

A Petition on Nuclear Policy of Japanese Government*

Naomi SHOHNO

Emeritus Professor, Hiroshima Jogakuin University

Affiliated Researcher,

Institute for Peace Science, Hiroshima University

Ikuro ANZAI

Director, Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University

* This petition was exhibited to the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto, on 26 June 1997 under joint signature of 39 Japanese individuals shown at the end of the document, which had been originally drafted by SHOHNO, the representative, in cooperation with ANZAI.

Your Excellency Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto,

This petition is presented to you by the people who have the same wish to realize abolition of nuclear weapons as early as possible and lay the foundation of cohabitation. Their signatures were collected by the Research Association for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, which has its general office in Hiroshima.

In presenting this petition, what should be noted are as follows: first, the forerunner of the above-mentioned organization, the Research Committee for Viewing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (the NPT), submitted a "Petition against the Unconditional and Indefinite Extension of the NPT" to then Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa in advance of the summit meeting held in Tokyo in July 1993; secondly, in the declaration at the Tokyo Summit, the indefinite extension of the NPT was not stipulated at the discretion of then Prime Minister Miyazawa and his aides; and thirdly, Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto, then Chairperson of the Liberal Democratic Party Policy Affairs Research Council, kindly sent to the Hiroshima General Office in August after the Tokyo Summit a postcard in his own handwriting to the effect that he realized the difficulty of diplomacy.

In addition, after the Tokyo Summit, major newspapers in the West featured Japan's opposition to the indefinite extension of the NPT, saying that Japan opposes because it intends to arm with nuclear weapons. Consequently, then Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa who succeeded to Mr. Miyazawa as Prime Minister declared that Japan supports the indefinite extension of the NPT in his speech at the United Nations General Assembly in late September.

Since then, actions of the Japanese government have let it more doubtful that it intends to endeavor to abolish nuclear weapons. The following are some of the cases:

(1) The issue, "Negotiations for an early conclusion of a treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons will be started within 1997," adopted by the U.N.

General Assembly in December 1996.

This idea was jointly proposed by nonaligned nations including Malaysia and adopted with 68 percent of favorable votes, but Japan did not express its approval nor disapproval.

(2) The Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference, held at the U.N. Headquarters in New York, 7 to 18 April 1997.

According to the annexed document, "Reinforcement of the NPT Review Conference," which was decided upon as well as the indefinite extension of the NPT in May 1995, "Review Conferences are to be held every five years to examine the situations of the promotion of nuclear disarmament, and, from three years before each conference, its preparatory committee is to be held every year." The first preparatory committee was held this April, in which nonaligned nations put forward a positive and concrete proposal to establish a special committee in the Geneva Disarmament Conference in order to begin negotiations stated above in (1). On the other hand, Japan only expressed its attitude that Japan will take every realistic and effective measure for nuclear disarmament towards the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and failed to make a specific or new proposal, and did not even mention a treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

(3) "Interim Report on the Review of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation" announced in Honolulu, Hawaii, on 7 June 1997.

There is not enough space to discuss the whole report, but the following point is certainly the content to be mentioned, i.e., "the U.S. maintains nuclear deterrence for the defense of Japan." This is a wrong judgement on the current international situation around Japan, which is obviously contrary to the attitude towards abolition of nuclear weapons.

It is an important issue whether or not to establish concrete measures to cope with the ideas adopted at the U.N. General Assembly, stated above in (1). Moreover, there are the following matters of great importance:

(I) The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

As had been urged in the annexed document to the indefinitely extended NPT, "Principles and Goals for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament," the CTBT was adopted at the U.N. General Assembly with 158 nations' favorable votes (including five nuclear powers and Japan) in September, 1996. However, subcritical nuclear tests without nuclear explosions or computer simulation tests are not banned by the CTBT. In addition, although it is stipulated that the CTBT comes into effect within 180 days from the day when all the 44 nations have ratified it, among the nations, which consist of nuclear powers and countries possessing nuclear technology, included are India which opposed its adoption and North Korea which abstained from voting.

Therefore, in order to urge an early effectuation of the CTBT, it is a particularly important matter to call a halt to a series of subcritical nuclear tests to be held by the U.S. Moreover, to place a real value on the CTBT, the ban on subcritical nuclear testing and computer simulation testing has to be promised immediately at least by those 44 nations.

(II) Other concrete recommendations stated in the annexed document to the NPT

To add to the content stated in (I), the annexed document deals with more issues; an early attainment of a consensus on the Treaty for Banning the Production of Fissionable Materials for Nuclear Weapons, the importance of nuclear nations' efforts towards nuclear disarmament, and the necessity of a treaty which prohibits the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear member states of the NPT. However, these questions confront difficulties at the Geneva Disarmament Conference and require concrete measures to break them through.

