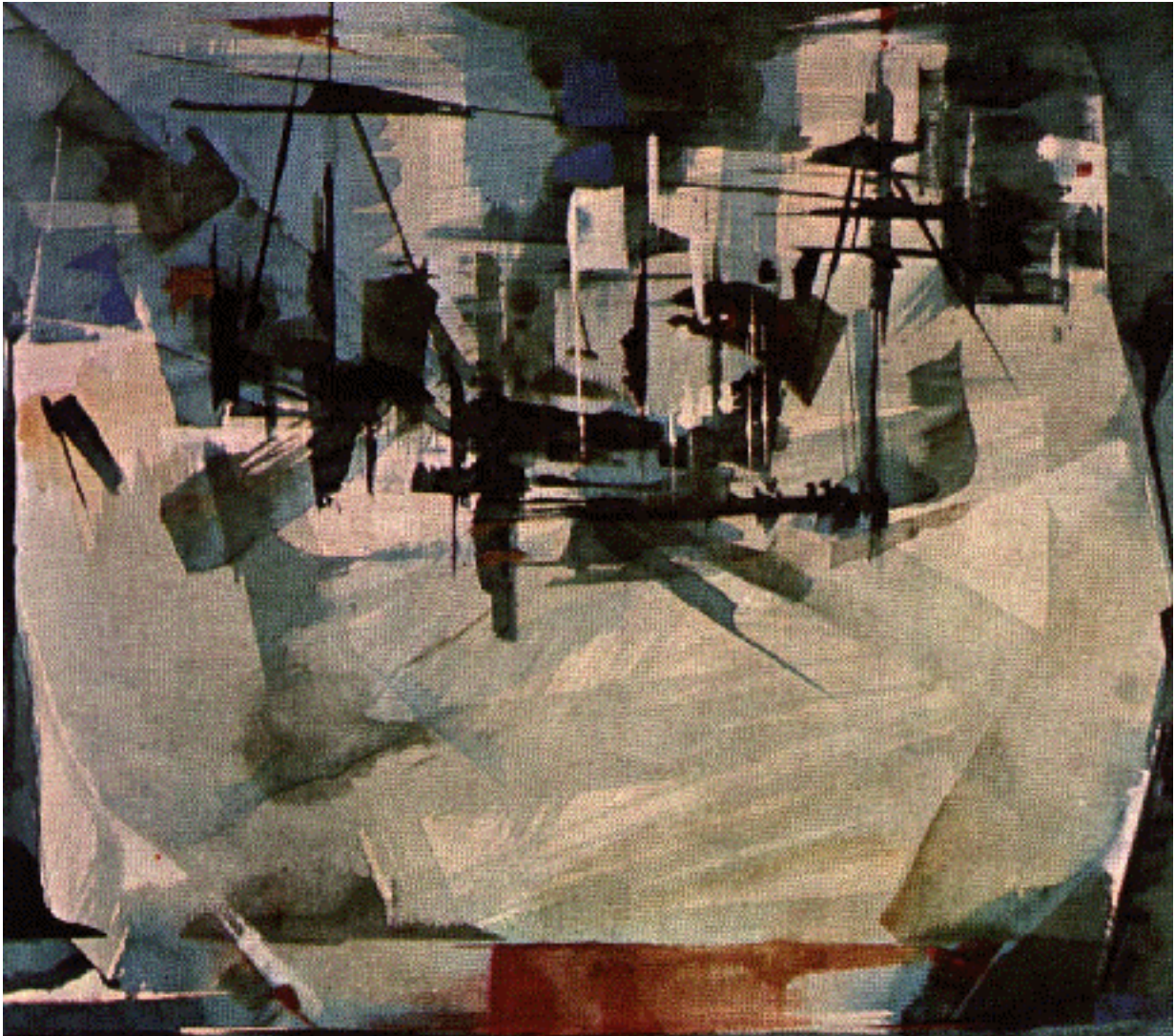


# **Island of Military Bases:** A Contemporary Political and Economic History of Okinawa



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*Island of Military Bases: A Contemporary Political and Economic History of Okinawa* is founded on the thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations at the International University of Japan, Niigata Prefecture, on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1995, and on preliminary research as a doctoral candidate at the Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, in 1996. The Introduction, Chapter Two, Chapter Three, and Conclusion are presented essentially as was in the original MA thesis text. Chapter Four was researched and written at the same time as other sections but not included in the final submitted text. Chapter One was written during 1996. This current text has previously only been available in online form through *The Contemporary Okinawa Website* ([niraikanai.wwma.net/index.html](http://niraikanai.wwma.net/index.html)) the author established in 1995 and continues to maintain. Please feel free to send observations, criticisms, or whatever, regarding this e-book to the author at: [jmpurves@niraikanai.wwma.net](mailto:jmpurves@niraikanai.wwma.net)

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## INTRODUCTION

### “Okinawa: Island of Bases”

On 27th February, 1995, the United States Department of Defence once more reaffirmed the importance of maintaining a strong military presence in the Asia-Pacific region. This policy announcement went contrary to reports published in 1990 and 1992 which suggested that it was planning to continue substantially reducing its troop deployment in the region in line with the collapse of the Soviet Union and with defence budget cuts. Between 1990 and 1994 the number of US military personnel in the region had been cutback from 135,000 to 100,000. According to the Department of Defence's *US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, "Post-Cold War reductions have been accomplished; no further changes in war fighting capability are currently planned; the United States will maintain a force structure requiring approximately 100,000 personnel in Asia." Most of these forces, some 89% will continue to be deployed at US military bases in South Korea (37%), Guam (7%), and Japan (45%). The Defence Department also stressed that of all of the United States' military commitments in the region the security alliance with Japan is the "linchpin of US security policy in Asia." It relies on access to Japanese bases and Japanese support for US operations. Japanese "support" for a continued US presence in the region is not merely moral. Japan provides the US with whatever land and facilities its forces require undertaking their designated duties, and continues to donate a hefty financial contribution each year towards the operating costs of those facilities. Japan is "by far the most generous host-nation," and its financial support makes it "less expensive to the American taxpayer to maintain...[its]...forces forward-deployed than in the United States." Thus, the military *status quo* in Japan will persist into the 21st century.

Whilst this renewed commitment on the part of the US to remain a "Pacific power" was warmly welcomed by the Japanese Government, this reaction was not necessarily mirrored in Okinawa Prefecture, where many people had been hoping for a reduction in the American military presence rather than a continuation at the same level. There is a marked disparity in the extent of military base and troop deployment on the Japanese mainland and its southernmost prefecture. The entire land area of Okinawa Prefecture constitutes only 0.6% of Japan's total land area (roughly the same relationship in size as that of Rhode Island and California). Within that tiny portion of the Japanese Archipelago, however, 75% of all the American military installations in the exclusive use of the United States forces in Japan and 61.5% of all troops are located. Furthermore these bases are not distributed throughout the Prefecture, instead they claim 20% of the land on the main island of Okinawa (including Iejima), most of which was prime arable land. This disparity could then lead one to conclude that it is in fact Okinawa, rather than Japan as a whole, that is the "linchpin" of US security policy in Asia. It may have been the case that there was a reasonable balance in terms of troop deployment and base facility levels between the Japanese mainland and Okinawa at an earlier stage in the evolution of the Japan-US security alliance, but this is clearly not the case now.

Although Okinawa Prefecture was returned to Japanese control on 15th May, 1972, after 27 years of American military occupation, and although the Cold War officially became a part of twentieth century history in 1989, there has been no substantial restructuring and reduction of the American presence in the islands. A 25% decrease in the overall American military presence in the Asia-Pacific region between 1990 and 1994 has not affected Okinawa's bases. Over the last 15 years there has been only a 7% reduction in the number of troops deployed in Okinawa and a 5% increase

in the number deployed on the Japanese main islands. These changes are routine and consistent with a "flexible" US security strategy in which small numbers of troops have their duties and stations rotated. As such, they represent no fundamental shift in policy. The Governments of both Japan and the United States are content to leave the current system intact. Given that security policy remains exclusively under national government sovereignty and that Okinawa Prefecture is only one of 47 "local" or provincial districts, the Prefectural Government and the local population have great difficulty in influencing the current *status quo*.

## CHAPTER I

### Okinawa's History from the "Sanzan" Era to the Pacific War

#### I-1. Geography and Climate

Okinawa is the largest island in the Ryukyu Archipelago: a chain of more than 160 islands which stretch the approximately 1300 kilometres between the southernmost tip of Kyushu (Japan) and Taiwan (The Republic of China).<sup>1</sup> Okinawa Island has a total land area of 1,199 square kilometres. Okinawa is also the name given to the fourth smallest administrative unit, or prefecture, of the forty-seven that constitute the modern Japanese State.<sup>2</sup> Okinawa Prefecture was established in 1879, and consists of some 70 of the Ryukyu Islands furthest from Kyushu. The remaining islands in the chain became part of Kagoshima Prefecture in the same year.

Okinawa Prefecture may further be broken down into the three geographically dispersed island groups of Yaeyama, Miyako and Okinawa. The Yaeyama Island group, which includes Ishigaki, Yonaguni, Iriomote, and the Daiyou or Senkaku Islands,<sup>3</sup> lies furthest from Japan. Yonaguni Island is 510 km from Naha City. The Miyako Island group, which includes Shimoji, Tarama and Irabu, is located between the Yaeyama and Okinawa Island groups. Miyako Island is just less than 300 km from Naha City. The Okinawa Island group is itself geographically dispersed. Whilst the islands of Ie, Kume, Tokashiki and Iheya fall within 100 km of Naha, the southernmost of the Daito Islands is more than 350 km from the prefecture's capital city. With a land area of less than 2,250 square kilometres,<sup>4</sup> Okinawa Prefecture comprises just 0.6% of Japan's total land area. In 1995, the total population of Okinawa Prefecture, spread over 10 cities, 16 towns, and 53 villages, was 1,274,000.<sup>5</sup> Of this figure, more than 85% is concentrated on the main island of Okinawa.

The capital of Okinawa and seat of the prefectural government is Naha City. It is geographically distant from large neighbouring cities, except for Fukuoka (861 km), Taipei (630 km), and Shanghai (820 km). Naha is actually closer to Manila (1,480 km), Hong Kong (1,440 km), and Seoul (1,260 km), than it is to the administrative capital of Japan, Tokyo (1,554 km). Geographically,

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<sup>1</sup> This archipelago is most commonly referred to as the *Nansei Shoto*, or 'Southwestern Islands' in Japan. Although both *Ryukyu* and *Nansei* describe the same set of islands, they differ in terms of political connotation. The word *Ryukyu* is of Chinese origin (derived from 'Liu Ch'iu'), and has therefore been used far more sparingly since Japanese control over the islands was established during the latter part of the 19th century. One can look upon this trend in naming as an integral part of the process of assimilating the islands into Japan. Interestingly, when the US seized control of Okinawa after victory in the Pacific War and decided to separate the islands from 'Japan proper', the term *Ryukyu* was used extensively. At this point, obviously, it was in America's best interests to play up the fact that Okinawa had not always been an integral part of Japan.

<sup>2</sup> The three smaller administrative areas are Kagawa Prefecture (1,883 km sq.), Osaka Metropolitan District (1,869 km sq.), and Tokyo Capital District (2,166 km sq.).

<sup>3</sup> The latter being the subject of a sovereignty dispute between Japan, China, and Taiwan

<sup>4</sup> In terms of total land area Okinawa Prefecture is only marginally smaller than the Autonomous Region of the Azores (2,333 square kilometres), but has in excess of five times the Azorean population. Okinawa Prefecture and the Azores are both small island groups geographically distant from the main body politic (Japan and Portugal, respectively), though in the case of the Azores this condition is more pronounced.

<sup>5</sup> Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation Survey Department, *Okinawa Keizai Deitabukku (Databook on the Okinawan Economy)*, Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation Survey Department, Naha, October, 1996, p. 1.

Okinawa is located at a crossroads between Japan, Taiwan, and China. Whilst this proximity has afforded Okinawa many opportunities for trade, commerce and cultural exchange with its Asian neighbors throughout periods of its earlier history, however, it is also the case that Okinawa occupies a key geo-strategic position in the region. This latter condition has been of most importance in Okinawa's recent history.

Okinawa falls well within the Temperate Zone, but the climate, influenced by the surrounding ocean, monsoons, typhoons, and the 'Kuroshio', is subtropical and humid.<sup>6</sup> Although located at roughly the same latitude as Libya and the Bahamas, Okinawa is climatically closer to Hong Kong. Warm temperatures and frequent rainfall combine to keep the islands green throughout the year. Average longevity for both males and females in Okinawa Prefecture has for many years been higher than in any other region of Japan, and local people cite Okinawa's climate and traditionally healthy diet as important contributing factors.<sup>7</sup> Typhoons strike Okinawa regularly during the summer and early autumn. Whilst they tend to be a good deal less ferocious these days than some remember, they can still disable both internal and external transport networks. Major crops include sugar cane, pineapples, sweet potatoes, vegetables and flowers.

Up until 1945, Okinawa's economy was principally founded on agriculture, with approximately three-quarters of the population dependent on farming. Over the last 50 years, however, this structure has drastically changed. In 1991, primary industry accounted for less than 10% of overall industrial employment and contributed to just less than 3% of the total Gross Prefectural Product (GPP).<sup>8</sup> The vast majority of the workforce, more than 70%, is employed in the tertiary sector. This heavy imbalance towards tertiary sector employment stands in stark contrast to secondary industry employment. Whilst the construction industry may account for some 13.7% of the workforce as of 1993, only 6.5% are engaged in manufacturing. This figure constitutes just over one-quarter of the national Japanese average.<sup>9</sup>

## I-2. The Evolution of Okinawan National Self-Identity

Although research continues to bring forth new and important information, there remains not even a trace of doubt that the people of contemporary Okinawa and Japan proper (*naichi*), including the Ainu,<sup>10</sup> share a common ethnological origin. They are most definitely not identical in

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<sup>6</sup> The *Kuroshio*, or Black Current, is the largest ocean current in the seas of Japan. A warm current, originating in an area just East of the Philippines, it flows northwards between Taiwan and Ishigaki Island into the East China Sea. After passing through the Ryukyu Archipelago between Amami Oshima and Tokara it splits into two currents just south of Kyushu.

<sup>7</sup> Another being the mellow disposition of the local people. Recent studies have indicated, however, that other prefectures in Japan are gradually catching up with Okinawa in terms of longevity. One of the principle reasons is that Okinawans are taking less care in their eating habits nowadays. Terunobu Tamamori and John C. James, *A Minute Guide to Okinawa: Society and Economy*, Bank of the Ryukyus International Foundation, Naha, 1995, p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Which stood at 23.7% in 1993. Ibid. p. 15.

<sup>10</sup> The term *Ainu*, which means literally 'human', refers to an indigenous people of Hokkaido (and nearby islands). Unlike the Ryukyuan, the Japanese Government officially recognises the Ainu as a distinct ethnic group. In 1878, ten years after the annexation of Hokkaido and its incorporation into the Japanese Empire, the Ainu were reclassified as 'former indigenous people'. The numbers of 'pure' Ainu have decreased over the last century through intermarriage with Japanese, and in contemporary Japan there are perhaps only as many as 25,000 people who insist on full identification. There are a vast number of books and articles about the Ainu. For a concise general overview see, for example, Richard Siddle, "Ainu: Japan's Indigenous People", in Michael Weiner (Ed), *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*,

terms of racial stock,<sup>11</sup> but share too many commonalities to be considered anything other than part of the same cultural organization that will henceforth be defined as Japanese *civilization*.<sup>12</sup> Simply put, the common objective elements that bind them together<sup>13</sup> are far more numerous than those which differentiate them from one another.

That said, civilizations are not culturally homogeneous entities. Indeed, they are vastly different in size and characterized by varying degrees of internal diversity. One need only look at the popularly held view that there exists a *Western* civilization,<sup>14</sup> and at the huge array of nations and states contained within it, to realize how heterogeneous, and often disharmonious, a civilization can be. Japan may perhaps be unique in that its civilizational and state territorial boundary are one and the same, making it one of the smaller and least diverse civilizational entities, but it is nonetheless heterogeneous.<sup>15</sup> Aside from an overall *majority* within the Japanese population, there are several

Routledge, London, 1997, pp. 17-49.

<sup>11</sup> Although space limitations prevent a comprehensive discussion of this theme within these pages, the overwhelming body of evidence supports the assertion that Okinawans and mainland Japanese (including the Ainu) share a common Mongoloid parentage. This was the result of several waves of both Southern and Northern Mongoloid migration into Japan (primarily through the Korean Peninsula) from about the 1st millennium BC. Both contemporary Okinawans and the Ainu, who inhabit the Southernmost and Northernmost, respectively, peripheries of Japan, retain more of the earlier Southern Mongoloid characteristics than do their mainland Japanese compatriots. The logical explanation for this is that later, predominantly Northern Mongoloid, migrants into Kyushu and Southern Honshu effectively pushed the earlier settlers further afield in search of lands to occupy. For a more scientific discussion of these anthropological themes one should consult: Suda Akiyoshi, "The Physical Anthropology of the Ryukyuan", *Minzokugaku Kenkyu (The Japanese Journal of Ethnology)*, Vol. 15, No 2, 1950, Marshall T. Newman & L Eng. Ransom, "The Ryukyu People: A Biological Appraisal", *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, Vol. 15, No 2, 1947, Matsui Takeshi, "Research on the Ryukyus: Progress and Problems", *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 28, No 4, August/October, 1987, Yanagita Kunio, *Yanagita Kunio Zenshu (The Collected Writings of Yanagita Kunio)*, Volume 1, Chikuma Shobo, Tokyo, 1962, and, Hanihara Kazuro, "The Origin of the Japanese in Relation to Other Ethnic Groups in East Asia", in Richard Pearson (Ed), *Windows on the Japanese Past: Studies in Archaeology and Prehistory*, Centre for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1986.

<sup>12</sup> The term *civilisation* may be rendered in two ways. On the one hand, it relates to, as Immanuel Wallerstein most accurately describes, "a particular concatenation of worldview, customs, structures, and culture (both material culture and high culture) which forms some kind of historical whole and which coexists (if not always simultaneously) with other varieties of this phenomenon". In this relatively, though not totally, neutral sense it refers simply to a 'cultural entity'. It is with this precise meaning that the term is rendered in the above text. On the other hand, it has a more charged meaning, one that denotes "processes (and their results) which have made men more 'civil', that is less 'animal'-like or less 'savage'". Immanuel Wallerstein, *Geopolitics and Geoculture: Essays on the Changing World System*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, p. 215. In the latter sense, American challenges to China on its (claimed) negative record in the area of human rights are, for example, *civilisational* in nature. The American assertion, is that *civilised* society no longer tolerates such abuses. Furthermore, America claims to be representing the whole of 'Western' *civilisation* when making such challenges. The implication is that both America specifically, but 'Western' *civilisation* generally, is superior to Chinese *civilisation* because it respects individual human rights. It goes without saying, of course, that China takes a different position.

<sup>13</sup> Defined by Samuel Huntington as including language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and the subjective self-identification of the people. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilisations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72., No. 3., Summer, 1993, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> Although Samuel Huntington was generally attacked for carving the world up into eight neat civilisational blocks; including Western, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, African, Latin American, Confucian and Japanese, he is only one of many to put forward the view that there is such a thing as a *Western* civilisation. One regularly sees references to 'The West' or the 'Cultural West' in scholarly works across many academic areas. Whether real, or an artificial construct, *Western* civilisation is certainly perceived by many as existing.

<sup>15</sup> The total population of Japan stands currently at just under 126 million. In terms of the small percentage of citizens within that total figure who identify themselves as somewhat different from the *mainstream* of Japanese society (or whom the *mainstream* identifies as somewhat different) Japan may be seen as less diverse.



main *minorities*.<sup>16</sup> One may perhaps visualize these civilizational sub-groupings as moons in orbit around a mother planet.<sup>17</sup>

As most will be aware, however, the issue of cultural diversity in modern Japan is not straightforward. This has been a result of the friction between an actual, and a perceived or constructed reality. Whilst the objective reality is that Japan is, and has been, heterogeneous, there has simultaneously been in operation a central government policy of rejecting the notion of diversity within its midst and asserting instead that the Japanese state is one single homogenous cultural entity from Hokkaido down to the furthest tip of Okinawa. This policy was instituted with the birth of Japan as a modern nation state in the aftermath of the Meiji Restoration in 1868. It was one tool, of many, designed to discourage the average citizen's primary affinity with his or her region, and to instill instead a strong sense of loyalty to the central state under the Emperor and the Constitution.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> In a thoroughly neutral sense, the word *majority* delineates the quality or state of being the greater, and *minority* the quality or state of being the smaller in number of two aggregates that together form a whole. In this particular context, however, a *minority* is the designation of a group which forms part of a larger embracing group or society, but which differs from the *majority* (in the sense of the dominant group) in terms of certain, generally cultural characteristics (i.e., racial, linguistic, religious, etc.) that the dominant group holds to be of less value than its own relevant characteristics. As a result, the *minority* group is often subject to differential treatment and (both positive and negative) discrimination.

<sup>17</sup> The category and nature of Japan's minority group differs. Whilst the Ainu are officially recognised by the Japanese Government as an indigenous people, and therefore constitute a distinct ethnic group, this is not the case with Okinawans. Okinawans certainly share many racial characteristics with the Ainu which are not prevalent amongst the mainstream Japanese population, but have never made any meaningful and unified claim for similar recognition by the government. The Burakumin are very interesting in comparison. Although racially identical with the mainstream of the Japanese population, they are regarded as different by that same mainstream. The minoritisation of the Burakumin is based on the fact that their ancestors worked with animal skins; a lowly regarded, if not reviled, job. Just as the Burakumin constitute a lowly underclass, or caste, does the Emperor and Imperial Family constitute the highest class, or caste. The mainstream of Japanese society then, regards itself first and foremost as both above the Burakumin and below the Imperial Family. Neither the Ainu nor Okinawans are part of this equation. The situation for the present day ethnic Chinese and Korean populations is largely identical. They are principally a product of Japanese colonial activities during the earlier part of this century. Although born and brought up in Japan, they remain legally unable to obtain Japanese passports or to enter many sectors of the employment market. Second- and third-generation Japanese returnees are the family of those Japanese who emigrated out of economic necessity at the turn of the century and during the early part of the post-Pacific War. Since the early- to mid-1980's they have been returning to Japan in greater numbers, ironically enough for economic reasons. Although undeniably of Japanese ancestry, they are minoritised because they have acquired 'non-Japanese' habits and philosophies as a result of their foreign upbringing. It is interesting to note that those of Okinawan origin have few problems upon returning to Okinawa. If anything, they are respected. Okinawans can at least theoretically be regarded as a distinct ethnic group. Were they, for instance, to push outright for independence from Japan there would be few who would not find their case compelling. They have certainly been minoritised and negatively discriminated against for largely cultural reasons this century. Okinawa was regarded as an integral part of Japan because claiming its territory served to expand the boundaries of the empire (as was the case with Hokkaido), but its people were never fully regarded as Japanese. Hence, Okinawa's history of sacrifice for the greater good of Japan this century.

<sup>18</sup> A comparable example would be the idea of a 'creation myth' in Plato's famous 'Republic'. In brief, Plato saw a society divided up into three main sectors by occupation. Below the ruling class and guardians of the Republic were the general workers, who constituted the largest majority. To keep them content in their (powerless) position, Plato proposed educating them from childhood with a story, the gist of which was that all citizens of the Republic were born with certain innate qualities. The rulers, of course, were endowed from birth with the ability to rationalise, making them the best suited to running the affairs of the Republic. The workers, in contrast, were born without rationality, making them suitable only for manual labour. The Japanese myth was designed to make all citizens equally subservient to the Emperor, who in turn, of course, was only a figurehead dominated by the Meiji oligarchs. In both cases, a myth was advocated so as to protect a ruling elite.

Attitudes may gradually be changing as internationalization (*kokusaika*) takes root and Japan becomes *de facto* more culturally diverse and open; largely because of the sheer number of foreigners coming to live within its shores, and with the influence of recent trends in international economic activity, but there still remains a strong sense of resistance to any dilution of the artificial construct known as Japan, both from abroad or within.<sup>19</sup> Only in the last decade has there been any meaningful amount of investigation by domestic scholars into the nature of Japanese-ness (*Nihonron*) and the construction of Japanese identity.<sup>20</sup> This essentially academic reevaluation has had very little practical impact, however, on the lives of those who identify themselves as amongst Japan's minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Whilst the people of Okinawa could perhaps be hammered into the role of a disenfranchised minority group by those championing nationalistic movements and the liberation of the underdog,<sup>22</sup> this would constitute too simplistic a description of the situation by far. The Okinawan condition, if I may put it that way, is complex in the extreme. There are several dynamics in effect simultaneously. To be sure, Okinawans are quick to assert the differences between themselves and the people of Japan proper on occasion. Usually when they have received, or at least perceived themselves as having received, negative discrimination. These assertions have ranged in manifestation from mild nationalistic murmurings and the language of division<sup>23</sup> to all-out calls for Okinawa's total

<sup>19</sup> One might look, for example, at the teaching of history (and other subjects) within the Japanese school system. Textbooks are regularly 'vetted' by Japanese Ministry of Education committees to ensure that the information presented reflects 'current government thinking'.

<sup>20</sup> Few will be unaware of the body of writing (if not general philosophy) in Japan during the latter part of the 1970's and throughout the 1980's, known generically as *Nihonjinron*. At its core, it sought to assert that Japan's economic success could be attributed to the cultural uniqueness of the Japanese people. Even the occasional Japanese politician was not averse to getting in on the act. Who could forget the claim by one individual, when faced with demands that Japan open its market to American beef, that the average Japanese person's intestines were fundamentally different from an American's. The whole phenomenon of 'Japan-bashing' may be seen in part as a reaction to *Nihonjinron*. For a discussion of *Nihonjinron* see: Peter N. Dale, *The Myth of Japanese Uniqueness*, St. Martin's, New York, 1986. For an example of the more recent *Nihonron* writing one might refer to the appropriately titled "Tokushu: Nihon to wa Nanika?" (Special Edition: What is Japan?), *Sekai*, No. 590, January, 1994, pp. 23-69.

<sup>21</sup> There is a good deal of recent literature focussing on Japan's principal minority groups: Ainu, Ethnic Koreans, Ethnic Chinese, Okinawans, Burakamin, as well as Second- and Third-generation Japanese returnees. Most is an integral part of the aforementioned *Nihonron* movement, though the area seems to be dominated by non-Japanese scholars. Although the current writer wonders why the publishers of some of these studies seem to insist upon sensationalist titles (in the mould of the old *Nihonjinron* era) when the myth of Japanese homogeneity was clearly deconstructed some time back, there is some fine investigation to be found within. Texts of particular interest include: Michael Weiner (Ed), *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, Routledge, London, 1997; Denoon, Hudson, McCormack & Morris-Suzuki (Ed), *Multicultural Japan: Paleolithic to Postmodern*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996; and, David L. Howell, "Ethnicity and Culture in Contemporary Japan", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 31, 1996, pp. 171-190.

<sup>22</sup> For an interesting, if misguided, example of this type of writing see: Koji Taira, "Troubled National Identity: The Ryukyuans/Okinawans", in Michael Weiner (Ed), *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*, op. cit., pp. 140-177.

<sup>23</sup> There are two common expressions in Okinawa that serve to place Okinawans and mainland Japanese on either side of a 'cultural' fence. The first, *Uchinanchu*, is derived from the original word used by Okinawans to name their island (*Uchina* = Okinawa). In its most neutral form it means nothing other than that the person referred to was born in Okinawa or of Okinawan family. It is generally used in the context of the regular *Uchinanchu* festivals/celebrations held to honour second- and third generation Okinawans brought up in South America, Hawaii, Continental USA., or beyond. In its more politically charged manifestation, however, *Uchinanchu* has dual meaning. Simply put, its says both 'We are Okinawan', and 'We are not mainland Japanese'. The second expression, *Yamatonchu*, is derived from the name of the Japanese people (*Yamato* = Japan) circa 8th century AD. The political form of *Uchinanchu* is almost always set against the word *Yamatonchu*. One can often hear scholars visiting from the Japanese mainland either apologetically or humorously referring to themselves as *Yamatonchu* (Boku wa Yamatonchu desukedo...). Although the expressions are by no means used on a daily basis by the majority of the Okinawan people, they are often used on such occasions when Okinawan

independence from Japan. At the same time, however, Okinawans are as quick to identify themselves as fully-fledged Japanese citizens and, on occasions, to give extreme demonstrations of patriotism. In this latter regard, one need only look at the sacrifices in the name of the Emperor made by Okinawans during the Pacific War and at their unified calls for reversion to the fatherland (Japan) in subsequent decades.

Quite obviously, the above examples are imperfect. One can never attach only one meaning to any given action. It is necessary to look at both the denotation and connotation of meaning. Although Okinawans rallied vigorously behind the cause of Reversion to Japan throughout the 1960's, for example, was this simply a clear-cut case of them asserting their identity as Japanese? Might reversion not also have been pursued as a way of ending an extended period of military occupation and to attain the same democratic and human rights enjoyed by the citizens of Japan proper and enshrined in the postwar Constitution? Furthermore, to what extent did Okinawa's desire for economic empowerment and a reduction in the extent of US military bases in the prefecture come into the equation? Finally, might Okinawans not have been pursuing Reversion in part to induce feelings of guilt within a Japanese Government that had sacrificed its southernmost prefecture to US military rule? In truth, all of the above factors, along with many others, were applicable.

### I-3. Historical Background

#### 1-3-1. The First Period: "From Obscurity to 'Discovery'"

Although archaeological evidence suggests that human habitation first occurred in Okinawa more than 30,000 years ago,<sup>24</sup> far less is known about the exact nature of the settlers. It is feasible that these early arrivals came from the land we now know as Japan, since the migration route downwards was perhaps more convenient than any other, but it is impossible to conclude that migration was exclusively from the north. Whilst the unpredictable weather and geographically-dispersed condition of the islands leading up towards Okinawa would certainly provide a stern navigational challenge, we have plentiful evidence that cultural development in both the Miyako and Yaeyama Island groups was affected by influences from Southeast Asia and beyond.<sup>25</sup> Future research may shed more light on the precise timing of these forays into the Ryukyus.

What archaeological findings can corroborate, however, is the theory that there were two waves of migration from Japan proper down into the Ryukyu Islands during a later historical period,

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national identity is asserted. The closest parallel I can think of when considering the politically charged form of *Uchinanchu*, is the term 'nigger'. Although the word may commonly be used in derogatory fashion towards African-Americans, it is also the case that it is applied by African-Americans to other African-Americans as an integral part of group identification. Both 'nigger' and 'uchinanchu' can be used to express minority status. Furthermore, they are expressions of exclusivity. Whilst an Okinawan can be simultaneously *Uchinanchu* and 'Japanese,' a Japanese person can only ever be *Uchinanchu* if born in Okinawa or of Okinawan family.

<sup>24</sup> For a concise overview of the various archaeological findings in the Ryukyu Islands and of their relevance to developments in Japan one should consult: Richard Pearson, "The Place of Okinawa in Japanese Historical Identity", in, Denoon, Hudson, McCormack & Morris-Suzuki (Ed), *Multicultural Japan: Paleolithic to Postmodern*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, pp. 95-107.

<sup>25</sup> The archaeologist Kanaseki Takeo believed there were two distinct waves of *southern* culture which passed through the islands, and that until about the 7th century AD the Ryukyus were culturally similar to Taiwan. The Yaeyama islands, he argued, remained so until perhaps as late as the 15th century. Sakihara Mitsugu, "The History of Okinawa", in Ethnic Studies Oral History Project, *Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawaii*, Ethnic Studies Department, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1981, p. 4.

but that the second wave had less of an effect on cultural development in Okinawa than the first. Whilst excavations show evidence of the Late Jomon culture of Japan (10,000 to 300 BC) permeating down into the islands as far as Okinawa, the later Yayoi culture (300 BC to 300 AD) extends only to the Amami Islands.<sup>26</sup> It seems clear then, that at some highly imprecise point in time<sup>27</sup> migration from Kyushu into the Ryukyus began to decline to a slow trickle (much as did that from the Korean Peninsula into Kyushu<sup>28</sup>), and that the various populations scattered throughout the Ryukyus and Japan proper entered an era of more settled evolution. It was during this period that organized and self-conscious political communities emerged. Not that this process occurred simultaneously in both areas. Japan was clearly centuries ahead of the Ryukyus.

Although the birth of Japan is celebrated domestically as taking place in 660 BC, there is no evidence whatsoever to back up this assertion. The date itself is drawn from largely mythical accounts of Japan's history compiled more than 1,400 years after the event is supposed to have happened.<sup>29</sup> Even if the legendary Emperor Jimmu did descend from the Gods, having chosen the land of *Yamato* to rule over, on or around that date, there is no indication that the disparate population groups inhabiting the area possessed any sense of being part of a larger unified cultural entity, let alone any knowledge of his arrival. These conditions certainly persisted for many centuries. Later Chinese chronicles of the Wei Dynasty in the 3rd century AD mention the existence of a people inhabiting the land of *Wa* (Japan) and a primitive *Yamatai* state, but the location of this early political entity was unknown.

A more realistic assessment would be that the actual birth of Japan occurred concurrently with the ethnogenesis, or ethnic group formation, of the Yamato (Japanese) people between the 6th and 8th centuries.<sup>30</sup> This culminated in the establishment of an organized Yamato state with its capital in Nara.<sup>31</sup> Obayashi Taryo asserts that all the major components of the Japanese people<sup>32</sup> had come

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<sup>26</sup> Obviously, if the common practice is to compare pottery and other remnants found in Okinawa with established stylistic patterns in Japan, as was the case for a long period, there will be more of a tendency to lump these two cultures together, but more recent research generally upholds earlier assertions.

<sup>27</sup> Undeniably a process occurring over decades, if not centuries.

<sup>28</sup> A final cutoff point might be regarded as the year 562 AD, when the 'Japanese' colony of Mimana in the Southern part of Korea was destroyed by Silla forces and the colonists ejected. For more on this episode, as well as archaeological evidence of early Japan-Korea relations see: Nishitani Tadashi, "The Kaya Tumuli: Window on the Past", *The Japan Foundation Newsletter*, Vol. 21, No. 3, November, 1993, pp. 1-6.

<sup>29</sup> The two earliest Japanese historical texts are the *Kojiki*, or "Record of Ancient Matters" (712 AD), and the *Nihongi*, or "Chronicles of Japan" (697 AD). Whilst both books provide an interesting insight into the lives of the earliest Japanese, they combine known historical information with highly fictionalised accounts of events. Whilst the current writer seeks to cast doubts on the legitimacy of these early accounts of Japan's history, however, he would be more than a hypocrite if he did not acknowledge the heavily subjective nature of all historical writing. Since there is no way for the writer or writers of history, even in the late-20th century, to present 'objective truths', there will always be some blurring between 'fact' and outright fiction.

<sup>30</sup> Although it is extremely difficult to isolate the exact time when an ethnic group came into existence, there are two important factors that combined allow us to take a more than educated guess. "One is the time when the major components of the group come together, and the other is the time when a strong 'we-consciousness' is formed." Obayashi Taryo, "The Crucial Time in the Formation of the Japanese People", *Minzokugaku Kenkyu*, Vol. 48, No 4, 1984, pp. 401-405.

<sup>31</sup> Prior to 710 AD, the capital had been located at various places in the Asuka region (close to present day Osaka). This era is known as the 'Asuka Period' (592-710). Although an official capital and Imperial Court did exist prior to 710 it meant very little since the Imperial Family was dominated (mostly through intermarriage) by, and had to accommodate, the most powerful clans (the Soga and Mononobe). Only after the Soga clan was destroyed in the so-called *Taika Reform* of 645 could a static capital be established.

<sup>32</sup> Including "the agriculturists of Yayoi tradition, the rulers of supposedly Altaic affinity and variegated immigrants from

together by the end of the 6th century. Buddhism and the 'Kanji' writing system had been two of the most notable cultural elements imported from China during this period through the Japanese colony of Mimana in Korea, with the former constituting the principal factor in the increased centralization and development of Japan's bureaucracy. Such advances were further consolidated after the establishment of the 'Ritsuryo' legal system in the mid-7th century and during the 'direct rule' of Emperor Temmu from 673-686.

If the latter half of the 7th century saw the genesis of an organized state, facilitated by the gradual extension of government controls, it also witnessed the development of a sense of national identification as Yamato, or Japanese (*Ware ware Nihonjin*)<sup>33</sup> amongst that section of the population which fell within the influence of the state. This consciousness was created and strengthened, as Obayashi states "through the military confrontations with Silla and Chinese forces on Korean battlefields in the 7th century,"<sup>34</sup> and by the attempts of the Yamato state to subjugate the various frontier tribes within the main Japanese islands; such as the Emishi, Kumaso and Hayato in subsequent years.<sup>35</sup>

In a sense this was enforced, since one was initially obliged to identify oneself as being either inside or outside of the state, if only to avoid violence, but it was also cultivated in more subtle ways. Whilst Emperor Temmu would use force to consolidate his own power and to extend the sphere of influence of the state (founded on his philosophy that 'the essence of politics is military'),<sup>36</sup> he also turned his attention to the manufacture of national history. It was Temmu who established the committee which produced Japan's first historical chronicle in 697, the 'Nihongi'. Temmu was also the first Emperor to give the Sun Goddess shrine at Ise Imperial status, thereby creating the first link between 'church' (the Shinto religion) and 'state' (the Imperial Family).

Yamato state expansion continued throughout the 8th and 9th centuries until, as George Kerr states, "the natural water barriers north of Honshu and south of Kyushu had been reached."<sup>37</sup> This is not to say, however, that there was no awareness of the existence of human habitation in areas beyond those shores. Intelligence-gathering expeditions had ventured into the islands stringing southwards from Kyushu during the latter part of the 7th century, if not before. Furthermore, a Civil Administration of the Kyushu District, or Dazai-Fu, had been established by the Yamato court to "supervise trade and intercourse with the Korean Peninsula and to control administrative outposts in the unconquered mountains of Kyushu."<sup>38</sup> It is logical to assume that people from the Ryukyus had

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the Asian continent". Ibid. p. 401.

<sup>33</sup> Perhaps the best way of differentiating between these terms is to say that although the word 'Japanese' refers collectively to all of those peoples who constitute a part of that whole known as Japanese civilisation, and whilst it is used in the contemporary sense to refer to those peoples inhabiting the land of Japan from ancient times, it is a modern construct. The term 'Japanese', in an all-embracing sense, has its roots in the Meiji Restoration of 1868, when the myth of cultural homogeneity was first perpetuated. Hokkaido, it should be remembered, was annexed by Japan in 1868, and the Ryukyus in 1879. Thereafter, the peoples of Japan proper, Hokkaido, and the Ryukyus, became Japanese. The term 'Yamato', in contrast, does not and cannot include either the Ainu or Okinawans.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 401.

<sup>35</sup> For an account of the Yamato state's subjugation of the *Emishi* in Northeastern Honshu from the late-8th and into the 9th century, see: Karl F. Friday, "The Taming of the Shrewd: The Conquest of the Emishi and Northern Japan", *The Japan Foundation Newsletter*, Vol. 21, No. 6, March, 1994, pp. 17-22.

<sup>36</sup> As Professor Tsuzuki Chushichi of the International University of Japan, Niigata Prefecture, explains in his lectures, Emperor Temmu was the first to enunciate this philosophy.

<sup>37</sup> George H. Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, Charles Tuttle, Rutland: Vermont, 1958, p. 43.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. p. 41.

been received at the Dazai-Fu. Either way, the names of more of the islands south of Kyushu began appearing in official documents from the 7th century.

The most controversial issue, of course, revolves around the degree of control that the then Yamato State may or may not have had over the Ryukyu Islands. It is one thing to claim sovereignty over the islands since early times,<sup>39</sup> as Japan has continuously done in the construction of its national histories, but another to prove that it was manifest. Even if one accepts that Fumi no Imiko, a Yamato court official dispatched to claim sovereignty over the *Nanto* (Southern Islands), did indeed bring all of the islands as far as Tokunoshima under his control by the end of the 7th century,<sup>40</sup> one must simultaneously accept that he did not succeed in extending the tentacles of the state as far as Okinawa Island. Indeed, the name Okinawa did not appear in Japanese records until the latter half of the 8th century.<sup>41</sup> The idea that the Ryukyus had been under the direct administration of Japan from early times seems to be very much open to question.<sup>42</sup>

Although there was undeniably a flow and counterflow of peoples between Japan proper and the Ryukyus both before and after the formal establishment of a Yamato state with its capital in Nara at the beginning of the 8th century, which in turn is traditionally regarded as the time that the Japanese nation came into being, there is little in the way of compelling evidence that the people of the Ryukyu Islands were an integral part of this political entity. Indeed, at this point in time the Yamato state was only starting the process of extending its territorial boundaries outwards. It had yet to subjugate the various frontier communities in Kyushu and northern Honshu, and had certainly not organized sufficiently to be able to tackle either the Ryukyu Islands or Hokkaido.

Furthermore, the high degree of centralization which had characterized the Yamato State at the time of its formation began to disintegrate in subsequent centuries. Power was initially usurped from the Imperial Family by Court nobles during the first half of the Heian Era (794-1192), but was then wrested from the nobles by an emerging warrior class, or bushi, by the end of it. The culmination of these power shifts was an effective loss of a central administration and the empowerment of regional political entities ruled over by the daimyo, or warlords, and their armies. Japanese history had, in a sense, come full-circle. What is interesting to consider in this regard, is the extent to which the Ryukyu Islands could possibly have been administered by Japan during this more turbulent period. To whom would the people of the region have been subservient? As will be outlined further into this text, it was certainly not a central authority.

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<sup>39</sup> The general view being that the Ryukyu Islands are 'historically, ethnically and culturally an integral part of the Japanese nation'.

<sup>40</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

<sup>41</sup> According to George Kerr, the first mention of Okinawa in official Japanese records occurs in the *Shoku Nihongi* (*Continued Chronicles of Japan*) in 797 AD. It referred to the shipwreck of a Japanese mission from Nara to China in 753 AD. Ibid. p. 42. Takara Kurayoshi isolates the same date in his chronology of Okinawa's history. Takara Kurayoshi, *Ryukyu Okoku (The Ryukyu Kingdom)*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1993. Sakihara Mitsugu asserts that the first mention of Okinawa came earlier, in 779 AD, in the *Todaiwajo Toseiden (Eastern Expedition of the Great Tang Monk)*. Sakihara Mitsugu, "The History of Okinawa", in Ethnic Studies Oral History Project, *Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawaii*, Ethnic Studies Department, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1981, p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> The famous Okinawan historian, Higaonna Kanjun, asserted that (at least in terms of Japan's version of history) the Ryukyus were under the direct administration of the *Dazai-Fu*, and that this constituted the first period of Japanese rule over the islands. Higaonna Kanjun, "A Short History of Ryukyu", *Minzokugaku Kenkyu*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1950, p. 235.

A tendency towards the creative reinvention of history is typical of powerful political entities the world over, and Japan is no shrinking violet in this regard. The assertion that the Ryukyu Islands are historically, ethnically and culturally an integral part of the Japanese nation; a claim made at the time the islands were annexed in 1879 and again in the post-Peace Treaty period when the reversion of the area was demanded, begins to look increasingly ragged when subjected to sober examination, even if one recognizes that the Japanese Government has had a good degree of success in perpetuating it.

As previously stated, the development of an organized and self-conscious political community occurred much later in the Ryukyu Islands than in Japan proper. There is little evidence of the existence of any political entity comparable to the Yamato State until the 13th or 14th century.<sup>43</sup> Prior to this time there were communities of varying size, ruled over by regional kings and warlords, the latter being known in Okinawa as *aji*, but none of these powerful (or perhaps interested) enough to establish a hegemony. Despite sporadic contact with China and Japan,<sup>44</sup> which certainly had some impact on societal development in the region, the disparate communities scattered throughout the Ryukyus remained largely unaffected by international affairs. The economy, such as it was, would have revolved around fishing and crop farming.

From the 12th century onwards, a transformation in the organization of the various regional political entities on Okinawa Island occurred. As is fairly standard, the weaker communities were first enveloped by the more powerful, which then competed for overall supremacy with rival groups. Some groups may have received useful advice on military tactics from Japanese soldiers forced to flee, or exiled, from the mainland during the late Heian and early Kamakura (1192-1333) periods.<sup>45</sup> Powerful

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<sup>43</sup> We are severely hindered in this regard by the fact that history was not written in Okinawa until the mid-17th century. Prior to this time Okinawan history was orally transferred from generation to generation, usually in the form of songs and poems, and always in the various dialects of the Ryukyuan language. These poems and songs that provide clues as to the nature of society and culture of Okinawa from the 12th to the 16th century were eventually gathered together and committed to paper, but it was done in such a fashion that we now struggle to find objective meaning in the texts. Okinawan scribes, often barely familiar with the language, attempted to render the original Ryukyuan verses into Japanese. The result, the *Omoro Soshi (Anthology of the Poems and Sentiments)*, hovers, in the words of American writer Paul Auster, "somewhere in the limbo between the two languages, and nothing will ever be able to rescue it from this precarious existence". Paul Auster, *Groundwork: Selected Poems and Essays 1970-1979*, Faber & Faber, London, 1990, p. 120 (Auster was not referring to the *Omoro Soshi* with this quote, but to an obscure piece of work by Louis Wolfson). Although dedicated Okinawan scholars have spent decades trying to decipher meaning and have been able to offer accurate interpretations, there are still sections which remain largely indecipherable. For an introduction to the world of the *Omoro Soshi*, one should consult almost any text written by Iha Fuyu. In English, one would be hard-pressed to find a better text than Sakihara Mitsugu's, *A Brief History of Okinawa based on the Omoro Soshi*, Honpo Shoseki Press, Tokyo, 1987.

<sup>44</sup> According to legend, a Chinese expedition landed on Okinawa in 608 AD, demanding that the island people submit to *Sui* rule and to accept the Chinese Emperor as their sovereign. Since the Chinese referred to virtually all of the islands between Japan and the Philippines as 'Liu Ch'iu', however, it is difficult to verify. Whether Okinawa, or quite possibly Taiwan, the local people rejected the Chinese proposal. Battle ensued, and many islanders were captured and taken back to China. The story of this episode first appears in the Chinese chronicle the *Sui Shu* in AD 616. China once again attempted to conquer Okinawa in 1296, under the Mongol Overlord Kublai Khan, but failed. The Mongols had similarly failed in two attempts to conquer Japanese forces in Kyushu in 1274 and 1281. As for Japanese venturings into the Ryukyus, in addition to those outlined in the above text were the missions sent to China from 607 AD onwards. It is quite possible that Japanese ships passed by several islands in the Ryukyu chain en route. We do know that Japanese ship construction methods and navigational skills were not that advanced, and that incidents of shipwrecks were very common. It is more than likely that shipwrecks occurred in the Ryukyus. Beyond that, there would invariably have been frequent contact between fishermen from both areas.

<sup>45</sup> According to legend, although entirely unproven, one such exiled Japanese soldier, Tametomo (who was alleged to have had royal blood in his veins), conceived a child with the daughter of an Okinawan chieftain. This child, Shunten,

figures constructed castles as both seats, and symbols of, their newly acquired authority. This era is most commonly referred to as the *gusuku*, or castle, period.<sup>46</sup>

By the early 14th century, this process had run its course. The island was now carved up into three distinct kingdoms. The Kingdom of Hokuzan was by far the largest. It encompassed all of those lands north of present-day Onna Village on the West Coast and Kin Town to the east up to Hedo. Nanzan was the smallest. It contained all lands south of, and including a large part of, present-day Naha City. Lying between these two was the Kingdom of Chuzan, with its capital at Shuri. Conflict between these kingdoms was quite common, though none was able to assert overall authority.

A balance of power persisted through to the latter part of the 14th century, when the Chuzan Kingdom gained the upper hand. In 1372, King Satto sent a tribute mission to the newly invested Ming Court in China to establish diplomatic and trading relations. In 1374, he was recognized as the King of Chuzan by a seal of office and accepted into the tributary system. In return for entry into the system King Satto recognized that he and his kingdom fell under China's suzerainty, which meant that Chuzan was no longer an independent entity, but an autonomous one. Although the Kings of Hokuzan and Nanzan were eventually recognized by the Ming Court, they had effectively missed the boat. The Kingdom of Chuzan, boosted by this newly established union, was already on its way to extending its authority. The *Sanzan*, or Three-Kingdom period, officially ended in 1429 when King Sho Hashi, founder of the powerful Sho Dynasty, brought about Okinawa's complete unification. Thereafter, the entire island became Chuzan, and was divided into the three administrative districts of Kunigami, Nakagami, and Shimajiri, which more or less covered the same land areas as the old kingdoms had. This was the first step in the formation of the *Ryukyu Okoku*, or Ryukyu Kingdom.<sup>47</sup>

In a practical sense, the normally rock-hard distinction between independence and autonomy was never of much relevance in the case of Chuzan, and later the whole Ryukyu Kingdom, because China never chose to exercise its authority over the region. If anything it was very lax. The ancient Chinese tributary system, a product of the Ming Dynasty's *Sappu*, or investiture, policy,<sup>48</sup> was, as Ralph Braibanti observes, far removed from the modern concepts of imperialism, protectorates or spheres of

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founded the first royal dynasty in the area around Urasoe (then Chuzan). Whilst this story is not inconsistent with the general flow of Okinawa-Japan proper relations, it did not appear in historical records until the mid-17th century. At this time, Japan was firmly in control of the island and encouraged the construction of any history that supported the idea of a profound and lengthy relationship between the centre and periphery. In the case of the Tametomo story, it was clearly beneficial for Japan to be able to claim that the first royal dynasty in Okinawa sprang, if tangentially, from royal Japanese blood.

<sup>46</sup> There were more than 100 fortified castle sites on Okinawa Island.

<sup>47</sup> Although the Chinese may have referred to Chuzan at this point in time as the Ryukyu Kingdom, it was little more than an Okinawa city state with a total land area of just less than twice the size of contemporary Singapore (633 square kilometres). In the opinion of the current writer, the Ryukyu Kingdom came into existence once the other islands in the Ryukyu Archipelago had been subjugated and brought under the control of the Chuzan court at Shuri.

<sup>48</sup> The *Sappu*, or investiture, policy was introduced by the first Emperor of the Ming Dynasty, T'ai Tsu (who reigned from 1368-1399). In short, he encouraged the surrounding countries to use the Chinese calendar and to bring special gifts as tribute in recognition of China's 'Greatness'. To those leaders of countries offering tribute to the Emperor, China would, firstly, recognise their sovereignty over the new vassal or tributary state and, secondly, generously extend gifts and favours. The King of Chuzan accepted the policy within 4 years of the inauguration of the first Ming Emperor. Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, of the Japanese Muromachi *Shogunate* (feudal government), accepted it in 1403. Ueki Chikako, "Changes of Ryukyuan Style Clothes and their Present Conditions: Research Study Reviewing Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Literature from the 14th to the 19th Century", *Journal of the International Association of Costume*, No. 4, 1987, p. 85, and Okinawa Prefectural Government, *Okinawa: Sengo 50 Nen no Arumi (Okinawa: The 50 Years of the Postwar Era)*, Okinawa Prefectural Government, Naha, 1995, p. 12.



influence. Instead China “viewed the world as a unified brotherhood rather than a group of warring, competing, independent states. When smaller kingdoms paid tribute to the Heavenly Kingdom it was in acknowledgement of China’s superior status as teacher rather than legal sovereign.”<sup>49</sup> Technically, however, the Ryukyu Kingdom was an autonomous rather than independent entity.<sup>50</sup>

China gained from the arrangement in several ways. In the first part, the territorial boundaries of the Empire expanded outwards without the need to subjugate through violence.<sup>51</sup> Second, practical economic benefits, as well as a less-tangible increased degree of international political prestige accompanied the deal. Third, these peripheral regions were able to contribute to the Empire in a myriad number of ways. In the case of Chuzan, this was through the running of errands. The magic of the Chinese tributary system in the case of Chuzan was that it was symbiotic and positive. It was, in fact, an arrangement that brought more overall benefits for Chuzan than it did to the Empire. China allowed the king of Chuzan both political and economic autonomy, whilst at the same time heavily supporting advancements in virtually every area. Although societal development in the Ryukyus lagged perhaps half a millennium behind that in Japan proper,<sup>52</sup> this was not a condition that would persist for much longer under China’s tutelage.

What is interesting, of course, is that despite the cultural commonalities between the people of Japan proper and the Ryukyus, and despite the flow of peoples between these two areas since early times, which in turn led to an increased degree of sophistication in the social organization of the region, it was China which played the most important role in the economic, political and social development of the Ryukyu Kingdom. It was China which enabled the kingdom to overcome many of its economic constraints, to utilize its geographical location to great advantage, and to become one of the most pound-for-pound vibrant and cosmopolitan areas in the East and Southeast Asian region. It is no coincidence that those responsible for contemporary Okinawa Prefecture’s development planning have turned to this early historical period for inspiration. Nowhere is this more evident than in the prefectural government’s ‘Cosmopolitan City Okinawa Formation Concept’.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ralph Braibanti, “The Ryukyu Islands: Pawn of the Pacific”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 48, No. 4, December, 1954, pp. 976-77. For perhaps the most rewarding source of information on the Chinese Tributary system and its constituent elements, see John King Fairbank, *The Chinese World Order*, Cambridge University Press, 1968.

<sup>50</sup> One can find a variety of descriptions related to the status of the Ryukyu Kingdom at this time in Okinawa-related texts. They range from independent to semi-independent, and from autonomous to semi-autonomous, with a couple others thrown in for good measure. The choice one makes depends largely on one’s own subjective interpretation of Okinawan history and the point one intends to make.

<sup>51</sup> Though violence was put forward as a threat. Japan, for instance, was told that if it did not accept the *Sappu* policy and pay tribute at the Ming Court, it should “make armed preparations” to defend itself. George Kerr, op. cit., p. 135. Chuzan was the first region to voluntarily submit to China’s suzerainty in 1372. Korea, Annam and Champa did so in the following year.

<sup>52</sup> Very often much further behind Japan in some cases. Iron utensils, for instance, which were in regular use in Japan from between the 6th and 7th centuries, were not used in Okinawa until the 14th century. Chinese characters, or *Kanji*, were introduced and used in Okinawa some 8 centuries later than they were in Japan proper. Okinawa was a full millennium behind Japan in the compilation of historical records. Higa Shuncho, Shimota Seji & Shinzato Keiji, *Okinawa*, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1963, p. 65.

<sup>53</sup> Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG), *Kokusai Toshi Keisei Kihon Keikaku: 21 Seiki Okinawa no Gurandodezain no Jitsugen ni mukete (The Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept: Towards the Realisation of a Grand Design for a New Okinawa in the 21st Century)*, Okinawa Prefectural Government, Naha, May, 1997.

### 1-3-2. The Second Period: 'An Economy of Transit'

Okinawans have long regarded the sea beyond their shores as the source of good things. According to traditional Okinawan beliefs, there is a sea paradise, or *Nirai Kanai*.<sup>54</sup> Legend talks of an eternal fire beyond the eastern horizon of the sea from which the sun, fire, and human life originated. A logical extension of this belief is that people who arrive from the sea are also a source of good things. Two distinctly Okinawan philosophies have evolved in this regard. The *marebito*,<sup>55</sup> or guest, concept holds that a visitor from afar might be the bearer of some new technical knowledge or information and should therefore be extended full hospitality. The next stage in the relationship-forming process is covered by the expression *Ichariba Chode*, which translates literally as 'if once we meet, even by chance, we are as brothers.'<sup>56</sup> Both of these latter concepts constitute a fairly well defined base from which positive intercultural exchange can be conducted.

Philosophy aside, Okinawa has always had to look beyond its immediate shores for more pragmatic reasons. As a small island region with little in the way of exploitable natural resources, it has rarely been self-sufficient, even in terms of basic food items. Okinawa has traditionally been dependent on imported goods. During the early days of the Ryukyu Kingdom the population size may not have been heavy enough to put excessive pressure on the productive capacity of the available arable land, but the destructive force of the regular typhoons would have. More weather-resistant crops, such as sugar cane and the sweet potato, were eventually introduced to offset the severity of famines, but not until the 17th century. Domestic economic constraints, therefore, dictated an outward-looking economic policy.

The tributary relationship with China brought immediate benefits for the Kingdom of Chuzan. Between 1385 and 1439, it received 30 ships from the Chinese Government, most of which were capable of carrying a large cargo and 250 men.<sup>57</sup> China also provided a substantial amount of start-up capital and goods with which Chuzan could initiate a profitable system of maritime trade. The idea was that Ryukyuan ships would use the initial capital to acquire 'exotic' goods<sup>58</sup> on their travels into Southeast Asia that would then be brought back to the Chinese court as tribute. In return, China

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<sup>54</sup> Yanagita Kunio, "On the Palace of the Sea-God", *Minzokugaku Kenkyu (The Japanese Journal of Ethnology)*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1950, p. 239. Yanagita points out that this Ryukyuan belief is similar to the Japanese concept of *Ryugu*, or Dragon Palace.

<sup>55</sup> The idea of the *marebito* may be found in both Okinawan and Japan proper philosophies. Whereas in both areas the root interpretation of divine or supernatural beings who bring luck and wealth from the world beyond (spiritual world) was largely identical, however, the modern interpretation is quite different. In Japan proper the concept is known only in the most metaphysical of senses. In Okinawa, in contrast, it is still a practical philosophy. It may be seen as an essential part of the Okinawan conception of *kokusaika*, or internationalisation.

<sup>56</sup> There is no direct Japanese equivalent for this expression (which is in the Ryukyuan language). The closest in meaning would be the proverb *sode furiau mo tasho no en*, or 'even a chance acquaintance is decreed [preordained] by destiny'. The Japanese concept, of course, is entirely different from *ichariba chode*. It is based on the Buddhist idea of cause and effect and is in the realm of the metaphysical. One is hard-pressed to find anything relating to the concept of "brotherhood" in the practical sense within Japanese philosophy. For more details about the idea of *Ichariba Chode* see: Sawada Kiyoshi, *Okinawa: Landscape of Minds*, Naha Shuppan Sha, Naha, 1997, pp. 28-30, and Idaka Hiroaki, *Okinawa Aidenteitei (Okinawan Identity)*, Maruju Sha, Tokyo, 1990, pp. 34-35.

<sup>57</sup> Sakamaki Shunzo, "Ryukyu and Southeast Asia", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3, May, 1964, p. 387.

<sup>58</sup> Such goods included: sapanwood (used for making dyes) and pepper, cloves and nutmeg, camphor, gold, tin, ivory, sandalwood, perfumes and incense, coral, mercury, opium, saffron, Malacca wine, cotton prints, muslin, silk goods, olibanum, eaglewood, costusroot, rose water, rhinoceros horn, strange animals and birds, ebony, agate, resin, ship's timber, musical instruments, and other arts and crafts. Ibid. p. 387.

would provide Chuzan with fresh capital and goods that could be resold. Since the value of many of these commodities differed wildly according to region<sup>59</sup> there were huge profits to be made. The port at Naha became the center of this Ryukyuan entrepôt trading network.

To put the position of the Ryukyus within the context of the political economy of Asia at that point in time, we must first isolate two different types of state. In the first part, there were, as Sanjay Subrahmanyam has outlined, the large, agrarian-based imperial formations, like the Ottomans, the Safavids, Vijayanagara and the Mogals, the Ming in China, and the Mataram in Java,<sup>60</sup> for whom maritime trade was of limited interest.<sup>61</sup> Second, were the smaller, predominantly trade-based coastal states, such as Kilwa, Calicut and Malacca, and island states, like Hurmuz (or Jarun) and Chuzan, which occupied “strategic ‘choke-points’ along key trade routes.”<sup>62</sup> And although the political situation of Hurmuz and Chuzan was fundamentally different; with Chuzan *being* a tributary state of China, and Hurmuz *having* tributary states in the Persian Gulf, commonalities in the structure of their economies existed. Both were driven to trade as a result of limited natural resources. Chuzan’s strategic location was between Japan, Korea, China, and Southeast Asia, but since Ryukyuan ships regularly visited Malacca, one can also link the tiny kingdom to a trade network which spread from the Sultanate to India, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and beyond.

The period from the 14th through to the latter part of the 16th century was one of amazing prosperity for the Ryukyu Kingdom. It is known as the ‘First Golden Age’, or ‘Great Maritime Trading Era’. It is estimated that from 1425 to 1570, well over a hundred trade ships set sail from Naha and traveled, via Fukien or Guangzhou on the Southern coast of China, to places like Luzon, Siam, Palembang, Java, Malacca, Sumatra, Patani, Annam, and Sunda in Southeast Asia.<sup>63</sup> During the same period, Ryukyuan ships also conducted regular missions to Korea and Japan. The spirit of the era is captured in an inscription on a temple bell installed in Shuri Castle in 1458, which talks of “ships replacing bridges to connect the Ryukyu Kingdom with the rest of the world.”<sup>64</sup> The expression *Bankoku Shinryo*, or ‘bridge over the world’, which is a term intimately connected to this particular period in Okinawa’s history, can be found in some of the most recent policy documents issued by the Prefectural Government that relate to Okinawa’s potential role in Asia in the 21st century.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> As Sakamaki points out, Sapanwood sold in China for 100 times the prevailing price in the Ryukyus, and several hundred times the purchase price in Southeast Asia. Pepper sold in China for up to 1500 times the original cost. Ibid. p. 387.

<sup>60</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500-1700: A Political and Economic History*, Longman, London, 1993. Chapter One of this book will be of great interest to anybody interested in the role of small trade-oriented states like the Ryukyu Kingdom in early modern Asia. He doesn’t focus specifically on the Ryukyus, but deals with a number of other similarly organised regions. A comparative study between these regions and the Ryukyus would make for very interesting reading.

<sup>61</sup> China was certainly involved in maritime trade during the first three decades of the 15th century, venturing as far as the Eastern coast of Africa, but then withdrew, thereafter relying principally on its vassal states for the acquisition of luxury goods.

<sup>62</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>63</sup> For details of exact numbers see: Shunzo Sakamaki, “Ryukyu and Southeast Asia”, Ibid. pp. 384, and Maehira Fusaaki, “15-16 Seiki ni Okeru Ryukyu Tonan Ajia Boeki no Rekishiteki Zentei” (The Historical Position of Trade Between the Ryukyus and Southeast Asia in the 15th and 16th Centuries), *Ryudai Review of History*, No. 12, December, 1981, pp. 49.

<sup>64</sup> Sawada Kiyoshi, op. cit., pp. 32-33. Mine is a far more liberal rendering of the translation which appears in Sawada’s text.

<sup>65</sup> It has appeared boldly in each version of the ‘Cosmopolitan City Okinawa Formation Concept’ from April, 1996, onwards. Although it is not specifically mentioned in the May, 1997, draft, it is still heavily alluded to.

China-Ryukyu exchange was not exclusively restricted to trade. From the time that relations between the Kingdom of Chuzan and the Ming Court were first established strong cultural ties were initiated. King Satto invited families of professional individuals from the port of Fukien to settle in Kume Village in present-day Naha. They brought with them a variety of skills which could immediately be put to use by the government, but also an intimate familiarity with Chinese culture and techniques that would permeate deeply into Ryukyuan society. In 1392, by way of a reciprocal agreement, China invited Ryukyuan students to study at the Imperial Academy in Beijing. An official embassy was established in Fukien in 1439, bringing with it a small Ryukyuan community. All in all, few aspects of Ryukyuan culture were not affected by the touch of China. Neither the ravages of the Pacific War, nor the subsequent period of reassimilation into Japan have been able to eradicate the Chinese influence on Okinawa. The male-female pair of *shisa*, or Chinese lions, which stand proudly outside of modern day private dwellings and government buildings in Okinawa to protect the occupants therein, constitute the most visible tip of a deep cultural iceberg.

As previously noted, massive profits accrued from Ryukyu-China tributary trade. These went directly to the Royal Court at Shuri<sup>66</sup> to be utilized for a variety of purposes, most of which benefited the royal family and ruling elite. A rigid hierarchical social class system was introduced to legitimize the power of the Ryukyuan elite at Shuri, based on the prevailing Chinese Confucian model of ranks and grades, and a military force established to protect it. The threat of a regional warlord usurping power was eradicated by a general edict prohibiting the possession of all weapons, and by the introduction of a system that required these warlords to live within the confines of the capital.<sup>67</sup> Splendid cities, palaces, castles, bridges and official residences were built in Chinese style, as were the temples constructed after Buddhism was officially introduced as the state religion. In its heyday, the Ryukyu Court seems to have conducted itself with a grandeur comparable to the Ming Court or any of the European monarchies.

The system was, of course, highly inegalitarian in nature. The average Ryukyuan citizen dwelled in poorly-constructed houses and lived, at best, a life of subsistence. Animistic beliefs were more prevalent amongst this section of the population than the metaphysical intricacies of Buddhism, and remained so for several more centuries, as most were primarily interested in warding off typhoons or other destructive natural phenomena to obtain a good harvest. A spirit of *Yuimaru*, or community interdependence, which has persisted into the 20th century and has often been ascribed as an almost innate cultural characteristic, was actually forged within predominantly agrarian communities under conditions of extreme hardship during this period. Interestingly, one tends to hear very little about the negativity of these times. Historical evidence may not be plentiful, but that which does exist certainly shows that the average citizen had to struggle hard to eke out a meager living. Contemporary Okinawan policy makers must be careful not to slip into a collective amnesia when promoting the glory of the 'Great Maritime Trading Era'.

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<sup>66</sup> Whilst Ryukyu-China trade was supposed to be strictly tributary in nature, there was a thriving black market in operation. Ryukyuan officials regularly acquired goods on their travels that would be offloaded and sold to Chinese merchants for very large, and presumably personal, profit. Official tributary trade was monitored very carefully by the Royal Court at Shuri.

<sup>67</sup> This was an edict that resembled, but pre-dated the Edo Period Japanese *Sankin Kotai*, or alternate attendance, system. Under the later Japanese system a regional lord was required to spend half of his time within the confines of the capital, whilst certain of his family members were required to reside there permanently. This 'ransom' system was designed to prevent regional figures from considering any challenge to the authority of the government.

As previously stated, the King Sho Hashi had successfully unified the whole island of Okinawa in 1429. Over the next 150 years the Sho Dynasty would extend its authority into the other Ryukyu Islands, often militarily.<sup>68</sup> The southern island regions of Yaeyama and Miyako had begun sending tribute missions to Chuzan in 1390, but were brought fully under the control of the Royal Court at the turn of the 16th century. Many pockets of resistance to Chuzan centralization abounded in these areas. There were the famous Yaeyama rebellions of Oyake Akahachi on Ishigaki Island, and Untura on Yonaguni, both of which were put down by the Miyako Island chieftain Nakasone Toyomioya, before he in turn submitted to Chuzan rule.<sup>69</sup> All of these had served to delay the unification process. The final piece of the puzzle, the northern Amami Island group, was incorporated into the Chuzan Kingdom after two subjugation missions, in 1537 and 1571. A complete *Ryukyu Okoku*, or Ryukyu Kingdom had now been established.

Whilst a kingdom was now united, the economic foundation on which it stood had been gradually crumbling. There were two principal and related reasons for this. In the first part, the most profitable period of Ryukyuan maritime trade came as a result of a sudden shift in Ming policy towards commerce in the early to mid-15th century. A reinstatement of traditional Confucian values, as Hugh De Santis states, “elevated the status of the learned and the landed classes and consigned the urban bourgeoisie to the lower rung of social respectability.”<sup>70</sup> Merchants were logically included in the latter category. Maritime expeditions and further ship construction were banned by the Chinese Government. Chuzan, as an autonomous tributary state which adopted a pragmatic rather than zealous attitude towards these Confucian principles inasmuch as commerce was involved, was largely unaffected by this imperial mood swing and duly took full advantage. It continued to dutifully fulfill its tributary commitments to China; which needed the luxury goods it could not acquire on its own behalf, but it was also able to conduct a significant amount more non-tributary trade. Advances in domestic shipbuilding served to minimize the loss when China decided that vessels would no longer be provided as gifts to the Ryukyus.<sup>71</sup>

Although Ryukyuan traders remained blissfully ignorant of the fact, China’s self-imposed isolationism would have dire long-term consequences for itself and for Chuzan. As the major power in the ‘Cultural East’ was contracting, several countries in Europe were expanding outwards and saw Asia, along with the African and American continents, as a region ripe for exploitation. The Portuguese had, by the mid-15th century, begun regularly utilizing the mid-Atlantic island group of the Azores as a stopping-off point on voyages both East and West. The construction of more advanced vessels brought them to India by the latter part of the 15th century, and further into Southeast Asia by the opening decade of the next. The Portuguese were not openly violent towards those they encountered, but they would certainly not rule out the tactic if access to desired markets was denied them. Such seemed to be

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<sup>68</sup> It is interesting to note, that whilst contemporary Ryukyuan recall proudly their traditional proclivity towards peaceful coexistence, marked by the fact that there has never been even a single instance in Okinawan history of the use of military force against another sovereign territory, that this was not a policy in operation during the formation of the Ryukyu Kingdom. It was a centralisation process that involved conquest and subjugation. Oyake Akahachi is still regarded by some in Yaeyama as a local hero for his resistance to Chuzan domination.

<sup>69</sup> Takara Kurayoshi, op. cit., pp. 64-65, and George Kerr, op. cit., p. 121.

<sup>70</sup> Hugh De Santis, *Beyond Progress: An Interpretive Odyssey to the Future*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1996, p. 99.

<sup>71</sup> Domestically produced Ryukyuan ships, although generally smaller than those previously provided by China, were apparently of a very high quality. The Korean government was impressed enough by a demonstration in 1431 that it ordered ships to be constructed in the same style. Sakamaki Shunzo, loc. cit., 388.

the case when Malacca, the second-most important trading area for Ryukyuan, <sup>72</sup> was brought under Portuguese control in 1511. Ryukyuan ships did not return there, nor to Patani after 1543. A gradual withdrawal from Southeast Asia culminated in the last mission to Siam, previously the jewel of the Ryukyuan trade network in the region, in 1570. <sup>73</sup> Thereafter, Ryukyuan trade was in a far less-exotic selection of goods and limited to that possible with China, Japan, and Korea.

Whilst the catalyst for the economic decline of the Ryukyu Kingdom was certainly provided by external forces; in particular the European advance into, and domination of the Asian markets, the real problem was internal and systemic in nature. It stemmed from the fact that economic success was not the product of endogenous Ryukyuan factors; beyond its advantageous geographic or geo-strategic position, and that it was therefore not self-sustainable. In this respect, the Ryukyuan economic experience is very similar to that of the Azores. It is unlikely that the Ryukyus were ever quite as pivotal to China as the Azores were to Portugal, since their geo-strategic location was that of a crossroads between several countries in East, Northeast and Southeast Asia, rather than at a midway point between three continents, <sup>74</sup> yet the economic rise and fall of both island regions was intrinsically linked with the fortunes of their respective suzerains. Both were founded on, as the Azorean scholar Carlos Pacheco Amaral terms, a “Wealth of Transit.” <sup>75</sup>

The Ryukyuan maritime trading economy was initiated with Chinese capital and technology, was possible because of Chuzan’s role as a tributary state under China’s aegis, and was based on the transit of predominantly non-domestically produced goods. The role of the Azores within Portugal’s master plan was as a kind of naval and commercial base in the Atlantic Ocean. Spices from India and gold from Brazil, as Carlos Pacheco Amaral states, “stopped by the Azores, but in transit only, to Lisbon and, from there, to the rest of Europe.” <sup>76</sup> Both economies developed to serve not themselves, but the wider needs of China and Portugal, respectively. As China’s influence in the Asian region increasingly diminished under European pressure during the latter half of the 16th century, so too did the Ryukyu Kingdom’s ability to conduct a maritime trading economy. If not fulfilling this role, the Ryukyu Kingdom had nothing substantial to fall back on. The advent of non-stop ocean-traversing vessels and the decline in Portugal’s naval superiority during the 18th century had a similar effect on the Azorean economy.

