

Formation of the Liberal Democratic Party's Position on the "Northern Territories" Issue: Inter-Party Rivalry as a Bone of Contention

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The Japanese Government's recognition of the Russian Federation's (RF) legal succession on all the agreements and accords between the former Soviet Union and Japan means that both countries have yet to conclude a peace treaty. The Joint Declaration signed by Japan and the former Soviet Union on 19 October 1956, while specifying in Clause 1 that "the state of war between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall cease on the date on which this declaration enters into force" and in Clause 2 that "diplomatic and consular relations" between both countries "shall be restored," stipulates in Clause 9 that "Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agree to continue, after the restoration of normal diplomatic relations" between them, "negotiations for the conclusion of a Peace Treaty."¹

However, the treaty has not been signed yet. The bilateral territorial dispute in question relates primarily to the issue of sovereignty of the islands of Kunashir ('Kunashiri' in Japanese), Iturup (Etorofu), Shikotan (Shikotan), Habomai or 'Ploskie' Habomais) which had been recognized as disputed in April 1991 during the then President of the former Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev's official visit to Japan.²

Japan as the claimant refers to the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT), signed in 1951, as the legal basis of its demands. Article 2 Section (c) of the SFPT is of high impor-

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1 See full text in Glaubitz, J. 1995. *Between Tokyo and Moscow: the History of an Uneasy Relationship*. London: Hurst, pp.255-257. On the history of bilateral negotiations see Togo, Katsuhiko. "The Inside Story of the Negotiations on the Northern Territories". *Japan Forum* 23 (1) 2011, pp.123-145.

2 Georgiev, Yu., ed. 1998. *Kurily-Ostrova v Okeane Problem*. [Kuriles-Islands amidxt Ocean of Problems] Moscow: Rosspen, pp.305-306.

tance, stipulating as it is that “Japan renounces all right, title and claim to the Kurile Islands.”³ Being the only relevant reference to the “Kurile Islands” in the text of the SFPT as a whole, it lacks clarity as regards the scope of islands mentioned. Nor does it make clear whether or not the “Kuril Islands” had to be ceded necessarily in favor of the Soviet Union.⁴

In Russia the currently disputed islands, along with their numerous adjacent and adjoining islets, are regarded as belonging to the “Kurile Islands” chain which is in turn divided into the “Greater Kurile” chain, bordering the Kamchatka Peninsula in the north, and the “Lesser Kurile” chain, bordering Japan’s northernmost island of Hokkaido in the south. According to Russian official sources, the disputed islands of Iturup (“Etorofu” in Japanese) covering 6,725 sq. Km and Kunashir (Kunashiri) covering 1,550 sq.km belong to the “Greater Kuriles” chain’s southern edge, while the disputed islands of Sikotan (Shikotan), covering 182 sq. km, and the “Ploskie Islands” (frequently bearing no collective name at all or referred to as “Habomai,” echoing their Japanese name) group covering about 80 sq.km make up the “Lesser Kurile” chain, with the “Kurile Islands” as a whole covering about 15,600 sq.km of land mass.⁵ In terms of administrative division, Kunashir and all the islands of the Lesser Kurile chain form the “Southern Kuriles Region” of the RF Sakhalin Region, while Iturup belongs to the Sakhalin Region’s “Kuriles Region” incorporating as well the islands of Urup and Simushir.⁶

In Japan, until early 1960’s it was common to regard the whole range of islands stretching from Hokkaido to the Kamchatka Peninsula, in some instances excluding either Shikotan or the Habomais, or both, as the “Chishimas.” The term “Chishimas” might in effect be viewed as identical to that of the “Kurile Islands”, which nevertheless served to give rise to as yet another contention rooted in the fact that the “Kurile Islands” term applied in the SFPT text appeared in the Japanese language version of the treaty as the “Chishima Islands.” Typically, the Military Government Handbook entitled *Kurile Islands* and marked as *OPNAV 50E-2*, issued by the U.S. Navy Department on 1 November, 1943 and

3 See the text in English at Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) official cite. Retrieved 10 August, 2018 from <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/territory/edition92/period4.html>

4 See Price, Glen W. “Legal Analysis of the Kurile Islands Dispute”. *7 Temp. Int’l & Comp. L.G.* 395, 1993, pp.395-420.

5 See Georgiev. *Ostrova*, p.23.

6 Ibid.

introduced by F.J. Horne, then serving as Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, referred to the "Kurile Islands" as "known to the Japanese as Chishima (Thousand Islands)" and designated the currently disputed islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri and Shikotan as the "Southern Kuriles".⁷

Following accepted practice, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Public Information Bureau stipulated in the brochure issued in 1955 and entitled *The Northern Islands. Background of Territorial Problems in the Japanese-Soviet Negotiations* that the "Kuriles" were "a chain of thirty-odd small islands which hang out like a garland from Hokkaido, one of the four principal islands of Japan, to Kamchatka Peninsula of the U.S.S.R. over a distance of 750 miles (1,200 kilometers)." ⁸ However, the MOFA's annual publication entitled *Japan's Northern Territories* issued in 1991 stated referring to "the important treaties concluded between the two countries in the past" that the "Northern Territories", a term routinely applied to the disputed islands, were not included in the "Kurile Islands" renounced in accordance with the SFPT provisions.⁹