(III) A Treaty for Nuclear-Weapon-Free Northeast Asia

The Denuclearization Treaty acknowledged in the NPT has been concluded in five regions: the South Pole area, Latin America, the South Pacific Ocean, Southeast Asia and Africa. Naturally, among those five regions are not includ-

ed nuclear powers. Now, it is time for Japan, North and South Korea to conclude a treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons in an attempt to set a good example in the northern hemisphere, and had all the nuclear powers, including China, Russia and the U.S., promise not to use nuclear weapons against this region and not to deploy nuclear weapons in this region by obtaining those nations' signatures to this treaty.

In striving for the settlement of these crucial matters, the clarity of A-bombed Japan's nuclear policy is of great significance. However, for all the remarks by successive political powers of the Japanese government since 1968 that they take the three non-nuclear principles as national policy, their action has been noncommittal, which is shown in above stated cases (1), (2) and (3). To add to them now, there was another case of Prime Minister Hashimoto's illogical remark made in Nagasaki August, 1996, "We would rather consider the three non-nuclear principles as the Japanese people's general will or the national policy than legislate it." The Constitution of Japan, Article 9 is persuasive to foreign countries and there are even some Americans who consider it "the Constitution of the World, Article 9," (including Mr. Charles Overby, The Article 9 Society, USA). It is because the Constitution of Japan, Article 9 is written clearly, and if it were a mere verbal national policy, it would not have that weight and persuasiveness. Now what we have to pay attention to is the fact that even Article 9, which is stipulated in the Constitution has become only a name through the profound cooperative relationship with the military superpower, the U.S. Moreover, as well as the close relationship with the U.S., Japan's fast development in technology has let the world, especially other Asian countries, have doubts about its denial of possessing nuclear weapons. After considering all the problems, we demand that the Japanese government should adhere rigidly to and fulfill the Constitution of Japan, Article 9 and also request following items.

(A) To legislate the three nonnuclear principles immediately, including a clause of not relying on other countries' nuclear umbrella.

In connection with the ratification of the CTBT, the Japanese government promulgated the partial amendment to the Nuclear Reactor Regulation Act on 13 June, 1997, and decided to sentence people who have perpetrated a nuclear explosion to penal servitude for not more than seven years. This is considered to be a penalty imposed on individuals or organizations, not the government. However, we regard the partial amendment as a part of legislation of the three non-nuclear principles (i.e., not to possess, not to produce and not to allow introduction of nuclear weapons onto Japanese soil), because those who try to carry out nuclear blasts actually "produce" or "possess" nuclear blast devices or nuclear weapons by making a purchase from other countries and "bringing them into Japan." Therefore, we suggest that the Japanese government should contribute to the world for the abolition of nuclear weapons by further advancing its policy and working, in earnest, on the legislation of the three nonnuclear principles and a principle that Japan will never rely on other countries' nuclear umbrella.

(B) If the Japanese government clearly shows the basis of its nuclear policy to the world by legislating above-mentioned principles and strives to tackle the important issues stated above, the world will acknowledge Japan's intention. Among the issues, the following seem to be the most crucial.

① To call on the U.S. government halt subcritical nuclear tests.

② To realize a Treaty for Nuclear-Weapon-Free Northeast Asia by Japan, and North and South Korea, to begin with.

③ To work on the establishment of a U.N. attached committee for negotiations towards an early conclusion of a Nuclear Arms Ban Treaty.

(C) To persevere in the negotiations to normalize diplomatic relations with North Korea.

The 44 countries mentioned in (I) include Japan, North Korea and South

Korea, but North Korea has not joined in the CTBT, and a Treaty for Nuclear-Weapon-Free Northeast Asia stated in ② will not be concluded without North Korea's affiliation. However, diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea have not been normalized yet, and Japan will never succeed in solving the issues of (I) and (2), if the situation between the two countries does not improve.

Looking back on the past, Japan colonized the Korean Peninsula for 35 years (from August 1910 till August 1945). The normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea was realized through long negotiations from 1952 till 1965, with various problems left to be settled on the basis of this history, whereas negotiations for the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea started when the delegation of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Socialist Democratic Party of Japan visited North Korea in September 1990. Then, in March 1995, the delegation consisting of the LDP, the SPJ and the New Frontier Party, and the North Korea Labor Party reached an agreement that both governments would earnestly strive for an early realization of the normalization of their diplomatic relations. If the Japanese government takes advantage of this occasion, and makes strenuous efforts in promoting negotiations based on humanitarian standpoints, as it did in the case of South Korea, naturally it will find a key to the settlement to the problems of (I) and ② as well as other questions lying between Japan and North Korea. As regards this diplomatic issue, it is said that North Korea is to blame in some degree about its attitude, but the Japanese should simply acknowledge that most of the causes of its attitude lie in the past history. This acknowledgement will lead to the cohabitation, which is the fundamental goal in the 21st century.