The purpose here is not to suggest that there was some grand conspiracy at work to economically disempower these regions and to create dependencies, nor to suggest that the profits accrued from Ryukyuan maritime trade or Azorean transit trade were illusory. This was just the way things were at that time. In the first part, China, at least, was as benevolent and as non-interfering as it could have been to the Ryukyus. In the second part, the tangible infrastructural developments and obvious societal advances achieved in both areas under both suzerains and with the wealth created via tributary (and non-tributary) and transit trade, respectively, were real. What is of major importance, is

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<sup>72</sup> Twenty Ryukyuan trade expeditions to Malacca were conducted between 1463 and 1511. See: Maehira Fusaaki, loc. cit., p. 49.

<sup>73</sup> There had been 59 Ryukyuan missions to Siam over a 146-year period. This had been the longest lasting and most profitable of all the Ryukyus’ Southeast Asian trade relationships. Ibid. p. 49.

<sup>74</sup> As international political conditions changed in subsequent centuries, of course, Okinawa came to occupy an extremely important geo-strategic position.

<sup>75</sup> Carlos Pacheco Amaral, “Integration, Development and Autonomy”. A paper presented at the *International Conference on Islands and Small States*, held at the University of Malta from May 23rd to 25th, 1991, p. 12. PLEASE NOTE: the current author has not yet asked the writer for his permission to quote from this unpublished source.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. p. 12.

that the root foundation of that wealth was extremely fragile and subject to relatively sudden change. In addition, the destinies of both areas were determined by factors beyond their control. These are conditions that have persisted throughout most of Okinawa's history and are defining characteristics.

### **I-3-3. The Third Period: 'One Nation, Two Masters'**

Although cultural commonalities clearly indicate that Okinawa and Japan have been part of the same civilization since ancient times, geographical factors served to keep these regions apart for an extremely long period. Formal economic and political relations were not actually established until the early 15th century. And whilst Japan's initial claim of sovereignty over the islands can be traced to this same period, no action was taken to make this manifest for another two centuries.

The principal reason for this, as previously mentioned, was that Japan had fallen into a state of political disorganization. Almost a century-and-a-half of relative stability was created with the establishment of the Muromachi Shogunate in Kyoto in 1336, though political in-fighting and financial problems were constants during this period. Many of the regional warlords who had been pivotal on the battlefield in the fall of the Kamakura Shogunate did not receive rewards they felt appropriate, and proceeded therefore to take unilateral action to redress this state of affairs. Simmering frustrations led ultimately to the outbreak of the Onin War, and the fall of Muromachi, in 1467. After that, and until the latter part of the 16th century, there was virtual chaos. Political power tended to reside with whichever warlord happened to have control over the strongest military force, and the Imperial Family had undergone so many transformations via intermarriage with politically influential factions that it no longer had any real credibility.<sup>77</sup>

Ryukyuan vessels first began conducting regular trade missions to Korea and Japan during the late 14th and into the early 15th century. At times ships would bypass Japan entirely on voyages to Pusan, Korea, but far more often than not they would stop in at Kagoshima (Satsuma) or Hakata, both in Kyushu, on the way. From there they would follow Japan's Inland Sea to arrive in Sakai, near present-day Osaka, on route to Kyoto. There are records of at least seven missions to the Muromachi Shogunate between 1403 and 1448.<sup>78</sup> As was customary, gifts were offered in the spirit of friendship and courtesy when ties were first established, and thereafter on each occasion that a commercial mission arrived in port. Ryukyuan traders brought Chinese lacquerware, coins, herbs, incense, and other luxury items, and left with swords, armor, gold, silver, folding screens, and fans, amongst other things.

The value of Ryukyuan trade with Japan during this period needs to be put in its proper historical context. Japan-China relations in the early Ming Dynasty period were antagonistic at best. Whilst the Muromachi Shogunate was enthusiastic about expanded commercial opportunities, if only to bolster its flagging finances, it was not prepared to bow to China's 'greatness' policy in order to achieve them. It demanded ties founded on political equality. Strides forward were made with the formalization of a kind of tributary system between the Ming Court and Kyoto during the early part of the 15th century, though this was principally initiated by the Chinese side as a means of trying to halt

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<sup>77</sup> Almost any figure could have been put forward as the Emperor, since nobody really had any idea about the Imperial Family lineage. The Imperial Family only ever had worth in as much as it was used to give legitimacy to the political power of a particular individual. In this sense, MacArthur's Japanese postwar Constitution of 1946, which asserted that the Emperor was only a 'symbol of the state', was an accurate interpretation of the role of the Imperial Family throughout most of its history.

<sup>78</sup> George Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

the activities of the wako, or Japanese pirates.<sup>79</sup> Official Chinese passes were supposed to be issued to legitimate Japanese traders through the Tenryuji temple in Kyoto, but the system became so corrupt that they were often sold off or passed on to the same regional figures who were permitting piracy to be conducted from their ports and becoming all the wealthier for it. The Shogunate's inability to prevent such activities effectively allowed the daimyo to accumulate more profit, which in turn made them more of a potential political threat to the government. Furthermore, revenue that may have ended up in Muromachi coffers through legitimate commerce was being drawn away by those involved in illegal activities, which only compounded the Shogunate's political and economic problems.

Certain of Japan's regional warlords, or daimyo, had less need to become involved in piracy. Shimazu, the Lord of Satsuma, fell in this category. The port of Kagoshima was a required stopping-off point for most Ryukyuan ships on route to Korea and Japan. He quickly recognized that this could work greatly to his advantage. There were four factors involved. The first was that Ryukyuan traders were anxious to establish and develop markets in the Japan-Korea area. Second, Ryukyuan vessels were arriving with the type of exotic wares that were in short supply in that part of the world. Thirdly, since Chuzan was an integral part of the tributary system, and therefore trading effectively on China's behalf, its vessels were unimpeded by the sort of legal restrictions that applied to most Japanese ships. Finally, the only real threat to Ryukyuan traders were the pirate vessels operating in the area.

Shimazu offered Kagoshima to the Ryukyuan traders as the principal marketplace for goods brought from Naha. This benefited both the traders, who were happy to unload the majority of their cargo in one go, and for the daimyo, who gained a virtual monopoly over the luxury goods market in Japan. Shortly afterwards, another Satsuma trading depot was set up on the offshore island of Tanegashima. Ryukyuan ships would continue on with the remainder of their wares to Korea and to the Japanese capital at Kyoto, but now under Shimazu's promise of protection. Some Ryukyuan vessels fell victim to piracy after the tying of this relationship, but on the whole Shimazu proved adept at scaring off the opposition.<sup>80</sup> He established a small military presence in the islands just north of Amami Oshima to prevent any unwanted incursions into the Ryukyus. Shimazu would also regularly send agents on Ryukyuan ships bound for Korea. Whilst the primary mission was to ensure smooth passage across dangerous waters, of course, Shimazu was not averse to utilizing the unrestricted status of the Ryukyuan vessels to carve out his own niche in the marketplace. In 1395, a trade relationship was established between Satsuma and Korea. Technically, Satsuma was now a tributary of the Li Dynasty, but Shimazu was perfectly happy to accept the status since there were large profits to be made. Between 1395 and 1504, Shimazu sent 126 missions to Korea, most of which carried goods brought to Kagoshima in Ryukyuan ships.<sup>81</sup>

It is not difficult to see how reliant Shimazu became on Ryukyuan trade. Nor is it hard to understand why he sought to forcefully exclude others from the relationship and to gain more control for himself. In the dog-eat-dog world of 15th century Japanese politics it was vital to get, and keep, an edge over the opposition. Nor were Ryukyuan traders exempt from Shimazu's exertion of authority. The

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<sup>79</sup> For a more detailed explanation about the activities of the 'Wako' see: George Sansom, *A History of Japan - 1334-1615*, Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, 1963, pp. 265-270.

<sup>80</sup> The Daimyo of Bitchu, Miyake Kunihide, attempted to go up against Satsuma for the proprietary position in Ryukyuan-Japan-Korea trade. He set sail for Naha with a fleet of 12 ships in 1516. Shimazu heard of the planned assault and intercepted it on route. Miyake was killed and his fleet scattered. Shimazu was not quite as effective in 1450, when Hosokawa Katsumoto of Shikoku seized a full cargo on board a Ryukyuan ship bound for Kyoto. George Kerr, op. cit., pp. 139-141.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. p. 136.



relationship may have started on a relatively equal footing, but Shimazu became increasingly paternalistic. Although Shuri was uncomfortable with any interference in its commercial affairs it could do little to resist. The Ryukyu Court was already upset at having to play 'Devil's Advocate' between a bickering China and Japan on a regular basis, but it had learnt some valuable diplomatic lessons as a result. Shuri wanted a reasonably quiet, if prosperous, existence, and understood that the best policy was to go with the flow and to avoid confrontation. It was, in retrospect, a little naïve.

Like sharks to the site of a fresh kill, Satsuma's position did not go unnoticed by the Muromachi Shogunate, which was intent upon securing some stake in the booming inter-regional trade network. Although it had effectively lost political and economic power to the regions it was still in a position to offer tokens of power and legitimacy to its allies. This was the case in 1441, when Ashikaga Yoshinori, the Shogun, conferred the rights of jurisdiction over the Ryukyu Kingdom to the Lord of Satsuma, Shimazu Tadakuni.<sup>82</sup> The rationale for this was rather interesting. Whilst the Shogun himself would not accept the basis of the Chinese system, whereby a neighboring country would offer up tribute to the Emperor in recognition of China's 'Greatness', and henceforth become an autonomous but vassal state of the Heavenly Kingdom, he would gladly adopt the whole system if tribute were paid to Japan. Ashikaga simply accepted the gifts presented by Ryukyuan envoys at Kyoto as 'tribute' and regarded the Ryukyus as a Japanese dependency.<sup>83</sup> Although Shuri had no idea of this transfer of sovereignty, and despite the fact that Kyoto chose not to exercise any control over domestic Ryukyuan affairs, the Kingdom was now in the unique position of having two masters.

The Shogunate was not, of course, in any position to exercise control over anyone or anything. By 1467, as we have noted, it is pointless to talk about any kind of central authority in Japan. The country descended into the *Sengoku Jidai*, or 'Civil War Era'. Satsuma, in contrast, was to flourish in the chaos. The strong economic foundation it had built on the strength of Ryukyuan trade would ensure its military dominance in the Kyushu region for several centuries. Even though he was obliged to hand back the bulk of this territory in subsequent decades, Shimazu won control of the entire Kyushu region by the end of the 16th century. What these internal changes meant for the Ryukyu Kingdom, however, was very little. Routines previously established continued. Periodically decrees would be transmitted to Shuri ordering that certain tasks be completed, but these were seen more as an irritant than direct interference. A closer type of control was approaching, though it was still over the horizon.

A significant change to be noted during this period was cultural rather than political or economic. This was connected to the establishment of relations with Satsuma and with the arrival of more and more Japanese ships into Naha Port; which was itself a bustling trade center, and with the evolution of a small, permanent Ryukyuan community on the island of Tanegashima. As Chinese customs and practices had penetrated into Ryukyuan life, albeit at a higher level in the social hierarchy, so did these new influences. Whilst the Japanese language had been of little interest to all but a few, it became of greater necessity to a wider section of the 'urban' citizenry, and was a popular choice amongst the student elite who, by the latter part of the 16th century, traveled to Kyoto in greater numbers. The rural communities, in contrast, remained as unaffected by Japanese as they had been by

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<sup>82</sup> Higa Shuncho, Shimoda Seiji & Shinzato Keiji, op. cit., p. 78, and Higa Mikio, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*, University of British Columbia Press, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>83</sup> George Kerr asserts that, from the Japanese view, the Ryukyu Kingdom had submitted *pro forma* to the Shogunate much earlier, in 1415. George Kerr, op. cit., p. 136.

Chinese. The various dialects of the Ryukyuan language were still prevalent amongst the largest segment of the Ryukyuan population.<sup>84</sup>

Either way, Ryukyuan were now consciously becoming more interested in things Japanese. This is not meant to imply that they were in the process of coming out of a lengthy period of amnesia and embarking on a discovery of their true cultural roots, of course. Ryukyuan did not see themselves in any way as 'being Japanese'. The people of the islands identified, at least inasmuch as self-identification was important, which it was probably not at this time, as being part of a distinct cultural entity which was *neither* Japan, *nor* China, *nor* Korea, nor any of the other countries with which their government at Shuri had established official diplomatic relations. And whilst elements from these areas certainly combined in the development of society and culture in the islands, the final product was a uniquely Ryukyuan mix. After all, as an autonomous state the Ryukyu Kingdom had the right to make its own choices.

Japan's descent into internal political chaos may have taken several centuries, but its emergence from this state happened within a few short decades. In 1568, warlord Oda Nobunaga declared himself Shogun. Within the following fourteen years, until his death by assassination in 1582, he had succeeded in militarily wiping out, or 'taming', virtually all of the regional daimyo and bringing Japan to the verge of political unification. The process was completed by Oda's most astute military commander, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. By the closing decade of the 16th century he had set his sights on an even grander scheme: the expansion a Japanese empire into Korea, China, and beyond. The Korean peninsula was to be invaded in 1592. From there Japanese forces would make their way to Peking.

Toyotomi had initially, and presumably on a whim,<sup>85</sup> since he had no authority in the region, conferred all rights over the Ryukyu Kingdom to the daimyo of Shikano, Kamei Korenori. Kamei was militarily weak, however, and was thrashed by Satsuma forces when he attempted to sail into the Ryukyus. Thereafter, Hideyoshi dealt with Shimazu when Ryukyuan affairs were under discussion. The first issue involved the invasion of Korea. In 1590, Hideyoshi told Shimazu Yoshihisa that the Ryukyus

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<sup>84</sup> Although there is precious little space to devote to the theme, it is important to point out that the language spoken in the Ryukyus up until the annexation of the islands by Japan in 1879 was unintelligible to people in surrounding countries. And whilst it may legitimately be regarded as a sister language to that spoken in contemporary Japan, it constitutes a separate linguistic system with its own grammar, lexis, phonology, and syntax. That said, Ryukyuan was not one, uniform language understood from Amami to Yonaguni. Within the language there was, and is, immense local variation. It is quite unlikely that a person from Kin Town, Okinawa Island, would be able to conduct anything more than a basic conversation with a person from Sonai Village, Iriomote Island, if both were speaking exclusively in their variation of Ryukyuan. I make this point only to counter the prevailing Japanese view that the system of spoken communication in the Ryukyus is a *Hogen*, or dialect, of the Japanese language. The term *Hogen*, when used in this way is a crude political device employed by Japan as a means of perpetuating the notion that Ryukyuan culture is but an offshoot of Japanese culture. One is advised to avoid the use of the word *Hogen* in any discussion of Ryukyuan, unless one is talking about linguistic variations within the Ryukyus. For a more comprehensive discussion of these themes see: Matsumori Akiko, "Ryukyuan: Past, Present, and Future", in John C. Maher & Yashiro Kyoko (Ed), *Multilingual Japan*, Multilingual Matters Ltd, Clevedon, Avon, 1995, pp. 19-44.

<sup>85</sup> Most of Toyotomi's allies were rewarded for services rendered in battle. Kamei, a minor figure at best, had asked for a different area from which foreign trade might be conducted, but had been pipped to the post by another warlord. When Kamei suggested that the Ryukyus might be a good alternative Toyotomi agreed, probably just to keep him quiet. There was certainly little thought as to how Shimazu, who was a major figure, might receive this news. One might also retrospectively question the legality of Kamei's ownership of the Ryukyus, since Toyotomi had simply scribbled 'Kamei: Lord of the Ryukyus' onto a decorative fan. This fan was later lost by Kamei during an invasion attempt against Korea. Needless to say, when the Koreans recovered the fan they were anxious to hear why the Ryukyus were aiding the invasion. Shuri had no idea what was going on.

would be required to contribute troops and provisions for the Korean conquest. Shimazu felt that this would be unwise and asked that Shuri be required to provide only supplies. With Toyotomi's consent, Shimazu forwarded a letter to the Ryukyuan King, Sho Nei, in October, 1591, asking that a ten-month supply of provisions for 7,000 men be delivered to the port of Bonotsu by February of 1592, in time for the spring invasion.<sup>86</sup> The King at Shuri, anxious not to become embroiled in conflict, ignored this and subsequent demands. Shimazu, caught between Hideyoshi's demands and Sho Nei's refusals, dispatched agents to Naha who were told that the Ryukyu Kingdom was too poor to fulfill such requirements since its foreign trade had been severely curtailed. A token shipment was eventually sent in 1593, but by then the first Korean invasion attempt had failed. Simultaneously, Shuri sent word to the Chinese court in the hope that some assistance with their awkward position might be offered. None was.

Shuri may be forgiven for thinking that life would return to relative normality after Hideyoshi's death in 1598, but such was not the case. A power struggle quickly broke out between one faction loyal to the Toyotomi family and another supporting Tokugawa Ieyasu. This culminated in the clash of the Western and Eastern armies, respectively, in the 'Battle of Sekigahara' in 1600. When the dust settled, Tokugawa emerged triumphant and established the *Edo* (Tokyo) or Tokugawa Shogunate. The period from 1603 to 1867 is one of unrivalled political stability in Japan's history. It is also notable for the economic and bureaucratic innovations introduced.

Effective control was kept through a two-pronged approach. Firstly, the old feudal territories were redistributed and reorganized. The lords loyal to Tokugawa were known as *fudai*. Those who had opposed him were known as *tozama*. The territories were further organized in a kind of patchwork quilt formation, so that each *tozama* could be watched over by a *fudai*. In addition, no *tozama* was located anywhere near to the Tokyo region. The *tozama* occupied about forty percent of Japan's total land area, principally on the peripheries.<sup>87</sup> Secondly, to prevent any resentment manifesting itself in a challenge to the Shogunate, Ieyasu introduced a system almost identical to that created in Okinawa about two centuries earlier. The *Sankin Kotai* system obligated the daimyo to spend half of his time in Tokyo. At those times when he returned to his domain, he was required to leave family members in Tokyo as hostages. Whilst this brilliant system kept order effectively, a spin-off infrastructural benefit was the creation of a Japan-wide network of roads and highways.

Furthermore, all lands, both *fudai* and *tozama* were assessed in terms of their tax value to the Shogunate. This survey system was known as the *Taiko Kenchi*. The unit of measurement was the *koku*,<sup>88</sup> which was equivalent to five bushels of rice. Once the net *koku* worth of the domain was established<sup>88</sup> a figure payable to the Shogunate was set. Tokugawa might only have chosen to impose a 10% tax or thereabouts on the daimyo, which seems somewhat light, but since the individual lords had full responsibility for the upkeep and improvement of all infrastructure in their domain; maintenance of costly second abodes in Tokyo; the upkeep of an armed retinue of samurai; and several other matters, it was actually quite heavy. Thus the Shogun could, through the levying of taxes, and if he so wished, ensure that a daimyo was little more than a pauper.

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<sup>86</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 155, Matsuda Mitsugu, *The Government of the Kingdom of Ryukyu, 1609-1872*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1967, p. 5, and Higa Shuncho, et al (Ed), op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>87</sup> W. G. Beasley, *The Rise of Modern Japan*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1990, p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Beasley asserts that there is generally assumed to have been a correlation between population size and *koku* value. This in the sense that a domain with a total *koku* value of 100,000 would be expected to have a population of 100,000. Ibid. p. 5.

Since the Lord of Satsuma, Shimazu Yoshihiro, had sided against Tokugawa Ieyasu in battle, he was more than a little apprehensive about his position in the new order. The Shogun immediately stripped him of his title and forced him to become a priest, but was thereafter lenient towards, if watchful of, his successors. Shimazu Iehisa, the first recipient of the title, was very grateful. As well as paying a personal visit to Tokyo to honor the new Shogun, he sent word to Sho Nei, the Ryukyuan King, telling him to do the same. As usual, perhaps blissfully unaware of the magnitude of the political changes in Japan, Shuri refused. Whereas on former occasions Shimazu could have made excuses for the Ryukyus, however, he was no longer in a position to condone this disrespectful attitude. As a good subject, Shimazu wrote to the Shogun asking for permission to deploy a punitive task force to the Ryukyus. In mid-1606, Ieyasu replied affirmatively.

Eventually, in February 1609, Shimazu launched an attack. His general, Kabayama Hisataka, set sail from Kagoshima with 3,000 men in 100 vessels.<sup>89</sup> Although there were minor skirmishes *en route*, the Ryukyans, having largely been disarmed two centuries prior, posed little resistance. On 5th April, King Sho Nei surrendered Shuri Castle and was transported, along with most of his senior officers, to Kagoshima, where he was paraded as the first 'foreign monarch' to have submitted to Japanese authority.<sup>90</sup> Whilst this was going on, close to 200 agents had surveyed the length and breadth of the Ryukyus and had assessed their political and economic value to Satsuma. In addition, the Ryukyu Court at Shuri was taken, giving Satsuma direct control over all Ryukyuan foreign affairs and a good measure of control over domestic matters. The first act was to prohibit all Ryukyuan foreign trade that was not specifically authorized by Shimazu.

A final dagger to the heart came in the form of an offer to Sho Nei in 1611. He was told that he could return and take charge of his Kingdom, provided he simply put his signature to the 'King's Oath'. The gist of the document was that the present unfortunate situation had been brought upon the Ryukyu Kingdom by its own king's disrespect for the Shogun via Shimazu. Sho Nei was obliged to agree that it was now only because of Shimazu's generosity that he could resume his duties. Finally, and most importantly, he had to concur with the statement that "the Ryukyu Islands have from ancient times been a feudal dependency of Satsuma."<sup>91</sup> The sight of one Ryukyuan official beheaded by one of Shimazu's samurai for his disagreement with the terms proved to be an effective catalyst for all others to sign.<sup>92</sup> In utter humiliation Sho Nei returned home.

As previously stated, Shimazu Iehisa's invasion of the Ryukyus had in part been conducted as a highly visible demonstration of his loyalty to the new Shogun. A far more important reason, however, had been his need to secure direct control over a vital source of revenue for Satsuma coffers. Whilst the Shogun had not confiscated all of Shimazu's lands and broken up the ruling clan, he reduced the size of Shimazu's domain and then began to impose a higher level of taxation on his southernmost *tozama*. Shimazu, in turn, would pass part responsibility for the recovery of these losses onto the Ryukyus.

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<sup>89</sup> Although there is some division amongst historians as to the exact makeup of the force sent by Shimazu against the Ryukyus (some suggest that it was somewhat smaller), the above figures appear most frequently. See: Higa Shuncho, et al (Ed), op. cit., p. 78, George Kerr, op. cit., p. 158, Okinawa Prefectural Government, *Okinawa: Sengo 50 Nen no Arumi (Okinawa: The 50 Years of the Postwar Era)*, op. cit., p. 14, amongst others.

<sup>90</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 160.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. pp. 160-161. See also: Higa Mikio, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>92</sup> The unfortunate individual, Jana Teido, came from the respected Kume Village Chinese community and was a minister representing China's interests at Shuri. His rejection of Satsuma's terms may have led to his execution, but he became an Okinawan folk hero in the mould of an Oyake Akahachi.

Although there was a greater degree of complexity to the system,<sup>93</sup> three general types of payment were demanded from Shuri. The first was a tribute tax. This figure was derived from the assessed productive capacity of all Ryukyuan lands. Satsuma agents set the *koku* value of the Ryukyus at 90,000.<sup>94</sup> From this, Shimazu asked for a direct payment by the Ryukyuan government of between 8,000-12,000 *koku*.<sup>95</sup> In addition, he requested a personal tribute from the king, which could have been as much as 8,000 *koku*. By far the largest amount of revenue coming from Shuri, however, was Shimazu's share of Ryukyuan foreign trade. It is estimated that he was clearing as much as 100,000 *koku* per year from this single source.<sup>96</sup> To put these figures into some sort of context, the total revenue of the Satsuma domain, which was the second-largest of the *tozama*, at that time stood at about 700,000 *koku*, and Tokugawa revenues at over 3 million.

Shimazu's demands on the Ryukyus were not as heavy as one might think.<sup>97</sup> At least they were relatively egalitarian. The tribute tax, which fell principally on the working-classes, was generally achievable as long as the harvest was good. Although the *koku* figure constituted perhaps fifteen percent of the officially assessed productive capacity, productivity in real terms was much higher. This was especially the case once higher value crops, such as the sweet potato and sugar cane, were introduced during the 17th century. The average citizen was certainly nowhere near to enjoying a prosperous existence, yet they were not significantly worse off after the Satsuma invasion. An increase in the Ryukyuan population over the same period did not seem to overly burden the taxpayer. Those located at the bottom rung of Ryukyuan society started at point zero, but progressed to zero. In this sense poverty was relative. If anything, the playing field was substantially leveled. Those occupying upper positions in the Ryukyuan hierarchy started to feel the financial pinch, and as such lost relatively more than the peasants. This was one of the more positive developments under Satsuma rule. It is important to understand, certainly for future reference and particularly when one hears of the 'sufferings' of the Okinawan people after 1609, that the Ryukyuan government and societal elite were by far the largest consumers.

Even though Shimazu siphoned off virtually all of the profits from foreign trade, he did not demand a set figure. Thus when times were bad for Shuri, Shimazu also suffered. This was fortunate, since the Ming Dynasty had heard of the Satsuma invasion in 1612 and stipulated that from then on tribute missions would be permitted only once per decade. This was clearly economically disadvantageous for both Shuri and Satsuma. After prompting, and with the succession of a new king in the Ryukyus, which provided a perfect excuse for an investiture mission, the Ming Court agreed to the resumption of tributary relations in 1623. Thereafter Shimazu made sure that his officials kept as far out of sight as possible when official Chinese missions arrived at Naha. He was not about to rock the boat now that Ryukyu-China relations were working to his advantage once more. The concealment

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<sup>93</sup> There were all sorts of land taxes, poll taxes, special produce taxes and miscellaneous taxes. For a comprehensive study of the Ryukyu-Satsuma financial relationship during the period see: Sakihara Mitsugu, *The Significance of Ryukyu in Satsuma Finances During the Tokugawa Period*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1971.

<sup>94</sup> When Ryukyuan lands were first assessed in 1611 they were actually valued at about 85,000 *koku*. The figure was reassessed in the early 18th century and the raised to some 95,000 *koku*.

<sup>95</sup> Depending on one's sources this figure will differ. The above figure should be regarded as an average.

<sup>96</sup> George Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>97</sup> According to the general thrust of Sakihara Mitsugu's comprehensive text, the Ryukyus were not financially exploited by Shimazu until the 1830's when his *Tempo* financial reforms were introduced. Furthermore, the whole of Japan was afflicted by this period of crisis which, in part, led to the decline and fall of the Tokugawa government.

of things Japanese was often quite elaborate.<sup>98</sup> Ryukyans also had to display a similar ignorance of things Japanese when conducting missions *to* the Japanese mainland. Shimazu encouraged them to dress and behave as exotically or as 'foreign' as possible. The policy was so successful that Okinawans have struggled to shrug off this image almost to the present day.

On the downside for the Ryukyus, Shimazu took complete control of the Amami Islands and Tanegashima in 1624. Since a good deal of Ryukyuan foreign trade was conducted through this region it constituted a considerable economic loss. Furthermore, it represented the first loss of what was considered 'sovereign' Ryukyuan territory. Pinned back from voyages South as a result of European advances, and now denied control over its northern foothold, Shuri had to content itself with a heavily curtailed maneuvering space. In addition, trade was becoming far more costly for the kingdom. The investiture missions from China had been expensive in earlier days, since a large retinue generally accompanied the official envoy, all of whom had to be accommodated lavishly, often for several months. Financing these events was now no longer possible without significant funding from Shimazu, though he was happy to oblige. Tokugawa Iemitsu, the new shogun, feared the dissemination of Christianity throughout Japan; mostly because it constituted a philosophical challenge to his rigidly imposed social hierarchy, and in 1638 prohibited contact with all foreign nations except China and Holland. Moreover, this limited foreign intercourse had to be conducted exclusively through the port of Dejima in Nagasaki. The official exclusion policy, known as *sakoku*, remained in effect for more than two centuries. Only Shimazu, with the small Chinese vassal state of the Ryukyus under his control, could legitimately circumvent these rules.<sup>99</sup>

Although painful adjustments had to be made, the Ryukyus settled in well under Satsuma authority. Once the realization had come that foreign affairs were now controlled from Kagoshima, that legislation had to be approved by Shimazu, and that no trade with China would exist without significant economic assistance from Satsuma, there was almost no will to try and resist. Peasants were still peasants, and the elite still, though to a lesser degree than previously accustomed, could lord it over all. With responsibility for all but petty matters residing elsewhere, the court at Shuri seemed to almost embrace pettiness. The most important remaining local functions beyond the conduct of trade between China and Satsuma, were the organization and collection of taxes, the upkeep of law and order, and preparations for Chinese investiture missions. Since there were only eight investiture missions dispatched to Okinawa in total during the Ch'ing Period<sup>100</sup> which lasted well over two centuries, however, and given that Shimazu's agents controlled overall policing, the main local governmental function was taxation. This Shuri administered well.

Since the functions of the king and his government had been severely curtailed after the Satsuma conquest, many at Shuri were left idle. Rather than succumb to total boredom, however, energies were thrown into creation of a new social and administrative hierarchy based heavily on an essentially Chinese Confucian system of ranks and grades. This was not, however, entirely unrelated to the types of changes being instituted by the Tokugawa Shogunate within Japan proper. Whereas in Japan proper the social hierarchy was based on the *shi-no-ko-sho*, or samurai-farmer-artisan-merchant system, with the warrior class located at the top of the pile and the merchant at the bottom, the

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<sup>98</sup> For a better description see: Ralph Braibanti, "The Ryukyu Islands: Pawn of the Pacific", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 48, No 4, December, 1954, pp. 977-978.

<sup>99</sup> Several other daimyo circumvented the *sakoku* policy by sending individuals abroad to study covertly.

<sup>100</sup> Ta-tuan Ch'en, "Investiture of Liu-Ch'iu Kings in the Ch'ing Period", in John King Fairbank (Edited), *The Chinese World Order*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968, p. 136.

Okinawan system had three levels. There were subdivisions within the categories. At the peak was the royal Sho family and the various noble households. Next came the *shizoku*, or privileged classes. Amongst this group were soldiers, priests, scholars, and craftsmen, as well as others rewarded for loyal service to the crown. Finally, there were the *heimin*, or ordinary people, including farmers and fishermen. It is interesting to note that farmers were allocated a higher social status on the *hondo* (Japanese mainland) than in the Ryukyus.<sup>101</sup> That said, there was more crossover within the Ryukyuan system. Farmers could rise into the ranks of the *shizoku*. Furthermore, although craftsmen were located amongst the privileged classes, their products contributed significantly to the economy.

Under Satsuma control the Ryukyus embarked on a new phase of political, economic and social development. Obviously this was principally internal since external relations, and therefore influences, were curtailed. In terms of infrastructural advances, attention was paid to the construction of new roads and bridges.<sup>102</sup> In addition, irrigation and cultivation techniques were improved. Both of these developments mirrored advances on the Japanese mainland. Sugar cane and the sweet potato were introduced from China. Both were largely resistant to typhoons and ideally suited to Okinawa's climate. They soon became profitable exports to the mainland, partially offsetting the decline in revenues from external trade.

Government offices were established to cope with various problems or to oversee economic development, but since many of these offices were artificially created to provide positions of influence for a burgeoning Ryukyuan nobility they were almost ineffective.<sup>103</sup> Only at such times when skilled statesmen guided the Ryukyuan king did the government achieve anything of substance. Within Okinawa's history under Satsuma, the period of *Sai On's* influence from the early- to mid-18th century stands out most clearly. As a scholar well versed in Chinese texts on economic problems and practical administration, Sai On sparked the government into life and oversaw the introduction of any number of practical economic innovations and environmental conservation projects.<sup>104</sup> His *Yomu Ihen*, or 'Compilation of Important Duties', edited in 1715, was based largely on the principle that Ryukyuan social life had to be adjusted downwards to accord with its rather negative economic situation.<sup>105</sup> In addition, he instituted a system under which there was greater harmony between economic endeavors in rural and urban areas.

There were gains and losses during the period of Satsuma rule. On the positive side, there was a creative explosion in Okinawa. Arts and crafts, such as music, dance, poetry, textile making, pottery and lacquerware flourished amongst the nobility. It was as if the Ryukyus were entering a belated

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<sup>101</sup> One can still, by examining of the Chinese characters in the names of modern day Okinawans, trace their lineage back to specific roles within the old hierarchy. The first of the two kanji in the compound *seifu*, meaning government, for instance, denotes a samurai background. The kanji meaning morning, read as *cho* or *asa*, clearly denotes a royal connection.

<sup>102</sup> In the case of bridges the situation in Okinawa was different from that on the *hondo*. Whereas the Tokugawa government frowned on bridge construction (on the grounds that Japan's internal defence would be weakened), Shuri built them in excessive numbers.

<sup>103</sup> It was entirely common for those seeking positions of influence to pay for the distinction. Although this underhand method of achieving power is common across cultural paradigms, Okinawa may be unique in that this system of 'cash for influence' was a government-sanctioned economic policy.

<sup>104</sup> For an excellent overview of Saion's life and selected translations of his writings see: Edward E. Bollinger, *Saion, Okinawa's Sage Reformer: An Introduction to his life and Selected Works*, Ryukyu Shimpo Sha, Naha, 1975. For an appraisal of Saion's policies and overall role in Okinawa's history written by two of Okinawa's finest scholars, see Iha Fuyu & Majikina Anko, *Ryukyu no Gojijin (Five Great Men of the Ryukyus)*, Shotaku Shoten, Naha, 1916.

<sup>105</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., pp. 205-206.

Heian-type era.<sup>106</sup> One might even look upon the Ryukyuan government, given its ceremonial intricacies, as a creative rather than practical endeavor. Furthermore, historical records were compiled. Although the first edition of the *Omoro Soshi*, a collection of traditional Ryukyuan poems and songs, actually predates it by more than a century, the first 'official' Ryukyuan history, the *Chuzan Seikan*, was compiled in 1650. Others followed.

At the same time, however, an interest in both Chinese and traditional Ryukyuan culture was declining. Shuri accorded the once-powerful *noro*, or priestesses, a diminished role in society, and the Ryukyuan royal family began to place less emphasis on regular pilgrimages to traditional religious spots like the *Seifa Utaaki* in Chinen.<sup>107</sup> A shortage of finances led to a decrease in the observance of both Chinese and Ryukyuan ceremonies, and to the termination of government subsidies to many students wishing to attend academies in Peking. The increased importance of Japanese influences during the mid-17th century may be seen in Ryukyuan Prime Minister Sho Jo-Ken's reinvention of Japan-Ryukyu historical relations in the *Chuzan Seikan*.<sup>108</sup> Although Okinawa would have looked, to the casual observer, much the same as a century before, the very soul of the kingdom was being transformed.

### I-3-4. The Fourth Period: 'The Ryukyus Consumed'

The Ryukyu Kingdom's peculiar status as a vassal state of both China and Satsuma persisted from the early-17th to the late-19th century. Change came as a result of several factors. The first was an internal economic crisis within Japan and the Ryukyus during the first half of the 19th century. This was precipitated by, and later led to the decline of, the feudal Tokugawa government. Second, was the arrival of more European vessels in the vicinity of Japan, and their often-forced acquisition of Asian markets. It was no secret that Japan was regarded as a nut ripe for cracking. The Ryukyus, a highly vulnerable island group located at the edge of the state, constituted the perfect foothold for any power seeking to 'open Japan'. Thirdly, and at the same time, however, there was more than a grudging respect for these foreign interlopers. Whilst Japan had existed in seclusion for the best part of two centuries, the 'Cultural West' had undergone a significant period of transformation. Although scientific and technological advances, especially those applied for military purposes, were known to and respected by the Japanese, it was the concept of the modern nation state that would be of most relevance for Japan's future.

The Ryukyus were afflicted by any number of natural disasters during the opening decades of the 19th century. Typhoons, earthquakes, tidal waves, droughts, famines and epidemics alone claimed as many as 20,000 lives. A heavy toll indeed when one considers that the population of the Ryukyus would not have exceeded 200,000.<sup>109</sup> These were not exclusively Ryukyuan conditions, however.

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<sup>106</sup> The principal difference between Okinawa and Japan proper during this period of decadence, however, was that the nobility in Okinawa constituted a much larger segment of the population; perhaps as much as one-third.

<sup>107</sup> The *Seifa Utaaki*, a now almost forgotten religious site if ease of access by bus is any indication, is located in a wooded area high up on a hill overlooking the sea in Chinen on the Southeastern tip of Okinawa Island. From the innermost sanctum of the shrine one can look out towards the island of Kudaka. Men were traditionally prohibited from entering all but the outer areas of the shrine.

<sup>108</sup> Just like the earliest Japan proper history, the *Kojiki*, Okinawa's *Chuzan Seikan* included one or two dubious, or uncorroborated, stories. In both cases, events were being committed to paper several centuries after they were supposed to have occurred. As with historiography generally, there is always the possibility that events can be twisted to suit the prevailing political environment. Sho Jo-Ken was an advocate of closer Japan-Ryukyu ties, and it shows.

<sup>109</sup> Kerr puts the population figure at between 150,000 to 200,000. George Kerr, op. cit., p. 241. Sakihara Mitsugu, in contrast, states that whilst the Ryukyuan population stood at around 100,000 at the start of the 17th century, it had risen



Unusual weather conditions hit the Japanese mainland during the 1830's, creating wide-scale famines and an exceptionally high loss of lives.<sup>110</sup> Poor harvests had an immediate economic impact on the governing and governed. Peasants and farmers bore the immediate brunt of the crisis and reacted with protests and riots. The Tokugawa central administration, or *bakufu*, and the individual daimyo were forced to become more frugal and to institute sweeping economic reforms. Some were successful, but most were not. Satsuma fell in the former category and Tokugawa in the latter.

One of the greatest ironies of the Tokugawa social hierarchy was that the lowly esteemed merchant class had become the most economically powerful segment of society by the 19th century. Sakihara Mitsugu estimates that in 1830 the Satsuma daimyo was in debt to Osaka merchants to the tune of 5 million *ryo* of gold.<sup>111</sup> Since his annual income was somewhere in the region of 150,000-185,000 *ryo* of gold, and given that the annual interest rate on the debt stood at some 12 percent,<sup>112</sup> Shimazu was said to have announced that it would take him 250 years to repay.<sup>113</sup> Contrary to expectations, however, he had totally restructured the terms of his debts so that he was now only obliged to pay 20,000 *ryo* per year and had amassed a sizeable reserve fund within only 20 years. He had become as adept at merchant capitalism as the merchants themselves. Most other successful daimyo reformers followed the same route. Contributing factors in the case of Satsuma included: improved sugar cane production and transportation techniques, market price manipulation to protect his monopoly on sugar cane, heavier local taxation, along with semi-legal (China-Ryukyu) and totally illegal (direct foreign intercourse and smuggling) trade. To this list one should also add a considerable capacity for guile. To give only two specific examples of incoming revenues for Shimazu after his reforms, sugar exports were bringing in close to 25,000 *ryo* per year from 1830-1839, and Ryukyu-China trade some 70,000 *ryo*.<sup>114</sup>

Shimazu was not yet out of the financial woods, but was comparatively better off than most other daimyo, and the government. Other daimyo had attempted many of the same measures as Satsuma, but had failed. Shimazu's advantage therefore was found in the number of varied economic tools he had at his disposal. The Ryukyus were undeniably an important factor in his success. The Tokugawa *bakufu* itself was a little slow off the blocks. When it did respond in the 1840's, however, it did so forcefully. One of the first actions was to accuse officials of fraudulent and wasteful use of government revenues. This was part of an overall Confucian 'morality' drive. Dismissals were swift and large in number. Merchants, and the regional daimyo, with whom they were seen to be in cahoots, were next. It was believed, legitimately so, that wild fluctuations in the price of basic goods, which benefited some but was generally bad for the overall population, was the result of price-fixing and market manipulation. Try as it may, however, the government only ever had limited success in destroying this system and breaking daimyo monopolies. It fared much better in increasing its revenues by ordering contributions from merchants for bakufu land reclamation and redistribution projects, and by instituting the *agechi rei* system, by which daimyo were obliged to hand back portions of their fiefs

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to 280,000 by the mid-19th century. Sakihara Mitsugu, op. cit., p. 211. By either figure, however, the loss of life was very heavy.

<sup>110</sup> In 1836, for instance, 100,000 people are believed to have starved to death in the Tohoku region alone. Harold Bolitho, "The Tempo Crisis," in Marius B. Jansen (edited) *The Cambridge History of Japan - Volume 5: The Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984, p. 119.

<sup>111</sup> Sakihara Mitsugu, op. cit., p. 221. Five million *ryo* of gold was equivalent to 320,000 *kan* of silver. One *kan*, or *kamme*, of silver was equivalent to 3.75 kilogrammes, or 8.27 pounds.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. p. 221.

<sup>113</sup> Harold Bolitho, loc. cit., p. 135.

<sup>114</sup> Sakihara Mitsugu, op. cit., p. 228 and p. 240, respectively.

to Tokyo control.<sup>115</sup> Quite obviously, the regional daimyo disliked this sudden reassertion of Tokugawa authority after years of relative autonomy. It may be seen as an important motivating factor in the revolution that would follow.

Life for the average citizen under Satsuma control after 1830 would undeniably have been like hell, given the severity of the reforms, though it is important to note, and contrary to a popularly held belief, that the Ryukyus were not singled out for specific malice. As Sakihara Mitsugu states, "it was rather that the ruling class exploited the ruled class, whether in Satsuma or in Ryukyu. Satsuma's peasants were just as much exploited as their counterparts in Ryukyu. When Satsuma's ruling class made demands on Ryukyu's ruling class, the latter simply passed on the burden to the peasants."<sup>116</sup> Yet again then, we may apportion a good deal of blame for the wretched economic conditions endured by the average Ryukyuan on their own government and elite.

By pure coincidence, as Japan was in the midst of its Tempo economic crisis, foreign countries were becoming more assertive in their challenge to the *sakoku*, or national isolation policy. Most at risk were those regions on the peripheries. Contact with foreign ships in the Ryukyus had been relatively common and almost always positive during the 17th and 18th centuries. It was generally the case that a trading vessel would inadvertently stray into the path of a typhoon, get blown towards the Ryukyus, and end up in need of food and repairs before setting sail once more. Ryukyuan were generous in both respects. By the middle of the 19th century, however, many of the visiting vessels were warships which had deliberately made their way to Naha. British and French warships arrived with very definite aims in mind during the 1840's. In 1844, the French ship *Alcmene* docked at Naha and demanded the establishment of commercial relations. Shuri, under strict orders from Satsuma, refused. Likewise when the British vessel *Starling* arrived in 1846. Both countries were, however, permitted to leave a missionary behind, ostensibly for language study. Although the records kept by the Frenchman, Forcade, and the Hungarian-born British representative, Bettelheim, are of interest to us now, the Shuri government regarded them as a nuisance. Bettelheim, in particular, abused the hospitality accorded him in myriad ways.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, it was Bettelheim who presented a visiting American naval commander with a less-than-flattering portrait of the Ryukyuan in 1848.<sup>118</sup> Given the flow of subsequent events, one wonders why the British are not held in utter contempt by contemporary Ryukyuan.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry's fleet set sail from Norfolk, Virginia, in November of 1852. He had been given specific instructions to expand America's trade relations in the Asian region and to acquire rights to establish coaling stations in ports along the Japanese coast or in the uninhabited islands around Japan (The Bonin, or Ogasawara Islands, located South of Tokyo at approximately the same latitude as the Ryukyus were targeted).<sup>119</sup> He was given full authority to negotiate treaties of friendship. Without doubt, Perry had studied Japan and its relations with the surrounding areas, including the Ryukyus, thoroughly. In one report sent to the American Naval Commander in 1852, Perry noted that if Japan were not to respond favorably to his calls for an end to the *sakoku* policy, he

<sup>115</sup> Harold Bolitho, loc.cit., p. 154.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. p. 215.

<sup>117</sup> For a description of the problems caused by Bettelheim see: George Kerr, op. cit., pp. 279-295. For an account of these early missionaries in the Ryukyus, see: Edward E. Bollinger, *On the Threshold of a Closed Empire: Mid-19th Century Missions in Okinawa*, William Carey Library, Pasadena, California, 1991.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. p. 292.

<sup>119</sup> Miyasato Seigen, "Perry Raiko", (Perry's Arrival in Okinawa) in Hosoya Chihiro (Ed), *Nichibei Kankeishi: Masatsu to Kyochō no 130 Nen (The History of Japan-US Relations: 130 Years of Conflict and Accord)*, Yuhikakusensho, Tokyo, 1982, pp. 175-178.

would anchor his ships nearby in intimidatory fashion. He proposed that the Ryukyus would be best suited. In his view, the Ryukyus were under the direct control of one of Japan's most powerful daimyo, Shimazu, but that the people of the Ryukyus had suffered nothing but oppression under his regime. In his own words, "liberating the islanders from this regime and occupying the region would be the most appropriate and morally-correct course of action. As far as I'm concerned, it would greatly improve the lives of the [Ryukyu] islanders. Without doubt, the Ryukyuan would welcome America."<sup>120</sup>

To be sure, America felt somewhat left out. The British had gained a virtual monopoly over China trade with the acquisition of both Hong Kong and Singapore. America sought to gain the proprietary position in Japan trade. Within this context, Perry's "Ryukyu Proposal" was given the go-ahead by the American President, though he was instructed to procure goods from the islanders at fair prices and to make sure that his crew behaved impeccably whilst there. Military force was sanctioned only in such circumstances that Perry or his crew came under attack. Perry's fleet arrived at Naha Port in May of 1853.<sup>121</sup> Contrary to instructions, however, he threatened, and applied, force readily. On 25th July, he told the Ryukyu government that if he were not allowed access or lease to required facilities and areas for a coaling station and for trading purposes, he would send 200 troops to occupy Shuri castle. The Ryukyu government surrendered unconditionally. Perry once more petitioned Washington for permission to go ahead with his Ryukyu occupation plans in early 1854, but was rejected. It was all largely academic, however, since Perry concluded the 'Treaty of Kanagawa' with Japan in March 1854, some two months before the reply reached him. Within the next eighteen months, Britain, Russia and Holland had all signed similar accords granting access to Japanese ports, thereby effectively ending sakoku.

Perry had originally pushed for American access to five Japanese ports, including Naha in the Ryukyus. Japan refused, designating only Shimoda and Hakodate. In the case of Naha, Japanese negotiators stated that since Ryukyu was a distant country, neither the Emperor nor Japanese Government had any rights to confer access to its ports.<sup>122</sup> This statement was a confirmation of Perry's own impression that the Ryukyu Kingdom was an independent entity. Upon returning to Naha, therefore, he swiftly organized a treaty specifically related to American interests in that region. A 'Compact between the United States and the Ryukyu Kingdom' was drafted in both English and Chinese and formally signed on 11th July 1854. It was ratified by the US Senate the following year. Since Japan had now been prized open, however, there was little subsequent interest in the Ryukyus. Only later, when the United States gained *de facto* control over Okinawa in the aftermath of World War II, and then *de jure* control after the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951, does this American interlude in the Ryukyus take on a renewed significance.

Although various foreign powers had forced the bakufu to reopen the country, this does not mean that it was universally welcomed. For a start, these treaties contained terms far more favorable to the foreign powers than Japan. The Ryukyu-US treaty was rather typical of the type negotiated. Americans were, for example, to be treated with great "courtesy and friendship" upon arrival at Naha.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Higa Shuncho, *Okinawa no Rekishi (The History of Okinawa)*, Okinawa Times, Naha, 1959, p. 319.

<sup>121</sup> For a comprehensive overview of Commodore Perry's visit to Okinawa, which is without doubt one of the most important events in Okinawa's history, see Chapter Seven of George Kerr's text, op. cit., pp. 297-341. Also, see: Takara Kurayoshi and Tamaki Tomohiko, *Peri to Dai Ryukyu (Commodore Perry and the Ryukyu Kingdom)*, Ryukyu Hosokabushiki Kaisha, Naha, 1996.

<sup>122</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 330.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

Furthermore, “they shall be at liberty to ramble where they please, without hindrance, or having officials sent to follow them.”<sup>124</sup> If they were to commit crimes whilst in port, of course, they would be punished, but rather than by the local authorities it would be administered by “the captain of the ship to which they belong.”<sup>125</sup> The concept of *extraterritoriality*, that is, the idea that a foreign citizen can be immune from barbaric local legal penalties for crimes, was born during this period, but one may still see the idea in full working order in the various SOFAs, or ‘Status of Forces Agreements’, governing the treatment of American troops stationed overseas. This point is especially pertinent in the case of Contemporary Okinawa.

It is unlikely that any foreign power could have bullied the bakufu into agreeing to these treaties were it not for the weakened state of the central government, and the general inadequacy of its internal defenses. Furthermore, the years of isolation meant that the bakufu had only minimal knowledge about contemporary international diplomacy. The bakufu was barely able to control the its own regional daimyo; since the *sankin kotai* system had been relaxed, allowing them to retreat to their fortified domains, nor to prevent civil unrest amongst ordinary peasants and farmers, let alone foreign intruders with advanced military know-how. A sense of desperation was illustrated by the bakufu’s sudden desire to seek the assistance of that long-forgotten institution: the Imperial Family.

The bakufu hardly received the support it was looking for since the Imperial Court denounced the treaties. Thereafter, Japan became divided into two main factions: those supporting *Sonno-Joi* (revere the Emperor and expel the barbarians), or *Kaikoku* (open the country). Satsuma and Choshu, two of Japan’s most powerful domains, had initially supported the *Sonno-Joi* cause, but shifted to the opposing camp after they received a harsh lesson in the destructive capability of naval artillery. They decided instead to emulate the foreigners and learn from them; mainly because both daimyo wanted to obtain the artillery. Once Satsuma and Choshu had aligned with Tosa and Hizen samurai, the end of the bakufu was near. The resulting civil war was brief. Finally, in 1867, the last shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, surrendered all powers of government to the Emperor. Some Tokugawa stragglers attempted to resist the inevitable by escaping to Hokkaido and settling up an Ezo Republic with an administrative capital at Goryokaku, but this was crushed in May of 1869. Belatedly, in September 1869, the new Japanese era was designated as *Meiji*, meaning ‘enlightenment’.

To say that the *Meiji Ishin*, or Meiji Restoration, was a radical political, economic and social transformation is an understatement. Since space is relatively limited, however, it will only be possible to outline some of the more significant aspects, and particularly those of relevance to the Ryukyus. At its core, the objective of the new Meiji government was to centralize power and to build a modern nation state to rival those in the West. The ‘Five Article Charter Oath’, announced by the child-Emperor Mutsuhito in May 1868, gives a good idea of the shift in philosophy. Briefly summarized, social and administrative systems were to become more egalitarian and Japan was to become more outward looking. The affairs of the nation were to be decided through democratic public debate, and the previously strict social hierarchy was to be eliminated so that all sectors could contribute to the restructuring of the country and then have the freedom to strive for, and attain, their goals. In addition, feudal Tokugawa practices were to be discarded as obsolete and attention focussed instead on the acquisition of knowledge and technology from “the world”.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

<sup>126</sup> The current writer draws heavily on the opinions and interpretations of Professor Tsuzuki Chushichi of the International University of Japan (IUJ), Niigata Prefecture, as presented in a lecture on the Meiji Restoration given at IUJ

In practice, of course, although the social hierarchy was restructured, the elite, to a certain extent, simply reinvented themselves. The majority of the important Meiji figures, often referred to as oligarchs, emerged from the old feudal domains: particularly Choshu and Satsuma. They were able to insulate themselves and their power base very effectively. Although Article One of the Japanese Constitution of 1889 states that “the Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal,” the Emperor could not act unilaterally. He was dependent on his ministers of state to sign legislation, but these same ministers were responsible to neither the Japanese public nor the Diet. They were beholden only to the Emperor himself. In a peculiar sense, however, the system was egalitarian. There was only one Emperor, to whom all Japanese people were subject. The Emperor system, or *Tennosei*, was reintroduced as a national unifying force, and the myth of his divine status, known as *Kokutai*, was perpetuated.

Whatever the deficiencies or downright lies, the Meiji political system worked well before and after the 1889 Constitution. The government oversaw any number of sweeping reforms. In 1871, the old feudal domains, or *han*, were abolished. Influenced by the French, they were replaced by *ken*, or prefectures. Former samurai were awarded government pensions, whilst many of the old domain elite were able to remain active within the new prefectural administrations. In 1872, national conscription was introduced. The ranks of the military were now open to all members of society. A chronic balance of payments deficit and spiraling inflation during the latter part of the 19th century led the government to pursue a strict deflationary policy and to encourage an export-driven economy. It initially set up cotton spinning mills and other factories to “prime the pump,” so to speak, but later sold them off to private corporations. These same companies, such as Mitsubishi and Mitsui, would evolve into the *zaibatsu*. Manufacturing and other enterprises, like agriculture and mining, were supported by improvements in transportation and other infrastructure, and in the institution of a national school system.

These and other measures led to an upturn in the Japanese economy during the 1880's. This *fukoku*, or enrichment of the country, was combined with the concept of *kyohei*, or strengthening of the military, successfully. Underpinning it, was an emerging nationalism. This was inspired by philosophers like Fukuzawa Yukichi, who initially argued that an individual could attain independence and enlightenment through education, but then threw himself behind the idea that this could just as well apply to an entire nation. By learning from the West, and with the creation of a modern nation state with the Emperor at the helm, Japan could rise to become independent.<sup>127</sup> Whilst French, American, German and other foreign influences varied in importance during the Restoration period, the principal motto was a constant: *wakon-yosai*, or literally ‘Western learning, Japanese spirit’.

The Ryukyu Islands were one of several peripheral regions: including the Bonins located far south of Tokyo, and the Kuriles, which stretched northwards from Hokkaido, over which a foreign

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on 18th November, 1993. This lecture was the sixth in a series on Japanese society and culture and was entitled ‘The Meiji Restoration, Fukoku-Kyohei, and Fukuzawa Yukichi’.

<sup>127</sup> In his *Bunmeiron no Gairyaku (An Outline of the Theory of Civilisation)*, in 1875, Fukuzawa argued that China was only a semi-civilised country when compared with certain Western countries. Since most of Japan's institutions and systems had been acquired from China, Japan was also in the semi-civilised category. His independence argument called for Japan to forget outmoded Chinese systems and to embrace instead Western thinking and combine it with indigenous Japanese thinking. Japan could thus become independent from China (or Asia more widely), and eventually the West (on which it would not need to rely). See: W G. Beasley, op. cit., pp. 96-98.

power asserted sovereignty. This induced a good deal of discomfort in the post-Tokugawa administration. In the case of the so-called 'Northern Territories', the Japanese Government reached an amicable, though non-permanent, sovereignty settlement with Russia in 1875. In the same year, both Britain and America withdrew all sovereignty claims to the Bonins. Although this left the Ryukyus as the last potential trouble spot, the issue was quite swiftly resolved.

Even from the time of Shimazu's invasion of the Ryukyus and the beginning of the kingdom's dual subordination to both China and Satsuma, China had not really minded. As Ta-Tuan Ch'en has argued, such arrangements were not uncommon within China itself, or within traditional East Asia.<sup>128</sup> Whilst Shuri continued to honor its tributary commitments the Ch'ing Court would not frown upon any third-party agreements. In contrast, Japan was motivated by a different philosophy. Influenced by political systems in the 'Cultural West', the Meiji Government sought to establish clear territorial boundaries. Under such conditions, the Ryukyuan tributary relationship could not be tolerated. Japan would have to either leave the Ryukyus in the hands of China (or perhaps another nation which stepped in to claim the region), or assert complete sovereignty over the area and terminate all relations between the kingdom and China. The Ryukyus sat in too strategic a position to consider anything but the latter policy. Because the Ryukyu Kingdom had long been recognized internationally as an autonomous state, of course, the Meiji Government would have to tread carefully on this issue, lest it be seen as overly aggressive by the other powers in the region. All would have to be conducted within the context of contemporary (Western) international diplomacy.

Let us hope that the Chinese investiture mission which arrived in Naha to recognize the ascendance of King Sho Tai to the throne in 1866 was one to remember. It would be the last such visit. Two years later the Tokugawa bakufu had fallen, and changes were to follow. In 1869, Shimazu took the lead in offering up his family domains to the Emperor. Most of the other daimyo followed suit. In August 1871, feudal domains, or *han*, were officially abolished and replaced with *ken*, or prefectures. Shimazu's former lands were now part of two *ken*: Miyazaki and Kagoshima. All of those Ryukyu Islands north of Okinawa, including the Amami Island group, were immediately incorporated into the new prefecture of Kagoshima. Since they had been under Satsuma's direct rule for more than two-and-a-half centuries, however, this was a natural administrative decision.<sup>129</sup> The other Ryukyu Islands south of, and including Okinawa, were a different matter.

Retrospectively, we can see it as a stroke of luck for the Meiji Government that in December of 1871, a vessel from Miyako was caught in a storm and blown aground in southern Taiwan. The indigenous inhabitants of the region immediately killed fifty-four of the crew before looting the cargo. Upon receipt of this news, Tokyo decided to make a big issue of it. It was announced that an expedition would be dispatched to Taiwan to penalize those responsible for this abhorrent crime against 'Japanese subjects'.<sup>130</sup> Whilst at first China denied that it had any authority over the inhabitants of Taiwan, and therefore any responsibility for the incident, it reversed this view. With tensions rising, and the prospect of war with Japan looming, China signed a document formally recognizing the legality

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<sup>128</sup> Ta-Tuan Ch'en, "Investiture of the Liu-Ch'iu Kings", loc. cit., p. 164.

<sup>129</sup> George Kerr argues, however, that in the agreement signed under duress by the Ryukyuan king after the Satsuma invasion, Shimazu left the rights of 'residual sovereignty' over the Amami Islands with the king. If so, the incorporation of the Amami Islands into Kagoshima Prefecture was a direct annexation of sovereign Ryukyuan territory. George Kerr, op. cit., p. 362.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. p. 357. See also: George H. Kerr, "Sovereignty of the Liu Ch'iu Islands", *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 14, No 8, April, 1945, pp. 98-100.

of Japan's actions in the matter in October 1874.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, it agreed to pay compensation to the families of those killed. Although a relatively minor agreement within the whole scheme of things for China, and certainly not a final settlement of the sovereignty issue, it was a triumph for Japan. It could now claim, with a good degree of international legitimacy, that Peking had recognized the people of the Ryukyus to be Japanese, rather than Chinese, subjects. This total lapse in concentration undermined later Chinese claims of sovereignty. Furthermore, Japan was seen acting on the behalf of the Ryukyus in the international arena, which only strengthened her position.

Preempting the outcome of negotiations with China, Tokyo began discussions with its government counterpart in Shuri in early 1872. At first these were cordial. The officials set about explaining the changes taking place on the mainland. Shuri was asked how it was intending to handle the debts owed to the former Satsuma domain and about the tribute payments it had been previously making. Shuri was informed that Shimazu was prepared to forget about the debts entirely, and that perhaps the money could be used for some worthwhile purposes locally. After some discussion about a potentially large coal deposit on Yaeyama that might be of great use in the Meiji Government's industrialization plans, the officials suggested that it might be sensible if the Ryukyu King traveled to Tokyo to pay his respects to the new Emperor. Sho Tai rejected the proposal, feigning illness, but sent a mission on his behalf. After a lavish reception for the delegation in Tokyo they were summoned to the office of the Japanese Foreign Minister on 14th October 1872. Upon arriving, the bomb was dropped. A prepared Imperial rescript was read aloud:

“We have here succeeded to the Imperial Throne of a line unbroken for ages eternal, and now reign over all the land. Ryukyu, situated to the south, has the same race, habits and language, and has always been loyal to Satsuma. We appreciate this loyalty, here raise you to the peerage and appoint you King of Ryukyu *han*. You, Sho Tai, take responsibility in the administration of the *han*, and assist us eternally.”<sup>132</sup>

The king's representative was so stunned by the announcement that he could do little but accept. In November of the same year, foreign governments were informed that Japan had “assumed paramount responsibility, including all treaty obligations, for the Ryukyus.”<sup>133</sup> Shuri had a shock of its own to administer, however. Whilst the Japanese Home Minister was on an official visit to Peking in September of 1874, he was more than surprised to hear that a Ryukyuan tribute ship had just arrived to perform the various rites of subordination to the Ch'ing Court as per usual. Tokyo was enraged. Shuri officials were summoned to feel the wrath. They were given a set of five demands. Briefly summarized, the Ryukyus had to forget the old ways and embrace changes happening in Japan. In addition, a Japanese military force would need to be stationed on the islands. The Shuri Government rejected them. Tokyo's claim that these troops were being sent merely to look out for the Ryukyuan people did not seem to win many believers. Patience tried to the extreme, a Japanese military garrison was dispatched to Naha. Finally, on 27th March 1879, an armed force was sent to Shuri Castle with an order proclaiming that the Ryukyu *han* was henceforth abolished and Okinawa *ken* established. That was about it.

Although Shuri had repeatedly petitioned the Ch'ing Court for assistance as Japan sought to further tighten its control over the islands, none was forthcoming. In a sense this could be seen as a betrayal on the part of China after centuries of loyal Ryukyuan service, but there was a good deal more

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<sup>131</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 360.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. p. 363.

<sup>133</sup> Higa Mikio, op. cit., p. 5.

complexity to it. In the first part, China has never backed down on its claims of sovereignty over the Ryukyus. It clearly felt it had been swindled in the 'Taiwan Incident'. At the same time, however, China was embroiled in an internal debate over the relevance of the tributary system when faced with the modern (Western) nation state system so effectively adopted by Japan.<sup>134</sup> Much like the pre-Meiji *Sonno Joi-Kaikoku* (expel the barbarians-open the country) ideological division, Chinese government factions were split in their defense or opposition to the tributary system. The more conservative faction believed that China was morally obliged to stand up for those who had voluntarily recognized the Ch'ing Emperor as sovereign, even if this led to conflict. The 'reformist' side felt that the tributary system had long outlived its usefulness and that China should be concentrating on its internal defense rather than that of unimportant peripheral states.

Japan's annexation of the Ryukyus in 1879 came as somewhat of a shock to China, though it chose not to respond militarily. Instead, in 1880, China proposed in negotiations with Japan, which had been mediated by ex-American President Ulysses S. Grant, that a satisfactory arrangement would be for the Ryukyus to be divided equally between the two countries. Miyako and Yaeyama, since they were located in closer proximity, would be ceded to China.<sup>135</sup> Japan would then get possession of Okinawa and the Amami Islands. Furthermore, Japan would be granted 'most favored nation' status in China-Japan trade relations. Japan agreed. By early 1881, however, China had about-faced, as it had done after the 'Taiwan Incident'. Although this issue would continue as an irritant factor over the next couple of decades, one can see it as effectively settled after Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War from 1894-95.

Japan had determined to secure control over Korea, much as Hideyoshi had tried, but failed, three centuries before. This time Japan was better prepared, and was more than happy to pit its military muscle against China should the Heavenly Kingdom come to the rescue of its long-standing tributary. Although war with China (in Korea) began in July of 1894, a remarkable display of military prowess found Japanese forces in control of most of Korea by September's end. By February of 1895, Japan had progressed from Korea and into China, entering Manchuria, the Liaotung Peninsula, and occupying Weihaiwei.<sup>136</sup> From these positions, it was within striking distance of Peking. Recognizing defeat, Chinese surrender terms with Japan were negotiated at Shimonoseki in April. China was obliged to hand over Taiwan, the Pescadores and the Liaotung Peninsula, although subsequent international pressure led to the elimination of the latter region from the peace treaty. The significance of the treaty for the people of the Ryukyus, of course, was that with Taiwan now occupying the southernmost frontier of the Japanese Empire, Okinawa Prefecture was to become of lesser strategic importance to Tokyo.

With China out of the equation, the government in Tokyo could now concentrate on bringing the Meiji revolution to the Ryukyus. The first act had been to remove the last king, Sho Tai, from his throne. Since there was already one Emperor, to whom all Japanese were subordinate under law, it would have been entirely foolish to recognize the existence of another royal dynasty. King Sho Tai was

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<sup>134</sup> Edwin Pak-Wah Leung, *China's Quasi-War with Japan: The Dispute over the Ryukyu (Liu Ch'iu) Islands, 1871-1881*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1978. This excellent piece of work should be required reading for anyone seeking a comprehensive discussion of these issues.

<sup>135</sup> It did not mention, of course, that the principal reason for proposing this deal was the fear of Japan invading Taiwan. George Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

<sup>136</sup> W. G. Beasley, *op. cit.*, p. 146.



transported to Tokyo in May of 1879, where he inconspicuously lived out the rest of his life.<sup>137</sup> He was granted an adequate stipend from Imperial coffers. Families of lesser nobility in Okinawa, like the now-redundant samurai on the mainland, were given government bonds with which to set themselves up in business. Most, unaccustomed to thrift, frittered them away. Thereafter they were forced to find a place within the general economy, just like the commoners. The Okinawan social hierarchy was effectively destroyed.

In place of the King and nobility, came an army of administrators dispatched from Tokyo. The less-prestigious administrative posts were principally occupied by individuals from the now-defunct Satsuma domain. Ryukyuan had no influence in prefectural affairs in the immediate aftermath of Japan's annexation. Prefectural Governors were sent from the mainland, many of who were "hard-liners." Furthermore, merchants from Osaka and Kagoshima, armed with investment capital and an eye for opportunity, gradually took control of the majority of Okinawa's limited resources and siphoned profits off to the mainland. The potentially lucrative coal mines in Yaeyama were handed over to the Mitsui Corporation in 1885,<sup>138</sup> Okinawa's one steamship given to the Mitsubishi Corporation in 1882, and, perhaps most importantly, control over one of Okinawa's largest sugar companies ended up in the hands of a group of shareholders from the mainland: looming large amongst whom were Mitsubishi and Mitsui. A few local companies were able to survive, and sometimes profit, but in general they had neither the capital nor technological know-how to compete with their mainland rivals.

Whilst Tokyo had effectively taken political and economic control of the Ryukyus, it had certainly not yet won the 'hearts and minds' of the local populace. Those loyal to China, both in Okinawa and in exile, continued to protest Japanese actions.<sup>139</sup> This presented Tokyo with a significant challenge. Whereas in Hokkaido; another recently-prefecturalized area regarded as traditionally an integral part of Japan, there was a vast expanse of land yet only a few indigenous Ainu inhabitants, Okinawa was a tiny group of islands with a comparatively large population. In Hokkaido, the central Japanese government encouraged a kind of 'Go North, Young Man!' policy. Families from the main Japanese islands were given the opportunity to migrate northwards and to claim tracts of land which could be put to productive use. This was later used in the case of Manchuria. As the number of *hondo* settlers increased, the indigenous population was relocated and minoritized. Waves of *Han* Chinese flowing into Taiwan had a similar effect on the indigenous people there.<sup>140</sup> Because this was unfeasible in the Ryukyus the government had to utilize an entirely assimilationist policy to de-*Ryukyuanize* them.

Looked at dispassionately, Meiji education policies were fundamentally egalitarian. The National Education Act of 1872 was designed to discourage regional loyalties amongst *all* citizens within the boundaries of the empire and foster a sense of national identification as Japanese. All were taught to be good Imperial subjects (*Shinmin no Michi*). Although the shock was more pronounced within the Ryukyus; since the people had traditionally pledged loyalty to their own royal institution, one should not disregard the difficulty that most mainland Japanese had in suddenly accepting (from nowhere) the existence of an Emperor. State Shinto was instituted as the national religion, and new shrines were erected countrywide. In Okinawa, new shrines were often located in close proximity to traditional Ryukyuan worship sites; the objective being to wean locals away from these 'primitive' beliefs.

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<sup>137</sup> Upon his death in 1902, he was returned to Okinawa for burial in the royal tombs at Shuri.

<sup>138</sup> George Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

<sup>139</sup> Chinese loyalists were referred to as "Yellow bands", whilst the "Red bands" supported Japan.

<sup>140</sup> One can see similar results in Australia, New Zealand, and North America amongst others countries.

In terms of general education, Tokyo was hindered in several respects. In the first part, few but the old Shuri elite had any real familiarity with the Japanese language. There was, of course, less of a need to introduce this segment of the population to the new changes sweeping Japan than the vast majority of the Okinawan population which spoke principally in the various dialects of the Ryukyuan language. Japanese language schools were established, but attendance figures were low. Few families had the money to invest in education. Furthermore, there was little enthusiasm for the new (Japanese) systems. It would take a considerable time to break the average Okinawan citizen's attachment to the past. A logical policy move on the part of the central government was to assume that the older generation of Okinawans was basically unsalvageable. When a new school system was brought in 1881, the greatest concentration was on elementary education. And whilst only 20% of those eligible received an elementary education in 1894, by 1927 this figure had jumped to 99%.<sup>141</sup> Extra resources were pumped into this sector and school attendance quotas were set per village. Higher levels of education, at least for the general mass of the population, were given less attention.

Whilst this enforced Meiji modernization was traumatic for the Okinawan people, given that traditional Ryukyuan thoughts and practices were being aggressively overlaid with those from the mainland, it is unlikely that the general body of the Japanese people were any more enamoured with the process. Modernization necessarily requires a radical across-the-board transformation from what is perceived as being 'old' to an ideal 'new'. Only after the process is complete can an effective judgement be made as to whether it has been a positive or negative change. Ota Chofu, a Tokyo-educated Okinawan journalist who defended his prefecture's economic and political interests, saw the process in Okinawa as taking place over four distinct periods. From 1879 to 1895, the prefectural administration was shifted from the seat of the old royal dynasty at Shuri to a new purpose-built office at Naha. Mainland Japanese moved into all of the key government positions, but there was little in the way of radical change. The next period, from 1896 to 1908, saw major shifts. Land reform, tax reform, the introduction of military conscription, and the start of the reorganization of Okinawa's districts. The shift to the Japanese *shi-cho-son* (city-town-village) system was largely completed from 1909-1919, as was the electoral system which gave Okinawa five representatives in the Japanese Diet. Finally, and from 1920, Okinawa, at least in terms of prefectural structure, resembled any other in the Japanese Empire.<sup>142</sup>

In terms of economic change, Okinawa can be seen as both gaining and losing. With foreign trade no longer an option, it had to fall back onto agricultural production. Although rice and soybeans were grown, by far the most important crops were sugar cane and the sweet potato. The latter was cultivated primarily for local consumption, whilst sugar cane was the major cash crop. Tokyo saw two major problems with the sugar industry. Firstly, it was disorganized. Second, extraction techniques, and therefore sugar quality, were poor. The first centrifugal sugar plant was set up at Kadena in 1912, and by 1939 there were a total of five spread throughout the islands, supported by more than two thousand smaller black sugar mills.<sup>143</sup> These developments had been sparked after the establishment of the Okinawa Sugar Improvement Bureau in 1907. By the late-1930's, sugar accounted for 65% of all

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<sup>141</sup> Nakachi Kiyoshi, *Ryukyu-US-Japan Relations, 1945-1972*, Abiva Publishing, Quezon, 1989, p. 17.

<sup>142</sup> Ota Chofu, *Okinawa Kensei Gojunen (Fifty Years of Okinawan Prefectural Administration)*, Okinawa Sha, Naha, 1932, pp. 188-189.

<sup>143</sup> United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR), *Economic Plan for the Ryukyu Islands*, USCAR, Naha, May, 1951, p. 1.

industrial production and exports.<sup>144</sup> On the less positive side, however, the purchase of the assets of the Sugar Improvement Bureau by a group of Japanese investors in 1915, meant that more profits were being siphoned off to the mainland. Furthermore, Okinawan sugar was sent in part-finished form elsewhere to be converted into higher value-added products. Mainland companies controlled the latter stages of production, and therefore effectively denied local acquisition of technology. Finally, both Taiwan and Saipan were able to produce sugar more economically and could undercut Okinawa.

