

CHAPTER 8

The Road to the Reversion of Okinawa Comparing Decision-making Processes: Japan and the U.S.

Makoto Iokibe

Professor

Kobe University

1. The Okinawa Problem for Japan and the U.S.

In the following section, I will outline what the problem of the Okinawa Reversion meant for Japan and the United States.

(1) "Okinawa" to the Japanese

First of all, Okinawa was a territorial problem which had critical implications for nationalism. There were few if any Japanese who did not wish to recover territories lost as a result of World War Two. Reflecting this sentiment, following the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference, every Japanese Prime Minister touched upon Okinawa at each opportunity for talks with a President of the United States. As this was a politico-security issue, Prime Ministers Nobusuke Kishi and Eisaku Sato, who were brothers by blood and who both placed greater emphasis on grand politics, raised the issue more insistently with the Americans than Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda, who preferred to discuss economic issues.

Second, to the Japanese, Okinawa was a problem affecting friendly relations with the United States. There were two aspects to this. One was that Okinawa was a problem which could be solved only through negotiations with the U.S. The problem therefore was one which had to be solved by a pro-American administration. If a pro-American administration could realize this national desire, that administration would not only have contributed to the advancement of Japan's national interests, but would also have proved to the Japanese that it had been taken seriously and respected by the American Government. If, however, the

requests of the pro-American administration with respect to Okinawa were treated coolly by the American Government, the *raison d'être* of the pro American administration within Japanese politics would come to be questioned. The other aspect was that Okinawa was a problem which could conceivably damage friendly relations between the U.S. and Japan. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs was skeptical towards any proposals to bring up the subject of Okinawa, especially because it both knew the strategic value of Okinawa for the Americans and placed great emphasis on friendly U.S.-Japanese relations.

In other words, for a pro-American administration, the reversion of Okinawa had the potential for being an enormous achievement if it could be realized, but at the same time it could be disastrous if it were attempted and did not materialize. The damage caused to a pro-American administration was therefore smaller if Okinawa was not brought up at all. To put it another way, Okinawa was, for a pro-American Japanese administration, full of dilemmas in that it was both the most attractive and the most dangerous issue on the agenda.

Third, Okinawa was also a symbol of anti-Americanism within Japan. The control of Okinawa by the U.S. for strategic purposes was the ideal target for Japanese postwar anti-Americanism, which was leftist and tended to be strongly pacifist. In comparison to the conservative nationalists who supported the Sato government's negotiations concerning the reversion of Okinawa, the leftist nationalists openly expressed their anti-Americanism, and

launched a "Recapture Okinawa Movement." This group not only called for the return of administrative rights over Okinawa, but also wished for the return of all American military bases in both Okinawa and the Japanese mainland. In other words, they were opposed to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty itself.

Conservative and progressive (kakushin) forces in postwar Japan had continuously confronted each other over Japan's relation to the Pax Americana system. Okinawa became an issue which radicalized this confrontation, and the question of whether the "Okinawa Reversion Negotiation" forces or the "Recapture Okinawa Movement" forces would prevail was one which had the potential for greatly altering the Japanese political map and the international political map of the Western Pacific in the 1970s.

(2) "Okinawa" to the U.S.

What did the Okinawa problem mean to the United States? The Okinawa problem was not a national political issue but a problem which mainly concerned the Pentagon and Foggy Bottom. First of all, it was a problem concerning the Pentagon. Since the U.S. had obtained administrative rights over Okinawa with the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the U.S. could freely use its bases on Okinawa without worrying about changes in the local political climate, unlike its other military bases in Japan or elsewhere in Asia. In particular, as the war in Vietnam escalated, the Pentagon did not want to lose the free use of its Okinawan military bases.

Secondly, Okinawa was a major problem with respect to U.S.-Japan relations. If the Okinawa problem were handled incorrectly, the danger existed that relations with Japan, which was the only industrialized and friendly country in Asia, would be damaged. Given the extraordinary intensity of anti-American nationalism at the time of the 1960 Security Treaty problem, it was uncertain whether a 1970 Security Treaty problem could be easily weathered. Anti-war movements and anti-American feelings within Japan had already grown stronger with the escalation of the Vietnam War, and if a 1970 Security Treaty problem erupted simultaneously with the closely

related territorial problem of Okinawa, U.S.-Japanese relations could founder. For the Japan Desk at Foggy Bottom, which was concerned about such a situation, the Okinawa problem was an extremely critical problem for U.S.-Japan relations and for the overall Asian policy of the U.S. in 1970 and beyond. That being the case, it was a problem which both the White House and Capitol Hill had to handle seriously.

The majority of Americans, however, had no interest in such a problem. Fortunately, neither the American Government nor the people had territorial ambitions. The problem was therefore one which could be handled by the government, taking into account the effects on American military capabilities and relations with the friendly country. This is in direct contrast to the situation in Japan, where the Okinawa problem was of national concern.

2. Decision-Making processes of the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations

Next, the decision-making processes of Japan and the United States will be compared. In the case of the Okinawa problem, it appears that the processes were quite different from the commonly-held images of such processes in both countries. Generally speaking, the President plays a very large role in the forming of U.S. foreign policy, while in Japan, the Prime Minister assumes the role of reconciling different views and makes policy through a consensus, based upon the minute preparations made by the bureaucratic apparatus. In certain phases of the Okinawa Reversion, however, precisely the opposite took place.

