for the world was by what means we should stand against international terrorism*
- *Three areas have been damaged by retaliatory war*
- Outlook on the 21st Century World in a Broader Perspective.....11**
- *Let's look at the hard facts of the danger of one-country hegemony*
- *'Forcible entry' in complete disregard of national sovereignty of other countries*
- *Historical outlook in world realigned*
- *Public opinion - the gap between the United States and the rest of the world*
- *Asia, the Middle East, and Africa will become major arena*
- *'Power' takes 'virtue'*
- What Kind of World Should We Construct?.....18**
- *Task is to build an international order that gives the U.N. Charter renewed life*
- *For a century of progress in 'peaceful coexistence of different cultures'*

WHAT WILL THE 21ST CENTURY BE LIKE?

An interview with

FUWA Tetsuzo

JCP Central Committee Chair

Part One

(Translated by Japan Press Service)

Sekiguchi Takao; Shoji Shojiro: We would like to present you our best wishes for the new year.

Fuwa: Happy new year.

Sekiguchi: It may be appropriate for us at the start of the new year to talk first about the present century on a global scale. I will be the main interviewer for the first half, and Shoji Shojiro for the second half of this interview.

Compared to the Start of the 20th Century

Sekiguchi: The first year of the 21st century was very eventful. I think the 21st century is being discussed from different angles in relation to these events. Do you have any comment to make on the past year?

A century serving a clear outlook on the period to come

Fuwa: The world in 2001 experienced a number of sinister incidents and events, including international terrorist attacks and the retaliatory war at the international level, and at the national level, the Koizumi Cabinet's arrogance leading to a violation of the Constitution and imposition of hardships on the people. I know that this has made some people take a pessimistic view of the 21st century, but I believe it necessary to try to maintain a long-range view when considering the present century.

You certainly remember there were a variety of arguments about the 20th century. Since the last century experienced two world wars as well as fascism and militarism, some tried to depict as an historical period full of adversity. However, if you take into account the full historical aspects of the century, you will find that in no previous periods have the principles of people's sovereignty and democracy been developed as such on a global scale. The same applies to basic human rights, including the right to livelihood which came to be widely accepted. Equally, the principles of the right of every nation to self-determination, national sovereignty, and independence were recognized as the world's common fundamental principles. I think all this shows that the 20th century should be a period that goes down in history as a century of hope.

I also hope that the 20th century will be remembered as a century that put an end

to world war once and for all. Of course, this will depend on our own continuing efforts.

So in envisioning the 21st century, we should maintain a long-range and broad perspective, instead of just paying attention to what's happening at present.

To do this, it would be appropriate to start with comparing the beginning of the 21st century to that of the last century. It will unmistakably help you to make your outlook for the future as clear as the blue sky.

'Scientific vision' is common asset of the world of natural science

Sekiguchi: Last year, we held the Akahata Festival for the first time in three years. I had the honor to head the organizing committee of the 37th Akahata Festival.

One of the new programs we presented in the festival was a discussion with Chair Fuwa. It was very successful. Chair Fuwa's talk was entitled, "The 21st Century and Scientific Vision." I think that the phrase, "Look at the world and Japan with scientific vision," really set the tone of the 37th Akahata Festival. I gather that what you wanted to say was that a scientific vision will enable us to see the current century very clearly.

Fuwa: That's correct. At the Akahata Festival, I began my talk on "scientific vision" by referring to NHK TV special programs to explain discoveries in science of the 15 billion year history of the universe and the existence of human beings in the universe.

What we now call "scientific vision" was actually developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the 19th century, whose point of departure was materialism and dialectics. Materialism and dialectics is based on what they achieved in studies of human society and its history. It was also significant as a summary of the development achieved in natural science during the period that Marx and Engels lived.

The world ushered in the 20th century after the era of Marx and Engels. Did "scientific vision" they developed exert its power? No, things were not that simple.

First, let's look at the understanding of nature. The beginning of the 20th century in many ways was a major turning point in the development of natural science. However, things evolved in a very complex way. For example, the dramatic development of physics has discovered what used to be invisible in the material world. The laws of physics discovered by the scientist Isaac Newton, which had been regarded as immovable laws, became invalid. This threw the scientific community into major confusion over how to understand the nature. It became fashionable to argue that "matter has disappeared" or that "natural science can deal only with phenomena; it cannot understand the substance."

To begin with, natural science is based on materialism, regardless of its perception. However, as it ran into new problems that denied the old theoretical framework, a kind of crisis occurred in the front line of natural science.

Looking back over the years, Dr. Sakata Shoichi, a physicist, stated that only Vladimir I. Lenin could expound on the crisis of physics at the time and precisely show how to solve it. Lenin was not a student of natural science, but in his "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism" (published in 1909), he criticized the philosophical confusion of the times, discussing and analyzing the crisis of physics in depth as one of the underlying causes of that confusion. It was so pertinent a critique that it impressed Dr. Sakata, who pioneered the theory of elementary particles. It really was a relevant illustration of the power of "scientific vision" called materialism and dialectics. However, that way of thinking was not shared immediately among students of the natural science community of the time.

