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## Stalemate or Slow Progress ? Japanese-Soviet Relations, 1986–1989\*

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In July, 1986, Gorbachev expressed his hope in his Vladivostok speech that Soviet-Japanese relations would be improved. More than two years later in his Krasnoyarsk speech he repeated the same hope. But more than three years after the Vladivostok speech, hope still remains only hope, not translated into reality. In fact, Soviet-Japanese relations find themselves as much in stalemate now as three years ago. Nevertheless, we should not conclude from this that they have stayed at the same place all along without movement. Actually, Japanese-Soviet relations in the three years have been characterized by considerable vicissitudes, which I would argue have contributed to producing an interesting change in climate in both countries. Basically, Japanese-Soviet relations for the past three years can be divided into three distinct periods : the first period, from the beginning of 1986 to the summer of 1987, which witnessed the rapid change from the beginning thaw into the big chill ; the second period from the summer of 1987 to the end of 1988, in which both countries sought a way out of the stalemate ; and the third stage beginning from December 1988 until now, in which Japanese-Soviet relations entered into a new stage under the different circumstances. It may well be that we are facing a major turning point in the near future. This paper attempts to explain what changes have taken place in the past three years, examine what factors contributed to these changes, and speculate on the possible prospect for the immediate future.

### I From Thaw to the Big Chill

Among major industrialized countries' relations with the Soviet Union, Japanese-Soviet relations represent anomaly. For more than forty years since the end of World War II no peace treaty has concluded between the two countries. Exchanges of visits by top leaders have been limited to the bare minimal ; in fact no general secretaries of CPSU nor chairmen of the council of ministers nor chairmen of the Supreme Soviet have ever set foot in Japan, and until two years ago no Soviet foreign minister had visited Tokyo since 1976. This certainly underscored the low priority the Soviet Union accorded to Japan in its foreign policy. Feeling were mutual, however, since Japan did not rush to court favor from its big neighbor. In fact, Japan conveniently took advantage of the existence of the hostile, aggressive Soviet Union in order to move its foreign policy clearly in concert with Western industrialized countries and boost its defense capability. Until 1986 no Japanese Foreign Minister visited Moscow since 1978, and if one excludes funeral visits, the last Japanese Prime Minister to visit the Soviet Union was Prime Minister Tanaka in 1973.

1986 seemed to be a big year for change in Soviet-Japanese relations.<sup>1</sup> January began with newly installed Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's visit to Tokyo, which was the first time in ten years that a Soviet foreign minister came to Japan. Japanese Foreign Minister Abe in turn went to Moscow in April, breaking eight-year suspension of visit. It was agreed that an annual foreign ministerial conference should be resumed alternately in Moscow and Tokyo. Moreover, a Cultural Agreement was concluded between the two countries for the first time in the history of Soviet-Japanese relations, and the Committee on Science and

Technology, which had been suspended in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, was resumed. In addition, agreements on tax, trade payment, and visitations to gravesites were also concluded. The bilateral relations were thus drastically improved to such an extent that in the words of Kimura Hiroshi, one of the foremost authorities on Japanese-Soviet relations, there remained only one outstanding issue : conclusion of the peace treaty.<sup>2</sup> In July Gorbachev delivered his Vladivostok speech, in which he affirmed his intention to improve relations with Japan. In this speech he suggested that the next order of business would be “the exchange of visits at a higher level.” There were expectations in Japan that Gorbachev’s visit to Japan would be a matter of time. If that happened, it would be the first time ever that a General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union visited Japan, and in the opinion of many commentators in Japan, certainly Gorbachev would not come to Japan without being prepared to settle the territorial question.

As the October wind began to blow, however, something happened to cool these expectations. At the reception of Kim Il-sung, Gorbachev criticized in a strident tone “the military alliance among the US, Japan, and South Korea,” a tone of hostility that did not exist in his Vladivostok speech. In the beginning of November Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Kapitsa accused Japan of having planned to participate in SDI and conducted joint military exercise with the US. Then in the middle of November Soviet Ambassador Soloviev announced that Gorbachev’s scheduled trip to Japan in January 1987 was postponed indefinitely.<sup>3</sup>

If 1986 was the year of hope for improvements in Soviet-Japanese relations, 1987 was the year in which all such hopes vanished. On April 30, the Japanese metropolitan police indicted the Toshiba Machine Co. for a possible violation of Japanese export regulations. In the face of an angry American reaction, the climax of which came when four US congressmen smashed a Toshiba cassette recorder with sledge hammer in full view of Japanese audiences watching television in their living rooms, the company president of Toshiba Corporation (not to be confused with the guilty affiliate company) resigned and apologized to the American people. The Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), which had been lenient in the past in enforcing the COCOM rules, tightened the export regulations, causing havoc in Japanese-Soviet trade.