The second most profitable industrial sector in Okinawa during the early part of the 20th century was manufacturing. Textiles, including Tsumugi silk, hats, jofu and cotton cloth, as well as lacquerware, were the chief exports.<sup>145</sup> Wickerwork and ceramic wares were of lesser importance. Unlike the mainland, however, the majority of Okinawan factories were small household concerns rather than modern industrial plants. Although modern technology from the mainland was improving the efficiency and productivity of the sugar industry, it was rarely introduced into other sectors. The economy was structured around only a few basic commodities and not on expanded diversification. Even if local industry could be seen as becoming increasingly modernized, this has to be looked at relative to even faster technological advances in Japan proper. In this sense, Okinawa lagged. Furthermore, an economic dependency system was created, with Okinawa providing raw materials to the center (Japan proper), whilst relying almost exclusively on the mainland for its manufactured goods needs.<sup>146</sup> This structural dependency system was implemented within Japan's later colonial acquisitions, like Taiwan, Korea and Manchuria.

Economic conditions at the turn of the century were poor. A rising population<sup>147</sup> put increased pressure on the productive capacity of the islands. This necessitated the import of more basic food items which, in turn, increased Okinawa's balance of payments deficit. In addition, unemployment was high. Tokyo determined that productivity would have to be increased and exports promoted; hence the modernization initiatives above, but also that the Okinawan population would have to be better dispersed. Drives to encourage emigration from Okinawa Island down to the Yaeyama region, or to other of Japan's recent colonial acquisitions, with or without central government development funds, proved relatively ineffective. Most figured that they would be as well or worse off than before. Domestic Okinawan efforts to redress this problem were more successful. From 1899, Toyama Kyuzo, a primary school headmaster in Kin Town, began encouraging groups of Okinawans to settle in Hawaii. His initiatives proved so successful that the policy was expanded to include mainland USA and South America. From 1899 to 1930, it is estimated that more than 50,000 Okinawans had emigrated, of whom more than 50% ended up throughout South America.<sup>148</sup>

Many of those choosing to emigrate were affected by Tokyo's decision to totally revise Okinawa's land distribution system. Under the previous system, the vast bulk of Okinawa's land;

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>145</sup> During the early 1920's, annual silk production weighed in at about 15 million yen. Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>146</sup> In 1971, Johan Galtung put forward the theory that whilst imperialism is closely associated with the act of military violence, it does not end with that act. To maintain control the dominant nation must institute a set of policies designed to bring about the complete dependence of the conquered (or peripheral) area on its new master. He defines this process as *structural violence*. In studying the policies implemented in Okinawa after its annexation by Japan in 1879, the current writer is of the opinion that Galtung's model could be successfully applied in its entirety. See: Johan Galtung, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1971.

<sup>147</sup> Okinawa's population now stands at just under 1.3 million. At the beginning of the 20th century it stood at approximately 500,000. By 1940, it stood at about 750,000.

<sup>148</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 438.

perhaps two-thirds, was under communal ownership. Only the nobility and wealthy merchants were able to own land. The communal lands were periodically redistributed, with the average family usually controlling the land for no more than ten years. Since the average farmer had little in the way of security under this system, he or she had little incentive to increase efficiency and productivity. Between 1899 and 1903, therefore, land reforms were carried out. Most Okinawan land was converted to private ownership. Not only did this egalitarian measure give the farmer a greater stake in the prefectural economy, but it allowed the government to make the land tax system more compatible with the modern economy it was creating. Although the reorganization of the tax base caused havoc with prefectural government revenues; putting it even deeper into deficit with Tokyo, the reforms were ultimately positive. Overall agricultural productivity per capita did increase, even if Okinawa was still heavily reliant on food imports.

As well as having an obligation to pay local taxes, Okinawans were obliged to pay taxes to Tokyo. As Nakachi Kiyoshi has outlined, in 1882, the total tax paid to Tokyo by Okinawa was 655,279 yen, yet this was twice the amount paid by Miyazaki Prefecture, which had approximately the same population size.<sup>149</sup> In return, however, the government allocated only 455,136 yen for expenditures on Okinawa in the same year.<sup>150</sup> Despite the fact that Okinawa remained the poorest of all Japan's prefectures right through to the end of the Pacific War (reclaiming that dubious honor once more after Reversion in 1972), it should be noted that Tokyo did begin to allocate a significant amount more resources to Okinawa into the 20th century. Grants-in-aid payments were made to both the new prefectural government and municipalities, as were disaster relief funds. But by far the largest amount of resources going to Okinawa were for infrastructural improvements. Although almost impossible to calculate now, investment was thrown into telegraph, radio and postal services; harbor and lighthouse development; along with road, highway, railway and airfield construction projects. Sadly, the expansion of health and welfare infrastructure was less emphasized. Only when Japan looked to be heading for war in the 1930's was this problem addressed.

As Okinawa was being physically dragged into the 20th century, it was necessarily becoming further detached from its past. Many of the buildings constructed at the peak of the Kingdom's affluence lay in a state of neglect. They stood as a metaphor for the gradual decline of Okinawa's traditional thoughts and practices. Okinawa was, like other regions of Japan, rapidly becoming incorporated into the *kazoku kokka*, or family state. All were as one, working in unity under the Emperor. There was a backlash against this policy. On the mainland and within Okinawa anti-cultural assimilation groups were established; known collectively as the *mingei* movement.<sup>151</sup> Okinawa's political resistance to Meiji policies had been spearheaded on the eve of the 20th century by individuals like Jahana Noboru, but he had largely failed to make a dent. By the first two decades of the next century there was much more unity between scholars in Okinawa and Japan proper on the issue of regional cultural eradication and its negative long-term ramifications for Japan.

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<sup>149</sup> Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>151</sup> The general objective being to preserve and encourage traditional arts and crafts throughout Japan to counter the homogeneity of the whole modernity project. For a brief overview of the *mingei* movement on the Japanese mainland and one of its most important figures, see: M. William Steele, "National and Cultural Pluralism in Modern Japan: Yanagi Soetsu and the Mingei Movement", *Asian Cultural Studies*, International Christian University Publications III-A, February, 1992, pp. 33-64. For resistance to Meiji Government policies in Okinawa, see: Ota Masahide, *Okinawa no Minshu Ishiki (The Consciousness of Okinawa's Masses)*, Kobundo Shinsha, Tokyo, 1967.

Yanagi Soetsu, like most of the cultural diversity advocates, was well educated and of noble family. This gave him the leverage to expound his theories without much realistic fear of retribution. Fortunate, since he spared nothing in his criticism of Japan's aggressive assimilationist policies conducted in Korea, Taiwan and, later, the forced integration of Okinawans and the Ainu.<sup>152</sup> Other mainland figures, like folklorist Yanagita Kunio and linguist Origichi Shinobu argued against the eradication of Okinawan culture on the grounds that it could provide invaluable clues to the origins of the modern Japanese.<sup>153</sup> What perhaps made the views of these and other scholars of less direct threat to the central government, was that they were almost without exception now locating Okinawa's culture firmly within the context of Japanese culture. However different it may be, it was merely an offshoot from, or variation on, a core culture.

Not only had the people been economically and politically assimilated into Japan, but they had been culturally consumed. After Meiji, the Ryukyuan language was now a dialect. The traditions of Okinawa were now a throwback to an earlier period in Japan's development. Famous local scholars, such as Higaonna Kanjun, followed the convention of locating Okinawa's history within Japan's. From then, and arguably until quite recently, most Japanese scholars did not work from the premise that Okinawa had once been a separate entity with its own patterns of cultural development. Since Okinawa was clearly so different through *hondo* eyes from anywhere else within the state, its people quickly earned the tag of 'inferior' or 'backward'. Okinawa's most famous scholar of the period, Iha Fuyu, argued that Okinawa's condition of backwardness was the result of Shimazu's exploitation rather than any innate inferiority, but he was clearly on a losing wicket. What is interesting in this regard, is the degree of similarity, albeit on a reduced level, between the charges of inferiority leveled against Okinawa by Japan, and the latter country's own sense of inferiority relative to the 'Cultural West'. Did not Japan view itself as backward and in need of modernizing through the adoption of Western thoughts and practices?<sup>154</sup>

What this perceived backwardness resulted in for Okinawans was discrimination of the negative variety and a growing sense of cultural inferiority. Whilst Okinawa's Tokyo-appointed Governors and upper-level administration were generally fair, they could not always ensure that this was a quality strongly held by those at the lower levels. And even though Okinawa was able to send five representatives to the Diet after 1917, they never had the power to effect any change in the structure of the administration. Okinawan workers found jobs in mainland factories yet regularly had difficulty renting property. Although military conscription was introduced in Okinawa in 1898, 15 years after Japan proper, the minimum height and weight requirements were for years fixed at a point just above the average for adult males in Okinawa.<sup>155</sup> Discrimination was to be found in any number of areas in which Okinawans and mainland Japanese had direct contact.

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<sup>152</sup> M. William Steele, loc. cit., p. 33.

<sup>153</sup> In Yanagita's case, after finding coconuts washed up on a beach in Irakosaki (which were not found anywhere throughout the Japanese islands but carried up via the Kuroshio, or Black Current) he concluded that the ancient Japanese people too could have come up from the south.

<sup>154</sup> Much as Japan saw its own thoughts and practices as superior to those in Okinawa, did the *Cultural West* set itself up as superior to the *Cultural East*. For the West, there was a particular way of modernising which, because of certain institutional characteristics, the East (perceived as a monolithic whole) was unable to successfully follow. For a fascinating deconstruction of this principally Eurocentric perspective of the East and modernity, see: Jack Goody, *The East in the West*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.

<sup>155</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 460.

Whereas one would think that this would spark in Okinawa strong anti-Japanese sentiment, however, it did not to any significant degree. The discrimination, which induced the feeling of inferiority, acted more as a catalyst in Okinawa's further accommodation to Japan. This in the sense that 'the quicker we become like the average Japanese, the sooner we will be treated as equals'. There was obviously an underlying feeling of resistance, but this was being whittled away via the education system and other government policies designed to disconnect Okinawa from its past. It is worth considering the fact that when the Japanese *Showa* era began in 1926, Okinawa had already been an administrative region, or prefecture, for 47 years. The last Ryukyu King, Sho Tai, died more than twenty years ago. Generations had come and gone, and those who remembered the Ryukyu Kingdom era were fewer in number. There was also the realization that Japan was in Okinawa to stay. Resistance had long since been futile. Japan's descent into war naturally accelerated the accommodation process amongst the uncommitted. In both Okinawa and mainland Japan, dissent of almost any variety brought swift castigation.

Although Japan's rationale for its entry into war with China, and later the United States, is of minor importance to Okinawa, the effect the decision had both on and in the prefecture is of major historical importance. Briefly outlined, the worldwide depression following the Wall Street crash of 1929 changed the shape of international relations. As Iriye Akira quite succinctly puts it, "the trend moved from internationalism towards regionalism."<sup>156</sup> Whilst the arrangements settled upon after WWI at the Washington and Versailles Conferences; and specifically the abrogation of individual treaties in Asia and the adoption of America's 'Open Door' economic policy, were generally agreeable to all parties, countries were faced with different conditions in the 1930's.

Japan, Germany and the United States were following a similar 'Keynsian' model to address their respective economic conditions.<sup>157</sup> High unemployment dictated increased government investment, especially in public works projects and, in each case, manufacture of military armaments.<sup>158</sup> Whereas in America lands and natural resources could be found in abundance, however, Japan and Germany were lacking in both. To cope with a burgeoning population and to obtain raw materials needed for further economic expansion, Japan determined that it would seek control of economic zones beyond its borders. It had already incorporated Korea and Taiwan into the empire,<sup>159</sup> but was set on developing Manchuria and Mongolia, over which it had a strong legal claim. Fearing that the Western powers would likely deny Japan's claims to the region, however, troops were dispatched to the Shantung Peninsula in 1927 to protect Japan's 'special interests', and in 1931 unilateral control was seized. As expected, America, and later Britain, denounced the move. Japan, and Germany, which later also adopted a militaristic expansion policy, had detached themselves from the 'Open Door' policy. As it turned out for Japan, practical economic realities became so confused with a highly dubious militaristic political philosophy gaining ever more adherents during the mid- to late-1930's, that war was almost inevitable.

<sup>156</sup> Iriye Akira, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941-1945*, Harvard University Press, 1981, pp. 2-3.

<sup>157</sup> On Keynes see: Michael P. Todaro, *Economic Development - Fifth Edition*, Longman, New York, 1994, p. 685, and Harold S. Sloan & Arnold J. Zurcher (Edited), *Dictionary of Economics*, Barnes and Noble, New York, 1970, pp. 248-249.

<sup>158</sup> Hata Ikuhito, "Continental Expansion, 1905-1941", in Peter Duus (Edited), *The Cambridge History of Japan - Volume Six, The Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988, p. 299.

<sup>159</sup> Japan's annexation of the Ryukyu Islands (and Hokkaido) was arguably the first stage in an aggressive colonial expansion process which extended the territorial boundaries of the Empire in all directions. The Ryukyus may have been closer to home, but the policies implemented were little different from those applied in areas with no history of cultural affinity with Japan.

Even before open war with China began in July 1937, Tokyo was keenly aware of the isolated position of Okinawa and of the need to prepare adequate defenses. Okinawans were already enlisted in all of the main service branches, and the local population was being knocked into shape as good imperial subjects with the 'Spiritual Mobilization' drives initiated throughout Japan from the early 1930's. Physical education programs in schools were instituted, and all other citizens were asked to contribute to the greater military preparedness of the nation. All of this was overlaid with slogans revering the Emperor and stories of Japan's brave soldiers out there defending national interests. The pace of war preparations was speeded up with the Diet passing of the National General Mobilization Law in 1938, and with the establishment, in 1940, of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association which organized military control from government down to civilian level. As George Kerr says of the latter, "its agents and offices in Okinawa helped to complete totalitarian political control in support of the army and the Cabinet".<sup>160</sup>

Okinawa was of no more particular concern to Tokyo than any other national area when war was first initiated against America at Pearl Harbor in late-1941. And since Japanese forces then proceeded to cut past the opposition like a hot knife through butter in the Pacific, Southeast Asia and beyond in 1942, nor was it of much concern then. Okinawa and the *hondo* remained nicely insulated from attack until the tide turned; first at Midway, and later at Guadalcanal and Saipan. Japan had not only severely underestimated its opponents, but also its own ability to economically sustain a lengthy war; particularly in terms of its oil requirements. Whilst the general public was largely unaware of Japan's rapidly deteriorating position, the population of Okinawa could have been in no doubt when, after the fall of Saipan in 1944, soldiers poured into the prefecture in great numbers. For Tokyo, it was imperative to prevent the taking of Okinawa. If gained, as was the fear during the Tokugawa period, it would allow the barbarians the ideal foothold from which to attack the 'real' Japan.

The area was to be defended against an American invasion by 75,000 troops from the Japanese Imperial Army's 32nd Division,<sup>161</sup> supplemented by about 20,000 Okinawan conscripts. Thousands of Okinawan civilians of all ages were put to work digging trenches and preparing defenses with the thousands of Chinese and Koreans brought in specifically for hard labor duties and, in the case of women, as prostitutes or 'comfort women'. After evacuations, there remained on Okinawa a civilian population just short of 500,000. Most had little in the way of even basic military training and were, to put it mildly, materially and psychologically ill-equipped for the absolute and unadulterated carnage that would follow. Okinawans understood both what and whom they were fighting for by the time hostilities began, but as battle quickly progressed the supposed national unity under the *kazoku kokka* conspicuously unwound. Furthermore, the myth of the torturing and raping American demons, which had been so well inculcated by the central government and its spiritual mobilization organs, was dispelled far too late for many Okinawans.

On 26th March 1945, American forces landed on the Kerama Islands just a few kilometers west of Naha, thereby starting the Battle for Okinawa.<sup>162</sup> More than 180,000 American troops in 1,400

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<sup>160</sup> George Kerr, op. cit., p. 463.

<sup>161</sup> The commander of these forces was Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima. He and his Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Isamu Cho, had previously been involved in the infamous 'Rape of Nanking' in 1937. Some Okinawan scholars have posited that these two may have an influence on the incidence of mass suicides during the Battle for Okinawa. Okinawa Prefecture, *Okinawa: Sengo 50 Nen no Arumi*, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>162</sup> There are many accounts of the Battle for Okinawa available to the reader. In terms of overall objectivity, one might

ships had been assembled in and around Okinawan waters for the landing force.<sup>163</sup> Altogether, more than 540,000 US troops would be involved in the campaign in some capacity.<sup>164</sup> After 89 days of fierce warfare it ended in an American victory. The overwhelming military superiority of the US forces might well have been sufficient to end the campaign far sooner in different circumstances. Heavy bombardment proved to be extremely successful initially, hence the Okinawan reference to the war as the *Tetsu no Bofu*, or Wind of Steel,<sup>165</sup> but as the Japanese forces retreated they dug themselves into a network of tunnels and other hiding holes making the operation far more complex and laborious. The guerilla warfare thereafter conducted was savage.

Only when the dust settled could the true magnitude of the battle be assessed. Some 94,136 Japanese soldiers, including Okinawan conscripts and *Boeitai*, or Home Guard, along with 12,281 American soldiers were killed.<sup>166</sup> The Okinawan civilian death toll is believed to have been at least 130,000, constituting close to one-third of the population. It is also estimated that as many as 10,000 non-Japanese or Okinawans, mostly Koreans, were killed in the battle or executed by the retreating Japanese forces. Of the civilian figure, whilst many had been slaughtered in the heavy shelling as they sought to find safety, or as a result of having been ejected from their hiding holes by the retreating Japanese troops presumably there to defend them, a disturbingly high number of people committed suicide. Many in groups. They were convinced that the Japanese prewar propaganda about vicious and torturing Americans was true and that capture had to be avoided at all costs. The 'luckiest', in terms of the swiftness of death if successful, used the hand grenades given to them by Japanese soldiers. Others, in scenes beyond the scope of anyone's imagination, used razors, knives or farm implements.<sup>167</sup> Some Okinawans were executed by the Japanese forces on the flimsy premise that they had provided military secrets to the enemy.

Throughout its long history Okinawa has undergone many a transformation. Some have been internally-preconsidered and deliberate; as in the shift from tiny, insular island kingdom to cosmopolitan trading nation during the late-14th century, and in the decision to rejoin Japan in 1972. Although we may argue that political and economic considerations were important mitigating factors, neither transformation was inevitable. Chuzan actively pursued a relationship system with China, as did the general mass of the Okinawan people seek Reversion to Japan. In other instances transformation was eventually accommodated, but externally-induced. Shimazu's invasion at the beginning of the 17th century brought an end to Okinawa's political and economic autonomy, even if the illusion dimly

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refer to: Ota Masahide, *This Was the Battle for Okinawa*, Naha Shuppan Sha, Naha, 1981 (available in both Japanese and English language versions), and Roy Appleman, James Burns, Russell Gugeler & John Steves (Edited), *Okinawa: The Last Battle*, Charles Tuttle, Rutland, 1960. For a Japanese military perspective see: Yahara Hiromichi, *The Battle for Okinawa*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1995 (this book was available earlier in the Japanese language). For a striking account utilising the testimonies of American troops involved in the battle: George Feifer, *Tennozan: The Battle of Okinawa and the Atomic Bomb*, Ticknor & Fields, New York, 1992. From the Okinawan perspective, and based on translated testimonies of Okinawan survivors, one might consult: William T. Randall, *Okinawa's Tragedy: Sketches From the Last Battle of W.W.II*, Okinawa Akishobo, Naha, 1987. Jo Nobuko Martin's *A Princess Lily of the Ryukyus*, Shin Nippon Kyoiku Tosho Co., Ltd., Tokyo, 1984, is also a personal account of the battle.

<sup>163</sup> This figure, unknown at the time by Japanese military intelligence, was more than double the size of the American force involved in the Allied assault on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day. Ota Masahide, *This Was the Battle for Okinawa*, op.cit., p. 19, and *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 1st April, 1995.

<sup>164</sup> Ota Masahide, *Ibid.* p. 19.

<sup>165</sup> Often rendered as 'Typhoon of Steel'.

<sup>166</sup> Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>167</sup> Translations of Okinawan accounts of the 'mass suicides' on Zamami and Tokashiki islands may be found in William Randall's aforementioned *Okinawa's Tragedy: Sketches From the Last Battle of W.W.II*.



persisted, while the Meiji Government's annexation at the tail end of the 19th century led to its total cultural absorption as well as structural (political and economic) dependency on Japan. In all cases, however, change was relatively gradual. Shimazu invaded on a specific day, but it had been well anticipated. Reversion was effectively put in motion almost a decade before it actually occurred. Although the possibility of war was certainly considered, the reality of war could never have been imagined. The Battle for Okinawa was the most radical and cataclysmic event in Okinawa's history, bar none.

## CHAPTER II

### The Evolution of the Japan-United States Security Alliance System and Okinawa's Military Bases

“The United States does not have a military base on Okinawa;  
Okinawa is a base”<sup>168</sup>

#### II-1 The Evolution of the Security Alliance System

##### II-1-1 Establishing Control

The United States' victory over the Japanese forces in the Battle for Okinawa in June of 1945 gave it *de facto* control over the Ryūkyū Islands. A more concrete, or *de jure*, basis for its control was provided by The Hague Convention of 1907, which upheld the belligerent's right to exercise military governmental powers in the conquered and occupied territory of another nation. This international law, along with an amended paragraph to the Geneva Convention in 1949, also obliged the United States forces to protect the people and property of the occupied territory. Since the war with mainland Japan was continuing, US military planners felt that Okinawa might have an important role to play as a base for "supplying bomber and fighter cover for invasions of either China or Japan or both...a good anchorage and naval supply base within 400 miles of the coast of Japan...a forward staging area...an important base for furthering the war of attrition in which sustained heavy bombing and an air-sea blockade are...major weapons,"<sup>169</sup> but in view of the scale of devastation and destruction wreaked upon the islands US military government policy on Okinawa for the moment was to provide emergency relief to the local population and to "administer the occupied territory until such time as a permanent civilian government was established."<sup>170</sup>

##### II-1-2 Developing an 'Okinawa Policy'

The first substantial talks on the disposition of Japan's former territories took place with the Political Problems Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, a think-tank set up in February of 1942 within the US State Department. American policy-makers were agreed that Japan "should not start off the new era with territories obtained through aggressive action."<sup>171</sup> This fundamental principle was accepted by all the Allied Powers involved in the persecution of the war with Japan and was formalized in the official Allied Declaration of Cairo in December 1943. The relevant clause stated that:

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<sup>168</sup>An expression commonly used by American military personnel stationed on Okinawa during the 1950's and 1960's. See; Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi (Economic History of Postwar Okinawa)*, compiled and edited by Makino Hirota, Bank of the Ryūkyūs, Naha, 1984, p. 415.

<sup>169</sup>Review of military operations in the Pacific War, issued at Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's headquarters on the morning of 22nd June, 1945. Ota Masahide, *This Was the Battle for Okinawa*, Naha Publishing Co., Naha, 1981, p. 79.

<sup>170</sup>Leonard Weiss, "US Military Government on Okinawa," *Far Eastern Survey*, 31st July, 1946, p. 236.

<sup>171</sup>Iriye Akira, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War 1941-1945*, Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 60.

“Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the first World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China. Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed”<sup>172</sup>

The Ryūkyū Islands were not specifically mentioned in this declaration, despite the fact that US President Roosevelt had been conducting discussions with China and the Soviet Union regarding their disposition at the time of its drafting. Stalin had seen the Ryūkyūs as being rightfully Chinese territory, whilst Chiang Kai-Shek believed that a joint Sino-US occupation, leading eventually to the establishment of a joint administration under the trusteeship of an international organization would be a satisfactory arrangement. The US was inclined to believe that the islands were an integral part of Japan and had not been acquired by aggressive action, yet since the fate of this small archipelago was of little major importance to any of the parties involved it was determined to keep any reference to them suitably vague. The Allied peace terms were finally laid down in the Potsdam Declaration on 26th July, 1945, to which the United States, Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union were all expressly committed. Article 8 of the declaration stated quite simply that:

“The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and *such minor islands as we determine*”<sup>173</sup> (my italics)

Such wording gave the Allied Powers the ability to delay any decision on territorial matters until the timing was appropriate. The Potsdam Declaration was accepted by the Japanese Government when it officially surrendered in September 1945. These terms henceforth became one of the two legal bases for the presence of the American forces in Okinawa until the Peace Treaty was signed on 8th September 1951.

During the immediate postwar period United States efforts were mainly focused on Japan proper. The Ryūkyū Islands, where problems were more severe than on the Japanese ‘home’ islands, were considered to be less important in comparison. They were, however, considered as “primary base areas”<sup>174</sup> by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and, like Greenland and Iceland, “Necessary for both the security of the United States and for the projection of its postwar military operations.”<sup>175</sup> Continued US control over the islands, either by direct annexation or, at the very least, through a United Nations trusteeship agreement was assumed. The US State Department opposed such a policy, believing that both political and diplomatic considerations made it necessary to consider the Ryūkyūs “minor islands which should be returned to Japan and demilitarized.”<sup>176</sup> This friction within the US Government between the “moral imperative” faction and the “security requirements” faction would characterize American policy towards these islands for the next twenty years.

<sup>172</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943*, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1961, pp. 448-449.

<sup>173</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), 1945*, Volume two, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1960, pp. 1474-1476.

<sup>174</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryūkyū Islands, 1945-1950*, Army Historical Series, United States Army, Washington D.C., 1988, p. 70.

<sup>175</sup>Kôno Yasuko, *Okinawa Henkan o Meguru Seisaku to Gaikô: Nichibei Kankeishi no Bunmyaku (Okinawa Reversion in the Context of Japan-US Relations: Policy and Diplomacy)*, Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Sha, Tokyo, 1994, p. 9.

<sup>176</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 70.

### II-1-3 Okinawa and the Emerging Cold War in Asia

In January, 1946, by order of General MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), a dividing line at 30 degrees north between the Ryūkyū Islands and Japan proper was put into effect. SCAP was quick to explain that this measure was designed for “administrative convenience and that it was not to be interpreted as an indication of Allied policy relating to the ultimate disposition of the islands,”<sup>177</sup> yet in one fell swoop he had removed the islands from the sphere of influence of the two main Allied occupation policy-making bodies, the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) and the Allied Council for Japan (ACJ).<sup>178</sup> MacArthur’s distrust for these bodies was legendary, and he sought to bypass their authority at every available opportunity. MacArthur was motivated by the fact that it had been American, rather than “Allied,” lives which had been lost in the Battle for Okinawa, and he ensured that the islands would remain directly and exclusively under the control of the US Military Government. The Soviet Union had already seized control of the Kuriles; one of the disputed former territories of Japan, and MacArthur seemed to be in favor of the US adopting a tit-for-tat policy with regard to the Ryūkyūs. This decision was welcomed by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff as a vindication of their policy to maintain the islands and to develop the current ramshackle American military facilities into permanent installations. MacArthur’s decision may also be appraised within a wider context.

US policy towards Asia in the immediate postwar period was based on three main premises: that international affairs in the region would revolve around a democratic China under Nationalist rule and aided by the United States; that the United States and the Soviet Union would continue to work together as during World War II, and; that decolonization in South and Southeast Asia would progress effectively with the result being the establishment of a number of independent, democratic states. Yet throughout the 1940’s these premises would fall as if dominoes and force the US into a complete rethink. Relations with the Soviet Union had, by 1946, already begun to fray, and the continuing civil war between the nationalist Kuomintang forces and the Communists in China showed no sign of abating. If the Communists were to achieve a victory there would doubtless be the threat of an extension of this influence into the weakened ex-colonial regions of Southeast Asia. None of these trends indicated any movement towards stability in the region within the foreseeable future.

Faced with such a scenario the United States began to consider a number of counterbalancing measures, foremost amongst which was the conclusion of an early peace settlement with Japan and the formation of anti-Communist alliance system. MacArthur had always been of the opinion that a lengthy occupation would be more likely to do more harm than good, so that when Hugh Borton, Chief of the Division of Japanese Affairs in the State Department, visited him in March, 1947, to

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<sup>177</sup>Watanabe Akio, *The Okinawa Problem: A Chapter in Japan-US Relations*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1970, p. 20.

<sup>178</sup>Although the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) and the Allied Council for Japan (ACJ) had been set up to determine the shape of Allied postwar policy towards Japan, they were, in reality, like watchdogs without teeth. The FEC, the more powerful of the two bodies, although charged with *formulating the policies, principles, and standards in conformity with which the fulfillment by Japan of its obligations under the Terms of Surrender may be accomplished*, was limited in the case of the Ryūkyūs as it could *not make recommendations with regard to the conduct of military operations nor with regard to territorial adjustments*. The ACJ was a purely consultative body consisting of the four main veto powers: The USSR, U.K., USA., and China. See document; “The Agreement of the Foreign Ministers at Moscow on Establishing the Far Eastern Commission and the Allied Council for Japan,” on 27th December, 1945. Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations, Volume One)*, Genshobō, Tokyo, 1983, pp. 89-90.

discuss an early peace settlement, there was almost instant accord. Since Japan had been completely demilitarized and had, under the terms of the new "Peace Constitution," disavowed her right to maintain offensive weaponry, the United States would be faced with the problem of providing for Japan's defense in the immediate future, but MacArthur was relatively unperturbed at the thought. He rejected the notion that Japan would have to be rearmed, and suggested instead that if the United States was to maintain unilateral and complete control of the Ryūkyū Islands she would be able to protect Japan from external aggression without the need for maintaining forces on Japanese soil. He isolated Okinawa as being the single most important location for an American strike force within a U-shaped area embracing the Aleutians, Midway, the former Japanese Mandated Islands, and the Philippines.<sup>179</sup>

George Kennan, head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff (PPS) was taken with MacArthur's strategy and with the place of Okinawa therein. This was a policy entirely consistent with the communist containment doctrine he had outlined in July of 1947.<sup>180</sup> In his PPS paper No. 28, 'Recommendations With Respect to US Policy toward Japan,' in March, 1948 he asserted that:

"The United States Government should make up its mind at this point that it intends to retain permanently the facilities at Okinawa, and the base there should be developed accordingly. The problem of obtaining international sanction for our permanent strategic control of the islands should be studied at once in the Department of State...The Navy should...proceed to develop to the maximum the possibilities of Okinawa as an advance naval base"<sup>181</sup>

On 6th May 1949, President Truman accepted National Security Council paper, NSC 13/3 (basically Kennan's PPS paper, No 28) as official US policy.

The establishment of the People's Republic of China on 1st October, 1949, coming as it did in the wake of news that the Soviet Union had successfully exploded its first nuclear weapon, brought with it, certainly in the minds of the military planners, the threat of a Communist hegemony in Asia. In the event of any conflict, and in light of the still weakened state of Japan, retention of military bases on Okinawa was considered essential.<sup>182</sup> From 1949 to 1951 a vast array of top-level military specialists visited Okinawa to devise detailed base construction plans. The US Congress had, in October of 1949, approved an initial figure of \$58 million for such projects.

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<sup>179</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - The Far East and Australasia, 1948*, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1974, pp. 700-701.

<sup>180</sup>X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 25, No 4, July, 1947, pp. 566-582.

<sup>181</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - The Far East and Australasia, 1948*, op. cit., p. 692. The US Navy did not like the prospect of developing Okinawa into its advance base, mainly because the island was prone to regular typhoons and did not provide adequate protection, but also because of the absence of the usual port development. By the latter part of 1948, whilst it was decided that naval facilities on Okinawa would be developed, the emphasis on Okinawa as an 'advance base' had declined. Yokosuka Base on mainland Japan was to become the most important naval facility in the area.

<sup>182</sup>Upon the seizure of Okinawa in 1945, the United States military had acquired in excess of 40,000 acres of Okinawan land that was to be used for the construction of airfields, ammunition dumps, and the stationing of US military personnel prior to the anticipated major assault on mainland Japan. In the aftermath of the war there was considerable competition for these prime tracts of land between the various branches of the military, which were still intent upon proceeding with a base construction programme, and the Okinawan Military Government, which was hoping to use these lands to further develop its civil reconstruction projects

Base construction work in Okinawa, which had been extensively planned in 1949, was formally initiated in April of 1950. In January, the US General Headquarters' (GHQ) Public Relations Department in Tokyo announced that a wireless telegraph network linking all of the Ryūkyū Islands had been established. On 9th March, GHQ further announced that Major-General Christiansen, Commanding Officer of the Construction Bureau, had established an office in Tokyo, and on 15th, announced that he would henceforth be receiving tenders from Japanese firms for the construction of nine prefabricated warehouses in Okinawa.<sup>183</sup> On 17th March, Lieutenant-General Stratimeyer, Commanding Officer of the US Air Forces in the Far East, announced that he had signed orders relating to the construction of the first batch of living quarters for Air Force personnel on Okinawa, and would shortly be initiating the project. On 18th April, the first two construction contracts were issued in Tokyo. The American firm of Morrison-Knudsen was given a \$963,000 contract to build concrete foundations for permanent structures, and the Japanese firm Shimizu Kensetsu a contract for \$189,000 for the construction of nine steel prefabricated warehouses.<sup>184</sup> On 16th June, Major-General Christiansen issued contracts to Japanese firms for the construction of 490 housing units, and on 27th June, Colonel Wren of the US Army, completed contracts with Tōshiba and Shimazu Seisakusho for the construction of electric power installations. Tenders for base construction projects were invited from April 1950, and actual work began in June. The outbreak of the Korean War on 25th June 1950, increased the pressure on the US to develop the Okinawan military facilities quickly, and policy began to be "predicated upon indefinite control of the island."<sup>185</sup>

#### II-1-4 US Pre-Treaty Policy Options for Okinawa

Although permanent control over Okinawa had never really been considered seriously, the notion of a direct annexation had been favored, since the early postwar period, by the military planners. The State Department opposed, given that the Atlantic Charter of 1941 had tied the United States to the principle that it sought no aggrandizement, territorial or otherwise. The United States had also joined in the statement of the Cairo Conference that the powers there represented coveted no gain for themselves and had no thought of territorial expansion.<sup>186</sup> This view was upheld by US President Truman on at least two occasions during the latter half of 1945, but with a slightly different twist. In March, he stated that:

"Though the United States wants no territory, or profit or selfish advantage out of this war, we are going to maintain the military bases necessary for the complete protection of our interests and world peace. Bases which our military experts deem essential for our protection and which are not now in our possession, we will acquire. We will acquire them by arrangements consistent with the United Nations Charter"<sup>187</sup>

The type of arrangement hinted at by Truman in 1945 materialized in the form of a "strategic trusteeship" agreement designating the US as the sole administering authority over the Japanese Mandated Islands by a resolution of the United Nations Security Council on 2nd April 1947. This

<sup>183</sup>Shinobu Seizaburō, "The Korean War as an Epoch of Contemporary History," *The Developing Economies*, Vol. 4, No 1, March, 1966, p. 26.

<sup>184</sup>Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>185</sup>Albert Seigal, *US Policy Toward Okinawa 1945-1972: A Study in Organisational Interaction in Policy-Making*, Ph.D. Dissertation, West Virginia University, 1978, p. 38.

<sup>186</sup>Frederick S. Dunn, *Peacemaking and Settlement with Japan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1973, p. 111.

<sup>187</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 14 - China and Japan, 1952-1954*, Edited by John P. Glennon, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1985, pp. 1321-1322.

agreement gave the United States the right to “establish naval, military and air bases and...to station and employ armed forces in the territory.”<sup>188</sup> It also set a precedent the US was hoping it might apply in the case of Okinawa. As good as this arrangement sounded, however, it would not provide the US with the exclusive control over Okinawa it required. Under a strategic trusteeship, US actions would be subject to interference by the UN Security Council and the veto powers of the Soviet Union. In the long-term, should Japan become a member of the United Nations, the US would fall foul of Article 78 of the UN Charter that disallows the existence of trusteeships on another UN member's sovereign territory.<sup>189</sup>

With the outbreak of the Korean War, the likelihood of Okinawa's Reversion to Japan decreased markedly. As the perceived Communist threat grew, the importance of Okinawa's bases increased. Continued control of Okinawa assured the United States of a major base in a key geographical area and this control would not be relinquished lightly. The Reversion of Okinawa to Japan would have been an effective gesture, but was never a realistic proposal. The United States needed to maintain firm control of Okinawa, free from any interference from any quarter. Two further factors swayed policy-makers from this course. Firstly, there was no way of predicting what a sovereign Japan would do. Secondly, Japan's loyalty had never been tested.<sup>190</sup> The Reversion of Okinawa to Japan, even with an accompanying base agreement, was not a viable option. Whilst a base agreement may be favorable to the US, there would still be too many constraints on its control of Okinawa.

Of all the options available, indefinite occupation seemed to offer the most advantages to the United States. If Japan's consent could be attained the US would not be subject to any UN interference; would retain complete military control; and would be in a position to leave the status of the islands undetermined. Potentially negative factors would include: the islands becoming an unwanted financial burden; the islands becoming an 'irritant' factor in Japan-US relations, and; the chance of unforeseen problems occurring precisely as a result of leaving the status of the islands undetermined.

### II-1-5 The Peace and Security Treaties

Although the Japanese Government initially balked at the thought of turning the Ryūkyū Islands over to exclusive American control in return for her sovereignty restored,<sup>191</sup> one has to look at

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<sup>188</sup>Article 5, "Trusteeship Agreement for the Former Japanese Mandated Islands Approved at the One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Security Council," Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations)*, op. cit., pages 99-103. For an extremely informative discussion of the concept of the "strategic area trusteeship" and of the US dilemma with regard to the conflict of securing base rights whilst still upholding its commitment to the Atlantic Charter, see Rupert Emerson, 'American Policy Toward Pacific Dependencies,' *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 20, No 3, 1947, pp. 259-275.

<sup>189</sup>The United Nations Association of Japan, *A Concise Guide to the United Nations*, The United Nations Association of Japan, Tokyo, 1990, p. 118.

<sup>190</sup>One of the principal reasons why the United States had wanted to separate the Ryūkyū Islands from Japan proper and retain exclusive control was so that it could keep an eye on Japan to prevent any resurgence in Japanese militarism in the post-treaty period. Midorima Sakae, "Okinawa to Beigun Kichi" (American Bases in Okinawa), *Nantō Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Ryūkyūan Culture)*, No 2, 1980, p. 4.

<sup>191</sup>Japanese Prime Minister Yoshida handed the US Government a note in January, 1951, expressing his displeasure at the proposed arrangement for Okinawa. He stated that, "It is proposed that the Ryūkyū and Bonin Islands be placed under UN trusteeship with the United States as administering authority. While Japan is ready to meet in any manner American military requirements, and even to agree to a lease..we solicit reconsideration of this proposal in the interest of lasting

what it stood to gain from the proposal. Whilst the Japanese Government was obliged, given its domestic considerations, to offer some resistance to the American proposals for control over Okinawa, it would be wise not to read too much into the Yoshida note. Japan's concurrence with the US plan to retain Okinawa seems to have been reached much earlier. In September 1947, Emperor Hirohito dispatched his special envoy, Terasaki Hidenari, to meet with William Sebald, Political Advisor to Douglas MacArthur, with a secret proposal. According to this memorandum, the Emperor suggested that, "The United States occupy Okinawa for 25 to 50 years, or even longer, after the signing of a peace treaty, to counter Soviet and Chinese influence in the Far East."<sup>192</sup> The Emperor felt that, "This was in the best interests of both countries."<sup>193</sup> The "Okinawa Deal" between the United States and Japan then, had been struck, in principle at least, some three years before the US's official peace treaty proposals had first been made. Watanabe Akio has also drawn attention to a plan submitted in the same month of the same year by the Foreign Minister in the Katayama Cabinet, Ashida Hitoshi, who envisaged a post-treaty security system whereby the United States would station its forces close to Japan *but not in Japan*. Specific locations were not mentioned, but the implication seems to have been that American forces would be stationed in the Ryûkyû and the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands.<sup>194</sup>

The Peace Conference was held at the San Francisco Opera House in September 1951. The all-important Article 3 pertaining to the Ryûkyûs reads as follows:

"Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as sole administering authority, Nansei Shotô south of 29 degrees north latitude (including the Ryûkyû Islands and Daito Islands)...Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, The United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands including their territorial waters."

Article 3 placed Okinawa under the direct rule of the United States until such time as it proposed a trusteeship by the United Nations. This article would henceforth become the legal basis of the US position on Okinawa until Reversion in 1972. Subsequent to the Peace Treaty signing, the United States never made any such proposal to the United Nations, nor did the treaty provide for a definite decision with regard to the ultimate status of Okinawa. In his discussion of the new Peace Treaty, John Foster Dulles, Special Advisor to the Secretary of State, talked of the divided opinions amongst the Allied Powers as to the status of the islands. He explained that:

"In the face of this division...the United States felt that the best formula would be to permit Japan to retain *residual sovereignty*, while making it possible for these islands to be brought into the UN trusteeship system"<sup>195</sup> (my italics)

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friendly relations between Japan and the United States." United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - Asia and the Pacific, 1951*, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1977, p. 833.

<sup>192</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, 10th January, 1989.

<sup>193</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, 11th October, 1989.

<sup>194</sup> Watanabe Akio, op. cit., p 27.

<sup>195</sup> United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 25, No 638, 17th September, 1951. *Residual sovereignty* was a classic piece of diplomatic ambiguity. Essentially it suggested that the islands would be held onto by the United States because of military necessity, but with a view to their eventual return to Japan's sovereignty at some point in time in the future. No date was specified, quite deliberately. The Japanese Government were returned the Amami Islands as a Christmas present in 1953, a symbol of America's good faith in regard to the other territories whose future status was, as yet, undetermined.



Dulles adopted the "residual sovereignty" formula both as a means of mollifying critics of American 'imperialist' policy, and as a way of delaying any decision with regard to Reversion. It allowed the Japanese negotiators the hope that the United States would not implement the trusteeship clause for the islands and that they would eventually be returned to Japan.<sup>196</sup> Whilst it served to deny any territorial ambitions on the part of the US, it permitted it to hold onto Okinawa with full Japanese consent.<sup>197</sup>

The principal aim of the Treaty of Peace had been to secure the maximum contribution of Japan in opposition to communism and to attain full military-basing rights in Japan for the defense of South Korea, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. The first step in granting America's demands had been the severance of the Ryūkyūs from Japan proper through Article 3, giving the US one area in which it could operate with complete military freedom, the second step was to agree to a security treaty that granted the US very favorable base rights in the main Japanese islands. By the terms of Article 1 of the Security Treaty between Japan and the United States, which came into effect on 28th April 1952,

"Japan grants, and the United States accepts the right, upon the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace and of this Treaty, to dispose United States land, air and sea forces in and about Japan...Such forces may be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack from without"<sup>198</sup>

What should be noted here, is that from the very outset, those American military bases in Okinawa and those located on the Japanese mainland were to be subject to an entirely different set of rules. Whilst the terms and conditions under which US forces and equipment were to be introduced into Japan would be determined by administrative agreements between the two governments,<sup>199</sup> giving the Japanese Government at least the theoretical rights of 'prior consultation' with the US,<sup>200</sup> the people of Okinawa had no such provisions. In subsequent years Okinawa would become the site for many of the United States' more controversial forms of weaponry: such as biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. Japan may have protested the inequality of the Japan-US Security Treaty and demanded its revision, but never had to endure the type of psychological terror experienced by those Okinawans living in Kadena, Yomitan, or Ishikawa.

<sup>196</sup>Watanabe Akio, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>197</sup>Douglas H. Mendel, *The Japanese People and Foreign Policy: A Study of Public Opinion in Post-Treaty Japan*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1961, p. 126.

<sup>198</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960*, op. cit., p. 445.

<sup>199</sup>Article 1 of the Administrative Agreement Under Article III of the Security Treaty, on 28th February, 1952, stated that "Japan agrees to grant the United States the use of the facilities and areas necessary to carry out the purposes stated in Article 1 of the Security Treaty. Agreements as to specific facilities and areas, not already reached by the two Governments by the effective date of this Agreement, shall be concluded by the two Governments through the Joint Committee." This was the right of *prior consultation*. Ibid. pp. 473-474.

<sup>200</sup>On 29th April, 1959, Ambassador to Japan, Douglas MacArthur II, in voicing his approval of the changes proposed by the Japanese Government to the 1952 Administrative Agreement, stated that "attention will not be publicly drawn to the fact that *there are still facilities and areas in use by US forces without Japanese agreement seven years after an exchange of notes* which had contemplated such agreement within 90 days." United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 18 - Japan; Korea, 1958-1960*, Edited by Madeline Chi & Louis J. Smith, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1994, p. 143.

## II-2 Transforming Okinawa into the "Keystone of the Pacific"

### II-2-1 The Pacific Basing System and the Role of Okinawa

By the mid-1950's, the US policy of communist containment in the Asia-Pacific region had reached full fruition. America had a military base network stretching along a 10,000 mile off-shore island chain from the Aleutians and Japan in the north, through Taiwan and the Philippines to Australia and New Zealand in the south, with a mid-oceanic presence on Guam, Midway and Wake Island and continental bases in South Korea, South Vietnam and Thailand<sup>201</sup>. This system was held together by a number of bilateral treaties: The Japan-US Security Treaty in 1951; The Mutual Defense Treaty between the US and the Philippines in 1951<sup>202</sup>; The Mutual Defense Treaty between the US and South Korea in 1953, and The Mutual Defense Treaty between the US and the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1954, and multilateral agreements: The Security Treaty among Australia, New Zealand, and the US (ANZUS) in 1951; and the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty (SEATO) in 1954. At the center of this system was Japan and, in particular, Okinawa.

The value of America's bases in Okinawa had already been proven during the Korean War. B-29 and B-26 bombers had been dispatched from the islands for sorties into North Korea, and Okinawa had served as a stationing point for US marines.<sup>203</sup> Congress-appropriated funding had been poured into the islands during the latter part of the 1940's, so that by the very early part of the 1950's Okinawa was fast becoming one of America's most important bases, often described as America's "Keystone of the Pacific." As Arnold Fisch describes,

"In addition to its large contingent of construction troops, the Ryūkyū Command included a number of combat units, including the 29th Infantry, at a peace-time strength of 85 officers and 2,000 men, and the 97th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Group, consisting of the 22nd AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion. More important, the command played host to the Twentieth Air Force, whose rapidly expanding components included the 22nd and 307th Bomb Groups, the 19th Bomb Wing, Medium, and the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing. These units, along with the 6332nd Air Base Wing, the 529th Aircraft Control and Warning Group, and the 931st Engineer Aviation Group were deployed at Okinawa's two major air facilities, Kadena Air Base and Naha Air Base"<sup>204</sup>

To a certain extent, the vast array of bases collected by the US in the area had become outdated. Certain technological advances in weaponry by the US and the Soviet Union, such as the advent of long-range bombers and the first generation of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM's), had reduced the need for permanent facilities to implement an effective Pacific containment policy.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>201</sup>William R. Feeney, "The Pacific Basing System and US Security," in William T. Tow and William R. Feeney, (Ed) *US Foreign Policy and Asian-Pacific Security: A Transregional Approach*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1982, p. 166. Chapter 7 of this text offers a concise and highly informative account of the origins and evolution of the US Pacific basing system.

<sup>202</sup>The ANZUS and US-Philippine Treaties evolved directly out of America's desire to form an anticommunist alliance with Japan. Both treaties were concluded *prior* to the signing of the Japan-US Treaties of Peace and Security in 1951. Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines insisted on the conclusion of such agreements out a fear of the resurgence of Japanese militarism. The US had to agree to both in order to get support for the Japan treaties at the San Francisco Peace Conference.

<sup>203</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 5.

<sup>204</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>205</sup>William R. Feeney, loc. cit., p. 166.

Whilst this allowed the US to effect a number of cutbacks, these new conditions necessitated the selection of certain key areas and a redefinition of their role. As William R. Feeney states,

"A number of forward facilities were retained to maximize US force capabilities in the event of theater conventional or guerrilla wars, and in time of peace to garrison proximate strike-forces and provide requisite logistic and communications support for a variety of operational activities"<sup>206</sup>

Because the US had attained exclusive control over Okinawa and because no prior consultation with the Japanese Government over the introduction of troops and equipment was necessary, Okinawa was targeted as the US's primary forward base in the region. Okinawa could be utilized as a stand by, relay, and supply base. Current base development levels, however, were well below that needed. Okinawa's capability to fulfill the forward base role was a top priority amongst US military planners, who decided that a large-scale modernization program was in order.<sup>207</sup> Current facilities would be renewed and new facilities constructed to cope with emerging requirements. Such a program was bound to lead to the requisition of more privately owned Okinawan land and to conflict between the US and the local population.<sup>208</sup>

The beginning of this period was marked by the US Government's return of a number of militarily unimportant islands in the Ryūkyū archipelago in December 1953. By reverting the northern Amami Islands to Japan's control the US was hoping to illustrate to the Japanese Government that her "residual sovereignty" over all the islands in the group would one day become 'manifest,' yet at the same time was attempting to impress upon Japan that this would be the only concession that would be made within the foreseeable future. In January of 1954, President Eisenhower stated quite categorically, "We shall maintain indefinitely our bases in Okinawa."<sup>209</sup> After this announcement the US threw itself into a massive base renovation and construction program on Okinawa. From the Okinawan perspective, the years from 1953 through to 1957 were amongst the worst in the history of America's rule. Military requirements came to dominate civilian needs in a highly repressive fashion.

The end of this period is marked by the successful completion of the base modernization process first envisaged in the early 1950's and the subsequent reorganization of American forces. During the latter part of the 1950's the Third Marine Division, with approximately 12,000 personnel, was moved from mainland Japan into new purpose-built facilities on Okinawa. There were now no ground combat forces stationed in mainland Japan. This shift coincided with the arrival, in similarly purpose-built facilities on Okinawa, of Nike-Hawk missiles armed with nuclear warheads. The US had been prevented from introducing tactical nuclear weapons for limited war into South Korea, but had no such problems in Okinawa. Japan continued to benefit from this shift of US military emphasis away from the mainland to Okinawa in the form of systematic reductions in forces and facilities during the 1960's.

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<sup>206</sup>Ibid. p. 166.

<sup>207</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 6.

<sup>208</sup>The Military Land Problem arising from this US policy is dealt with quite comprehensively in Chapter Three of this current text.

<sup>209</sup>United States House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, *Report to Accompany H.R. 1157, Providing for Promotion of Economic and Social Development in the Ryūkyū Islands*, 14th April, 1960, p. 9. See; "Further Authoritative Statements Re US Tenure in the Ryūkyūs."

## II-3 Mutual Cooperation and Security

### II-3-1 Okinawa and the New Security Treaty

The original Japan-US Security Treaty had been designed as a provisional agreement, based on the fact that Japan had been in no position to defend herself from armed attack. By the time the issue of revision<sup>210</sup> surfaced in the mid-1950's, however, Japan's National Police Reserve force of 75,000, created during the Korean War, had been transformed into a total Self-Defense Force (SDF) of 164,500. Japan had some reason for believing that she had satisfied the primary requirement. In June, 1957, consistent with the force reorganization we have discussed above, US President Eisenhower pledged to remove all ground combat forces from Japan in 1958 and then to continue reductions in line with increases in Japanese SDF strength.<sup>211</sup> Japan's SDF responsibilities would cover all parts of Japan except the Ryūkyūs.

Japanese Prime Minister Kishi chose not to dispute this point or to attempt to link the sovereignty of the Ryūkyūs with Security Treaty revision, as was being demanded vehemently by the Japanese press and a large segment of the Japanese population who had been drawn to the plight of the Okinawans during the land struggle. He placed instead absolute priority on Security Treaty revision as it pertained to the mainland. He was guided in avoiding the Reversion issue by both left wing and right-wing political factions, and by his own pragmatic standpoint.

Whilst, on the one hand, the vast majority of the Japanese population was in favor of the abrogation of the Security Treaty and the removal of US bases from Japan<sup>212</sup> (including those in Okinawa), this was not the position of the Japanese Government. The advantages of the security alliance with the US by far outweighed the disadvantages. This belief, and the difference in the status of the US bases on Okinawa and on the mainland, made it impossible to push the issue of Okinawa's inclusion in the Treaty. If Japan wished to continue to receive protection under the American "nuclear umbrella" it was imperative that the rights to introduce nuclear weapons the US currently enjoyed in Okinawa remain unaffected. The need for such protection had been made crystal clear by the outbreak of the Korean War and the proximity of that region to Japan. Conservative factions rejected any talk of the Ryūkyūs being included in the Treaty area at this stage, as did the left wing. This was based on the belief that if they were included it would be contrary to the Japanese constitution and would bring Japan into a multi-lateral security treaty with Taiwan, The Republic of

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<sup>210</sup>The Japanese Government focused on 6 main 'problem areas' related to the 1951 Security Treaty: 1) that it contained no explicit guarantee on the part of the US to defend Japan if she were attacked; 2) that the 'prior consultation' clause was extremely weak and that the US could, if it desired, launch from Japan a military action which would involve Japan in a conflict related to US foreign policy to which Japan was not involved; 3) that it allowed the US to act in a quasi-police capacity to put down internal disorder in Japan (this was seen as humiliating to a sovereign nation); 4) that Japan had to get permission from the US if she wished to enter into any security agreement with a third party; 5) that the current treaty did not provide Japan with the means of terminating the treaty without the express approval of the US, and 6) that Japan's rights to veto the introduction of "controversial" weaponry (i.e., nuclear weapons) was relatively vague.

<sup>211</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960*, op. cit., pp. 808-809.

<sup>212</sup>The general population had been, by and large, opposed to the presence of US military bases on Japanese soil except during the Korean War. In September, 1950, 30% had been in favour of a US base presence and 38% opposed. Following the truce in 1953, only 28% were in favour and 48% opposed. By October, 1957, more than 60% of the population opposed the base presence. Douglas H. Mendel, "Japanese Attitudes Toward American Military Bases," *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 28, No 9, September, 1959, p. 130.

Korea, and the Philippines, etc. The Ryūkyūs and Bonins, they argued, were covered by the United States treaties with those countries, whereas mainland Japan was not.<sup>213</sup>

The final Kishi formula was to have no specific mention of the Ryūkyū Islands in the final draft of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, signed in January 1960. In the Agreed Minute to the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, signed on the same day, Kishi expressed concern for the safety of the people of those islands "administered by the United States under Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace,"<sup>214</sup> to which the United States responded:

"In the event of an armed attack against these islands, the United States Government will consult immediately with the Government of Japan and intends to take the necessary measures for the defense of these islands, and to do its utmost to secure the welfare of the islanders."

Perhaps the most important section of the new security agreement, at least from the Okinawan perspective, related to the use of facilities and areas in Japan by the United States. Whereas major changes in the deployment of United States armed forces, major changes in their equipment, and the use of facilities and areas in Japan as bases for military combat operations "shall be the subjects of prior consultation with the Government of Japan,"<sup>215</sup> there was still no such arrangement in the case of Okinawa. In March 1961, the US brought Mace-B nuclear missiles into Okinawa to augment the Nike-Hawks that had arrived 4 years earlier. These new missiles had a range of some 2,200 kilometers. Okinawa's capacity as a military base had been vastly improved throughout the 1950's. By 1957 it had become America's largest offensive military base in the Western Pacific. Not only did it have a pivotal role in the maintenance of peace and security in East and Southeast Asia, but it could be used to project America's military capability much further afield.

Although Prime Minister Kishi could have chosen to obtain the inclusion of the Ryūkyūs into the renegotiated Security Treaty, thereby demonstrating an active concern for the local population and asserting his desire for the administrative return of these islands, he decided to leave America's complete freedom of military operation in the islands as before. Kishi's compliance benefited mainland Japan in two principal ways. Firstly, America's protection of Japan from external aggression by whatever appropriate means had been maintained. If a 'nuclear scenario' was to emerge the United States would be able to fulfill her commitment to the defense of Japan from Okinawa. Allowing the US the continued rights to introduce nuclear weapons into Okinawa was also a tactic employed so as to prevent the US from bringing such controversial weaponry into the main Japanese islands. Secondly, Kishi had gone some way towards trying to diffuse anti-American military sentiment on the mainland. As a result of giving the Okinawans over to more of the same for the next ten years the US began to implement a program of systematic mainland base relocation and removal. Throughout the 1960's, as far as was possible, bases were moved away from population centers to less-visible locations and non-essential facilities phased-out. As in 1951, however, Okinawa had become the sacrificial lamb for the greater good of the Japanese mainland.

The Japanese Government was still anxious to pursue the issue of Okinawa's Reversion, a major issue of concern to the Japanese people, but within the framework of the United States

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<sup>213</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 18 - Japan; Korea, 1958-1960*, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>214</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960*, op. cit., p 965.

<sup>215</sup>Ibid. pp. 963-964. First Exchange of Notes, 19th January, 1960.

maintaining strategic possession of the islands until the 'conditions of threat and tension in the Far East ceased to exist.'<sup>216</sup> This would involve the Japanese Government pursuing the issue in such non-controversial, non-military areas as education, health and welfare programs, and economic development. By establishing profound links between the mainland and Okinawa on the economic and social levels a type of *de facto* Reversion could be achieved prior to any political decision. The political decision, in turn, would be easier to achieve as a result of this economic and social *fait accompli*. Either way, by the start of the 1960's Japan had brought about a good degree of equality in its relations with the United States.<sup>217</sup> Both leaders expressed such sentiments in their Joint Communiqué in January 1960, just prior to the signing of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security:

"They are convinced that the partnership and cooperation between their two nations is strengthened by the new treaty which has been drawn up on the basis of the principles of equal sovereignty and mutual cooperation that characterize the present relationship between the two countries"<sup>218</sup>

### II-3-2 John Fitzgerald Kennedy and the New Pacific Policy

The US Government had actively discouraged any involvement on the part of the Japanese Government in the affairs of the Okinawan people during the 1950's. The rationale behind this was the belief that such involvement would stir local nationalistic sentiment that would in turn jeopardize the effective day to day operation of the bases. Two factors had the net effect of bringing about a change in this policy during the early part of the 1960's. The first factor, was Japan's willingness to accept the necessity of a long-term American military presence in the islands and to adopt a strict policy of non-interference in military matters pertaining to the islands. The second, was the advent of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's administration. It was Kennedy who attempted to salvage from the trashcan America's long-held ethical *raison d'être*. America's foreign policy objectives in the persecution of the Pacific War with Japan and in the continuing Cold War with the Soviet Union were to advance the cause of democracy, to champion the protection of human rights, and to bring about such conditions as to facilitate the advancement of mankind. Yet what had happened in Okinawa? Kennedy was the first American postwar premier to recognize that salvageable mistakes had been made and to press for the Reversion of these islands to Japan. The eventual Reversion came as a direct result of the initiatives Kennedy instituted and as a result of those individuals who found their way into positions of power in the US Government bureaucracy during the period of his administration. When Kennedy and new Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato met in Washington in June of 1961, there was almost instant accord on the need to promote the economic and social advancement of the Okinawan people.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>216</sup>This expression had been a firm favourite of the United States and was used on almost every occasion when the duration of their stay in the Ryūkyūs was questioned. It was wonderfully vague, much like Dulles' "residual sovereignty" expression.

<sup>217</sup>The United States gained the equality it had been hoping to achieve with regard to the mutuality of defence interests. As much as the old Japan-US Security Treaty had been unequal in America's favour it had contained no commitment on the part of Japan to come to the United States' assistance in the event of an armed attack by a third party. Article 5 of the new treaty rectified this. By the terms of this clause "each party recognises that an armed attack against either party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would *act to meet the common danger* in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes." Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960*, op. cit., p. 961.

<sup>218</sup>Ibid. p. 990.

<sup>219</sup>The relevant section of their Joint Communiqué reads: "The President and the Prime Minister exchanged views on matters relating to the Ryūkyū and Bonin Islands, which are under the United States administration but in which Japan

Both Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk were under the impression that there was more to the Okinawa situation than met the eye. Despite their outward cries for Reversion to Japan, it was believed, the Okinawans actually harbored desires for independence, and were acting in a rather opportunist manner by attempting to foster political ties with Japan whilst at the same time promoting economic ties with the United States.<sup>220</sup> Despite this belief, he felt that appealing to the independence cause would be difficult, as "any significant shift in political status would 'harm' the security of the bases."<sup>221</sup> In this regard Kennedy was definitely a defense 'hawk.' He decided on a two-prong approach to the islands. Firstly, he would instigate an American financed and sponsored anti-poverty program that, it was hoped, would deflate the independence cause. Secondly, he would insist that the Japanese Government contributed heavily to this program. Kennedy was basically asking the Japanese Government to put its money where its mouth was.

In the short-term, this would be a way of illustrating to other Asian countries that the United States was concerned about the welfare of the local people. In the long-term, as Japanese economic and political involvement in the islands increased, the United States would be able to achieve a "security-safeguarded"<sup>222</sup> Reversion. Immediate steps were taken towards increasing Japanese involvement in the islands. During the early part of 1961, USCAR<sup>223</sup> was ordered to hoist the 'Rising Sun' flag on all off-base buildings. Observance of Japanese holidays was reinstated, and patriotic, pro-Japanese rallies were encouraged on those dates.

Following Ikeda's visit in June of 1961 a special survey team was dispatched to investigate conditions in the Ryūkyūs and to gather information needed in the formulation of US policies and programs that would more effectively improve the islands' living conditions.<sup>224</sup> Its general findings were virtually identical with the President's own opinions. The role of Okinawa as an important strategic base was emphasized, with its value reflecting "not only the installations and facilities contained therein, but the fact that...use of it is free from the restrictions imposed by the existence of another political authority."<sup>225</sup> This was balanced by a need to promote a greater degree of local political autonomy, vis-a-vis the nomination of the Chief Executive of the GRI by the Legislature rather than by the High Commissioner; and the appointment of a civilian rather than military civil administrator of USCAR. Economic reforms were also advocated, in that the administration should seek to increase the amount of economic assistance currently appropriated from Congress, and that the Japanese Government should be encouraged to participate in the sharing of the costs of short and long-term economic development programs, "on the basis of the United States' assumption of about

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retains residual sovereignty. The President affirmed that the US would make further efforts to enhance the welfare and well being of the inhabitants of the Ryūkyūs and welcomed Japanese cooperation in these efforts. The Prime Minister affirmed that the Japanese would continue to cooperate to this end." United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 45, No 1150, 10th July, 1961, p. 58.

<sup>220</sup>Timothy P. Maga, *John F. Kennedy and the New Pacific Community, 1961-1963*, Macmillan Press, 1990, pp. 102-103.

<sup>221</sup>Ibid. p. 102.

<sup>222</sup>Ibid. p. 103.

<sup>223</sup>In the knowledge that it was about to gain exclusive rights over the Ryūkyūs by the terms of the Treaty of Peace with Japan and in order to both: 1) institute a more permanent form of control, and 2) to promote greater civilian democracy, the US decided to make two fundamental changes to the civilian and military government structure in the islands. The first, was the inauguration of the United States Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands (USCAR) in December, 1950, to replace the Military Government, and the second was to create the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands (GRI) in April 1952.

<sup>224</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 45, No 1165, 23rd October, 1961, p. 667.

<sup>225</sup>Timothy P. Maga, op. cit., p. 107.

two-thirds of the total."<sup>226</sup> The report suggested that Congress should raise the amount of annual economic assistance to the islands from the current level of \$6 million to some \$25 million.<sup>227</sup>

Kennedy welcomed the Kaysen Report, and in March 1962, made the first move towards implementing the plan. Executive Order No 11010, Amending Executive Order 10173,<sup>228</sup> Relating to the Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands, provided for the nomination of the Chief Executive by the Legislature; lengthened the term of office for Okinawan Legislative members to three years; restricted the veto power of the High Commissioner to cases affecting only the security and national interests of the United States, and; provided that the Civil Administrator of USCAR would from now on be a civilian.<sup>229</sup> On the same day as announcing the amendment to Eisenhower's Executive Order 10173, President Kennedy issued a statement on general American policy towards the Ryūkyūs. Most important perhaps, was the following passage:

"I recognize the Ryūkyūs 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."<sup>230</sup>

Maintenance of the Okinawan bases was still seen as essential "in the face of threats to the peace of the Far East,"<sup>231</sup> but he was committed to liberalizing as far as possible USCAR policies and keeping such policies under continuous review in Washington. He pledged to raise the standards of public health, welfare and education, to a level comparable with the Japanese mainland, and sought to promote closer economic links with the Japanese Government towards such goals.

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<sup>226</sup>Ibid. p. 107.

<sup>227</sup>Ibid. p. 107. It was pointed out that the United States bases in Okinawa were costing less than a pittance. 'Cheap' rents for basing privileges were normally considered to be in the realm of \$10 million per year as in the case of Libya, or \$20 to \$40 million as in the case of Morocco. 'Moderate to expensive,' but still fair rent was seen to be at the \$150 million per annum figure as was the case with Spain. An increased rent level for Okinawa, possibly as high as that required in the case of Spain was advised, with such increased rentals able to constitute a second aid scheme.

<sup>228</sup>On 5th June, 1957, President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10713, Providing for Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands. This order placed all authority for matters relating to Okinawa directly into the hands of the Secretary of Defence in Washington, who was himself subject to the will of the President. The Secretary of Defence was ordered to "encourage the development of an effective and responsible Ryūkyūan Government, based on democratic principles and supported by a sound financial structure...[to] make every effort to improve the welfare and well being of the inhabitants...and...[to] continue to promote the economic and cultural advancement of the inhabitants." A new High Commissioner was appointed who would exercise complete authority over the administration of Okinawa. The High Commissioner in turn would appoint the Chief Executive of the GRI. United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 37, No 941, 8th July, 1957, pp. 55-58.

<sup>229</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho; Nenpyō - Volume Two, 1961-1970 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations, 1961-1970)*, Genshobō, Tokyo, 1984, pp. 409-414.

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<sup>231</sup>Ibid. p. 415.



## II-4 The Vietnam War and Okinawa's Bases

### II-4-1 Changes in United States Security Strategy

As has already been noted, US security policy had undergone somewhat of a transformation during the late-1950's. There had been somewhere in the region of 200,000 US troops and 600 installations in Japan at the end of the Korean War, but by 1960 all combat infantry forces had been removed, leaving a token force of about 50,000 men, mostly in air and naval units, stationed in some 250 bases. In line with the fact that the United States had more freedom of operation in Okinawa than on the mainland, many of the withdrawn combat forces, like the Third Marine Division, were stationed there. Eisenhower's defense strategy had emphasized the tactical use of nuclear weapons for limited war (hence the positioning of Nike-Hawks and Mace-B's on the islands), along with a reliance on strategic, retaliatory forces.

During the Kennedy administration, there had been a distinct shift away from such a policy. The emphasis during the 1960's was on building up US conventional, tactical forces, including ground forces, so as to give it a greater capacity to be able to fight in limited, local wars. As Martin Weinstein has stated, the purpose of such changes was to "avoid putting the US Government in a position where it would have to choose between using nuclear weapons to fulfill a defense commitment and not fighting at all."<sup>232</sup> This new strategy was defined as "flexible, graduated response." The implication of such a strategy was that there would be a distinct shift away from permanent troop deployment in foreign bases. Such a move meant, instead, "building units that could fight anywhere in the world, and providing air and sea transport to move them rapidly and support them in combat."<sup>233</sup> These were the so-called 'Green Berets.'

Okinawa was as vital for the United States to maintain under this new policy as it had been under the old one. Combat forces were already stationed on the islands with a well-organized network of supply facilities. Furthermore, the United States could claim Kadena Air Base on Okinawa as among the finest in Asia. When the Defense Department announced in March, 1961, that fifty-two of its overseas bases had, in line with shifts in policy, become 'obsolete' and would be deactivated, not one Okinawan facility had been included.<sup>234</sup> US facilities on mainland Japan were, in contrast, reduced throughout the 1960's, so that by 1969 there had been in excess of a 50% deactivation on the 1960 figure. With one or two exceptions, US facilities in Japan had been moved away from population centers in line with Government requests.

In terms of American defense thinking, the political situation in Asia had begun to deteriorate during the early part of the 1960's. This was well illustrated by events in Vietnam. The Saigon Government had become increasingly unstable, and guerrilla incidents between the Vietcong and South Vietnamese troops were increasing daily. The United States in turn increased the number of 'military advisors' sent to support the ailing South Vietnamese Government.<sup>235</sup> This period was capped by the first successful detonation of a nuclear weapon by the People's Republic of China in October 1964. Okinawa once more became of the highest value to the United States. The Gulf of

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<sup>232</sup>Martin E. Weinstein, "Strategic Thought and the US-Japan Alliance," in James W. Morley (Ed), *Forecast For Japan: Security in the 1970's*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1972, pages 73-74.

<sup>233</sup>Ibid. page 74.

<sup>234</sup>David Wurfel, "Okinawa: Irredenta on the Pacific," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 35, Winter, 1962-62, p. 354.

<sup>235</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., pp. 151-152.

Tonkin resolution, adopted by the US Congress in support of President Lyndon Johnson's decision to bomb strategic targets in North Vietnam on 7th February, 1965, opened the way for an increased buildup of US troops in the area.

As William R. Feeney has pointed out, the Vietnam War, like the Korean War before it, had challenged the traditional containment policy in Asia. As US involvement in Vietnam increased "so did the logistical facilities necessary to sustain that effort."<sup>236</sup> In early February 1965, the US started launching bombing missions into North Vietnam and the land battle in South Vietnam began. Okinawa played an important role in both senses. In the same month one battalion equipped with Nike-Hawk missiles was flown from Okinawa to Da Nang, and by the middle of the same year some 12,000 marines and 3,000 airborne troops previously stationed in Okinawa spearheaded the main influx of US troops into Vietnam.<sup>237</sup>

Within a very short period, Kadena air base became a key refueling point for KC-135 air-to-air tankers that had the responsibility of refueling the B-52's launched from Guam for bombing runs into Vietnam.<sup>238</sup> Once the necessary runway improvements were made at Kadena, B-52's soon began launching bombing missions into Vietnam directly from Okinawa.<sup>239</sup> At the height of the war it was estimated that one plane took off from Kadena Air Base every three minutes, and that the US was burning up one million gallons of fuel each day.<sup>240</sup> The Naha and White Beach port facilities were used as rear area logistic depots to transport important supplies and combat materials to American forces in Vietnam.<sup>241</sup>

The US facilities on Okinawa became the center of operations during the war. Okinawa functioned as an attack/launching base; strategic base; supply base; relay base; and training base.<sup>242</sup> Thus it served in both a 'forward' and 'rear' base capacity. Although new Japanese Prime Minister Satô Eisaku and Lyndon Johnson had discussed the issue of the Reversion of the Ryûkyûs in January of 1965, conditions of "threat and tension" now dictated that there would be little headway made until some resolution was found to the situation in Vietnam.

#### **II-4-2 The Reversion Movement in Washington**

Despite the fact that most Americans were engrossed by events in Indochina, there were still many who favored a continuation of Kennedy's pledge to see the realization of Okinawa's return to Japan. One of the chief torchbearers was the Kennedy-appointed US Ambassador to Japan, Edwin Reischauer. In late 1965 he issued a memorandum urging that Okinawa's military bases and their future military role should be taken up as a matter for serious discussion between the Governments of

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<sup>236</sup>William R. Feeney, loc. cit., p. 167.

<sup>237</sup>Watanabe Akio, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

<sup>238</sup>Takahashi Minoru/ Yui Shôko/ et al, "Kichi no naka no Okinawa" (Okinawa Amongst the Bases), *Sekai*, No 275, September, 1968, p. 179.

<sup>239</sup>Not only was this advantageous in that it saved the US a great deal of money on fuel costs, but it gave the US a far-improved long-range strike capacity. From Okinawa B-52's could be dispatched deep into the Soviet Union. Moscow was only marginally out of reach.

<sup>240</sup>Takahashi Minoru/Yui Shôko/et al, loc. cit., p. 178.

<sup>241</sup>Watanabe Akio, op. cit., pp. 64-65. As Watanabe points out, in March of 1967 310,000 tons of goods were unloaded at these two facilities for shipment into Vietnam. The total consumption of goods by US forces in Vietnam at that time stood at 400,000 tons. This is one way of appraising Okinawa's role during the war.

<sup>242</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 8.