Today, more than 100 years later, at the beginning of the 21st century, things are totally different in the community of natural science. In my lecture on scientific socialism at the JCP Central School in January last year and in my talk on "scientific vision" at the Akahata Festival, I have always referred to the most advanced stage of development ever achieved by natural science. An overwhelming majority of scientists who are engaged in the exploration of nature in whatever field, whether they say they are materialist or not, are convinced that every movement in the world can be explained by its material elements and movements, including activities of consciousness and the thinking of human beings.

Sekiguchi: I see.

Fuwa: One of the cruxes of dialectics is its way of understanding things. In dialectics, one does not see things within a fixed framework but as they are with flexibility in light of facts. Without such flexibility, you'll not be able to understand nature in any field. It would be correct to say that dialectics serves as a natural scientific approach to nature.

In this respect, present-day developments can be seen in sharp contrast with the early 20th century which started amid chaos. I think that the "scientific vision" developed in the 19th century by Marx and Engels is now a common asset of the natural science community.

Shoji: I was listening to your talk at the Akahata Festival as a reporter. I was impressed to see many people surprised to learn that the elements that make up the human body came into existence as part of the history of the universe. A materialistic view or scientific vision will enable us to have a positive outlook of the future, even in the present chaotic world.

Using 'scientific vision' to observe social affairs

Sekiguchi: Let us now look at social affairs. What can you tell us about social changes as seen with the "scientific vision" ?

Fuwa: The 20th century began in a situation that was also quite complex in the social aspect.

Marx and Engels applied "scientific vision" to their analysis of capitalist society and they arrived at the conclusion that capitalist society was not the final stage of human society. They found that its economic system won't last forever but will

some day be overcome by a higher form of society. That was in the middle of the 19th century. Toward the end of the 19th century, contradictions of capitalist society were already sharpening, and they came to believe that socialism was around the corner. For example, Engels in the 1890s was counting down the days to the establishment of a socialist government.

But that didn't happen. With the beginning of the 20th century, capitalism ushered in a new era of monopoly capitalism. In terms of productive forces, the steam engine was replaced by electric power, and the world rushed into an era of imperialism in which the major capitalist countries came to grips with the whole of the globe.

The era of imperialism produced many evils, including colonization, world wars and fascism, but materially speaking, it was an era when capitalism marked an era of upswing, in particular in terms of material production.

In preparing a booklet of my lecture at the Akahata Festival, I made a graph to show the world's energy consumption. The energy consumed annually by the world at the beginning of the 20th century was estimated at 600 million tons, but at the end of the 20th century there was a steep increase and the number reached 8.3 billion tons in 1997. The 20th century saw a rapid economic growth never experienced before. In that sense, capitalism did not reach an impasse in the 20th century as had been predicted in the late 19th century, it instead marked a century of tremendous economic development.

The 20th century is gone, and capitalism is a contradiction literally on a global scale and I think that at the beginning of the 21st century, the contradiction is being felt in many ways.

Production for Production

Rapid Increases in World Energy Consumption

1751 --	3 million tons
1800 --	9 million tons
1867 --	143 million tons
1900 --	603 million tons
1945 --	1,311 million tons
1997 --	8,334 million tons

Breakdown of energy consumption in 1997

Oil:	39.9%
Coal:	26.3%
Natural Gas:	23.2%
Hydraulic:	2.7%
Atomic:	7.3%

Note: Energy consumption levels are from the U.S. Oak Ridge National Institute data on fossil fuel consumption (1751- 1997). The figures for the years from 1950 to 1997 take into account the electricity produced by hydraulic and nuclear power plants.

'Inchon Declaration' – Post-capitalism will be the world trend

Fuwa: Those who defended capitalism rejoiced at the collapse of the Soviet Union 10 years ago, describing it as an end of communism and a victory of capitalism. However, even those same people are unable to get rid of the fear that "what would come next might be the collapse of capitalism." Today, 10 years later, this fear is present more extensively.

I am very impressed by the declaration from an international conference held in Incheon, South Korea, in late last November on Northeast Asia Intellectuals' Solidarity (NAIS). The conference brought together influential intellectuals from South Korea, China, and Japan. Yasuo Ogata, head of JCP International Department (House of Councilors member) was invited to attend that forum. He gave me a detailed report on what happened there.

The conference issued a document called the "Incheon Declaration 2001" which sets forward a very interesting view.

On the 20th century it states:

"The 20th century, which witnessed the constructive power of the human race through two World Wars and experienced the trials and errors of ideology through the collapse of the Soviet Union, was also the century in which material civilization spread globally with increasing economic power. "

Isn't it fascinating to know that the declaration defines the "collapse of the Soviet Union" as "trials and errors of ideology" instead of a "victory of capitalism," while stating that the 20th century was a "century in which material civilization spread globally with increasing economic power." Thus, the authors distance themselves from the trend.