On April 29, the Emperor’s Birthday, Japanese Ambassador Katori delivered a message on Soviet television, but a part of his message dealing indirectly with the territorial question was changed without his approval. The Ambassador’s message stated that Japan hoped to conclude a peace treaty by “solving the problems that are left for continuing diplomatic negotiations for the normalization of Japanese-Soviet relations.” The Russian text changed the word, “having solved” (*razreshiv*), into “having deliberated” (*obsudiv*).<sup>4</sup> The Japanese thus learned quickly that *glasnost* had not yet extended to the territorial question. In the beginning of May Politburo member Vitalii Vorotnikov told Japanese businessmen visiting Moscow that Gorbachev’s visit to Tokyo in 1987 would be canceled, dashing the Japanese hope that the postponed trip might be arranged for May.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time as the Toshiba incident, another problem surfaced as a thorny question between Moscow and Tokyo. When Gorbachev made a new proposal on INF in February, differences between Washington and Moscow suddenly narrowed, making the possibility of concluding the INF agreement within reach. The Soviet insistence retaining 100 SS-20 warheads in Asia, however, displeased both Japan and China, creating another tension between Moscow and its Asian neighbors. At first, the Soviets took a hardline position not likely to win any friends in Asia. Soviet Foreign Ministry (MID) spokesman Ganadi Gerasimov stated on April 16 that the retention of SS-20s in Asia was intended to counter American nuclear

weapons in Asia, including F-16s in Misawa, tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea, and other nuclear weapons deployed on the sea. General Nikolai Chervov of the General Staff said that the Asian deployed SS-20s would not be eliminated until the second stage of the grandiose three stage nuclear weapon elimination plan proposed by Gorbachev in January 1986 was initiated.<sup>6</sup> Gorbachev reiterated this position by stating that the precondition of elimination of the Asian deployed SS-20s was the removal of American nuclear weapons deployed in Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines.<sup>7</sup> The Soviet position was obviously unreasonable, since the US had no comparable land-based INFs in Asia; besides, Moscow was trying to trade what they had added to the existing nuclear arsenal in the Asian part of its territory for the type of US nuclear weapons that were excluded in the European theater from the INF negotiations. This position prompted Prime Minister Nakasone to suggest at the Venice summit in June that the US should consider deploying INF in Alaska to force Moscow to abandon the Asian deployed SS-20s.<sup>8</sup>

To everyone's surprise in Japan, however, in August Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union decided to eliminate the SS-20s in Asia altogether without making any demands for reciprocal concessions from the US. General Chervov emphasized that this was a magnanimous concession on the Soviet part, explaining that US nuclear force, including 160-170 F-16s and F4s capable of carrying nuclear weapons in Misawa, continued to pose a threat to the Soviet Far East.<sup>9</sup> The Japanese government, which had previously angrily raised an accusing finger at the Soviets, however, reacted to the Soviet decision without dignifying this move with official comment. The Japanese silence was in sharp contrast to the Chinese reaction: the Chinese government issued an official statement welcoming the Soviet decision. To add insult to injury, Japan decided to join the US sponsored SDI program on the following day after Gorbachev made the decisive concession.

On August 20, Moscow expelled a military attache and a deputy director of Mitsubishi Trading Company's Moscow office on trumped up charges. This was the first time in post-war history that a Japanese diplomat had been expelled from the Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup> The Japanese government retaliated by expelling a Soviet representative in the commercial office, who was allegedly involved in an industrial espionage, separate from the Toshiba case.<sup>11</sup> What appeared to be a thaw in 1986 after the long winter between the two countries plunged back into the big chill again only one year after the Vladivostok speech.

The question to be asked is: Why did Japanese-Soviet relations that seemed to move finally in a direction of improvement in the first half of 1986 suddenly see sudden deterioration in 1987?