It should be noted that the decision-making process in both countries (and especially in the United States) differed considerably before and after November 1967. A discussion of the process leading up to the Okinawa Reversion must therefore be divided into two periods: the first half, which was the period before November 1967, and the second half, which was the period that followed.

(1) The Kennedy Period

The person who was responsible for bringing the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference to a successful conclusion was John

Foster Dulles, who had been appointed as special ambassador by President Harry S. Truman. Dulles had served the Eisenhower Administration for eight years as its Secretary of State, and had therefore managed American policy towards Japan throughout the 1950s.

Regarding Okinawa, Dulles had recognized only the "residual sovereignty" of Japan, and with respect to administrative rights over Okinawa, he took the position that, "So long as the conditions of threat and tension exist in the Far East, the U.S. will find it necessary to continue the present status."¹ Since it was not possible for "the conditions of threat and tension" to cease to exist, Dulles had therefore taken the position that the U.S. would not relinquish its military bases or administrative rights in Okinawa for the foreseeable future—at least while the Cold War continued.

In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy expressed the situation from the opposite standpoint and gave the problem a fresh orientation. Although the Pentagon had not changed its position that there were military reasons why Okinawa must be retained, some notable persons emerged who stressed the need to return Okinawa. One was the American Ambassador to Japan, Edwin O. Reischauer, and the other was Senator Mike Mansfield². Ambassador Reischauer attempted to persuade the President through Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who visited Japan in January 1962. On March 19, 1962, President Kennedy released the following statement on the Ryukyu Islands: "I recognize the Ryukyus to be a part of the Japanese homeland and look forward to the day when the security interests of the Free World will permit their restoration to full Japanese sovereignty." Although it could be said that nothing new had been said, since Kennedy had not specified a target date for the return of Okinawa, his statement changed the nuance of the American position. He expected the "eventual restoration" of the administration of the Ryukyus, and in preparation for such an event, the self-government and welfare of the population of Okinawa would be enhanced. Although at the time, in consideration of the Pentagon's position, the Kayser Commission

report was suppressed so as to avoid touching upon the subject of the return of administrative rights in Okinawa, Kennedy had established a long-term vision through his own statement.

This is a good example of the positive exercise of leadership in America, in which the President personally listens to the views of his trustworthy advisers and publicly presents a new direction in policy. Nevertheless, the principal thesis in Washington at that time was still the Pentagon's position, which was that Okinawa would be controlled for an indefinite period, and the prevailing atmosphere was still that any direct negation of such a position was tantamount to a political offense which would damage the national security interests of the United States. This situation did not change until 1967.

(2) The Johnson Period

As the saying goes, "New wine should be poured into new wineskins." Such is the case in the United States: Newly-elected presidents always set up their own decision-making systems. A typical example of such a system is the one set up by Franklin D. Roosevelt, who enlarged the leadership role of the president by going over the heads of the bureaucracy and giving important roles to individuals who could represent some facet of Roosevelt's own will. Another example is the system established by Roosevelt's successor, Harry S. Truman, who entrusted much to the Cabinet members with formal responsibility over the problem in question, and who respected the advice of such Cabinet members while making the critical decisions himself.

President Lyndon B. Johnson was not as good at handling foreign affairs as he was at domestic matters, and most of the energy which he expended on foreign issues was spent on the Vietnam War. In most foreign policy issues, therefore, President Johnson adopted Truman's style. Okinawa in particular was a case which was suited to a style of decision-making in which Secretary of States Dean Rusk would cooperate with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and form a consensus between the civilian and military branches of the government, after which they would advise the President.

In accordance with that policy, the system of a Senior Interdepartmental Group (SIG) and Interdepartmental Regions Groups (IRGs) was set up within the bureaucracy in 1966, as a new policymaking apparatus. One of the IRGs which was formed was the Special Ryukyu Islands Working Group, chaired by Richard Sneider, the Japan Desk of the State Department. The view is now common that, generally speaking, the interdepartmental consensus-building organizations were not able to produce very satisfactory results. The Sneider Group was, however, a notable exception.⁽³⁾

The work of this group served as the impetus for reversal of Washington's understanding of the Okinawa problem. It soon became clear that, in the case of conventional weapons, it made little real difference whether the Okinawan bases were placed under the control of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty or whether they remained under the direct administration of the U.S. as bases which the Americans could freely use. (The issue of American nuclear weapons, however, was a different problem.) Which, then, was the more desirable scenario: A worsening of U.S.-Japan relations without the return of Okinawa to Japan, or the continued use of bases in Okinawa following the return of Okinawa and the subsequent strengthening of U.S.-Japan relations? It was a matter well worth considering. Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs Morton Halperin, who was the Defense Department's member in the Sneider group, worked excellently together with Sneider, and was especially responsible for persuading the Pentagon.

By the summer of 1967, Halperin had obtained the approval of both his superior, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs John McNaughton, and Secretary of Defense McNamara. In private, Secretary of State Rusk also took a favorable stance towards Sneider's position. More than a few members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff continued to be opposed to any change in the status of the Okinawan bases, and McNamara and Rusk continued to take a careful position in public.

3. The Initiative of the Sato Administration

It was not until Sato became Prime Minister, in November 1964, that the Japanese government actively started to work towards the reversion of Okinawa. Until then, the understanding reached in the early 1950s between Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida and Dulles, which confirmed that Japan possessed residual sovereignty over Okinawa, was as far as previous Japanese prime ministers had gotten with American presidents regarding Okinawa. In the June 1957 summit between Eisenhower and Kishi and the June 1961 summit between Kennedy and Ikeda, Washington rejected the reversion of Okinawa, making the removal of "threat and tension... in the Far East" a condition for such reversion.