Also noteworthy is that the declaration talks about the 21st century after discussing the 20th century, which I have just quoted. It states: "The 21st century is a century of globalization, information, and the accelerated development of post-capitalist society..." In addition to a general definition of globalization and knowledge informatization, the declaration also makes the point that a "post-capitalist" system will be accelerated. Although the declaration does not go so far as to discuss the type of society that will come after capitalism, intellectuals from South Korea, China, and Japan declared they all believe that a socio-economic system different from capitalism will be on the agenda in the 21st century.

I think that this essentially shows how people in different countries hope the 21st century to be and how they view the present-day world .

It may be appropriate to say that there is a feeling that the new century will make history in a way that is different from the 20 century.

Sekiguchi: Ogata said he had been specifically invited to speak to the conference as an "unusual guest."

Fuwa: The main participants at the conference were South Korean intellectuals. His description of the atmosphere at the conference made me feel that these intellectuals, through their long-standing exchanges with different circles of Japanese people, came to show their interest and expectations for the Japanese

Communist Party. It in fact was their first direct contact with the JCP, so they may have aspects that are unknown to them about the JCP.

Terrorism and Subsequent Retaliatory War

Sekiguchi: Let us talk about the present issues. Last year's biggest event in world politics was the simultaneous terrorist attacks on the United States last September. One month later, the Bush administration launched a retaliatory war against targets in Afghanistan. I think the shock wave of the war has spread the world over. Could you tell us how you see the present situation in this regard?

The question for the world was by what means we should stand against international terrorism

Fuwa: Last year's incidents of international terrorism raised the question of how the world should deal with terrorism.

We immediately warned the world not to go to war against the terrorists, emphasizing that it is inadmissible to try to capture the terror suspects by actions that will sacrifice innocent citizens. That said, we proposed that the international community try to eradicate international terrorism through U.N.-led measures and actions to isolate the terrorists everywhere using international opinion and politics and bring the suspects to justice in a reasoned manner and in conformity with international law.

But the United States chose to launch a retaliatory war. It is already three months since the war began. I think that the consequences have shown that the war has been a major terrible mistake and proved clearly that our proposal was appropriate.

Has the retaliatory war achieved the stated objective of combating terrorism? The United States declared that the major objective of the war is to capture the terrorist suspects. In Japan, every time we in parliament pointed out that it was a big mistake and insisted on the importance of bringing the suspects to justice, Prime Minister Koizumi got furious, saying, "The suspects could not be arrested without using force."

In the three months of war, the Taliban regime was overthrown, but no one can tell whether the terrorists will be brought to justice. The eradication of international terrorism? It's far from being accomplished. In fact, there is a widespread fear throughout the world that the violence of the retaliatory war might have helped to extend and buttress the cause of terrorism.

We emphasized that war may be able to overthrow a regime but not eliminate terrorism, and this has been confirmed by the actual developments.

Without the proclaimed objective of the struggle against terrorism being achieved, the world is suffering immeasurable damage as a result of the retaliatory war.

Three areas have been damaged by retaliatory war

(1) Afghan people

Fuwa: I think it's important to recognize that three areas have been heavily damaged.

First and foremost, the damage caused to the people of Afghanistan.

Shoji: That was the most heartbreaking thing for many people throughout the world.

Fuwa: The thing is that great damage is being caused to the people of Afghanistan, who are not at all responsible for the terrorist attacks on the United States.

Mark Herold, professor at the University of New Hampshire in the United States recently published a report estimating the level of civilian casualties caused by U.S.-led air strikes against Afghanistan (*see the December 25, 2001 issue of the daily Akahata*). Based on corroborated reports from aid agencies, the U.N., eyewitnesses, and the media, he estimates that at least 3,767 civilians were killed by U.S. bombs between October 7, when air strikes began, and December 6.

Afghan people are suffering from more damages from the air strikes. And damage is not just caused by air strikes. The U.S. forces have used Afghanistan as a test site for various atrocious weapons. We in parliament revealed that the cluster bomb that releases more than 200 smaller bombs is being used. Those smaller bombs remain active on the ground like small landmines and are killing many children. It is precisely a weapon of mass destruction, and international organizations such as the "Diana Memorial Fund" and the "Landmine Action" which are working for the removal and abolition of landmines as well as the International Red Cross Committee are raising their voices calling for a ban on the use of cluster bombs. All this shows that the on-going war is being pursued in defiance of world opinion against the use of such brutal weapons.

In addition to these direct damages from the war, we must pay attention to another problem, the humanitarian crisis. Afghan has been plagued with aggression and civil war for many years. The suffering of the Afghan people has reached the limit of their endurance. Many international agencies have extended emergency assistance in many ways, including food and water supplies, medical treatment, and the removal of landmines. But the war has interrupted these aid activities and even undermined all that has been achieved, including landmine removal, thus exacerbating the hardships. Many now warn that the lives of several millions of people are at risk.

Who on earth has the right to cause such suffering to the people of another country? This has been called into question in the present retaliatory war.