Japan and the United States.<sup>243</sup> Within a few years the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation would once more be up for renegotiation, and Reischauer was one among many who believed that if the Okinawa Reversion issue was ignored for too long the United States may lose all base rights in the 1970's. Given the mass protests at the time of the 1960 agreement, along with the current Japanese Government's determination to pursue the Okinawa issue, there seems to have been much in favor of his argument. Reischauer's memorandum was countered by the Defense Department that produced one of its own, suggesting that it would be ridiculous to discuss Reversion at a time when Okinawa's role was of the utmost importance in the Vietnam effort.

Despite this setback, the Reischauer-Kennedy policy found increasing favor within Washington through the creation of a special Ryūkyūan Islands Study Group in June 1966. By the end of that year a report had been completed that echoed to a large extent what Reischauer had said a year before. It recommended the promotion of further measures giving the local people a greater degree of political autonomy to help deflect at least some of the current criticism emanating from Japan and Okinawa. Should local unrest be allowed to build, the United States military would find itself with major problems over the next few years. The most important conclusion, however, was that such measures to placate the local population would have only a minimal effect, and that the United States Government must prepare for the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan within the next five years or risk the removal of all of its bases and the abrogation of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security.<sup>244</sup> The issue was not whether Reversion would happen, but when, and as to what sort of deal the United States would be able to make with the Japanese Government.

The Japanese Government seemed largely oblivious to the fundamental change of ideas on the Okinawa Reversion issue within Washington itself. It was certainly not fully aware of how much pressure the United States was increasingly coming under in an attempt to manufacture a deal that would enable it to retain the same base rights in the 1970's as it currently enjoyed. It is doubtful that the Japanese Government ever conceived of itself as being in the driving seat.

As a precursor to the Satō-Johnson Summit scheduled for November, 1967, the Washington-based Ryūkyū Islands Study Group conducted another examination into the Okinawa base issue, this time focusing on the specific problem of US base status after the potential return of the islands to Japanese control. The group left to one side the issue of nuclear weapons, both because the report needed to be conducted "strictly in the context of strategic posture, which was at that time in a state of evolution at different levels of Government,"<sup>245</sup> and because "the decision on nuclear weapons was the most likely part of the package to be left ultimately to the President and it was important that a President was not forced prematurely to rule on the issue and decide against the political considerations."<sup>246</sup> After a thorough investigation of all the possible ramifications, the group concluded that, in essence, very little would change. The only major disadvantage would be the necessity to engage in prior consultation with the Japanese Government, as prescribed by the terms of the Security Treaty, before carrying out bombing runs from Okinawa. Once the Defense Department realized that the actual losses would be minimal there was increased accord across traditional battle

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<sup>243</sup>Miyasato Seigen, *Amerika no Okinawa Seisaku (America's Okinawa Policy)*, Nirai Sha, Naha, 1986, page 173.

<sup>244</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., pp. 154-155.

<sup>245</sup>Priscilla Clapp, "Okinawa Reversion: Bureaucratic Interaction in Washington, 1966-1969," *Kokusai Seiji (International Politics)*, Vol. 52, No 2, 1974, p. 24.

<sup>246</sup>Ibid. p. 24.

lines that Reversion could be achieved without a significant curtailing of the United States' freedom of action.

Increased impetus towards settling the Reversion issue came in a further softening of the Defense Department's traditional position through the appearance of a number of reports circulating in Washington that downgraded the importance of Okinawa as a base for tactical nuclear weapons. Improved ICBM technology made those weapons stored on Okinawa largely outdated, and the improvement of sea-launched missiles largely negated the necessity of permanently based ones.<sup>247</sup> The chief hindrance to full negotiations proceeding was the continuing saga in Vietnam. When Satô and Johnson met in November 1967, the intention to revert the islands was officially announced, yet the time frame and the nature of any potential agreement were described only in the vaguest terms:

"The Prime Minister...further emphasized that an agreement should be reached between the two governments within a few years on a date satisfactory to them for the Reversion of these Islands. The President stated that he fully understands the desire of the Japanese people for the Reversion of these Islands. At the same time, the President and the Prime Minister recognized that the United States military bases on these islands continue to play a vital role in assuring the security of Japan and other free nations in the Far East"<sup>248</sup>

## **II-5 The Reversion of Okinawa to Japan**

### **II-5-1 Defining the Status of the Post-Reversion Bases**

Joint Japan-US negotiations with regard to the bases, albeit on a lower diplomatic level, proceeded effectively in the wake of the Satô-Johnson Summit. One of the main problems, however, was the issue of nuclear weapons. As Priscilla Clapp has pointed out, American officials were "bound by a government-wide restriction on the discussion of nuclear weapons with foreign officials. They could neither confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons on Okinawa and thus could not speculate as to their removal."<sup>249</sup> What is clear, however, is that the United States was prepared to concede to a non-nuclear Reversion if necessary. US policy was to wait and see how the issue developed within the context of Japanese domestic politics. The maintenance of the Okinawan bases, under whatever terms could be achieved, was the priority.

In November 1968, Richard Nixon was elected as the new President of the United States. One of his first moves was to restructure the decision-making process in Washington to remove responsibility away from the State Department and into the newly refurbished National Security Council (NSC). One of the most important issues to be resolved in the NSC was the Reversion of Okinawa and its bearing on Japan-US relations. National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) No 5 directly pertained to this issue. It proposed that:

- 1) An agreement should be drafted by 1969, containing a specific Reversion target date, preferably by 1972;
- 2) That even if Japan refused to sanction the stationing of nuclear weapons on the islands, the US should seek the rights of emergency reintroduction via some clause which gave the US the upper hand in determining what was an 'emergency';

<sup>247</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., p. 230.

<sup>248</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 62, No 1484, 4th December, 1967, p. 745.

<sup>249</sup>Priscilla Clapp, loc. cit., p. 31.

3) That although Japan would unlikely agree to unrestricted use of the bases for combat operations by the US after Reversion, there should be an attempt to attain an interim agreement whereby the US would retain maximum takeoff privileges, or a limited free-use plan in which Japan recognized the vital role of the bases in an 'emergency' situation vis-a-vis peace and security in the Far East.<sup>250</sup>

This document, once ratified by the President in the NSC, became the official US position and was then finalized in National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) No 13. It proposed Reversion in 1972, but only on the condition that, "there is agreement in 1969 on the essential elements governing US military use and provided detailed negotiations are completed at that time."<sup>251</sup>

That the Washington bureaucracy could align themselves on such a decision had perhaps been most significantly contributed to by a further restructuring of Defense Department policy that now determined that the strategic position of Okinawa as far as nuclear weapons were concerned had decreased significantly in value. The refinement of the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) system and the shift of emphasis to the home-basing of strategic forces undermined the argument for the retention of Okinawa as the keystone of the US forward base deployment system in Asia. Furthermore, if necessary, such responsibilities could be transferred to other bases in the region. Relations with Japan did not just revolve around security issues, there were also high economic stakes to consider. Settlement on the Okinawa issue would protect and strengthen such relations immeasurably.

For the US Government, the situation in Vietnam increasingly began to look as if some sort of resolution was possible. In March of 1968, Lyndon Johnson had announced that the United States would cease its bombing missions into North Vietnam, except in those areas north of the demilitarized zone where "the continuing enemy buildup directly threatens Allied forward positions,"<sup>252</sup> and carry on such moves for peace within the Paris Peace Talks between Hanoi and Washington. Whereas the United States could not conceive of relinquishing control of its Okinawan bases prior to such developments, the climate had undergone a fundamental change. Another major change in US policy towards Asia was detailed by President Nixon in conversation with newspaper reporters in Guam on 25th June 1969.

Nixon stated that, "We must avoid the kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent on us that we are dragged into conflicts such as the one we have in Vietnam."<sup>253</sup> Whilst still maintaining a "presence" in the Asian-Pacific region and upholding its treaty commitments, the United States would sit back and, "should not dictate."<sup>254</sup> According to Nixon's "Guam Doctrine" the United States was committed not to intervene in Asian land wars. Future US assistance to friendly governments in Asia would be limited to the provision of funds and military equipment.<sup>255</sup> In subsequent years the Nixon policy of advancing détente with the Soviet Union, whilst simultaneously seeking rapprochement with China, would lead to a further redefinition of America's containment policy.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>250</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., pp. 302-303.

<sup>251</sup>Ibid. p. 304.

<sup>252</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Two, 1961-1970*, op. cit., p. 773.

<sup>253</sup>Ibid. p. 866.

<sup>254</sup>Ibid. p. 866.

<sup>255</sup>William R. Feeney, loc. cit., p. 167.

<sup>256</sup>Ibid. p. 167.

The Japanese Government had been preparing for negotiations throughout 1969. The bulk of the planning with regard to the post-Reversion status of America's bases was conducted by the Okinawan Base Problems Committee. In March, this committee submitted a report to Prime Minister Satō that recommended that: the date for Reversion should be set during 1969, with actual Reversion taking place no later than 1972; that in the post-Reversion period the Japan-US Security Treaty should become fully applicable to Okinawa, and; that in the post-Reversion period Japan would assume all responsibilities for the domestic defense of Okinawa.<sup>257</sup> The central recommendation of the report was that there should be restrictions placed on the United States deployment of nuclear weapons.

## **II-5-2 The Satō-Nixon Communiqué, 21st November, 1969.**

What emerged from the Satō-Nixon meetings had "compromise" stamped across it. Sifting through the diplomatic language of 'Reversion,' one finds that, as far as the position of America's military bases in Okinawa were concerned, very little had changed. Just as the 1951 Japan-US Security Treaty had been designed as a temporary agreement until such time as the Japanese Government could organize her Self Defense Forces to cope with the defense of the 'homelands,' the Satō-Nixon Communiqué was a temporary agreement designed in the hope that, "the war in Vietnam would be concluded before return of the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan."<sup>258</sup> The time limit set on this conclusion was three years. Both sides would enter into immediate negotiations with a view to accomplishing Reversion during 1972.

Although Japan would take responsibility for the defense of the Ryūkyū Islands once Reversion had been completed, both leaders confirmed that, "The United States would retain under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security such military facilities and areas in Okinawa as required in the mutual security of both countries."<sup>259</sup> Okinawa's bases would, in theory, be subject to exactly the same conditions and terms of prior consultation as those bases on the mainland, yet two clauses seem to suggest conditions to the contrary. In the first part, is the joint pledge in Article 7 which states that; "the return of the administrative rights over Okinawa...should not hinder the effective discharge of the international obligations assumed by the United States for the defense of countries in the Far East including Japan."<sup>260</sup>

This obligation involved the dispatch of troops, as was the case during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and the use of nuclear weapons. The implication here is that "unhindered" means unchanged. As to the specific question of nuclear weapons, the two leaders stated as follows:

"The Prime Minister described in detail the particular sentiment of the Japanese people against nuclear weapons and the policy of the Japanese Government reflecting such sentiment. The President expressed his deep understanding and assured the Prime Minister that, *without prejudice to the position of the United States Government* with respect to the prior consultation system under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the Reversion of Okinawa would be carried out in a manner consistent with the policy of the Japanese Government as described by the Prime Minister"<sup>261</sup> (my italics)

<sup>257</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>258</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 61, No 1590, 15th December, 1969, p. 555.

<sup>259</sup>Ibid. p. 556.

<sup>260</sup>Ibid. p. 556.

<sup>261</sup>Ibid. p. 556.

One can interpret this in two ways: 1) that the United States has determined that Okinawa's Reversion will be a non-nuclear Reversion, or; 2) that the United States plans to retain or reintroduce nuclear weapons in the post-Reversion period by using some loophole in the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. The Japanese Government emphasized the former interpretation and the United States another. Henry Kissinger was later to describe this formula as "as ingenious as it was empty."<sup>262</sup> His assessment seems more accurate in light of the secret Agreed Minute that would follow.

In conjunction with these two clauses, attention should also be paid to a particularly significant admission on the part of Japan in Article 7; in that, "The Prime Minister affirmed the recognition of his Government that the security of Japan could not be adequately maintained without international peace and security of the Far East and, therefore, the security of countries in the Far East was a matter of serious concern for Japan."<sup>263</sup> It should be remembered that, in 1958, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been trying to get such a clause introduced into the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security as a means of legitimizing the right of America to introduce nuclear weapons into Japan. The final treaty had been somewhat vague as to America's rights in this regard. At that time Japan was assured that the United States could at least use nuclear weapons from its bases in Okinawa, but now that all bases, both in Okinawa and mainland Japan, would come under the same basic conditions of prior consultation, Japan would have to either reject America's right to introduce nuclear weapons flatly, and therefore lose protection under the "nuclear umbrella," or to make alternative arrangements that recognized America's *latent* right to introduce nuclear weapons "in the case of an emergency."

The Japanese Government chose the latter option. In the draft Agreed Minute to the Joint Communiqué of United States President Nixon and Japanese Prime Minister Satō, issued on 21st November 1969, the arrangements were clarified and warrant quotation in their entirety:

"As stated in our Joint Communiqué, it is the intention of the United States Government to remove all nuclear weapons from Okinawa by the time of actual Reversion of the administrative rights to Japan; and thereafter the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security and its related arrangements will apply to Okinawa, as described in the Joint Communiqué. However, in order to discharge effectively the international obligations assumed by the United States for the defense of countries in the Far East including Japan, in time of great emergency ***the United States Government will require the re-entry of nuclear weapons and transit rights in Okinawa*** with prior consultation with the Government of Japan. The United States Government would anticipate a favorable response. The United States Government also requires the standby retention and activation in time of great emergency of existing nuclear storage locations in Okinawa: Kadena, Naha, Henoko and Nike Hercules units"<sup>264</sup> (my italics)

Prime Minister Satō responded affirmatively by agreeing that, "The Government of Japan, appreciating the United States Government's requirements in time of great emergency stated above

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<sup>262</sup>Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1979, p. 334.

<sup>263</sup>Ibid. p. 556.

<sup>264</sup>Wakaizumi Kei, *Tasaku Nakarishi o Shinzamuto Hossu (Lit. I Want to Believe that there are no Other Options)*, Bungei Shunju, Tokyo, 1994. The secret Agreed Minute is published in the preface to the text. Wakaizumi Kei was Prime Minister Satō's 'secret emissary' charged with the task of working out the main understandings and the specific language of the Joint Communiqué with Kissinger prior to the arrival of Satō in Washington on 19th November, 1969. Kissinger recounts Wakaizumi's role (without making specific reference to his name) in his memoirs. Henry Kissinger, op. cit., pp. 332-335.

by the President, will meet these requirements without delay when such prior consultation takes place."<sup>265</sup>

Thus, the American bases on Okinawa had once again been accorded a different status from those on the Japanese mainland. Since the contents of the above document remained secret for 25 years, neither the Japanese nor Okinawan people had an inkling of what had actually transpired in the Japan-US negotiations over the Reversion of Okinawa, even though many had accurately guessed that a 'deal' had been struck. What counted at the time, was that Satō had gotten a pledge that the islands would be returned. In recognition of this deed Satō's ruling Liberal Democratic Party recorded an emphatic victory over the opposition parties in the general election on 27th December 1969, claiming its largest majority in the Diet since 1960. Swept along by the "Reversion" momentum, there was no difficulty in renewing the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security for another 10-year period in June 1970. Satisfied with what he had achieved in 1969, Satō went on to assert that the Okinawa accord "marked the transition from a 'closed relationship' between Japan and the United States, confined to the solution of bilateral problems which concern the two countries alone, to an 'open' relationship."<sup>266</sup> Japanese security policy had shifted from an unwillingness to participate in 1951, to a desire to contribute to its own defense in 1960, and then to a willingness to participate in the security of the whole Asian region in 1970. Japan's open recognition that peace and security in South Korea, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, was vital to her own security was a necessary trade-off for the Reversion of Okinawa.

### II-5-3 The Reversion Agreement

On 17th June 1971, the citizens of Japan, Okinawa, and the United States (if they possessed television sets) witnessed the historic joint signing of the accord to return the administrative rights of Okinawa to Japanese control. Okinawa would be handed back to Japan at some point in 1972. Little in the actual agreement was new in nature, and mostly consisted of details of which US-owned (non-military) facilities (such as water works, power plants, highways, Government buildings, and Naha Airport) would transfer to the Japanese Government after Reversion; what the Japanese and United States Governments were liable to pay; and various other administrative or bureaucratic details.<sup>267</sup> Basically, the US Government managed to exonerate itself from most of its financial responsibilities, actually managing to extract a sizable \$320 million cheque from the Japanese Government for the transferal of most assets.

With regard to the military bases, there would be little in the way of substantial change. Most of the crucial base-related discussions had taken place and been agreed upon by Satō and Nixon during their 1969 summit. The US would continue to operate its facilities on Okinawa, only now they would be covered, like those on the Japanese mainland, by the terms of the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. Under such terms the Japanese Government would take immediate responsibility (including financial responsibility) for obtaining the necessary lands required by the US and would have to negotiate directly with the Okinawan landowners on the US's behalf. The most positive new development in the base issue was the categorization of facilities. All

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<sup>265</sup>Ibid.

<sup>266</sup>Roland A. Paul, *American Military Commitments Abroad*, Rutgers University Press, New Jersey, 1973, p. 40.

<sup>267</sup>"The Agreement Between The United States of America and Japan Concerning the Ryūkyū and Daito Islands," United States Department of States, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 65, No 1672, 12th July, 1971, pp. 33-41.



US bases on Okinawa were divided into three categories: A, B, and C.<sup>268</sup> A-type facilities were the equivalent to the type of facilities currently utilized by the US in the mainland. These would remain in operation. Type-B facilities, which were of a more controversial nature (intelligence gathering units, psychological warfare units, etc.), were to be phased out gradually. Type-C facilities, defined as controversial, such as biological and chemical weapons facilities, would be removed by the time of Reversion.<sup>269</sup> Certain bases would be transferred to Japanese Government control for the express use of the Japanese SDF consistent with the Japanese Government's assumption of responsibility for the domestic defense of these islands.

In Okinawa, the obvious feeling of elation at the actual physical manifestation of Reversion after too many years of hot air in Japan-US negotiations was countered to a large degree by a huge sense of disappointment over the military bases. As far as most Okinawans were concerned it would be business as usual. Assurances were given that nuclear and other dangerous weaponry would be removed by the time of Reversion, but many refused to believe such announcements. No reductions in the current military presence had been mentioned in the agreement, and many believed that Okinawa's bases would still be utilized in a different fashion than those on the mainland. Whilst the Governments of Japan and the US welcomed the Okinawa Reversion Agreement as a triumph in bilateral negotiations and as a symbol of the solidity of Japan-US relations entering a new era, the Okinawans held a somewhat different opinion. They had created the Reversion agenda, had pursued it with increasing fervor throughout the latter half of the 1950's and particularly during the latter part of the 1960's, but had ultimately lost control. Once the issue of Reversion became a topic of open discussion between the Governments of Japan and the United States the resultant agreement would reflect more their particular agendas than the desires of the Okinawan instigators. It should be remembered that the removal or de-escalation of the American military presence in Okinawa had been one of the most important elements in the Reversion Movement's platform.

The United States secured a deal that ensured the retention of its military bases and facilities on Okinawa under the same status as those on mainland Japan. Not only that, but it also received a virtual non-interference pledge from the Japanese Government at the Satō-Nixon Summit in 1969. Another major coup for the United States was achieved over the thorny issue of nuclear weapons on Okinawa. Whilst the United States gave up the right to store them on Okinawa it maintained the right to reintroduce them in the case of an emergency (it would also maintain the advantage in deciding what an 'emergency' was). The United States emerged from the Reversion negotiations with perhaps an even better deal than it had expected.

Although Japan could be seen as having conceded a great deal, literally, to the United States in order to achieve Reversion, the Japanese Government had gained from negotiations in two important ways. Firstly, the Reversion of Okinawa Prefecture had been a major issue of concern to the general public on the mainland, and Prime Minister Satō's pledge to see the negotiations through to a successful conclusion, and then to achieve it, would have done the ruling government no harm. Secondly, the government emerged from negotiations that ensured Japan's continued protection under the United States' Far East 'security umbrella.' The Japanese Government was still liable to

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<sup>268</sup>On Okinawa there were 88 A-type bases, 12 B-type bases, and 34 C-type bases. Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 13.

<sup>269</sup>Lee W. Farnsworth, "Japan: The Year of the Shock," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 12, No 1, January, 1972, p. 47. Included by implication in this category of base would be any existing nuclear weaponry. The US never commented on the location of its nuclear weapons for obvious security reasons and could therefore not make specific reference to any theoretical removal in diplomatic documents.

pay the costs for its own domestic defense, which would naturally be extended to include the Ryūkyūs, but the United States would continue to bear the brunt of the cost for Japan's international defense. It is surely impossible to assess how much the Japanese Government would have saved in defense costs because of the US commitment in East and Southeast Asia, but this was undoubtedly an important factor in the spectacular growth of the postwar Japanese economy.

## II-6 Okinawa's Bases in the Post-Reversion Era

### II-6-1 Accentuating the Base Imbalance

In 1970, the United States had as many as 149 military facilities in mainland Japan, 32 of which were classified as "major" installations, and included 6 airfields, two naval bases, two bombing ranges, six ammunition depots, and a maneuver area.<sup>270</sup> Within these facilities were stationed some 40,000 military personnel. In the Ryūkyū Islands (almost exclusively on Okinawa) the United States had some 134 military facilities, of which 19 were classed as "major" installations. These included 3 air bases, two maneuver areas, two marine camps, a large logistics depot and adjoining port facility, and a small naval base.<sup>271</sup> These facilities hosted 45,000 military personnel. Okinawa Prefecture then, contained over 52% of all the American forces and just less than 48% of all facilities.

In December 1970, the United States announced plans to reduce the number of military personnel stationed on the Japanese mainland by 12,000, and to turn over to Japanese control a number of "major" installations. Two of the three F-4 fighter squadrons at Misawa were to be sent to South Korea and the Hawaii respectively; the F-4 wing at Yokota was to be relocated to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa; Itazuke Air Base would be ceded to Japanese control; as would most of the operations conducted from Atsugi Naval Air Facility.<sup>272</sup> Force restructuring would similarly effect most of America's naval facilities. A decrease in the levels of "threat and tension" in the Vietnam War had been one reason for this base rethink. Another had been the constraint imposed upon the US military in terms of budgetary pressures. Either way, this restructuring allowed the Japanese Government to further reduce the visibility of the American presence on the mainland and therefore to silence a certain amount of opposition criticism. As long as the US's basing rights were assured it showed itself to be very flexible over actual locations. As Roland Paul importantly points out, "Over the years the United States had always taken the position that it was willing to relocate virtually any of its facilities in Japan if the Japanese Government would provide, at its expense, equivalent facilities elsewhere."<sup>273</sup>

Japan had directly benefited from this flexible policy, but how would it be applied in the case of Okinawa where the bases were not just close to populated areas, but were an integral part of towns and cities? Futenma Air Base, for example, occupies 33% of the total land area in the heart of Ginowan City (the city surrounds the base like a doughnut). Kadena Air Base occupies 12,470 msq, which constitutes more than 82% of Kadena Town's total land area.

Under the Okinawa Reversion Agreement there was to be little change in the basic structure of the US's operations on Okinawa. Certain C-type facilities were immediately removed and others

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<sup>270</sup>Roland A. Paul, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>271</sup>*Ibid.* p. 51.

<sup>272</sup>*Ibid.* p. 44.

<sup>273</sup>*Ibid.* p. 43.

were to be handed over to Japan for SDF use, but the base areas scheduled for transferal to Japan constituted only 1.5% of the total area occupied by US forces. This would leave 98.5% under the same conditions of operation as before.<sup>274</sup> At the behest of the Japanese opposition parties Prime Minister Satō pursued this issue with US President Nixon at their summit conference in San Clemente in January of 1971, but only received the assurance of the President that his concerns would be "taken fully into consideration" when base realignment plans were being formulated after Reversion had been achieved.<sup>275</sup> Many people in Okinawa felt that little would come of such plans. If Nixon's "Guam Doctrine" was fully implemented and US troops were withdrawn from other parts of Asia, it was more than likely that Okinawa's bases would become more, rather than less, important. This view was reinforced by the continued presence of certain special forces first stationed on the islands during the Vietnam War, such as the 7th Psychological Warfare Unit (which directed its activities towards North Korea), the US Army's Composite Service Group (CSG), the US Army's Pacific Intelligence School (USARPACINTS), and by the continuing operation of the SR17 Reconnaissance aircraft (which conducted flights into North Korea, China, and North Vietnam).<sup>276</sup>

Some realignment of bases did take place immediately after Reversion, affecting both Japan and Okinawa. In March 1972, some two months prior to Reversion, there were a total of 105 US military facilities located on the main Japanese islands occupying in excess of 290,000 msq of land. In the same month, one year later, now with the inclusion of Okinawa Prefecture, there were a total of 172 US military facilities occupying some 548,335 msq.<sup>277</sup> A separation reveals that of this total figure, 89 facilities occupying some 264,400 msq were located on the mainland, and 83 facilities consisting of 283,870 msq on Okinawa. In both locations the number of facilities had decreased, yet there had been a very subtle shift of emphasis away from the mainland and towards Okinawa Prefecture. The land area occupied by US bases on Okinawa now constituted almost 52% of the total land area utilized by American forces in Japan. The chart below illustrates the changes. What is interesting to note, is that the decrease in the number of facilities does not correlate in terms of the amount of land utilized. Whilst there had been a 44.8% reduction in the number of facilities utilized on Okinawa, there had only been a 12.1% decrease in the total amount of land occupied by US forces.

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<sup>274</sup>Imazu Hiroshi, "Sacrificial Lamb," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No 3, July-September, 1972, p. 302.

<sup>275</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Three, 1971-1980 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations, 1971-1980)*, Genshobō, Tokyo, 1985, p. 524.

<sup>276</sup>Hirose Michisada, "Okinawan Disappointment," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No 4, October-December, 1971, p. 410, and Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 13.

<sup>277</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, *Okinawa no Beigun oyobi Jietai Kichi: Tōkei Shiryōshū (Collected Data on United States and Japanese Self-Defence Force Bases in Okinawa)*, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, Military Base Affairs Office, Naha, 1994, p. 98.

Movement in US Military Facilities and Land Area on Okinawa, 1972-82 (meters sq.)<sup>278</sup>

	<u>No of Facilities</u>	<u>Land Area</u>
1972	87	286,610
1973	83	283,870
1974	72	276,710
1975	61	270,480
1976	57	266,530
1977	54	263,020
1978	51	259,260
1979	51	258,620
1980	49	255,870
1981	48	254,010
1982	48	251,910

A further clarification is needed. All US bases located in Japan and Okinawa fall into two classifications: 1) *Senyō Shisetsu* - which are those facilities in the exclusive use of American forces under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, and; 2) *Ichiji Shiyō Shisetsu* - which are facilities used on a temporary basis by US forces or are facilities jointly operated by US forces and Japanese SDF.<sup>279</sup> The data on Okinawa's bases presents a more interesting picture when analyzed through this division. In 1978, for instance, the total number of US bases in Japan (including Okinawa) was 125. Of this number, 119 were *Senyō* facilities and 6 *Ichiji* facilities. Whilst there already exists a disparity (disproportionate to their relative sizes) between the mainland and Okinawa Prefecture in terms of the land area occupied by military bases, this gap is widened even further when one examines specific categorizations. Almost 75% of all the bases in the exclusive use of United States forces in Japan are located in Okinawa Prefecture, which itself constitutes only 0.6% of Japan's total land area.

Type of US Military Facility and Amount of Land Occupied, 1978 (Meters sq.)<sup>280</sup>

	<u>Okinawa</u>		<u>Mainland</u>		<u>Japan (Total)</u>	
Exclusive US Use	253,402	74.73%	85,662	25.27%	339,064	100%
Temporary/Joint Use	5,117	3.46%	142,618	96.54%	147,735	100%
Total	258,519	53.10%	228,280	46.90%	486,799	100%

The Japanese Government, at the 14th meeting of the Japan-US Consultative Committee (set up to facilitate communication between the two Governments on matters related to the Security Treaty) in 1973, continued to press the issue of Okinawa's bases in the wake of the Tanaka-Nixon Summit in Hawaii. The main thrust of the agreement reached was to reduce the visibility of US bases in the vicinity of Naha City.<sup>281</sup> This strategy has, largely, been successful. Only two military facilities: the Naha Port Area and the Makiminato Service Area, remain within the immediate vicinity.<sup>282</sup> The problem with this plan, however, is that such facilities have merely been incorporated into existing

<sup>278</sup>Ibid. p. 8.

<sup>279</sup>This latter category would increase in number during the 1980's, the result of the Japanese Government's adoption of the "Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation under the Security Treaty," on 28th November, 1978. Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Three, 1971-1980*, op. cit., pp. 1013-1016.

<sup>280</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 30.

<sup>281</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Three, 1971-1980*, op. cit., p. 610.

<sup>282</sup>The Naha Port Area has been a bone of contention between the Okinawa Prefectural Government and the US military for over two decades. Agreement to return this facility had already been reached, but on condition that an alternative site is provided for military use. As yet no alternative site has been considered satisfactory. The main road into Naha City from the airport runs right alongside the military port, meaning that this is one of the first sites the millions of tourists visiting Okinawa are confronted with.

US bases located more towards the central and northern parts of Okinawa. The bases in these regions, particularly central Okinawa, have always been far more problematic in terms of their impact on the local communities and are highly visible. The issue was pressed once again in 1976 at the 16th meeting of the Consultative Committee.<sup>283</sup> In both cases the number of facilities was reduced, but the area of land occupied by bases remains largely the same. Reductions in any base category have been minor since 1976.

## II-6-2 The Japan-US Security Alliance Crisis?

Although Japan-US relations seemed to be on a high in the wake of the Okinawa settlement, this was a momentary high at best, and did not reflect movements in other areas. Concurrent with Reversion negotiations had been a tedious dispute over textile quotas that symbolized the growing discord between the two nations on trade issues and the overall fear in the United States, as Roger Buckley puts it, "that its industrial strength was under serious challenge from its Pacific protégé."<sup>284</sup> Such concerns would continue to characterize Japan-US relations, although more profoundly, in subsequent years. The main issue was that of the increasing trade imbalance between the two nations.<sup>285</sup> As Japan had sought to balance security relations through the renegotiation of the Security Treaty in 1960, the US was seeking to encourage Japan to open its markets to reciprocal trade. Japan's stubbornness prompted the US to question imbalances in other areas. One of the principal disputes was in regard to the overall cost of ensuring Japan's security.

On the one hand, the US was of the opinion that Japan should invest in more American military equipment, both as a means of modernizing Japan's SDF capability so that it may assume far greater defense responsibilities for greater self-reliance, and as a method of assisting the American balance of payment's deficit.<sup>286</sup> This view was shared by the Ministry of Finance that believed that this would cost less overall. On the other hand, there were those in Japan who favored the pursuance of an 'autonomous' defense strategy based on the domestic production of military equipment. Japan chose to adopt a policy that was an amalgamation of the two, in that whilst it would promote the domestic production of military equipment it would, at the same time and in the interest of Japan-US relations, accept a certain amount of responsibility for the costs incurred by US forces in Japan. As Japan became further economically empowered during the 1970's, the US increasingly demanded that Japan accept a greater share of the financial burden for its American security guarantee. Japan began to question the relevance of that security guarantee and to once again discuss the possibility of an 'autonomous' defense structure.

Japan's doubts as to the relevance of Japan-US relations in general were only reinforced by Nixon's 'shock' revelation on 15th July, 1971, that he had begun negotiations to bring about the normalization of Sino-US relations, contrary to the US's previously held position, and with his second 'shock' announcement in the following month that he would protect the dollar and the American economy by floating the dollar and levying a 10% surcharge on imports.<sup>287</sup> In neither

<sup>283</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Three, 1971-1980*, op. cit., p. 864.

<sup>284</sup>Roger Buckley, *US-Japan Alliance Diplomacy, 1945-1990*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992, pp. 123-124.

<sup>285</sup>In 1971 Japan ran a trade surplus with the United States of \$4.1 billion, \$1 with Europe, and \$9 billion with the world as a whole.

<sup>286</sup>John K. Emmerson & Leonard A. Humphries, *Will Japan Rearm? A Study in Attitudes*, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington D.C., 1973, p. 68.

<sup>287</sup>Lee W. Farnsworth, loc. cit., pp. 51-52.

instance, and in spite of 25 years of close contact, had the US consulted with the Japanese Government. The US was also encouraging Japan to increase her conventional armaments and to consider the development of her own nuclear capability in light of the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) negotiations with the Soviet Union that may have led to the removal of the current 'nuclear umbrella' over Japan. Conflicts over trade issues, defense issues, and foreign policy issues all seemed to point to the downgrading of the Japan-US alliance.

Japan's reaction was to follow the American position as far as was possible to try to restore Japan-US relations to an even keel. New Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei went to China in September 1972, and turned Japan's previously held policy of support for Taiwan upside down by normalizing relations with the PRC. He also sought rapprochement with the Soviet Union (as the US was doing in its SALT negotiations) by opening up peace treaty negotiations when Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko visited Tokyo just prior to Tanaka's departure to Peking. During the Tanaka-Nixon Hawaii summit both leaders seemed to be striving to put their mutual differences as far behind them as possible. As far as economic differences were concerned, Tanaka pledged that, "The Government of Japan would...try to promote imports from the United States and...to reduce the imbalance to a more manageable size within a reasonable period of time."<sup>288</sup> Both leaders took the opportunity to reaffirm their joint commitment to the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security by stressing that, "The maintenance of and strengthening of the close ties of friendship and cooperation would continue to be an important factor for peace and stability."<sup>289</sup> By the mid-1970's, despite continuing economic disputes and disagreements over the degree to which Japan should contribute financially to the American military presence, Japan-US relations had stabilized. America needed to remain a Pacific power in order to protect its increasingly important economic interests in the region and Japan was not prepared to 'nuclearize' and pursue an independent security strategy. There were still doubts, however, as to America's commitment to the region.

### **II-6-3 Shifts in America's Asian-Pacific Security Strategy**

Whilst Japan had been increasing her security role with the assumption of complete SDF responsibility for the immediate defense of the Ryūkyū Islands and their surrounding waters (200 nautical miles), the United States seemed to be systematically decreasing its interests in the region. By 1973, 12,000 forces had been withdrawn from Japan, 20,000 from Korea, and 13,000 from the Philippines, along with the 550,000 returning from Vietnam. This was entirely consistent with the doctrine Nixon had outlined in Guam in 1969, in that whilst the United States would continue to play a major role in the area "we would call upon our allies to draw increasingly on their new strength and on their own determination to be more self-reliant."<sup>290</sup> The US would still honor all of its treaty commitments, and would continue to extend its nuclear shield (both as a means of maintaining a balance of deterrence amongst the major powers and as a means of minimizing the incentive for any individual state to develop its own nuclear deterrent), but the individual nation would have the prime responsibility to "mobilize its own people and resources for its own defense."<sup>291</sup> Japan clearly felt as if she had been progressing effectively along the lines expected by the US, but began to doubt the US's

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<sup>288</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Three, 1971-1980*, op. cit., p. 590.

<sup>289</sup>Ibid. p. 588.

<sup>290</sup>Nixon reasserted his Guam Doctrine almost verbatim in a comprehensive foreign policy document on 3rd May, 1973. Ibid. p. 636.

<sup>291</sup>Ibid. p. 637.

reciprocal commitment as its policy of reducing its military presence continued.<sup>292</sup> The lowest point came in March of 1977, when President Carter announced that he would phase out all US ground forces from South Korea by 1982.<sup>293</sup> This US announcement sparked the almost immediate and continued build-up of Soviet forces in the area.

For Japan, peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula was intimately connected to her own security.<sup>294</sup> US actions prompted a period of serious soul-searching over future Japanese security policy and led to an increase in support for Japan's shift from dependence on an American-led security structure to the adoption of a more autonomous or regionally based security structure. The Foreign Ministry's 1977 White Paper clearly recommended a transition from her traditional 'low posture' in international affairs. Part of the report suggested that

"In order to assure peace and development in international society it is necessary and indispensable that Japan make such contributions commensurate with the wealth and capacity of our country in various fields, not only in the field of international economics, but also in the sphere of politics and the like"<sup>295</sup>

This represented a significant shift away from a reliance on her economic strength as a tool in international affairs. Another fundamental shift in policy came as a result of Prime Minister Fukuda's Southeast Asian tour in August of 1977. During this trip Fukuda endorsed the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and pledged that Japan would become an equal partner. This again marks a significant move away from following blindly in America's footsteps. As Bernard Gordon analyzed, "Much of the unease stems from Japan's growing uncertainty about the future of the US defense role throughout Asia, and this goes well beyond the anxieties over troop withdrawals from Korea...At the heart of the matter lies a nagging fear that the United States, despite its rhetoric and repeated assurances, really does not regard Japan highly."<sup>296</sup> Many felt that America was prioritizing its relations with China at the cost of its relations with Japan.

There were two main reasons why the United States had been systematically reducing its presence in the area. Firstly, there was the 'Vietnam factor' that manifested itself in a policy of ensuring that American troops would never again become involved in any protracted regional conflict in Southeast Asia. The "Guam Doctrine" and its commitment to a substantially lower military profile<sup>297</sup> was evidence of this broadly based American sentiment. Secondly, there was the overall

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<sup>292</sup>It is also clear that Japan began to have serious doubts as to the United States' nuclear capabilities in the light of significant improvements to the Soviet's nuclear arsenal. Just what sort of protection could America offer Japan? See critique of the Japanese Government's 1977 White Paper on Defence in: Bernard K. Gordon, "Japan, The United States, and Southeast Asia," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 56, No 3, April, 1978, pp. 579-580.

<sup>293</sup>Nakada Yasuhisa, "Japan's Security Perceptions and Military Needs" in Onkar Marwah & J.D. Pollack (Ed), *Military Power and Policy in Asian Studies: China, India, Japan*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1980, p. 149.

<sup>294</sup>Three major wars had taken place in the Korean Peninsula within the last 100 years: the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895); the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905); and the Korean War (1950-1953).

<sup>295</sup>Bernard K. Gordon, loc. cit., p. 580.

<sup>296</sup>Ibid. p. 581.

<sup>297</sup>At the time of the outbreak of the Pacific War the US had 160,000 troops in the Asia-Pacific region, This figure had risen to 1 million by the war's end. Japan's surrender led to a large-scale reduction, but by the end of the Korean War there were some 650,000 personnel in the region. At the start of the Kennedy administration and involvement in Vietnam this figure had again dropped to around 175,000, but by 1968 had shot up to 855,000. In mid-1975 troop deployment stood at some 175,000, and by 1979, after withdrawals from Thailand, Korea, and Taiwan, had dropped to a record low of 140,000. Young Whan Kihl & Lawrence E. Grinter, *Security, Strategy, and Policy Responses in the Pacific Rim*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 1989, p. 7.

financial cost of maintaining a military presence in the region. US budgetary limitations required that the United States either withdraw or seek a far greater amount of assistance from its allies in absorbing operational costs. A reduction in the overall US presence during the 1970's certainly fostered a great sense of insecurity amongst its allies in the region. In terms of the United States position this was a positive development. It forced these states into the realization that they should become more self-reliant for their security needs and, in light of the subsequent shift in US policy, that they were obliged to contribute more if they wished the US to remain. This was clearly the case with regard to Japan.

In the light of an increased Soviet military presence and its conclusion of a treaty of friendship with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in November of 1978, the United States decided to renew its commitment to the region. Full US diplomatic relations with China were established in January of 1979; a new and revised basing agreement with the Philippines was concluded in the same month; and President Carter canceled plans for any further troop withdrawals from Korea. These moves, argues William R. Feeney, "not only reasserted an American commitment as a Pacific power, but also underscored the dependence of that commitment on a credible military presence and a viable basing structure."<sup>298</sup> The United States believed that its newly established links with China would support existing treaty alliances in the region and would act as a deterrent to the Soviet Union and its allies from attempting any change in the current balance of power. Continued access to 'forward bases' and important support bases would "reinforce the perception that the United States would be able to project a convincing forward regional military presence and hence achieve its security objectives."<sup>299</sup>

#### **II-6-4 The 'Forward Base' Structure**

The United States had two basic choices as far as its Asian-Pacific basing system was concerned. It could assume, as it had before, a global containment strategy, whereby it would accept primary responsibility for the preservation of regional stability and the prevention of any extension of Soviet influence into the region. On the other hand, it could strive towards a regional partnership system, whereby the regional powers themselves would accept the primary responsibility of resolving regional disputes and the US would adopt a purely supportive role. The former system would commit the US to extending and increasing its current military presence in the area, whilst the latter system would allow it to achieve a considerable reduction. The latter system would constitute the perfect balance, in that it would allow the US to cut back on military expenditures in the region in line with continuing budgetary constraints, whilst at the same time maintaining a credible enough presence to protect its own and its allies (all of whom except Indochina had embraced free-market economies) economic interests. By ensuring political stability in the region the US would be ensuring economic stability. These objectives were reflected in the structure of the bases.

Overall, the US bases in the region were organized to fulfill three main roles: 1) the provision of forward staging areas to preposition general purpose forces to reassure allies, deter potential enemies, and to engage hostile forces rapidly in the event of an outbreak of conflict; 2) assistance in establishing tactical air, sea, and ground control, securing sea lanes of communication, and power projection in a conflict situation to permit a full range of options and to obviate enemy actions to achieve similar conflict objectives, and; 3) the continuing support for the activities of general purpose

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<sup>298</sup>William R. Feeney, loc. cit., p. 164.

<sup>299</sup>Ibid. p. 164.



forces, including large-scale proximate replenishment, repair, and maintenance.<sup>300</sup> In terms of function, US bases may be separated into three interrelated levels: 'forward bases,' 'support bases,' and; 'repair/maintenance bases.'

<u>US Military Personnel Deployments in the Pacific (exc. Continental US), 1981</u> <sup>301</sup>					
<u>Location</u>	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marines</u>	<u>Air Force</u>	<u>Total</u>
Alaska	7,661	1,510	205	10,303	19,679
Hawaii	16,847	11,100	7,883	6,052	41,882
Guam	18	4,815	397	4,004	9,234
Midway Island	---	474	---	---	474
Afloat (3rd Fleet)	---	146,558	161	---	146,719
Australia	17	377	10	273	677
Japan (incl. Okinawa)	2,337	7,555	21,817	14,428	46,137
Okinawa	(1,173)	(3,029)	(16,658)	(8,922)	(29,782)
Philippines	31	4,702	2,628	8,303	15,664
South Korea	28,109	231	252	9,291	37,883
Afloat (7th Fleet)	---	19,935	1,957	---	21,892
					<u>340,241</u>

The most important of the US's bases in the region are its 'forward' bases, of which the air and naval bases at Clark and Subic Bay in the Philippines constituted the centerpiece. US facilities here were the largest and most comprehensive military facilities located outside of the United States itself. Clark and Subic were in a position, and were equipped with the capability, to be able to respond to virtually any conflict in an area stretching from the Sea of Japan across to the Indian Ocean and beyond into the Persian Gulf. Clark Base was the home base for the 374th Tactical Airlift Wing (equipped with C-130's that could transport both men and equipment anywhere throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans), the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing (armed with F-15 and F-4's), and Subic was the location of the finest dry-docking and repair facilities in the region, capable of servicing any vessel in the US Navy. This would have been almost perfect, were it not for the high level of domestic opposition to the US presence and the base-related aid programs which, argued the Filipinos, supported the repressive Marcos regime. The US only barely managed to secure the 1983 Bases Agreement. Aware that its position in the Philippines was becoming increasingly untenable the US sought alternative locations, such as Guam and Palau, but was put off by the estimated \$3 to \$4 this would involve. The fall of the Marcos regime in 1986, and America's use of the Philippines as a supply base for its forces during the 1990-1991 Gulf War despite intense local opposition, brought the issue to a head. In November 1992, US forces were ejected. Certain of the US's other 'forward' bases, of which there were now only three: South Korea, Japan, and Okinawa, had to accept greater responsibilities as a result of this loss. The US was subsequently to gain valuable privileges, though not base rights, in Singapore, which to a certain extent took the sting out of its loss of the Philippines.

Since the Korean War from 1950-53, the United States has had forces stationed in South Korea. The number of troops deployed there have been increased and decreased over the years, but there is no doubt that this area remains pivotal to American security objectives in the region and that its presence has been an important stabilizing factor. Almost two-thirds of North Korea's one million strong armed forces are stationed in offensive positions along the demilitarized zone. To supplement a well-trained and well-equipped South Korean armed force totaling some 650,000, the United States maintains the 2nd Army Infantry Division (about 29,000 troops), and several Air Squadrons

<sup>300</sup>Ibid. p. 171.

<sup>301</sup>Ibid. p. 190.

(including the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 497th Tactical Fighter Squadron, and the 314th Air Division) at the Osan, Kunsun, and Taegu Air Bases, armed with F-4's and state-of-the-art F-16's. It maintains no naval facilities in South Korea as important facilities are available in nearby Japan. The US also apparently has a number of nuclear warheads stationed in South Korea.<sup>302</sup> Although there continues to be a good deal of domestic opposition to the US presence this has largely been countered by a realization that the US plays an extremely important role.<sup>303</sup> The South Korean Government, like Japan's, contributes financially to help defray the costs of maintaining US forces there.

Intimately linked to the security of South Korea is the US's security alliance with Japan. Japan is perhaps the key area in America's ability to project its power effectively throughout the region. This ability is based on the number and type of military facilities that the US maintains in Japan and Okinawa and on the high level of support it receives from the Japanese Government. On Mainland Japan are located two of the most capable naval facilities in the region (in the light of America's ejection from the Philippines). Yokosuka, home of the 7th Submarine Group and headquarters of the 7th Fleet, has excellent dry-docking and repair facilities, as does Sasebo, which is located on the northern coast of Kyushu and within proximity to South Korea. The remainder of the US forces on the mainland, apart from a very small army unit, are with tactical fighter, tactical air support, or tactical reconnaissance squadrons at US air bases in Yokota, Misawa, Atsugi, and Iwakuni. US air force bases in Japan are also equipped with F-16's. The main role of such forces was to prevent any aggressive action on the part of the Soviet Union from the north and to supplement the US forces in South Korea.

In addition to these facilities the US can theoretically rely on the support of a Japanese SDF with over 150,000 troops, 350 aircraft, and over 160 vessels. Japan's assumption of a greater share of the responsibility for her own skies and sea lanes (now extending to 1000 nautical miles) provides an effective deterrent to any potential aggressor and gives the US forces a greater flexibility to deal with other areas. The most important development, however, has been Japan's assumption of a greater financial burden for the US presence. Japan first committed to this goal in 1979 at the summit meeting between President Carter and Prime Minister Ohira, and by the latter part of the 1980's during the Ronald Reagan Administration was providing around \$2 billion per year,<sup>304</sup> which constituted perhaps as much as 25-30% of the non-salary cost of the US forces in Japan.

Whereas there was once a great deal of domestic opposition towards the US presence, symbolized most strikingly by the 1960 Security Treaty riots, this has largely disappeared as a major political issue. At one point during the 1970's Japan appeared to be contemplating breaking away from the US, but it has now put paid to such notions. One of the main reasons for this has been the reduced visibility of US forces in mainland Japan. With the exception of one or two of the noisier facilities, such as Yokota Air Base, most are located quite distant from large population centers. The

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<sup>302</sup>Young Whan Kihl & Lawrence E. Grinter, *Asian-Pacific Security: Emerging Challenges and Responses*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 1986, p. 154.

<sup>303</sup>North Korea continued to adopt an aggressive approach towards South Korea during the 1980's. Most of the South Korean cabinet was murdered in a terrorist bombing in Rangoon in 1983, and many civilians were killed in the sabotage of a Korean airliner in 1987. North Korea continues to play cat-and-mouse over its nuclear programme. Such actions make the likelihood of the normalisation of relations between the north and south highly unlikely within the foreseeable future. Conditions of "threat and tension" in this peninsula are therefore likely to persist.

<sup>304</sup>Ronald Reagan, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, Pergamon-Brassey's International Defence Publishers, Washington D.C., 1988, pp. 86-87.

Japanese Government has also been able to diffuse anti-US base sentiment on the mainland to a large degree by ensuring that the majority of the American military bases are located in Okinawa Prefecture.

When the US began constructing bases on Okinawa during the very early-1950's the objective was to transform the island into the "Keystone of the Pacific." This had largely been achieved by the latter part of the decade. Okinawa's value was proven during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Because the US had complete freedom of military operation it was able to equip Okinawa with any weaponry it saw fit and to conduct any type of military operation. As has already been mentioned, nuclear and chemical weapons were present on the island at various points from the latter part of the 1950's through to 1972, and the US was able to launch direct bombing runs into Vietnam from the island. The US enjoyed a unique status in Okinawa unparalleled in any of its other facilities. In short, US bases in Okinawa were essential to the operation of the entire system.

Although Okinawa's bases were downgraded to a certain extent after Reversion, the US still has a highly effective strike capability on the island. Kadena Air Base is the largest US military air base in the entire region. The 313th Air Division, the 18th Tactical Fighter Wing, and the 376th Strategic Wing, amongst others, give the US a comprehensive tactical Fighter, tactical Air Support, tactical reconnaissance, and a limited tactical airlift capacity. Futenma Air Base supplements this capacity. The offensive capability of Okinawa's bases is bolstered by the presence of the elite 3rd Marine Division, the largest flexible combat force in the region outside of Hawaii. Units connected to this Division specialize in ground and amphibious combat. The whole system is supported by an effective logistic support capacity. US forces in Okinawa are well placed to guard the important sea-lanes north, south, east and west of Okinawa and to cope with most potential conflict situations.

There has been a long-standing and well-supported base opposition movement in Okinawa since the early part of the 1950's that increasingly threatened to affect the smooth running of the US bases. If it was not for Reversion in 1972 the US may well have found itself in a position as untenable as that in the Philippines. Reversion, in one swift stroke, reduced the effectiveness of the opposition movement to nothing. As Japanese citizens the people of Okinawa Prefecture were obliged to accept its central Government's foreign policy decisions. As the Japanese Government fully supports the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security with the US and the existing structure which places the heaviest burden on Okinawa there is little hope of rectifying the disparity.

## **II-7 Post-Cold War Okinawa**

### **II-7-2 Okinawa's Military Bases in the Post-Cold War Era**

Since the *raison d'être* of the Asian-Pacific basing system had been the prevention of Soviet influence into the region, it was natural to assume that the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 would lead to a complete redefinition of that role and a reduction in the overall US presence in the area. Okinawans were heartened in this regard by a report issued by the US Pacific Command on 15th December, 1989, which stated in part that:

"In line with the relaxation of the tensions between the Soviet Union and America and in the light of the concurrent decrease in overall defense spending, there has been a complete reexamination of US strategy for the Asian-Pacific region. There will be a substantial reduction in the number of US forces

concentrated in Japan and South Korea, including, by the middle of 1995, the complete withdrawal and relocation in Hawaii of all the US marines currently stationed in Okinawa"<sup>305</sup>

By the early part of 1990, post-Cold War euphoria had subsided somewhat. In February, US Defense Secretary Richard Cheney appeared a good deal more cautious. He stated that "if we were to withdraw our forward-deployed forces from the Asia-Pacific region, a vacuum would quickly develop. There would almost surely be a series of destabilizing regional arms races, an increase in regional tensions and possibly conflict."<sup>306</sup> A subsequent document from the US Defense Department in May of 1990, *A Strategic Framework for the Asian-Pacific Rim*, made the same observation and suggested that US military, political, and economic policies "should evolve to avoid such a possibility and to support our unique and stabilizing role."<sup>307</sup> Troop withdrawal figures were revised and now envisaged a cut in the current total Asian-Pacific deployment of 135,000 by up to 15,000.<sup>308</sup> Whilst the US Department of Defense was under intense budgetary pressure to follow a path of systematic reductions there was also the full awareness that any drawback could lead to the creation of a power vacuum in the area. Several Southeast Asian nations had expressed fears of an extension of Chinese, Indian, or even Japanese influence in the region if the US was to significantly withdraw.

China had consistently made any number of territorial claims to areas in the South China Sea (such as the Spratley Islands) and had barely patched over differences with Japan over the Senkaku Islands (part of Okinawa Prefecture).<sup>309</sup> In both cases potential oil deposits were at stake. Although China dominated and seemed to be intent on transforming the South China Sea into the 'All China Sea,' she was by no means alone. Almost every nation in Southeast Asia is pursuing some territorial claim with a neighbor. In American eyes, regional threats to international commerce (such as jurisdiction over important sea-lanes) and conflicts over resources could escalate if it were to reduce its presence. The US had its own economic interests in the region to protect and therefore had a high stake in ensuring continued stability.<sup>310</sup>

The US can, however, also cause problems. During the Iraq crises from 1990-91, not only did the US disregard almost unanimous opposition in the region and use its bases in the Philippines and in Okinawa to dispatch supplies and forces into the Persian Gulf, but it also encouraged Japan to play a more active military role by sending its SDF to assist in the operation. Nations in Southeast Asia categorically rejected any move that might lead to a militarily resurgent Japan. The threat of a reduction in the US presence gave further credence to the idea that the US was preparing Japan for an

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<sup>305</sup>Gabe Masaki, "90 Nendai Saihen no naka no Zaioki Beigun Kichi" (Okinawa's US Military Bases within the Reshuffle Plans for the 1990's), in Shimabukuro Kuni & Gabe Masaki (Ed), *Posuto Reisen to Okinawa (Post-Cold War Okinawa)*, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1993, p. 69.

<sup>306</sup>Katahara Eichi, *Japan's Changing Political and Security Role: Domestic and International Aspects*, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1991, p. 24.

<sup>307</sup>Ibid. p. 24.

<sup>308</sup>Principally from Japan (including Okinawa) and South Korea. Gabe Masaki, loc. cit., p. 96.

<sup>309</sup>Both parties agreed to the idea of the joint development of any potential oil deposits in the Senkaku Island region, and further agreed to postpone the sovereignty issue. For a discussion of the oil and sovereignty issues one can refer to: Daniel Tretiak, "The Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1978: The Senkaku Incident Prelude," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 18, No 12, December, 1978, and Choon-Ho Park, "Oil Under troubled Waters: the Northeast Asia Sea-Bed Controversy," *Harvard International Law Journal*, No 14, 1973. The most comprehensive text on the islands remains: Midorima Sakae, *Senkaku Rettô*, Okinawa Bunko, Naha, 1984.

<sup>310</sup>Over the last 15-20 years Asia surpassed Europe as America's most important overseas trading region. It is estimated that in 1992 East and Southeast Asia absorbed over 30% of America's total \$422 billion in exports. Robert B. Oxnam, "Asia/Pacific Challenges," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No 1, 1992-93, p. 56.

enhanced military role. There was great opposition to the Japanese Government's Peace-Keeping Operations (PKO) Bill in Okinawa.

Undoubtedly, as far as a further reduction in its military presence is concerned, the US would be "damned if it did, and damned if it didn't." On the one hand, it has to take account of the fact that its presence does ensure a measure of stability in the region that is beneficial for its own interests. On the other, this presence will be dependent on the will of Congress to continue forking out the necessary military budget. The US will surely be looking towards the establishment of a cooperative security system between the nations of this region that will allow it to withdraw further, but there seems little hope of this on the horizon. The US has problem enough in encouraging the ASEAN states to standardize their defense equipment. This is based on the fact that each state concerns itself with individual threat perceptions. As Sheldon Simon has illustrated,

"Contrast Singapore's emphasis on forward defense with Indonesia's defense-in-depth; Thailand's concern with land-based threats from the north and east with Malaysia's focus on maritime security; and finally, the Philippines' focus on counterinsurgency with the rest of ASEAN's orientation towards conventional warfare"<sup>311</sup>

All of these considerations have led the US to the conclusion that it will have to remain in the region, yet this will involve an even greater extension of the ally's responsibility to defray the US's costs. Japan has risen to this task. The total US budget for the maintenance of its forces in Japan is somewhere in the region of \$7.5 billion per year. In 1991 Japan contributed some \$3 billion<sup>312</sup> towards these costs, but by 1992 this figure was closer to \$3.7 billion. This year, 1995, Japan is to pay \$5 billion.<sup>313</sup> This includes virtually all local labor costs, utilities costs, land leases, and facility construction costs. On top of this the Japanese Government is obliged to pay the so-called *kichi taisaku hi*, or base maintenance expenditures, which, for example, involve compensation to persons whose property has been damaged, and moneys directed towards the reduction of base-related noise pollution. The latest official Defense Department report on policy for the East Asia-Pacific Region states that, "Because of a program of cost-sharing with our allies, it is actually less expensive to the American taxpayer to maintain our forces forward deployed than in the United States."<sup>314</sup>

Given these circumstances, it would be somewhat optimistic to think that the base disparity between Japan and Okinawa will be resolved within the foreseeable future. Japan has clearly and systematically shifted the overwhelming burden for Japan's commitment to the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to Okinawa, which is distant from the mainland, and is perfectly content to leave it that way. As long as America remains committed to being a "Pacific power," and as long as Japan and South Korea continue to pay greater amounts of money to the United States in return for that presence, the current system will remain. The United States has, on occasions, suggested that it is willing to relocate certain facilities in response to Japan's demands, provided Japan provides alternative facilities, yet Japan seems to have made few demands as to the US bases in Okinawa. The

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<sup>311</sup>Sheldon W. Simon, "US Interests in Southeast Asia: The Future Military Presence," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 31, No 7, July, 1991, p. 674.

<sup>312</sup>Richard Holbrooke, "Japan and the United States: Ending the Unequal Partnership," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No 5, Winter, 1991-1992, p. 49.

<sup>313</sup>*Asahi Evening News*, 28th February, 1995.

<sup>314</sup>United States Department of Defence, "US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region," printed in summarised form in the *Daily Yomiuri*, 28th February, 1995.

people of Okinawa prefecture, who have long demanded the correction of this disparity, will continue to remain between hammer and anvil.

## CHAPTER III

### Postwar Okinawa Politics and the Military Base Factor

#### III-1 Okinawan 'Political Culture'

If 'political culture' is a "set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process," born out of the "collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members,"<sup>315</sup> it would seem fair to say that political behavior is determined in large part by historical experience. Furthermore, since each history is unique, it also follows that the characteristics of each 'political culture' will be unique. A cursory glance at the current international political system reveals that there are already some 186 individual 'units,' or nation states, each of which came into existence by virtue of its difference from another. Yet within this number, as is illustrated by the continuing growth of nationalism throughout the world, there could be at least another 186 potential political 'units' that may eventually emerge. This ever-increasing trend is the recognition of the diversity of 'political culture,' or cultures.

The political culture of Okinawa has been shaped by three important and interrelated factors: 1) that it is a tiny island blessed with few natural resources; 2) that it has, as a result, had to develop relations with other, larger, nations in order to survive, and; 3) that these nations have not sought to establish relations of equality, but of dominance.<sup>316</sup> Not only have these factors affected the actual physical lives of the local people, but also the individual's awareness of what it means to be Okinawan. Smallness of size does not have to mean weakness or to manifest itself in an inability to influence one's own destiny, but in the case of Okinawa, it has. Similarly, reliance does not have to involve complete dependency, yet in the case of Okinawa, it has. Ultimately, to be dominated does not have to involve being exploited, oppressed, or discriminated against, but in the case of the Okinawan people, it has. Thus, given physical or geographical factors and historical experiences have combined in the development of Okinawa's political culture.

When Okinawa was annexed by the Japanese Government in 1879, it became official policy to assimilate the islanders as quickly as possible and to destroy all and any of the differences between the center and the periphery. There was one system; the Japanese system, and there was no room for regional variation. For the Okinawan people, there were basically two choices: to resist being incorporated into an 'alien' culture and to continue to argue the validity of their own beliefs and

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<sup>315</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," *Ryūдай Law Review*, No 17, 1975, p. 157, and Nakachi Kiyoshi, "Political Culture of the Ryūkyū Islands under US Military Rule, 1945-1972," *Asian Profile*, Vol. 21, No 5, October, 1993, p. 1.

<sup>316</sup>In the sense that "what comes around, goes around," it should be remembered that the Ryūkyū Kingdom, of which Okinawa was the centre, did not evolve out of mutual consent. There was no overwhelming desire on the part of the people of Yaeyama, for instance, to become a part of one large political entity organised around Okinawa. Instead, there was conquest and subjugation. Okinawa was able to bring about a total unification of the islands of the Ryūkyū archipelago, but only through the use, or the threat, of direct military force, as was the case in putting down the rebellion of Oyake Akahachi on Yaeyama from 1500-1501. In each of the outlying islands of the Ryūkyū chain one may find similar tales of resistance against the Okinawan policy of centralisation. Thus, one can find examples of different political cultures within the Ryūkyūs themselves. In the postwar period, although there may have been a consensus amongst the various islands that an American presence in the area was not desired, only the Okinawan islanders had the specific "military base problem." Okinawa's postwar political culture and Yaeyama's political culture are different in this respect also.

ways; or to accept the inevitable engulfment. Neither was mutually exclusive, and a middle path was possible: that of accepting the reality of the situation, learning to live with it and accepting the benefits (Okinawa needed alignment with a larger nation, if only for economic reasons), whilst rejecting a complete transformation. As Higa Mikio has asserted of the Okinawan mindset, the two contradictory patterns of 'rejection' and 'accommodation' "coexisted in Okinawan society and even in the minds of the same individuals."<sup>317</sup> It was possible for the Okinawan people, in this way, to accept what they could not resist, but to resist, at least psychologically, what they could not accept.

For myself, and in relation to the aforementioned discussion of Okinawan political culture and political behavior, one of the most puzzling chapters in Okinawa's history, is that of the Pacific War. Given the dual patterns of resistance and accommodation, would Okinawans fight to the death as Japanese against the American forces? Was the Pacific War recognized by Okinawans as a morally defensible war? Or were there contradictory attitudes held in association with being, on the one hand, 'Japanese' in terms of national identification, and 'Okinawan' in terms of basic self-identity? Clearly the Okinawan people did fight and did die for an Emperor system that was, at the same time, of no relevance and of every relevance to them.

There are several reasons for the triumph of the practical (in this instance to fight) over the noble (to resist the call to arms). Firstly, there would have been little room for the Okinawans to maneuver out of an obligation to defend the 'homeland' from external aggression. All other Japanese had been mobilized towards the war effort from the mid-1930's, and by the late-1930's there were few who were not, in some way, playing a part. The Meiji Education system, imposed on the Okinawan people after the annexation of the islands, had successfully instilled the value of total obeisance to the "Living God," the Japanese Emperor; had emphasized the importance of "National Wealth and Military strength"; and had stressed the shame of surrender, "To die on the tatami (at home) is to die a dog's death." The "thought police," propaganda,<sup>318</sup> and the highly effective Spiritual Mobilization Movement combined to keep the civilian population 'motivated.' Many sought to resist becoming entangled with the war effort; much as they had in resisting the annexation of the islands, the assimilation policies, and the discrimination, but these people were eventually in a minority.

Secondly, as Nakachi Kiyoshi has pointed out, in the Okinawa of the pre-annexation period most people were divided into disparate groups without any central or unifying religion or philosophy. With no tradition of formal organization, "the Okinawan people had no power to organize groups to express their views. Most Okinawan people did not have their own views, ideas and philosophy. They tended to follow mighty power and authority."<sup>319</sup> Thus, there was no history of political self-reliance.

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<sup>317</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., pp. 161-162.

<sup>318</sup>Propaganda was an extremely important tool employed by the Japanese Government, and it would not, I think, be unfair to say that the Okinawan people understand this more profoundly than most other Japanese. The Battle for Okinawa was one of only two battles fought on 'home' Japanese soil during the Pacific War (the other being at Iwojima in the Ogasawara [Bonin] Island Group), therefore Okinawans were amongst the few 'real' civilians to come into direct contact with American forces in a war situation. They had been told that the Americans were beasts who would torture and then kill them. Few mainland Japanese can understand what it means to stab or bludgeon one's family to death before the arrival of the American forces, only to find these same forces prepared to offer first aid, food and shelter. Of all the traumas experienced as a result of involvement in war, perhaps none illustrated the futility of it more than realising that it was all a huge, wasteful lie.

<sup>319</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, "Political Culture of the Ryūkyū Islands under US Military Rule, 1945-1972," loc. cit., p. 391.



Another reason, was, as Higa Mikio points out, that there was another pattern of orientations which also governed Okinawan political behavior, which stood in contrast to the desire to resist the existing conditions. This he defines as "opportunism," or "the attitudes of subservience toward the powerful in order to survive."<sup>320</sup> The roots of such a pattern may be found within Okinawa's historical experience of being weak, dependent, and subordinate in relation to China, Japan and, later, the United States. This opportunism is supported, he further states, by an "inferiority complex."<sup>321</sup> When initially confronted by the Japanese Government's assimilation policies, Okinawans resisted, but gradually came to look upon Japanese culture as far superior to their own. Unlike the ordinary Japanese, however, the Okinawans had, as Watanabe Akio says, "To *become* Japanese."<sup>322</sup> Having to assimilate themselves into a society as homogenous as was Japan's only heightened the sense of inferiority and drove the Okinawan people to "an extreme form of devotion to their country"<sup>323</sup> during World War II. Although a proclivity towards subservience, in its mildest "opportunistic" sense, had always been an Okinawan characteristic, in this instance it manifested itself in the most extreme form possible.

### **III-2 Early Postwar Okinawan Politics**

#### **III-2-1 The Ambivalence Factor in Early Postwar Political Behavior**

Whilst the Okinawan people had been effectively assimilated as Japanese by the time of the Pacific War, there still existed a certain amount of ambivalence as to identity. The discrimination directed against them in the prewar period; culminating in the sacrifice of the island and its people in a last-ditch, no-hope battle with the American forces, seemed only to illustrate that they had never really been accepted by the Japanese as equal, and were merely expendable assets. Thus, whilst Okinawan political behavior may have been characterized by the two conflicting patterns of resistance and accommodation, so too was Japan's. In seeking to incorporate the Ryūkyū Islands into the Empire, while showing only contempt for the population, Japan succeeded only in heightening the level of ambivalence felt by the Okinawans. If the end of the war provided the Okinawan people with the opportunity to reevaluate their attitudes towards the Japanese, the arrival of the American forces and of completely new conditions provided the catalyst.

Although the vast majority of the surviving civilian population was more concerned with day to day survival and therefore uninterested in political matters, the United States Military Government prioritized the establishment of a political structure that would at least provide itself and the local population with a means of liaison. On 15th August 1945, representatives from each of Okinawa's districts agreed upon the formation of a 15-man Advisory Council to fulfill this role. During the early part of 1946 the functions of this body were expanded in line with the necessary requirements of the rehabilitation projects, and each of the 15 members was given responsibility for overseeing specific areas: such as education, public health, and the like. On 8th April, the Military Government ordered the unification of all these areas into the Central Okinawan Administration (later renamed the Civilian Administration). On 11th April, the former Chairman of the Advisory Council, Shikiya Koshin, was nominated by a group of 86 Okinawan representatives to the position

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<sup>320</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., p. 160.

<sup>321</sup>Ibid. p. 161.

<sup>322</sup>Watanabe Akio, *The Okinawa Problem: A Chapter in Japan-US Relations*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1970, p. 9.

<sup>323</sup>Ibid. p. 9.

of Governor. Recognition of this appointment by the US Military, as was necessary, came on 24th April. By the end of September elections for mayors and city council members had been held. Thus, by the end of 1946, Okinawa had in place a local government system, a central bureaucracy, and, if you will, a figurehead.

The conditions that had limited the interest of the local population in political affairs had, by 1947, stabilized somewhat, and within a period of only 5 months, from June to October, four political parties: the Okinawan Democratic Alliance (ODA); the Okinawan People's Party (OPP); and the Okinawa and Ryūkyū Socialist Parties (these latter two merged in late October) had emerged. Each of the three parties addressed the same issue in their earliest platforms; that of the ultimate sovereignty of the islands, and each was utterly different from the other. The Okinawan Democratic Alliance, which would develop into the most conservative of the three, favored the establishment of the Ryūkyūs as an independent republic; the Okinawan People's Party, consistently left of center, called for the immediate Reversion of Okinawa to Japan on racial grounds; and the Socialist Party (SP), which was actually quite conservative, called for the Ryūkyūs to be put under a United Nations trusteeship.<sup>324</sup> It is difficult to judge which of the three diverse views was most popular amongst the local population at this stage as there was no system of permanent civilian government and therefore no general election. The nature of this system was military, as was exemplified in the order permitting the formation of the parties in the first place. Whilst the democratic right to organize parties was bestowed on the people by the Military Government in Special Order No. 23, on 15th October, 1947, these parties were prohibited from criticizing any aspect of military policy.<sup>325</sup>

Although there was no means of accurately testing public opinion as to the various party platforms at this stage, the Okinawan People's Party stance on Reversion to Japan seems to have been the weakest of the three in terms of potential public support. The local media, limited to the one existing newspaper the *Uruma Shimpō*, had throughout 1946 concentrated on how Okinawa had been duped and victimized by the Japanese Government and Imperial Army during the war, and this view was undoubtedly shared by a large segment of the population. The United States forces, in contrast, were described as "liberators" and "saviors" who would introduce democracy where there had been colonialism and liberalism where there had been militarism. Shikiya, the Governor, stated in August of 1947, that the Okinawan people "desired to build a peaceful state under the protection of the United States" and that only a minority was in favor of realignment with Japan.<sup>326</sup> Clearly the United States had no interest in remaining in the islands for any longer than necessary, but it was providing relief and instituting policies so as to make the community self-governing and self-supporting as quickly as possible. These were measures that combined to create a good deal of support for the American presence and the rejection of association with Japan.

By the latter part of the 1940's the Okinawan people had fully accepted the new political systems instituted by the Military Government towards the promotion of democracy, and began to demand changes so as to facilitate a greater move in that direction. "Civilian" government was still very military in character, with no provisions for the public election of the Governor or for the members of the Okinawan Civilian Administration. The United States had initially rejected the idea

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<sup>324</sup>For a more detailed analysis of party formation and policies see Nakachi Kiyoshi, *Ryūkyū-Japan-US Relations, 1945-1972*, Abiva Publishing House, Quezon, Philippines, 1989, pp. 33-35. See also Higa Mikio, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*, University of British Columbia Press, 1963, Chapter II.

<sup>325</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, *ibid.* p. 35.

<sup>326</sup>Watanabe Akio, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

of setting up a permanent civilian government whilst the future status of the islands was undetermined, but by 1950, as has been discussed in previous chapters, a decision had been made to hold onto the Ryūkyūs as a strategic area and to construct military bases. Commensurate with this commitment came the decision to change the nature of both the Civilian and Military Governments. The civilian *Guntō* Government was slated for inauguration in November 1950,<sup>327</sup> with full provisions for the general election of the Governor and members, and the new United States Civil Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands (USCAR) in the following month.

Although elections for both Governor and members of this new government were carried out in September of 1950, against the backdrop of the Korean War, a massive base construction project, and an impending peace settlement with Japan, the main focus of those candidates involved in both elections was relatively vague. There was obviously some concern as to the post-treaty status of the islands and the bases, but this manifested itself in suggestive rather than explicit fashion. Taira Tatsuo, a non-party-affiliated agriculture union president, garnered 65% of the total vote on a platform that rejected both the Ryūkyūan independence and UN trusteeship arguments and called for the establishment of a Ryūkyūan Legislature which would unify the four *Guntō*. Although he did not explicitly state that he was in favor of Reversion to Japan this approach seems to have been implied. In winning, he beat out the OPP's candidate, Senaga Kamejiro, a left-wing proponent of Reversion (although he too did not explicitly state his Reversion stance and chose to focus instead on Okinawan self-government), quite comprehensively, as well as the conservative, Matsuoka Seiho, who followed the anti-Reversion sentiments of the SP and the ODA (which became the Republican Party in October, 1950). The new Governor then, was basically a "liberal," pro-Reversion proponent, who had taken almost two-thirds of the Okinawan popular vote. Fifteen of the total of twenty Legislative members elected one week later took the same position as Taira. As soon as the election was over, Taira, along with these fifteen Legislative members, formed the Okinawan Socialist Masses Party (OSMP).