In March 1962, as mentioned above, Kennedy released his statement that he was "look(ing) forward to the day" of "eventual restoration" of full sovereignty to Japan. At the time, it was still unclear whether this was merely a rhetorical change, or if it was a notice of real changes to come. Such was the situation when Sato decided to challenge Prime Minister Ikeda in the Liberal Democratic Party President elections, which were planned for July 1964. In order to prepare his policy platform, Sato established a brain trust, "Sato Operation" (S-OPE), centering around Minoru Kusuda, a reporter for the newspaper *Sankei Shimbun*. The group proposed that negotiations be conducted for the reversion of Okinawa, along with efforts to improve relations with China, and Sato agreed to these proposals in May 1964⁽⁴⁾. Although Sato lost the July elections by a narrow margin, he was appointed Prime Minister following the resignation of Ikeda in November 1964 due to illness.

Sato immediately decided on a visit to the U.S., and began preparing for a summit meeting with President Johnson. In December 1964, preparations for requesting the reversion of Okinawa were carried out, led by Chief Cabinet Secretary Tomisaburo Hashimoto and Special Regional Division Chief of the Prime Minister's Office Kokichi Yamano. Nobuyuki Nakajima, Director, First North America Division of the Foreign Ministry, joined the process, and a set

of talking papers was prepared. During the process, Yamano was notified that the Prime Minister planned to visit Okinawa in the summer of 1965⁽⁵⁾. The distinctive character of the decision-making process involved in the Okinawa Reversion is evident in these events. Okinawa was placed on the foreign policy agenda, not by the bureaucracy, but by a decision made by the Prime Minister, bases upon the advise of his private brain trust, and the Okinawa policy which was formed in this manner was to be carried out under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

Despite Prime Minister Sato's zeal, all he obtained in the January 1965 Sato-Johnson summit was a reconfirmation of Kennedy's March 1962 statement. In other words, Johnson, the new President, gave him only the fine-sounding phrase that he was "looking forward to the day" when Okinawa could be returned. In August 1965, Sato visited Okinawa, as scheduled, and made clear his determination to realize the reversion of Okinawa by standing, "Until Okinawa is reverted to the Motherland, the postwar period for Japan will not end." Sato had thus staked his political fate on this goal.

It was thus in 1965 that the Sato Administration identified the Okinawa Reversion as a critical issue. Although this was after President Kennedy had started to take a new approach to the issue, bases upon the advise of Reischauer and Mansfield and the Kayser Report, it preceded by two years the debate over a change in policy within the Washington bureaucracy, which did not begin until 1967. After the Kennedy statement, the Okinawa problem was largely forgotten within Washington. Prime Minister Sato's official request to President Johnson, however, forced Washington to reconsider the problem. At the same time, Sneider, who had been closely observing political processes within Japan, had been following the statements of Sato, who was trying to realize the reversion of Okinawa within a pro-American framework, and the activities of a number of other movements, including the anti-Sato camp. Sneider responded by reorienting the activities of his Interdepartmental Group in Washington towards a reconsideration

of policy towards Okinawa.

During this period, Prime Minister Sato was supported by a number of groups regarding the Okinawa problem. At the political level, Hashimoto, Kiichi Aichi and Toshio Kimura were in positions of responsibility within the Prime Minister's closest circle of advisers, while Yamano of the Prime Minister's Office was responsible at the working level. The activities of S-OPE as a brain trust were formalized, for all practical purposes, following the appointment of Kusuda as the Prime Minister's Chief Secretary in March 1967. In addition, the groups which had been directing nationalistic civilian activities played major roles. Ichiro Suetsugu, who had been energetically directing civilian movements concerning demobilization, war crimes and territorial problems, cooperated with Noboru Takeshita in the early 1960s in the creation of a Youth Organization for Overseas Cooperation (i.e. a Peace Corps). As a result, he acquired a channel of communications with the Sato faction of the Liberal Democratic Party, and from early 1965 he supported, through Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeshita, the efforts of the government to tackle the Okinawa problem. Together with Nobumoto Ohama, the President of Waseda University and Chairman of the Nanpo Doho Engokai (Southern Compatriots' Support Committee), and Secretary-General Tsugunobu Yoshida, Suetsugu created a forum of scholars and other intellectuals, and made efforts to increase public support for the reversion of Okinawa. The group of scholars represented by Ohama became the advisory committee for the Prime Minister known as the "Committee on Okinawa and Other Problems" (in Japanese, "Okinawa Mondai To Kondankai," hereinafter referred to as the Okinawa Committee) in August 1967.

It was this committee which played a key role in the development of Okinawa policy, preparatory to the second Sato-Johnson summit in November 1967. Between August 16 and November 1, 1967, the Okinawa Committee held seven meetings. Prime Minister Sato personally attended these meetings and actively participated in the discussions. Foreign Minister Takeo Miki, Vice Minister Nobuhiko Ushiba and two other

high officials of the Foreign Ministry also were regular participants at the meetings, but it was the Prime Minister, Ohama and Kimura who led the discussions, while Yamano served as secretary. The Okinawa Committee therefore assumed the nature of a temporary civilian-governmental supreme committee regarding the Okinawa problem.