I know that some say: "Now that a new regime has replaced the Taliban regime, the Afghan people can feel secure," but a serious question remains.

In short, the United States intervened in the civil wars in support of one of the various armed groups which have been fighting against each other. For the United

States and its supporter countries, any one of them was good if it was anti-Taliban; none of these foreign forces have closely examined what the armed groups have done so far in Afghanistan. Nor have the people of Afghanistan decided on a government they want to establish. What happened was that they bring together the anti-Taliban groups and help them establish a coalition government with the aim of facilitating a military campaign for overthrowing the Taliban regime. So no one is sure if the established government will implement policies that will truly benefit the Afghan people.

Shoji: Some people have pointed out that these forces in the coalition include those with political records that are far worse than that of the Taliban.

Fuwa: In fact, there is the allegation that prisoners of war were massacred.

Sekiguchi: It is reported that a considerable number of prisoners of war have been killed following the victory of the Northern Alliance.

Fuwa: That is not just a matter of media reports. The International Red Cross Committee, Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights, and other international human rights organizations are demanding that these allegations be investigated and that necessary steps be taken. Clearly, some developments under those forces that make up the new regime make us apprehensive about the future.

In my view, we need to develop effective international opinion and movements to protect the lives, livelihoods, and basic rights of the Afghan people from the retaliatory war that causes so much suffering to them.

Sekiguchi: I agree.

(2) A new danger of Middle East conflict

Fuwa: Secondly, the Palestinian-Israeli peace process is on the verge of collapse. The question of Palestine emerged soon after World War II. The United Nations adopted a framework allowing the Palestinian state and the Israeli state to coexist, but it was never implemented. After four Middle East wars, Israel occupied the areas declared by the U.N. as Palestinian territory. Since then, the armed conflict has continued endlessly between the Palestinian liberation forces and Israel. In 1993, the "Oslo Accords" marked a modest first step towards establishing an order of peace in the region. The world breathed a sigh of relief because it appeared that the path toward peace was open.

Two years later, however, a cycle of terrorist attacks by Palestinians and military retaliation by Israel was reproduced. Things went from bad to worse when the Israeli government's intention to renege on the "Oslo Accords" became apparent. It was precisely in the middle of this critical situation that terrorist attacks occurred, followed by a retaliatory war. Taking advantage of this development, the Israeli government embarked on the worst kind of retaliatory attacks.

Complaining that acts of terrorism by Palestinians remain unfettered and that Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat does not take necessary steps to crack down on terrorists, the Israeli government blamed the Palestinian Authority for

"defending terrorism." Announcing that Israel would no longer talk with Arafat, it has launched attacks on all areas under control of the Palestinian Authority and gone so far as to occupy these areas militarily.

We have long stood firmly against terrorism and military retaliation. This position of ours remains unchanged. The Israeli government's military retaliation can never be justified because of the presence of terrorists on the side of Palestinians. I think that these acts of Israel reflect the strong will of this country to make the Oslo Accords a dead letter in order to put these areas under its control.

This is tantamount to threatening to drag the Middle East region into a renewed war despite a ray of hope for peace appearing in the region after a half century of conflicts.

More recently, the Palestine Authority and the Israeli government are reportedly moving toward resuming talks. But nevertheless, the situation remains unpredictable and no one can tell what's going to happen.

Sekiguchi: What is your view on the connection between the outrageous actions by Israel and the U.S. retaliatory war?

Fuwa: The reason Israel gives for its action is the same as what the U.S. used to justify its war of retaliation: "Any means are allowed in the fight against terrorism." Israeli has said that it recognizes the Arafat government as a 'defender of terrorist forces' and therefore it has the right to decide how to destroy them," meaning that Israel is following the example of the United States.

The question of Palestine has been the crux of the antagonisms between Israel and the United States on the one hand, and the Islamic world that includes Arab countries on the other. It has also been referred to as one of the major "hotbeds" of international terrorism.

If the Israeli government is allowed to use the U.S. logic justifying the retaliatory war for scrapping the "Oslo Accords" and trigger another Middle East war, the whole world will be seriously affected.

Sekiguchi: That is also a point that calls for our close attention, isn't it?

(3) U.S. is further consolidating on its hegemony

Fuwa: The third point is that the United States is apparently pulling out all the stops in its pursuit of hegemony because it has embarked on a war of retaliation.

The United States tried to justify its retaliatory strikes against targets in Afghanistan as a war in "self-defense," but it turned out to be a wrong action that has no legal grounds. Realizing that this was not what had been expected, the United States began to expand the war objectives; it is now without scruples in discussing plans to launch a new war aimed at overthrowing governments which the United States does not like. In fact, key U.S. administration and military officials cite such countries as Iraq and Somalia as possible next targets of air strikes. In the case of Iraq, connections with suspect Osama bin Laden cannot be used to justify U.S. military attacks, they are using the danger of Iraq's nuclear

weapon development as the pretext. And for Somalia, they may say that there used to be an Al-Qaida base in that country.