### III-2-2 The First Reversion Movement

The idea of Ryūkyūan independence had been a poorly supported and slim possibility at best. Most Okinawans, even if they felt a nostalgic twinge, were well aware of the basic economic realities that dictated the foolishness of pursuing such an option. The most realistic "independence" proposal was put forward by the American scholar George H. Kerr, who suggested in 1945 that the Ryūkyū islands could be established as an "independent nation whose status is guaranteed and whose ports (and airfields) can be used for commerce by all nations."<sup>328</sup> Although the international trade port idea would resurface once more in the 1990's, it was impossible to achieve during the 1950's with such a large American military presence. The proposal for a UN trusteeship was now as unrealistic. If the United States took this option its actions in the islands would be open to UN Security Council scrutiny and a possible Soviet veto that would compromise the effectiveness of its military operations. During the 1950 elections for Governor, only 28% of the electorate supported a candidate who emphasized cooperation with the US Military Government and implied anything other than a return to Japan.

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<sup>327</sup>Literally *Guntō* means archipelago. They were administrative units set up by the US Military Government in November, 1950, to replace the Okinawan Civilian Administration. The whole of the Ryūkyūs under US control was divided for that purpose into four groups: Amami, Yaeyama, Miyako, and Okinawa, each of which was called a *Guntō*.

<sup>328</sup>George H. Kerr, "Sovereignty of the Liu-ch'iu Islands," *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 14, No 8, April, 1945, p. 100.

By the early part of 1951, as Peace Treaty negotiations between Japan and the United States were entering their final phase, Reversion to Japan was, by far, the most popular political stance. It was not that Okinawa's ambivalence towards Japan had dissipated, but more the case that most Okinawans simply assumed that their sovereignty would be returned to Japan by the terms of the peace settlement.<sup>329</sup> This would also explain the absence of any meaningful resistance to the military base construction programs, the use of Okinawan bases during the Korean War, and to the non-democratic "democratic" government system bestowed upon the people of which the US retained complete control. The OPP and the OSMP had voiced some criticism, but hardly enough to force the US into a rethink on any of these issues. Such problems, it was believed, would be solved during the post-treaty period when the Okinawans would reinherit the same constitutional rights as all other Japanese citizens. The local people accepted and accommodated the American presence as a short-term presence, whilst concurrently accommodating, in characteristically "opportunistic" fashion, the inevitable return to Japan. It was assumed that the Japanese would have changed somehow during the intervening years and that the realignment of the two areas after an enforced separation would result in a more profound unification than that of the prewar period.

In March of 1951, the OSMP used its three-quarter's majority in the Guntô Government to push through a pro-Reversion resolution, demanding the right to display the Japanese flag; the application of Japanese law to Okinawans; and the right of free travel to and from Japan.<sup>330</sup> These sentiments were reflected and encouraged outside of government, and by the middle of the same year the OSMP had succeeded in creating the Association for the Promotion of Reversion to Japan and the Youth Association for the Promotion of Reversion to Japan. These non-governmental bodies succeeded in getting 72% of all eligible voters in Okinawa *Guntô* and 89% of all eligible voters in Miyako *Guntô* to sign a Reversion petition. The petition, along with the support of the Governor and of the OSMP, was submitted to the Japanese and American delegates at the San Francisco Peace Conference.<sup>331</sup>

Somewhere along the line a grave miscalculation had been made. Instead of making provisions for the administrative return of the islands to Japan, the Japanese Government had actually signed over all powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction to the United States *ad infinitum*. This transfer of authority also meant that whilst the military base presence on the main Japanese islands was covered by the terms of the simultaneous Japan-US Security Treaty, which theoretically gave some powers to the Japanese Government over the disposition of such forces, US bases in the Ryûkyûs were not. The two treaties provided the United States with an exclusive zone for its military operations, and Japan her independence renewed. Prime Minister Yoshida's speech to the Japanese Diet presenting the Peace Treaty for ratification on 12th October, 1951, clearly illustrates that regained independence came before loyalty to one's subjects. His comments on the loss of Okinawa Prefecture under Article 3 of the Peace Treaty read as follows:

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<sup>329</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., p. 151. Professor Higa has pointed out that it was this generally held assumption that accounted for the absence of specific references to Reversion by the candidates in the 1950 elections.

<sup>330</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

<sup>331</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., pp. 117-118; Watanabe Akio, op. cit., p. 13; and Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

"In certain quarters dissatisfaction is still being expressed regarding the disposition of the Nansei Archipelago. We should recall that on 14th August 1945, Japan surrendered unconditionally, leaving the matter of territorial disposition to the Allies. Now the Allies have written down their decision in the Peace Treaty - a decision that was made after taking into consideration as far as possible the wishes of our nation. I regret to see that some Japanese still go on repining..."<sup>332</sup>

On 28th April 1952, both treaties came into force, to the great satisfaction of Japan and the United States. In Okinawa, however, sentiments were somewhat different. On the one hand, there was bewilderment at how the Japanese Government could have agreed to a continued occupation of a territory it had always asserted was an integral part of the Japanese homeland and, on the other, plain anger. The 28th April on Okinawa was named as the "Day of Humiliation."<sup>333</sup> It was not as if there was no historical precedent for such actions; Japan had tried to barter the islands in negotiations with China in the latter part of the 19th century, it was just that Okinawans could not believe that Japan would do it again. Prior to 1879, Okinawa had been subordinate to both China and Japan. Now, in 1952, Okinawa was subordinate to the United States and Japan; in that Japan retained "residual sovereignty," but the Okinawans were citizens of neither state. In June of 1952, Secretary General Anri of the Ryūkyū Socialist Party described Okinawa as "like an illegitimate child abandoned in the Pacific Ocean by Japan."<sup>334</sup>

### III-3 Post-Peace Treaty Okinawan Politics

#### III-3-1 Redefining Objectives

Although Japan had rejected the Okinawan people by accepting the terms of Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace, this did not dampen the resolve of those local individuals and groups promoting the Reversion cause, but merely changed the emphasis. The post-Treaty Reversion movement can be seen in part as a resistance movement against the oppression and discrimination of both the United States *and* Japan. The oppression and discrimination directed at the Okinawan people by the United States came in the form of the limitation of political freedoms and civil rights as the island was increasingly transformed into a military base. These restrictions were only to become more pronounced now that the US had attained exclusive control. The oppression and discrimination directed at the Okinawan people from Japan was symbolized by Article 3 in this instance, but should be looked at within a broader historical context. The action of the Japanese Government in regaining her independence at the expense of Okinawa is a carry-over from the pre-war period, and may be viewed in tandem with the actions of the Japanese Imperial Army that regarded the local population as expendable. Certainly, and from the Okinawan perspective, if it were not for Japan's compliance the United States would not have the rights to operate Okinawa as a military facility. What had changed by the terms of Article 3, was that whilst the conflicting dynamics of Ryūkyū-Japan relations had previously been a domestic issue, it was now an international issue. The Okinawan people were no longer Japanese citizens, but in an international limbo. Realignment with Japan was sought, at least in part, as a means of ending this unnatural state of affairs and restoring the *status quo*.

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<sup>332</sup>"Extract from a Speech to the Japanese Diet by the Prime Minister, Mr. Shigeru Yoshida, Presenting the Peace Treaty for Ratification," 12th October, 1951. A photocopy of this document was provided to the author by Dr. Gordon Daniels, The Department of History, University of Sheffield, England.

<sup>333</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>334</sup>*Mainichi Shimbun*, 9th June, 1952. United States Embassy, Tokyo, *Daily Summaries of the Japanese Press* (hereafter abbreviated to DSJP).

In the post-Treaty period it was also the case that the Okinawan people had run out of other options. Independence was now impossible, as was the United Nations trusteeship proposal. It should be remembered that whilst the United States claimed that it would apply for trusteeship it never did. The United States publicly acknowledged that Japan would retain "residual sovereignty" over the islands. Regardless of when this would actually take place, Japan retained possession. The Okinawan people would have only two choices: 1) to side with and support the American administration to the point where the United States might consider applying for trusteeship of the islands as Article 3 had specified, or; 2) to pursue Reversion to Japan. The new direction of the Reversion movement may perhaps be characterized by the phrase "better the devil you know than the devil you don't." To avoid one form of oppression and discrimination the Okinawan people were prepared to accept the fact that they may well have to reendure another, more familiar form. The more severe the former was, the harder identification with the latter would be sought.

Just prior to the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace on 28th April 1952, USCAR decided to abolish the four *Guntō* Governments and to replace them with a central administration. On 18th December 1951, USCAR had promulgated the Election Law for the Legislature of the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands (GRI), and, on 29th February 1952, the Provisions of the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands. On 2nd March the first general elections for the 29 seats in the GRI were held. The ŌSMP, promoting Reversion to Japan, gained the majority. The first action of these newly elected legislators at the inaugural session of the GRI on 29th April was to unanimously pass a resolution calling for Reversion to Japan. By August of 1952, even the most conservative of factions had jumped on the Reversion bandwagon. The newly formed Ryūkyū Democratic Party (RDP), which had evolved out of the old Republican Party, had dropped its independence platform like a lead balloon. Legislators in the GRI were aligned as far as what they wanted: i.e., Reversion. The principal differences between them in subsequent years would be as to what "type" of Reversion they required. For the moment, however, all governmental and non-governmental organizations became consumed with a different problem.

### III-3-2 The Military Land Problem

"We are neither anti-Americans or Communists. We believe that, if war should break out in the future, Okinawa will again have a hard experience unless the US gains a victory. We cannot be satisfied, however, with such a situation that we are given no aid, but compensation for removal from our land. The substitute land is barren, full of pebbles, and the land rent we are paid is as small as one-fiftieth of the annual yield from crops. It is said that our situation cannot be helped because we were defeated in the war and that an egg cannot match a stone, but we have made up our minds to remain in our land until we die"<sup>335</sup>

From the latter part of 1952 through to 1957, the Okinawans became embroiled in a large-scale conflict with the US administration. This was the so-called *Gunyōchi Mondai*, or Military Land Problem. It evolved out of a complete lack of sensitivity on the part of the US towards the Okinawans. The US needed land for base construction programs, and simply took it, though as if it were constructing bases in Texas rather than on a tiny island with limited agricultural land. In doing so it did not take account of the traditional, or 'cultural' value of the land to the Okinawans, nor did it see fit to offer realistic compensation. The US did not seem to understand that it was asking a landowner to part with his or her ancestral home site for a sum of money that was woefully

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<sup>335</sup>Group of Okinawan landowners reporting their situation at the height of the land conflict. *Asahi Shimbun*, 27th January, 1955. (DSJP)

inadequate by any acceptable criteria. To the Okinawans, land was 'land,' with which there existed a strong connection, but to the US, land was just 'real estate.' This problem, more than any other, served to illustrate the broad divide between occupier and occupied.

With the capture of Okinawa in 1945, the United States military had taken immediate possession of some 45,000 acres of land,<sup>336</sup> and although some 5,000 acres were returned, approximately 40,000 Okinawan landowners had been dispossessed.<sup>337</sup> Although this land had been obtained by the military as an 'act of war,' which meant that there was no requirement on its part to provide compensation to those landowners, it was thought 'politically' advisable that the deprived landowners should receive something. The Real Estate Branch of the Okinawa Engineer District (OED) began examining the issue at the behest of the Military Government in 1945. The OED eventually reached appraisals totaling some \$10 million for 39,000 acres of land,<sup>338</sup> with the rentals for fiscal years 1951 and 1952 calculated based on 6 percent of the fee value of land as of 1st July, 1950.<sup>339</sup> In the event that such terms proved unacceptable to the Okinawan landowners, however, the US gave itself an insurance policy. By the terms of paragraph 16 of the USCAR Directive, the US reserved the rights to take whatever lands necessary for base construction by force.<sup>340</sup>

The Okinawan landowners rejected the terms offered by USCAR and refused to sign the voluntary lease agreements. The principal argument was that the farmer could gain a greater return by making productive use of the land. If USCAR was to offer something equivalent to the land's productive value, it was argued, there might be room for compromise. USCAR ordered its land rentals to be reappraised by the OED in 1952, but could still not come up with anything better than 6% of the estimated market value of the land. Okinawans pointed out that since land was rarely, if ever, sold in Okinawa, how would it be possible for USCAR to reach any sort of realistic assessment. Under the system proposed USCAR would have to base its appraisals on the declared value of the land for tax purposes, which would mean an underestimated value as the landowners had asserted.

In November 1952, USCAR issued Ordinance No 91, "The Authority to Contract," which instructed the Chief Executive of the GRI to "execute a lease with the landowners under a service agreement concluded between the United States Government and the GRI."<sup>341</sup> The leased lands were 53,669,036 *tsubô*<sup>342</sup> (42,935 acres), the price of one *tsubô* was B-yen<sup>343</sup> 1.08 for a total payment price

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<sup>336</sup>Higa Mikio, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>337</sup>Ibid. p. 41.

<sup>338</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryūkyū Islands, 1945-1950*, Army Historical Series, US Army, Washington, D.C., 1988, p. 175.

<sup>339</sup>Higa Mikio, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>340</sup>The relevant section of Paragraph 16 reads: "The Governor will secure title to any additional real estate or facilities required permanently by the United States Government by purchase from owners, either Ryūkyūan, Japanese or other nationality, or through condemnation. This property will be acquired through negotiated purchase if possible. If it cannot be purchased at reasonable terms or if the owners refuse to negotiate, condemnation proceedings will be instituted. The Department of the Army, the Air Force, or the Navy or other interested United States agencies will request a specific authorisation and appropriation to effect purchase of such property, subject to an equivalent reduction in GARIOA funds." United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - East Asia and the Pacific, 1950*, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1976, p. 1318.

<sup>341</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>342</sup>One *tsubô* was equal to approximately 3.6 metres squared, or 36 square feet.

<sup>343</sup>Although the rate of exchange between the US dollar and the Okinawan B-yen fluctuated, between April of 1950, and September of 1958 (when the B-yen was replaced by the US dollar as the official currency on the island), 1 US dollar was

of B-yen 125,669,615 (\$104,724) for payment from 1st July 1950, to 28th April 1952.<sup>344</sup> USCAR threatened that if these terms were not accepted it would simply direct the moneys elsewhere. Out of an estimated 57,000 landowners only 900 decided to accept the initial contract terms under Ordinance No 91.<sup>345</sup> Many accepted the money offered so as not to lose out entirely, but rejected USCAR's interpretation that this had been a 'voluntary' acceptance. Opposition to the "Authority to Contract" was virtually unanimous amongst landowners, the GRI, and the Ryūkyū Legislature. From its humble beginnings as a movement composed of landowners seeking to obtain 'fair' compensation, the land problem was quickly developing into a large-scale political issue.

Settlement for lands acquired prior to the Peace Treaty was one thing, but new lands were required for further base construction and improvement. USCAR was determined not to become bogged down in such arduous negotiations. In April 1953, it finally implemented the forced expropriation clause in the form of the infamous Ordinance No 109, "The Land Acquisition Procedure." As the majority of landowners still rejected the contract terms, however, this law came to be applied in any number of cases. The standard procedure in the face of opposition was for USCAR to dispatch armed personnel to escort the bulldozers that had been sent to level a particular designated area. Land was regularly being taken at bayonet point, and in some cases by very dubious or underhand means. A number of landowners on Iejima who had secured work with the military recall being handed pieces of paper to sign, which they were told were necessary in order that they receive their wages. When bulldozers arrived to destroy their houses they realized that they had signed over their lands to the military.<sup>346</sup> The growing politicization of the land issue as a result of such incidents led in turn to a hardening of USCAR's attitudes towards the landowners. Opposition to USCAR's land policies was increasingly characterized, with no justification, as "communist-inspired."

On 15th March 1954, the US Department of the Army decided to try to resolve the issue conclusively. It announced that a new "lump-sum" payment system would be introduced as a replacement for the existing system. The payments were to be 6% of the estimated land value as before, but the contract would last for a period of sixteen-and-a-half years. USCAR believed that by paying a lump sum the landowner would have the necessary funds to be able to relocate elsewhere in Okinawa<sup>347</sup> or to establish a new business. If the landowner signed, he or she, would not lose the land, but would retain "residual sovereignty." Landowners rejected this proposal. Not only was the money offered under the new scheme not commensurate with the productive value of the land, but the "residual sovereignty" proposal was nonsense. What was the point, as the respected Okinawan scholar Professor Higaonna Kanjun stated, of a landowner retaining sovereignty, residual or not, "over a piece of land which, once turned into a concrete site, will be of absolutely no use."<sup>348</sup> Opposition was vehement amongst the landowners, and was reflected further in the Okinawa political sphere. A 'Council of the Four Bodies,' made up of the GRI, the Ryūkyū Legislature, the Mayor's Association, and the Okinawan Military Landowners Federation, had been specifically

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equivalent to approximately 120 B-yen. Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, Bank of the Ryūkyūs, Naha, 1984, p. 202. 1 Okinawan B-yen = approximately 3 Japanese yen.

<sup>344</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>345</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 436.

<sup>346</sup>A poignant testimony to the United States' forced land expropriation policy on Iejima may be found in: Ahagon Shōkō, *The Island Where People Live*, Christian Conference of Asia, Hong Kong, 1989.

<sup>347</sup>The Department of the Army even suggested that dispossessed landowners should take the lump sum, leave Okinawa and move to the Yaeyama region where no military facilities were located.

<sup>348</sup>*Mainichi Shimbun*, 23rd June, 1956. DSJP.



established in response to the land issue, and in April, 1954, the Ryūkyū Legislature passed a resolution known as "The Four Principles for Solving the Military Land Problems." They read:

- 1) The United States should renounce the purchase of land or permanent use thereof and lump sum payment of rentals.
- 2) Just and complete compensation should be made annually for the land currently in use.
- 3) Indemnity should be paid promptly for all damage caused by United States forces.
- 4) No further acquisition of land should be made, and the land which was not urgently needed by the United States Government should be promptly restored<sup>349</sup>.

When USCAR refused to budge, the Council of the Four Bodies decided to appeal its case direct to Congress. It had been motivated in this direction by the increased ground swell of opinion in Okinawa and by the increased amount of media attention the military land problem was receiving in both Japan and the US. Both the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper in Japan and the American Civil Liberties League had seized on the issue. Both concentrated on the fact that landowners were being paid a pittance for the lands they were ejected from; that Okinawan military workers were being grossly underpaid on racial grounds and had no protective labor rights; and that the American regime in the islands was repressive in the extreme. Thus, the land movement had shifted even further into alignment with any number of other issues related to the American administration of the islands.

The visit of the six-man Okinawan delegation to Washington in mid-1955 prompted the US to reconsider the direction it had been taking. The US House Armed Services Committee put a hold on the lump-sum payment policy and on the Department of the Army's 'Vinson Bill,' which planned to actually expand the amount of land occupied by the military by another 30%, to 52,000 acres. The Committee would conduct an on-site investigation in Okinawa during the Autumn, after which a final decision would be made. The House Armed Services Committee sub-committee, under the chairmanship of Charles Melvin Price, arrived in Okinawa in October 1955, to conduct three days of public hearings. Six representatives from amongst the GRI, the Ryūkyū Legislature, and the Landowners Federation, along with Chief Executive Higa Shūhei, were to explain the land problem from their respective positions. The so-called "Price Committee" was also to inspect areas where land had been forcibly expropriated by the military and to consider the Army Department's plan for further land requisitions.

Higa Shūhei expressed the concerns of the landowners over the small amount of compensation paid, as did Kuwae Choko of the Landowners Federation. The lump-sum system had been championed by the Army Department chiefly because it would be cheaper for the US than paying annual rentals. What is less expensive for the payer, Kuwae said, "means also less payment for the payee."<sup>350</sup> Furthermore, the US had originally requisitioned land from the local people on the grounds that it was essential for military purposes, yet there seemed to be an increasing number of instances where requisitioned land was being used for non-essential purposes. One example, was the 86 acre Higa Golf Course built by the US military, of which three-quarters was on prime agricultural land.<sup>351</sup> Over the next few years the US would use requisitioned land to build swimming pools, bowling alleys, and other such recreational facilities. After three days of testimony the Price Committee departed Okinawa.

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<sup>349</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>350</sup>Ibid. p. 85.

<sup>351</sup>*Mainichi Shimbun*, 27th October, 1955. DSJP.

### III-3-3 The 1956 Legislative Elections

Although it would seem as if resistance to USCAR's military land policies would become the most important single issue in the various party platforms during the lead-up to the 3rd Legislative Elections in March 1956, this was not the case. In fact, the conservative RDP, which had been actively supporting the US administration's position, including agreement with the lump-sum payment policy, attained its first clear majority.<sup>352</sup> The RDP only promised to obtain financial assistance for the relocation of those landowners affected by US policies and to press the Japanese Government to pay compensation for lands seized by the United States prior to the Treaty of Peace settlement. The middle-of-the-road OSMP, which had hoped to capitalize on the land issue to secure votes, could offer up a platform little different from the RDP. The OSMP merely declared that "although the world policy of the US makes it inevitable for her to establish a military base on Okinawa, the base should not be a burden or demand sacrifice by the people."<sup>353</sup> Although some OSMP members offered up a more stinging criticism of the US administration on issues such as the continued military appointment of the Chief Executive of the GRI, there was little direct criticism of USCAR.

This was also the case in the stances of both parties towards Reversion to Japan. The RDP was intent upon seeking the expansion of domestic autonomy and unification with Japan within the framework of cooperation with the American administration. The OSMP's platform was virtually identical, in that it sought Reversion "on the basis of mutual trust and understanding of Ryūkyūans and Americans."<sup>354</sup> The only party offering a different approach was the OPP, which categorically sided with the landowner struggle and opposed the US administration. One section of its 1956 Charter stated that:

"The Okinawa People's Party shall establish a prefectural people's democratic united front for Reversion to the fatherland with workers, farmers and fishermen as its nuclei, struggle against the US occupation of Okinawa, and thereby devote itself to the promotion of a strong union with its compatriots of the fatherland who are fighting for the construction of an independent, peaceful and democratic Japan"<sup>355</sup>

To offer such a view, in light of USCAR's increasingly pronounced anti-left wing stance, was virtually to commit suicide in the political environment of the time. The OPP elected one legislator in the elections on 7% of the total vote. During the previous elections in 1954 the OPP had obtained two seats. USCAR had always actively intervened in Okinawa's political affairs to ensure that those holding pro-American views would rise to the top of the ladder, and those deemed to have "communistic" leanings were forced from office. This was illustrated by the so-called "Tengan Incident" on 4th April, 1953,<sup>356</sup> and by the ousting of the new popularly elected Mayor of Naha City and leader of the OPP, Senaga Kamejiro, from his post through a 'dirty tricks' campaign conducted

<sup>352</sup>Voting breakdown: RDP - 16 seats; OSMP - 8 seats; OPP - 1 seat; Independent - 4 seats. Nakano Yoshio (Ed), *Sengo Shiryō Okinawa (Data on Postwar Okinawa)*, Nihon Hyōron Sha, Tokyo, 1969, p. 749.

<sup>353</sup>United States Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, *Significance of the 1956 Legislative Elections in the Ryūkyū Islands*, Intelligence Report, No 7239, 4th May, 1956, p. 3.

<sup>354</sup>Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>355</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., p. 173.

<sup>356</sup>Midorima Sakae, "Okinawa to Beigun Kichi" (American Bases in Okinawa), *Nantō Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Ryūkyūan Culture)*, No 2, 1980, p. 6. In this incident USCAR invalidated the legitimate by-election victory of Tengan Choko ostensibly for his "leftist" opinions.

during the latter part of 1956 and into 1957. USCAR was also able to withhold financial support from 'non-cooperative' organizations and businesses since it held a 51% majority share holding in the Bank of the Ryūkyūs. USCAR always used its contentious right to appoint the Chief Executive of the GRI by picking a candidate whose worldview reflected the American position.

Success in Okinawan politics seemed to hinge less on the defense of resolutely held principles, and more on the adoption of a rather accommodating posture towards, on the one hand, the views of the general electorate, and, on the other, the US military. The US was under no illusion about the general feeling of the population towards its administration, but felt that as long as the current system persisted it would be able to continue operating its bases with little or no interference. USCAR's principal worry was that if the RDP was not able to deliver on its election promises its ambivalent role might become untenable by the time of the next elections in 1958. The United States would have to give careful consideration to the RDP's requests for a fairer land policy and for the extension of greater local autonomy, at least with regard to the public election of the Chief Executive. The greatest threat of all would come over the Reversion issue. And whilst the US felt that it could contain the problem within Okinawa itself with the cooperation of the leading political parties, this would become increasingly difficult if a large-scale irredentist movement were to evolve on the Japanese mainland.

### III-3-4 The Japanese Government Keeps its Distance

Although the Price Committee report was presented before the Lower House Armed Services Committee at the beginning of 1956, its contents were not revealed to the Okinawan representatives until much later. When it was finally publicized on 13th June 1956, it came as a bombshell. It upheld the lump-sum payment system as a means of acquiring fee title to lands, upheld the right of the US military to continue to acquire further land for base building, and rejected the Okinawan "Four Principles." It stressed the importance of Okinawa as a strategic base (including the storage of nuclear weapons<sup>357</sup>) and, as a consequence, upheld the existing *modus operandi* whereby military requirements took precedence over civilian concerns. Two concessions were made to the Okinawan position: 1) that the amount of assessed rentals was too low (the majority of land rental payments were increased by up to threefold), and; 2) that the US should only take land absolutely necessary for military needs.<sup>358</sup> The Price Committee's verdict was universally slated on Okinawa as well as on the Japanese mainland. Okinawan political leaders threatened to resign *en masse* over the issue.

Adverse reaction to the published Price Report had stimulated intense debate among the political leaders and general population in Okinawa, within the US Government and, especially, within the Japanese press. Coverage of the land problem, in terms of Japan's sovereignty, "residual" or otherwise, and with regard to the human rights implications of an oppressive American military rule in Okinawa, was unprecedented throughout June. Debate was also focused on specific ramifications of the lump-sum policy. If the US was intending to occupy this land indefinitely, would this not be infringing on Japan's sovereignty over the islands? This would become a more intense issue for discussion once Japan had gained membership in the United Nations later in the year. The only party not present in the debate was the Japanese Government. A press report in June, 1956, stated, "The US State Department, while being surprised at an unexpectedly great sensation in

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<sup>357</sup>Ibid. p. 7.

<sup>358</sup>Nakano Yoshio, op. cit., pp. 176-179.

Japan, is puzzled in view of the fact that the Japanese Government has so far made not a single formal proposal to the US on the Okinawa issue."<sup>359</sup>

The Japanese Government had been taking what may be described as a 'safety first' approach to the Okinawa "problem," in that whilst it vigorously acknowledged that the Okinawan people were Japanese in terms of nationality, it made no attempt to raise any of the more controversial issues with the US Government. In this sense it was aligned with the Okinawan RDP. Foreign Minister Shigemitsu summed up his Ministry's attitude when commenting on the US administration of Okinawa and the land problem. He stated that, "America's attitude is based upon a broad point of view and is very understanding."<sup>360</sup> Prime Minister Hatoyama hoped only that "the US would give some substitute land to those people who had been dispossessed,"<sup>361</sup> which followed the Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) line of "seeking to negotiate with the US so that Okinawan islanders may emigrate to Hawaii, the US mainland, South America and other areas."<sup>362</sup> The Government tended to take the view that by the terms of the Peace Treaty it was prevented from negotiating with the United States over Okinawa.

The Government's attitude towards Okinawa, based on the Foreign Ministry and LDP's position, was entirely inconsistent with its attitude towards other territorial issues, and this was picked up by press. The *Tokyo Times* stated, "At a time when Japan is going to demand the return of the Southern Kuriles during the Japan-USSR talks...it is improper for the Government to conduct no negotiations with the US on the issues of territorial rights and land requisitioning in Okinawa."<sup>363</sup> The *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* posed the question that "if the Soviet Union has constructed permanent installations...[on the Habomai and Shikotan Islands]...it is natural to regard this as suggestive of her intention to occupy these islands permanently. Where does Japan come in when Okinawa is held by the US in the south and these islands by the Soviet Union in the north?"<sup>364</sup>

Conflict within the Government itself existed principally between the Foreign Office and Legislative Bureau, which saw no reason to take diplomatic action, and the Justice Ministry, which took the reverse course. According to the Justice Ministry, under Article 3 of the Peace Treaty Japan left the legislative, administrative and judicial powers in Okinawa to the discretion of the American authorities, but this in no way meant that Japan abandoned its concern for the 'personal sovereignty' of the Okinawan people. The US government had acknowledged the nationality of Okinawans as Japanese by announcing that Japan retained "residual sovereignty," and on those grounds the Government could exercise the right of diplomatic protection under international law and should conduct official negotiations with the US Department of State.<sup>365</sup> The Japan Socialist Party immediately embraced this view and pledged "supra-partisan support"<sup>366</sup> for the realization of the Okinawan "Four Principles" and for the return of the islands to Japan. In one sense there was quite genuine concern expressed by mainland political parties for the plight of the Okinawan people, but one can also look at the issue as a political vote-winner. The Japan Socialist Party specifically adopted the "Okinawa Problem" in its drive to gain control of the Tokyo government.

<sup>359</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 22nd June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>360</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 22nd June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>361</sup> *Shin Yukan*, 28th June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>362</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 1st July, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>363</sup> *Tokyo Times*, 25th June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>364</sup> *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 29th June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>365</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 29th June, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>366</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 1st July, 1956. DSJP.

### III-3-5 Opinion Divided

Public opposition in Okinawa to the Price Recommendations had reached fever pitch by the middle of 1956. In June, rallies were held in 52 towns and cities across the island with more than 200,000 people participating.<sup>367</sup> Not all people had been affected when the US first began to acquire land, but as the importance of Okinawa as a strategic base grew and military needs led to the expropriation of further lands and therefore more repressive legislation in order to achieve the goal, there were very few who were not touched by the land issue, either directly or indirectly. This was also reflective of the way the issue had risen from a fundamentally "economic" struggle to one which incorporated virtually every complaint that the local people had against USCAR. This had to be balanced, however, against the fact that a large number of Okinawans made their living, in one form or another, from the base presence. There was a certain amount of disagreement as to how far the issue could be pushed.

On the one side, there were the strongly anti-USCAR land policy factions. In July 1956, the Council of the Five Bodies (now including the Association of Chairmen of Municipal Assemblies) decided that the fight to see the realization of the "Four Principles" would continue with even greater vigor. As Nakachi Kiyoshi points out, however, a rift had developed within this group. The unanimous support of this organization in opposition to the lump-sum payment policy was broken by Chief Executive Higa Shûhei's decision to declare himself neutral on the land issue.<sup>368</sup> He refused to tender his resignation as a result of his change of heart. This tussle resulted in an overall decline of influence for the Council of the Five Bodies, and to the rise of the more resolutely anti-military Council for the Protection of Okinawan Land. This organization was made up of more than 20 separate groups, including the Okinawan Teachers Association (OTA), the Okinawan Youth Association, the Okinawan Federal Parents and Teachers Association, the OSMP, the Federal Committee of Landowners, and the Okinawan Commerce Committee, amongst others. Yara Chôbyô of the OTA was elected as chairman. One of their first resolutions stated, "We will fight with our inexhaustible latent power not to sell even a single tsubô of our homeland to the United States."<sup>369</sup>

Representing a different approach to the land issue was Tôma Jûgô, the Mayor of Naha City. He had stated to an American news agency that under certain conditions there would be no objections to the lump-sum policy.<sup>370</sup> He was as skeptical about US policy as those opposed to the lump-sum policy, yet understood the profound economic dependence relationship that had evolved between the local population and the bases. He suggested that the US work on a positive economic rehabilitation plan for Okinawa that would serve to show the administration in a better light. Tôma Jûgô and Higa Shûhei were criticized for deserting the cause at a crucial time, yet they had accurately picked up on a new mood developing throughout the island. Those who had decided to accept the lump-sum payment conditions offered by USCAR, of whom the numbers were increasing, had an equal commitment to the protection of their lands from forced expropriation as did those active within the Council for the Protection of Okinawan Land, yet they had simply been confronted by

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<sup>367</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>368</sup>Ibid. p. 88.

<sup>369</sup>*Mainichi Shimbun*, 19th July, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>370</sup>Higa Mikio, op. cit., p. 51.

economic realities that necessitated the acquisition of cash to afford life's basic requirements. A press commentary accurately points out the most poignant of ironies for such landowners thus:

“A casual glance at the local army employees gives an impression that they are modern workers, but the truth is that they are tragic people who have to work to construct military bases on the very land taken away from them in the first place. Ultimately, they are destined to be thrown out of employment once the work is over. The Okinawans are fully aware of such a destiny”<sup>371</sup>

As any smart employer is aware, by applying the screws economically it is possible to sap the political strength of a union and to create internal frictions that eventually lead to the collapse of the struggle. Such was the USCAR strategy on Okinawa. In August 1956, ostensibly to prevent conflicts between American troops and local people, USCAR issued a directive making off-base facilities ‘off limits’ to military personnel. As Nakachi Kiyoshi points out, there were some 3,500 local businesses whose principle means of survival lay in catering to servicemen and their families, and that of Okinawa’s total GNP of \$131 million in 1953, some 38% was derived from such businesses.<sup>372</sup> This action had a rather sobering effect. Although Okinawan resistance to USCAR’s policies had never utilized violent tactics, demonstrations had to be toned-down so as to ensure that the ‘off limits’ directive would be rescinded. Fighting USCAR was, in many ways, like biting the hand that fed.

Although there was unanimous island-wide support, in principle, for the plight of the landowners and their stance against USCAR, there were increasing divisions amongst groups and individuals in relation to the overall military base presence. The conservative RDP was inclined to leave the bases essentially as they were; the middle-of-the-road OSMP had no fundamental objections as long as USCAR adequately compensated the landowners; and the left-wing OPP was opposed to the bases consistent with its opposition to the Japan-US Security Treaty. Okinawan public opinion was largely divided along the same lines. The one issue upon which all could agree was the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan. The land problem served to strengthen the resolve to persecute this goal.

### **III-3-6 Settlement of the Land Problem and Executive Order 10173**

Although the Price Recommendations had legitimized USCAR's land policies, there was growing concern in Washington over the increased amount of media attention focused on the islands. The principal fear in this regard, was that Japan might seek to intervene. Her membership of the United Nations, effective from December 1956, gave her the right to challenge the US's role in Okinawa. Under the provisions of Article 3 of the Peace Treaty, Japan would *concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system* the Ryūkyū and Bonin Islands, etc. *Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon* the United States was to become the sole administering authority over the islands. The moment Japan became a member of the United Nations, the very conditions under which the US gained control of Okinawa had expired. The US had clearly made a commitment to apply for trusteeship of the islands, but had since made no such moves. Article 78 of the United Nations Charter explicitly states that,

<sup>371</sup>*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 23rd July, 1956. DSJP.

<sup>372</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 90.

“The trusteeship system shall not apply to territories which have become Members of the United Nations, relationship among which shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality”<sup>373</sup>

Secretary of State Dulles wrote in August, 1957, that, “Our policies in the Ryūkyūs have clearly to be considered not only from the standpoint of sound local administration...but also from the standpoint of our long-term relations with Japan.”<sup>374</sup> He urged caution in proceeding with the lump-sum payments “until a procedure is devised which is basically acceptable to the Ryūkyūan population and not susceptible to serious criticism in Japan...and that any plans calling for the withdrawal of further land from agriculture should be reconsidered.”<sup>375</sup> America's overall objective had to be to prioritize its relations with Japan so as to retain the same basing rights in Okinawa into the 1960's and beyond. Although the Price Recommendations had been accepted as official US policy towards Okinawa, some means of achieving an acceptable balance between these demands and Japan's concerns for the welfare of the local population would have to be found. The US would still require access to further lands for military use in line with current force restructuring plans, yet the basic problem had originally been the disparity between what the landowners wanted in the way of financial returns and what the US had been prepared to offer. The key to resolution would lie in this area, and in cleaning up the less-than-perfect image of its Okinawan administration.

In early June, 1957, US President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10713, "Providing for the Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands." This order placed all authority for matters relating to Okinawa directly into the hands of the Secretary of Defense in Washington, who was himself subject to the will of the President. The Secretary of Defense was ordered to “encourage the development of an effective and responsible Ryūkyūan Government, based on democratic principles and supported by a sound financial structure...[to] make every effort to improve the welfare and well being of the inhabitants...and...[to] continue to promote the economic and cultural advancement of the inhabitants.”<sup>376</sup> A new High Commissioner was created, Lt. General James E. Moore, who would exercise complete authority over the administration of Okinawa. The High Commissioner, in turn, would appoint the Chief Executive of the GRI. This new form of governance was much the same as the one before it in most respects, and still, for example, protected military personnel from prosecution in the civil courts,<sup>377</sup> yet it demonstrated that the US was prepared to tighten the reigns.

Later in the same month, the new Japanese Prime Minister Kishi traveled to Washington for his first summit meeting with President Eisenhower. Although security issues were to be the main topic of discussion, Kishi took the opportunity to express his concerns over the Okinawa land

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<sup>373</sup>The United Nations Association of Japan, *A Concise Guide to the United Nations*, United Nations Association of Japan, Tokyo, 1990, p. 118.

<sup>374</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 23, Part 1 - Japan, 1955-1957*, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>375</sup>Ibid. p. 197.

<sup>376</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 37, No 941, 8th July, 1957, pp. 55-58.

<sup>377</sup>Acquittals were common with regard to cases of assault, sexual assault, traffic violations, etc. During the Vietnam War the number of crimes committed against locals increased markedly: 973 cases in 1964, 1,003 in 1965, and 1,407 in 1966. Out of the total of 3,383 crimes committed in these years, 986 (just less than one-quarter) were described as 'atrocious and violent' crimes. Watanabe Akio, op. cit., p. 65. Mainland Japan often wrestled with the same sorts of problems over jurisdiction for crimes committed by military personnel. In 1956, for instance, a woman foraging for scraps within a military base compound was shot and killed by a young soldier (The Girard Case). The Japanese Government demanded that the soldier be handed over for trial in the domestic courts, but the US refused.

problem.<sup>378</sup> Whether sparked by this very low-key request or not, US policy-makers began moving towards the resolution of this issue. It is very clear that Eisenhower himself felt that any failure to address the issue might result in a seriously destabilized position for the US bases in Okinawa.<sup>379</sup> In mid-1958 an Okinawan delegation arrived in Washington in an attempt to sway the US policy-makers in the direction of a settlement in Okinawa's favor. Head of the delegation and new Chief Executive Tōma Jūgō, stated flatly that "if the land problem was solved, all the political problems that existed in Okinawa now and in the future will be eliminated perfectly."<sup>380</sup> This seems to have been the response the US was hoping for, as on 26th November, the US announced that the lump-sum payment policy was being abandoned.

In a positive move on the Japanese Government's part, Kishi had overseen the creation of a semi-governmental organization, the *Nampō Dōhō Engokai* (NDE), or Association for the Relief our Compatriots in the Southern Areas, both as an avenue of indirect liaison and assistance with Okinawa.<sup>381</sup> One of the first contributions of the NDE had been to employ the services of a US attorney, Noel Hemmendinger, to present the Okinawan compensation claims to the State and Defense Departments.<sup>382</sup> Under a new system, landowners would now have the option of receiving rental payments on an annual basis, or of receiving advance payment for long-term use, under a five-year leasehold agreement. These rental payments would, in turn, be reappraised by the US every five years. By the early part of 1960 USCAR had acquired some 51 percent of the base leases.<sup>383</sup>

In some ways this could be seen as a significant victory on the part of the Okinawan landowners, yet the political will to settle the issue came after Japan's entry into the United Nations and revolved around its subsequent ability to make life increasingly difficult for the United States at a time when they would least desire such problems. Of the "Four Principles" demanded by the

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<sup>378</sup>On 20th June, Kishi met with US Secretary of State Dulles. According to a State Department memorandum Kishi, "said that regarding Okinawa...the question of lump-sum payments for land use...there have been proposals in Japan...for an investigation by a committee composed of American Congressmen and Japanese Diet members which would result in a joint decision on the matter. He asked whether the United States could defer measures being taken to requisition further land in Okinawa pending such an investigation." United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 23, Part 1 - Japan 1955-1957*, op. cit., p. 391.

<sup>379</sup>"Memorandum for the Record, 9th April, 1958." Eisenhower related the Okinawa problem thus: "Regardless of legal or treaty arrangements, this conflict creates problems not only with our relationships with the people of Okinawa and Japan but could, if they become acute, be used for ammunition in the Communist propaganda attacks on us. The situation could become unpleasant. While I do not expect the matter to assume the importance of the Cyprus difficulty with Britain, nor of the Algerian with France, still there could easily develop a situation that would create much embarrassment for us." United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 18, Japan; Korea 1958-1960*, Edited by Madeline Chi & Louis J. Smith, US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1994, p. 16. There were several parallels between the situations in Cyprus and Okinawa. Both involved nationalistic and irredentist movements. Unlike the Greek Government, however, which filed violent protests against the British Government for its 'colonial rule,' the Japanese Government preferred not to directly force the Okinawa issue on the US Government. The Japanese press often cited the case of Cyprus as a means to motivating the government into action. A very important difference between the two cases, however, is that the Okinawans never chose to manifest their nationalistic desires in the form of violence against the US authorities. Okinawans employed the 'resistance of non-resistance'

<sup>380</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

<sup>381</sup>Although this organisation was initially established with the inhabitants of Okinawa Prefecture in mind, its scope was increasingly broadened. For further information on the NDE consult Watanabe Akio, op. cit., p. 85, 123, 124, 127, 144, and 185. Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., pp. 95-96, and Douglas Mendel, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>382</sup>Eve L. Armentrout, "The Explosive Nature of Okinawa's 'Land Issue' or 'Base Issue,' 1945-1977: A Dilemma of United States Military Policy," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, No 1, Winter, 1992, p. 451.

<sup>383</sup>Ibid. p. 93.



Okinawan landowners as the basis of their struggle, only two were accepted outright by the U.S: the abandonment of the lump-sum policy, and the payment of fair annual rents. Part responsibility for compensation for land use prior to the Peace Treaty had been accepted by the Japanese Government<sup>384</sup> which contributed 1 billion yen to the Okinawan landowners in 1956.<sup>385</sup> Although the United States subsequently agreed to compensate the landowners for land use prior to the Peace Treaty, on an *ex gratia* basis and after a thorough determination of the correct values had been assessed, this issue was not finally settled until 1977.<sup>386</sup> It would continue as a bone of contention, though on a far less dramatic scale, into the 1960's. As for the issue of further base construction, in return for the settlement of the bulk of the other demands Okinawan landowners had to concede that more land would be made available for military use. The US, on its part, agreed to return to the original owners such lands as were not necessary for military requirements. In 1959, it released some 1,136 acres of requisitioned land, and approximately 7,000 acres on military installations were licensed for farming purposes.<sup>387</sup> As of March, 1962, the total area of land utilized by US forces in the Ryûkyûs was approximately 76,000 acres, of which 52,000 acres was private land belonging to Okinawan landowners, and 24,000 acres owned by the Japanese Government.<sup>388</sup>

### III-4 The Rise and Rise of the Reversion Movement

#### III-4-1 The Sharpening of Divisions

Although the Japanese Government could perhaps be seen in this instance as flexing its newly acquired political muscle to bring about a settlement to the land issue in Okinawa, it is important to judge its reactions within a broader context: that of the upcoming negotiations on revision of the Japan-US Security Treaty. This was bound to become a highly contentious issue, and Kishi could ill-afford to have the opposition parties attacking him simultaneously on two fronts. Kishi's strategy was to diffuse the Okinawa issue and then to focus all his attention on the more important of the two goals. The US Government was also intent upon maintaining in power in Japan a government supportive of its Asian security strategy. In U.S eyes, the international situation in Asia was still basically unstable. The Korean war had ended, but no final settlement had been achieved; in Vietnam the situation was becoming more unstable after the withdrawal of French in 1954, and by 1956 the antagonism between the two governments had worsened; the Soviet Union was still providing support to various communist governments and parties in East and Southeast Asia, and; the People's Republic of China was supporting communism in Southeast Asia and was intent on reclaiming Taiwan. In 1958 it began shelling the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu.<sup>389</sup> The US backed down over its lump-sum payment policy in Okinawa, partly out of recognition that it was creating for itself a situation that might seriously destabilize its operations in the islands, and partly to show the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party in a better light domestically. The Treaty was marginally squeezed through.

<sup>384</sup>This was deemed fair, since Japan had signed the Treaty of Peace. By the terms of the Treaty all claims for compensation against the US had been dropped. Japan had also, therefore, taken away the legal right of Okinawans to claim any moneys from the US for the period prior to 28th April, 1952.

<sup>385</sup>Appropriated from the fiscal 1956 supplementary budget by the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party's Okinawa Problems Special Committee. A further 80 million yen was appropriated for needy persons repatriated from overseas, along with 20 million yen as pensions for Okinawa's salaried officials.

<sup>386</sup>Eve L. Armentrout, loc. cit., pp. 435-463.

<sup>387</sup>John Barr, "The Ryûkyû Islands: A US Bastion in the Pacific," *World Today*, Vol. 17, No 5, May, 1961, p. 190.

<sup>388</sup>Higa Mikio, "Okinawa: Recent Political Developments," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 3, No 9, September 1963, p. 419.

<sup>389</sup>These islands were part of mainland China and located far from Taiwan, but were under Nationalist control.

Okinawa had been a key element in negotiations. By allowing the US to retain its complete freedom of military action in Okinawa, Kishi was able to negotiate a far more equalized security arrangement for the mainland and to bring about the reduction of mainland US forces. Kishi's concern for the Okinawans during the land problem may have been genuine, but his priority lay in protecting the Japan-US security alliance above all else. The history of Japan-US security relations is dotted with a number of such important tit-for-tat arrangements. In return for an end to the first phase of the land problem, Okinawa ended up with 12,000 more US marines (transferred from the mainland); with the introduction of Nike-Hawk nuclear missiles; and with the same amount of political clout on key issues as it had previously. There is no doubt that Okinawa was, once again, made the "sacrificial lamb" in Japan-US relations. The Okinawans may well have been better off with no solution of the land issue, as this may have resulted in the demise of the Security Treaty and the far earlier return of the islands to Japan.

Only the external appearance of USCAR had changed as a result of Executive Order 10173. Democracy was still rejected, the military character of the islands remained as before, and continued attempts were made to repress calls for the administrative return of the islands to Japan. When the dollar was introduced as the official currency on Okinawa in September 1958, this seemed the clearest possible statement that the US administration was set to remain in place for the foreseeable future. This merely added fuel to the fire, however, and the Reversion Movement came to garner greater levels of support than it had before. This resulted in the creation of the *Okinawa Ken Sokoku Fukki Kyōgikai* (*Fukkikyō*), or the "Council for the Reversion of Okinawa Prefecture to the Fatherland," on 28th April 1960. The *Fukkikyō* was composed of 17 organizations, including the OTA, the Council for Okinawa Government Employees' Unions, the Okinawa Prefectural Council for Youth Associations, and every political party except for the Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party (OLDP),<sup>390</sup> which had been established in October, 1959, as a successor to the RDP. The *Fukkikyō* advocated mass rallies and demonstrations to bring about the "realization of complete Reversion,"<sup>391</sup> and pushed for the solution of the outstanding land issues; for the free rights of travel between Okinawa and the mainland; 'proper' justice in the case of military personnel offences; and the improvement of basic human rights.<sup>392</sup>

The *Fukkikyō* platform was not accepted by the ruling political party in Okinawa. In the Legislative elections in March of 1958, on the eve of the land settlement, there had been broad dissatisfaction with the position of the conservatives. The RDP's majority 16 seats had been cut to a minority of just 7.<sup>393</sup> Only the independent candidates made significant advances. Yet at the 5th Legislative Elections in November 1960, the newly formed OLDP stormed to a more than convincing victory, gaining 22 out of the 29 seats.<sup>394</sup> The opposition factions had been virtually eliminated. This was less in response to the creation of the *Fukkikyō* than as a result of Tōma's pushing of the land issue to a settlement. Not only had a settlement brought to an end a long period of political unrest and tension, but it brought immediate economic benefits to those landowners who were now prepared to sign contracts and receive 'fair' payments. Economic issues were an important

<sup>390</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part II," loc. cit., p. 121.

<sup>391</sup>Ibid. p. 122.

<sup>392</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 7.

<sup>393</sup>Nakano Yoshio, op. cit., pp. 749-750. Voting breakdown: OSMP - 9 seats; RDP - 7 seats; Minren (The Council for the Vindication of Democracy, a joint OSMP/OPP party) - 5 seats; and Independent - 8 seats.

<sup>394</sup>Ibid. p. 750. Voting breakdown: OLDP - 22 seats; OSMP - 5 seats; OPP - 1 seat; and Independent - 1 seat.

factor in this election. What is clear, however, is that the divisions between those political groups on the left-of-center arguing for immediate Reversion, who were being marginalized in governmental circles but the recipients of much support within the local communities, and the conservative OLDP arguing for the gradual realization of Reversion through cooperative policies with the US, were becoming sharper. One faction was prepared to push Reversion in USCAR's face, and the other to avoid rocking the boat.

### III-4-2 Cooperative Japan-U.S Policies Towards Okinawa

The position of the OLDP was reflected in moves being made in both Japan and the US towards the formulation of cooperative policies designed to bring about the economic and social advancement of the local population. Prime Minister Kishi had decided that rather than seek to force the Reversion issue onto the US, it would be preferable to seek a means whereby the Japanese Government could attain an increasing measure of control over the affairs of the Okinawans. This would provide the Government with a strong case for the total Reversion of the islands when the topic came up for meaningful discussion. This 'slow track,' non-confrontational approach was the backbone of the Liberal Democratic Party's Okinawa policy. Overall there were three aims:

- 1) Integrating, wherever possible, Ryūkyūan and Japanese social, political and economic interests;
- 2) Elevating Ryūkyūan economic standards to a level comparative to Japan's
- 3) Liberalizing the Ryūkyūan people's civil and political liberties with a commensurate lessening of USCAR's political control<sup>395</sup>

By choosing to establish more profound relations and to avoid any interference in US military policy the Japanese Government was following the view that it was possible to separate the issue of military bases from the actual day to day administration of the islands. One may also look upon this posture as a realization by the Japanese Government that the price it would have to pay for eventual Reversion of the islands would be unhindered utilization by the Americans of the bases in Okinawa. Kishi was smart enough never to put the security relationship, which Japan greatly benefited from and to which Okinawa was vital, under any threat. The final Reversion Agreement conforms to this formula completely.

The same view was being adopted on the other side of the Pacific. New US President John F. Kennedy was keen to see what he felt was a too long-delayed economic and social welfare package for the Ryūkyūs implemented. When Kennedy met with new Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato in June of 1961, there was total agreement. Kennedy immediately took steps to allow the Japanese Government to become involved in non-military aspects of Okinawan affairs, and ordered the dispatch of a special economic and social survey team to the Ryūkyūs, headed by Carl Kaysen. Okinawans, unaware of what the precise nature of the mission was, accorded the Kaysen group both hostile and friendly reactions. Whilst the anti-base factions, such as the OPP, saw the mission much as the previous Price Group's mission had been, to "facilitate conditions for the maintenance of military bases,"<sup>396</sup> other factions welcomed any mission designed to improve basic Okinawa living conditions. The GRI and the Ryūkyū Legislature between them appealed for the expansion of Okinawan political autonomy, the abolition of the High Commissioner's veto power over the GRI,

<sup>395</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, *The Japanese Foreign Policy-Making Process: A Case Study - Okinawa Reversion*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Georgetown University, 1981, p. 101.

<sup>396</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 106.

the public election of the Chief Executive of the GRI, and the implementation of a planned welfare package for the islanders.<sup>397</sup>

The Kaysen Report's findings were that: the amount of US aid should be substantially increased; that the Japanese Government should also be encouraged to provide economic support; and that political freedoms should be extended. It specifically recommended that the GRI should be able to pick its own Chief Executive, and that there should be a civilian rather than military civil administrator of USCAR. It was felt that by allowing the local GRI officials to assume an administrative role equal to Japanese and American officials, and by allowing the Japanese Government active participation in Okinawa's economic development, that not only would this benefit the local people, but it would also assist Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda who was under strong pressure from both left-wing and ultra-right-wing factions within the Diet.

The report also pointed out to Kennedy the basis of Okinawan objections to the military base presence. There were, it outlined, three main perceptions: 1) that there was concern that the increasing military presence in the islands meant imminent war against fellow Asians; 2) that there would be the national humiliation of a potential war conducted from still-considered Japanese soil, the scene of so much bloodshed during the last phase of the Pacific War, and; 3) there was the fear that the United States was stockpiling nuclear and other dangerous weapons at its main air base at Kadena and at other facilities.<sup>398</sup> Kennedy was warned that if war were to break out and the Okinawan bases involved, both Japanese and local mass movements might quickly develop which could lead to "violence, the closing of the bases, and the crippling of American military or diplomatic strength."<sup>399</sup>

Later that month, Kennedy issued Executive Order No 11010, "Amending Executive Order 10173, Relating to the Administration of the Ryûkyû Islands." This provided for the nomination of the Chief Executive by the Legislature; lengthened the term of office for Okinawan Legislative members to three years; restricted the veto power of the High Commissioner to cases affecting only the security and national interests of the US, and; provided that the Civil Administrator of USCAR would from now on be a civilian.<sup>400</sup> Whilst this amendment was welcomed in Okinawa as a statement of intent, it had not fundamentally addressed a number of Okinawan requests. Namely, that the Chief Executive should be publicly elected and that the High Commissioner's veto power should be more effectively curtailed. Although Kennedy's amendment had moved in the right direction, the Carraway years would illustrate that the veto powers of the High Commissioner were still largely at the discretion of the particular individual.<sup>401</sup>

Okinawans lost out in terms of actual political gains, but gained in terms of the expansion of cultural contacts with the mainland. Travel to and from the mainland was more frequent; almost two-thirds of the periodicals imported were from Japan; the school curriculum was revised so as to be

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<sup>397</sup>ibid. p. 106

<sup>398</sup>Timothy P. Maga, *John F. Kennedy and the New Pacific Community, 1961-63*, MacMillan, New York, 1990, pp. 106-107.

<sup>399</sup>Ibid. p. 107.

<sup>400</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyûsho, *Nihon Gaikô Shuyô Bunsho; Nenpyô - Volume Two, 1961-1970 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations, 1961-1970)*, Genshobô, Tokyo, 1984, pp. 409-414.

<sup>401</sup>David Wurfel, "Okinawa: Irredenta on the Pacific," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 35, Winter, 1962-1963, pp. 358-359. Wurfel also points out that, although not part of the Presidential Amendment, Civil Ordinance No 145 was repealed, giving Okinawan labour organisations the rights of free association.

almost identical with Japan's; and more students were attending mainland universities than the University of the Ryūkyūs.<sup>402</sup> In terms of public support, it would seem that most were in favor of these developments. This was bolstered by Kennedy's statement that the Ryūkyūs were "a part of the Japanese homeland," and his commitment to realize the goal of Reversion. In the Legislative Elections in November, the conservative OLDP managed to retain its clear majority.<sup>403</sup> All parties were aligned on the issue of Reversion and differed only in their perceptions of when and *how* it should occur. Although the OSMP had shifted further leftwards in its stance, the overall policy of each party towards the continued military base presence had changed little since the 1956 elections: the OLDP recognized them as necessary to the economy, whilst the marginalized left-wing pushed for their abolition as before. Okinawan legislators used their newly acquired right to nominate the Chief Executive by picking the OLDP president Ōta Seisaku for the post.

Although Washington's policies called for the extension of political liberalization and the greater involvement of the Japanese Government, the US capital was far distant from Okinawa. On-site, the High Commissioner, Paul Carraway, reigned supreme. He rejected the notion that Japan should have any role in the affairs of the islands on the grounds that it was dangerous for the viable operation of the bases. He also rejected any change to Eisenhower's Executive Order 10173. Under his administration, from 1961-1964, USCAR prevented local politicians from gaining representation in the Japanese Diet, and resisted at all corners any attempts to increase local autonomy which he believed was a naive demand. One of Carraway's most famous proclamations was made at the Golden Gate Club on 5th March 1963, when he stated that,

"The cry for 'autonomy,' or complete freedom from all restraints, for power to rule without responsibility or demonstrated competence is a false 'aspiration of the people.' It is, unwittingly or wantonly, a screen to hide incompetence; irresponsibility; disloyalty to the community which vested authority in it; or it is a shield for special interest and special privilege battenning on the remainder of the community"<sup>404</sup>

Carraway was a more than adequate nemesis for President Kennedy and US Ambassador to Japan Edwin Reischauer who were in favor of liberalizing contacts between Japan and Okinawa to pave the way for Reversion. Carraway was able, with an almost missionary zeal, to obstruct Kennedy's plans from implementation for two years. During Carraway's term of office as High Commissioner, US economic aid appropriations for the islands never exceeded \$6.5 million, despite congressional authorization for almost twice that amount, and Japanese appropriations never exceeded \$3.9 million.<sup>405</sup> This served to remind the Okinawans that regardless of high level promises, political freedom was as far away as it had been ten years before. Some positive moves were made by the new High Commissioner, Lt. Gen. Albert Watson, to patch up the damage caused by his predecessor, including overseeing (with Reischauer) the formation of two committees designed to increase Japan's involvement in Okinawan affairs, and speeding up the influx of Japanese aid.

In overall terms, the period from the revision of the Security Treaty through to the mid-1960's progressed further in the direction demanded by the Okinawan people, in both the governmental and non-governmental spheres. Increased Japanese aid and Kennedy's commitment to

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<sup>402</sup>Ibid. p. 359.

<sup>403</sup>Nakano Yoshio, op. cit., pp. 750-751. Voting breakdown: OLDP - 17 seats; OSMP - 7 seats; OPP - 1 seat; Socialist Party (formed in February 1958 after a split in the OSMP) - 1 seat; and Independent - 3 seats.

<sup>404</sup>Miyasato Seigen, "Hopes and Realities in Okinawa," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No 2, April-June, 1965, pp. 163-164.

<sup>405</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 710.

improve the lot of the Okinawan people were welcomed, as was his landmark admission that Okinawa was an integral part of Japan. Closer contacts with the mainland led to a more profound integration between Okinawan and Japanese organizations. The biggest problem was the continued curtailment of certain political freedoms that Okinawans had long been demanding, yet this served to strengthen the overall movement towards Reversion. USCAR attempted to prevent the Reversion Movement from seriously threatening the smooth operation of its bases by offering continued political concessions throughout the latter half of the 1960's, but most Okinawans realized that the only sensible path was to attain Reversion and, as Higa Mikio states, "the shelter of the Japanese Constitution."<sup>406</sup> Although the continued presence of the military bases was an important element in Okinawan politics, on which each party had a platform, it had remained a relatively subdued issue since the introduction of the Mace-B nuclear missiles during the early part of the 1960's.

### III-4-3 The Revival of the Military Base Issue

Perhaps the most important year in the history of the Okinawa Reversion Movement was 1965. In January, Japan and the US jointly restated that their goal was to realize Reversion as soon as was possible. In February, the United States began bombing targets in North Vietnam which activated Okinawa's role once more as a key military facility. And in August, Prime Minister Satō became the first postwar Japanese political leader to make an official visit to Okinawa. He had previously stated that it was his intention to stake his whole political career on achieving the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan.<sup>407</sup> These events had the net effect of activating all of the various factions that constituted the Reversion Movement and propelling it towards the actual realization of its goals.

The military bases on Okinawa were vital to the US during the Vietnam War. As well as being the major supply base during the early part of the war Okinawan bases were used for offensive missions. B-52's launched regular bombing missions from Kadena Air Base. Just as the Kaysen report had predicted, this led to the formation of mass popular opposition. Okinawans feared that the use of its bases might lead to the island becoming involved in a conflict against another Asian nation. In this sense, they objected on the principle that it was not Okinawa's place to be involved in such a conflict...They also objected on the grounds that it violated their express desire for peace in the light of what had occurred on Okinawa in 1945. Finally, Okinawans feared for their own safety in the face of a military build-up on the islands. Nuclear weapons were already present, as well as perhaps-other highly dangerous weaponry. War conditions increased the likelihood of major accidents that would affect those people living in forced proximity to the bases. The *Fukkikyō* took the lead in organizing anti-base demonstrations on these principles, and protested the presence of the B-52 bombers and other weaponry. In July 1965, the GRI echoed mass popular opinion by passing a unanimous peace resolution calling for the cessation of B-52 flights.<sup>408</sup>

USCAR was not prepared to take heed of any of these protestations. Even the mild-mannered High Commissioner Albert Watson, advocate of a greater voice for the local people, insisted that it was essential for the US to "have available for our forces a base in which we have the freedom to act."<sup>409</sup> With the exception of the conservative Democratic Party (DP),<sup>410</sup> which was pushing for the

<sup>406</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part II," loc. cit., p. 126.

<sup>407</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>408</sup>Midorima Sakae, loc. cit., p. 8.

<sup>409</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, op. cit., p. 153.

US to maintain its bases in Okinawa under the same conditions as those on the mainland (i.e., non-nuclear), all other parties were advocating the abolition of the bases. The OSMP had shifted way leftwards in its attitude on this issue. The fundamental difference between the OSMP and the far-left OPP, was that whilst the OPP wanted instant, outright and unconditional removal, the OSMP followed the line that the bases would be reduced or removed at the time of a Reversion settlement. The DP stressed, and the OSMP recognized, the economic value of the bases. What they were both aligned with, to greater or lesser degrees, was that the bases might remain in Okinawa as a part of a Reversion agreement.

In the first 32-district Legislative Elections in November, the conservative DP maintained its majority<sup>411</sup> on a platform little different from any of the other parties. All had promised to tackle the issue of the public election of the Chief Executive, to push for greater political autonomy, and to encourage the Japanese Government to step up its aid programs. On the whole the only difference between the parties was in their attitude towards the bases and their significance in the drive for Reversion. The DP's position was that the issues of Reversion and the military presence could be separated. The US would return the administrative authority of Okinawa to Japan whilst still maintaining the use of its military bases under the same condition as those on the mainland.<sup>412</sup> This view reflected exactly what their conservative colleagues on the mainland were proposing. All of the other parties, theoretically, ran a joint campaign calling for the abrogation of the Security Treaty (which obviously implied the removal of all bases) and the abolition of Article 3 of the Peace Treaty which would bring about immediate Reversion.<sup>413</sup> Although the opposition camp garnered a larger overall chunk of the popular vote this did not transfer into the number of seats. It would seem as if, island-wide at least, the general public was rather evenly divided as to which approach to Reversion they were in favor of. Yet there is no doubt that the bases had become intrinsically linked with Reversion.

Autonomy demands fared both well and not so well. On the one hand, there was the obvious tightening of certain military controls as a result of the Vietnam War, yet, on the other, the US government showed a willingness to continue expanding the civilian political sphere. The long-running issue of the public election of the Chief Executive, for example, was pursued by the *Fukkikyō* with increasing vigor, which led to President Johnson's amendment of Kennedy's act and the first public elections in 1968. Overall, there had been a marked change in the general thrust of the Reversion Movement. After 1965, as Higa Mikio comments, the movement "pushed its nationalistic character to the background and became clearly ideological in character."<sup>414</sup> There was less concentration on the question of national identity, and a more interested in securing movement on very practical issues, such as the military bases, the realization of popular sovereignty, and the protection of human rights. In one sense, because Kennedy and others had made plain that they agreed that Okinawa was an integral part of Japan, this may have reduced the need for Okinawans to labor the point. This was certainly true to some extent, yet the aims of the Reversion Movement had always gone beyond seeking Japanese identity. It should be remembered that Japan rejected Okinawa under the Treaty of Peace and that this had not been forgotten by Okinawans. Gaining Japanese

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<sup>410</sup>Basically a reconstituted OLDP.

<sup>411</sup>Nakano Yoshio, op. cit., pp. 751-752. Voting Breakdown: DP - 19 seats; OSMP - 7 seats; Socialist Party - 2 seats; OPP - 1 seat; and Independent - 3 seats.

<sup>412</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Reversion Theme in Current Okinawan Politics," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 7, No 3, March, 1967, p. 159.

<sup>413</sup>Ibid. pp. 159-160.

<sup>414</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part I," loc. cit., p. 125

identity was important from the point of view of ending the unnatural 'limbo-like' status of the Okinawans, but the Japanese constitution was the means by which all current woes could be eradicated.

### III-4-4 Bases and Okinawa-Japan Relations in Opinion Poll Surveys

Just prior to Prime Minister Satô's meeting with Lyndon Johnson in November 1967, a joint *Asahi Shimbun-Okinawa Taimusu* opinion poll survey was carried out. This was the first time that any such survey had been carried out simultaneously on both the mainland and in Okinawa. As such its results are quite revealing. The survey focused on two main areas: attitudes towards Reversion, and, military bases in the post-Reversion period. Realistically, there were four possible base scenarios for the post-Reversion period: 1) that the US would return Okinawa but maintain the rights to store nuclear weapons there; 2) that the US would give up the rights to store nuclear weapons on Okinawa after Reversion; 3) that the US would place its bases in Okinawa under the same conditions as those on the Japanese mainland, which would effectively give Japan full rights of prior consultation over troop and equipment deployment, and 4) the removal of all US bases from Okinawa either before or after Reversion.

The nuclear issue was clearly of major importance to both samples. The US's right to store nuclear weapons in Okinawa was rejected by a majority in Japan (57%) and in Okinawa (63%). Support for the non-nuclear/prior consultation option backs this up (Japan 52% and Okinawa 57%). Both samples were extremely skeptical about allowing the United States "free use" of the Okinawan bases, even if it were to agree not to deploy nuclear weapons, hence only 34% in Japan and 32% in Okinawa would agree to this formula. The most revealing question posed concerned the idea of a base-free Okinawa. In this regard, a majority of 52% in Japan was in favor, but only 40% in Okinawa. 25% of those Okinawans surveyed disagreed with the removal of all bases after Reversion, and almost 30% gave no reply.<sup>415</sup>

In Okinawa, opinion regarding the bases was remarkably divided. Although these are by no means clear-cut divisions, we can perhaps divide opinion into three groups: 1) those opposed to the presence of bases for political reasons; 2) those in favor of the bases for economic reasons, and 3) those torn between political motives and economic needs. No one political party offered Okinawans the chance to vote their political conscience *and* protect their economic needs. Okinawans demonstrated what we may define as "clear-cut" opinion on four base-related issues other than those previously mentioned: Does the presence of US bases make you feel insecure? (Yes - 65%); Does the US administration in Okinawa respect human rights? (No - 53%); Have the US bases been of some economic value? (No - 61%), and; Has the existence of US bases on Okinawa caused you any inconvenience or damage? (No - 86%).<sup>416</sup> But what does the aggregate of this opinion mean? How can, for instance, the bases cause no inconvenience, yet make one feel insecure? How can the infringement of one's human rights not be an inconvenience? More typical of the three-way division of opinion on the base issue was in reply to a question regarding the strength of the prefectural economy if income from US sources was to decrease. 34% felt that Okinawa's economy would decline in strength, 32% felt that it would not, and 34% offered either no reply or a different reply.<sup>417</sup>

<sup>415</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "The Asahi Shimbun's Public Opinion Survey," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No 1, January-March, 1968, pp. 46-49.

<sup>416</sup>Ibid. pp. 50-52.

<sup>417</sup>Ibid. p. 51.



As to the issue of Reversion, there was absolute accord in both samples. In both Japan and Okinawa 85% of those surveyed desired administrative return. The main reasons given by those expressing the desire for Reversion were as follows:

	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Okinawa</u>
Since it is Japanese territory in the first place	47	no reply
Since Japan is the Motherland	no reply	20
Since we are the same Japanese	11	21
Since return is a racial desire	8	4
Because I am opposed to bases and war	2	1
Over 20 years has passed since the end of the war	1	no reply
I don't like to be ruled by a different race	no reply	7
For the sake of the Okinawan people	2	no reply
Because we want equality with the mainland	no reply	8
Because Japan's territory will become larger	2	no reply
For the sake of our children and their education	no reply	11
For other reasons	1	1
For no particular reason, it just seems right	3	2
No reason given	8	10

It is interesting to note in these replies that whilst a total of 45% (out of the 85%) of the Okinawan sample expressed the desire for Reversion on cultural or racial grounds, only 19% (out of the 85%) of the Japanese sample followed this view. 49% (which in this case is a clear majority) of those Japanese surveyed believed that Reversion was a territorial issue.<sup>418</sup> Closer examination of the latter replies in the Okinawan sample point to Reversion being desired so as to achieve constitutional equality. Both Japan and Okinawa want the same thing, but the agendas are quite different.

### III-4-5 The Public Election of the Chief Executive

The month of November, 1968, was an extremely significant time in Okinawa. On 31st January 1968, President Lyndon Johnson had finally amended the legislation concerning the nomination of the Chief Executive of the GRI, so that now he or she "shall be elected by the people of the Ryūkyū Islands."<sup>419</sup> The first election was set for November of the same year. These elections would have a considerable bearing on the stances of both the Governments of the United States and Japan, as they would reflect in the clearest possible way the opinions of the local populace on the Reversion and base issues.

There were only two candidates in the race for the post: Nishime Junji, President of the Okinawan Liberal Democratic Party (OLDP) and Mayor of Naha City, who was backed by the OLDP and provided with considerable financial assistance by the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party; and Yara Chōbyō, President of the Okinawan Teacher's Association and the ex-president of the *Fukkikyō*, who was backed as an independent candidate by all of the major Okinawan opposition parties and pro-Reversion organizations, known collectively as the "Reformist Joint Struggle Conference." Both were in favor of Reversion, but whilst Yara called for immediate, unconditional Reversion, his opponent favored a gradual approach leading to a time table for Reversion by 1970

<sup>418</sup>ibid. p. 46

<sup>419</sup>Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho, *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume Two, 1961-1970*, op. cit., p. 767.

and the achievement of actual Reversion in 1973.<sup>420</sup> As far as the base issue was concerned, whilst the conservatives favored continued observance of the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the opposition parties behind Yara (though not necessarily Yara himself as we shall see) sought the removal of nuclear weapons, the removal (to lesser or greater degrees) of conventional bases, and the abrogation of the Security Treaty. During the campaign trail Nishime had often put forward the view that:

"If the bases on Okinawa were removed and Okinawa reverted to Japan immediately, without any preparations, Okinawa, whose prosperity has been sustained by revenue from the US military bases, will revert to the condition of that fourth-rate prefecture which it was before World War II"<sup>421</sup>

As had been expressed in earlier opinion poll surveys, a great number of Okinawans had been very concerned about the economy in the post-Reversion period. US military bases accounted for 54% of all external revenue earned on Okinawa; some 52,000 Okinawans were employed by the bases in some form or another, and; some 61,000 in industries directly dependent on bases for the continuation of their operation. As one journal emphasized, if family members of these workers were included, almost half of the total Okinawan population of 940,000 was dependent on the bases.<sup>422</sup> Nishime's message was clearly a practical economic one.

Yara's victory, by 237,562 votes to Nishime's 206,011 votes, although never emphatic, was a significant shift away from what had been an almost total conservative dominance of Okinawan politics. The LDP went on to perform, as usual, in dominant fashion in what were the 8th and final Legislative Elections for the GRI<sup>423</sup> on 10th November, but had been severely stung by its loss in this instance. Whilst there was little disagreement with Nishime's economic assessment, his cry for the postponement of Reversion was out of step with the majority view in Okinawa. As Yara Chôbyô expressed immediately after his victory,

"I believe the election results express the pent-up inner voice of the entire people of Okinawa Prefecture, which cries for escape from 23 years of rule by an alien people and is crying for a government directly responsible to the people of the prefecture.... I want to study as soon as possible policies which will enable us to return to our motherland and to appeal strongly to our compatriots on the main islands of Japan. As a Japanese nationalist, I will make every effort to see that the basic rights recognized in the constitution of Japan are also guaranteed to the people of Okinawa Prefecture"<sup>424</sup>

In contrast to the more radical elements of his support group then, Yara was prepared to compromise on the base issue to a certain extent, if not on Reversion. This must have given the US Government a reasonable amount of confidence in pushing for continued use of the bases under the same terms as those in Japan proper. The volatility of Yara's support could become problematic, however, if the United States and Japan did not make substantial headway towards the achievement of Reversion at the earliest possible moment.