In October 1961 the LDP government resolved to publicize its official Position Statement regarding the 'Northern Territories' problem. Issued on 6 October 1961, it is this very statement of the LDP's views on this subject which is widely regarded as representing the Japanese government's official stance. The statement is based on the reply which was given by the then Japanese Foreign Minister, Kosaka Zentaro, to a query regarding the 'Northern Territories' problem put by the LDP deputy, Yukatsugu Tokuji, during deliberations in the Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee.¹⁰

Referring to the 1855 and 1875 bilateral agreements, Japan's government emphasized that Kunashiri and Etorofu were a part of Japan's "immemorial territories" whose status differed substantially from that of the islands lying to the north of Uruppu inclusive. Typically, the government's position avoided any references to the terms "Southern Chishimas" or "Northern Chishimas", abstaining, however, from identifying Kunashiri and Etorofu as not a part of the Kurile Islands chain.¹¹

7 See *Kurile Islands*, p.6.

8 See *The Northern Islands*, p.9.

9 See *Japan's Northern Territories*, p.12.

10 *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* daily newspaper. 18 October, 1961.

11 *Hoppo Ryodo Mondai Shiryou Shu*. 1972. Tokyo: Northern Territories Problem Association, p.239.

Testifying to the confusion as it applied to basic terms, only two days before the government's position was announced, on 4 October the Japanese Foreign Ministry had issued its Position Statement regarding the "Northern Territories" which, by contrast with that of the government, applied the term "Southern Chishimas" several times.¹²

Besides, the LDP government's Position Statement referred to a statement which was made by the then Japanese Foreign Minister, Shigemitsu Mamoru, in the course of the bilateral normalization talks on 1 August 1956. The LDP government's document claimed that the government intended to support a stance brought forward by Shigemitsu.¹³

In his statement of 1 August, 1956 Shigemitsu, according to a brief summary offered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, admitted that Japan had renounced the Southern Sakhalin and the "Chishima Islands" in favor of the Allied Powers as in accordance with provisions of the SFPT.¹⁴ However, Shigemitsu at the same time stressed that Kunashiri and Etorofu were Japan's "immemorial territories" implying that they had been uninterruptedly controlled solely by Japan. He also indicated that Kunashiri and Etorofu were not a part of the "Chishima Islands" which Japan had renounced.¹⁵

Before proceeding to present the LDP's position as it was expressed in the "Position Statement Regarding the Northern Territories Problem" of October 17, 1961, it is worthwhile mentioning the LDP government's ordinance issued in March 1959.

On 15 May 1958, under revised legislation on the establishment of the Prime Minister's Office, the Special Areas Liaison Bureau was set up as one of Internal Departments of the Prime Minister's Office. It was entrusted with handling affairs pertinent to both the 'Southern Areas' and the 'Northern Areas.' The definition of the 'Northern Areas' was issued on 20 March 1959 as following the Government Ordinance No. 33. According to the ordinance, the 'Northern Areas' included the Habomais, Shikotan, Kunashiri, Etorofu and "other Northern Areas which prime Minister resolves to designate as such."¹⁶

12 Ibid., pp.238-239.

13 Ibid., p.239.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 For the original text see *Hoppo Ryodo Henkan Undo Gojyunen Shi*. 1996. Tokyo: The Northern Territories Policy Association, p.65.

The LDP's Position Statement contained seven sections. The first position concerned the Habomais and Shikotan. According to the document, these islands both geographically and administratively were a part of Hokkaido and consequently a part of Japan proper, and were not included in the "Chishima Islands" which Japan had renounced in the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SEPT).¹⁷ In order to support this claim, the LDP referred to a speech of the U.S. Ambassador Plenipotentiary at the San Francisco Peace Conference, John P. Dulles, which allegedly contained a similar position. However, Dulles mentioned only the Habomais in his speech as of 5 September 1951. He said as follows:

Some questions may be raised as to whether the geographical name "Kurile Islands" mentioned in Article 2 (C) includes the Habomai Islands. It is the view of the United States that it does not. If, however, there were a dispute about this, it could be referred to the International Court of Justice under article 22 [of the SEPT)."¹⁸

Besides, in this regard the LDP Position Statement refers as well to the Soviet Union's promise to "transfer" the Habomais and Shikotan to Japan expressed in the Joint Declaration of October 1956, and concluded that the Soviet Union was obligated to act so at the time of the conclusion of a peace treaty.¹⁹

The second position of the document is devoted to the issue of the status of Kunashiri and Etorofu. They are defined, firstly, as Japan's "immemorial territories" in a sense that these islands "had never been placed under the sovereignty of any other country but Japan" and that besides the Japanese no other people had resided there. It was also asserted that according to the bilateral agreements of 1855 and 1875 the term "Kurile Islands" implied the islands located to the north of Uruppu inclusive and hence did not relate to Kunashiri and Etorofu.²⁰

Also, the document referred to the 'territorial non-aggrandizement' principle, put forward by the Cairo Declaration and the Potsdam Declaration, as testifying to the fact that

17 See full text of the Position Statement in *Seisaku Geppo* monthly. Tokyo: LDP Publ., pp.28-30.

18 Jain, R.K. *Japan's Postwar Peace Settlements*. 1978. New Delhi: Radiant Publ., p.186. See also Rees, David. *The Soviet Seizure of the Kuriles*. 1985. Praeger, p.114.

19 *Seisaku Geppo*, p.28.