After discussing the return of administrative rights and the status of the military bases, the members of the Okinawa Committee found themselves in opposition over whether or not Japan should demand a target date for the reversion of Okinawa at the November 1967 summit. The Foreign Ministry questioned a time limit of "one or two years," as Suetsugu and Yoshida had advocated. In the Interim Report, which was drafted by Ohama, it was decided that an agreement would be sought whereby "the date for the return of administrative rights would be determined within a few years."⁶⁷ It had thus been decided to seek a promise regarding the date of reversion before the "1970 Security Treaty" problem materialized.

During that time, the Foreign Ministry was not asleep, either. Director, First North America Division, North American Affairs Bureau, Kazuo Chiba and others were energetically gathering information. In September 1967, Foreign Minister Miki visited the U.S., met Secretary of State Rusk and requested the reversion of Okinawa. Rusk responded by asking, "How much responsibility is Japan prepared to accept?" While Rusk thus maintained his official position of caution, he agreed to the opening of discussions regarding reversion. Afterwards, Director General, North American Affairs Bureau, Fumihiko Togo and others pressed forwards with their American counterparts in the drafting of a joint communiqué, to be released during the summit meeting. Although they had agreed to discussions with the eventual objective of reversion, the Americans steadfastly refused to state clearly the date by which reversion would take place. Within the Japanese government, the Foreign Ministry also took this position. The Foreign Ministry was apprehensive that any demand by the Japanese for such a timetable

during the Vietnam War and one year before the U.S. presidential elections, would catch the Americans at one of the worst times possible, militarily and politically, and would create a difficult problem⁶⁸. Although the Foreign Ministry eventually learned that the American government had finally agreed, in principle, to reversion, it felt that it was its responsibility to deter the Japanese from making excessive demands based on over-optimistic expectations about the American response.

In comparison, the members of the Okinawa Committee had been pursuing all along the resolution of the Okinawa problem as a postwar problem, from a nationalistic standpoint, and recognized the basic problem was how to realize the early reversion of Okinawa. In addition, Suetsugu and others visited the U.S. in April 1966 and March 1967, and had been impressed by the change in Washington regarding Okinawa. Although they had received a cool response during their 1966 visit, the number of American officials in high places who showed a friendly or flexible response had increased by the time of their 1967 visit. The problem for the Okinawa Committee members was therefore whether or not the Japanese had the will to realize the reversion and how such reversion was to be realized, any they felt that the time was ripe to make one final push in order to achieve success⁶⁹. Prime Minister Sato would follow this policy of the Okinawa Committee during the summit meeting.

A few days before his own departure for the U.S., Prime Minister Sato sent a personal emissary to Washington. The emissary met Walt Rostow, the President's National Security Advisor, and relayed the Prime Minister's request that reversion be slated for sometime "within a few years." Ambassador Alexis Johnson, who had arrived in Washington five days before Prime Minister Sato arrived in the U.S., met the Prime Minister in Seattle on November 12. The next day, in the airplane on their way to Washington, the Prime Minister and the Ambassador talked alone, for three hours. In response to Sato's strong request that the phrase "within a few years" be inserted into the communiqué, Johnson said the conditions in

Japan for setting a date for reversion had not been fulfilled yet. This preparatory meeting in the airplane was crucial to what followed in Washington. The memorandum prepared on this day by Rostow for the President reads, "A principal item of business—the formula for handling the Ryukyus in the communiqué—is still being negotiated out. Ambassador Johnson is travelling with the Prime Minister from the West Coast and will be in this evening."⁹ and states that he will be back with the words of "within a few years."

In the evening, after his arrival in Washington, the Prime Minister made clear during a meeting at Blair House, where he was staying during his visit, his intention to ask the President for reversion "within a few years." Upon hearing this, Togo of the Foreign Ministry could not help but feel perplexed. Draft work on the communiqué continued, with the diplomats applying all of their technical skills to the wording. In the summit meetings that began the next day, Sato emphasized that, with the reversion of Okinawa, Japan's national security responsibilities would be increased, and that the functions of the Okinawan military bases would not be damaged. After receiving the approval of the congressional leaders, President Johnson finally accepted the target date of "within a few years."

The decision-making process outlined above is a complete reversal of the popular image of the process commonly preferred in each country. The United States is generally characterized by a top-down process, in which the President exercises strong leadership, while Japan is noted for a bottom-up process, in which the Prime Minister approves a policy which has been carefully prepared by the bureaucracy. In the case discussed above, however, President Johnson adopted a cautious and careful bottom-up method, while Prime Minister Sato displayed strong leadership in taking a top-down approach. Sato personally controlled the entire process, from placing the Okinawa problem on the agenda, to formulating policy, making decisions and conducting negotiations.

As Haruhiro Fukui has pointed out, there are more examples than is commonly believed in

post-World War Two Japan of a small group of persons, centered on the Prime Minister, exercising leadership in resolving critical ground-breaking foreign policy issues. Fukui called this type of decision-making process a "critical decision model," to be distinguished from the "routine decision model."¹⁰

Prime Minister Yoshida managed the entire process leading up to the signing of the 1951 Peace Treaty and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and Prime Minister Kishi did likewise for the reversion of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. In that respect, Sato can be said to have followed examples. In contrast to Yoshida and Kishi, however, who were both able to utilize and rely on the Foreign Ministry, Sato was not able to receive the active cooperation of the Foreign Ministry at this early stage. Sato therefore had to create his own team of governmental and civilian advisers. In this respect, therefore, Sato's method is similar to that taken by Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama during the normalization of Soviet-Japanese relations in 1956. Hatoyama was able to put the normalization issue on the agenda, in the face of opposition by the Foreign Ministry, then led by Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu. Once the negotiations with the Soviets began, however, they were placed under the control of Shigemitsu, who considered the Foreign Ministry his own semi-autonomous kingdom. While Hatoyama was able to reserve the right of final decision for himself, he was unable to exercise direct personal control over the entire process. (If Foreign Minister Miki had been able to exercise some sort of independent control over the Okinawa reversion negotiations, the decision-making process in the Okinawa reversion case would have been similar to that in the 1956 Soviet-Japan negotiations.) In every respect, therefore, the Okinawa reversion can be said to have been a case of the Prime Minister exercising the strongest degree of control.