Lastly, we would like to request you to send us a reply to this petition.

26 June 1997

Representative:

Naomi Shohna (President, Research Association for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons)

Goro Kawai (Director, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation)

Makoto Kitanishi (Professor Emeritus, Hiroshima University)

Hiroharu Seki (Professor Emeritus, Ritsumeikan University)

Teruaki Fukuhara (President, Japanese Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War)

Sumi Yukawa (Honorary President, World Federalist Movement)

Michito Ichimaru (Professor Emeritus, Nagasaki University)

Sadao Kamata (Director, Nagasaki Peace Institute)

Mikio Kawahara (Vice President, Nagasaki Prefectural University)

Hiroshi Takei (Professor, University of the Ryukyus)

Eisaku Miyoshi (Professor, Kyusyu University)

Shigeyasu Mori (Professor Emeritus, Kyusyu University)

Iwao Ogawa (Professor Emeritus, Rikkyo St. Paul's University)

Eiichi Sugie (Professor, Chukyo University)

Yoshiaki Toeda (Reverend and Executive Director, Christian Peace Exchange Committee)

Manabu Hattori (Professor Emeritus, Rikkyo St. Paul's University)

Koji Fushimi (Former President, Science Council of Japan)

Ikuro Anzai (Professor, Ritsumeikan University)

Akira Ishida (Chairperson, Japan Hibakusha Teachers' Association)

Takeshi Ito (Chairperson, Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organization)

Narihiko Ito (Representative, Society for Globalization of the Peace Constitution of Japan/ Professor, Chuo University)

Hiroshi Iwadare (Chief Manager, Peace and Cooperative Journalist Fund of Japan)

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu (Chairperson, Japan Congress against A- and H-bombs)
Hiromichi Umebayashi (International Coordinator, Pacific Campaign for Disarmament and Security)

Takeo Okada (Bishop and President, Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace)

Kimiko Ogasawara (Chairperson, Committee on Peace and Nuclear Issues of National Christian Council in Japan)

Hiroshi Katsumori (Chairperson, Article 9 Society-Japan/ Professor Emeritus, Chubu University)

Kazushi Kaneko (Director General, Hiroshima Council of A-bomb Sufferers Organization)

Nobuo Kusano (Representative, Peace Office/ Ex-professor, The University of Tokyo)

Akira Tachibana (Representative, Study Group for Nuclear Disarmament)

Sunao Tsuboi (Executive Director, Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers Organization)

Iwao Tomita (President, Hiroshima Consumers' Co-operative Union)

Masaru Nishida (Co-representative, Campaign: Non-nuclear Legislation Now!/ Ex-professor, Hosei University)

Keiichi Hiraiwa (Co-representative, Nuclear Abolition 2000 in Kanagawa)

Isamu Fujita (President, Japan Lawyers International Solidarity Association)

Kosaku Fujimoto (Director, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Foundation)

Yasuhiro Matsui (President, Japan Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms)

Seiko Miura (President of Hiroshima Branch, Japan Children's Book Authors Association)

Yasuo Miyazaki (Representative, Hiroshima Council against A- and H-bombs)

The Research Association for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

SY Build. 3F,
12-9 Hatchobori, Naka-ku,
Hiroshima 730
Japan
Tel/Fax: +81-82-223-6707

Supplementary progress report

Our ideal is the total abolition of nuclear weapons in the nearest possible future. Although ideal is sometimes wide of reality, it is not prudent to take down a flag of ideal easily. In the United Nations Kyoto Conference on Disarmament in April 1993, Jayanta Danapala (Ambassador, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka) uttered “idealism yesterday becomes realism today”. We will continue to hold on to our fundamental idea of the soonest abolition of nuclear weaponry system.

However, from the nature of the petition to be exhibited to the government, we did not cling to our own view self-righteously in the above-introduced document. Instead, we made efforts to draft our petition in full consideration of the practicability of governmental policy based on the consensus of the signers of different thinking.