20 *Ibid.*, p.29.

the Soviet Union had no sovereign rights to annex these islands.²¹ In support of this claim the document, in particular, mentioned the Aide-Memoire of the U.S. Government as of 7 September 1956, addressed to the Japanese government, which stipulated as follows :

*The United States has reached a conclusion after careful examination of the historical facts that the islands of Etorofu and Kunashiri (along with the Habomai Islands and Shikotan which are a part of Hokkaido) have always been part of Japan proper and should in justice be acknowledged as under Japanese sovereignty. The United States would regard Soviet agreement to this effect as a positive contribution to the reduction of tension in the Far East.*²²

The LDP Position Statement did not mention, however, that the United States did not specify its stance regarding the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu concerning the “Kurile Islands” stretch as a whole. Indeed, the absence in the Aide-Memoire of any comments concerning the relationship of Kunashiri and Etorofu to the term “Kurile Islands” may only be assessed as a severe deficiency, particularly in legal terms.

The document’s second part contained a concluding section stipulating that the Soviet Union was “occupying” the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu illegally and had to “return” them to Japan.²³

The document’s third position relates to the islands located to the north of Uruppu inclusive and the Southern Sakhalin. Calling the former the “Chishima Islands,” thus in effect identifying the “Chishimas” as the “Kuriles,” the LDP admits that Japan had renounced both areas in the “SFPT based on provisions of the Potsdam Declaration.”²⁴ However, the document proceeds to declare that both areas were renounced exclusively in favor of the signatories of the SFPT.

While also noting that the national status of these areas remained unresolved and had to be determined in the future by concerned powers, implying the SFPT signatories, the document asserted that it was “natural” that the Soviet Union, as not a signatory to the

21 Ibid.

22 Rees, David, p.117.

23 *Seisaku Geppo*, p.29.

24 Ibid.

SEPT, had no right to refer to the peace treaty in support of its possession of the "Chishimas" and the Southern Sakhalin.²⁵

The fourth position of the document briefly treated, in particular, issues of the Yalta Agreement and the Soviet Union's refusal to admit the existence of the bilateral territorial dispute. Defining the Yalta Agreement as a "secret agreement" to which the Soviet Union referred in support of its territorial claims "to our country's Northern Territories," the LDP declared that it was not binding as far as Japan was concerned because Japan had neither participated in it nor ever accepted its provisions.²⁶ Referring to the Soviet Union's position of refusing to admit the existence of the territorial dispute per se, the LDP characterized it as a "wild argument."²⁷

The document's fifth position directly attacked a position assumed by the JSP regarding the territorial issue. Specifically, the document refuted the JSP's approach which stipulated that "return" of the 'Chishimas' had to be secured after the signing of a peace treaty in the subsequent process of striving for the abolition of the U.S. - Japan Security Treaty.²⁸ The LDP stated that there was nothing in common between the US-Japan Security Treaty, which served to defend Japan, and the 'Northern Territories' issue and that both issues could not be "mixed."²⁹

Moreover, the document declared that since, from a perspective of the content of previous bilateral negotiations, the bilateral territorial issues with the Soviet Union were expected to be eventually resolved by a peace treaty, the JSP's offer to conclude a peace treaty on the basis of securing the "return" of only the Habomais and Shikotan implied "getting into the Soviet Union's jar and forever losing any hopes to get the 'Northern Territories' back."³⁰

Concluding this section of the statement, the LDP proceeded to accuse the JSP of "siding" with the Soviet Union's "unfair attitude" and aiming at the abrogation of the

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

U.S.-Japan Security Treaty through mixing it with the issue of “our country’s ‘Northern Territories.’” The LDP expressed its resolute protest against such a policy line.³¹

The sixth position of the statement declared that the LDP’s consistent policy line was filled with a sincere desire to conclude a peace treaty as soon as the Soviet Union agreed to meet demands for the “return” of “our country’s ‘Northern Territories.’”³²

Besides, the LDP pledged to stubbornly assert Japan’s “vested” rights to possess the “Northern Territories,” relying on public support, and to persist in pursuing the goal of their “return.”³³ The LDP also expressed a desire to promote in the meantime friendly, cooperative and peaceful relations with the Soviet Union, pledging compliance as regarded provisions of the bilateral Joint Declaration of October 1956 and adherence to the principles of non-interference into domestic affairs of other countries.³⁴

The seventh, and the last, position of the LDP declared that even though Okinawa and the Ogasawaras (Bonin) were administered by the United States, their status fundamentally differed from that of the “Northern Territories” because the United States had recognized Japan’s “residual sovereignty” over Okinawa and the Ogasawaras.³⁵ The document also indicated that the “return of administrative rights” over Okinawa and the Ogasawaras at the earliest opportunity was eagerly expected.³⁶

The LDP’s position reflected peculiarities of the contemporary international environment, featuring the growing tension between the Soviet Union and the U.S. in particular in reference to the January 1960 revision of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which had been initially concluded simultaneously with the signing of the SFPT in 1951. On 27 January, 1960 the Soviet government proceeded to issue a document widely known as “Gromyko Memorandum” that stipulated that “the Soviet Union cannot allow itself to contribute to an extension of the territory used by foreign armed forces by handing” the Habomais and Shikotan to Japan which had been mentioned as an option in the Soviet-Japanese Joint

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid, p.30.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