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<sup>420</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement: Part II," loc. cit., p. 131.

<sup>421</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "Okinawa's Reformist Chief Executive," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No 1, January-March, 1969, p. 8.

<sup>422</sup>Ibid. pp. 8-9.

<sup>423</sup>Voting breakdown: LDP - 17 seats; OSMP - 8 seats; OPP - 3 seats; SP - 2 seats; Independents - 2 seats. Nakano Yoshio, op. cit., page 752.

<sup>424</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "Okinawa's Reformist Chief Executive," loc. cit., p.10.

### III-5 The Reversion of Okinawa to Japan

#### III-5-1 The "Pre-Reversion Shakes"

As Japan and the United States prepared to formalize their Reversion plans at the November 1969 Summit, there was in Okinawa a great deal of diverse political activity. This was prompted by the realization, perhaps for the first time, that Reversion would actually happen. Most people in Okinawa began to suffer from what may be defined as the "pre-Reversion shakes." The realization of Reversion may have been a formality, but it was still unclear what type of Reversion was being negotiated by Satô. The crucial issue was that of the US bases. Was Satô so desperate to gain the political benefits of Reversion that he would end up sacrificing the Okinawans to further unchecked US military control as previous Japanese Governments had done in 1951 and 1960? Or was he arguing vigorously the Okinawan position? The *Fukkikyô*, which was dominated by the anti-base factions, clearly felt that he was about to take the former option. During the early part of 1969 the Council actually decided to protest Satô's visit to Washington for the November Summit on these grounds and organized several rallies. The *Fukkikyô* also protested what it saw as the "progressive emasculation"<sup>425</sup> of certain constitutional principles on the mainland. This was particularly salient with regard to the Japanese Government's defense of the SDF and of the Security Treaty when looked at in the context of the anti-war spirit of Article 9. These rallies coincided with a heightened sense of frustration amongst the local population.

Although one cannot deny the beneficial economic impact of the US military presence on Okinawa, this had to be balanced against the number of problems brought into the local communities that did not exist prior to the American arrival. This was especially so during the Vietnam War. Along with the various incidents of fuel leakage contaminating local water supplies, came the more serious incidents, like when a KC-135 jet fuel tanker skidded across Kadena Air Base whilst attempting to take off and crashed into a civilian vehicle on a nearby road killing the occupant, or when a bomb-laden B-52 caught fire as it was attempting to take off and exploded, damaging nearby houses and starting a number of fires. The B-52 incident was particularly worrying, as Watanabe Akio states, because it "could have caused a holocaust if the plane had crashed into a densely populated area or, as was quite likely, it had flown for a few seconds longer and plunged into the nearby ordnance storage areas, where, it was believed, nuclear weapons are housed."<sup>426</sup> This incident sparked a mass movement opposed to the stationing of B-52's on the island, and was reflected in any number of the public opinion surveys conducted at the time. Okinawans also had to suffer at the hands of US personnel coming back from the war in Vietnam and looking upon the locals as similar in appearance to the 'gooks' they were fighting. Rape, violent assault, murder, and drunk driving were on the increase, yet those US personnel involved were often acquitted.<sup>427</sup>

As Reversion to Japan moved closer, the local population began to exhibit less tolerance of these incidents than they had in previous years. The "resistance of non-resistance," a proud tradition,

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<sup>425</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part II," loc. cit., p. 132.

<sup>426</sup>Watanabe Akio, op. cit., page 66.

<sup>427</sup>For the reader interested in pursuing this theme, an excellent source book is: Fukuchi Hiroaki, *Beigun Kichi Hanzai: Ima mo Tsuzuku Okinawa no Kanashimi to Ikari (Sadness and Anger at the Continued Incidence of American Base-Related Offences in Okinawa)*, Rôdô Kyôiku Centre, Tokyo, 1992. Fukuchi's definition of what constitutes an 'offence' is very broad. Individual personnel offences are well detailed, yet he also includes the stationing of B-52 bombers, jet crashes, the presence of chemical and nuclear weapons, and parachute drops onto private property within this framework.

gave way, perhaps for the first time in Okinawa's history, to open, and often violent, revolt. During the very early part of 1969, Yara had just managed to exert enough influence to prevent a general strike in protest at the continuing use of Okinawa as a B-52 base. Instead a mass demonstration at Kadena Air Base with some 50,000 participants took place. It ended with 1000 university students involved in a pitched battle with police<sup>428</sup>. Strikes and rallies were held throughout the year to support the *Fukkikyô's* position on Satô's visit to Washington. Further protest ensued when, in July, the New York Times ran a scoop on the storage of nerve gas and other chemical weapons on Okinawa.<sup>429</sup> Later, in May of 1970, the US admitted that it had brought in 13,000 tons of this weaponry to Okinawa.<sup>430</sup> These protests culminated, as perhaps was inevitable, in the Koza<sup>431</sup> Riot at on 20th December 1970. When the military police attempted to release a young American soldier who had just knocked down an Okinawan base worker in his car, a large crowd assembled and began overturning and setting ablaze military-owned vehicles. The riot lasted for 6 hours and involved 5,000 Okinawan civilians and 300 armed police. For 25 years the US had pushed. The local population was now pushing back. The Japanese Government believed that such acts could jeopardize the delicate Reversion negotiations and encouraged Yara to cool things down, but little could quell Okinawan dissatisfaction except prompt Reversion.

Pushing for a different outcome to the November Summit was a sizable chunk of the Okinawan population and a small but vocal group of businessmen and politicians. The former, were the military base workers and their families who felt that if the *Fukkikyô's* position was reflected in the November Summit then they would likely be out of work after Reversion. They were in favor of a phased military base withdrawal so as to lessen the economic impact of large-scale redundancies.<sup>432</sup> Their position was perhaps shared by any number of Okinawan landowners who had become accustomed to receiving regular payments from the US Government. The latter, constituted the so-called Anti-Reversion Movement which manifested itself in 1969 in the form of the Okinawa for the Okinawan People Association.

This latter association had its roots in the Anti-Reversion Movement that had begun to gain attention in 1967. As has been already pointed out, the defeated candidate in the first public election for the Chief Executive of the GRI, Nishime Junji, had expressed his worries about the future Okinawan economy and had principally demanded a gradual Reversion so as to allow appropriate time for consideration of such matters. Echoing much the same sentiment, Sakima Binsho, member of this new "Okinawa for the Okinawan People Association" expressed his opinions thus:

"Up until now the Reversion Movement has been single-mindedly idealistic. What we want to do is look at things from the material, economic aspects. Even if one can say that the present Okinawa

<sup>428</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit. page 143.

<sup>429</sup>Takizawa Makota, "Okinawa: Reversion to Japan and Future Prospects," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 11, No 5, May, 1971, p. 500.

<sup>430</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "Nerve Gas," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No 4, October-December, 1970, p. 366..

<sup>431</sup>The original name of this location was Kôja Town, but since the Americans had trouble pronouncing it and since this was the main entertainment district for servicemen from Kadena Air Base, it was renamed Kôza (in katakana). The city gained such a reputation as a red-light district that it has since been renamed Okinawa City. One ex-USCAR official, Irving Eisenstein, rather cynically described this renaming, with the use of kanji, as part of Okinawa's rush to accept all things Japanese in the post-Reversion period. He should be reminded that this area had a name (in kanji) before the Americans arrived and distorted it, and that it has been changed for the purpose of a cleaning-up the image of the area. See: Douglas H. Mendel, "Okinawan Reversion in Retrospect," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 48, No 3, Fall, 1975, pp. 399-400.

<sup>432</sup>It was estimated in 1967 that if the US were to withdraw completely, that over 100,000 workers would be laid off, as well as perhaps 5,000 government employees. Takizawa Makota, loc. cit., p. 502.

economy is rootless and dependent on the American bases, it is nevertheless true that we enjoy a prosperity that is unprecedented in Okinawan history. Once we return to Japan, we will be back to being Japan's poorest Prefecture just as we were before the war. No thank you. It's taboo to throw cold water on the idea of Reversion these days and so the people here don't talk about it, but 70 percent or more of them agree with me."<sup>433</sup>

The plain fact of the matter, was that the general mass of the Okinawan people had no idea what Reversion would mean to them once manifested, it was beyond their control. The Reversion agreement had become less a matter of what the local people wanted and more a matter of what the Governments of Japan and the United States would thrash out between them consistent with their own needs.

The *Mainichi Shimbun* conducted an opinion poll survey on both Okinawa and the Japanese mainland in April 1969. It is interesting to analyze what changes, if any, had occurred since the *Asahi Shimbun's* poll. The questions were, by and large, the same, and dealt with general attitudes towards Reversion and the status of the post-Reversion bases. In the Japanese sample some 91% now favored the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan. This represented approximately a 6% increase on the 1967 sample. In Okinawa, however, support for Reversion had declined from 85% to 82% of the population. Obviously the majority in both areas come out overwhelmingly in support of the proposal, but one may link the decrease in Okinawa with the uncertainty of what Reversion might bring. Some 12% of the sample in Okinawa wanted to maintain the *status quo*.<sup>434</sup> There was somewhat of a change in the attitudes of both parties when specific reasons for Reversion were questioned. The majority in the Japanese sample, as in Okinawa, were now desiring Reversion on the grounds of cultural unity. Of the Okinawan sample 10% were stressing the economic benefits of Reversion, and more than 30% sought protection under the Japanese constitution.<sup>435</sup>

What is your reason for thinking that Okinawa should be returned to Japan?

	Japan	Okinawa
Guarantees Livelihood	7%	10%
Okinawans are Japanese	59%	48%
Okinawa is Japanese Territory	24%	6%
So the Constitution can be Applied	7%	29%
Dislike Foreign Rule	3%	6%
No Reply/Other Reply	0%	1%

As to the issue of military bases, in both Okinawa and Japan proper there was broad general agreement. Both samples favored de-nuclearization and either the limitation or complete removal of the US's current base rights. A majority in both cases also believed that US bases in both Japan and Okinawa were maintained more for the defense of America than for the purpose of maintaining peace and security in the Far East.<sup>436</sup> In relation to the Japan-US Security Treaty, a 52% majority of the Japanese sample felt that it played a positive role in Japan's security, with 37% believing that it either was not at all helpful or that it was actually dangerous. In Okinawa, only 32% of the sample supported the Treaty, and some 42% opposed. The largest body of opinion in the Okinawan sample favored Japan moving away from the Japan-US security alliance and relying on Japan's Self Defense

<sup>433</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>434</sup>Japan Institute of International Affairs, *White Papers of Japan, 1970-71: Annual Abstract of Official Reports and Statistics of the Japanese Government*, Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, 1970-71, p. 396.

<sup>435</sup>Ibid. p. 397.

<sup>436</sup>Ibid. p. 397.

Forces (SDF) or on a policy of military neutrality,<sup>437</sup> yet only 43% felt that it would be necessary to have SDF stationed on Okinawa in the post-Reversion period. On issues regarding military bases or Japan's security there tended to be a reasonably high "no reply" rate in the Okinawan sample. Usually this category would account for approximately 20% of the total vote, but often rose nearer to 30%. This was more the case in Okinawa where the retention or removal of the bases was never a simple political issue. The economy of the island was so intertwined with the base issue that one can perhaps understand the inability of one-fifth to one-third of the population to categorically declare themselves in favor or in opposition the bases.

### III-5-2 Fallout in the Wake of The Satō-Nixon Joint Communiqué

In the *Mainichi's* survey, some 53% of the Okinawan sample felt that Prime Minister Satō was not making enough of an effort in his negotiations with the US to achieve Reversion.<sup>438</sup> The published text of the Joint Communiqué did little to diffuse this sentiment. On the one hand, the decision to return Okinawa to Japan had been made, which was obviously welcomed on Okinawa. On the other, however, it would not be realized for at least another two years. Yara had been elected in Okinawa's most symbolic elections on a platform of immediate Reversion to Japan. In the eyes of many Okinawan politicians Satō had blatantly ignored the message he had been sent by the Okinawan electorate. Satō had also ignored the Okinawan people on the issue of the post-Reversion status of America's military bases. The terms of the Joint Communiqué were vague in this regard. The OSMP, the OPP, the SP, and the *Fukkikyō* all protested the Satō-Nixon agreement. The Joint Communiqué promised neither immediate nor unconditional Reversion. Article 4 of the Joint Communiqué had set quite solid conditions. The latter part read:

"Should peace in Vietnam not have been realized by the time the Reversion of Okinawa is scheduled to take place, the two governments would fully consult with each other in the light of the situation at that time so that Reversion would be accomplished without affecting the United States efforts to assure the South Vietnamese people the opportunity to determine their own political future without outside interference"<sup>439</sup>

In a *Ryūkyū Shimpō* opinion poll survey conducted in December, 1969, 45% of those Okinawans felt that a Reversion settlement conditional in this way was unacceptable, and 33% that they would only accept if there were no other alternatives.<sup>440</sup> Only the LDP (ex-OLDP, but now fully integrated with its mainland counterpart) could claim to have won. The agreement had, as it had demanded, stressed that Reversion would be a gradual process, taking place sometime in 1972, and had suggested that nuclear weapons would be removed from the Okinawan bases. The same opinion poll survey, however, pointed out that only 10% of Okinawans believed that the US would fulfill their promise and remove such weaponry.<sup>441</sup>

Buoyed by mainland opinion poll surveys which showed that 77% were in favor of the agreement he had negotiated in Washington, Satō decided to call a general election, at which his

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<sup>437</sup>Ibid. p. 400.

<sup>438</sup>Ibid. p. 398.

<sup>439</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 61, No 1590, 15th December, 1969, pp. 555-556.

<sup>440</sup>Takizawa Makota, loc. cit., p. 501.

<sup>441</sup>Ibid. p. 501. The United States had announced on 16th December that it would remove all its Mace-B nuclear missiles from Okinawa.

LDP won an overwhelming majority of 300 (out of 486) seats. One gets the distinct impression that the majority of the mainland Japanese considered the Satô-Nixon Joint Communiqué as the solution to the long-running "Okinawa Problem" which had dominated domestic politics in recent years. In the following year Satô was able to renew the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security with very little difficulty. The Okinawa issue would doubtless reemerge once the final Japan-US agreement was published, but Satô had bought himself some reprieve.

### III-5-3 *De Facto* Reversion Realized

During the 1950's the US had discouraged Japanese involvement in Okinawan affairs. Kennedy ordered a complete rethink on that policy during the early part of the 1960's and began to allow the formation of relations in all areas that did not compromise the effective military operation of the US bases. Okinawans gained the symbolic right to be able to display the Japanese flag, gained the right of freer travel between the islands and the mainland, and gained virtual Japanese Government control over education. Okinawan political parties, particularly during the latter part of the 1960's, increasingly began to align themselves with their mainland counterparts. Japanese Government aid began pouring into Okinawa at such a rate that by the mid-1960's it began to put the US contributions to shame. The net result of such a policy was that by the late 1960's the Japanese Government had achieved a *de facto* Reversion.

In much the same way as the hoisting of the "Rising Sun" flag had been a symbolic achievement, so was the decision to allow the Okinawan people the right to elect members to the Japanese House of Representatives and the House of Councilors in November, 1970. The results of this election can be seen as a vote of approval or disapproval for the Satô-Johnson Communiqué a year earlier in 1969. Prior to this historic vote, the *Ryūkyū Shimpō* conducted two surveys canvassing opinion on the type of Reversion demanded, the role of the military bases, the proposed stationing of Japanese SDF in Okinawa, and current political affiliations. In August 1970, the majority of the respondents (52%) indicated that they felt very uneasy about Reversion. The principal worries expressed concerned Okinawa's economic prospects. These worries concerned both the potential withdrawal of US forces and resultant loss of income, and the potential problems the local economy would face with the influx of large Japanese companies flooding into the islands after Reversion. Already the US had announced that military spending in Okinawa was to be curtailed and that several thousand local workers would be laid off. The loss or retention of base jobs was high on the list. Other base-related problems concerned the return of military-occupied land, much of which would be unfit for cultivation after years of military use and erosion, and the transfer of the current dollar currency into Japanese yen. Despite reliance economically, some 77% of the sample called for the reduction or complete removal of the US bases.<sup>442</sup>

In the August poll, when asked about the presence of Japanese SDF in Okinawa after Reversion, there was no clear consensus: 35% agreed, 31% disagreed, and the remaining 34% either could not or did not answer.<sup>443</sup> By November, however, the Japanese Government had suggested that 6,800 SDF would be deployed, to which almost 48% disagreed.<sup>444</sup> 41% of the respondents believed

<sup>442</sup>"What Does Okinawa Demand?" *Ryūkyū Shimpō* Opinion Poll Survey, August, 1970. *Hōritsu Jihō*, Special Edition on the Reversion Agreement, 10th October, 1971, p. 411.

<sup>443</sup>Ibid. p. 412.

<sup>444</sup>"Public Opinion on the Okinawa Reversion Agreement," *Ryūkyū Shimpō* Opinion Poll Survey, November, 1970, *ibid.* p. 414.

that if the SDF were to be stationed on Okinawa their purpose would be to protect Okinawans; over 6% felt that the SDF would have more of a quasi-disaster relief role; and more the 30% had no idea what their role would be. Most interesting perhaps, was the view of almost 10% of the respondents who believed that the SDF role was to strengthen central government's control over Okinawa.<sup>445</sup>

Political affiliations were a little more difficult to judge. Whilst support for the LDP and OSMP was neck and neck, over 43% expressed no view at all. It would seem as if the issue of Reversion to Japan had now risen way beyond simple political party affiliations. Perhaps a better indication of where sentiment lay can be found in support for the Chief Executive. 50% indicated that they were in favor of Yara, whilst only 12% opposed his policy of seeking immediate Reversion and a reduction of the US military bases. 38% of respondents were still sitting on the fence.<sup>446</sup>

On 15th November, more than 83% of the eligible voters turned out to express their opinions in the Diet elections. Five seats were contested for the House of Representatives and two for the House of Councilors. The OSMP, OPP, and Kōmeitō (Clean Government Party), won one lower house seat each, with the remaining two falling to the LDP. In the upper house elections the LDP gained one seat and the Independent reformist candidate the other. There was, as was the case in the 1968 Chief Executive elections, no emphatic defeat of the conservatives, but it did represent a significant and symbolic victory for the reformist parties. What effect it would have on the final Reversion agreement would be difficult to predict.

### **III-5-4 The Reversion Movement and Okinawan Political Culture**

During the mid-late 1940's there had been no clearly defined Reversion movement. There had been those in favor of a return to Japan, yet there had been as many in favor of separation from Japan through a trusteeship agreement or, the return of the islands to their pre-Meiji semi-independent status. Under the latter system it was envisaged that the Ryūkyūs would be able to exist as an independent political entity, whilst forging economic alliances with whomever it chose. Although this was perhaps an impossible dream, there was a certain degree of support for this option. Ryūkyūan history illustrates that the local population of these islands had always adopted a more 'internationalist' approach to the forging of foreign relations and felt more an integral part of Pacific Asia than the basically 'isolationist' Japanese under whose control they found themselves. By the early 1950's the independence option had been eradicated leaving only two choices. Support for the trusteeship option persisted, but once the Treaty of Peace between Japan and the US was signed there remained no option other than Reversion.

Japan's rejection of the Okinawans by the terms of Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace harnessed the reconstitution of the Reversion Movement. Reversion in this sense was based on three fundamental objectives: 1) to protest Japan's rejection and to draw her attention to the fact that she had made the wrong decision; 2) to protest the principle of alien rule, and; 3) to realize the only option now available. These objectives were rooted in what we may define as the 'cultural premise': "we Okinawans are Japanese, and Okinawa is an integral part of Japan." Thus, at the time of the Peace Treaty, the movement for Reversion was fundamentally 'nationalistic.' Okinawans held a grudge against the Japanese for having sacrificed them in this instance, and to a certain extent pursued Reversion more vehemently as a result, but the main point was that Japan and Okinawa

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<sup>445</sup>Ibid. p. 412.

<sup>446</sup>Ibid. p. 414.



belonged together no matter how rocky the internal dynamics of the relationship were. The United States had not yet fully shown her true 'military face' at this juncture.

When the true nature of the beast was revealed by the middle part of the 1950's, the movement for Reversion developed beyond its 'nationalistic' origins and was not now just protesting the *principle* of alien rule, but also the *physical manifestation* of alien rule. US rule brought military bases, which by their very nature were outside of civilian control. The bases in turn brought about certain economic, political and social conditions. The US's base-dependent economic policies led to the payment of low wages and the contravention of internationally recognized labor practices, and also brought about the forceful expropriation of privately owned lands and the payment of pitiful remuneration for such lands. Okinawan economic development was stifled unless it played some role in the provision of goods or services to the bases. Politically, the bases restricted the spread of a meaningful democracy and dictated that no substantial decision could be made without military approval. Nor could local citizens gain 'justice' when their civil or human rights had been infringed upon. Socially, there was a total disruption of communities divided by bases and the constant conflict between civil and military interests. Whilst the movement had been relatively accommodating towards the US during the early postwar period, the goodwill had largely disappeared by the mid-1950's to be replaced by wide-scale and open resistance. Appraised within the context of Okinawan political culture, this marks a profound and largely unprecedented transformation.

The movement for Reversion during the early part of the 1960's had incorporated the two goals of realizing 'nationalistic' ambitions, and finding solutions to practical problems caused by the US presence. The method of achieving Reversion would be through non-violent resistance. Reversion would bring the people of Okinawa prefecture under the wings of the Japanese constitution and the Japanese Government. Such realignment would provide citizenship; meaningful democracy; the protection of human, property, and legal rights; the expansion of economic and social advancement; and would theoretically mean that all bases on Okinawa would be subject to the same conditions as mainland bases. The main problem with the movement for Reversion at this stage, was that the cause of all the problems: the military bases, had become an important source of livelihood for many Okinawans. All Okinawans, across political divides, were in favor of gaining the benefits of administrative reunion with Japan, but were torn as to whether to "bite the hand that fed."

The mid- to late-1960's were a crucial time in the development of the movement for Reversion. Economic prosperity served only to heighten the fear of a total military withdrawal amongst those dependent on the bases. What would replace them? Centuries of poverty under the Japanese administration sharpened the desire to continue benefiting as they were now. Yet Okinawa was in the midst of America's persecution of the Vietnam War. This involvement went contrary to the vast body of popular Okinawan opinion. Opposition to the led to a more vigorous push for Reversion to fulfill Okinawa's peaceful ambitions, to find shelter under the constitution, and to bring about the removal or reduction in the base presence. Thus, the movement had largely dropped its 'nationalistic' origins, perhaps because these were a given, and come to focus on the practical dynamics of Reversion. During the latter part of the 1950's Okinawans were forced into adopting a more accommodating posture towards USCAR when faced with certain economic realities, but continued to resist overall. The resistance movement reached new heights during the latter part of the 1960's.

By the time of the Reversion Agreement the movement had developed still further, into what Higa Mikio describes as an "anti-discrimination movement."<sup>447</sup> Okinawans wanted to ensure that the military bases after Reversion would exist under the same conditions as on the mainland, that Okinawans would enjoy the same basic rights as all other Japanese, and that they would be able to enjoy the same economic prosperity as people on the mainland. Okinawa had been accorded a particular status amongst Japan's 47 prefectures in the prewar period and it was determined that there would be no resumption of this position. Reversion was desired by the majority of the population, but it is vitally important to realize that the movement for Reversion developed way beyond emphasizing the 'cultural premise.' Okinawans had very specific requirements as to how Reversion should be accomplished, and these had been developed during a long period of resistance to military occupation. The patterns of resistance to USCAR from the individual to governmental level have led to one scholar to define the Okinawa of the period as the *Kakushin Ōkoku*, or "Kingdom of Reform."<sup>448</sup> All Okinawans would be studying the Reversion Agreement closely.

### III-6 Okinawan Political Movements in the Post-Reversion Era

#### III-6-1 Dissatisfaction and "Disenfranchisement"

As of 15th May 1972, the multi-factional Okinawa Reversion Movement ceased to exist. If it had simply had this one 'nationalistic' *raison d'être* one could only observe that it had been entirely successful, yet it did not, and therefore died without accomplishing a number of important goals. Reversion came up short in a number of respects, but particularly with regard to the status of the US bases in Okinawa. Yara Chōbyō's reaction to the Okinawa Reversion Agreement serves to illustrate the disparity between what he felt the Okinawan people had been demanding and what they eventually got:

"During the war Okinawa acted as a shield for the defense of the homeland, and over 100,000 of our comrades lost their lives in that effort. After the war Okinawa became a spoil of victory, a means with which to settle the problem of defeat. Okinawa was sacrificed and entrusted to the rule of an alien people. Now it is to be placed in the uncertain position of becoming a keystone of the Japan-US Mutual Security Treaty, so that it may help to protect the peace and safety of Japan and the Far East. To this day Okinawa is, as it has always been, the sacrificial lamb of state power"<sup>449</sup>

Such a view was not limited to those located firmly at the left of the political center, but may also be corroborated in island-wide opinion poll surveys. The *Asahi Shimbun* conducted a poll in July of 1972. It is interesting to note the high level of ambivalence exhibited, especially considering that this survey was conducted only two months after the aims of the Reversion Movement had apparently been won. Of those sampled, only 55% came out in whole-hearted support of Reversion. 22% of the respondents did not support Reversion, and a further 23% either did not reply or could not express an opinion one way or the other.<sup>450</sup> Of those agreeing, the majority expressed satisfaction with cultural reunification; with the full application of the Japanese constitution to Okinawans; and

<sup>447</sup>Higa Mikio, "The Okinawan Reversion Movement - Part II," loc. cit., p. 135.

<sup>448</sup>Shimabukuro Kuni, "Fukkigo no Okinawa Seiji Kōzō no Henyō" (Changes in the Structure of Okinawan Politics in the Post-Reversion Period), in Shimabukuro Kuni, (Ed) *Ronshū: Okinawa no Seiji to Shakai (Essays on the Politics and Society of Okinawa)*, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1989, p. 31.

<sup>449</sup>Imazu Hiroshi, "Sacrificial Lamb," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No 3, July-September, 1972, p. 306.

<sup>450</sup>Asahi Shimbun Nishibu Honsha, *Okinawa kara no Hōkoku: Fukkiyū no 20 Nen (The Report From Okinawa: 20 Years After the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan)*, Southern Press, Naha, 1993, p. 177.

with the infrastructural improvements which would be implemented under the Japanese administration. Of those disagreeing, the principal issues were fears over the increase in the price of goods as the dollar currency was replaced by the yen; and a general feeling of insecurity as to the economic future of the prefecture and to the perils and pitfalls of readjusting to Japanese systems.

There was, as ever, dissatisfaction with the unchanged structure of the US military bases,<sup>451</sup> and with the arrival of the Japanese SDF. In a joint *Mainichi Shimbun-Ryūkyū Shimpō* opinion poll in November of 1972, 70% of Okinawan respondents called for the removal or reduction in the American military presence and almost 50% were opposed to the stationing of the SDF.<sup>452</sup> There was vehement opposition to the latter, and it was not uncommon for SDF soldiers to have to seek the protection of the US forces from the Okinawan general public. Yara Chōbyō, a long-time anti-base activist, continued to oppose both the US and SDF presence. In June of 1972, in the first important post-Reversion elections for the Governor of the prefecture, Yara Chōbyō beat out the conservative candidate Ōta Seisaku. The conservatives, it must be remembered, had generally welcomed the Reversion Agreement as it stood. As Nakachi Kiyoshi has asserted, "Though the economic situation in Okinawa worsened, Okinawans apparently preferred an anti-base policy to an economic recovery policy."<sup>453</sup>

Broadly speaking, there were two main areas of dissatisfaction amongst Okinawans: 1) the continuing presence of US military bases (and the arrival of Japanese SDF) as enshrined in Japan's commitment to the Japan-US Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, and: 2) post-Reversion economic life and the disparity between the standard of living on the mainland and in Okinawa Prefecture.<sup>454</sup> In an *Asahi Shimbun* opinion poll conducted in March 1973, 62% expressed dissatisfaction with the Reversion of Okinawa on these grounds.<sup>455</sup>

The main problem faced by Okinawans in relation to expressing dissatisfaction in the post-Reversion period was that its unique political position had been lost. As a state-less people existing in sort of political 'limbo,' the Okinawans had the ability to be able to constitute an important third party that could negotiate directly with the Government's of both Japan and the United States in the persecution of its goals. Although the results were not always in line with Okinawan demands, this was more related to the dynamics of power politics. Japanese and American interests dominated, but Okinawa was definitely a "player" in the political game until 1972. What killed this status was the Japanese constitution. Although the Okinawans had been seeking to be covered by the constitution and to regain all of the benefits of legitimate citizenship, citizenship itself is governed by certain restrictions. After 1972, Okinawans became subject to the Japanese constitution and to the rule of Japanese law as but one of 47 prefectures. As a prefecture, Okinawa is bound to accept policies devised in Tokyo whether it agrees or not. Okinawa has the rights to demand changes to such policies through its democratically elected representatives in the Diet, yet even if all Okinawan representatives argued against a particular policy there would be no movement unless representatives from the other 46 prefectures agreed with the Okinawan stance. Okinawa has no power to change overall economic policies or, most importantly, to influence policy-makers to abrogate the Japan-US

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<sup>451</sup>Please refer to the post-Reversion status of the US military bases as outlined in Chapter Two of this text.

<sup>452</sup>Douglas H. Mendel, "Okinawan Reversion in Retrospect," loc. cit., p. 408.

<sup>453</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>454</sup>Obviously the military bases and economics collide, but these issues are dealt with in Chapter Three of this text.

<sup>455</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "Okinawa: The First Year," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No 3, July-September, 1973, p. 251..

Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security under which the military bases in Okinawa are maintained.

### **III-7 Patterns of Resistance and Accommodation**

Having posited the conclusion that the Okinawan Reversion Movement had not succeeded in achieving its political objectives before its demise, what happened? Did the movement just disappear without a trace? Or is there still to be found in contemporary Okinawa Prefecture a political movement (or movements) which continues to persecute the realization of these unachieved objectives? Furthermore, if we have suggested that the nature of Okinawan political culture underwent a profound transformation during the occupation period, involving a shift from the traditional Okinawan tendency to accommodate itself to the big powers to a new tendency of outright resistance, does the nature of Okinawan political culture remain basically the same, or has there been a further transformation? Ultimately, have Japan-Ryûkyû relations in the post-Reversion period developed in the way envisaged by the Reversion Movement?

#### **III-7-1 Military Bases and the Politics of Land**

Although Okinawans would no longer have to endure oppressive American land expropriation policies in the post-Reversion period, the Japanese Government had pledged to allow the US to operate its bases in much the same way as it had before, and now had the responsibility under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security to secure all the facilities and areas necessary for the effective operation of the US forces. Okinawans, as Japanese citizens subject to Japanese Government policy and regulations, had to accept the US presence and the Security Treaty as an integral part of Japan's defense policy. Although this had been perhaps the inevitable trade-off for Reversion, this did not necessarily mean that all would suddenly accept what they had not before.

Upon the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972, the former OED, Real Estate Division, turned over to the Japanese Government all of its documentation on the 148,000 tracts of privately owned Okinawan land it currently held.<sup>456</sup> It would now be up to the Japanese Government to negotiate contracts with the individual landowners. In a Diet Resolution in December 1971, and contrary to the demands of Okinawa's Governor Yara Chôbyô and mainland opposition parties, the Japanese Government passed a bill that allowed the US forces continued use of all publicly owned lands it currently utilized. In 1972, the Japanese Government began applying a new "US Military Land Use Special Measures Law" for the purpose of getting contracts with private landowners. Government policy was to secure a 20-year contract which would pass from generation to generation and thereby guarantee long-term use of the land. Government strategy, rather than the brute force policy utilized by the US, was to raise the amount of rental payments by up to five times the previous amounts, providing a powerful incentive to those landowners.<sup>457</sup>

Responsibility for securing these land contracts and for administrating all base-related issues in Okinawa was passed on to the Naha Regional Facilities Administration Bureau (one branch of the central government's Defense Facilities Administration Bureau) which was established in 1972.

<sup>456</sup>L. Eve Armentrout, loc. cit., p. 459.

<sup>457</sup>Nohara Zensho, "Okinawa no Beigun Kichi: Fukki 20 Shûnen Zakkan" (US Military Bases in Okinawa: Some Notes on the 20th Anniversary of Reversion to Japan), *Nantô Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Ryûkyûan Culture)*, No 14, 1992, p. 15.

Because 75% of all American military installations in the exclusive use of the US forces in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa, the Naha Regional Facilities Administration Bureau (NRFAB) is allocated one-third of the total Defense Facilities Administration Bureau's (DFAB) budget.<sup>458</sup> The NRFAB is obliged, in terms of its land use plans and contract terms, to liaise with the Okinawa Prefectural Commission for the Appropriation of Land Used for US Military Facilities (OPC). This body is supposed to be politically neutral, but since its membership is appointed by the Governor of Okinawa the political views of the incumbent are more often than not reflected in the committee.<sup>459</sup> Under the Yara Chôbyô administration from 1972 to 1976, and the Taira Koichi administration from 1976 to 1978, the committee tended to support the position of those landowners who rejected giving over their lands to military usage, but when the conservative administration of Nishime Junji came to power in 1978 the committee followed an active policy of cooperation with the Japanese Government.

Most of the estimated 38,000 private Okinawan landowners were quite content to continue leasing their lands to the Japanese Government for military use after Reversion. They benefited from quite substantial financial remuneration and tax concessions. As Nakachi Kiyoshi has pointed out, whilst these landowners had been paid a total of 3.1 billion yen in land rentals in 1971,<sup>460</sup> by 1973 they were dividing up 17.7 billion yen between them. From 1973 to 1983 rentals were increased from 17.7 billion yen to 35.4 billion, and by 1993 to 51.6 billion.<sup>461</sup> For those landowners willing to accept the continued base presence the rewards are high, though if the military were to withdraw at some point in time it is very doubtful whether the private sector would be as accommodating. Private businesses would reject having to lease the lands in such a way and would demand an outright purchase. It would also be impossible for the landowner to achieve a productive agricultural yield from the land anywhere near equivalent to the amount of land rental he or she receives from the Japanese Government. It is interesting to note that the original land battle revolved around gaining rentals *as high* as the potential productive yield of the land.

Not all Okinawan landowners have agreed to contract their lands for military usage. These landowners have attempted to exert pressure on the Japanese Government, much as the Reversion Movement did, for the reduction or complete removal of the military bases and for the abrogation of Japan's commitment to the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. There are two main organizations dedicated to pursuing this course of action. The Anti-War Landowners Committee (AWLC), formed in December, 1971, defined its objectives as follows:

"The Committee opposes any political policies of the Japanese Government related to war activities and to reserve the peace clause of the Japanese Constitution for anti-war peace campaigns. The Committee aims to protect the rights of lands and properties"<sup>462</sup>

<sup>458</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, "A Study of Political Movement in the Military Land Issues of Post-Reversion Okinawa, 1972-1991," *Proceedings of the 14th International Symposium on Asian Studies*, Asian Research Service, Hong Kong, 1992, p. 219. The DFAB budget for 1988 totaled some 377 million-yen, of which the NRFAB received 120 million-yen.

<sup>459</sup>Ibid. pp. 219-220.

<sup>460</sup>Ibid. p. 230.

<sup>461</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, *Okinawa no Beigun oyobi Jietai Kichi: Tôkei Shiryôshû*, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>462</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, "A Study of Political Movement in the Military Land Issues of Post-Reversion Okinawa, 1972-1991," loc. cit., p. 221.

This Committee attempts to garner support amongst Okinawan landowners, anti-war groups, municipal governments, and other concerned individuals and groups, to reject the contracts offered by the Japanese Government and to fight against the compulsory expropriation of lands. In 1972 this Committee had in excess of 2800 members, but in subsequent years this number has declined drastically. The AWLC had at least been supported morally by the OPC under the Yara and Taira reformist administrations, but with the arrival of the conservative administration under Nishime a policy of greater cooperation with the Japanese Government was pursued and AWLC support declined. The AWLC membership had declined to less than 100 by the time the new Governor and anti-base campaigner, Ota Masahide, came to power in 1990.<sup>463</sup> The vast majority of those who had eventually rejected the cause and accepted the contracts offered did so for economic reasons. The AWLC had only ever at best been able to obstruct the NRFAB in its duties. If a landowner rejected the terms offered the lands would be utilized nonetheless and the landowner would be paid a yearly sum in compensation. Yet this sum constituted far less than was being given to the landowners that had accepted the contracts and the tax levels were set far higher. Hirayasu Tsuneji, the leader of the AWLC until the latter part of 1988, as a non-contracting landowner, was due to have been paid a total of 50 million yen in compensation for the use of his land for the previous ten years, yet he ended up with only 25 million after taxes and other deductions.<sup>464</sup>

Another group taking a similar stance towards the Japanese Government's land contracts is the so-called "Committee of Hitotsubô Landowners" (CHL). Individuals who support the cause of peace in both Okinawa and Japan pay a 10,000 yen membership fee for which they become a part-owner of a piece of Okinawan land. This collective then flatly rejects the Japanese Government's contract terms. The beauty of this organization is that since none of these part owners depend for their livelihoods on income from the land they can reject the Government's contract terms indefinitely. The land is still seized for military use by the Government, but since the NRFAB is obliged to pay compensation for the seized lands it has immense difficulties when attempting to track down the individual owners. That the CHL membership does not suffer any direct economic hardship has meant that this body has been able to grow in strength. When it was first established in 1981 there were 1,000 members, but by 1987 this figure had almost doubled.<sup>465</sup>

These types of anti-war movements that attempt to use their lands to support a cause are almost unique to Okinawa Prefecture. Of all of the military lands required for US and Japanese SDF on the mainland, almost 90% are located on Government-owned lands. In Okinawa, however, 63% of US military facilities and 85% of SDF facilities are located on municipal or privately owned lands,<sup>466</sup> which means that the Government is obliged to continue to conduct arduous negotiations with individual landowners. The Japanese Government had, until quite recently, to endure a similar sort of obstruction by landowners in the Sanrizuka region of the mainland who opposed the extension of Narita Airport. They had prevented the Government from proceeding with its development plans for more than two decades.

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<sup>463</sup>Nohara Zensho, loc. cit., p. 15. In 1992 the AWLC membership stood at 60 persons.

<sup>464</sup>Chibana Shoichi, *Burning the Rising Sun - From Yomitan Village, Okinawa: Island of US Bases*, Southwind, Kyoto, 1992, p. 78.

<sup>465</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, "A Study of Political Movement in the Military Land Issues of Post-Reversion Okinawa, 1972-1991," loc. cit., p. 222.

<sup>466</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, *Okinawa no Beigun Oyobi Jietai Kichi: Tōkei Shiryōshū*, op. cit., p. 7.

Governor Ota's election in 1990 on a reformist platform, and the increasing perception of the Okinawan people that the US military presence should be cutback severely in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, has led to a significant revival in the anti-base sentiment prevalent during the height of the Okinawan Reversion Movement in the late 1960's, and this looks set to continue. In 1992, between March and May, four separate opinion poll surveys were conducted on Okinawa inquiring about attitudes towards the future military base presence. Respondents had three reply choices: 1) that the status quo should be maintained; 2) that the bases should be withdrawn, or; 3) don't know (DK) - no answer (NA). The results are presented in the chart below and speak largely for themselves.

Public Opinion Poll on Attitudes towards the Military Base Presence on Okinawa (%)<sup>467</sup>

<u>Polling Organization/Date</u>	<u>Status Quo</u>	<u>Withdrawal</u>	<u>DK/ NA</u>
NHK (Okinawa Branch) 1992/3	11.0%	80.9%	8.1%
<i>Ryūkyū Shimpō</i> 1992/4	12.0%	78.0%	9.9%
<i>Asahi Shimbun-Okinawa Times</i> 92/4	11.0%	85.5%	3.3%
<i>Okinawa Times</i> 1992/5	9.7%	64.3%	26.0%

In a 1995 Japanese Prime Minister's Office survey into Okinawan attitudes towards the bases, only 7.8% of respondents expressed positive support for the bases. The majority, 85.3%, said that they either: reluctantly accepted the bases (31%); felt that they were unnecessary (24.9%), or; completely opposed them (29.4%).<sup>468</sup> The Japanese Government tried to present the 31% "reluctantly accept" figure as some sort of victory on its part in the struggle to bring the Okinawan people around to its way of thinking, but for 23 years now it has patently failed, and has, like the US administration before it, had to rely on the tactics of force to gain access to lands.

Opposition to the bases had been a major feature of the Okinawa Reversion Movement during its 20-year struggle, and is as much a part of the political landscape now as it was then. It is, and will, remain far from resolution until the Japanese Government has a profound change of attitude. Back in the late-1940's Japan had envisaged a security alliance system with the US whereby troops and equipment would be stationed at the very peripheries of the Japanese nation so as to inconvenience the general population as little as possible. It has steadfastly supported a system fundamentally based on those principles for almost 50 years. It is a noble thing to wish to reduce the amount of inconvenience to your population, yet does the Japanese population not extend in reality from Hokkaido down through to Okinawa? The Japanese Government's policy of using Okinawa as a dumping ground for the most destructive wings of the American military arsenal is a clear continuation of the very negative discriminatory treatment it accorded the Okinawan people in the prewar years, and serves to illustrate that certain patterns in Japan-Ryūkyū relations have yet to be changed. Japanese people often refer affectionately to Okinawa as "Japan's southernmost *genkan*,"<sup>469</sup> in terms of its proximity to her Southeast Asian neighbors. But as most visitors to Japan are only too well aware, a *genkan* is a place where a person removes his or her shoes in order that dirt and other unsavory things are not brought into the main part of the house.

<sup>467</sup>Tamozaka, Hiroshi (?), "Gunyōchi Jinushi to Shakai Ishiki (The Social Awareness of Okinawan Military Landowners), in Shimabukuro Kuni & Gabe Masāki (Ed), *Posuto Reisen to Okinawa (Post-Cold War Okinawa)*, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1993, p. 193.

<sup>468</sup>*Yomiuri Shimbun*, (English language edition) 5th March, 1995. 6.9% expressed other opinions or no opinion.

<sup>469</sup>Literally "entrance hall" or "front door."

The gulf between the Okinawan and Japanese perceptions of the bases is, at present, far too wide to be bridged. During the latter part of 1994, Noboru Hoshuyama of the Japanese DFAB held a press conference in Naha City, at which he stressed the continued importance of the US bases in Okinawa in terms of the overall aims of the Japan-US security alliance. Frustrated at what he saw as a generally uncooperative spirit amongst Okinawans and a failure to recognize their role within the scheme of things, he demanded that Okinawans "accept the American bases and make a far more determined effort to coexist with them."<sup>470</sup> The so-called *ittaika* or "unification" policy that has formed the basis of Japanese Government's post-Reversion programs for Okinawa, is rooted in the notion that it will be possible, over a period of time, to bring about the complete integration and assimilation of the Okinawan people into Japan. It will, however, never be possible to achieve such a goal until the Okinawan people begin to feel a greater sense of affinity with the mainland. In many areas *ittaika* has been extremely successful, yet the disparity in terms of the actual physical burden for Japan's commitment to the Japan-US security alliance, and in terms of the perceptions of that burden, there will never be alignment. The US Government often lambastes Japan for its failure to commit to the security alliance commensurate with its economic strength, and accuses Japan of getting a "free-ride" in this regard. As Kakazu Hiroshi accurately observes, however, "Isn't it the case that Japan has gotten a free-ride by sacrificing Okinawa?"<sup>471</sup> The Okinawan struggle for the resolution of the base issue has never been realized and will persist long into the future.

### III-7-2 Post-Reversion Okinawan Political Culture

As has been previously discussed, during the period of the American occupation there was a marked transformation in the political culture of Okinawa. Patterns of accommodation gave way to patterns of resistance. Okinawan political culture was defined by the struggle for human rights, the due process of law, citizenship, economic and social advancement, democracy, political autonomy, the reduction or total removal of the military bases, the breaking of the economic base dependency, and for a non-discriminatory post-Reversion relationship with Japan. Accumulated experiences in the prewar era were combined with certain postwar experiences: particularly Japan's rejection of Okinawa under the terms of Article 3 of the Peace Treaty and the overall repressive nature of the American military system as determined by the base presence, to prompt this transformation into the *Kakushin Ōkoku*.

In the period after Reversion, however, there was a profound change in the conditions that had prompted that transformation. All of the basic rights demanded by the Okinawans were gained as a result of becoming subject to the Japanese constitution on 15th May, 1972, and the Japanese Government pushed ahead with its *ittaika* policy, with the influx of staggering amounts of financial assistance, so as to eliminate as far as possible all social and economic differences between Okinawa and the mainland. The main outstanding dissatisfactions were the continued presence of the American military bases under basically the same conditions as before, and large-scale economic instability in the transitional period as a result of massive base redundancies and the alignment of the Okinawan and mainland currency systems.

The initial post-Reversion period is marked by a continuation, although in a much less vehement manner, of the resistance patterns. Although much good would come of the economic and

<sup>470</sup>*Ryūkyū Shimpō*, 10th September, 1994.

<sup>471</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, "Ichi no Higeiki kara Ichi no Yūi e: Fukki 20 Nen soshite kore kara" (From a Location of Tragedy to a Position of Advantage: Okinawa 20 Years After Reversion to Japan), *Sekai*, June, 1992, p. 219.



social aid programs, this would take time to achieve. All of the basic rights Okinawans had been demanding had been achieved, yet these were fundamentally 'invisible' rights. Free travel to and from the mainland was an immediate benefit, but most people seemed to be looking at some very basic 'tangible' issues, such as the poor state of the economy and the existence of the bases. As has been mentioned previously, only 55% of the population welcomed Reversion as it stood in mid-1972. This overall feeling is backed up by the choice of the anti-base reformist candidate Yara Chôbyô over the conservative Nishime in the important elections for Governor.

By the time of the next elections for Governor in 1976, the Government's financial assistance programs had begun to show tangible results in terms of social infrastructural improvements, such as public works construction projects. Overall assimilation policies had also had a profound effect. Most Okinawans were in support of these policies and were quick to accept Japanese systems so as to put the American occupation as far behind them as possible. An important result of assimilation policies on the organizational level was in bringing Okinawan political parties and labor organizations, many of whom had been an integral part of the 'resistance' movement, into line with their larger mainland counterparts.<sup>472</sup> This absorption resulted in a substantial watering down of the reform ethos. Mainland organizations were much less radical, quite obviously, than their Okinawan counterparts. This was perhaps the most significant step in the pacification of the Okinawans. Despite all of these developments, the economy was still in a mess. This had been heightened by the Okinawa Ocean Expo '75, which had led to spiraling inflation. There had also been little in the way of base reductions. These two issues dominated the voting patterns for the Governor, and another anti-base reformist candidate, Taira Koichi, was elected.

This election victory was the swan song for the resistance movement, which had persisted decreasingly since the Reversion. As financial assistance flooded into Okinawa from the Japanese Government and the economy began to show signs of improving, the Okinawan people increasingly turned their attention to the continuation of these trends. The impression that Reversion had been a good thing and that Government's policies were headed in the right direction dominated. In the impromptu 1979 elections for Governor, the conservative candidate, Nishime Junji, who had been pipped to the post in the election for Chief Executive in 1968, was elected on a platform of promoting economic recovery first and foremost.<sup>473</sup> He believed that the military bases were a big impediment to Okinawa's long-term economic development, but still followed the line that the Security Treaty was necessary. He was prepared to leave the issue of base reductions to the proper channels: i.e., the Governments of Japan and the US. The Nishime administration remained in power for a twelve-year period.

The success of Japan's *ittai* and centralization policies may be seen as the main reason for this swing to the political right of center. When the *Okinawa Times* conducted an opinion poll survey in April of 1981, those in favor of Reversion had increased to 62% of the total sample.<sup>474</sup> Only 20% expressed a negative attitude, whilst 18% were still sitting on the fence. Of those expressing disapproval, the vast majority pointed to the continued high price of commodities.<sup>475</sup> Because

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<sup>472</sup>Shimabukuro Kuni, "Fukkigo no Okinawa Seiji Kôzô no Henyô" (Changes in the Structure of Okinawan Politics in the Post-Reversion Period), in Shimabukuro Kuni, (Ed) *Ronshû: Okinawa no Seiji to Shakai (Essays on the Politics and Society of Okinawa)*, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1989, p. 50.

<sup>473</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>474</sup>Asahi Shimbun Nishibu Honsha, op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>475</sup>Ibid. p. 177.

Okinawa's economy improved dramatically over the course of the next few years this dissenting segment of the population also declined. A telephone poll conducted in April of 1992 found that a massive 88% were now in favor of Reversion,<sup>476</sup> with only 4% against and 8% on the fence. These results can be corroborated in any number of other surveys conducted to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of Reversion. Although Okinawan per capita income was perhaps only two-thirds of the national level, this needs to be put into proper perspective. Okinawa's per capita income exceeded that of Italy, France and Great Britain. Economic prosperity had the net effect of softening Okinawan attitudes towards the mainland immeasurably.

Conflicting with this overall trend towards "conservativization," was the election of a reformist candidate for Governor in the 1990 elections. Ota Masahide, a renowned scholar and long-term opponent of the Japan-US Security Treaty, based on his own experiences as a Japanese Imperial Army draftee during the Battle for Okinawa, beat out Nishime Junji by 330,982 votes to 300,917.<sup>477</sup> Ota based his campaign on a platform calling for the abrogation of the Security Treaty and for the return of all military lands currently occupied by the US. His victory denotes a distinct shift amongst Okinawans away from economic matters, and to a reawakening of political interests.

Part of this transformation can be accredited to the "post-Cold War syndrome," in that with the demise of the Soviet Union Okinawans naturally expected there to be an overall rethink of American defense strategy that would in turn lead to a large-scale reduction of forces. This view had been reinforced by US Defense Department statements. This shift can also be placed within the context of the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, during which Okinawa's bases were again reactivated to provide a supporting role. More than 8,000 marines had been dispatched into the conflict from Okinawa.<sup>478</sup> Activities at Henoko, Kadena, and Futenma increased the suspicion that the US had activated its rights to station nuclear weapons on Okinawa soil under the "emergency" clause. Domestic political matters also added to the revival of the anti-base sentiment. The Diet was in the process of attempting to pass the UN Peacekeeping Bill that would allow Japanese SDF to be sent abroad, to which the Okinawans vehemently objected. One might also add the continuing trial of the anti-base activist, Chibana Shoichi, who burned the "Rising Sun" flag, and in the process stirred up memories of the Battle for Okinawa and of the role of the Imperial Army which inflicted cruelties on the Okinawan people under that banner.

The base issue had remained a bone of contention between the central and local Governments throughout the post-Reversion period, and therefore the underlying patterns of resistance developed during the Reversion Movement's activities remained an integral part of Okinawa's political culture, yet both had been buried in the drive for economic advancement and in the quest for assimilation. Over 85% of the population favored Reversion, yet the same percentage again objected to the bases. Ota's Victory in 1990, his subsequent reelection in 1994, and his continued promotion of the reformist platform, has served to halt the Okinawan descent into complete accommodation to the mainland. Okinawans remain basically conservative in nature and happy to continue receiving the benefits that have come as a result of Reversion, yet the Okinawan conscience is pricked by the base issue. The bases are still the cause of extreme inconvenience to many Okinawans in terms of the nuisance factor, and prevent the transformation of the Island into the

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<sup>476</sup>Ibid. p. 192.

<sup>477</sup>Anthony P. Jenkins (Ed), *Okinawa in the News: Stories Selected from the Shimpô Weekly News*, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1993, p. 53.

<sup>478</sup>Nohara Zensho, loc. cit., p. 9.

"Cornerstone of Peace" as envisaged by Ota and the Prefectural Government, yet the bases remain overall the greatest impediment to Okinawa's future economic development. The Okinawan economy has developed to the extent of its potential under existing conditions and will therefore need to reclaim the military-occupied lands to ensure prosperity. Now, just as in the immediate pre-Reversion period, the base issue lies at the root of economic problems and constitutes the most pressing political issue.

This dilemma takes place, however, within the context of a different environment. Then, the Okinawans were a state-less people engaged in a struggle over any number of issues. Its political culture manifested itself, out of necessity, into patterns of resistance towards the Japanese Government and the US administration. Nowadays, with citizenship and all accompanying rights endowed, with economic and social advancement promoted by a Government anxious to right the wrongs inflicted upon the Okinawans for their experiences in the war and for their continuing military burden, there is no need to struggle. Okinawa's political culture is marked by a tendency, even if begrudgingly at times, towards accommodating and assimilating to the mainland. The likelihood of any change in this regard will revolve around the development of the military base issue in future years, particularly in its relationship with the economy, and on the degree to which the Okinawan people perceive the need for greater self-reliance in political and economic matters.

## CHAPTER IV

### The Post-War Okinawan Economy

#### IV-1 The Economy of Scarcity

During the late-1930's and into the 1940's, some 75% of the local population were engaged in agriculture. The primary crops at this time were sweet potato, sugar cane, and rice. Sugar cane was the principal cash crop. Other crops, such as cereals, fruits and vegetables, were also cultivated, but contributed considerably less to the economy of the prefecture. In 1939, approximately 25% of the total land area of Okinawa was under cultivation, with the vast majority of farmers working small tracts of land.<sup>479</sup> Livestock, particularly pigs, was another important source of income, with some seven million pounds of meat being produced for domestic consumption in 1939.<sup>480</sup> Given Okinawa's abundant marine resources one would expect a flourishing fishing industry, but this was not the case. As Daniel Karasik points out, in 1939, there were only 1,700 persons registered as crewmembers of 125 commercial fishing vessels.<sup>481</sup>

Okinawa's manufacturing sector was, and has always been, of far lesser importance to the prefectural economy than the primary sector. Although machines and tools, along with household implements and building materials were manufactured, the majority of Okinawa's industries were small in scale and served only the domestic prefectural market. Foremost amongst locally produced items were unrefined sugar, woven linen, liquor, pottery and lacquerware. Analyzed by industrial sector, out of Okinawa's average national income of \$14.8 million during the period 1934-1936, \$7.7 million was derived from agriculture, forestry and fishing; \$2.1 million from manufacturing; \$0.5 million from construction; and \$4.5 million from the sale of goods and services.<sup>482</sup> National per capita income stood at \$25, making Okinawa the poorest of Japan's 47 prefectures.

In the period just prior to the war, Okinawa's yearly exports had a value of some \$4.6 million. This figure has to be balanced, however, against the total value of its imports, which stood much closer to \$6 million.<sup>483</sup> Amongst the principal imports were some very basic food requirements. Approximately two-thirds of the rice consumed on Okinawa, along with one-half of the soybeans, and one-quarter of the wheat and barley was imported.<sup>484</sup> In 1940, the population of the Okinawa Island group was 475,766,<sup>485</sup> of which approximately 25,000 out of a total potential labor supply of 325,000 were engaged as ordinary wage laborers.<sup>486</sup> Most of these were unskilled. For many Okinawans the only means of self-improvement was emigration.

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<sup>479</sup>Daniel Karasik, "Okinawa: A Problem in Administration and Reconstruction," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No 2, February, 1948, p. 257. This text remains essential for those interested in pursuing basic American policy towards Okinawa in the immediate aftermath of the Pacific War. Later, and perhaps more oppressive, policies have tended to gain far more attention than those implemented at the very outset of American rule. This text provides a necessary counter-balance, and shows that initial policies were designed very much with the interests of the local population in mind.

<sup>480</sup>Ibid. p. 258.

<sup>481</sup>Ibid. p. 258.

<sup>482</sup>Thomas M. Klein, "The Ryūkyūs on the Eve of Reversion," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 45, No 1, Spring, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>483</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., p. 258.

<sup>484</sup>Leonard Weiss, "US Military Government on Okinawa," *Far Eastern Survey*, 31st July, 1946, p. 236.

<sup>485</sup>Nakano Yoshio, *Sengo Shiryō Okinawa (Data on Postwar Okinawa)*, Nihon Hyōron Sha, Tokyo, 1969, p. 733.

<sup>486</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., p. 258.

## IV-2 The Postwar Okinawan Economy

### IV-2-1 Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

The level of physical destruction wreaked upon Okinawa during the 82-day battle between Japanese and American forces was extremely high. Somewhere in the region of 90% of all private housing, along with the majority of all governmental, economic and social institutions, had been leveled. Most roads and railways were similarly destroyed, and the majority of all public utilities were inoperable. Crops and farmland had been ruined by constant shelling and bombing, and most livestock had either befallen a similar fate or been consumed by local people and retreating Japanese forces. The vast majority of the surviving local population holed up in caves with whatever clothing and supplies they could muster, awaiting the arrival of the American soldiers who, they had been told by the Japanese forces, would torture and then kill them. Many committed suicide rather than emerge from the caves to face their conquerors. Okinawa had to enter the postwar period with nothing.

Political objectives aside, the primary role of the United States Military Government on Okinawa, established by the so-called Nimitz Proclamation of March, 1945, was to maintain law and order and to administer emergency relief to the local population. Once the island had been secured by American forces on 21st June 1945, it remained the function of the Military Government to "administer the occupied territory until such time as a permanent civil government was established."<sup>487</sup> Absolute priority was given to the task of alleviating the suffering of the local population on humanitarian grounds,<sup>488</sup> whilst policy-makers set about creating such conditions as would allow the early establishment of a self-governing, and economically self-sufficient community. As Brigadier General William E. Crist, head planner for the Okinawan Military Government, succinctly put it, "we have no intention of playing Santa Claus for the residents of the occupied territory."<sup>489</sup>

The specific objectives of the Military Government on Okinawa, as determined by General Douglas MacArthur, the Commander in Chief of the Far East (CINCFE), in December, 1945, were:

- a) the liquidation of political, social and economic ties with the Japanese Mainland,
- b) the restoration of living standards consistent with those existing prior to the war by: the physical restoration of damaged property and facilities; the continued improvement of health and sanitation; the institution of a sound program of economic development and trade, industry and agriculture along lines which would ensure that the profits and benefits thereof accrued to the native inhabitants and which would assist them in achieving the highest possible level of economic independence; the establishment of an educational program adapted to native capabilities and to the local environment; and the early establishment of self-governing communities<sup>490</sup>

<sup>487</sup>Leonard Weiss, loc. cit., p. 234.

<sup>488</sup>Since the US had been planning to launch the final assault on Japan from the Ryūkyūs and other peripheral island groups, large numbers of troops and supplies had been amassed in those areas. The US Military Government was able to disperse these unused military food, medical, and clothing supplies amongst the local Okinawan population. Many thousands of lives were saved by this initiative.

<sup>489</sup>Ota Masahide, "The Occupation of Okinawa and 'Postwar Reforms' of Japan," *Ryūkyū Daigaku Hōbungakubu Kiyō (Bulletin of the College of Law and Literature, University of the Ryūkyūs)*, No 24, November, 1981, p. 63.

<sup>490</sup>See: Leonard Weiss, loc. cit., p. 234, and United States Department of the Army, Army General Staff, *MacArthur in Japan; The Occupation - Military Phase*, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1966, p. 86.

It is one thing to have formulated a plan, but another to actually implement it, and the Military Government was hindered in the latter respect in any number of ways. Overall authority of the Military Government itself was bounced between the Army and Navy during the first year of the occupation, until it finally came to reside with the Army in July 1946. This created a certain degree of instability, heightened by inter-factional rivalries, which made the task of day to day administration harder.<sup>491</sup> There was also the problem of finding the financial resources necessary to carry out the set objectives in light of the well-stated American policy of minimizing its economic commitment to the islands. Refusal to commit beyond what was absolutely necessary was further manifested in a distinct lack of appropriately trained personnel assigned to carry out the Okinawa reconstruction program. Large numbers of specialists were in the process of being discharged, whilst many were on their last tour of duty. Okinawa, now of seemingly little importance in the light of Japan's defeat, came to be regarded as a "Botany Bay"<sup>492</sup> by many stationed there. Those officers who had arrived on Okinawa with a high level of enthusiasm towards the task of reconstruction, more often than not found their idealistic zeal was at odds with those around them. Ultimately, there was the not so inconsequential matter of the cultural and linguistic differences between the occupier and occupied. Despite such problems, and within a short space of time, the Military Government had made reasonable advances towards the targets set in the initial directive. Rehabilitation projects in all areas had met with some success.

One of the major problems facing the Military Government was the resettlement of a dislocated Okinawan population. By mid-1945, two-thirds of these people had been returned to their native towns and villages, but since 90% of all private housing had been destroyed during the war and since many homeowners found that their land had been incorporated into a military facility during their absence, there was an urgent need to embark on a massive housing construction program. Such a program was instigated in November of 1945, and within eight months more than 18,000 small-prefabricated homes had been constructed.<sup>493</sup> Although houses were being erected at a rate of 2,500 per month, it was estimated that more than 70,000 would be required to cope with the existing population and with the high numbers of Okinawan evacuees soon to be repatriated.<sup>494</sup>

Despite considerable damage to facilities and the very high student-to-teacher ratio as a result of staff shortages, school enrollment had reached 133,536 by July 1946 and 166,501 by November

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<sup>491</sup>One of the biggest problems, even at this early stage, revolved around the problem of land allocation. Upon the seizure of Okinawa in 1945, the United States military acquired in excess of 40,000 acres of Okinawan land that was to be used for the construction of airfields, ammunition dumps, and the stationing of US military personnel prior to the anticipated major assault on mainland Japan. Competition for prime land areas between the various branches of the military at this stage was perhaps understandable, but once the Okinawa campaign had ended the principal competition was between the military commanders, who were still intent upon proceeding with a base construction programme, and the Okinawan Military Government, which was intent on acquiring land for its civil reconstruction plans. Needless to say, whilst the war with Japan was continuing the military was able to acquire whatever funding was necessary from the US Congress to persecute its goal. Once the war had ended, however, a base construction programme was no longer seen as necessary and funding was curtailed. As was characteristic of the entire term of the American occupation of Okinawa, funding for civil development programmes was never independent of military objectives. Large influxes of US capital into Okinawa can be traced with pinpoint accuracy to periods in which the United States saw it as necessary to strengthen its military presence in Asia: particularly during the Korean War in the early 1950's and the Vietnam War in 1965.

<sup>492</sup>Miyagi Etsujiro, *Okinawa Senryō no 27 Nenkan (The 27-Year American Occupation of Okinawa)*, Iwanami Booklet No 268, Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo, 1992, p. 18.

<sup>493</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., p. 264.

<sup>494</sup>Ibid. pp. 264-265.

of the same year.<sup>495</sup> Communication and transportation facilities were largely functioning by the latter part of 1946, and a public health program had, with the exception of an increasing number of malaria cases,<sup>496</sup> begun to control the spread of disease resulting from poor sanitation and the squalid conditions many people were forced to live in. With such a mountainous reconstruction program to achieve, the vast majority of those able were employed. In November 1946, unemployment stood at 8.8%. Of the actual working population of 155,000, the majority of whom were engaged in the various rehabilitation projects, some 15,000 were employed directly by the United States military.<sup>497</sup> With the absence of a monetary economy, labor, like goods, had to be requisitioned directly and assigned certain tasks. Such work was conducted on a strictly voluntary basis. The reward for completing a full day's work would be an extra half ration of food.<sup>498</sup>

There was little chance that Okinawa's principal industry, agriculture, could ever be reconstructed in the postwar period to resemble what it had been prior to the war. Massive destruction as a result of bombing and shelling was one reason. Another was that approximately one-third of the best available farmland on the island had been removed from both the private and public domains to serve the purposes of the United States military. Such lands, if ever returned, would be maintained under military control until the ultimate postwar status of Okinawa Prefecture had been decided by the Allied Powers, and could therefore not be included in any reconstruction planning. For the moment, the Military Government did as much as possible to restore some level of normality. A system for the importation and redistribution of livestock had been instituted in April 1946. Full offshore fishing rights had been restored by the same time and, in June 1946, the Okinawa Central Agricultural Association, with a membership of some 70,000, was reestablished. As of July 1946, somewhere in the region of 11,000 acres of arable land were in production, but by the latter part of 1947 this productive acreage had risen to between 40 and 45,000.<sup>499</sup>

Although manufacturing industries had been of lesser importance in the prewar period, the Military Government placed substantial emphasis on the restoration and promotion of this sector both as a means of rebuilding Okinawa, and, in light of the heavy reliance on imports of basic products, as a means of producing exportable items that would assist Okinawa in achieving a balance of trade. To these ends, a two-year plan for industry was adopted which set as priorities: the increased production of necessary construction materials such as cement, sandstone, tiles and bricks; the development of an iron-working industry capable of both repairing and producing machines so as to decrease the reliance on imports from Japan; and the expansion of local industries such as pottery, weaving, and lacquerware.<sup>500</sup> Military planners hoped at least to restore Okinawa's manufacturing industry to its prewar level of development.

Whereas there was an adequate supply of labor to perform the various and necessary tasks, there was a distinct shortage of materials, capital and enterprise. With this imbalance in mind, the Military Government placed the restoration of a monetary economy as one of its top priorities. Before such a move could be instituted, it would be necessary to obtain a minimum of exchangeable

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<sup>495</sup>Ibid. p. 266.

<sup>496</sup>There were approximately 177,000 cases of Malaria in 1947, but by 1950 less than 1,500.

<sup>497</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., p. 265.

<sup>498</sup>Leonard Weiss, loc. cit., p. 237.

<sup>499</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryūkyūs, 1945-1950*, Army Historical Series, United States Army, Washington D.C., 1988, p. 168.

<sup>500</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., pp. 262-263.

goods and services, and to create a sound administrative structure. In the long term, it was believed, the Military Government's newly-instituted agricultural and industrial plans would in part lead to the creation of the necessary conditions to fulfil the former requirements, but until such conditions were obtained the chief responsibility for supporting a monetary economy would fall on the Military Government itself. As Daniel Karasik states, "after examining the statistics of this planned economy it is quite evident that without heavy subsidization by the Military Government the whole system would collapse."<sup>501</sup> Accepting this burden,<sup>502</sup> a monetary economy was formally restored on Okinawa on 1st May 1946. During May wage levels and prices were set so that cash money would officially begin changing hands in June. The so-called B-Yen,<sup>503</sup> issued by the US Military Government, became the new legal tender. As an indication of the value of this currency, it was estimated that the average cost of living for a family of five was in the region of 190 B-yen per month, whilst the average monthly wage of an Okinawan civilian employed by the US military stood at around 114 B-Yen per month.<sup>504</sup>

The final condition necessary for the full implementation of a monetary economy, was the creation of a sound administrative structure. This structure found its genesis in the creation of the 15-man Okinawan Advisory Council on 15th August 1945. During the early part of 1946, the role and functions of this body were expanded to cope with new demands, and the 15 members of the Advisory Council each took on responsibility for specific departments; such as education, public health, judicial affairs, and the like. By April of 1946, these individual bodies had been unified as the Central Okinawan Administration. This organization increasingly began to meet the necessary criteria for the development of a stable monetary economy as had been required by the Military Government. By the early 1950's, with the establishment of the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands (GRI), local government had finally achieved, in the eyes of the occupier, a sound administrative structure.

Despite the efforts of the Military Government on Okinawa to make progress towards further economic, social, and political rehabilitation for the local population, by the middle of 1946 things had come to a virtual standstill. Interest in the civil affairs of the island tended to work in tandem with military interest, but at this moment in time the United States was pursuing the development of military base projects in other areas, such as Japan and Korea, and was content to attach only minor importance to its base plans for Okinawa. The Military Government was no longer able to move forward with its civil reconstruction program until it was assured that it would, on the one hand, receive the necessary funding from the US Congress to meet its obligations and, on the other, be able to utilize much of the land currently occupied by the American military. Such matters, in turn, could not be positively determined until a resolution was found to break the

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<sup>501</sup>Ibid. p. 265.

<sup>502</sup>At this stage funding for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Ryūkyūs was not allocated separately by the US Congress, but was part of a large general appropriation for Japan. The Military Government on Okinawa had to go through General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, in Tokyo, to acquire the necessary financial resources.

<sup>503</sup>Although its value was to fluctuate, the official dollar/B-Yen exchange rate as of May, 1946 was 1 dollar = 15 B-Yen. From March, 1947, until April, 1950, the exchange rate had risen to 1 dollar = 50 B-Yen. From 1950, through to late-1958, when the US dollar became the official legal tender in Okinawa, the dollar/B-Yen rate had risen further and stabilised at 1 dollar = 120 B-Yen. Japanese currency was also accepted as legal tender on Okinawa. 1 B-Yen was roughly equivalent to 3 Japanese yen. Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi (Economic History of Postwar Okinawa)*, edited and compiled by Makino Hirota, Bank of the Ryūkyūs, Naha, 1984, p. 202.

<sup>504</sup>Daniel Karasik, loc. cit., p. 266.



deadlock between the US Defense and State Departments over the shape of basic US postwar policy for East and Southeast Asia. For the next two years, as Arnold Fisch states, "military government in the Ryūkyūs was relegated to a 'business as usual' status with a corresponding diminution in civil affairs initiatives."<sup>505</sup>

#### **IV-2-2 National Security Council Paper, Number 13/3**

While defense plans for the main Japanese islands had not yet been agreed upon, there had been broad general agreement upon the need to retain and develop the military bases on Okinawa. In June 1948, MacArthur urged such action, asserting that communist successes in China "raised the specter of Soviet access to air bases from which it could threaten Japan."<sup>506</sup> This view was, in turn, backed up by US Air Force officials who argued that "Sino-Soviet air operations from the Shanghai area could easily mount an attack against the now sparsely defended Ryūkyūs."<sup>507</sup> George Kennan, head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff (PPS) had reached the same conclusion. In a top secret draft paper prepared for the National Security Council, entitled *Recommendations With Respect to US Policy Toward Japan*, in May, 1948, he asserted that:

"The United States Government should make up its mind at this point that it intends to retain on a long-term basis the facilities at Okinawa, and the base there should be developed accordingly. The United States Government agencies responsible for administering the islands should promptly formulate and carry out a program on a long-term basis for the economic and social well-being and, to the extent practicable, for the eventual self-support of the natives"<sup>508</sup>

In October, 1948, President Truman was given the recommendation that the United States should "retain on a long-term basis the facilities at Okinawa and other such facilities as are deemed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be necessary in the Ryūkyūs Islands...The base on Okinawa should be immediately developed."<sup>509</sup> On 6th May 1949, President Truman accepted National Security Council paper, NSC 13/3, as official US policy. Okinawa's bases would be developed, but in conjunction with a policy to "alleviate the burden now borne by those of the Ryūkyū Islands...incident to their contribution to occupation costs, to the extent necessary to establish political and economic security."<sup>510</sup>

The particular conditions on Okinawa differed considerably from those on the main Japanese islands, where a good deal of the economic infrastructure had survived the ravages of war. Therefore, and as far as State Department officials were concerned, unlike the mainland Japanese, "the citizens of Okinawa were in no position to underwrite occupation costs, even if the United States wished them to do so...apart from their willingness and ability to supply labor for such projects, the Ryūkyūans lacked the capacity in the foreseeable future to materially support their own reconstruction."<sup>511</sup> The Japanese economy may have been in a mess, but it was still able to provide

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<sup>505</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>506</sup>Ibid. p. 154.

<sup>507</sup>Ibid. p. 154.

<sup>508</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - The Far East and Australasia 1948*, op. cit., p. 777.

<sup>509</sup>Ibid. p. 877.

<sup>510</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 7 - The Far East and Australasia 1949*, Part Two, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1976, p. 731.

<sup>511</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 155.

some \$297 million in fiscal year 1951 towards to the costs of the American occupation of the main islands.<sup>512</sup>

As a remedy towards this economic disparity, the United States approved a formula whereby the Ryūkyū Islands would be separated economically from the main Japanese islands. This move may be seen also as a direct precursor to the administrative separation of the two territories by the terms of the Treaty of Peace with Japan in September 1951. By US Government rationale, and in relation to the 'residual sovereignty' statement, a sovereign Japan "could hardly be expected to provide material support for an American occupation of an area over which it retained only an implied sovereignty at best."<sup>513</sup> The economic separation formula was accepted as official US policy by President Truman in an amended paragraph to National Security Council paper, NSC 13/3, on 6th May, 1949.