4. "Nuclear-Free, Mainland-Level" Reversion

(1) Normalization of Japanese Government Organizations

At the summit meeting, it was decided that

the Bonin Islands (Japanese name: Ogasawara Islands) would be returned within one year, and that the date for the reversion of Okinawa would be set within a few years. Afterwards, the role of the Japanese Foreign Ministry was expanded in the negotiations conducted on the matter between the U.S. and Japan. Why?

First, the Foreign Ministry, while unable to recognize adequately the change in Washington in 1967, led by Sneider and Halperin, was able to see the results of such change for during the summit. The United States Government, including the Pentagon, had agreed to the reversion. Since a decision had been made in favor of reversion, the Foreign Ministry had no choice but to make every effort to effect the best reversion possible.

Second, the reversion process of the Bonins was set into motion, while the Okinawa issue entered the stage at which the conditions for reversion would be negotiated. That was a stage at which the technical capabilities of the Foreign Ministry were useful, and the character of the negotiations were such that the Foreign Ministry alone was qualified to handle them. The issues of national sovereignty and the application of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty were the forte of the Foreign Ministry.

Third, in its personnel transfers and appointments of 1967 and 1968, the Foreign Ministry prepared a lineup for the handing of the Okinawa reversion negotiations. The best and brightest of the Foreign Ministry, including first and foremost the security experts who had starred in the drafting of the 1960 Security Treaty, were placed in all of the key positions. Ambassador to the U.S. Takezo Shimoda, Vice-Minister Ushiba, Vice-Minister Haruki Mori, Director General, North American Affairs Bureau, Togo, Counsellor, North American Affairs Bureau, Yoshio Ogawara, Director, North America Division, Chiba, Deputy Head, North America Division, Yukio Sato, Director General, Treaties Bureau, Shoji Sato, Vice Director-General, Treaties Bureau, Masuro Takashima, and Director, Treaties Division, Toshiji Nakajima were among those who came to play major roles.

Forth, a change in Foreign Ministers was

made in 1968. Foreign Minister Miki had been more a potential rival for power than a member of Prime Minister Sato's team. U.S. Ambassador Johnson realized this, and constantly strove to maintain a direct channel with Prime Minister Sato, even as he negotiated with Miki. During the period when Miki was Foreign Minister, Prime Minister Sato, Miki and the Foreign Ministry were unable to function as a single, well-coordinated machine. In the November 1968 elections for Liberal Democratic Party President, Miki had to resign his portfolio in order to challenge Sato. After winning a third term as Party President, Sato appointed his trusted friend Aichi to the Foreign Minister position. As a result, it became easier for the Prime Minister and the Foreign Ministry to establish a more cooperative relationship.

The Sato Administration had also prepared its negotiating team. It consisted of Chief Cabinet Secretary Toshio Kimura and Chief Cabinet Secretary Shigeru Hori, and was a "blue-ribbon team" in terms of talent and ability.

In this way, the Japanese Government prepared its organization for the reversion negotiations, but it was then forced to wait a while. The 1968 presidential election campaign was underway in the U.S., the Vietnam War was turning into a nasty quagmire, and President Johnson had announced his intention not to seek a second term in office. It was therefore necessary to wait until a new president was elected, and until he had formed a new team and determined his foreign policy.

(2) The Decision-Making Process of the Nixon Administration

Upon his election, Richard Nixon immediately formed his team. In December 1968, he appointed Henry Kissinger as his National Security Adviser. Kissinger asked Halperin, his former Harvard colleague, to join the National Security Council (NSC) staff, and simultaneously asked Halperin for advice regarding the formation of a decision-making system on the NSC. Halperin proposed a system in which officers from various Departments would form a consulting committee under the NSC, and this was approved by Kissinger and Nixon. In addition, Halperin recommended

Sneider for the NSC staff, as an expert on Far Eastern affairs, and this was also approved.

Even while the election campaign was in progress, Nixon had announced that he would follow the policy of Okinawa reversion which had been agreed upon by Sato and Johnson. But the addition of Halperin and Sneider to the NSC staff, which was destined to play a key role in the formulation of policy by the new administration, made it that much more certain that the Nixon administration would inherit the previous administration's Okinawa policy. The details of that have been excellently described by the paper which has been submitted to this conference by Halperin himself, and probably need not be repeated here.

