

Appeal from Okinawa, where the U.S. Bases occupy a vast area of the land for 57 years.

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After the Second World War, Japan and a group of countries led by the United States concluded the San Francisco Treaty of Peace in 1951. By this treaty the United States achieved its strategy to make peace settlement without the Soviet Union. Okinawa was reconstructed as an important base of the American Far East Strategy because of its geographical conditions. In the treaty the Japanese government agreed to America's free-hand activities in Okinawa until it would be brought to the United Nations for trusteeship. The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, concluded at the same time, allowed America to station its forces in Japan to permit joint operation in case of an attack against Japan and, it is claimed, to maintain peace and security in the Far East.

A quarter of total of 600 hundred thousand residents of Okinawa were killed in the recent war. Occupation of Okinawa by the United States was carried out with violence, dispelling the Okinawan residents with guns, demolishing houses with bulldozers to construct vast military bases including Kadena airport, the biggest U.S. base in the eastern hemisphere. The residents were robbed of dwellings and farmlands. Penniless residents of Iejima Island staged a "beggars' parade" to appeal outrageous conducts of American Forces to people of entire Okinawa, of Japan and of the world. The residents were helpless before the military power of American Forces, but, spiritually, they were in a superior position to teach them lessons. No army, neither friend nor enemy, can defend people – this is what the recent war taught the Okinawan, who were drafted to fight battles in this tiny island, including young boys about age of 15.

Those who survived the war found their land occupied by vast American bases, from where American aircrafts would take off in the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, for the attack in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the retaliatory war in Afghanistan during 57 years until 2002. The reasons asserted by America to wage wars in remote countries change with times. In the earliest period it was a "threat of Communism", which made way for the "rogue nations." Today it is "axis of evil."

The actual threat to the Okinawan residents, however, has always been the Armed Forces of the United States. During the occupation no one could go out of Okinawa against its will. Water system, electric power and banks were all under its control. In 1956 Senaga Kamejiro, the most abhorrent person of all for American military authority, was elected a mayor. After having tried strife within the parliament and a suspension of banking, which triggered the residents' backlash, the occupying army eventually purged him by means of an arbitrary law dictated by the then high commissioner.

American Forces had plenty of nuclear and non nuclear weapons to deal with armed enemies. They had to retreat inch by inch before the Okinawan residents, who took a peaceful and rational tactics in their resistance. Until its return to Japan in 1972, Okinawa had only nominal autonomy and the sovereign of American Forces could change any law without the slightest difficulty. High commissioner Callaway, who was given a nickname of "The King of Okinawa", once declared that autonomy was nothing but a myth for the Okinawan residents. He was the very person who fully

enjoyed the American-style freedom and arbitrary decisions.

There were times, of course, when American Forces, a pragmatic ruler, made concessions, but never with essential issues such as free-hand control of the military bases and transit of nuclear weapons into Okinawa. This intention on the U.S. side was a driving motive lying behind Okinawa's reversion to the homeland: they had a perception that the demand of the Okinawan residents for reversion of the island to Japan might, if left untouched, lead to a removal of the American bases altogether.

In his book, Wakaizumi Takashi, a proxy for Prime Minister Sato, refers to the background of the time. "Thus the complicated negotiation came to a conclusion thanks to the behaviors of farsight wisdom and political good sense. An avoided crisis makes no big news. On the surface, America seemed to have made concessions. In reality we saved the U.S.-Japan relationship. America accepted withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Okinawa as well as a set of restraints on usage of the conventional weapons. By doing so, we have avoided losing everything. The American bases in Okinawa are made use of after 1972 just as efficiently as before, without interference whatsoever or large scale public oppositions. On top of that, the Okinawa negotiations laid a foundation for an improved partnership between America and Japan." (Kissinger's Secret Memoir, 1979, "I am willing to believe that there was no alternative", Wakaizumi Takashi, p495) Despite all this, the Okinawan residents have virtually defused Article 3 of the Sanfrancisco Peace Treaty, which made Okinawa a trust territory of America.

They applied the similar tactic to the 10.21 Protest Rally of 85,000 irate Okinawan residents in 1995 in response to a rape of a girl by a marine. In order to meet the need for a base appropriate for V22 Osprey, Washington announced with fanfare an agreement to return the old and outdated Futenma Base in exchange for a brandnew huge offshore base. The seven years allowance for relocation is expiring as soon as in 2003, but construction of the new base has not yet started in the face of the residents' antibase movement.

Now Washington demands Japan to go over the share of burden to that of military forces, as was insisted in the Armitage Report (October 2002). Japan contributed one trillion yen to support the Gulf War. Now Washington demands the use of military forces in the retaliatory war in Afghanistan. In the 2002 Presidential Speech President Bush called Iran, Iraq and the North Korea the "Axis of Evil", listing them as the potential targets of attacks by American weapons including nuclear ones. In response to it, the Japanese government submitted three emergency laws to the Diet in April 2002. There is no doubt that Japan, the only victim of nuclear bombing, now stands at the watershed between peace and war after refraining from using military forces as a means to settle international disputes for 57 years.

How can we make the U.S. government reconsider its intention to govern the world with military forces, dumping ABM and NPT Treaty? We, Japanese people, including the Okinawan residents, carry on movements for peace and nonviolence. It goes without saying that movements within America will tie the hands of belligerent Bush Administration. I hope all the peace-loving individuals who participated in the 15th IPPNW World Convention will exert the greatest effort.