In line with State Department policy for the Ryūkyūs, in May 1949, Douglas L. Oliver was dispatched from the Office of Far Eastern Affairs to assess the economic and political situation on Okinawa. His report was critical of virtually all aspects of the current military administration. The Army responded by sending its own inspector, Under Secretary of the Army, Tracy S. Voorhees, later in the same year. Contrary perhaps to the Army's expectations, Voorhees' report echoed, in essence, everything Oliver had said. Like Oliver, he applauded the great strides made by the Military Government on Okinawa during the immediate aftermath of the war, but lambasted the level of progress made in subsequent years. As Arnold Fisch has stated, "his acceptance of these realities was significant because it indicated that the Department of the Army was ready to accept the Department of State's assessment: something was wrong with the administration of the island bastion and something had to be done to revitalize its defenses and its social and economic base."<sup>514</sup> Once a policy had been formulated, the next most important step was to put an officer in charge that was capable of overseeing its implementation. To these ends, the incumbent Commanding General, Ryūkyūs Command, Major General William W. Eagles, was replaced with Major General Josef R. Sheetz, on 1st October 1949.

### **IV-3 Convergence and Divergence**

The economies of the Ryūkyū Islands and Japan had been formally separated on 6th May, 1949, ostensibly for two purposes: 1) to relieve the Japanese people and MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo of the burden of Okinawa's rehabilitation and reconstruction, which was viewed as an unnecessary hindrance to economic development in the main islands, and; 2) to constitute the first step in a full separation policy for the Ryūkyūs that would guarantee the United States complete military freedom of action in the post-Peace Treaty period. Once Japan and the Ryūkyūs had been split into two separate territories, however, The United States' policy increasingly moved towards bringing the two areas back into one large interdependent economic system which also included several other Southeast Asian countries. This US policy of divergence in order to achieve convergence needs some explanation.

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<sup>512</sup>Ibid. p. 156.

<sup>513</sup>Ibid. p. 156.

<sup>514</sup>Ibid. p. 158.

#### IV-3-1 The Japanese Economy: 'Enyasa' and the Promotion of Exports

Although MacArthur had achieved virtually all of his political occupation objectives by the middle of 1947, very little had been done to tackle the severe economic problems Japan had been left with in the aftermath of war. SCAP's directives had quite clearly stated that he was simply to ensure that the Japanese authorities implemented programs that served the following purposes: "a) to avoid acute economic distress; b) to assure just and impartial distribution of available supplies; 3) to meet the requirements for reparations deliveries agreed upon by the Allied Governments, and; 4) to facilitate the restoration of the Japanese economy so that the reasonable peaceful requirements of the population can be satisfied."<sup>515</sup> These very modest objectives were based on the US Government's belief that since the current economic situation in Japan was "the direct outcome of its own behavior...the Allies will not undertake the burden of repairing the damage."<sup>516</sup>

During the latter part of 1947, however, US policy towards Japan had turned about-face, and circumstances dictated that Japan be prepared both politically and economically to: 1) resume her former independent status within the world community, and; 2) to become the United States' principal ally against the threat of a communist hegemony in Asia. As George Kennan and his PPS had already observed, Japan was not yet stable enough to take on either responsibility. From the latter part of 1947 onwards, occupation policy changed its emphasis from punitive and political, to non-punitive and economic. This was the so-called 'Reverse Course.'

In September 1947, a report prepared by US businessman and attorney, James Lee Kauffman, was circulated in Washington. It was, on the one hand, an open criticism of thus-far implemented US occupation economic policies towards Japan and, on the other, a recommendation as to such measures which could be taken to facilitate the reintroduction of foreign capital and to bring about an economic recovery. For Kauffman, Japan was "an attractive prospect for American industry and a fertile field for American capital,"<sup>517</sup> but not under existing conditions. The principal problem, was that whilst the Japanese economy was in the hands of "sincere and hard-working men,"<sup>518</sup> none were trained in economics. Furthermore, the "economic experiment"<sup>519</sup> currently being conducted, such as the elimination of the *zaibatsu* through MacArthur's Anti-Monopoly Law in April, 1947, constituted the imposition of an "un-American system."<sup>520</sup> What MacArthur and his staff were actually achieving, argued Kauffman, was the installation of a bureaucracy of Americans in Japan which "will make that country a dependent for years to come."<sup>521</sup> By bringing in trained economists the Japanese economy could be shifted away from its current dependency on American aid towards a self-sufficient state within a reasonable period.

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<sup>515</sup>"United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan, 6th September, 1945, Part IV - Economic." Kashima Heiwa Kenkyūsho., *Nihon Gaikō Shuyō Bunsho: Nenpyō - Volume One, 1941-1960 (Basic Documents on Japanese Foreign Relations 1941-1960)*, Genshobō, 1983, pp. 88-89.

<sup>516</sup>Ibid. p. 88.

<sup>517</sup>James Lee Kauffman, "Report on Conditions in Japan, 6th September, 1947." A photocopy of this document was made available to the author by Dr. Gordon Daniels at the Department of History, University of Sheffield, England.

<sup>518</sup>Ibid.

<sup>519</sup>Ibid.

<sup>520</sup>Ibid.

<sup>521</sup>Ibid.

The Kauffman report had a considerable influence, both on those Congressmen who objected to the spiraling costs of the occupation for the American taxpayer,<sup>522</sup> and on the pro-Japan lobby which was seeking the restoration of trade. Kauffman's views were not lost on George Kennan, who had taken a keen interest in the 6th September report. The two men, along with James Forrestal, head of the investment firm Dillon Read & Co, Kenneth Royall, Secretary of the Army, and William Draper, Under Secretary of the Army, had discussed Kauffman's report at some length and were basically very positive about its contents. Kennan stated before his historic visit to Japan in February 1948, that the United States should:

"devise policies toward Japan which would assure the security of that country from communist penetration and domination as well as from military attack by the Soviet Union and would permit Japan's economic potential to become once again an important force in the affairs of the area, and conducive to peace and stability"<sup>523</sup>

Under Secretary of the Army, William Draper, was convinced that the long-term economic recovery of Japan was dependent upon her gaining access to her traditional non-dollar sources of supply and markets in Korea, China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. He proposed that Congress should fund an Economic Recovery in Occupied Areas (EROA) program to the tune of \$180 million that would supplement the already existing Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) fund which stood at some \$400 million per year. If the United States injected the necessary initial capital and other assistance which would provide industrial raw materials to insure export-oriented production, it would be "laying the basis for a self-supporting Japan no longer dependent on the United States."<sup>524</sup> Draper was principally responsible for the dispatch of a group of businessmen to Japan, who in turn concurred with his assessment regarding Japan's access to Asia's raw materials and export markets. On 26th April 1948, The Johnson Committee report was published. It urged, as Michael Schaller states:

"the elimination of most restrictions on production and the cancellation of reparations. To help achieve the needed nine-fold increase in exports, the report called for an eventual shift in Japanese food and other imports from the dollar area to the sterling and Far Eastern Areas, with payment made in Japanese industrial exports. Production was to be accelerated by the drastic relaxation of anti-monopoly measures, placing severe curbs on organized labor, controlling inflation, fixing the yen's foreign exchange value, and discouraging domestic consumption in favor of exports"<sup>525</sup>

Based on Draper's recommendations,<sup>526</sup> President Truman issued a nine-point stabilization directive for the Japanese economy, and on 2nd March, 1949, ordered the appointment of the

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<sup>522</sup>As Frederick Dunn has pointed out, the occupation of Japan "was costing a million dollars per day, and actually the apportioned aid, even apart from army expenses, was nearly this great: 108 million in 1945-1946, 294 million in 1946-1947, 357 million in 1947-1948." When increased funds, to the tune of \$725 million, were demanded by the War Department for relief in Germany, Japan (and the Ryūkyūs), and Korea, the Chairman of the US House Appropriations Committee, Herbert Hoover, suggested that immediate peace treaties with Japan and Germany should be concluded on the grounds that "these countries would then be able to participate in the capitalist economy of the world, which would render them self-sufficient and no longer dependent on United States aid". Frederick S. Dunn, *Peace-Making and Settlement with Japan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1963, pp. 62-63

<sup>523</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, *Ryūkyū-Japan-US Relations, 1945-1972*, Abiva Publishing House, Quezon, Philippines, 1989, p. 46.

<sup>524</sup>Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1985, p. 127.

<sup>525</sup>Ibid. p. 129.

<sup>526</sup>Draper, like Kauffman, felt that there were too many competing agencies involved in reconstructing the Japanese economy, and that this was entirely counter-productive. He felt that a Presidential directive would be the most effective

Detroit Banker and ex-financial advisor in occupied Germany, Joseph M. Dodge, to oversee its implementation.<sup>527</sup> Dodge was to be an economic 'advisor' to MacArthur. Dodge believed that if Japan was to be brought back into the world of international trade and an emphasis was to be put on the promotion of her exports, the Japanese economy would need to be as free from government controls as possible. He also believed that the recovery so far achieved was artificial, in that it was still based on the 'stilts' of American aid and government subsidies. Whilst the Japanese Government's economic policy was centered on emphasizing recovery first, Dodge's was based on the primary task of achieving stability. His priorities were set on balancing the budget, reducing public expenditure, decreasing the scope of government intervention in the private economy and, particularly, dealing with inflation.

The United States had decided that its policy towards Japan was to be fundamentally based on the promotion of her exports, and one of Joseph Dodge's most enduring measures was to establish a fixed exchange rate of 360 yen to the dollar on 25th April, 1949. On the one hand, this would ensure that Japanese exports would be highly competitive in the world market and therefore allow her to obtain much-needed foreign capital. On the other, this exchange rate would give the United States a "free ride" in terms of its military spending.<sup>528</sup>

#### **IV-3-2 Okinawa's Economy: Base Development and the 'Endaka' Policy**

Whilst two major factors determined that United States economic policy towards Okinawa would take a different form from that instituted on the Japanese mainland: 1) the absence of any industrial base which could act as the foundation for a rejuvenated and expanded manufacturing sector, and; 2) her inability to be self-sufficient in certain basic requirements even if all her industries were restored to their pre-war conditions, one major factor had the net effect of deciding which direction economic policy would take: the continuing dilemma of how to provide for Japan's security in the post-treaty period. Japan's tacit approval of a long-term American presence in the Ryūkyūs solved the problem of her own defense, and provided the United States with a keystone area in her line of containment against communist expansion.

Acceptance of NSC 13/3 in May, 1949, committed the US to embark on a large-scale base construction program which would update and maintain strategically important military facilities on Okinawa whilst, at the same time, promoting and supporting the development of the Ryūkyūan

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way of gaining a measure of cross-departmental cooperation. Draper recommended 10 specific measures which should be included in any such directive: the establishment of a yen-dollar exchange rate; permitting Japanese trade representatives to travel abroad; establishment in Tokyo of foreign trade missions of countries not already represented; re-negotiation of the Cotton Credit loan to extend the period of repayment; establishment of the Revolving Fund; re-establishment of facilities for the permanent residence of foreign businessmen in Japan; simplification of the procedure for clearance of foreign trade transactions and the removal of duplication of Japanese Government functions on the part of SCAP; encouragement of private loans to Japanese business; determination of policy on patents, trademarks and utility models; restoration of business property to United Nations nationals in Japan. United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - The Far East and Australasia 1948*, op. cit., page 714.

<sup>527</sup>Joseph Dodge announced Truman's nine-point economic stabilisation directive at a press conference in Tokyo on 7th March, 1949. Perhaps commensurate with his increased influence, this stabilisation directive was hereafter referred to as the "Dodge Line" rather than the "Truman Line" or, in reality, the "Draper Line".

<sup>528</sup>Makino Hirotsuka, "Senryō Shita no Keizai: Doru no Seijigaku" (The Okinawan Economy under the American Occupation: Dollar Politics), in: Miyagi, Etsujiro (Ed.), *Shimpojiumu: Okinawa Senryō - Mirai e Mukete (Symposium: The American Occupation of Okinawa - Looking Towards the Future)*, Okinawa Senryō Kokusai Shinpoijiumu Jikkō Iinkai, Hirugi Sha, Naha, 1993, pp. 320-321.

economy. If the economic and social advancement of the local population was not undertaken in conjunction with the base-building program civil disorder could result. As Arnold Fisch has pointed out:

"the Department of State posited and President Truman accepted the proposition that the success of America's Far Eastern policy depended in large measure on military government programs fostering political stabilization on Okinawa. Failure to do so might threaten American bases with social and political upheaval born of Cold War pressures in Asia"<sup>529</sup>

In essence, the relationship between the military bases and the civilian economy was to be one of mutuality of purpose. The United States would devise construction programs which met the needs of the military in terms of required facilities first and foremost, but such programs would also be devised so as to maximize the use of civilian labor; to utilize as far as possible materials and services provided by local companies, and; to develop certain facilities, such as roads, bridges, harbors, power plants, and the like, which could be used both by the military and civilian sectors. The Nold Mission to Okinawa in October, 1949, which consisted of civilian and military engineers, placed a heavy emphasis on the construction of such joint-use facilities, as did the Martino Mission, which came to survey economic conditions in the following month.

The overall function of such projects, was not to foster a total dependency on base construction, however; which by its very nature was finite, but to stimulate local activity which went above and beyond immediate military needs. If base building stimulated the creation of civilian construction companies, these companies would also be able to handle projects in the civilian sector. The United States' aim was to 'prime the pump', so to speak; as it had with regard to the initial procurement of industrial raw materials for Japan and with the restitution of a monetary economy on Okinawa, and to encourage the development of industries which would be able to contribute to the local economy long after the bases had been built. The first phase of this economic reconstruction plan was instigated when the United States Congress authorized a construction budget of \$74 million, with a further \$25 million in Government Appropriation for Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) funding for fiscal year 1950.<sup>530</sup>

A vast influx of capital was not in itself enough to solve Okinawa's current economic problems; foremost amongst which was the extreme disparity between the supply and demand of certain basic commodities. A renewed base commitment on the part of the US would also necessarily involve the stationing of greater numbers of military personnel which would place even greater stress on the demand side of the existing disparity. US economic policy-planners could choose to tackle this problem in one of two ways: to invest heavily in the local manufacturing industry as a means of raising productivity to meet demands, or; to construct mechanisms which facilitated the importation of all necessary requirements from abroad. Given the poor state of Okinawa's industrial base and the

<sup>529</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>530</sup>Ibid., p. 164. GARIOA funding for Okinawa was capital appropriated from the US Congress for the exclusive purpose of supporting Military Government programmes which *directly benefited the Okinawan economy*. GARIOA funding for Okinawa had been appropriated from Congress since 1947, but with the economic separation of the islands from Japan proper on 6th May, 1949, and the subsequent "pay as you go" policy which freed occupied Japan from the burden of underwriting Okinawa's occupation costs, these GARIOA funds were increased. GARIOA funds would be used to purchase goods, the sale of which would generate revenue for use in reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. In fiscal year 1950, GARIOA funding in total amounted to \$49,581,000, which constituted a 500% increase on the 1947 figure of \$9,260,000. See: Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 1372.

time it would take to reconstruct such enterprises to the required level of productivity, the first option was discarded in favor of the latter. Local Okinawan industries would be promoted as far as was possible, although the mechanisms needed to support an import-based economy would necessarily hinder the export of locally manufactured products.

Although the currencies of Okinawa and Japan proper had been thus far aligned, the polarized nature of their economies dictated that the continuation of this system would have a destructive effect. In Japan, the exchange rate had been geared towards an export-oriented economy and set at 360 yen to the dollar on 25th April 1949, leaving the US to decide on the exchange rate for Okinawa. On 12th December 1949, MacArthur's General Headquarters in Tokyo recommended in its Economic Mission to the Ryūkyūs report, that the internal exchange ratio of the Okinawan B-yen:

"should be altered to some point within the range of 120 to 140 yen to the dollar with a distinct preference for the lower ratio. Cross ratio to the Japanese yen and Philippine peso should be in terms of dollars. Export considerations do not warrant the highest ratio in the range. The lowest ratio in the range is preferred so as to favor low prices on incentive goods purchased from Japan with Ryūkyūan dollar earnings. Finally, the lower the ratio the less the inflationary pressures therefrom"<sup>531</sup>

From 12th April, 1950, the internal exchange rate of the Okinawan currency was realigned at 120 B-yen to the dollar, and on 20th October of the same year, according to Article 3 of Military Government Ordinance No 26, Japan was designated as a 'foreign country' with regard to foreign exchange and trade procedures.<sup>532</sup>

Such currency realignment measures allowed the importation of cheap, quality goods from the foreign market which would go some way towards correcting the supply-demand imbalance and bringing a measure of stability to commodity prices, but this stability could not be maintained unless prudent measures were also adopted in terms of currency circulation. Although a vast amount of capital was targeted towards the necessary employment of a large local workforce for the base-building projects, it was determined that the wage levels should be restrained as far as possible and set at the lower end of the scale. If wages were too high the cost of goods would invariably rise into the bargain. In subsequent years the United States would be severely criticized for its 'slave labor' policies, but at this early stage wage controls were imposed as a necessary anti-inflationary measure and as part of the overall 'start-up' package.

#### **IV-3-3 Economic Integration and the "Double Use of the Dollar"**

By 1949, and especially after the communist victory in China in October of that year, American efforts in Asia were almost exclusively directed towards the economic recovery of Japan. US policy emphasized freeing Japan from a dependence on expensive dollar-based commodities which were forcing up the price of her manufactured goods and therefore limiting her market outlets. Some form of regional economic integration needed to be organized whereby Japan could purchase the vast bulk of her necessary imports, particularly industrial raw materials, from the same non-

<sup>531</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 293.

<sup>532</sup>Government of the Ryūkyū Islands, *USCAR Legislation 1957: A Complete Collection of Outstanding Proclamations, Ordinances and Directives with Amendments Thereto Issued by USCAR and its Predecessors Since 1945*, Administrative Section, Secretariat of the Legislature, Government of the Ryūkyū Islands, Naha City, Okinawa, 31st May, 1957, p. 114.

dollar Asian areas that would constitute her export markets. Policy-planners had originally envisaged Japan achieving this goal within the China-Manchuria-Korea market, but once China had fallen attention was directed towards the disputed colonial states of Southeast Asia which appeared as, "practicable spots to draw the line against communist expansion beyond China."<sup>533</sup> In March 1949, General MacArthur had drawn America's line of defense from the Philippines through the Ryūkyūs, Japan, and the Aleutians to Alaska. In January of the following year Secretary of State Acheson described the same area as being America's 'defensive perimeter.' Thus, by the latter part of 1949, regional economic recovery programs and US defense strategies had been aligned. Both were focussed heavily on Japan.

The United States was funding any number of disparate economic aid programs in China, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, French Indochina, the Dutch East Indies, and a number of British colonies, with the express aim of fostering in Asia strong, independent governments, friendly towards American interests and opposed to communism. It was determined that, as far as possible, these aid programs should be integrated, with Japan as the main source of supply. As Michael Schaller states:

"dollars for the purchase of supplies bound for the region could be spent acquiring these products in Japan, even though Japanese prices might be somewhat higher than for similar procurements in America. The Benefit would come from the multiplier effect, in that the dollars would benefit both Japan and surrounding countries. Development projects in 'colonial and other under-developed areas,'...could be quickly and cheaply begun by utilizing both Japanese materials and technical assistance"<sup>534</sup>

Joseph Dodge, the new economic 'advisor' to SCAP,<sup>535</sup> was a keen advocate of such a program, and especially highlighted the benefit for the American taxpayer. By integrating economic aid packages, he asserted, each dollar "may be used several times over."<sup>536</sup> Nowhere was the 'double use of the dollar' policy used more effectively than in Ryūkyū-Japan economic relations.

In October, 1949, when Congress authorized close to \$74 million dollars (which included \$22 million specifically for military housing) for the Okinawa military base construction program and a further \$25 million in GARIOA funds, a verbal directive was issued to the occupation officials to the effect that the procurement of all materials and services should be made, as far as was possible, in the Ryūkyūs and Japan. On 30th December, the Public Relations Department at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Tōkyō announced that in order to obtain the necessary tools, materials, and skilled workers required in the large-scale building works being carried out in Okinawa, the cooperation of Japanese companies, both large and small, was being sought. GHQ estimated the cost of the required materials to be somewhere in the region of \$25 million. Therefore, and as Shinobu Seizaburō points out, "Japanese capitalism, which was suffering from the effects of the 1949 rationalization slump, looked to base construction on Okinawa as a great opportunity."<sup>537</sup>

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<sup>533</sup>Michael Schaller, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>534</sup>Ibid. p. 147.

<sup>535</sup>Once the United States had decided to implement its "reverse course" policies towards Japan, Douglas MacArthur's once unassailable influence steadily declined. From the mid to latter part of 1949 Joseph Dodge, although only a humble advisor to SCAP, was without doubt more influential in Japanese affairs than SCAP himself.

<sup>536</sup>Michael Schaller, op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>537</sup>Shinobu Seizaburō, "The Korean War as an Epoch of Contemporary History," *The Developing Economies*, Vol. 4, No 1, March, 1966, p. 26.



Most of the construction contracts offered thus far by the Ryūkyū Command, Okinawa, had been divided between Filipino, American, and Okinawan firms, with the local companies gaining a sizeable amount of business. As per Congress directives to invest in local economic activity, US monies had stimulated the growth of at least two major Okinawan construction firms; the Kokuba Gumi and the Oshiro Gumi, who handled between them the construction of Makiminato Ordnance Works, Chibana Bridge, the American military hospital in Chatan, and any number of 'joint-use' projects, such as roads.<sup>538</sup> This promoted economic expansion and facilitated the task of Military Government economic planners, as Arnold Fisch states, "by assuring more local jobs and consumer revenues."<sup>539</sup>

Starting in June 1950, Ryūkyū Command began soliciting bids for the reconstruction of Okinawa's Bucknerville water system, and for the first time opened up the market to include Japanese firms. By successfully underbidding their competitors Japanese firms secured the contract. This was to become somewhat of a continuing trend. In the mid-1950's, during the most intensive period of base construction, Filipino building firms had been priced out of the market, and only Japanese, Okinawan, and American contractors remained. Of these three, there were 7 American, 8 Okinawan, and a staggering 42 Japanese contractors involved in building projects.<sup>540</sup>

Although base construction on Okinawa was an extremely important source of dollar revenue for Japan during the early part of the 1950's, contributing greatly to her accumulation of foreign capital, this was never more important than during the latter part of the 1950's, particularly during 1957 and 1958.<sup>541</sup> Out of Japan's total dollar reserve of \$13 billion, some \$4 billion was derived directly from Okinawa.<sup>542</sup> Base construction revenues were part of a package which, perhaps more importantly, aligned the promotion of Japan's exports with Okinawa's need to import. In 1949, this policy had first been initiated when Major-General Sheetz had secured a trade agreement with MacArthur's Far East Command in Tokyo whereby the Ryūkyūs would purchase some \$9 million worth of goods from Japan. In exchange, Japan would buy \$1 million worth of goods from the Ryūkyūs.<sup>543</sup> In July of 1952, the United States permitted the completion of a trade agreement between the Ryūkyūs and Japan, the 'Note Concerning Trade and Financial Arrangements Between the Japanese Mainland and the Nansei Shotō,' which established special trade and financial arrangements; i.e. no tariff barriers, between them.<sup>544</sup> By 1954 a completely interdependent economic system had developed, in which Japan provided 69% of all of the Ryūkyūs imports, to the tune of \$37,609,000, and accepted more than 80% of her exports, worth a little in excess of \$10 million.<sup>545</sup> The United States had successfully implemented the 'double use of the dollar' policy by effectively aligning the polarized export/import-based economies of two of her most important economic aid recipients, thereby attaining an increased value for each Congress-appropriated dollar.

<sup>538</sup>Arnold G. Fisch, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>539</sup>Ibid. p. 165.

<sup>540</sup>Makino Hirotaka, loc. cit., p. 327.

<sup>541</sup>Prior to September, 1958, when the dollar became the legal tender on Okinawa, outgoing moneys had first to be converted from the Okinawan B-Yen into the dollar. This would necessarily involve conversion costs.

<sup>542</sup>Makino Hirotaka, loc. cit., p. 327.

<sup>543</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 7 - The Far East and Australasia 1949*, op. cit., p. 912.

<sup>544</sup>Watanabe Akio, *The Okinawa Problem: A Chapter in Japan-US Relations*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1970, p. 32.

<sup>545</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 1321.

#### IV-4 Economic Progress and the Shift to Long-Term Planning

The United States' short-term economic policies for the Ryūkyūs proved to be largely successful once the base construction program had been initiated. In 1950, particularly after the outbreak of the Korean War in June, US Congress appropriated funding had begun to filter into the local economy in greater amounts. Flooding into Okinawa were dollars for base construction programs; dollars for Korean War military procurements; dollars in exchange for the junk and scrap metal left in the aftermath of the war that Okinawans were now allowed to export to the States for cash; and dollars in US GARIOA aid programs.

##### IV-4-1 The Economic Effects of the Base Construction Program

The United States' economic policies were clearly most effective in the area of employment, and almost entirely the result of the base construction program. In 1947, the unemployment figure stood at 7.2%, but by the latter part of 1950 had been squeezed down to just 0.4%.<sup>546</sup> Although this figure was to rise and fall in subsequent years, it should be noted that unemployment did not exceed 2% at any point until 1972, the year Japan was returned full administrative rights over the islands. The employment figures themselves may have remained relatively stable during the term of the American occupation of Okinawa, but not the distribution of employment when analyzed by sector.

Employment by Industrial Sector, 1950-1960 <sup>547</sup>				
Year	Working Population	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1950	290,000	176,000	22,000	92,000
1955	329,000	179,000	27,000	123,000
1960	383,000	181,000	43,000	160,000

As the above figures clearly show, within only ten years the main thrust of economic activity had shifted away from the primary sector, which was based on sugar cane production and subsistence farming, into the construction of, or provision of services for, the military bases. Whilst the total working population increased by 32% over the ten years, there was only a 2.8% increase in primary sector employment. Employment in construction and manufacturing, in contrast, had seen a 95% increase, and the tertiary sector a 73% increase.

Given that the most important commodity within any base construction program was land, and that much of the land chosen for development was some of the best arable land on the island, it is no real surprise that the agricultural sector suffered. Indeed, one of the main reasons why employment in the agricultural sector was decreasing in contrast with the service sector, was because as landowners were obliged to vacate their farms to make way for military projects (which would in turn create jobs for local people in the building trade or in providing goods and services) they would necessarily have to find employment elsewhere. One of the principal causes of friction between the local population and the United States military was over an economic policy which forced those who were quite happy as independent farmers into lower-status service related jobs. The US made great efforts to revitalize the agricultural sector during the latter part of the 1950's and into the 1960's, encouraging particularly pineapple and sugar cane production. An agreement was formalized

<sup>546</sup>Ibid. pp. 1306-1307.

<sup>547</sup>Ibid. pp. 1308-1309.

whereby Ryûkyûan exports to Japan were exempted from the usual tariffs. These industries became far more profitable than they ever had in the pre-war period, yet this came as a result of streamlining and the introduction of more effective technology from Japan.<sup>548</sup> Between 1950 and 1970 the number of persons employed in the primary sector had decreased by 50%.<sup>549</sup>

Of the total working population of 290,000 in 1950 it was estimated that 36,000, or 12%, were directly employed by the military in one capacity or another,<sup>550</sup> but it was almost certain that this figure was significantly higher. Specific 'military jobs' available for the local population ranged from those in management or supervisory positions in military administrative structures, to service club employees and manual laborers, down to housemaids and cleaners, but building contractors constructing bases, small shops and retailers, restaurants and bars, along with any number of other service industries catering for military personnel, were all in the service of the United States military. According to Richard G. Martin, "in 1958, base-direct employment accounted for 28% of the Ryûkyûan labor force engaged in occupations other than agriculture, fishing or forestry."<sup>551</sup> The trend towards base-direct employment continued into the 1960's as primary industry employment declined further. It must also be pointed out, that the vast majority of the military bases were located in southern and central Okinawa where more than 50% of the entire population of the Ryûkyûs was located.

Trends in employment were matched in terms of the amount of revenue derived from each of the three industrial sectors, where a decline in the importance of the primary sector was contrasted by growth in construction and manufacturing, and by the phenomenal growth of the tertiary sector. During the period 1934-1936, national income from all sectors totaled some \$14.8 million, with the lion's share, some 47.9%, derived from the primary sector. Construction, manufacturing, and services accounted for 3.3%, 14.1%, and 30.4%, respectively. By 1955, primary sector income accounted for only 27.7% of the total, with construction and manufacturing occupying 4.6% and 5.2%, respectively. The tertiary sector now accounted for 62.2% of the national income of the Ryûkyûs, and by 1960, 72.9%.

	National Income by Industrial Origin 1955-1960 (\$ million) <sup>552</sup>					
	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Agriculture	32.6	29.1	24.5	29.5	31.0	26.3
Manufact	6.1	6.7	8.7	8.7	10.8	11.7
Construction	5.5	7.5	9.0	10.2	9.4	9.5
Services	73.0	83.4	93.4	96.2	104.2	128.1
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>117.3</u>	<u>126.7</u>	<u>135.6</u>	<u>144.6</u>	<u>155.4</u>	<u>175.6</u>

By analyzing the statistics in this way it is possible to see that manufacturing, construction and services had profited from the changes thus far introduced by the American occupation, yet it must be remembered that each of these industrial sectors was entirely dependent on the military presence and on its continuing need for new facilities. The sharp rise in personal incomes as a result

<sup>548</sup>In 1959, Japan provided the necessary funds for the construction of nine new centrifugal mills throughout the Ryûkyûs. Prior to this modernisation there had been three centrifugal mills in total in the Ryûkyûs with a grinding capacity of just 1,500 tons. The new mills gave the Ryûkyûs a total grinding capacity of 19,000 tons. Thomas M. Klein, loc. cit., p. 2.

<sup>549</sup>Bank of the Ryûkyûs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 1308.

<sup>550</sup>Ibid. pp. 1308-1309.

<sup>551</sup>Richard Gordon Martin, *The Okinawa Factor in US-Japanese Post-World War II Relations*, Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Georgia, 1982, p. 135.

<sup>552</sup>Bank of the Ryûkyûs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., pp. 1388-1389.

of base-direct employment certainly made available capital for the development of local manufacturing enterprises, but many of these, such as cement plants, plywood mills, and metal works, were specifically established to supply needed materials for base construction and renovation. Very few industries transcended the Okinawan economy's base dependence, the successful ones thrived on it.

	<u>Income from Base-Direct Employment (BDE) in \$ million</u> <sup>553</sup>		
	<u>1955</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1960</u>
Service Sector Total (A)	73.0	93.4	128.1
BDE (B)	19.0	22.5	20.0
B as a percentage of A	<u>26.02%</u>	<u>24.08%</u>	<u>15.61%</u>

United States economic policies had achieved a good measure of success during the 1950's. The creation of much-needed employment for the local population certainly had a profound effect on the 'feel good factor' in Okinawa (although the land problem had the net effect of increasing the 'feel bad factor'), but when analyzed in terms of the basic economic objectives the Military Government had set itself, very little had changed. Imports outnumbered exports by approximately 5-1 throughout the period, and the economy seemed to be growing more rather than less dependent on the US bases by the latter part of the 1950's. A per capita income increase from an average of \$25 during the immediate prewar period to \$147 in the mid-1950's is an indication of significant progress in one sense, but would this be sustainable if base-related demands decreased?

#### **IV-4-2 USCAR and Long-Term American Economic Development Planning**

Base construction had the immediate effect of stimulating local economic activity, much as US policy-makers had anticipated, yet this was not enough. A well-structured long-term economic plan was required in conjunction with America's long-term strategic objectives in the islands. In the preamble to the Directive for the United States Civil Administration of the Ryûkyû Islands (USCAR) on 4th October 1950, it was asserted that

"It is the policy of the United States to retain the Ryûkyû Islands on a long-term basis by reason of their importance to the security of the United States, to develop and maintain military facilities on the islands, and to conduct the civil administration of the islands so as to foster the economic and social well-being of the civil population subject to the necessity of military security"<sup>554</sup>

In terms of economic policy, the Governor of the Ryûkyûs was charged with the task of initiating a long-term plan for the islands which would provide for the maximum participation of the local people and would raise the standard of living comparable to that existing prior to the war.<sup>555</sup> The plan set several objectives: 1) participation by the Ryûkyûans in all suitable forms of agriculture, fishing, industry and commerce under a system of free, competitive enterprise; 2) sound policies for the utilization and conservation of Ryûkyûan natural resources, including land reclamation and improvement; 3) a program for developing on a long-range basis those Ryûkyûan

<sup>553</sup>Ibid. p. 1388.

<sup>554</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - East Asia and the Pacific 1950*, US Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1976, p. 1313.

<sup>555</sup>It should be remembered that "the restoration of living standards consistent with those existing prior to the war" had been one of the primary directives of the then Military Government on 12th December, 1945. That the United States set exactly the same objective 5 years further into its military occupation has the net effect of illustrating how far (or how little) meaningful economic development for the islands had progressed.

industries which can be sources of exports or reduce import requirements; 4) development of foreign trade, initially on a government basis but with the aim of restoring private trade as early as is feasible, and; 5) measures designed to stabilize the financial structure of the economy, e.g., an adequate and equitable system of taxation to support necessary Ryūkyūan governmental activities without recourse to deficit financing; a sound banking and currency system, including a single rate of exchange appropriate for all foreign transactions with the ultimate objective of free convertibility.<sup>556</sup> These basic goals were restated in subsequent economic policy documents during the 1950's.

One of the most important steps towards promoting economic development in Okinawa undertaken by USCAR, was the introduction of the American dollar currency to replace the military B-yen in September 1958. In part this had been a move consistent with its 'civilianization' policy adopted since the Treaty of Peace. Since a great deal of negative media interest had been focussed on Okinawa during the land dispute the US wished to present its administration in a better light. The military B-yen was basically anachronistic. On the other hand, this was a smart economic move. Having a dollar currency allowed Okinawan commercial banks to establish direct links with the American commercial banking system which made it possible for them to stabilize the flow of credit.<sup>557</sup> As Thomas Klein has stated,

"this helped to establish an automatic stabilizing mechanism for the economy which resembled in its operation the classical 19th century gold standard. The US dollars circulating in the Ryūkyū Islands and the Ryūkyūan commercial banks' reserve deposits with US commercial banks were together equivalent to an independent country's foreign exchange reserves"<sup>558</sup>

During periods of heavy demand imports soared, causing the banks to lose reserves and therefore to have to curtail lending, but this ensured that effective demand was tailored to local resource availability. As Thomas Klein further states, "if the Ryūkyū Islands had had an independent currency system and had to rely on discretionary action by the Civil Administration or by the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands to stabilize the economy, it is doubtful whether overt deflationary policies could have been applied with the appropriate degree of severity at the right time."<sup>559</sup> In the six-month period immediately following the currency change, deposits increased by approximately \$12 million. The increase during the corresponding period of previous years had been around \$5 million.

Another step adopted consistent with USCAR's economic development package, was the establishment of development oriented financial institutions. The Bank of the Ryūkyūs had been created by the Military Government in 1948, with the US maintaining a 51% majority sharehold. Although other banks were established throughout the 1950's with private capital investment, their combined assets would never exceed those of the "control bank."<sup>560</sup> The Military Government, and later USCAR, was able to control the lending operations of the Bank of the Ryūkyūs so that its activities were consistent with the US's overall economic objectives.<sup>561</sup> The Bank of the Ryūkyūs was

<sup>556</sup>United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Volume 6 - East Asia and the Pacific 1950*, op. cit., pp. 1314-1317.

<sup>557</sup>Thomas M. Klein, loc. cit., pp. 5-6.

<sup>558</sup>Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>559</sup>Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>560</sup>Makino Hirotsuka, loc. cit., p. 326.

<sup>561</sup>This was also true as far as political objectives were concerned. From 1953 through to 1957 (the most intense period of the land dispute) the US had been taking a very hard-line policy towards the local population and had actively intervened

instrumental in funding the larger building contractors and other enterprises earmarked for development.

Another source of funding, particularly long-term credit for new industries and for private housing construction, was the Ryūkyū Reconstruction Finance Fund (RRFF). This was established with GARIOA funding by the Military Government in April 1950, and was administered by the Bank of the Ryūkyūs until the latter part of 1959, when it was chartered as a separate institution, the Ryūkyū Development Loan Corporation (RDLC).<sup>562</sup> During the almost 10-year period of its operation, the RRFF provided over 23,000 loans totaling \$40.5 million for commercial and industrial enterprises, utilities, municipal projects and housing. The RDLC was designed to be a more flexible institution, providing services and credit terms beyond those offered by banks. In addition to income from principal and interest collections the RDLC continued to receive periodic grants from USCAR. To encourage individuals or groups with sound ideas for small productive ventures, loans up to \$50,000 were made at an annual interest rate of 5%. Almost 40% of the RDLC's total credit resources were targeted towards the development of indigenous manufacturing enterprises.

Certain infrastructural improvements necessary for the promotion of local economic development were achieved quite rapidly, such as the renovation of roads and harbors. Others, like electricity generating and water resource facilities, were a much longer time coming. The principal problem in this regard was in securing the necessary funding from Congress. Vast amounts had been allocated for necessary base development projects, yet when funds were demanded for civilian development projects Congress was less forthcoming.<sup>563</sup> The original funding for such projects in the early postwar period had come through the sale of aid goods provided through the GARIOA scheme. B-yen proceeds from these sales were paid into the GARIOA Aid Counterpart Fund (which became the USCAR General Fund in 1958), which would then be allocated to the local government for reconstruction projects. This was its only source of income. Following the establishment of the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands (GRI) in 1952, taxes could be levied to supplement the GARIOA fund. There was now more money available to finance reconstruction projects and to plough into the RRFF and the Bank of the Ryūkyūs.

When the GARIOA program was terminated, the General Fund's revenue consisted of the profits generated by those USCAR facilities established with Counterpart Fund money, such as the Ryūkyū Electric Power Corporation, the Ryūkyū Domestic Water Corporation, and the Petroleum Distribution Fund (PDF). The latter was particularly profitable. The PDF originated in 1950, when the Civil Administration decided to take responsibility for supplying petroleum products to the civilian economy. Caltex Overseas, Ltd. was given a five-year contract, renewed periodically, for building and then operating a terminal supplying petroleum products. The petroleum products were sold at a mark-up by USCAR to a locally owned company for sale to the ultimate consumers.<sup>564</sup> During the latter part of the 1960's other oil companies were offered contracts to supply oil to the

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to quell any political opposition. Organisations holding openly 'left-wing' or anti-military views were denied funding from the Bank of the Ryūkyūs.

<sup>562</sup>Thomas M. Klein, loc. cit., p. 7-8.

<sup>563</sup>Roads and harbour facilities had been necessary in the development of the bases, hence their prioritisation. Since all bases had their own sources of supply for water and power generation there was less consideration given to civilian facilities.

<sup>564</sup>Thomas M. Klein, loc. cit., p. 9.

Ryūkyū Electric Power Corporation. From 1958 through to 1972 the capital available to USCAR from the General Fund was almost equal to or in excess of that derived from the US Congress. Congress funding for 1968 was \$11.9 million and in 1969 \$15.6 million. The General Fund constituted \$14.9 in 1968 and \$14.7 in 1969.<sup>565</sup>

With the introduction of the dollar currency USCAR also took steps to promote the development of foreign trade in the Ryūkyūs. Specific regulations had initially been drawn up regulating the entrance of foreign capital and technology by USCAR in November 1952, specifying that such investments would be accepted as were "in the best interests of the Ryūkyūan economy."<sup>566</sup> These regulations were amended, though with fundamentally the same objectives, in September 1958. The next move was to try to draw the attention of the world business community to, firstly, the existence of this tiny island group, and, secondly, to the particular benefits of investing in the area. To these ends USCAR commissioned the J. Walter Thompson Company to conduct a comprehensive survey and to publish a brochure in its "World Markets" series during the latter part of the 1950's. When defining the particular attraction of the tiny area, such as the Ryūkyūs, to the would-be investor, the company stated that:

"decentralization of one or more phases of manufacturing and selling is common practice among companies catering to large nation-wide markets. High transportation costs and regional market characteristics are often important reasons for decentralizing production and marketing, partly or wholly. This method of establishing regional units which has proved its value in domestic marketing, is found increasingly useful by companies with international operations. In addition to high transportation costs and overseas market characteristics, trade barriers and labor factors may be compelling reasons for establishing abroad partly or fully equipped production and sales units"<sup>567</sup>

After a thorough examination of the particular conditions in the Ryūkyūs, the report reached a number of very positive conclusions: 1) mass production in the islands is possible as long as large export markets can be found (It was pointed out that the Ryūkyūs were as close to these markets as was Japan or Hong Kong); 2) that since 70% of the Ryūkyūan population are under the age of 30 they are capable of learning new skills and trades; 3) that the Ryūkyūs, although short in most natural resources, have abundant marine resources and that there is room for an expansion of commercial fishing and for the establishment of larger food and chemical industries based on these resources.<sup>568</sup> Neither Japan nor Hong Kong are abundant in natural resources, and are themselves heavy importers of food and raw materials.

The key to Ryūkyūan success in industrialization is to adopt the same basic formula as Japan and Hong Kong. Rather than to establish a manufacturing industry based on indigenous materials, the Ryūkyūs should import basic raw materials, machinery and equipment, for the purpose of export production. In this respect, the Ryūkyūs were way behind their competition. On a per capita basis, Taiwanese exports for 1958 stood at \$158, Filipino exports at \$205, and Ryūkyūan exports at a

<sup>565</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., pp. 1372-1373.

<sup>566</sup>Specifically, those which processed indigenous resources or imported raw materials for export, or which catered for the essential needs of the US armed forces. USCAR Ordinance No 90 "Foreign Investment in the Ryūkyū Islands", 1st November, 1952. In; Government of the Ryūkyū Islands (GRI), Administration Section, *USCAR Legislation 1957; A Complete Collection of Outstanding Proclamations, Ordinances and Directives with Amendments issued by USCAR and its Predecessors since 1945*, op. cit., p. 239.

<sup>567</sup>J. Walter Thompson Company, *The Ryūkyūan Market: An Introduction to Investment and Trade Opportunities*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960, p. 7.

<sup>568</sup>Ibid. p. 35.

measly \$17.<sup>569</sup> Based on the data gathered it was concluded that the expansion of Ryūkyūan exports was possible, and was without doubt necessary. Should action be taken on the lines described above it was posited that the Ryūkyūs could potentially become a "Far East Springboard."<sup>570</sup> USCAR was attempting to make conditions for such investment as favorable as possible. Tax concessions were offered on investments targeted towards specific areas earmarked for promotion: particularly primary and secondary industries.

A connected move, was the establishment of a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) consisting of 88,776 square feet of land adjacent to Naha Commercial Port in February, 1960. It was designed for the purpose of "developing processing industries and entrepôt trade."<sup>571</sup> Finished goods, raw materials and semi-finished materials were to be brought into the FTZ from outside; stored, handled, processed and displaced within the FTZ, and reexported from the Ryūkyūs without customs inspections or other formalities. Such goods would be completely exempt from import, commodity and excise taxes and duties, and import and export licensing. The purpose was to encourage the use of the Ryūkyūs for the storing and handling of goods slated for shipment to other markets as well as to facilitate the supply of production materials and equipment for the local economy. As of June 1962, five companies were operating in the FTZ, principally involved in the assembly of transistor radios, cameras, and sporting equipment (baseball gloves).<sup>572</sup> After some expansion and some initial success, however, this project began to deteriorate. Exports from the FTZ would never exceed 6% of the total overall Ryūkyūan export figure.

Commodity	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
Tran. Radios	1,460	4,773	2,209	3,490	3,740	3,403	3,382	1,887
Cameras	7	252	221	321	256	529	332	119
Sew. Mach	33	50	---	---	---	---	---	---
Sports Equip	---	84	104	31	34	96	71	39
Others	34	---	---	27	13	78	30	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>5,158</b>	<b>2,534</b>	<b>3,870</b>	<b>4,043</b>	<b>4,107</b>	<b>3,815</b>	<b>2,056</b>

This deterioration was analyzed as a result of the lack of international competitive power of transistor radios on which the Zone principally depended. It was recommended that the FTZ be expanded with the construction of a tailor-made industrial estate complex on an area of reclaimed land at Itoman. It was envisaged that such an expansion would allow the Ryūkyūs to compete with the Kaohsiung Free Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) in Taiwan and with Hong Kong, whose fame "lies in part in its free port status."<sup>574</sup> Such an industrial estate would also serve as a centralizing point for other indigenous manufacturing enterprises. The Okinawa FTZ idea has never been successfully developed to its full potential.

<sup>569</sup>Ibid. p. 36.

<sup>570</sup>Ibid. p. 35.

<sup>571</sup>USCAR, *Report for the Period 1st July, 1967, to 30th June, 1968. Volume 16 (RCS CSCAMG-5)*, High Commissioner of the Ryūkyū Islands, 1969, p. 83.

<sup>572</sup>USCAR, *Report for the Period 1st April, 1961, to 30th June, 1962 - Volume 10 (RCS CSCAMG-5)*, High Commissioner of the Ryūkyū Islands, 1963, p. 212.

<sup>573</sup>Daniel, Mann, Johnson, and Mendenhall, *Industrial Estate and New Town Study Okinawa*, A Study conducted for the United States Civil Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands, June, 1969, p. 251.

<sup>574</sup>Ibid. p. 290.



#### IV-4-3 The 1960 Price Act: The Promotion of Economic and Social Development

As an illustration of its commitment to improve the lot of the Okinawa people, the United States Government passed the so-called Price Act, 'Providing for Promotion of Economic and Social Development in the Ryūkyū Islands', in 1960. It was felt that since the interests of the United States in the islands were indicated by "strategic military considerations of the highest importance,"<sup>575</sup> it should "provide means for maintaining and increasing the effectiveness of the performance of the basic military mission."<sup>576</sup> Basically, the US could not afford any further civil unrest in the islands which might jeopardize the effective operation of its bases and sought to address a number of areas previous economic plans had failed to adequately deal with.

Although the US Government prided itself on some of the work it had already done to expand the local economy, the bill suggested that there was a great deal more that needed to be done before the 'economy of scarcity' could approach any level near to self-sustaining. Prior to the war, it was pointed out, Okinawa Prefecture received annual subsidies of some \$4 million to \$6 million from central government in Tokyo. In 1960, its population density of over 1,000 persons per square mile was twice that of Japan and one of the highest in the world.<sup>577</sup> A large proportion of its food requirements were imported, it had a serious shortage of industrial and commercial skills, and inadequate venture capital to exploit such resources as were available. In short, the reconstruction so far achieved by the US had only really scratched at the surface of the problem.

The House Armed Services Committee bill targeted several major areas for drastic improvement. Infrastructurally, roads and bridges, retaining walls and irrigation facilities were seen as priority areas. The estimated cost for these areas alone was some \$73 million.<sup>578</sup> GRI resources were seen as inadequate in relation to the problems faced. There was some satisfaction that the GRI revenue had increased from some \$11.7 million in fiscal year 1955, to some \$22.4 million in 1960, but with a population increase of some 20,000 per year there was still a net shortfall of \$4 million with regard to the services the GRI had to provide. It was approximated that \$2 million per year was spent on typhoon relief alone.

The GRI was not seen as wasteful with these increased revenues, in fact quite the contrary. Comparison between the GRI fiscal year 1960 budget and the fiscal year 1958 budget illustrated that investment in capital outlays were up some 155%, whilst investment in lending institutions was up by 84%. Government operating costs increased by some 12% over the period, but government subsidies decreased by 60%.<sup>579</sup> The GRI was not able to raise revenues by any other means, and the United States had placed a ceiling on the amount of aid it could expropriate for the islands. All of this led to the conclusion, in the words of the bill, "that the funds needed to help this economy to live and grow must be sought elsewhere."<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>575</sup>United States House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, *Report to Accompany H.R. 1157, Providing for Promotion of Economic and Social Development in the Ryūkyū Islands*, 14th April, 1960, p. 2.

<sup>576</sup>Ibid. p. 2.

<sup>577</sup>Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>578</sup>Ibid. pp. 11-12.

<sup>579</sup>Ibid. p. 12.

<sup>580</sup>Ibid. p. 12.

As the report further pointed out, because of the peculiar status (or non-status) of the islands under the jurisdiction of the United States, they could not benefit from the generous allowances provided for friendly foreign governments under the Mutual Security Act or other assistance programs, such as the Development Loan Fund or the World Bank.<sup>581</sup> Nor could they qualify for benefits accorded to territorial or insular possessions of the United States. A solution to these and other problems for the Okinawan people needed a change of leadership on both sides of the Pacific, along with the intention to transform Japan-US relations into mutual and cooperative relations.

#### **IV-5 High Economic Growth: The Third "Golden Age" of the Ryūkyūs?**

##### **IV-5-1 The Kennedy Revolution**

Although the new US President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was committed to the Defense Department's position that Okinawa was vital in America's Asian-Pacific security strategy and that the bases there would have to be maintained for the foreseeable future, he saw no reason why the local inhabitants should have to suffer under the shadow of that huge military presence or that civilian requirement should have to come secondary to military requirements. Whereas Eisenhower had paid lip service, Kennedy was committed to the idea that there should be a greater emphasis placed on improving the welfare and economic advancement of the Okinawan people. He expressed concerns consistent with those raised in the Price Report. Thus far implemented US economic packages had only scratched at the surface of the Ryūkyūan problems.

Within only a short time in office, he had taken steps to reduce the amount of military influence over the civilian government; had sponsored the dispatch of a special survey team to investigate and report on economic conditions in the Ryūkyūs, and, most importantly, had enlisted the financial support of the Japanese Government in the latter regard. Kennedy had already surmised that the Japanese Government would be anxious to take any responsibilities offered by the US which would give it a greater role in the affairs of the Okinawan people, principally because this would further strengthen its Reversion requests, and was prepared to accede. He had also surmised that the Japanese Government would be prepared, eventually, to accept a continued American military presence in return for the return of the administrative rights to the islands. As long as America's security needs were protected Kennedy was happy to work towards Reversion. The results of the Kaysen report were consistent with the President's views.

The report recommended that the administration should seek to increase the amount of economic assistance currently appropriated from Congress, and that the Japanese Government should be encouraged to participate in the sharing of the costs of short and long-term economic development programs, "on the basis of the United States' assumption of about two-thirds of the total."<sup>582</sup> The report suggested that Congress should raise the amount of annual economic assistance to the islands from the current level of \$6 million to some \$25 million.<sup>583</sup> It was felt that by allowing

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<sup>581</sup>Ibid. p. 13.

<sup>582</sup>Timothy P. Maga, *John F. Kennedy and the New Pacific Community, 1961-1963*, MacMillan Press, New York, 1990, p. 107.

<sup>583</sup>Ibid. p. 107. It was pointed out that the United States bases in Okinawa were costing less than a pittance. 'Cheap' rents for basing privileges were normally considered to be in the realm of \$10 million per year as in the case of Libya, or \$20 to \$40 million as in the case of Morocco. 'Moderate to expensive', but still fair rent was seen to be at the \$150 million per annum figure as was the case with Spain. An increased rent level for Okinawa, possibly as high as that required in the case of Spain was advised, with such increased rentals able to constitute a second aid scheme.

the local GRI officials to assume an administrative role equal to Japanese and American officials, and by allowing the Japanese Government active participation in Okinawa's economic development, that not only would this benefit the local people, but it would also assist Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda who was under strong pressure from both left-wing and ultra-right-wing factions within the Diet. Japan would assume greater financial and administrative responsibilities in the islands which would necessarily culminate in the full return of administrative rights. No timeframe was set, but it seems as if policy planners were envisioning a Reversion within ten years.

### **I-5-2 The Influx of Japanese Capital**

Kennedy's new Okinawa policies were not universally popular, and strong opposition within Congress hindered their full implementation for at least the next few years. The US Senate Armed Services Committee insisted that the ceiling for fiscal year 1963 on appropriations for Okinawa should be raised only to \$12 million, rather than the \$16 million requested by Kennedy.<sup>584</sup> The major concern in Washington was that if it was Kennedy's intention to work towards an early return of these islands to Japanese control, then why should Congress have to invest so much? Ultimately, it would be the Japanese Government that inherited all.

Kennedy also had his detractors in the Ryūkyūs. The new High Commissioner, Paul Carraway was a staunch opponent of increased Japanese economic involvement in the islands on the grounds that this was dangerous for the viable operation of the bases, and an advocate of wiping out what he saw as high levels of corruption in dealings between the GRI and business organizations, amongst others. Carraway was able to obstruct Kennedy's plans from implementation for two years. During his term of office from February 1961, to July 1964, US economic aid appropriations for the islands never exceeded \$6.5 million, despite congressional authorization for almost twice that amount, and Japanese appropriations never exceeded \$3.9 million.<sup>585</sup>

Despite attempts in Washington and in the Ryūkyūs to throw a wet blanket on Kennedy's initiatives, a good deal of progress was made. In February 1964, a formal agreement was reached between the Governments of Japan and the US to establish Consultative and Technical Committees to "facilitate cooperation between the two governments in programs of economic and technical assistance in the Ryūkyū Islands."<sup>586</sup> These two committees served to harness greater levels of aid from the Japanese Government. Japanese economic assistance to Okinawa increased from \$3,916,000 in 1964, to \$6,476,000 in 1966, and up to \$23,594,000 in 1968.<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>584</sup>Neil Abel Marcot, *The Japanese Foreign Policy-Making Process: A Case Study - Okinawa Reversion*, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>585</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 710.

<sup>586</sup>United States Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 50, No 1298, 11th May, 1964, p. 755.

<sup>587</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 710.

Government Economic Aid to the Ryūkyūs, 1960-70 (\$ Thousand)<sup>588</sup>

	<u>Jap. Govnt Aid</u>	<u>US Govnt Aid</u>
1960		3,470
1961		3,974
1962	55	5,223
1963	2,028	6,536
1964	3,916	5,175
1965	3,992	6,584
1966	6,476	8,286
1967	15,237	9,118
1968	23,594	9,734
1969	31,443	16,646
1970	47,959	18,690

Although the Kaysen Report had insisted in 1962 that the United States should assume responsibility for two-thirds of the economic aid towards the Ryūkyūs, by fiscal year 1967 the amount of Japanese Government aid had exceeded the American contribution to the GRI budget by almost 50%.<sup>589</sup> Japanese aid was principally targeted at education and training, public health and welfare, agriculture, and forestry. As Watanabe Akio has pointed out, however, the inclusion of two new categories of Japanese economic assistance in 1961: the promotion of industrial development; and the improvement of social security services, accounted largely for the marked increase in Japanese assistance in subsequent years.<sup>590</sup> Certain frictions between the United States and Japan developed out of this shift in the balance of economic aid to the Ryūkyūs. As the Japanese Government committed more economic assistance it felt it only natural that it should have a greater say with regard to how such funds were being spent. This was perhaps the first stage in Japan's *de facto* assumption of control over the islands, and it is therefore not surprising that the United States resisted somewhat.

In addition to increased amounts of economic assistance from Japan, Kennedy's plans for greater cooperation in non-controversial areas had borne fruit. All Nippon Airways, for instance, had become the first Japanese air carrier to be granted US permission for daily flights to Naha. The announcement proclaimed that "jet-age Tokyo-Naha connections would lead to a new era of Japanese-Ryūkyūan-American communication and development."<sup>591</sup> Up to March of 1960, travel between Okinawa and the Japanese mainland had been discouraged by USCAR, mainly by virtue of its rather lengthy administrative procedures.<sup>592</sup> Despite such restrictions many Okinawans took advantage of these new air links. The most profound development, however, was in travelers coming from the mainland. In 1961, 25,420 visitors came to Okinawa, but by 1964 this figure had

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<sup>588</sup>Ibid. p.710.

<sup>589</sup>Ibid. p. 710.

<sup>590</sup>Watanabe, Akio, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>591</sup>Timothy P. Maga, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

<sup>592</sup>Travel documents were only valid initially for single trips, and applications for new documents had to be supported each time from extracts from family registers. These procedures were especially troublesome for commercial travelers as well as other who desired to travel at short notice. In March, 1960, although travel documents were given a four-year validity, USCAR permission was still required and sometimes refused. These restrictions persisted throughout the whole term of the US administration of the islands. Thomas M. Klein., loc. cit., p. 17.

increased by almost 100%.<sup>593</sup> In 1964, tourism was bringing an estimated \$12.9 million into the Okinawan economy.<sup>594</sup>

#### IV-5-3 The Vietnam War: A Conflict of Interests?

The Vietnam War had two principal effects in Okinawa: 1) it produced a great surge of support for the Reversion Movement and the goal of removing the American military presence from the islands, and; 2) it caused a profound upturn in the Okinawan economy. Through the mid- to late-1950's the GNP of the Ryūkyūs grew at an average annual rate of around 10%. From 1958 to 1968 the average annual growth rate in the Ryūkyūs in real terms was over 12%, easily one of the highest in the world. Japan's was only 10.3% during the same approximate period.<sup>595</sup> This upturn may also be measured in terms of Per Capita Income (PCI) increases. In 1965 the PCI of the Ryūkyūs was \$344. As John Emmerson has pointed out, "this exceeded Kagoshima, Miyazaki, and Tottori prefectures, and was about 50% higher than that of Taiwan and the Philippines."<sup>596</sup> By 1969 the PCI had almost doubled to \$653.

Gross National Product of the Ryūkyū Islands, 1955-1970 (\$ million)<sup>597</sup>

	<u>1955</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>
a) Personal Consumption Expenditure	100.4	137.2	242.2	486.4
b) Government Current Expenditure	10.2	21.8	43.3	130.5
c) Fixed Capital Formation	16.3	47.6	103.3	324.9
(Private)	(11.8)	(39.4)	(81.6)	(276.4)
(Government)	(4.5)	(8.2)	(21.7)	(48.5)
d) Increase/Decrease in Stocks	-1.2	18.5	-5.3	36.0
e) Export of Goods and Services	66.3	116.0	245.5	400.2
(US Forces Local Expenditure)	(48.2)	(71.9)	(135.0)	(228.2)
(Merchandise Exports)	(10.7)	(24.0)	(83.4)	(106.7)
(Other Services)	(7.4)	(20.1)	(27.1)	(65.3)
f) Minus: Imp. of Goods and Services	-60.8	-137.0	-242.4	-517.6
TOTALS	<u>131.2</u>	<u>204.1</u>	<u>386.6</u>	<u>860.4</u>

Part responsibility for this sustained upswing lie in the introduction of Japanese Government aid in increasing quantities from the early part of the 1960's, but the main reason was the increase in American expenditures in line with its escalating involvement in Vietnam. Total US input into Okinawa in 1967, including the expenditure of government agencies, personnel, aid programs, private investment and exports to the US, accounted for \$257 million.<sup>598</sup> This constituted almost 48% of Okinawa's GNP at the time. Specific 'Vietnam' expenditures included: purchases of local goods and services to be used to construct bridges, air bases, and other military installations; payment of local wages and salaries; personnel expenditures of US military and civilian personnel

<sup>593</sup>USCAR, *Report for the Period 1st July, 1969, to 30th June, 1970, Volume 18 (RCS-CSCAMG-5)*, High Commissioner of the Ryūkyūs, 1971, p. 82.

<sup>594</sup>Ibid. p. 82.

<sup>595</sup>John K. Emmerson, *Arms, Yen and Power: The Japanese Dilemma*, Charles Tuttle Company, Rutland, Vermont, 1972, p. 187.

<sup>596</sup>Ibid. p. 187.

<sup>597</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., p. 1384, and Thomas M. Klein., loc. cit., p. 3.

<sup>598</sup>John K. Emmerson, op. cit., p. 187.

and their dependents stationed in these countries; and soldiers visiting on 'rest and recuperation.'<sup>599</sup> Another source of receipts related to the Vietnam War were American grants of goods and services.

US Defense Expenditures for Goods and Services by Asian Country (\$ million)<sup>600</sup>

	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>
US Total	2,880	2,952	3,764	4,378	4,530	4,824
Asian Countries	704	926	1,592	2,050	2,205	2,356
(% of US Total)	(22.44)	(31.37)	(42.30)	(46.83)	(48.68)	(48.84)
Japan	321	346	484	538	581	640
Korea	91	97	160	237	301	360
Philippines	58	81	147	167	169	180
Ryūkyū Islands	115	123	150	188	202	208
Taiwan	21	21	60	70	76	84
Thailand	34	70	183	286	318	278
Vietnam	64	188	408	564	558	606

By 1967 most of the base construction and renewal projects necessary for the persecution of the Vietnam War had been completed, and this led to a decrease in US military expenditure in Okinawa. In 1969 total US military expenditures were still \$271 million, but now accounted for only 37.5% of the total GNP of the Ryūkyūs.<sup>601</sup> In 1957, military expenditures had accounted for almost 45% of the total GNP. In a way this was an important development, because it illustrated that an extremely healthy Okinawan economy was becoming less overwhelmingly dependent on the bases. From 1965 to 1968 the rapid expansion had been as a result of US military expenditures and a sharp rise in the private construction industry, yet by financial year (FY) 1968 economic growth was principally supported by the growth of personal consumption expenditures and by the increase in government aid-financed capital expenditures.<sup>602</sup> On the other hand, if the economy were to stay healthy the bases would continue to play the most important single role. Those whose incomes were wholly dependent on the military bases became increasingly concerned about this cutback and about the potential ramifications of the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan, which Japanese and US leaders were currently negotiating. Practical economic realities began to clash with political aspirations.

Against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and the potential resolution of the Reversion issue, the *Asahi Shimbun* conducted a comprehensive opinion poll survey in both Okinawa and Japan during September 1967. Whilst there is little doubt that the majority in Okinawa favored Reversion to Japan, this had to be countered by the general recognition by those sampled that Reversion would also lead to a reduction in the American military presence. Furthermore, whilst the majority of Okinawans would definitely call for the reduction or removal of the military bases 'on principle,' there is a recognition that any reduction in bases would necessarily imply a cutback in base-direct employment and a loss in revenue for those currently in business as a result of the base presence. This analysis perhaps helps to explain some of the less-than-clear results.

When asked whether they were in agreement with the presence of American military bases or not, 25% came out in favor, 40% against, and 35% were either undecided or gave no reply.<sup>603</sup>

<sup>599</sup>Naya Seiji, "The Vietnam War and Some Aspects of its Economic Impact on Asian Countries," *The Developing Economies*, Vol. 9, No 1, March, 1971, p. 33.

<sup>600</sup>Ibid. p. 33.

<sup>601</sup>John K. Emmerson, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>602</sup>USCAR, *Report for the Period 1st July, 1967, to 30th June, 1968. Volume 16 (RCS CSCAMG-5)*, High Commissioner of the Ryūkyū Islands, 1969, p. 47.

<sup>603</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "The Asahi Shimbun's Public Opinion Survey," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No 1,

Similarly, when asked how Okinawans would be likely to fare economically after Reversion, 17% expressed the belief that things would improve, 28% that no change would occur, and 30% that things would get worse. 25% were undecided or gave no reply.<sup>604</sup> When it was asked whether the Okinawan economy could survive a decline in base-related revenues, 32% felt that it could, 34% that it could not, and 34% could offer no view one way or the other.<sup>605</sup> The level of ambivalence in each case is such that one cannot accurately assess what it is that the majority of Okinawans wanted. An opinion poll survey conducted by the *Mainichi Shimbun* prior to the historic Satō-Nixon Reversion decision in 1969 is a good deal more emphatic with regard to anti-base sentiment. Almost 75% agreed with the reduction or complete withdrawal of the bases,<sup>606</sup> yet there is concern over Okinawa's post-Reversion economic performance. When asked whether life will get better after Reversion, 24% expressed the view that it would become easier, 25% that nothing would change, and 41% that life would get harder.<sup>607</sup> The latter, or perhaps what we may refer to as the 'anxious' faction, increased markedly in number in subsequent surveys.<sup>608</sup>

## IV-6 The 'Reversion Shock:' Anxieties and Realities

### IV-6-1 Employment and Working Conditions

One of the most consistently recurring anxieties concerned employment, or the potential lack of it, in the post-Reversion period. This was based on the widely held perception that military redundancies were bound to occur, and was reinforced by an announcement to that effect by USCAR in December 1969. General military spending was to be curtailed and several thousand Okinawan employees would be discharged in the spring of 1970.<sup>609</sup> It was estimated that as many as 100,000 workers employed directly or in some subsidiary capacity in connection with the bases would be laid off, and perhaps as many as 5,000 government employees.<sup>610</sup> The nature of the system imposed under the American administration was such that workers were unable to bargain collectively or to earn pensions. In 1970, there were 42,472 Okinawan military base workers,<sup>611</sup> but by the latter part of 1972 this figure had reduced to 19,980.<sup>612</sup> By 1976 this figure had decreased by

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January-March, 1968, p. 49.

<sup>604</sup>Ibid. p. 51.

<sup>605</sup>Ibid. p. 51.

<sup>606</sup>*Mainichi Shimbun* Opinion Poll Survey on the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan', April, 1969. In: Japan Institute of International Affairs, *White Papers of Japan, 1970-71: Annual Abstract of Official Reports and Statistics of the Japanese Government*, Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, 1971, p. 398.

<sup>607</sup>Ibid. p. 399.

<sup>608</sup>The *Ryūkyū Shimpō*, for example, conducted two opinion poll surveys just prior to the historic first election of Okinawan representatives into the National Japanese Diet and House of Councilors. In the August, 1970, survey, the sample was asked "Before Reversion to Japan in 1972, Do you feel uneasy?". 52.3% answered affirmatively (29.6% - not anxious; 19.1% undecided/no reply). Of the affirmatives, over 60% expressed a specific anxiety about economic matters. In the November, 1970, poll, the 'anxious' faction had increased to 64.8% (not anxious - 16.4%; undecided/no reply - 18.8%). "What Does Okinawa Demand?", *Ryūkyū Shimpō* Opinion Poll Survey, August, 1970, and "*Ryūkyū Shimpō* Opinion Poll Survey on the Reversion Decision", November, 1970. *Hōritsu Jihō*, Special Edition on the Reversion Agreement, 10th October, 1971, p. 410, and p. 413, respectively.

<sup>609</sup>Takizawa Makota, "Okinawa: Reversion to Japan and Future Prospects," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 11, No 5, May, 1971, pp. 502-503.

<sup>610</sup>Ibid. p. 502.

<sup>611</sup>Nakachi Kiyoshi, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>612</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, *Okinawa no Beigun oyobi Jietai Kichi: Tōkei Shiryōshū (Collected Data on United States and Japanese Self-Defence Force Bases in Okinawa)*, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, Military Base Affairs Office, Naha, 1994, p. 8.

almost half again to 10,265. In 1993 some 7,813 persons were employed by the US military in Okinawa.<sup>613</sup>

Employment fears were not just related to base-related jobs, but also to those jobs in local industries threatened by the predicted influx of mainland Japanese industries and state monopolies into Okinawa in the post-Reversion period. To a certain extent smaller businesses were squeezed out by mainland firms with access to far greater amounts of capital with whom the Okinawans could not compete, but this was countered to a degree by the growth of other industries. Immediately after Reversion massive amounts of central Government assistance was targeted towards infrastructural improvements which led to a new non-military construction boom and to the expansion rather than reduction of Government, or public sector, employment. As Higa Teruyuki points out, amongst non-agricultural workers on Okinawa, almost one in five is a public employee. The national Japanese average is around one in thirty.<sup>614</sup> The evolution of employment opportunities in other areas helped in part to offset the large-scale base redundancies, but unemployment still leapt from 1% in 1971 to 6.8% in 1977.<sup>615</sup> In 1993, Okinawa's unemployment rate was 4.4%, in contrast with 2.5% in Japan overall.<sup>616</sup> Okinawa has not yet managed to come to grips with the shock of the base worker redundancies.

Another disheartening trend after Reversion was the continuation of the Okinawans' service role. Much of the employment created in post-Reversion Okinawa has been of the non-skilled or semi-skilled variety. Along with construction and public sector employment, the greatest expansion has been in the service sector. Whilst dependency on the military bases has decreased substantially it has been replaced by a boom in tourism. Tourism and service sector-related jobs tend to require less investment in training and pay salaries at the lower rather than higher end of the spectrum. The average wage of a regular employee in Okinawa is 294,000 yen, which is some 43,000-yen below the national average.<sup>617</sup> Okinawans also work longer hours than their mainland counterparts. In 1990, average yearly working hours in Okinawa were 2,168.4, in contrast with the Japanese national average which stood at 2,015.8.<sup>618</sup>

#### IV-6-2 Currency Realignment and Commodity Prices

Although Okinawans would have to undergo a profound systemic transformation as American structures were replaced by Japanese ones, and although these would have an effect on virtually every political, economic, and social aspect of Okinawan life, some adjustments caused great anxiety. A major worry was as to what would happen when the American dollar currency was

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<sup>613</sup>Ibid. p. 8.

<sup>614</sup>Higa Teruyuki, "The Cycle of Dependency: Okinawa's Economy," in: *Islands: A Challenge for the Future - Global Networking of Island Communities*, Proceedings of the Journalists Global Islands Symposium (J-GIS) '93, 24th to 28th August, J-GIS '93 Organising Committee, Naha, 1993, p. 94.

<sup>615</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., pp. 1306-1307.

<sup>616</sup>Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation, Survey Department, *Okinawa Keizai Databukku (Databook on the Okinawan Economy)*, Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation, Survey Department, Naha, 1994, p. 10.

<sup>617</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs International Foundation, *A Minute Guide to Okinawa's Economy*, Bank of the Ryūkyūs International Foundation, Naha, 1991, p. 61.

<sup>618</sup>Nohara Zensho, "Okinawa no Beigun Kichi: Fukki 20 Shūnen Zakkan" (US Military Bases in Okinawa: Some Notes on the 20th Anniversary of Reversion to Japan), *Nantō Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Ryūkyūan Culture)*, No 14, 1992, p. 4.



replaced by Japanese yen. It was estimated in 1969 that there was somewhere in the region of \$60 to \$70 million worth of currency floating around in the islands.<sup>619</sup> Some people panicked and tried to transfer their savings into foreign banks, others tried to convert their dollars into yen in the wake of rumors that the Japanese Government was going to increase the value of the yen, whilst others contemplated exchanging their dollars for expensive foreign items available under the current American rule so as to resell at an increased rate after Reversion. The Japanese Finance Ministry attempted to reassure Okinawans that they would not suffer as a result of currency realignment.

After Reversion, central Government in Tokyo decided to leave in place the tariff concessions that had allowed Okinawans to import more beef and luxury goods than the rest of Japan as well as the government subsidies which granted Okinawan farmers favorable conditions for the export of their produce, particularly sugar cane and pineapple, to Japan. Okinawans were to be 'protected' from the Reversion shock. What affected most Okinawans, however, were the prices of very basic food items. Cheap American rice along with other basic items would no longer be available. Okinawans, whose basic income was perhaps 60% of mainland Japan's, were paying virtually identical prices for basic goods. Certain items, such as vegetables and fruits, were far more expensive in Okinawa than on the mainland. As one writer put it,

"Okinawa has been sucked into the inflationary yen economy, an economy that is "strong outside but weak inside", and commodity prices have been rising at a faster rate than in Japan proper"<sup>620</sup>

When Okinawans were polled on the actual effect of Reversion in March 1973, their answers reflected a strong disappointment with these economic circumstances. When asked what had become worse as a result of Reversion, almost 60% pointed to the rise in commodity prices, and almost the same figure again were of the opinion that their livelihoods would more likely worsen in the future.<sup>621</sup> This sentiment fairly well reflected realities. By investing vast amounts of money into the Okinawa Ocean Exposition (EXPO) '75, the Japanese Government caused a leap in inflation locally and sent commodity prices skyrocketing. Since 1985 the consumer price index for Okinawa has been stable. This has been due in part to the strong yen which has reduced the domestic price of imported goods (which Okinawans are more dependent on than other prefectures), and the drop in the price of oil. In 1987, consumer prices in Okinawa fell for the first time since Reversion.<sup>622</sup>

#### **IV-6-3 Narrowing the Social Gaps**

Just prior to Reversion, the Japanese Government had targeted two main areas for special attention; 1) the disparity in social overhead capital (health, welfare, education, housing, etc), and 2) the economic disparity (as illustrated for example by a pronounced Per Capita Income disparity). These had been issues of profound concern to Okinawans. To these ends the 'Special Steps Law for the Promotion and Development of Okinawa' was promulgated in 1971. The central objectives of this law were to,

<sup>619</sup>Takizawa Makota, loc. cit., p. 503.