Declaration signed in 1956.³⁷ This declaration in effect restored diplomatic relations between the two countries. At the same time the "Gromyko Memorandum" positively promised to turn the Habomais and Shikotan over to Japan "on condition of the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of Japan and the conclusion of a peace treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Japan", with only the latter condition having been specified in the 1956 Joint Declaration.³⁸

Replying to this memorandum on the same day, the LDP government made it clear that it was "unable to recognize the Soviet position in attaching a new condition to the terms of the Joint Declaration concerning the territorial problem", simultaneously proclaiming that "it shall continue to ask for the return of not only Habomais and Shikotan islands but other territories which inherently belong to Japan."³⁹ On 24 February 1960, the Soviet Union proceeded to send yet another memorandum addressed to the Japanese government, declaring that Japan's claims "for the recovery of other territories as well" could only be regarded as "an expression of dangerous revenge-seeking tendencies."⁴⁰

Also, it is compelling to note that the LDP's position concerning the "Northern Territories" issue was to a large extent brought forward as a response to opposing claims of the other political parties. In the preamble to the Position Statement as of 17 October 1961, the LDP made it clear that its issuance was necessitated by an appearance of action programs generated by, in particular, the JSP.⁴¹ The LDP's document starts with a blistering attack against the JSP, the LDP's major political rival. The JSP's proposed method for resolving the territorial dispute was assessed as "impossible to realize" and leading to renouncing of Kunashiri and Etorofu.⁴²

Formation of the Japan Socialist Party's Position on the "Northern Territories" Issue

The very first Japan Socialist Party (JSP) document to have reviewed the "Northern Territories" problem was issued on 18 September 1950, when post-war peace treaties were hotly debated. The document was entitled "Our Demands regarding the Peace Trea-

37 Georgiev, *Ostrova*, p.134.

38 Ibid.

39 Seisaku Geppo, p.29.

40 Georgiev, *Ostrova*, p.136.

41 Seisaku Geppo, p.28.

42 Ibid.

ty.⁴³ The document made it clear that at that point the JSP, while considering the Habo-mais and Shikotan to be separate from the “Chishima Islands”, viewed both island groups as “minor islands” indicated in Article 8 of the Potsdam Declaration and recognized the right of the Allied Powers to dispose of them as found appropriate.⁴⁴

However, in the latter regard, the document demanded that the Allied Powers’ final decision should be based on a high regard for the principles of the Atlantic Charter of 1941. The document specifically mentioned the following two principles of the Atlantic Charter: (1) that the Allies would seek no territorial aggrandizement and (2) that they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.⁴⁵

Deserving further critical attention is the document issued on October 2, 1951 and entitled “Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee on Merits and Demerits [賛否] of the Peace Treaty and the U.S. -Japan Security Treaty.”⁴⁶ The Committee Chairman, Wada Hiroo delivered the report. Issued after the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT) but before its ratification by the Japanese Diet, this document reviewed various representative positions that had been expressed by the JSP’s Foreign Affairs Committee members.

Wada Hiroo noted that expert opinions on the subject differed. Thus, speaking of the estimates regarding a relationship between the international situation and the Peace Treaty, Wada indicated that views of Katsumata Seiichi and Sone Eki, two of the Committee’s members, were opposed to one another. Specifically, Sone while admitting that the Third World War was not inevitable, at the same time believed that an offensive against peace by the “international communist camp” did spread a high risk. Sone also claimed that even though the “international communist camp” showed distaste for provisions of the SFPT, it did not imply that developments in Korea had to lead to an all-out war involving

43 [講和条約の内容に対するわが党の要望] See *Nihon Shakaito Yonjyunen Shi* [Fourty Years of the JSP Hitory], Collection of Primary Sources. JSP Publ., Tokyo, 1987, p.224.

44 The Potsdam Declaration stipulated in Article 8 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.” Jain, R.K. 1978. *Japan’s Postwar Peace Settlements*. New Dehli: Radiant Publishers, p.148.

45 See Berton, Peter. 1992. *The Japanese-Russian Territorial Dilemma: Historical Background, Disputes, Issues, Questions, Solution Scenarios*. Boston: Harvard University Publ., pp.32-33.

46 See *Nihon Shakaito*, pp.238-242.

Japan's participation.⁴⁷

On his part, Katsumata, claiming that the Third World War was not inevitable, nevertheless warned that a confrontation between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. was gaining momentum and in particular that the situation in Asia, primarily as it revolved around the "Korean issue," was growing strained. Moreover, in contrast to Sone's estimate, Katsumata claimed that in case the United States and Japan proceeded to conclude a separate peace treaty along with a mutual defense treaty, with both of them seeing China and the Soviet Union as "potential enemy states", the confrontation between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. would intensify and various conflicts in Asia centering on developments in Korea would become more difficult to resolve. Adding that since it was "obvious" that according to both treaties Japan was obligated to interfere with "these and other [similar] conflicts," Katsumata asserted that in the event of the Third World War Japan's involvement was "unavoidable."⁴⁸

Nevertheless, according to Wada's report, all the Committee members demonstrated dissatisfaction with provisions which pertained to territorial issues.⁴⁹ Firstly, as the report indicated, Committee members claimed reversion of Japan's territorial rights to the Southern Sakhalin and the "Chishima Archipelago," stressing specifically that the Yalta Agreement's provisions were not binding on Japan. Secondly, it was declared that the Habomais and Shikotan were "undoubtedly" Japan's territories and that in case the Soviet Union refused to "return" them to Japan, the matter would be brought forward to the International Court in anticipation of a fair settlement.