This means that the U.S. government's identification of any country as an enemy of peace would be enough for Washington to declare war on that country on its own. This is nothing but an attempt to put the whole world under U.S. hegemony, thus replacing the present international order that has been built upon international consensus with an order sanctioned by hegemony.

Moreover, in international politics, the United States has unilaterally announced its withdrawal from major international agreements in the name of national interests. The U.S. government is increasingly straightforward in behaving that way. It has withdrawn from the Kyoto Protocol to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and rejected the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-ban Treaty (CTBT) which was concluded in response to the world's expectations; it is unilaterally pushing ahead with the development and implementation of a missile defense system by breaking away from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty which the United States regards as an obstacle to the missile defense system development. This tendency is likely to increase in many other areas.

In the Afghan war, some observers said that the United States replaced its unilateralism with internationalism because it needed cooperation and support from other countries. But what actually happened was the opposite. U.S. Under Secretary of State John R. Bolton was very clear about this point when he flatly denied the validity of such an observation in an interview (published in the December 23 issue of the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper), on the grounds that the United States only takes into account U.S. national interests.

It would be correct to say that the U.S. policy is one of placing U.S. national interests above anything else and what may be described as US-centrism that regards the world as revolving around the United States. Its visibility is now increasing unfettered.

I have discussed the problem from these three standpoints. And I believe that even in these three areas alone, the damage inflicted to the world by the war of retaliation is immeasurable.

The retaliatory war is not over yet. President Bush says he does not know how many more years it will take before it ends. But I think the balance sheet of the past three months is more than enough to show how wrong and harmful it is to resort to retaliatory war as a means of combating international terrorism.

Outlook on the 21st Century World in a Broader Perspective.

Sekiguchi: The September 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent retaliatory war have caused widespread concern about the United States adopting a military strategy that does not hesitate to unilaterally take military actions. Akahata's Washington reporters say that the United States is increasingly asserting what might be described as U.S. supremacy to go unchallenged in doing anything it

wants to. Out of concern about this tendency, many people worldwide are expressing deep apprehension that U.S. unilateralism and hegemony might possibly lead the 21 century to another dark era. What do you think?

Let's look at the hard facts of the danger of one-country hegemony

Fuwa: I think we have two aspects to look at in considering this issue.

First, we need to look at the present stage of development of U.S. hegemony so that everyone can accurately understand its danger and appropriately criticize or condemn it in appropriate terms.

Militarily, the biggest problem is that the U.S. strategy of seeking hegemony, even at the cost of the national sovereign rights of other countries, is expanding extraordinarily.

In 1999, when the laws for the implementation of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (War Laws) were enacted, NATO adopted action guidelines billed as a new "strategic concept." It declared that NATO will not come under U.N. command and that the alliance may launch interventionist war upon approval from the United States and NATO even without United Nations authorization, which is a flagrant challenge to the U.N.-led international order. The crux of NATO's new strategic concept can be summarized as an overt plan that allows the U.S.-led alliance to disregard the United Nations when it takes military actions necessary to defend U.S. interests, a top priority task.

'Forcible entry' in complete disregard of national sovereignty of other countries

Fuwa: At the time, Washington took another important decision that was first put forward in the annual "Report of Defense Secretary" in 1998 and 1999 that includes the following points:

- Military invasion abroad needs adequate military bases. It requires the cooperation of governments concerned, but in some cases such cooperation cannot be expected.

- The United States must go into foreign lands and establish a military stronghold there even without the cooperation of the local government. It is necessary to have the ability to carry out "forcible entry" to ensure such operations.

Sekiguchi: "Forcible entry" operations?

Fuwa: Yes. The idea is this: The United States is the world policeman responsible for the security of the entire world; it must be able to respond to any regional contingencies throughout the world; in regions where the United States has no military alliance or military bases for U.S. forces to use as their footholds, it is necessary to construct bases by directly sending in U.S. troops in order to thwart opposition from the government of the country.

Shoji: That was under the Clinton administration, wasn't it?

Fuwa: The U.S. Department of Defense published the "Quadrennial Defense Review" on September 30, shortly after the international terrorist attack in New York. It places even greater emphasis on "forcible entry" as one of the pillars of U.S. military strategy.

Analyzing the present state of affairs in the background of this strategy, the report said that although the United States has interests everywhere in the world, its military bases only exist in Western Europe and Northeast Asia, which is inadequate in the "new security environment" in which threats can emerge in any part of the world.

It said that "forcible entry" operations are necessary to overcome this problem by seizing and holding a military presence in the face of the region's government obstructing U.S. military deployment or lacking the capacity to take responsibility. The forcible entry operation will allow U.S. forces to construct necessary bases by disregarding the local government's protests by removing obstructions by force.

In other words, the United States has come to assert its hegemony to carry out war whenever it believes necessary even without a U.N. decision, and try to construct its military bases in foreign countries even without the consent of the local governments. All this is part of the established military policy of the United States.