In the first NSC meeting, held on January 21, 1969, one day after Nixon's inauguration, the decision was made to give high priority to the resolution of issues involving Japan, including the Okinawa problem. National Security Study Memorandum 5 was submitted on March 21, the Nixon Administration's policy regarding the Okinawa Reversion was finalized in the NSC meeting held on April 30, and the NSC made its final decision on May 28, in National Security Decision Memorandum 13. In the meantime, Alexis Johnson, who had been appointed Under Secretary of State, had effectively persuaded the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others in the U.S. Government to support the position in favor of returning Okinawa. The decision stipulated that Okinawa would revert in 1972, without nuclear weapons, and that the Security Treaty would apply to Okinawa after reversion. *In order for this to be realized, however, it was necessary to induce Japan to take a more active policy regarding Far Eastern security issues such as Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam, and for that to happen, the Japanese Government had to obtain assurance that the prior consultation clause in the Security Treaty would be applied. Until such conditions could be met, the official position taken with respect to nuclear weapons was that the handling of such weapons was undetermined, and the final decision on that issue was left up to the President.*

Although the system taken by the Nixon Administration to concentrate power in the NSC,

which came under the direct control of the White House, was a dramatic change from Johnson's system of respecting the proposals of the bureaucracy, both systems represent the two types of decision-making systems in American administrations, and are not exceptions. While on later occasions, such as the so-called "Nixon Shocks" of the summer of 1971, the White House would make critical foreign policy decisions without consulting the State Department, a close relationship between the White House and the bureaucracy regarding organizational, personnel and policy matters was maintained during the early years of the Nixon Administration, including the time when the Okinawa Reversion was handled.

(3) The "Nuclear-Free" Secret Negotiations

Kusuda, who was the Sato Administration's Chief Secretary, expressed the spirit which was commonly held by the members who supported Sato's team as a "passion for anonymity."¹⁷ Although Americans, who place great value on active initiative taken by each individual, may not be as moved by that phrase as Kusuda was, those in positions of responsibility in the American Government displayed extremely high ethical standards regarding the maintenance of secrecy on policy matters. High officials in the American Government who knew about the reversal of American policy on Okinawa in 1967 did not reveal this information to their Japanese friends, and the nuclear-free policy of May 1969 was kept secret by even those high U.S. Government officials who had close Japanese friends, although the secret did leak to the New York Times on June 5. As such would have it, the Japanese Government did not view the New York Times article as accurate information.

As a result of the maintenance of secrecy regarding the Nixon Administration's policy to accept a nuclear-free policy, the Japanese Government continued its negotiations in a state of great tension, until the Sato-Nixon summit meeting in November 1969. Unlike the case in 1967, Foreign Minister Aichi and the other high officials Togo and Chiba were able to communicate closely with the Prime Minister and his immediate advisers while carefully conducting preparations for the summit meeting.

At this stage, it looked as if the negotiations with the U.S. had reverted to a normal style, in the sense that they relied on regular Foreign Ministry channels.

Of course, channels outside the Foreign Ministry had not closed entirely. The "Okinawan Bases Problem Study Group" (Kichiken), which was formed as a sub-committee of the Okinawa Committee under its head, Tadao Kusumi, held twenty meetings between February 1968 and March 1969, and held discussions which were in line with the "nuclear-free, mainland-level" policy. In January 1969, the Kichiken held the Kyoto Conference, inviting nine prominent American military figures and scholars, which had a considerable impact on the Japanese and Americans officials who were involved in the Okinawa Reversion. On March 8, the Kichiken released a report centered on the ideas of "nuclear-free, mainland-level and reversion in 1972." Three days later, Prime Minister Sato, in a question-and-answer session in the National Diet, made a statement which followed that idea. Since Sato had indicated this policy to Ambassador Shimoda on January 6, the Kichiken report probably served no more than to reinforce him in his conviction in his policy.

This official statement by Sato on March 11, which went much further than any previous statements on the matter, was made before the Nixon Administration had finalized its decision on the matter, and was probably intended as a message to the American Government. Naturally, the Foreign Ministry took a cautious stance regarding the intentions of the Nixon Administration. As a result, the impression is that Sato was again following his earlier method of taking action based upon the advice of his civilian brain trust, rather than that of the Foreign Ministry.

Upon discovering that he could not force a change in the unyielding position of the American Government regarding nuclear weapons by working through regular diplomatic channels, Sato sent the personal emissary mentioned earlier to Washington on July 18, and had him contact Kissinger. Kissinger states in his memoirs that the purpose of that emissary

was to resolve the dispute between the U.S. and Japan regarding restrictions on Japanese textile exports to the U.S., the resolution of which was needed by Nixon for domestic political reasons and which would pave the way for an agreement on "nuclear-free" reversion.

An agreement on "nuclear-free" reversion was a condition which the Sato administration absolutely needed to secure, from the standpoint of domestic politics. It was now questionable how much a reversion without a "nuclear-free" agreement would be welcomed by the Japanese people. On the other hand, a satisfactory resolution of the textile issue was crucial for the Nixon Administration to receive the support of the Deep South. It is noteworthy that a trade-off, which would have benefited both administrations domestically, was not conducted openly as a dry, business-like compromise. The Nixon Administration could not resist the temptation to tie the textile issue together with the Okinawa negotiations, while the Sato Administration was excessive in its fear of seeing Okinawa and textiles linked together. Thus, unofficial negotiations between Kissinger and Sato's personal emissary took place, and an understanding was reached. Sato, however, who had displayed such superb leadership until then, was unable to carry out his part of the understanding domestically, either before or after the summit meeting.

To sum it up, although the Japanese side of the Okinawa negotiations was carried out by the Foreign Ministry after the November 1967 summit meeting, Sato used separate, unofficial channels for the handling of delicate problems. There were two such "delicate problems." One was the "nuclear-free" issue, and the other was the linkage between Okinawa and the textile issue. The resolution of these issues required that high-level political decisions be made, and it was natural that the Prime Minister should personally handle them. It therefore cannot be stated conclusively that the use of personal emissaries in itself was an error.