Thirdly, implying provisions of Article 3 of the SFPT, Committee members expressed their protests against placing under the United Nation Organization's trusteeship system, with the United States as a sole administrative authority, the Nansei Shoto (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Dai to islands), the Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan (including the Bonin Islands, Rosario Islands, the Volcano Islands, the Parece Vela and Marcus Islands), and claimed reversion of Japan's sovereign rights to these territories.⁵⁰

In this regard, Wada also mentioned that in addition to arguments of historical, ethnic,

47 Ibid., p.238.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid., p.239.

50 Ibid. see full text of the SFPT in Jain, R.K. *Japan's Postwar Peace Settlements*, pp.194-210.

and geographical nature, in defense of their territorial claims “all the Committee members—had unanimously demanded the application of ‘non-annexation’ and ‘non-aggrandizement’ principles stipulated in the Atlantic Charter of 1942”.⁵¹

The very first JSP’s official document which put forward a linkage between the ‘Northern Territories’ issue and the U.S. military presence in Japan was entitled the “General Principles of the Political Course” and adopted at the JSP Unification Congress which took place on 13 October 1955. One of the JSP’s major political documents, it stipulated a demand for the “return” of “the Habomais, Shikotan, Chishimas, Southern Sakhalin” as linked with the U.S. presence on Okinawa and the Ogasawaras (Bonin).⁵²

At the same time, it appealed for the conclusion of a “simple peace treaty” between Japan and the U.S.S.R., declaring the end of the war and the need for a restoration of diplomatic relations. Moreover, as an emergency measure in case the bilateral negotiations regarding a peace treaty were delayed, it suggested first of all to conclude a bilateral “provisional agreement” stipulating the end of the war and proposing to continue negotiations regarding a conclusion of the peace treaty as well as a resolution of “various other pending problems.”⁵³

The position expressed in the “General Principles of the Political Course” was further elucidated in the document issued on 2 February 1956 and entitled “The Political Course regarding Restoration of the Japanese-Soviet Diplomatic Relations.”⁵⁴ This document was issued in the midst of the bilateral negotiating process which led to the signing of the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration in October 1956.

Containing two parts, devoted to “basic political course” and a “concrete political course”, respectively, the document stipulated in the first part that the JSP planned to conduct foreign policy on the basis of “autonomous independence” in relation to either a “free camp” or a “communist camp” by means of establishing friendship and goodwill re-

51 Ibid., pp.239-240.

52 Ibid., p.322.

53 Ibid. According to Uezumi Mitsuhiro, formerly one of the JSP top level executives, this position had been so “realistic” that it later allowed the JSP International Department leaders to establish direct contacts “with the Soviet Union.” See Uezumi, Mitsuhiro. 1992. *Nihon Shakaito Kobo Shi* [History of the Rise and Fall of the JSP] Tokyo: Jiyusha, p.186.

54 日ソ国交回復に関する方針 See *Nihon Shakaito*, pp.329-330.

lations with all the countries of the world and representing a fully independent Japan. As it applied to the Soviet-Japanese relations, the document referred to the part mentioned above of the "General Principles of the Political Course" as the party's "basic policy line."⁵⁵

The document specified a "concrete political course" regarding territorial issues in two sections of its second part, dealing with a proposed content of a peace treaty and a "provisional agreement," respectively.⁵⁶

Addressing the issue of the status of the Habomais and Shikotan separately, the document asserted that these islands initially represented a "part of Hokkaido" and accounted for the Soviet Union's de facto occupation by referring to the Soviet Union's "accidental military presence" on these islands at the end of the war. Concluding that consequently provisions of Article 2 of the SFPT according to which Japan "had renounced its rights to the Southern Sakhalin and the Chishima Islands" had nothing to do with the Habomais and Shikotan, the document advised that it was "natural" to claim the "reversion of this area to Japan" in the course of "forthcoming negotiations".⁵⁷

Turning attention to the Southern Sakhalin and the "Chishima Islands," the document stipulated that the JSP was appealing to resolve the issue of their "reversion" in connection with the issue of the status of Okinawa and the Ogasawaras and through conducting either "separate" or "joint" negotiations.⁵⁸ The latter provision implies conducting either "separate" negotiations with the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., respectively, or "joint" negotiations between Japan, the Soviet Union, and the U.S.A. at once.⁵⁹

Pointing out that this territorial claims was raised in violation of the SFPT's Article 2, the document emphasized "fairness" of the JSP's stance by referring, firstly, to the fact that Japan "had nothing to do with the Yalta Agreement" and, secondly, to essential features of the Atlantic Charter and the Cairo Declaration (implying the 'territorial non-aggrandizement' principle) as well as "historical background" and "ethnic feelings".⁶⁰ Be-

55 Ibid., p.329.

56 Ibid. The remaining third section was devoted to the issue of repatriation of Japanese "war criminals" and detainees.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid.