There has never been such a flagrant disregard of the U.N. Charter or international law in the history of U.S. military strategy, including the period of "U.S.-Soviet confrontation." It is important to be aware of this dangerous development of U.S. hegemony in the military aspect, and criticize or denounce it.

Japan serves as the largest U.S. military base in Northeast Asia. The greater part of the U.S. military strategy is carried out with Japan as its foothold, which makes our international responsibility particularly important.

Historical outlook in world realigned

Sekiguchi: I see. Now, what is the other aspect?

Fuwa: It's about the outlook of the present-day world in relation to the U.S. hegemony taking shape. Is U.S. military-political strategy accepted without any problem in today's world? Absolutely not. This is precisely what we must understand about the present-day world.

In the present struggle against terrorist attacks, the world's nations have found it difficult to take issue with what the United States is doing simply because New York was a target and the United States was the victim. But, if the United States, taking advantage of the momentum it gained in the retaliatory war, tries to expand the war beyond Afghanistan, will the rest of the world be likely to follow suit? That is not what we expect to happen in the 21st century world. I think we must understand this point.

The point is that we should keep two aspects in our mind: the present danger of

U.S. hegemony and a historical outlook on the changing 21st century world.

I know there are pessimistic views about the world being dominated by the United States which asserts its hegemony and shatters hopes for a bright future in the 21st century. Such pessimism is not totally baseless, but at the same time, we cannot fulfill our responsibility for maintaining the world peace if we optimistically underestimate the threats of hegemony, assuming that no serious consequences will come out of the high-handed statements being made by senior U.S. government officials. We must look at both aspects in order to understand the direction of international efforts, activities, and struggles against hegemonism.

Sekiguchi: There are discrepancies among the governments siding with the United States in the retaliatory war. Specific ways of support for the war vary even among NATO members. Opposition persists to expanding the war beyond Afghanistan, as is voiced by a number of countries, including even Britain. Figures from a Gallup survey in several countries did not show that the public is in favor of the Bush administration's open-ended war.

Public opinion - the gap between the United States and the rest of the world

Fuwa: In the period of "U.S.-Soviet confrontation," the Western nations were compelled to maintain their unity with the United States at its center. Under those circumstances, the alliance's support for any open-ended actions by the United States were taken for granted. The Soviet Union is gone and the United States now stands out as the only super power in the rest of the world. Does this mean that this unity of the Western nations has got stronger? Apparently, the United States assumes so in developing its strategy, but that is not the reality.

Recently, figures from a survey caught my eye. That was a poll of the world's 275 opinion leaders who are influential people in politics, media, business, culture and government. It's interesting to note that U.S. respondents and non-U.S. respondents were starkly divided over the terrorist attacks and the retaliatory war.

Asked if many or most ordinary people consider U.S. policies to be a major cause of the Sep. 11 attacks, 18 percent of respondents from the United States said yes, and in the rest of the world, 58 percent answered yes.

While not a single American respondent believed the U.S. attacks on Afghanistan would be widely considered as an overreaction, 42 percent of non-Americans saw them as such, and 62 percent in Islamic countries.

Asked if the United States is taking into account its partners' interests in the fight against terrorism or acting mainly on its own interests, 70 percent of American respondents said it is taking into account its partners' interests, while 62 percent of those surveyed abroad answered the opposite.

In the international political arena, many countries are apparently taking sides with the United States, but there is a sharp discrepancy, or a crack, between American and non-American opinion leaders. I think these are interesting statistics that indicate an aspect of division in the present-day world.

Shoji: They really are.

Fuwa: These figures show that radical changes are under way in the political structure or political alignment of the world.

Even among the western nations that are playing various roles in assisting the U.S. retaliatory war, the forms and levels of their cooperation vary. No government in the world, except the Koizumi Cabinet, is acting only to show its loyalty to the United States.

Equally, Washington's suggestion that the war should be expanded to Iraq would face negative reactions from Britain, France, and Germany. Objections from Islamic nations were particularly vociferous.

What underlies these reactions is public opinion in these countries as expressed in poll which I have just referred to. European media criticisms of the actions and policies of the U.S. government were very severe. This is why any U.S. attempt to wield its hegemony to expand the war beyond Afghanistan may find those governments' reluctance to follow suit.

We are in a new era in which the Western allies are beginning to assert their independence in pursuit of their national interests. This is a clear departure from the era of "U.S.-Soviet confrontation" that marked the 20th century.

Asia, the Middle East, and Africa will become major arena

Sekiguchi: What do you think about the developments in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa?

Fuwa: On the issue of the anti-terrorism war, many nations in these regions have expressed their opinions more clearly than NATO nations at every turn of the situation.

In the present-day world, it is impressive to see that the nonaligned countries - mainly countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America - are exerting a greater influence on international politics.

One clear example is a U.N. General Assembly resolution two years ago.

The western nuclear powers used to try to hold back the movement toward the elimination of nuclear weapons by arguing for the "ultimate elimination" of nuclear weapons. In Japan, the government says it will make efforts as the government of the only atomic-bombed country to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons, but never fails to add the word "ultimate" to the "elimination."