Rather, the problem was that conducting negotiations by sending personal emissaries was in direct conflict with the custom of *nemawashi*, which is, simply put, the building of an informal

consensus through prior consultations with all of the parties involved. Although *nemawashi* takes a long time to complete, once a consensus is built, those who have been involved in the process have a moral obligation to faithfully cooperate. If a leader makes a decision on his own, without prior consultation, the persons involved in the problem have little motivation to cooperate in the implementation of the decision. Liberal Democratic Party and bureaucracy were not willing to join forces and fight together on issues against which a pressure group strongly voiced opposition.

The various text of the communiqué of the Sato-Nixon meetings of November 1969 were virtually prepared by the Foreign Ministry, and the details were worked out by Director General, North American Affairs Bureau, Togo and Sneider, and by Foreign Minister Aichi and Secretary of State Rogers. In addition, the texts were evaluated in the final stages by Sato's emissary and Kissinger. The texts were then agreed upon at the summit meeting.⁽¹²⁾ Article Eight of the Joint Communiqué stipulated that nuclear weapons would be removed, with the qualification, "Without prejudice to the position of the United States Government and with respect to the prior consultation system under the treaty." In connection with this, Nixon gave the following "good news" to Sato immediately after the agreements on November 19. "We have decided to begin the removal of the Mace-B within three weeks."⁽¹³⁾

After this summit meeting, negotiations regarding the reversion were conducted entirely by the Foreign Ministry on the Japanese side, up through the actual reversion, which took place in May 1972. The textile negotiations, which were bogged down momentarily, were finally resolved by an agreement reached on October 15, 1971, after the Prime Minister appointed Kiichi Miyazawa as his Minister of International Trade and Industry, in place of Masayoshi Ohira, and then Kakuei Tanaka in place of Miyazawa. (The textiles agreement was signed on January 3, 1972.)⁽¹⁴⁾

SUMMARY

I. Decision-Making Process in Japan.

1. "Prime Minister-Directed" Type

The Prime Minister played a leading role in all aspects of the Okinawa problem, i.e. raising the issue, forming policy, deciding policy and negotiations.

2. Policy-making under Sato.

(A) The Prime Minister was supported by both the Foreign Ministry and his private brain trust.

(B) The Private brain trust (i.e. the Okinawa Committee) played the main role through 1967. From 1968, the role of the Foreign Ministry increased; civilian advisory groups such as the Kichiken, however, continued to play roles which cannot be ignored. After November 1969, the Foreign Ministry was dominant.

3. Negotiation with the U.S.

(A) Regular diplomatic channels through the Foreign Ministry and the Prime Minister's direct channel were simultaneously used. The Prime Minister's direct channel includes negotiations between the Prime Minister and the American Ambassador and other important Americans, the dispatch of a personal emissary, and negotiations conducted at the summit meetings.

(B) While both channels were used together throughout the reversion process, the important of the Foreign Ministry's channel was greater in 1969 than it was in 1967.

(C) The Foreign Ministry always played the main role in the drafting of the communiqué of the summit and the text of the treaty.

4. Characteristics

(A) The Prime Minister took the standpoint that a cooperative relationship with the

U.S. was essential for Japan and the world. While he actually cooperated by all possible means, he actively approached the American Government, concentrating his efforts on the reversion.

- (B) The Prime Minister approached the American Government directly, by making official requests to the U.S., and indirectly, through such actions as visiting Okinawa in August 1965, and making statements in Japan such as his March, 1969, statement to the National Diet.
- (C) While he was unable to obtain absolute confirmation, the Prime Minister was able to make policy decisions which roughly matched the policy decisions made by the U.S. Government, such as the change in policy in 1967 and the new policies of the Nixon Administration.
- (D) The Prime Minister benefited by the fact that there were strong opposition forces in Japan, and persons within the U.S. Government who understood Japan's position.

II. Decision-Making Process in the U.S.

1. The decision-making systems of the Johnson and Nixon Administrations contrasted with each other.
 - (A) President Johnson ordered Secretary of State Rusk to prepare policy for the President, and Rusk sought a military-political consensus through the use of the SIG-IRG system. This was a bottom-up system, in which the President authorized or vetoed policy which had been formulated within the bureaucracy.
 - (B) President Nixon concentrated power in the White House, and ordered Kissinger to prepare policy through the use of the NSC. The bureaucracy therefore only had a supporting role.
2. Nevertheless, U.S. policy towards the

Okinawa problems was highly consistent.

The reasons are as follows:

- (A) Both Presidents attached great importance to good U.S.-Japan relations, and desired a Japan which was friendly toward the U.S. to play a greater role in Asia.
- (B) The difficulties faced by the Japanese Government regarding the 1970 Security Treaty problem was recognized by the U.S. Government, and a consensus was reached within the U.S. Government from 1967 onward that a return of administrative rights over Okinawa was possible without damaging the functions of the military bases there. Sneider and Halperin, who played key roles in this process, were given the important job of drafting NSC documents under the Nixon Administration. In other words, although the decision-making system of the two administrations were different, there was continuity in the core staff of both. Consequently, it was possible to maintain continuity in the basic position and content of policy from one administration to the next.

3. Negotiations with Japan

Channels of both the State Department and the White House were always in existence, but under the Johnson Administration, the importance of the State Department's channel was overwhelming, while the importance of the White House's channel was greater under the Nixon Administration. In either case, however, Alexis Johnson and Sneider played key roles, albeit under different positions.