59 See Uezumi, *Nihon Shakaito*, p.186.

60 See *Nihon Shakaito Yonjyunen*, p.329.

sides, it was stipulated that if in relation to the peace treaty there were any territorial areas which could not be positively defined as due to “return,” a reference to their future status as a pending issue had to be recorded in the text of a peace treaty.⁶¹

The section dealing with a “provisional agreement” might be regarded as being of particular importance because it looked forward to the “return” of the Habomais and Shikotan as a prerequisite for the conclusion of an agreement leading to the signing of a peace treaty expected to resolve the territorial issue. This particular vision had remarkably anticipated a concept formulated in the bilateral Joint Declaration of October 1956 which offered “transfer” of the Habomais and Shikotan to Japan as a route towards the conclusion of a further significant agreement.

The JSP viewed the signing of a “provisional agreement” exclusively as a practical measure provoked by two factors: firstly, a high probability of a rupture of a negotiating process conducted on the basis of past evidence and, secondly, a search for a compromise in order not to “lose a perspective” of restoration of bilateral diplomatic relations, “no matter how fair our party’s demands in regard to these problems [territorial issues] are.”⁶²

In addition, appealing to a common sense, the document warned that since the Soviet Union based its territorial claims on the Yalta Agreement’s provisions and sustained its territorial rights to the Southern Sakhalin and the “Chishima Islands” by referring to provisions of the SFPT, neither the U.S. nor Great Britain could be expected to “flatly refute” the Soviet Union’s official stance.⁶³ Extending the linkage still further, the document’s authors indicated that as long as the de facto “dominance” over the Ogasawaras and Okinawa by the U.S. continued, it was difficult to persuade the Soviet Union to end its territorial control.⁶⁴

Hypothesizing about the “worst scenario”, the JSP document’s authors suggested to conclude, “because of the lack of an alternative”, a “provisional agreement” that stipulated an end of hostilities, restoration of diplomatic relations, repatriation of war criminals and detainees, “return” of the Habomais and Shikotan and an unconditional support for Ja-

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., p.320.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

pan's entry into the United Nations Organization, leaving various other pending problems, including "remaining territorial issues", as due to be resolved after the conclusion of a "provisional agreement".⁶⁵

Speculating about the linkage between the Japanese-Soviet territorial disputes and the U.S. military presence in Japan, the "Political Course Regarding Restoration of the Japanese-Soviet Diplomatic Relations" fell short of forcing both issues to collide head-on with one another. The latter was attempted in August of the same year in a document entitled "On the Current Stage of the Japanese-Soviet Negotiations."⁶⁶

Issued on 29 August 1956, this document offered the JSP's analysis of a crisis which began to evolve soon after the bilateral normalization talks started for the third time. In the middle of August, the then Japanese Foreign Minister, Shigemitsu Mamoru, "was ordered to break off talks" held in Moscow.⁶⁷ Contributing his share to the breakdown of negotiations, on 19 August 1956 the then U.S. Secretary of the State, John Foster Dulles, told Shigemitsu during their brief encounter in London that "if Japan formally recognized Soviet title to the South Kuriles in a peace treaty, the United States would annex Okinawa."⁶⁸

As if responding to the Dulles' warning, the JSP's document entitled "On the Current Stage of the Japanese-Soviet Negotiations", declared that an abrogation of both the SFPT and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty remained a "nationwide demand of the Japanese people" and, implying the JSP's will to abrogate both, that when the JSP's consistent demands for a foreign policy line of "autonomous independence" were realized it would become possible to plan a fundamental resolution of the Japanese-Soviet Japanese territorial disputes.⁶⁹

At the same time, the document leveled severe criticism at the LDP government's policy of "being totally committed to America" and denouncing "all the communist countries". Referring to Japan as the country where the U.S. military bases were welcome anywhere, the document, while being critical of the Soviet Union's clinging to an "old prod-

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid. [日ソ交渉の現段階について]

67 For a brief description of the crisis see Hellman, Donald C. 1969. *The Peace Agreement with the Soviet Union*. University of California Press, pp.37-39.

68 See Rees, David. 1985. *The Soviet Seizure of the Kuriles*. Praeger Publ., p.116.

69 *Nihon Shakaito Yonjyunen*, p.331.

uct” of disposing of territories on the basis of “bargains” struck between the great powers, condemned primarily the LDP government’s foreign policy for having invited such a Soviet Union’s response. Consequently, the document viewed the LDP’s policy line to be the cause of grave concern, particularly concerning a resolution of the Japanese-Soviet territorial issues.⁷⁰

The JSP’s early linkages regarding the Soviet-Japanese territorial issues and the U.S. military presence in Japan, while as a rule implying a possibility to resolve the former through a prior liquidation of the latter, included the reverse sequence as well. Thus, speaking at the plenary session of the National Diet’s Lower House on 27 November, 1956, and expressing the JSP’s willingness to support ratification of the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration, the JSP deputy, Matsumoto Shichiro, emphasized that one of the essential merits of the Japanese-Soviet normalization rested with its being a “turning point” in the direction towards the establishment of Japan’s full independence and “autonomous foreign policy”.⁷¹

In that regard, Matsumoto accused the LDP government, and specifically the then Prime Minister, Hatoyama Ichiro, of assuming a passive attitude towards the international situation. Providing an example, Matsumoto mentioned that Prime Minister Hatoyama in his replies to queries of deputies frequently stated that both the signing of a peace treaty and a resolution of territorial issues could be achieved when international situation “changed for the better.”⁷²

A close examination of the Diet hearings which preceded ratification of the 1956 Joint Declaration testify to the fact that Matsumoto’s references to such statements by Hatoyama were well-grounded. Thus, one of the most typical statements as it was, on 22 November 1956, Hatoyama, while answering deputies’ queries at the meeting of the ‘Special Committee on the Japanese-Soviet Joint Declaration’ asserted as follows :

As you all know, the [resolution] of the status of Etorofu [and] Kunashiri is deferred until the period of the signing of a peace treaty. As for the Habomais [and] Shikotan, it

70 Ibid.

71 Kanpo Gogai (Official Gazette). Special Edition. Japanese National Diet 25th Diet Session Lower House Proceedings. No. 7, Nov. 27, 1956, p.11.