Even the nuclear powers cannot openly oppose the elimination of nuclear weapons, so they use the prefix "ultimate" to imply that they are in favor of the elimination of nuclear weapons if it happens in a far distant future, but that should not happen now. The Japanese government has persistently used this tricky argument in the international political arena.

But the use of the term "ultimate elimination" crumbled in the U.N. General Assembly two years ago. The United States was compelled to agree with removing the word "ultimate" from "elimination of nuclear arsenals" at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in April and May 2000 that preceded the U.N. General Assembly, when it was unable to reject the argument by the nonaligned nations and other groups of nations calling for nuclear weapons abolition, including the "New Agenda Coalition" (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Sweden, Mexico, New Zealand, and South Africa) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). At the NPT Review Conference, all countries, including the United States, endorsed a final document that declared the "unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals." Later, at the U.N. General Assembly, a "New Agenda Coalition"-proposed resolution reconfirming the NPT Review Conference Final Document was adopted by an overwhelming majority. This is how the position of postponing nuclear weapons elimination until the distant future was rejected and the position of seeking to make it an urgent task of the world was recognized.

In the JCP 22nd Congress Resolution and Central Committee Report in November 1999, we emphasized the significance of the resolutions of the NPT Review Conference and the U.N. General Assembly. What we said was that these resolutions show that after many twists and turns, the movements of the nonaligned nations and the "New Agenda Coalition" were powerful enough to contain the resistance of the United States and other western nuclear powers and make them accept the reasonable argument for the elimination of the nuclear weapons in the international political arena. This clearly shows a major change taking place forecasting a new international political alignment in the 21st century.

Shoji: What did representatives of the government of Japan, the atomic-bombed country, do in those circumstances?

Fuwa: It's truly a shame that Japanese representatives to the NPT Review Conference persisted in calling for the "ultimate elimination" of nuclear weapons. But the United States could no longer defend its position and threw out the term "ultimate." This made Japanese delegates deeply ashamed, saying, "We have been deserted in the battle field." They were helpless.

The story did not end there. Last year, the Japanese government submitted a draft resolution on the issue of nuclear weapons to the U.N. General Assembly. It was adopted by a majority, but the "New Agenda Coalition" nations opted to abstain because the resolution would virtually allow nuclear weapons countries to backpedal on the promise that their nuclear arsenals will be eliminated, a promise reconfirmed by the U.N. General Assembly the previous year. It is outrageous that the Japanese government is trying to push back the international current into calling for the "ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons" in spite of the progress made so far, thus showing its blind loyalty to the United States.

What's more, the United States opposed the Japanese draft on the grounds that it includes a clause expressing approval of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The Japanese government thus found itself embarrassed when its loyalty to Washington was called into question.

The 21st century will certainly see the international current in favor of nuclear weapons abolition grow even stronger. It is necessary for the Japanese people to keep in mind the emerging international political alignment that will not allow the United States to force the world's nations to accept its hegemony. We should break away from the irresponsible attitude of following U.S. hegemony and stand in the forefront of the international movement for world peace to be established in opposition to hegemony.

Sekiguchi: After the terrorist attacks and the retaliatory war, the adverse current represented by U.S. hegemony is flagrant indeed. What you are saying is that hegemony may gain impetus temporarily, but that hegemony will not be able to dominate a course for the world because the currents that resist and restrain it will keep growing.

'Power' takes 'virtue'

Shoji: We discussed the "Northeast Asia International Conference." Professor Chi Myong-Kwan (director of the Hallym University Institute of Japanese Studies), who is one of the senior advisors to the NAIS, gave an interview to the Japanese monthly magazine "Sekai" (World). In the interview published in the January issue of the magazine, he argued that real 'power' takes 'virtue,' adding that without virtue, power will be no more than a violence. Pointing out that the United States uses state-of-the-art weapons to carry out air strikes or intimidations wherever it wants to, he stated: "The United States is no longer a country that can earn trust for its spiritual elements; it is only feared for its military power. This signifies the beginning of the fall of U.S. unipolar domination or hegemony.

In a really Korean-style implicative description he meant to point out that highhanded approaches without any great cause are no longer accepted in today's world.

Fuwa: To borrow the words of Professor Chi Miyong-Kwan, the group of nonaligned countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America is much smaller than the major powers in terms of military and economic power. The GNP (Gross National Product) of Asia's 22 countries (including India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, but excluding Japan) combined is smaller than that of Japan alone, although they constitute a great force with a population of 3.2 billion.

Still, these countries are taking a very active part in international politics, upholding objectives consistent with international justice and world peace. This is what Professor Chi Myong-Kwan calls "virtue." This virtue had enough of an impact to break through the thick wall of U.S. government arrogance in tackling the elimination of nuclear weapons. The new world order is growing out of the old one. It is crucial for us to recognize this.

What Kind of World Should We Construct?