First, the Shevardnadze-Abe meeting in January 1986, which signaled the first sign of improvement in relations, also contained an element of misunderstanding. From the Japanese point of view, the most important issue discussed during the conference was the territorial issue. The Japanese side succeeded in having Shevardnadze accept the expression, "to negotiate the unresolved question," in a joint statement. Japan took this to mean that the Soviets were willing to go as far as to restore the conditions that existed in the Tanaka-Brezhnev Joint Communique in 1973, which had recognized the importance of "concluding a peace treaty by settling outstanding questions left unresolved since World War II." Previously, the Soviet had refused even to talk about the territorial question at the negotiating table. Therefore, the fact that this question was raised at all at the negotiations and that the expression indicating the existence of "unresolved questions" was included in the joint statement demonstrated, so the Japanese concluded, that the Soviets were softening their position. This conclusion obviously led to the expectation that when Gorbachev visited Japan, some kind

of solution to the territorial problem would be forthcoming.

During the negotiations, however, there was nothing to indicate that the Soviets were softening their position on the territorial question. Shevardnadze made it perfectly clear that the Soviet Union considered this question already solved and, therefore, that the Soviet side had no intention to include the territorial question among the "unresolved questions." Why then did Shevardnadze agree to issue a joint communique that he should have known would cause misunderstanding? In my view, he did this probably because he wanted to signal to Japan that the Gorbachev regime could be more flexible in dealing with Japan than the Brezhnev whose policy had been symbolized by intransigence and high-handedness often shown by unsmiling Gromyko and boorish Ivan Kovalenko, deputy chief of the Central Committee's International Department. Shevardnadze perhaps hoped that the Soviet softening of attitude would be reciprocated by the Japanese, leading to improvement of relations without settling the territorial question.

What was concealed under the obvious improvement of *mechanism* of bilateral relations was that both sides were as far apart as before in their approach to improving relations *in substance*: the Japanese government continued to regard the solution to the territorial question as the most important precondition for improvement of relations, while the Soviets wanted to improve relations on their own terms without paying the price of returning the four islands. This gap in approach became wider as time went on. For instance, Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech, which I consider to be an important landmark in Soviet policy toward Asia, disappointed the Japanese precisely because it did not contain any positive proposal for solving the territorial question.<sup>12</sup> It was indicative that even those who took a critical position on the Japanese government's intransigent policy advocated the solution of the territorial problem by accepting the return of the two islands for the time being.<sup>13</sup>

In my opinion, these expectations far exceeded the limit beyond which either government was willing to traverse at that time. I do not believe that the Soviet government carefully examined the cost-benefit analysis of various options to improve Soviet-Japanese relations. In the face of mounting expectations, therefore, it did not make sense for Gorbachev to visit Japan without the Politburo's first having come to some kind of conclusions on the territorial question.

Such expectations posed a dilemma to those in the Japanese Foreign Ministry who were responsible for formulating Japan's Soviet policy. In my opinion, for these people the four islands are not the real obstacle, but the excuse to prevent and delay improvement of relations with the Soviet Union. Discussions on how to solve the problem, regardless of the positions advocated, were therefore not welcomed by them.<sup>14</sup>

The second reason was that Soviet-Japanese relations were caught by worsening US-Japanese economic frictions. The Toshiba incident was ultimately not a security issue, but essentially an economic friction with only superficially security overtone. In contrast to European countries, the volume and structure of Soviet trade represents but a marginal part of the entire trade structure in Japan. Faced with a prospect of worsening economic relations with the US, Japan's best strategy seemed to yield to the US pressure by sacrificing the minuscule Soviet trade. The Soviets accused the Japanese government of concocting the incident to poison the atmosphere. This argument was hardly convincing, since it was clear that the Toshiba Manufacturing Co. was willingly involved in a deal it knew was intended for military use and clearly violated the Japanese export regulation, and that the Soviets were fully aware of the illegality of the deal.<sup>15</sup> They were correct, however, that the Japanese reaction was politically motivated. It was politically motivated, as the Soviets claim, but so motivated to

ease the anger of the US at the expense of deterioration of relations with the Soviet Union. In fact, it was more convenient for Japan to have the Soviets nearby to offer as a sacrificial lamb in order to soothe the frustrations of the vitally important partner, particularly when her sacrifice would not cost much either economically or politically. It is therefore out of place for the Soviets to accuse Japanese foreign policy of not being independent and following the US *diktat*. The Japanese government chose, on its own independent motives and calculations, to yield to US pressure on the Toshiba case.

Faced with this downturn of relations, which saw initiated by the Japanese, the Soviets had no effective leverage. In the past, they would certainly have chosen the only available means — intimidation by military means. This measure was, however, counter to the new thinking the Gorbachev regime espoused. Something had to be done to give the Japanese a message that further deterioration of relations would not be tolerated. In my opinion, this was the meaning of the Soviet expulsion of a Japanese military attache and a businessman. The timing of the expulsion was well calculated. Nakasone was to step down soon, and nothing positive and tangible was expected from the lame-duck Nakasone government.