In an international symposium entitled “Rethinking Fifty Years of Nuclear Weapons - Challenge to and Implications for International Relations Theory and Global History”, held in Hiroshima in September 1996, Osamu Fujiwara pointed out in his report “The Role and Significance of Contemporary Peace Movement” four dimensions in which the achievement of peace movements is to be accessed, i.e., (1) policy change, (2) social education, (3) movement maintenance, and (4) individual empowerment. Our movement directly to petition the government to change nuclear policy is obviously categorized as (1), and is expected to cooperate with other peace movements promoted by varieties of people with

diverse dimensions.

Such expectation is expressed in some of the reactions in Japan and abroad we have received to date. Some Japanese people placed value on our action with regard to the fact that the petition had succeeded to collect wider range of individuals beyond the ordinary cooperative framework of peace movement in this country. David McReynolds (War Resisters League) expressed his gratitude to our action, and Colin Archer (International Peace Bureau) set forth his expectation by stating that he did hope “this signals an era of greater cooperation between Japanese anti-nuclear organizations”. David Krieger (President, Director, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation) asked us to promote the signers’ organizations to join the Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons. We are well aware that there exists a wide difference in strategies and tactics of respective anti-nuclear organizations in Japan, but are yet convinced that there are potentialities to promote collaboration between them through extensive efforts for coordination regarding specific proposition for agenda-setting in the sphere of non-nuclear policy.

International behavior of Japanese government after the petition was as follows.

According to the answer to us from the General Affairs Section of the Prime Minister’s Secretariat, the government sent our petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 7 July 1997 and asked to conduct the affair. Then we watched the course of events carefully, and recognized that the Minister of Foreign Affairs Yukihiko Ikeda made a statement on 15 August 1997 declaring Japanese government’s resolve to endeavor for resuming the negotiation to normalize diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea), which complies with our request. It is now well-known that the negotiation resumed after that and the situations have been gradually developing. The signers of the petition sincerely hope that the progress in the diplomatic normalization process between Japan and North

Korea will develop chances to realize a treaty for the denuclearization of north-east Asia.

On the other hand, a manifestation of Japanese government's attitude in the United Nations was quite contrary to our request. At the meeting of the First Committee of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly held on 10 November 1997, ambassador to the United Nations Akira Hayashi abstained from voting concerning the draft resolution A/C.1/52L.37 proposed by 45 countries including Malaysia entitled "Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons". The draft resolution requested the First Committee to decide to include in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons" calling upon all States to immediately fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations in 1998 leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear-weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction under effective international control. Ambassador Hayashi asserted that it is more important to enter into negotiation for the conclusion of a so-called "Cut-off Treaty" as soon as possible because concrete measures should be taken to attain step-by-step advance in the process of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. But this assertion seems quite unreasonable because the draft resolution does not negate Cut-off Treaty at all, but it rather urges member states to commence negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Shohnu, the representative of signers, sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Keizo Obuchi on 27 November 1997 requesting Japanese government to vote in favor of the proposed resolution A/C.1/52L.37 in the coming General Assembly scheduled in early December. (Notes: Position in the General Assembly and that in the First Committee can

be independent.)

We have a recognition that the world public opinion has been drastically changing in connection with the collapse of cold war regime.

On 8 July 1996, the International Court of Justice unanimously concluded for the first time in history that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to settle negotiations guiding to nuclear disarmament, which was followed by Malaysia and other countries by the proposition of a UN resolution to request all member states to commence multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament in 1997. They once again proposed an identical resolution for 1998 as introduced above.

In December 1996, Generals Lee Butler (former Commander-in-Chief, United States Strategic Air Command) and Andrew J. Goodpaster (former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe) issued a joint statement for nuclear disarmament entitled "Joint Statement on Reduction of Nuclear Weapons Arsenal: Declining Utility, Continuing Risks" which was supported by 60 former military high officials in 17 countries including Naotoshi Sakonjo (ex-Secretary General, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Self-Defense Forces of Japan) who expressed that nuclear weapons had not been effective for deterring wars in the postwar period and that Japan has special responsibility in the field of nuclear disarmament. As he wrote in his paper, he agreed to join the action based on his personal understanding that the joint statement recognizes actual difficulty of attaining a nuclear-weapon-free world, setting the goal at considerably distant future. Therefore, there exists a gap between his view and ours, and we are confident that we have to make greater efforts to narrow the gaps among the people with common will for a nuclear-weapon-free world and contribute to filling the gap between a fervent hope of the unprecedentedly A-bombed Japanese people and the reality of the governmental security policy depending on the deterrent potential of a nuclear weaponry system.

We will make further efforts to increase our supporters and continue to organize actions pertinent to various occasions for realizing our goal stated in the petition.