4. Characteristics

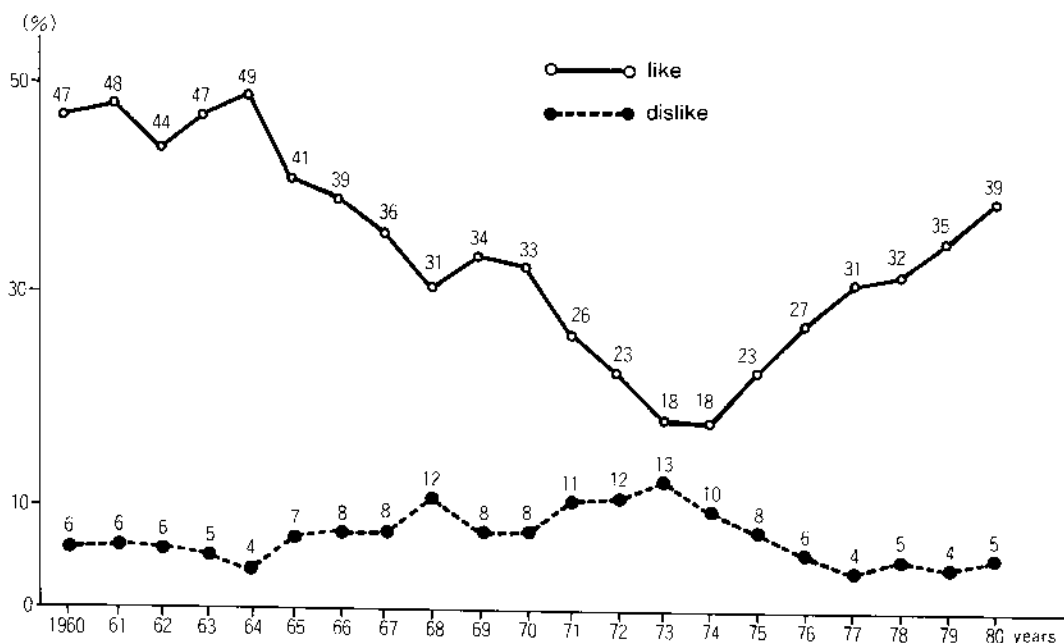
Regardless of the fact that the U.S. Government had reasons for not wanting to get involved in the Okinawa Reversion issue, a flexible and innovative planning of policy took place, based upon a broad long-term vision, both in 1967 and 1969, which enabled an agreement with Japan. As can

be seen in the graph given below, such an agreement halted the downslide in U.S.-Japan relations in 1969-1970, and made possible the establishment of a long-term

cooperative relationship.

Japanese Attitudes Toward the United

U.S. Like & Dislike in Japan, 1960 - 1980



Source:

States, 1960-1980

NOTES

- (1) Joint communiqué by President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Kishi, June 19, 1957.
- (2) Interview with Reischauer, 1978-1979, at Harvard University. Interview with Mansfield, October 1, 1991, in Washington, D.C.
- (3) I. M. Destler, et al., *Managing and Alliance: the Politics of U.S.-Japan Relations*, Washington, D.C., 1976, pp. 28-29; Priscilla Clapp, "Okinawa Reversion: Bureaucratic Interaction in Washington 1966-1969," *Kokusai Seiji* (International Relations), vol. 52, 1974, pp. 16-25.
- (4) Minoru Kusuda, *Shuseki Hishokan* (Chief Secretary), Tokyo, 1975, p.29; Hitoshi Senda, *Sato Naikaku Kaiso* (Recollections of the Sato Cabinet), Tokyo, 1984, pp. 24-31; Minoru Kusuda ed., *Sato Seiken 2797 Nichi* (2,797 Days of the Sato Administration), 2 vols., Tokyo, 1983, vol. 1, pp. 61-64; in the policy statement

Asu e no Tatakai (Fight for Tomorrow), drafted by S-OPE, the expressions related to the Okinawa Reversion have been made abstract, in order to avoid turning foreign policy issues into political struggles.

- (5) Kokichi Yamano, *Okinawa Henkan Hitorigoto* (Personal Remembrances of the Okinawa Reversion), Tokyo, 1972, pp. 23-25.
- (6) *Ibid.*, pp. 142-148.
- (7) Fumihiko Togo, *Nichibei Gaiko Sanju-nen* (Thirty Years of Japan-U.S. Diplomacy), Tokyo, 1982, pp. 133-135.
- (8) Suetsugu, op. cit., pp. 211-223; also interview with Suetsugu.
- (9) Walt Rostow, Memo for the President on Visit of Prime Minister Sato, November 13, 1967, Lyndon B. Johnson Library, from Shin'ichi Kitaoka ed. *Chronology and Documents Relating to the Reversion of Okinawa*, 1992; U. Alexis Johnson, *The Right Hand of Power: The Memoirs of an American Diplomat*, New York, 1984.

- (10) Haruhiko Fukui, "Okinawa Henkan Kosho: Nihon Seifu ni Okeru Kettei Katei" (Okinawa Reversion: Decision-Making Process in the Japanese Government), *Kokusai Seiji*, vol. 52, 1974, pp. 97-100.
- (11) Kusuda, *op. cit.*, p. 37. Kusuda heard these words from Douglass Cater of the Johnson Administration.
- (12) Togo, *op. cit.*; Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, city, 1979; also interviews of persons involved.
- (13) Kusuda *cd.*, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p.62.
- (14) See I. M. Destler, Haruhiko Fukui, Hideo Sato, *The Textile Wrangle: Conflict in Japanese-American Relations, 1969-1971*, New York, 1979.