Sekiguchi: Let's change the subject. What will the world be like in the 21st

century? What should we focus on? I think this is a matter of great interest for many at present.

Fuwa: U.S. hegemony is so flagrant that it is important that politically aware forces throughout the world stand up to fight the outrageous activities of hegemonism. This point was strongly emphasized at the JCP Congress two years ago.

Talking about our vision for a future world, I think we should devote our efforts to building an international order of peace pertinent to the 21st century.

Task is to build an international order that gives the U.N. Charter renewed life

Fuwa: Last October, in an interview with daily Asahi Shimbun entitled, "Have Terrorist Attacks Changed the World?" (*English translation was published in a Japan Press Weekly Special Issue - December 2001*), I made a two-point proposal.

One is the need to increase real efforts to build an international order of peace based on the U.N. Charter.

The U.N. Charter was produced to reflect the lessons of World War II, that there must be no more wars like the last world war. Unfortunately, international politics in the "U.S.-Soviet confrontation" era was manipulated by the calculations of these two superpowers, and for many years the U.N. Charter was far from being allowed to play an active role in establishing a peaceful world order. The Soviet Union is gone, but U.S. hegemony stands in the way toward establishing an international order guided by the U.N. Charter.

But we must not forget that the U.N. Charter is one of the most valuable legacies the 21st century has taken over from the previous century. So a major task in the 21st century is for us to let the U.N. Charter guide the real effort to establish a peaceful international order.

This does not mean, however, that the present United Nations has the capacity to perform the roles stipulated in the U.N. Charter. In dealing with the issue of the terrorist attacks and the retaliatory war, for instance, the United Nations was helpless to do anything to resist the retaliatory war, although there have been aspects that can be evaluated as an effort to respond to these developments in a reasoned manner based on international law.

The United Nations is an international assembly in which more than 180 nations participate in serious discussions for peace. It also provides an arena for common action for peace based on points agreed upon. The 21st century will be an era in which a major international movement or international common effort will emerge to realize the fundamental objectives: to allow the United Nations to use its capacity to defend peace in conformity with the U.N. Charter and to establish a U.N.-led international order.

For a century of progress in 'peaceful coexistence of different

cultures'

Shoji: The other point you made in that interview was concerning the "peaceful co-existence of different cultures." It had an eye-opening impact.

Fuwa: The present-day world consists of nations with different cultural and economic values. Each country or nation has its own life style and cultural tradition and economic as well as political systems rooted in its history. People in each country explore and achieve their own way of social progress based on their historical gains. Human values that are shared universally may develop, but they must not be imposed from the outside.

In the past, however, it was often the case that western nations forced other people to unconditionally accept the "values" established in their societies on the grounds that the west represented the most advanced part of the world in economic terms. Behind this is the history of colonization carried out in many regions of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America by those monopoly capitalist countries.

The 21st century will be an era in which the world's nations will establish a single international community on an equal footing. In that sense, the major task in this century is for us to explore the path toward the peaceful co-existence of different cultures with different values.

That is what I have felt acutely through my visits to Asian countries. I have been prompted to make this proposal by the present issue of terrorist attacks and the retaliatory war, and the ominous phrase, "clash of civilizations."

I think it is increasingly important for all nations or ethnic groups to stop imposing their own cultures or economic and political systems upon others as supreme values and take the attitude of respecting each other's values. Today, coexistence with Islamic nations has become a major focus of attention, but such coexistence is very important everywhere in the present-day world.

Sekiguchi: The Islamic world has a population of 1.2 billion in 57 member nations of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, thus constituting a major part of the world.

Fuwa: Recently, a JCP research team visited Pakistan to conduct research on comprehensive problems, including the Afghan refugee problem. They received the cooperation of the Pakistani government in many ways. So, after their return home, Ogata Yasuo and other team members visited the Pakistani Embassy. At the embassy, coffee was served, but not for the ambassador. Asked for the reason, the ambassador replied that they were in Ramadan. Even those who work as diplomats in Japan observe Ramadan. This is how Islamic society practices cultural traditions.

Sekiguchi: I see.

Fuwa: Speaking of the "co-existence of different cultures," the capitalist world had a dramatic experience early in the 20th century. When the Socialist regime came into being in Russia in 1917, the immediate reaction the capitalist world showed was one of fervent rejection of any system other than capitalism in the world. And that feeling was translated into an interventionist war against Russia by 14 capitalist

nations led by Winston Churchill of Britain, the aim being to destroy the socialist regime.

In Russia, Lenin had already developed the concept of "peaceful coexistence" with capitalist countries, but the capitalist world did not come to embrace the idea until the interventionist war ended in failure. In 1922, an international conference was held in Genoa to discuss the postwar reconstruction of Europe. Adopting the idea of "peaceful coexistence" with differing economic systems, the conference invited Socialist Russia to take part in the discussion. I think this is one of the important lessons we can learn from the 20th century.

I hope we can make use of this lesson to make the 21st century a century of progress in terms of the "peaceful coexistence" of cultures with different values.

(To be continued)

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