## II Both Sides Attempt Damage Limitation

Despite the precipitous deterioration of relations, however, neither side intended to let them grow worse than the pre-1986 level. The Japanese officials, beginning from Nakasone and Foreign Minister Kuranari, made it clear that they had no intention to seek further retaliations.<sup>16</sup> Actually, despite this announcement another round of mutual expulsions of diplomats took place in September, but neither side publicized it, and this incident did not become known until November.<sup>17</sup> The Japanese government hastened to announce that the vice-ministerial conference would be held in October as scheduled, and that there was no change in Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev's visit to Tokyo to attend this meeting.<sup>18</sup> Ambassador Soloviev expressed an optimistic opinion in September that Japanese-Soviet relations would be ultimately influenced by the improvement in international relations, and that he had no doubt as to the realization of Gorbachev's visit to Japan.<sup>19</sup> In November, Rogachev did indeed come to Tokyo to attend the vice-ministerial conference. Although in June, MID Pacific Division Chief Chizhov had threatened that the anti-Soviet campaign lead to a cancellation of the Second Japanese-Soviet joint Economic Conference,<sup>20</sup> it took place in January 1988 in Tokyo. In December 1987, just when the Washington Summit between Gorbachev and Reagan, a Soviet TU Badger reconnaissance plane violated Japanese airspace by flying over Okinawa. When the Soviet plane did not heed to the warning of a Japanese fighter, the latter fired at the invader. The Soviet government promptly apologized, explaining that the violation was caused by a mechanical malfunction, and promised to punish those responsible, and despite lingering question about the nature and the cause of this violation, the Japanese government did not pursue the case further.<sup>21</sup>

Why did relations not deteriorate even farther than they did? In my view, it was because neither side saw advantage in seeing further deterioration. For both sides it served no purpose to destroy what had been achieved in 1986. The mechanism of negotiations and the basis for further development of relations wer already firmly in place in the multitude of agreements including the Cultural Agreement and the Science and Technology Cooperation. What was needed was political will and a mutually agreeable method to build relations on this baseline. In addition, the international environment did not allow either country the luxury of starting a cold war. Japan feared diplomatic isolation, when virtually everybody else was

jumping on the bandwagon of rapprochement with Moscow, while the Soviet Union did not want Japan to serve as a spoiler of this process. Moreover, it was not advantageous to the Soviets to worsen the relations when the new government was installed under Takeshita, whose attitude toward the Soviet Union was unclear.

### III Search for Ways to Escape from the Stalemate

If the latter half of 1987 saw an attempt on both sides for damage limitation, there have emerged in 1988 some important signs of searching for ways to escape from the corner into which they both had boxed themselves. These signs are admittedly more visible on the Soviet side, but one should not ignore subtle changes in attitudes and opinions on the Japanese side as well.

#### A. Soviet Side

##### (1) The Territorial Question

The most obvious change took place in Soviet approach to the territorial question. Although the government's position did not change officially, various opinions were expressed privately as well as in print. It is true that previously various opinions that differed from the official line had been presented.<sup>22</sup> But such opinions had tended to be a trial balloon only to see the Japanese reaction. Statements that emerged in 1988 were distinguished from previous ones in their diversity as well as in the sober realization that without solving this question Soviet-Japanese relations would have no chance of improvement.

In August 1987, Evgenii Primakov, Director of the Institute of International Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), stated that the Soviet Union had no intention of transplanting the European solution to the border questions into Asia, and suggested that he himself would prefer to leave the solution of the territorial question to the decision of the next generation in a similar way as Japan and PRC had decided to solve the territorial dispute involving Senkaku Island.<sup>23</sup> In February, 1988, in his interview with *Hokkaido Shimbun* Vice-President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences F. P. Fedoseev, who was reputed to be a close advisor to Gorbachev, proposed creating a zone between the Soviet Union and Japan where both sides would reduce the level of military force, although he did not clarify if such a zone would include the northern territories.<sup>24</sup> Ambassador Muto's message on the Emperor's Birthday, which specifically referred to the northern islands, was televised without any change, reversing the situation in the previous year.<sup>25</sup>