72 Ibid.

*has also been settled that the Soviet Union will acknowledge their belonging to Japan when the peace treaty is signed. Concerning the period of the signing of a peace treaty as well as the time when at last the belonging issue of Etorofu [and] Kunashiri [to Japan] might be settled, I tend to think that the Soviet Union's will may only change following shifts in the international situation. By [referring to] the international situation I imply that when there occurs an easing of tension between the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union, then there will be an opportunity. Today, all the people think that if the international tension eases, and a highway to peace opens wide, then the Soviet Union might stop clinging to [retaining] Etorofu [and] Kunashiri.*⁷³

It was this particular approach that Matsumoto Shichiro, the JSP deputy, chose to criticize as passive, indicating that Hatoyama "had never dropped a word" about a decisive role that Japan had to play or a specific policy it had to adopt striving to improve the international situation.⁷⁴

Proceeding further to form a linkage, Matsumoto, while stressing that normalization of the Japanese-Soviet relations was a "starting point" leading towards "reaching a full independence", suggested that time was ripe for an abrogation of both the SFPT and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty as well as for the withdrawal of the U.S. military bases from Japan.⁷⁵

In the wake of the signing of the Joint Declaration of 1956, the Soviet Union and the JSP established close contacts, beginning from an official visit to Moscow of the JSP delegation in October 1957. The Joint Statement signed on that occasion by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the JSP on 11 October 1956, while abstaining from any references to the bilateral territorial issues, confirmed that a normalization of the Japanese-Soviet relations generated an opportunity to develop extensive cooperation in the spheres of economy, science, and culture.⁷⁶

73 *Nisso Kyodo Sengen Tokubetsu Iinkai Roku* (Proceedings of the Special Committee on the Japanese-Soviet Declaration). No. 5, Japanese National Diet 25th Diet Session Lower House Proceedings. No. 7, Nov. 22, 1956, p.3.

74 *Kanpo Gogai* (Official Gazette). Special Edition. Japanese National Diet 25th Diet Session Lower House Proceedings. No. 7, Nov. 27, 1956, p.11.

75 *Ibid.*

76 See full text of the Joint Statement in *Nisso Mondai Kankei Shiryoushu* (Materials on the Japanese-Soviet Issues). *Nihon Shakaito Nisso Mondai Tokubetsu Iinkai* (JSP Special Committee on Japanese-Soviet Issues). Tokyo, 1978, p.33.

Ivan Kovalenko, formerly the CPSU International Department's chief executive responsible for the Soviet-Japanese relations, in his memoirs recalls that ever since the first official contact between the CPSU and the JSP occurred in October 1957, the two parties' relationship grew stronger, gradually spreading over a large variety of areas despite differences in terms of political convictions.⁷⁷

Results of the 28th general election to the National Diet's Lower House (House of Representatives) held on 22 May 1958, amply testify to the fact that policies the JSP proposed, including the party's approach to territorial issues, were readily accepted by the public at large. Specifically, the JSP gained as much as 32.9 percent of votes, receiving support from 13,093,993 voters.⁷⁸ Drawing a comparison with the 27th general Election held on 27 February 1955, when Socialists were divided into the Left Socialist Party and the Right Socialist Party, in May 1958 we observe a substantially strengthened public support, with 1,920,000 additional votes gained.⁷⁹

For their part, the LDP, gaining the largest number of votes, won support from 22,976,846 voters or 57.8 percent of votes in toto, during the 28th general election.⁸⁰ Thus, as a result of the May 1958 general election, the LDP and the JSP appeared on Japanese political scene as two major rivals, in effect splitting the society into two opposed halves.⁸¹

A major change in the JSP's approach to the Japanese-Soviet territorial disputes occurred in October 1961 when on 8 October the JSP Central Executive Committee issued a document entitled "Policy Course in Regard to the Resolution of Territorial Issues" which addressed both the "reversion" of Okinawa and the Ogasawaras, and the "return" of the 'Northern Territories', firmly linking the territorial disputes with the Soviet Union with

77 Kovalenko, Ivan. 1996. *Tainichi Kosaku-no Kaiso*. [Recalling Japan Strategies] Tokyo: Bungei Shushu, p.212. Kovalenko's memoirs were issued only in Japanese.

78 Tsuge, Masao. 1977. *Kokusei Senkyo-to Seito Seiji*. [National Elections and Party Politics] Tokyo: Seiji Koho Senta, p.53.

79 Ibid, p.45. As a result of the 27th General Election (1955) the Left Socialist Party and the Right Socialist Party gained in toto 29.2 percent of votes. Ibid.

80 Ibid, p.53. As a result of the 27th General Election (1955) the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party, predecessors of the LDP, gained in toto 63.2 percent of votes. Ibid.