<sup>620</sup>Japan Quarterly Editorial Staff, "Okinawa: The First Year," *Japan Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No 3, July-September, 1973, p. 250.

<sup>621</sup>Ibid. p. 251.

<sup>622</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs International Foundation, op. cit., p. 19.

"stabilize the economy and livelihood of the people, to increase their general welfare through the improvement of fundamental conditions, and to promote the development of Okinawa according to its natural geographical characteristics"<sup>623</sup>

With regard to the former issue, Okinawa had been way below the mainland in virtually every area. Pre-Reversion Okinawa had only 447 doctors against a 1 million population, which was less than 50% of mainland levels. Most were located around Naha City. Okinawa had only one-quarter of the national average in terms of the number of hospitals, and had 50% fewer beds than the average Japanese prefecture. Welfare systems were almost non-existent, there were no homes for orphans, and the medical insurance system was based on an American-style repayment plan which meant that there was no treatment unless the person had the ability to pay.<sup>624</sup> Okinawa's educational facilities were woeful in comparison to the mainland, and general exam results much lower. The list could continue at far greater length.

Huge amounts of Government funds were channeled into such areas after Reversion, and in each case there have been improvements. Okinawa now ranks above the national average in terms of the amount of paved roads, water supply, sewerage facilities, and old-peoples' homes. Other improvements have been slower in materializing, and Okinawa still lies well below the national average in terms of school buildings, hospitals, and parks.<sup>625</sup> The most profound disparity is in terms of land, and relates to the continued occupation of vast areas by the US military. Okinawa ranks last out of the 47 prefectures in terms of space per resident, and the population per square kilometer stands at 540, whereas on the mainland the rate is 332.<sup>626</sup> Generally speaking, however, things have vastly improved since Reversion and look set to continue in that vein. The spin-off effect of such infrastructural improvements, of course, has been the expansion of the construction industry and public sector employment which has in turn contributed to the general economy of the prefecture.

#### **IV-7 The Promotion and Development of the Okinawan Economy**

##### **IV-7-1 Narrowing the Economic Gaps and the Recipe for Self-Reliance**

At the time of Reversion Okinawa could in no way be described as 'poor.' As has already been mentioned, during the mid-1960's Okinawa's Per Capita Income (PCI) was more than double that of Taiwan and the Philippines. Yet Okinawa was poor relative to the huge Japanese economy it was about to be assimilated into. It would be Japanese yen prices for goods and services that Okinawans would have to pay. Some of the difficulties experienced by Okinawans in relation to the Reversion transition have already been outlined. What remains is to discuss the various measures instituted by the Japanese Government designed to reduce the economic disparity between center and periphery. This was part of an overall "ittai-ka," or unification program.

The First 10-Year Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan was jointly developed by the newly-created Okinawa Development Agency (ODA) of the Japanese Government and the Okinawa Prefectural Government. The plan was initiated to run from 1972, and set two principal objectives:

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<sup>623</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 90.

<sup>624</sup>Takizawa Makota, loc. cit., p. 505.

<sup>625</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 103.

<sup>626</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, "Ichi no Higeiki kara Ichi no Yûi e: Fukki 20 Nen, Soshite kore kara" (From a Location of Tragedy to a Place of Advantage: Okinawa 20 Years After Reversion to Japan), *Sekai*, June, 1992, p. 219.

1) narrowing the socioeconomic gaps between the mainland and Okinawa, with specific attention paid to raising the PCI to 80% of the Japanese level, and; 2) strengthening the foundation of the Okinawan economy in the direction of greater self-sufficiency. The same basic objectives have characterized the two later Development Plans, although the emphasis has changed somewhat. Raising the level of the Okinawan PCI is less of a priority, and whilst the first plan envisaged the path to greater self-reliance as being through the expansion of the manufacturing sector, its failure to reach the projected levels has led to a greater concentration on the development of tourism.

In order to institute these objectives, the Japanese Government granted Okinawa vast amounts of financial assistance. In FY 1972 the figure was 37.29 billion yen, but by 1993 had reached 325.14 billion yen, some eight times the original amount. Accumulated expenses over the first 22 years amount to about 3,990 billion yen.<sup>627</sup> This influx of capital struck at the heart of certain problems, but, and as implied above, did not necessarily develop in line with planned objectives. During the first few years after Reversion, Okinawa experienced quite rapid economic growth, peaking at an 11.8% growth rate in 1979 which was well above the national average.<sup>628</sup> In the years thereafter this growth has slowed somewhat, yet has tended to parallel more closely the national level. This growing stability was part the result of the eventual stabilization of commodity prices during the 1980's, and part the result of the Prefectural Government's concentration on the steady growth of private consumption expenditure, large-scale investment in public works and private enterprises, and financial expenditure. Annual growth stands at around 5% to 6%.

In line with economic growth has been a pronounced rise in Okinawa's PCI. As is illustrated by the data presented below, by 1990 there had been a 487% increase in PCI from the 1972 figure. Since the Japanese national average PCI has also increased by 376% during the same period, however, there still remains a reasonable disparity. Okinawa's PCI has not yet exceeded 75% of the national average. Since the Okinawan Prefectural economy and the national economy are developing at a fairly parallel rate it is unlikely that this disparity will ever be bridged. In terms of comparative purchasing power Okinawa will remain weaker than other prefectures. As a counterbalance to these statistics, and as Higa Teruyuki points out, "the per capita income of Okinawa has not only caught up with that of many advanced nations, it has even surpassed that of some, such as Italy, U.K., and France."<sup>629</sup>

Post-Reversion Disparity in Per Capita Income (Yen Thousand)<sup>630</sup>

	1965	1972	1980	1985	1990
A) Okinawa Prefecture	141	410	1,195	1,544	1,999
B) Japan (National)	268	740	1,728	2,072	2,786
A as a % of B	52.6%	55.4%	69.2%	74.5%	71.4%

On average, manufacturing industry in Okinawa contributed 14.1% of the GPP during the mid-1930's. Wartime destruction saw this industrial sector reduced to almost zero until the US administration targeted it as a means of reducing Okinawa's overreliance on imports. With extensive

<sup>627</sup>Osoda Masanori (Director, Planning Division, Okinawa Development Agency), "Okinawa's Role and Potential in World Island Affairs," Paper presented at the Islands of the World IV Conference, 'Island Matters, Islands Matter', held at the Mielparque Conference Centre, Naha City, Okinawa, 22nd to 26th June, 1994, pp. 3-4.

<sup>628</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs International Foundation, op. cit., p. 17. Okinawa experienced a far higher rate of growth under the US administration in the 1960's, yet much of this was the result of large military expenditures during the Vietnam War. Most people would prefer stable lower, but peaceful, economic growth.

<sup>629</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 92.

<sup>630</sup>Nohara Zensho, loc. cit., p. 3.

planning and the influx of funding the manufacturing sector was redeveloped. In 1955, this sector contributed over 5% of the overall Okinawan economy, and by 1969 almost exactly 10%.<sup>631</sup> Given the introduction of Japanese capital in addition to US funding during the 1960's, however, this sector was still lower in overall importance to the economy than it had been in the prewar period. Economic planners in the post-Reversion period felt that if this industry could be significantly developed it would constitute the basis of an increasingly self-reliant Okinawan economy. To these ends the first Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan stressed the expansion of the manufacturing sector to the point that it would contribute 30% of Okinawa's GPP.

By the end of the first planning period in 1981, it was quite clear that these targets would not be reached. Appraised overall, the percentage of manufacturing output in net GPP varied between 8% and 12% from 1972 to 1985. During the same period the percentage of manufacturing in net Japanese national product constituted between 27% and 33%.<sup>632</sup> By and large the failure of the plan to obtain the desired results stemmed from the reluctance of mainland companies to invest in the area. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, because of its geographical distance from the mainland the cost of electricity in Okinawa is higher than any other prefecture. Secondly, Okinawa has had constant water shortage problems and cannot cope with the demands of an increasing population and with the needs of a rapidly expanding tourist industry. Thirdly, Okinawa is the only prefecture which does not have a railway system. Goods would have to be transported via an already overpopulated road system. Geographical isolation also means that Okinawan companies would be located far from mainland suppliers. Fourthly, Okinawan workers were believed to be inadequately trained in those areas which mainland firms required.

Furthermore, although Okinawans are generally paid lower wages than mainland Japanese, they are still comparatively high in terms of the international labor market. Japanese firms invest abroad as a result of these conditions and foreign firms, with the current high rate of the yen, are discouraged from entering the Japanese market. When all of these factors are combined Okinawa does not become an attractive proposal. In the years since Reversion mainland capital has been directed towards developing Okinawa for *consumption* rather than *production*.<sup>633</sup> Hence the rapid expansion of the tourist industry. For the mainland firms, on which Okinawa relies, quicker and easier profits can be found in service sector development. Less investment in training is required, which in turn ensures that the wages paid will be lower. For Okinawa, and in terms of the goals of the Development Plans, this has increasingly meant more reliance or dependence on the Japanese mainland rather than less. As Higa Teruyuki states;

"the fact that the service industry does not 'produce' goods means...that the service industry is inherently dependent on the goods producing industries. Thus for the service sector to have expanded when the manufacturing sector did not can itself be seen as indicative of the failure of the first Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan."<sup>634</sup>

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<sup>631</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., pp. 1388-1389.

<sup>632</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs International Foundation, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>633</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 96.

<sup>634</sup>Ibid. p. 96.

<u>Structure of Industry FY 1991 (%)</u> <sup>635</sup>		
	<u>Okinawa</u>	<u>Japan</u>
Primary	2.9	2.4
Secondary	22.0	39.6
(Manufacturing)	(6.1)	(28.3)
(Construction)	(15.6)	(11.0)
Tertiary	79.2	64.4

The mainland dependence trap is completed when one examines another dimension of central Government financing. Okinawa's economy sprang from the construction of military bases and developed into a subsequent base-dependent economy. In 1970 some 57% of the revenue tabulated for balance of payments was derived from US military base related sources.<sup>636</sup> After Reversion, however, this dependence on military revenues was replaced by the ever-increasing quantities of Japanese Government transfer payments. In 1989, Japanese Government transfers constituted 45% of the overall total of Okinawa's balance of payments receipts.<sup>637</sup> A key objective of the Reversion Movement was to shift away from the base dependence, but the net result has been a shift to a different form of dependence, that of Government transfers. One stark difference between the two administrations may also be measured in terms of Okinawa's ability to be self-financing. In 1969, under the US administration, the Government of the Ryūkyū Islands could provide 57% of the revenue for its expenditures, yet by 1978, after several years of increased Government transfers, only 16.7%.<sup>638</sup> Okinawa's self-financing power has increased since 1978, so that it can now provide 23% of the revenue for its expenditures, yet Tokyo can provide 97% and the national average is 60%.<sup>639</sup> Kakazu Hiroshi argues that whilst self-reliance has increased in general, it should be remembered that 50% of Okinawa's deficits are "still financed by non-self-reliant external sources,"<sup>640</sup> i.e., central Government transfers.

#### **IV-7-2 The Rise of Tourism**

The failure of the objectives of the first Development Plan to promote Okinawan economic self-reliance through the expansion of manufacturing led to a shift of emphasis in the latter two. The key to the same goal has increasingly been focused on the development of the service sector, with particular attention paid to the tourist industry. This was presumably consistent with the aim of "positively making the best possible use of Okinawa's unique characteristics."<sup>641</sup> The Ryūkyū Islands are naturally endowed with the necessary requirements, all that was needed was to develop certain areas accordingly and then to promote their virtues. This would promote employment, boost the construction and retail industries, and provide a larger market for indigenous products. In many ways planners were presented with a ready-made success story. In 1970, tourism was the second largest locally-generated source of dollar income after sugar exports.

<sup>635</sup>Osoda Masanori, loc. cit., p. 4.

<sup>636</sup>Ibid. p. 90.

<sup>637</sup>Ibid. p. 106.

<sup>638</sup>Kurima Yasuo, "Fukkigo no Okinawa Keizai no Dōkō" (Trends in the Post-Reversion Economy of Okinawa), *Nantō Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Ryūkyūan Culture)*, No 3, 1981, p. 2.

<sup>639</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 95.

<sup>640</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, *Sustainable Development of Small Island Economies*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1994, p. 156.

<sup>641</sup>Okinawa Development Agency, *Dai Sanji Okinawa Shinkō Kaihatsu Keikaku (The Third Promotion and Development Plan for Okinawa)*, Okinawa Development Agency, Naha, 1992, p. 3.

<u>Pre-Reversion Tourism: No of Tourists and Revenue</u> <sup>642</sup>						
	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>
Visitors (*1000)	103	128	164	188	328	358
Revenue (\$ Million)	18.5	24.1	29.1	33.1	33.7	42.1

<u>Early Post-Reversion Tourism: No of Tourists and Revenue</u> <sup>643</sup>						
	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>
Vistors (*1000)	623	1,026	1,131	1,898	1,172	1,504
Revenue (Billion Yen)	32.4	45.9	57.7	125.7	63.7	99.0

The holding of the Okinawa International Ocean Exposition (EXPO) '75 boosted the number of visitors to a record high, and although the numbers decreased in the following year they have gradually ascended. 1975 also marked the year when tourist-related income succeeded military base income to become the leading economic sector. In 1993 a record 3.18 million people visited Okinawa Prefecture, bringing in more than 343 billion yen.<sup>644</sup> Revenues from the tourist industry account for more than 20% of Okinawa's total balance of payments receipts and more than 10% of its GPP. In terms of the direct revenue it creates and in terms of the multiplier effect, tourism has proven to be one of Okinawa's most important industries. As to whether it is the best means to promote greater self-reliance for Okinawa is another matter.

At the time of Reversion Okinawa was designated as an 'underdeveloped area,' hence the need for a separate Government department to oversee economic planning, the ODA, and the need for substantial development funding, or 'assistance.' With the flow of vast amounts of Government capital into the islands, however, came large numbers of mainland companies seeking to 'get a piece of the action.' The initial boom was in the construction industry and the emphasis on public works projects, but this rapidly expanded into private sector construction. With this boom came the advent of the 'joint venture' projects. As Higa Teruyuki explains,

"through joint venture, mainland firms are able to participate in local Okinawan projects, and local firms are able to benefit from association with those larger companies which have access to cost-saving procedures and purchases, as well as the financial resources"<sup>645</sup>

One effect of this increasingly common development, however, has been that more of the profits have been siphoned back to the mainland. This is particularly noticeable in relation to the tourist industry. The vast majority of Okinawa's large "resort" hotels are financed and owned by mainland capital; these luxury hotels tend to be 'enclave' businesses, wherein the spin-off benefits to the local communities in which they are situated are few; the majority of the top, or managerial, positions tend to be occupied by mainland Japanese with Okinawans employed predominantly in a 'non-skilled' capacity, and; perhaps most importantly, the means of transportation to and from the mainland is controlled principally by mainland companies, such as All Nippon Airways (ANA) and Japan Airlines.<sup>646</sup> All of these elements combine to keep the majority of profits 'within the family.' Kakazu Hiroshi defines this phenomenon as the "economic boomerang," in that the bulk of what is invested in Okinawa from the mainland returns to the mainland. The term implies, he says,

<sup>642</sup>Bank of the Ryūkyūs, *Sengo Okinawa Keizaishi*, op. cit., pp. 1400-1403.

<sup>643</sup>Ibid. pp. 1400-1403.

<sup>644</sup>Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation, Survey Department, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>645</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 93.

<sup>646</sup>Ibid. pp. 92-97. See also; Kakazu Hiroshi, op. cit., pp. 157-160.

"that since most financial assistance is tied to the country that provides the assistance, benefits of the assistance are returned to the donor country through imports from the donor"<sup>647</sup>

Okinawa has benefited greatly from tourism, yet suffers to a certain extent from the hand that feeds. Large-scale tourist development puts greater pressures on the islands water resources, and has led to an increase in pollution and environmental degradation. One should bear in mind that Okinawa is already overpopulated in terms of the amount of land per person. The total population of the prefecture is 1.25 million, yet visitors have now exceeded 3 million per year. The fact that tourist development is geared towards cheap mainland 'package tours' (95% of visitors to Okinawa come from the mainland) has meant that local people, not offered such cheap packages, are "financially excluded from the resort hotels."<sup>648</sup> Okinawans, squeezed between the bases and the hotels, have also had to put up with rapidly increasing land prices. Some of these problems are perhaps the inevitable prices an area pays in return for development, yet some have invariably resulted from a skewed economic structure which has allowed the mainland to 'mine' its 47th prefecture under the pretence that it is in fact encouraging greater self-reliance.

#### **IV-7-3 The Decline of the Military Bases**

Since 1972 the income derived from bases as a percentage of the total Okinawan economy has decreased from 15.4% to 4.9%. This is a far cry from the base-dependent Okinawa of the late-1950's when 44.2% of the prefecture's total income was derived from the military. As far as most Okinawans are concerned this has been a positive development. Initial fears about the profound effect of a reduction in military expenditures were warranted, but a decline in the importance of the bases has been offset to a certain extent by the meteoric rise of tourism and the ability of that industry to be able to absorb the subsequent abundance of labor. The story of one decline should be seen in the context of another's rise. In 1972 income from the bases was twice that derived from tourism. The tables have turned, and in 1991 base income was less than half that derived from tourism.

The collapse of the Cold War system which necessitated the construction of a basing system and reductions in the American defense budget in recent years point to a continuation in the trend of the decreased value of the bases, though to be fair, the Japanese Government has encouraged their continued presence and currently bears the cost for all military land rentals and for the wages of military employees. The Government is also obliged to compensate local people as a result of base-related inconveniences, such as damage to property and to bear the burden for the cost of reducing noise pollution. The United States has asserted on several occasions that it is cheaper to station forces in Japan and Okinawa than it is to maintain them in the United States.<sup>649</sup> Although base income as a percentage of the GPP has declined, however, it is worth pointing out that the base presence still brings in 152 billion yen into the local economy,<sup>650</sup> and provides employment to almost 8,000 persons.

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<sup>647</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, *ibid.* p. 157.

<sup>648</sup>Higa Teruyuki, *loc. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>649</sup>The most recent case being in: United States Department of Defence, "US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region," summarised in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 28th, February, 1995.

<sup>650</sup>Okinawa Prefecture, Military Base Affairs Office, *Okinawa no Beigun Kichi (American Bases in Okinawa)*, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Public Office, Naha, 1993, pp. 281-284. The economic statistics in this book cover the period up to 1990. The author was able to obtain a slightly updated set of figures (to 1991) from the Military Base Affairs Office during a visit to Naha from 26th December, 1994, to 7th January, 1995.

Amount of Military Receipts and Percentage of GPP, 1972 and 1991 (Billion-yen/%)<sup>651</sup>

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1991</u>
Military Personnel Spending	41.4	53.2
Base Workers Income (civilian)	24.0	47.9
Land Rental Fees	12.6	51.6
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>78.0</u>	<u>152.7</u>
As a % of Okinawa's GPP	15.4%	4.9%

As valuable as this income may be, the bases cannot be seen as productive in relation to the resources they command. The spin-off from bases to the local communities were high in the 1960's during Vietnam War, but in the post-Reversion period and with the increased value of the yen (which currently stands at 82 yen to the dollar) military personnel spending is drastically down. Most US servicemen and women stay within the base compounds where they get US value for money. The businesses which set up around the bases under the American administration when the dollar was being traded at 360 yen flourished with US personnel patronage, but now they do not. As the *Ryūkyū Shimpō* recently reported, "retail stores clustering at the entrances to Kadena Air Base are struggling to survive."<sup>652</sup>

US bases account for just less than 5% of the Okinawan GPP and employ just over 1% of the working population, yet they occupy almost 20% of Okinawa Island's (including Iejima) total land area<sup>653</sup> Nowadays, the bases are actually a hindrance to the further development of the local economy. The high percentage of military-owned land has driven up Okinawa's land values. With the exception of the Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya regions Okinawa has the highest land values in Japan. The inability of the Prefectural Government to be able to plan for urban development or alternative land use puts a strain on the local economy. This in turn reduces Okinawa's capacity to develop any sort of autonomous prefectural economy. The ODA's planning for Okinawa in the 21st century calls for the promotion of Okinawa's traditional culture, tourist resort development, and international exchange based on the island's particular geographical and natural advantages,<sup>654</sup> but in order to be able to achieve any success in this regard it will be necessary to gain some reduction in the amount of land currently occupied by the US military. The local Government has devised preliminary plans in anticipation of this happening which aim at; "securing places for safer and better living conditions and industrial production for the Okinawan people and improving their social welfare."<sup>655</sup>

#### **IV-8 Post-Cold War Okinawa: The Prospects for Economic Self-Reliance**

##### **IV-8 Analyzing the Roots of Dependence**

The original intention of the US Military Government in 1945 was to bring about such conditions as would allow Okinawa to become politically self-governing and economically self-

<sup>651</sup>Ibid. pp. 281-284.

<sup>652</sup>*Ryūkyū Shimpō*, 18th April, 1995.

<sup>653</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, Okinawa General Bureau, Governor's Office, *Okinawa no Beigun oyobi Jietai Kichi: Tōkei Shiryōshū*, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>654</sup>See the preamble to: Okinawa Development Agency, op. cit., pp. 1-3.

<sup>655</sup>Okinawa Prefectural Government, *Okinawa Ken Chūryū Gunyōchi Sekichi Riyō Kihon Keikaku (The Basic Plan for the Site Utilisation of the Lands Currently Used by the US Military in Okinawa)*, Okinawa Prefectural Government, Naha, March, 1993, p. 1.



sufficient in as short a period as possible. The onslaught of the Cold War during the latter part of the 1940's and the subsequent complicity of the Japanese Government in allowing Okinawa to be transformed into one large military facility to a certain extent made the former objective impossible, in that any strong local government would be able to exert a great deal of pressure in opposition to the bases and therefore threaten their effective day to day operation, yet it necessitated that the latter be prioritized. The US sensibly realized that by bringing economic prosperity to the islands it would be able to deflect and diffuse local anti-base sentiment. The recipe for this prosperity was to be sparked by the base construction program and the influx of large amounts of Congress-appropriated aid. Once the economy had been 'launched,' planners believed, it would be able to take on a life of its own and diversify beyond its "base roots."

That this never occurred came as a result of two main factors: 1) that the US had prioritized the economic recovery and strengthening of mainland Japan, which would necessarily involve aligning all other 'underdeveloped' economies in the region with its Japan policy, and; 2) that its economic policies towards Okinawa were inadequate and conflicted with its military requirements. On the one hand, Japan was being developed as an export producer and needed raw materials and markets. Okinawa was, as a consequence, tailored to fit this role. One of Japan's most important sources of much-needed foreign currency was Okinawa. Japan was the greatest beneficiary of the base construction program and became the source of around 90% of all Okinawa's import requirements. The US created a total economic dependency relationship between Japan and Okinawa which was beneficial for both parties in terms of basic needs, but not symbiotic. By encouraging Okinawa's development as an importer the US was strangling its capacity to export other than through the establishment of extremely favorable tariff concessions in the recipient countries.

The US compounded such difficulties in that it seized 20% of Okinawa Island's total land area, thereby reducing its capacity to expand its manufacturing sector through the creation of industrial estates, or to expand the area of land under cultivation. US policy was geared towards the unbridled expansion of the service sector which took Okinawa further and further away from the possibility of economic self-reliance. There is no doubt that the base presence and the expanded service sector led to greater prosperity, but at what cost? Firstly, base-building was linked to the existence of conflicts in the region such as the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Okinawa's periods of greatest prosperity were aligned with wars. Thus, Okinawa's economy was always dependent on shifts in international politics. This fragility was well-exemplified by the military drawback from Asia after the Vietnam War. Secondly, the development of the service sector as per the US's 'Okinawa model' created two profound, and as yet unresolved, structural flaws. The first was the top-heavy industrial structure. A 'non-goods productive' service sector usually has at its foundation a counterbalancing 'goods producing' primary and secondary industry which can provide the economy with some export power. In the case of Okinawa the service sector was developed at the expense of these areas, so that it is now proportionally too dependent on other goods-producers, particularly Japan. Breaking out of this trap has proven almost impossible. The second flaw is that Okinawa has become a "basket economy". No matter how much revenue the service sector provides it inevitably leaks out because Okinawans have to purchase the goods that they do not produce from elsewhere, again almost invariably from Japan. Although Okinawa can be seen as base-dependent under the US administration, one must also realize that the economy had also been purposely manufactured as Japan-dependent.

Despite planning to the contrary, the Japanese Government has brought the Okinawan economy no closer to self-reliance than the American administration before it. In reality, one can see the last 50 years, regardless of who was designated actual sovereignty, as a continuation of the same basic policy. In terms of economic development there has been an amazing degree of compliance between Japan and the US Base-dependence has merely been replaced by central government transfer-dependence. The structural flaws still loom large some 23 years after Reversion. On the one hand, the Japanese Government was following a policy of "differential correction," by increasing incomes and investing in social overhead capital, yet on the other, local businesses were being weeded out by mainland competition who succeeded in gaining more from the post-Reversion capital influx than those it was targeted towards. The Okinawan economic structure is far too top-heavy in its reliance on tourist-spawned service sector revenue, and the general movement of capital remains largely the same, in that "what comes in must surely go back out." Neither of these flaws can be seriously addressed whilst Okinawa remains predominantly a non-productive consumer. In terms of general prosperity it is undeniable that Okinawans are far better off today than they were 25 years ago. This has been the obvious result of alignment with the rapidly expanding Japanese economy of the 1970's and 1980's, and is reflected in opinion poll surveys conducted since Reversion which point to more than 80% of the population being basically content.

What can one glean from this? Was the idea of economic self-reliance always an impossible notion, given Okinawa's historically-consistent dependent position, favored principally by Okinawan scholars and forever limited to the realms of academic musing, or would the same 80% who favor the current *status quo* prefer it if Okinawa could eventually stand on its own two feet? In the opinion of this writer, self-reliance is a goal favored by many more than just the academic community on Okinawa and has a good deal of support amongst the general population. The dependency relationship was foisted upon the Okinawans by Japan (and during an interim period of 27 years by the US) and put forward as the only solution to her economic situation, yet this runs contrary to both geographical factors, Okinawan historical experience, and, perhaps most importantly, the sense of 'belonging.' Okinawa is an integral part of Japan, of that there is no doubt, but it is also an integral part of Pacific Asia in a much broader sense. No matter how much Japan struggles with the concept, she remains predominantly 'isolationist' as opposed to 'internationalist.' Okinawans, or perhaps more accurately Ryūkyūans, align with the latter concept and have problems with the former.

#### **IV-8-2 The Need for Self-Reliance**

There are clearly problems within the current structure of the economy, particularly the current emphasis on tourism, which need to be addressed if Okinawa is to move towards self-reliance in the 21st century. On the one hand, the industry looks steady. Over 3 million tourists, bringing in more than 343 billion-yen visited these islands in 1993. The numbers of tourists and the income derived from them has been fairly consistent since 1990. As previously stated, this industry is second only to central Government transfers in terms of Okinawa's balance of payments receipts. This industry is vital, not only for the revenue it creates, but also for the multiplier effect: i.e., the spin-off industries it encourages. If tourism carries on spiraling onwards and upwards this will also mean an increase in such related industries. On the other hand, however, tourism seems to have stagnated somewhat. From FY 1990 to FY 1993 there was a 7.7% increase in the number of visitors

to Okinawa, yet in the preceding four years, from FY 1986 to FY 1989, the growth rate had been 31.6%.<sup>656</sup> This slowdown has coincided with the recent and meteoric rise of the yen.

There are three main causes for concern with this trend. Firstly, Okinawa is increasingly faced with overseas competition. The rise of the yen and the advent of longer holidays make Hawaii, Guam, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan fiercely competitive tourist destinations. Visitors are often fickle. Consider, for instance, that the favored honeymoon Mecca for the Japanese was once Aoshima in Miyazaki Prefecture. This role was usurped by Okinawa, but there is no guarantee that the favored spot will not change again.<sup>657</sup> Secondly, Okinawan tourism has been supported by airline campaigns. These same airlines are now promoting Southeast Asia, Guam and Hawaii. If the yen continues to skyrocket it will be more profitable to promote these other routes. Thirdly, Okinawan tourism is utterly dependent on mainland visitors. Only 3% of the visitors to Okinawa in 1987 were 'foreign.'<sup>658</sup> Okinawa may attempt to attract visitors from foreign countries, but there is little doubt that under the current climate most are "financially excluded."

It is by no means a forgone conclusion that the Japanese will suddenly desert Okinawa for cheaper foreign climes in their droves. Okinawa is 'safe,' and Japanese tourists prefer 'safety.' One should be aware, however, of how fragile the mainstay of the Okinawan economy actually is, and how dependent it is on the Japanese mainland. A lengthy period of non-growth 'stability' in effect means that the economy is not going anywhere. A decline in tourism revenues would have as much of a profound effect on the Okinawan economy as the withdrawal of US forces after the Vietnam War. It would be debilitating. There needs to be more diversification in the economy so as to reduce the overriding dependence on this sector. One wonders, however, whether it will be possible to halt the predominant flow in the direction of the tertiary sector in order to strengthen the primary and secondary sectors. The current policy is, after all, Government-led. As Higa Teruyuki writes;

"Perhaps the persistence of Okinawa's dependency is more a matter of benefits for Japan than it is a matter of benefits for Okinawa. And if Japan is benefiting sufficiently from this relationship, it will be difficult for Okinawa, single-handedly, to break the cycle of dependency"<sup>659</sup>

#### **IV-8-3 The Path to Self-Reliance**

One of the foundations for self-reliance lies in the effective diversification of economic activity. This had been an integral part of policy planning initiatives formulated by Okinawan economists over 25 years ago, and still remains a key element amongst contemporary economists. As Kakazu Hiroshi explains, it is necessary for two important reasons:

"One is in order to "disintegrate" the system of economic boomerang...diversification means deeper economic linkages or integration among the domestic economic sectors...The second reason for diversification is in order to acquire a socio-economic "resilience" in the face of uncertain external forces"<sup>660</sup>

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<sup>656</sup>Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation, Survey Department, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>657</sup>Tomikawa Moritake, "Kichi to Kankô" (Military Bases and Tourism), *Shin Okinawa Bungaku*, No 77, 1988, p. 23.

<sup>658</sup>Ibid. p. 23.

<sup>659</sup>Higa Teruyuki, loc. cit., p. 100.

<sup>660</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi., op. cit., p. 160.

One can, in turn, diversify horizontally, which would involve moving "from the production of a single or a few products such as sugar, pineapple, and coconuts to the production of multicommercial products such as tropical fruits, vegetables, and flowers,"<sup>661</sup> or vertically, which would mean "a shift in the production process from upstream activities of raw material production to downstream activities of manufacturing, thereby generating more intra- or inter-industry linkages and value-added production activities."<sup>662</sup> The first method would place a greater emphasis on primary and secondary economic activities, whilst the second would involve both producing and processing local materials *in* Okinawa, rather than shipping them to the mainland, and expanding tourism-related activities.<sup>663</sup>

Certain efforts have been made to diversify, particularly in the agricultural sector, although the results seem, at the same time, both encouraging and discouraging. On the one hand, the production of beef and milk cattle and flower cultivation are bringing in increased revenues yearly, yet the development of techno-agriculture products, which looked to be on the rise during the mid-1980's, have declined in value in subsequent years. Given the particular situation of Okinawa where land is scarce, new industries have to be developed at the expense of traditional industries. Sugar cane and pineapple production has declined. Overall, the agricultural sector has further declined in terms of its contribution to the GPP. From 1973 to 1991 Gross Agricultural Product (GAP) has only increased by 139%.<sup>664</sup> The disproportionate growth of the tertiary sector has definitely had an effect in knocking back the primary sector and in maintaining it at its current low position. The moves thus far made have, however, been positive in many respects. Kakazu Hiroshi's view that more of the products produced in Okinawa should be turned into finished products in Okinawa is an excellent idea, yet this would require more land to build processing plants. For this the current military base area will need to be reduced.

The expansion of the manufacturing sector would be an important step. Not only would this help to solve Okinawa's existing unemployment problem, but it would provide greater opportunities for Okinawan university graduates to remain within the prefecture upon graduation. Employment prospects for young people within the prefecture are particularly bleak. As Kakazu Hiroshi points out, almost two-thirds of the unemployed are under twenty-four years of age.<sup>665</sup> Although they have more of a chance of securing work on the mainland they prefer to stay in Okinawa for "cultural reasons."<sup>666</sup> The so-called "U-turn graduates" are recruited in Okinawa by mainland companies, yet cannot adjust to life in the mainland and return to Okinawa after 2 or 3 years. Manufacturing would also help to redress the "basket" or "boomerang" effect and decrease Okinawa's reliance on central Government transfers, as long as investment is poured into on-site production and not into wide scale capital intensive industry (which would have the reverse effect).<sup>667</sup> Currently, however, the production capacity of Okinawan industry is limited: in terms of land scarcity; and in terms of the overall will to invest long-term in it.

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<sup>661</sup>Ibid. p. 160.

<sup>662</sup>Ibid. p. 160.

<sup>663</sup>Ibid. p. 160.

<sup>664</sup>Okinawa Promotion and Development Finance Corporation, Survey Department, op. cit.,

<sup>665</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, *Sustainable Development of Small Island Economies*, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>666</sup>Ibid. p. 152.

<sup>667</sup>Tomikawa Moritake, loc. cit., pp. 14-15.

There are possibilities. In June of 1969, USCAR commissioned a comprehensive study into the possibilities of reclaiming land for industrial estate development. The area principally targeted was Itoman, which is located on the southwestern coast of Okinawa Island and within very close proximity of Naha City. It was proposed that 320 hectares of land would be reclaimed wherein heavy, light, and waterfront-oriented (steel mills or lumber mills) industries could be established.<sup>668</sup> This estate would also provide space for an expanded Free Trade Zone (FTZ) envisaged as being of the same approximate size as the Kaohsiung Free Export Processing Zone (KEPZ) in Taiwan, one of the world's most successful FTZ's, yet better located. The industrial estate would, overall, provide an excellent location for many of Okinawa's small- and medium-sized manufacturing firms whereby they could engage in cooperative and joint operation. Greater integration in this way would benefit Okinawa's manufacturing industries immeasurably. This idea was embraced by the Okinawa Economic Development and Research Center in their preparatory planning in the same year.<sup>669</sup> This idea has been developed, and Itoman now serves as a Marine Products Processing District and General Industrial District wherein many companies have begun operating. An area more in line with USCAR's proposal has been developed at Nakagusuku Bay on the eastern coast of Okinawa. This is the tentative site of a large Processing and Distribution Port which will also house a large industrial district and expanded FTZ.

Tourism will without doubt remain a mainstay of the Okinawan economy, yet there will need to reappraise how further development will be instituted. The Japanese Government's 1987 "Resort Development Act" does not provide any significant answers or solutions to many of the problems we have already mentioned in this text, rather it increases the strains.<sup>670</sup> It is planned that the current number of resort hotels and golf courses will be doubled, yet the same basic structure, whereby the mainland Japanese firms cream off the profits whilst Okinawa gains only spin-off benefits yet experiences further environmental degradation and water consumption pressures, will remain in place. Under the existing structure Okinawans may find an overall increase in revenues, but will not escape the mainland trap. Land prices are already spiraling, and local people will have little chance if they are to be further squeezed between, on the one hand, the military bases and, on the other, luxury hotels. It is difficult to say what should be done with regard to future development in this area, it already seems to have achieved somewhat of an unstoppable momentum, but there should clearly be some way of allowing the local population to derive more of the benefits than they currently do. Secondly, although this may sound old-fashioned, tourist development should above all be conducted "responsibly," in that it does not simply take. Its effects on Okinawa 20 to 30 years down the line need to be looked into. As the OEDRC asserted 26 years ago,

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<sup>668</sup>Daniel, Mann, Johnson, and Mendenhall, *Industrial Estate and New Town Study Okinawa*, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>669</sup>Okinawa Economic Development and Research Centre (OEDRC), *Road Toward Self-Sustaining Economy for Okinawa: Basic Programming for Preparatory Period*, OEDRC, Naha, 1969, pp. 16-23. Apart from one or two of the more innovative ideas put forward by contemporary Okinawan economists this document is as relevant to modern-day conditions as it was to pre-Reversion conditions.

<sup>670</sup>The nature of this Act and its overall ramifications are comprehensively discussed in two fine pieces of work: Higa Teruyuki, "The "RDA" - Its Impact on Okinawa," *Sangyō Sōgō Kenkyūsho*, Offprint No 1, March, 1994, pp. 39-68, and; Shimabukuro Shinzo, "Recent Resort Development by Big Enterprises and its Impact on Land Use in Okinawa," *Ryūkyū Daigaku Hōbungakubu Kiyō (Bulletin of the College of Law and Letters, University of the Ryūkyūs)*, No 35, March, 1992, pp. 67-91.

"we must not lose sight of the important things which should have preference over others in our efforts to attract foreign tourists. The protection of tangible and intangible cultural properties is one of them"<sup>671</sup>

All of the various measures outlined above need to be implemented in order to turn the tide from dependence towards self-reliance, yet the most convincing path may lie in combining Okinawa's geographical position with recent movements in international economics which point towards the expansion of deregulated commerce and the formation of regional trading zones. On a large scale the concept is exemplified by the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Alliance (NAFTA), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Free Trade Area. On a smaller scale, and of relevance to an area the size of the Ryūkyū Islands, are the "local economic zones:"<sup>672</sup> such as the South China Economic Circle (SCEC), incorporating Hong Kong and Taiwan, with the Chinese provinces of Guangdong and Fujian; and the Japan Sea Economic Circle (JSEC), which brings together prefectures along the Japan Sea coast such as Niigata with northern areas in China, Siberia, and Korea.<sup>673</sup> That these groupings exist across traditionally inflexible political or national borders has given rise to the notion that we are increasingly moving towards a "borderless world."

What all of these groupings have in common, is that they are "natural economic zones." Geographical proximity makes them feasible, and mutual benefit makes them desirable. Naha City lies in closer geographical proximity to Taipei (390 miles), Shanghai (510 miles), Seoul (830 miles), Manila (900 miles), and Hong Kong (900 miles), than it does to Tokyo (970 miles), but remains exclusively tied to the Japanese mainland and unable to take advantage of its location. As Kakazu Hiroshi has pointed out, although Okinawa buys Taiwanese goods, these must first be shipped to Japanese mainland ports before they can be shipped on to Okinawa.<sup>674</sup> This ridiculous practice increases the transportation costs of the goods which then makes them more expensive for the eventual consumer. If the political will within the central Japanese Government could be found, a better system might conceivably be created.

As a means of sparking some movement in this direction, Kakazu devised the "Diamond Peace Trade Zone." Under this scheme Okinawa would be established as a "Free Port" and would be linked into one large trade zone with Taiwan, Shanghai, and Kyushu. There were five main objectives: 1) to create trade and investment opportunities through a subregional FTZ; 2) to enhance regional economic activities through a decentralization of the decision-making process; 3) to reduce Japan's growing trade surplus by first opening up its regional markets; and 4) to reduce politico-military tensions, which have been dangerously building up in recent years, over the territorial disputes on the Spratley Islands in the South China Sea by intensifying mutual economic interests.<sup>675</sup> The fifth, and overall objective, was to secure for Okinawa the chance of another "Golden Age" as a peaceful trading nation at the crossroads between Japan, China, Korea, and Southeast Asia.<sup>676</sup>

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<sup>671</sup>Okinawa Economic Development and Research Centre (OECRC), op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>672</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, "Five Economic Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region: Emerging Issues and Japan's Role," *Research Institute for Asian Development Bulletin*, Vol. 1, March, 1992, p. 121.

<sup>673</sup>Ibid. p. 122.

<sup>674</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>675</sup>Ibid. p. 186.

<sup>676</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, "Ichi no Higeiki kara Ichi no Yūi e: Fukki 20 Nen, Soshite kore kara," loc. cit., p. 225.

Such ideas have been embraced in Okinawa. The Second Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan in 1982 championed the expansion of international commercial and cultural exchange with the Asia-Pacific region. The Prefectural Government has gone on to invest a great deal towards the realization of this goal by expanding cultural exchange programs at the Okinawa International Center at Urasoe and marketing Okinawa as a site for international meetings and conventions through the construction of the Okinawa Convention Center. It has also set about improving port facilities at Naha, Itoman, Nakagusuku Bay, and Urasoe; has plans to expand the current number of international routes to and from Naha Airport;<sup>677</sup> and is planning the construction of a large research and development estate. This direction was strengthened under the Third Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan (currently in effect), which envisages for Okinawa the role of Japan's southern node of international exchange and cooperation with neighboring Asian and Pacific countries.

Non-governmentally, there has been an enthusiastic acceptance of this approach for Okinawa. Books and journal articles with themes such as, "Okinawa in the Asian-Pacific Era," "Okinawa and International Exchange," "Okinawa and the South China Economic Sphere," and any number discussing Okinawa's role in the 21st century began appearing with greater frequency during the latter part of the 1980's, and have increased in number during the 1990's. One of the most interesting, yet extreme, texts to emerge from this 'genre,' sets Okinawa within the "Region State" concept as outlined by Ômae Kenichi in his 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article.<sup>678</sup> Discussions center on Okinawa's potential role at the "hub" or center of a region state system incorporating itself with China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The creation of such an "Asian Community," argues Ômae Kenichi, will be necessary if Asia is to keep pace with the EU and NAFTA.<sup>679</sup> A so-called *Yuimâru* or Region State Parliament<sup>680</sup> would be established in Okinawa where national, regional and business leaders from the participating countries and areas would converge. This idea would seem entirely too far-fetched for the Japanese Government to take seriously.

This may not be the path that Okinawa will follow, yet there is little doubt that the prefecture is moving further in this direction than it is content with the existing relations between itself and the central Government. If the Japanese Government is serious in its desire to see Okinawa Prefecture achieve greater self-reliance, then what other path is there for Okinawa to follow other than that outlined by those seeking the expansion of Okinawa's role within its natural economic zone? This desire, set against the *status quo*, is bound to create friction. As Kakazu Hiroshi states, "In order to have such an open economic system within a relatively closed Japanese territory, current politico-administrative systems must be completely dismantled. This would be, without doubt, a revolution within the market system."<sup>681</sup> It is extremely doubtful whether the Japanese Government is yet ready for such a revolution. These and other issues will be the subject of much discussion as Okinawa approaches the year 1999, when the period of Reversion to Japan will equal that of the previous 27-year occupation by the United States. Comparatively analyzed, what has changed?

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<sup>677</sup>Currently Naha Airport operates international flights to Seoul, Taipei, Hong Kong, and Guam.

<sup>678</sup>Ômae Kenichi, "The Rise of the Region State," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No 2, Spring, 1993, p. 79.

<sup>679</sup>Ibid. p. 79.

<sup>680</sup>Okinawa Konwakai, *Ômae Kenichi no Yuimârubijion (Ômae Kenichi's 'Region State' Vision)*, Bôdâinku, Naha, 1993, pp. 50-51. See also the plan of the Parliament; p. 86.

<sup>681</sup>Kakazu Hiroshi, op. cit., p. 187.

## CONCLUSION

### Okinawa between Japan and the United States

The contemporary history of Okinawa began with a war in which the local population was sandwiched between the invading American forces and the Japanese Imperial Army assigned to defend it. Okinawa was seen as a necessary territory to *retain* by the Japanese, and as a necessary territory to *attain* by the Americans. As a small island “nation” with few means of resisting outside advances Okinawa had been the subject of sovereignty struggles between the great powers of China and Japan in an earlier, and the United States and Japan in a later, period of its historical development, but such struggles had never resulted in the island being subjected to such absolute carnage. The Battle for Okinawa then, was an unprecedented experience or event within the history of this island people, yet the context was entirely familiar.

While there are various discussions and theories about the ethnogenesis of the Okinawan and Japanese people and of their mutual relations, as examined in Chapter One, Okinawa is generally regarded as being an integral part of Japan. This is based on the existence of a high degree of commonality in the cultural characteristics of Okinawans and mainland Japanese, and on the long history of their relations. This notion was strongly promoted by the Meiji Government as the reason for its annexation of the islands in 1879, and was subsequently manifested in its education policies. Okinawa, it was argued, had been separated for too long from the ‘family.’ The Meiji rulers brought together all of the various wings of the Japanese ‘family’ to coincide with the birth of a modern nation-state. The modern Japanese nation, which spanned from Hokkaido in the north to the Ryûkyû Islands in the south, constituted a natural political community with its people possessing a uniform culture and natural identity.

This notion of Japanese “homogeneity” has, at best, only ever had a minimal connection with reality. The concept itself was sound, and in the best ‘Platonic’ traditions of providing your general masses at birth with a “memoryscape” or reason to rally behind a particular cause, yet the implementation by Japan was imperfect. The “homogeneity” myth may easily be deconstructed through the study of Ryûkyû-Japan relations. All Japanese were supposed to be the same, yet Okinawans were discriminated against in their contacts with mainland Japanese on the grounds that they were below mainlanders on the evolutionary scale; were, for a long period, considered untrustworthy and unsuitable for military service; and were ultimately sacrificed in Japan’s last ditch effort to prevent an American assault on the mainland. Assimilation policies adopted to eradicate regional differences by the Japanese Government and implemented throughout the country had achieved a high degree of success by the time of the Pacific War. They had been successful in Okinawa, to the point where Okinawans considered themselves Japanese and were prepared to fight in the name of an emperor with whom they had had no fundamental connection prior to the latter part of the 19th century. But assimilation had not been completely successful. Okinawans could not fully identify themselves as Japanese whilst there remained substantial contradictions between the words and deeds of the Government. There was somewhat of an “identity crisis” amongst Okinawans in the immediate postwar period.

The United States offered a new set of conditions and attitudes. It was benevolent when food, shelter, and medicine were required, and it embarked on a reconstruction program that would bring needed success in many areas within a short space of time. Not all Americans saw their Okinawan



charges as fundamentally different from the mainland Japanese with whom they had just been at war, which meant that not all aspects of the relationship were perfect, yet Okinawans seriously toyed with the idea of attempting to sway the United States into making their rule of Okinawa permanent. As was outlined in Chapter Three, there was as much support for continuing under American rule by way of a trusteeship arrangement as there was for a return to Okinawa's pre-Meiji days of "semi-independence," or for a return to Japan. Regardless, it was assumed that the shift of Okinawa's sovereignty would once more and inevitably be decided and implemented by powers not within the realm of Okinawa's control.

When the US began constructing military facilities on Okinawa it looked as if it was considering such a permanent move, yet this seemed somewhat contradictory in the light of the impending Peace Treaty settlement with Japan. The Ryūkyū Islands had not been seen as territories taken by "violence and greed" by Japan during her imperialistic advances into Asia, and most Okinawans believed that their sovereignty would, after all, be returned to Japan. They had not yet resolved the "identity crisis," and still felt negatively towards Japan in terms of its prewar and wartime attitudes and actions, yet if sovereignty was to be restored, what else was there to do other than to accommodate and accept? By the time of the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951, the majority of the Okinawan population was enthusiastically supporting the idea of an imminent Reversion to Japan.

The eventual settlement, by which Okinawa was traded to the US in return for an end to the occupation of the mainland, came as a profound shock to the Okinawans. This constituted nothing less than a complete rejection. The 28th April was designated as the "Day of Humiliation" in Okinawa and was thereafter observed as such every year until Reversion. This shock was compounded when the US began to adopt an entirely different attitude towards the local people than it had previously.

### **The Conflict between the Military Bases and Okinawan Society**

As was detailed in Chapter Two, in the immediate aftermath of the Peace Treaty settlement with Japan the United States embarked upon a massive base construction and modernization program in Okinawa. Bases were being constructed in Japan too, but the right of complete military freedom enjoyed by the US in Okinawa with Japan's full compliance determined that these bases would be significantly more important within the context of the overall Asian-Pacific basing structure. Okinawa's strategic value had been recognized during the Pacific War, at the outset of the Cold War with the Soviet Union (which had defined the need for bases), and during the continuing war in Korea. Okinawa was to be transformed into America's "Keystone of the Pacific."

These military requirements brought the US into direct conflict with the local population. Moves that the US had made towards transforming Okinawa into a self-governing and economically self-sufficient community were halted, and all US policies were to prioritize military requirements over and above civilian concerns. Land was scarce in Okinawa, but priority was given to military bases rather than to agricultural production and much needed civilian housing projects. The US came to occupy one-fifth of the total land area of Okinawa Island, dispossessing tens of thousands of independent landowners and forcing them to find work elsewhere, usually as poorly paid base workers. Okinawa's economy was in ruins and in need of complete rebuilding, but rather than to encourage the expansion of such goods-producing industries as would reduce Okinawa's dependence

on imports from Japan and lead to long-term economic self-reliance, every economic policy was geared towards the construction of, or the provision of goods and services for, the military bases. By the latter part of the 1950's the Okinawan economy was utterly dependent on the bases. Ultimately, and in recognition of the high value of the bases and to prevent instability in their operation, it was determined that political freedoms would necessarily have to be curtailed. Virtually every problem faced by the Okinawan people was intimately connected to the US military base presence.

Options for the Okinawan people were fundamentally limited. They could either accommodate themselves to the current American regime in the hope that conditions would improve in time, or they could seek to realign themselves with Japan. The nature of American rule and the increase rather than reduction in the number of repressive policies, best illustrated perhaps by its strong-arm military land policies, necessitated the pursuance of the latter option and led to the creation of a multi-factional, supra-partisan, "Reversion Movement." Okinawans had not yet resolved the "identity crisis," and continued to regard Japan with contempt for its enthusiastic acceptance of alignment with the US over and above the cultural premise that "we are all Japanese," but saw more solutions to urgent problems in following this path.

In short, Reversion to Japan would allow Okinawans to become subject to the recently promulgated "Peace Constitution," which would eradicate virtually all of Okinawa's current difficulties. Reversion and the constitution would provide citizenship, protection of human and property rights, would ensure a 'fair' judicial process, would endow each citizen with the ability to influence the form of his or her government, and was consistent with the Okinawans' hatred of warfare. With these specific goals in mind, Okinawans temporarily submerged their ambivalence towards Japan. The Reversion Movement began stressing the cultural commonalties between Okinawa and the mainland in order to legitimize its base, to bring greater media attention to the movement, and to promote the growth of a stronger support base both in Okinawa and on the mainland. Reversion to Japan, when stressed in such slogans as "we desire a return to the Fatherland," constituted a passionate and convincing case which, as it was designed for, would be difficult to ignore. The underlying thrust of the movement, however, was the drive to achieve solutions to the most vital issues confronting them, which in turn sprang from the bases.

Adopting such an approach represented a significant transformation in the political behavior of the Okinawan people. When the transfer of sovereignty had occurred previously, such as when the Ryūkyū Kingdom had become part of the Chinese tributary system in the 14th century, and then when Japan officially replaced China as ruler during the latter part of the 18th century, there had been no large-scale resistance movement that spanned from the individual to the government level. The transfer of power, almost like musical chairs within Okinawan history, had been accepted as an inevitable result of being a small island "nation" with limited natural resources and limited powers of resistance. The Okinawan Reversion Movement, in direct contrast, was a mass popular movement created for the express purpose of influencing Okinawa's destiny in conformity with the general will of the Okinawan people themselves. Okinawans were no longer demonstrating a pattern of accommodation towards the US, nor towards Japan, but were actively resisting the conditions under which they were forced to exist. Japan's rejection of Okinawa was resisted in the form of the "nationalistic" goals of the Reversion Movement, and the US's overall rule and the military base presence was resisted in the underlying goals of the Reversion Movement: the expansion of political autonomy, the protection of human rights, and the abrogation of the Japan-US Security Treaty, etc.

This policy of playing one power off against the other illustrated a well-developed sense of political pragmatism.

### **The Strengthening of the Reversion Movement**

The Reversion Movement of the 1960's had, out of necessity, to pursue its goals in more determined fashion than its predecessor. Although Okinawans had resisted the US's land policies in the 1950's to the full extent, barring actual physical violence, the solution was at best inadequate. The US got to claim more privately owned lands, and even with supposed changes the military administration was basically as military in terms of where the power to influence on key rather than trivial matters actually resided. During the late 1950's the currency had been changed to the dollar, nuclear missiles had been introduced into purpose-built facilities, and the new Japan-US Security Treaty ensured that Okinawa's bases continued to operate under different conditions than those on the mainland. The US was free to conduct any type of offensive military operation or to introduce any kind of weapon, both conventional or NBC (nuclear, biological, and chemical) into the islands. It did not appear as if the US was contemplating making a withdrawal within the foreseeable future. Okinawans had made key gains in getting the issue of Reversion on the negotiating table during the Kennedy administration and in encouraging greater Japanese-Okinawan contacts, yet the "nationalistic" face of the Reversion Movement only barely concealed the overriding concern for the solution to more pressing needs. In terms of the latter's priorities there had been no substantive gains.

Although there was general agreement within and across all stratas of Okinawan society that Reversion was the only option, there was some disagreement as to the method of its resolution. Economic base-dependency had been a key divider in this sense. Although all objected "on principle," almost 50% of the population was tied into an economic relationship with the bases in either a direct or subsidiary capacity. It would be impossible to both abrogate the Security Treaty and to keep the mainstay of the Okinawan economy. The conservatives recognized this contradiction and were divided from the left in that they stressed that the bases should remain in Okinawa after Reversion. The influx of large amounts of economic aid from Japan did nothing to diffuse the perception that the bases were and would remain pivotal to the economy. American promises of greater economic self-reliance had come to very little. If Okinawa had at least one other industrial sector that could have been developed to eventually replace the bases the political left would have commanded by far the largest block of Okinawan popular support. As it was, the economically minded conservatives dominated in party politics during the early part of the 1960's and the anti-base left was marginalized.

The outbreak of the Vietnam War and America's decision to utilize its bases on Okinawa to train and dispatch troops and to conduct direct bombing missions had the net effect of gelling together that conservative section of the Okinawan population which promoted a policy of cooperating with the US, and the basically left-wing anti-base Reversion Movement which centered around the *Fukkikyō* (Council for the Return of Okinawa Prefecture to the Fatherland). Not only were all Okinawans worried about becoming embroiled in a war with another Asian country, but they feared for their own safety in the wake of a massive military build-up. There were any number of incidents of plane crashes and fuel leaks which could have had calamitous results for those living in the surrounding areas. Those holding the view that the bases were essential to the economy had somewhat of a problem in squaring that with their overall objections to the role of Okinawa's bases. Both left and right became basically aligned in the sense that Reversion, whether it led to a complete

withdrawal or even a part reduction and denuclearization, was the only real solution. The point was, that what the US was doing in its bases in Okinawa, it was not permitted to do on the Japanese mainland.

### **Coming Home?**

By the latter part of the 1960's the decision to return Okinawa to Japan had been made in principle between Japanese and American policy-makers. All that remained was to specify the exact terms and to set a time frame. Since the decision was made by the US within the context of the continuing war in Vietnam, and since it was determined to protect its freedom of operation in Okinawa the US required that the actual date of Reversion be left as vague as possible. Japan complied with the American position in the 1969 Satô-Nixon Joint Communiqué. In terms of the status of the post-Reversion bases, operations were to remain essentially as before. As was detailed in Chapter Two, Japan would gain the rights of prior consultation over the Okinawan bases, yet this was meaningless from the Okinawan perspective in the light of the secret agreement allowing the US to reintroduce nuclear weapons there.

In truth there was little difference in Japan-US goals. Japan had maintained a system whereby Okinawa would take the heaviest responsibility for Japan's commitment to the security alliance since the time of the Peace Treaty in 1951. Japan didn't like nuclear or chemical weapons, so they were stationed in Okinawa. Japan was opposed to the idea of offensive missions being launched from the mainland, but agreed with Okinawa's Vietnam role. The US had been very satisfied with this arrangement. For the Japanese Government, it would be important to ensure that the majority of US facilities in Okinawa remain intact after Reversion. Its principal "public" demand would be that all nuclear weapons would be removed in line with the particular sentiment of the Japanese people, to which the US would agree, yet the reality of the agreement was somewhat to the contrary.

Although the Okinawans were in the midst of protests and demonstrations against the US bases and the Vietnam War, the realization that Reversion would occur soon necessitated that they clearly restate their objectives, particularly to the Japanese Government. Failure to do so, it was thought, would result in an unsatisfactory settlement negotiated behind closed doors. As was outlined in Chapter Three, Japan had to be reminded that Okinawans were pursuing a "non-discriminatory" Reversion, in which its bases, if they were to remain at all, could only be maintained under exactly the same conditions as on the mainland; that Okinawa was not prepared to end up as Japan's poorest prefecture as it had been in the prewar period; and that Okinawans must enjoy the same rights and privileges as other Japanese citizens.

For almost twenty years, the main target of Okinawan protests was the US, yet on the eve of Reversion it had shifted back towards the Japanese Government as had been the case after the Peace Treaty settlement. The fundamental difference at this point in time, was that whilst the Okinawans had still been struggling to resolve the feelings of ambivalence towards the mainland in the aftermath of the Battle for Okinawa and again in the wake of the Peace Treaty settlement, the problems related to identity were not now crucial. Okinawans understood that they were fundamentally tied to Japan. Another profound change had been in the way Okinawans were prepared to present their case. Whereas they had timidly accepted much that they did not agree with after the Meiji annexation, and particularly during the militaristic *Shôwa* era, they were making clear demands of the Japanese Government as to what they expected after Reversion.

## Continuing Patterns in the Post-Reversion Era

More in line with traditional patterns in Okinawa-Japan relations, was the reality of the Reversion settlement. Whilst Okinawans immediately became Japanese citizens and therefore subject to the Japanese constitution, they had not managed exert any influence on the military base issue. By the terms agreed by Satô and Nixon in 1969, and the final Reversion Agreement in 1971, the bases would not be substantially reduced in the post-Reversion period, and certain of the US's special forces in Okinawa would continue operating. The disappointment was heightened by the fact that Okinawa now, as but one of 47 Japanese prefectures, would have far less influence in the matter. Citizenship had been a goal pursued by Okinawans since the Peace Treaty settlement of 1951, which had left them as a "state-less" people, yet it now constituted a hindrance to their anti-base desires in that it constrained their ability to effect change.

Perhaps in recognition of the fact that the base settlement had been less than satisfactory from the Okinawan perspective, and definitely in recognition of Okinawa's experiences during the Pacific War and its aftermath, the Japanese Government adopted a set of policies designed to bring about the economic and social advancement of the Okinawan people. Special laws were introduced which designated Okinawa as an "underdeveloped area," and a government body dealing specifically with Okinawan affairs was set up. All policies were formulated around the main concept of *ittaika*, or "unification." It was determined that Okinawa Prefecture, both economically and socially, needed to be raised to mainland levels. Per capita income and social overhead capital were specifically targeted for improvement. The Japanese Government began appropriating vast amounts of funding for these tasks.

Although Okinawans had welcomed Reversion and the reclamation of Japanese citizenship as the means of ending 27 years of American occupation, the demand for a reduction in the bases had been a major issue. The failure to address the bases can be seen in Okinawan attitudes towards Reversion generally. Two months after Reversion only 55% of the population expressed outright support. Another reason for the high degree of dissatisfaction revolved around the state of the Okinawan economy. When the US decided to lay-off base workers and to cut back on its military expenditures, the local economy suffered heavily. To offset the decline in military revenues the Japanese Government began increasing the amount of direct government transfers to Okinawa. As necessary as this financial assistance was, it ultimately served to support the systemic inadequacies of the Okinawan economy as developed under base-dependency rather than to address them.

Just prior to Reversion, when Okinawans had the opportunity to voice their opinions in two key elections, for the Chief Executive and Diet representatives, there was a preference for reformist candidates, which clearly signaled a rejection of the central government's position. This tendency continued into the post-Reversion period. In 1972 an anti-base reformist candidate was elected Governor of Okinawa, and again in 1976. The *ittaika* policies were beginning to cut through in various areas, yet the economy was still in a high inflationary spiral and no resolution had yet been found to the continuing military base problem as demanded by Okinawans. Rather than emphasize the positive aspects of Reversion Okinawans were still focusing on outstanding dissatisfactions over the bases.

## **Economic Prosperity**

The amount of money central Government was investing in Okinawa was bound to have an effect at some point, and this occurred during the latter part of the 1970's. The economy was showing signs of attaining greater stability, the base redundancies were beginning to be offset partially by the growth of the construction and tourist industries, and Okinawans were beginning to notice long-sought after improvements in roads, schools, hospitals, and the like. Whereas they had been somewhat suspicious about the overall effect of these policies at the outset, there was now an acceptance that they were moving in the right direction. They seemed also to be accepting the increasing cultural "Japanization" of the prefecture, suggesting that the ambivalence factor had also been successfully resolved. A greater sense of satisfaction was significantly marked by the election in 1979 of the first conservative Governor in the post-Reversion period, and with this a distinct shift of emphasis away from outstanding military base problems to a concentration on economic matters.

The decline of the reformist movement was undeniably tied to the increased level of economic prosperity, which saw Okinawa overtake the economies of France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, yet it was also connected to certain systemic changes in the post-Reversion era. Left-wing political parties and the trades' unions that had existed at the very core of the anti-base movement during the 1960's had increasingly begun to align themselves with their mainland Japanese counterparts. These organizations were far less radical. Over a ten-year period Okinawan organizations were gradually "pacified." The same process affected the general population. High economic growth increased the "feel good" factor. There was, in short, no necessity to struggle as there had been ten years earlier. Resistance had all but been replaced by accommodation to the mainland. As previously stated, in 1972 only 55% of the population was satisfied with Reversion, but by the early 1980's this figure had risen to around 63%. By 1992, the number was closer to 90%.

## **Post-Cold War Trends in Okinawan Society**

The issue of Okinawa's military bases and of its role within the Japan-US security alliance resurfaced as a major political issue during the latter part of the 1980's. This was prompted by the dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar ideological conflict that had characterized the postwar period. Okinawa's bases had been built specifically to cope with Cold War demands, as had the Japan-US security alliance system. If the world at large let out a collective cheer in light of these tumultuous events, it is easy to see how Okinawans, profoundly interconnected with the Cold War system, might envisage the beginning of a new era. Hopes were raised by US Department of Defense statements to the effect that bases in Okinawa would be "substantially" reduced. Anti-base supporters were aligned with the vast majority of the population that looked forward to the transferal of military lands into the civilian sphere for private development or for urban redevelopment projects.

A high level of optimism amongst Okinawans was, however, shattered with a sudden retrenchment by the US on its reduction policy, and with the outbreak of the Gulf War. Just as during the Vietnam conflict troops and supplies were sent into the Gulf directly from Okinawa, chemical and biological weapons drills were carried out in several US facilities, and guarded activities at Kadena and Henoko pointed to the reintroduction of nuclear weapons. As Okinawans had discovered previously, even shattering changes within the world system might leave intact certain

established patterns. Cumulatively, however, these events did serve to slow the “conservativization” process.

Okinawans reacted to these developments by electing the first reformist candidate in 12 years to the position of Governor in 1990. Ota Masahide won the election by specifically emphasizing his objection to the Japan-U.S Security Treaty and his intention to solve the military base problems. Ota has continued to pursue this platform, and was reelected quite convincingly once more in 1994. This has brought him directly into conflict with the Japanese Government over foreign policy objectives. Okinawans have always disliked the bases, no matter what the economic benefits have been. They would have far preferred to have developed an economy based on something other than military sources. In both cases they have had no other choice but to accept. With the end of the Cold War, which presumably involves a lessening of the “conditions of threat and tension,” Okinawans no longer understand why the bases need to remain. This does not, however, mark a profound transformation towards patterns of resistance amongst Okinawans as during the pre-Reversion period. They remain conservative in the main and will continue to be so as long as prosperity continues. Yet economic prosperity is to a large extent dependent on gaining a resolution of the base issue.

### **Dilemmas of Growth in Post-Reversion Okinawa**

Historically, Okinawans have always sought to overcome their natural disadvantages (shortage of natural resources) through the use of their natural advantages (geographical location). This was achieved only on one occasion when the Ryūkyū Kingdom was able to establish trade relations with most of her neighboring countries under Chinese guidance and aid. Those days were doomed not to last once Western ships started appearing in Asian waters with greater frequency, and when control of the Kingdom was taken by Satsuma in the name of Japan. Trading opportunities had declined dramatically by the time the kingdom was annexed during the Meiji period, assimilated and centralized. Okinawa remained Japan’s poorest prefecture thereafter.

Okinawans had hoped that they would be able to achieve a certain degree of economic self-reliance under the American administration. Was it not American economic savvy that was transforming Japan into one of the world’s most prosperous economies? Despite such policy promises on the part of the Americans Okinawa was directed further away from self-reliance and more towards dependence on the only economic reconstruction policy put forward by the U.S: military bases. Within a few short years almost every economic activity was directed towards or dependent on the bases. At any stage of the American administration, if the bases had been withdrawn or military expenditures stopped the whole Okinawan economy would have crashed. At least one aspect of the drive towards Reversion amongst Okinawans of all political persuasions was the desire to break the base dependency cycle, to align with the mighty Japanese economy, and then to move on a path towards economic self-reliance based on effective economic diversification policies.

The Okinawan struggle has always been for the removal of the military bases. Amongst other things this would satisfy the strong anti-war sentiment felt by Okinawans and lay to rest their experiences in the Battle for Okinawa. The military base presence and the constant dangers during times of American involvement in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf, have always served to remind Okinawans. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, new cities have grown from the wastelands with populations ever less connected to the events of 50 years ago, yet this has not been possible in Okinawa. Given the limited powers of the Okinawan people to effect change and the continued

commitment of the Japanese Government to the maintenance of the Japan-US security alliance system, there looks to be no foreseeable solution. Okinawan, Japanese, and American negotiators are currently still arguing over the return of one base, Naha Military Port, upon which agreement was reached years ago, yet no final settlement has been found. Okinawans have some political power, over for instance budgetary matters, yet not in areas of real significance.

The failure to address certain basic economic and political demands, especially after the Cold War, has in turn led to the resurgence of the Okinawan “identity crisis.” This may be seen in the rise of an Okinawan “national consciousness.” The process of assimilation to Japan, which had previously been welcomed, has slowed since the latter part of the 1980’s and into the 1990’s, and is now seen to be eroding the foundations of traditional Okinawan culture or “Okinawan-ness.” In certain areas traditional culture is being reasserted, as for instance in the holding of speech contests in *uchinaguchi* or Okinawan dialect. It is also the tendency of Okinawans to assert the differences between themselves and the Japanese rather than the similarities. Recent opinion polls have illustrated these trends. In 1992, more than 62% of Okinawans said they felt “different from other Japanese,” and just less than 50% expressed the opinion that “Okinawan-ness” was being irreversibly lost.

Current themes within the field of Okinawa’s economy and the notion of a return to Asia are popular amongst Okinawans generally who have always defined themselves as being an integral part of Pacific Asia. Japan’s annexation of Okinawa in 1879 ended the island “nation’s” involvement with her Pacific Asian neighbors, yet Okinawans have always felt somewhat uncomfortable within the post-Meiji, and now post-Reversion constraints. There remains a fundamental difference in attitudes and perceptions between a Japan that constantly talks about internationalization, yet seems not to be able to embrace the idea as a result of its compulsion to isolate itself, and the people of Okinawa and the Ryūkyūs for whom internationalization is a fundamental part of their traditional culture, yet who are restrained from doing what comes naturally.

These are the most fundamental issues facing the Okinawan people as they look towards a new century. They have a long historical background, as well as domestic and international complications. Okinawa’s future prospects depend on the solution or the non-resolution of these issues.

### **Towards an Integrated Understanding of Contemporary Okinawa**

Having analyzing contemporary Okinawa through reference to the issue of military bases, from economic, political, and cultural perspectives, it is possible to draw a number of overall conclusions.

Firstly, that the differences and similarities between Okinawans and mainland Japanese which were largely determined by the processes of ethnogenesis they underwent and by their historical experiences, especially in the last few centuries, have persisted well into the contemporary period. An analysis of cultural factors, therefore, is essential in any examination of contemporary Okinawa. One may look, for instance, at the differing perceptions of the Pacific War between Okinawans and Japanese, especially in terms of perceptions towards Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the one hand, and the Battle for Okinawa, on the other; at the importance of the ambivalence factor amongst Okinawans in the formation of the Reversion Movement and in its policies and goals that were both nationalistic and yet not; and in the continuation of such patterns in the post-Reversion era. Japanese



in the mainland today, tend to see Okinawans as somewhat different from themselves in terms of culture, whilst Okinawans emphasize their own traditional culture as being different from that of the mainland. Another important division, is that whilst Okinawans are almost by nature “internationalist,” the Japanese are somewhat “isolationist,” if this expression might be permitted to highlight the point. The cultural similarities between the *Uchinanchu* (Okinawans) and the *Yamatonchu* (mainland Japanese) are profoundly deep, yet so too are the differences.

Following on from the difference/similarity divide in terms of culture(s), are the dynamics of the relations between the central Japanese Government and its southernmost prefecture. On the one hand, Okinawans were assimilated into the main Japanese body politic as part of an overall national policy of regional difference eradication, yet have at times been treated as a separate or special case as other prefectures have not. After Reversion, a vast amount of money was poured into Okinawa for the purpose of raising the standard of living to something approaching the mainland’s, yet a large part of this drive was to make amends for the particular hardships suffered by Okinawans during the war and afterwards when the US was given permission to build the bases and to operate with military freedom. One may also look at Japan’s overall foreign policy objectives vis-a-vis the Japan-US security alliance in the postwar period and at how Okinawa was deemed appropriate to be sacrificed for this purpose. An analysis of contemporary Okinawa should take full account of domestic *center-periphery* relations.

A third conclusion is that the military base presence is the single-most important issue for Okinawans, and has been so for almost fifty years. The reasons have been well detailed in this text. Suffice it to say that most economic, social, political, and other matters in Okinawa have some linkage to the solution or non-solution to the military base problem. This base problem in contemporary Okinawa looks as if it may continue far into the future.

A fourth conclusion is that contemporary Okinawa must be analyzed within the triangular Okinawa-Japan-US context, which is both domestic and international. Okinawa is profoundly affected by movements within the Japan-US security system, by movements within the US, especially those pertaining to defense matters, and, of course, by domestic Government-Prefecture dynamics, as for instance in relation to different perceptions of security requirements and in terms of “internationalist/isolationist” policies. All of these relations are inter- and intra-active. Contemporary Okinawa cannot be reduced only to its domestic context

Another dimension that needs to be taken into account, is the extent to which changes within the international system have a direct effect on the tiny island of Okinawa. Okinawa is a vital part of the United States’ global defense strategy, and as such is affected by America’s defense policies. It is also a vital link in one of the world’s most important bilateral security alliances between Japan and the US. Major international political events were profoundly felt in Okinawa as a result of this connection: The end of World War II and the origins of the Cold War, the Korean War, the war in Vietnam, détente with the Soviet Union, the Gulf War, and, finally, the end of the Cold War.

A sixth factor that must be taken into account in an analysis of contemporary Okinawa, is the extent to which its geographical location is both a blessing and a curse. From a strategic point of view, Okinawa is perfectly placed to respond to almost any crisis within the Asian-Pacific region, yet at the same time that location could serve just as well for Okinawa in her quest to participate in her natural economic zone. This has always been the Okinawan dilemma. Okinawans are endowed with a highly

advantageous location in terms of commerce, as was the case in bygone days, yet in recent centuries strategic requirements have dominated and her natural advantages have served to benefit others.

All of these above elements are crucial and will remain so. Any inquiry into the field today and in the future will need to pay balanced attention to each of these elements and would gain from integrating them together. This study has tried to present an integrated view of contemporary Okinawa through an investigation into the military base issue, and the present author can only hope that it has made some contribution to the field, however humble it might be.

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