81 As a result of the 28th General Election the LDP gained 287 deputy seats in the Diet Lower House, while the JSP won 166 seats. The remaining 14 seats were shared by the JCP (1), minor parties (1) and independents (12). *The Diet, Elections, and Political Parties*. "About Japan Series 13". 1995. Tokyo: Foreign Press Center, p.145.

the U.S.-Japan Security treaty issue. The document sought to work out a cure for the situation featuring the "yet not realized reversion" of neither the 'Northern' nor the 'Southern' territories and break a deadlock of the "not as yet concluded" peace treaties with China and the Soviet Union.⁸²

The document claimed that what had caused such a state of affairs along with the resultant continuous instability of Japan's position in the world was the "U.S.—Japan Security Treaty system". Since, according to the document, there were no prospects for the "return" to Japan of either Okinawa and the Ogasawaras or the "Chishima Islands" as long as the Security Treaty existed, in order to resolve Japan's territorial issues there was nothing else left to do but to abolish the "treaty system".⁸³

Blaming the LDP government, the JSP Central Executive Committee warned that it was utterly unrealistic to think that the Soviet Union was going to make concessions as long as Japan's military standing continued to strengthen under conditions of the existence of the Security Treaty. According to the document, the LDP government's policy could only "limitlessly" delay the "reversion" of both the 'Southern' and the 'Northern' territories.⁸⁴

The document had also asserted that the LDP government was "clinging" to the "irresponsible" policy line of "scattering" illusions among the Japanese people regarding a possibility of the "return" of Kunashiri and Etorofu. The JSP claimed that such a policy "cast a gloomy shadow" not only over the "return" of the Habomais and Shikotan but also over such "pending bilateral issues" as the Japanese-Soviet economic exchange and safe fishing in the "Northern waters."⁸⁵

The JSP Central Executive Committee had formulated four basic positions as they applied to the conclusion of the Japanese-Soviet peace treaty and the "return" of 'Northern Territories.' The first position spelled out that Kunashiri, Etorofu and the islands located to the south of them (the Habomais and Shikotan) had to belong to Japan. As regards Kunashiri and Etorofu, the document claimed that both islands were recognized as the Japa-

82 See full text in *Nihon Shakaito Yonjyunen*, pp.554-555.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

nese territory by provisions of a bilateral agreement signed in 1855. As regards the “Chishimas lying to the north of Uruppu inclusive,” it was indicated that Japan had appropriated those islands as a result of territorial exchanges based on provisions of the Russo-Japanese agreement concluded in 1875.

Claiming also that neither of the above mentioned two groups of islands had been appropriated “by violence”, the document concluded that together they made up Japan’s “inherent territories.” It was also mentioned separately that the Yalta agreement was not binding on Japan.⁸⁶

The second position was specifically directed against policies of the LDP government. Firstly, calling it a major blunder, the document accused the “reactionary” LDP government of renouncing rights to these islands despite the background described in the first position. Secondly, implying formerly Prime Minister Ikeda’s statement of October 3, the JSP accused the LDP government of changing its previous position concerning a definition of Kunashiri and Etorofu. Thirdly, the document pointed out that the government’s insistent claim that the “Chishima islands” had not been renounced in favor of the Soviet Union was an argument “unacceptable internationally.”⁸⁷

The document’s third position asserted that it was “absolutely impossible” to secure the “return” of the ‘Chishima Islands’ under conditions of the LDP’s continuous policy of strengthening the “Security Treaty system.”⁸⁸

The fourth position put forward by the JSP Central Executive Committee manifested a “two stages approach” to the resolution of the territorial issue. Specifically, the document offered as “the only realistic means” to secure stability of the Japanese-Soviet relations and contribute to the easing of international tension in the Far East, striving – as “the first stage measure’ – to conclude a peace treaty with the Soviet Union conditional on the “return” to Japan of the Habomais and Shikotan.⁸⁹

Further, the JSP proposed to secure a peaceful “return” of the “Chishima Islands” by

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid.

carrying on negotiations with the Soviet Union regarding the "return" of Japan's "inherent territories of the Chishimas" simultaneously with striving for the abolition of the "Security Treaty System".⁹⁰

According to Uezumi Mitsuhiro, the policy shift embodied in the JSP Central Executive Committee's document issued in October 1951 was based on the initiative of the then head of the JSP International Department, Wada Hiroo, two members of the Central Executive Committee in charge of national movement, Katsumata Seiichi and Kameda Tokuji, Secretary of the National Movement Bureau, Ito Shigeru, and Head of the National Movement Bureau, Hososako Kanemitsu.⁹¹ The approach contained in the "Policy Course in Regard to the Resolution of Territorial Issues" of October 1961 was later confirmed in such primary JSP documents as the "Opinion Regarding the Northern Territories Problem" [北方領土問題に対する見解], issued in November 1969 by the JSP "Special Committee on Policies Regarding the Japanese-Soviet issues" and yet another document, entitled "Opinion Regarding the Northern Territories Problem" issued by the same Committee on 24 March, 1972.⁹²

This particular approach, in the course of inter-party opposition, was instrumental in the formation of the LDP's lasting formulation of Japan's territorial demands.

90 Ibid.

91 Uezumi, Mitsuhiro. *Nihon Shakaito Kobo*, p.187.

92 Ibid, p.188. See full texts in Japanese in *Nisso Mondai Kankei Shiryoshu*, pp.73-81 and *Nihon Shakaito Yonjyunen*, pp.962-964.