In May JCP General Secretary Huwa and JSP Chairman Doi visited Moscow in succession. Gorbachev spent a total of nine hours with these heads of the feuding opposition parties in Japan, an important sign in itself indicating Gorbachev was taking Japan seriously. During these conversations, the territorial question was raised. Particularly during the meeting with Doi, it was Gorbachev himself who referred to the 1956 joint communique, in which the return of the two islands was agreed upon. According to Gorbachev, it was Japan which reneged on this provision by renewing the security treaty with the US.<sup>26</sup> At the end of June the Soviets have reportedly proposed unofficially that both countries should agree on the demarcation line of borders, a move that JFM immediately rejected.<sup>27</sup>

The July issue of the MID publication, *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, published a roundtable discussion on Soviet policy toward Asia since the Vladivostok speech. This discussion is an interesting document indicating (1) the frustrations that Soviet Asian specialists felt regarding the lack of progress that had been made during the two years since the Vladivostok speech,

(2) the frankness with which they were examining the situation, and (3) the diversity of opinions being expressed among themselves. With regard to Japan, Dmitrii Petrov, Director of the Far Eastern Institute (IDV), pointed out three major obstacles that stood in the way of improving Soviet-Japanese bilateral relations: (1) the territorial question, (2) US-Japan security alliance, and (3) the persistent image of the USSR as enemy among Japanese.<sup>28</sup> The implication of this statement was obvious: Petrov seemed to advocate accepting the existence of dispute on the territorial question, recognizing the reality of Japan's security alliance with the US, and trying to remove the enemy image prevalent in Japanese perception of the Soviet Union. Chizhov countered this argument by stating that Soviet policy toward Japan had been clearly formulated and that it was Japan that had to respond to Soviet initiatives.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, Georgii Kunadze, IMEMO scholar reputed to be close to Primakov, presented a paper at a conference held in Japan, in which he advocated the Senkaku Island method, and suggested other forms of solution such as "joint ownership, special international status, separating the factual situation from the juridical situation."<sup>30</sup> *Ogonek* chief editor Korotich met with former foreign minister Abe in early October, and agreed with Abe's view that both sides had to continue the dialogue, while acknowledging the existence of the territorial question.<sup>31</sup> A few days later *Izvestiia* correspondent Aleksandr Bovin expressed his personal opinion in Tokyo that the territorial problem existed and that both sides had to make effort to make a compromise to find a common ground.<sup>32</sup> In addition, a noticeable change in Soviet attitude toward the territorial question took place at the Soviet-Japanese Round Table Conference that began in Moscow on October 17. Previously on such occasions, the Soviet side refused to even talk about this issue. This time Yukio Hatoyama, member of Parliament from Hokkaido and a grandson of former Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama, expressed hope that the Soviet Union would return to the position taken in the Soviet-Japanese Joint Communiqué concluded by his grandfather and Bulganin exactly thirty two years ago. Dmitrii Petrov agreed with this suggestion, and proposed to proceed with negotiations on this basis with concessions from both sides. Aleksandr Bovin of *Izvestiia* said: "Of course, there exists the northern territorial problem. But Japan should not raise this question only emotionally. I would like Japan to insist not only on its own interests, but also take it into consideration that the Soviet Union has its own problems. Both sides should strive to search for ways out of this impasse, considering historical, legal, military and other factors." Contrary to these opinions, Shishlin, propaganda department head of the Central Committee, criticized the Japanese approach as the opinion reducing all bilateral equations into the territorial question, ignoring other factors.<sup>33</sup> On the second day, however, the Soviet side withdrew the previous statements, reverting to the previous position criticizing the Japanese side of raising a red herring. Lukin, insisting that the Soviet official position had not changed, asserted that any change of national borders would have negative impact on Eastern Europe. Chief of the International Department's Section Senatorov referred to the Soviet public opinion, citing his impression he had on his recent tour to Kunashiri.<sup>34</sup> This underscored the differences that existed between scholars and political commentators, on the one hand, who could freely express their opinions, and MID officials, on the other, who had to adhere to the official position.

It is important to note, however, that the Soviet official position is also beginning to change. At the end of September, JFM's councilor Kuriyama met Shevardnadze in the United Nations for five minutes.<sup>35</sup> It was agreed that the foreign ministerial conference would be held in Tokyo in December.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, Japanese Foreign Minister Uno invited Ambassador Soloviev in Tokyo and discussed the agenda of the foreign ministerial conference. Soloviev agreed that the Soviet side would be willing to discuss the territorial question.<sup>37</sup>

Compared with Shevardnadze's position in January 1986 refusing to put the territorial question in the agenda, this change was a significant improvement.

In private conversations I personally had or I heard others have had with Soviet specialists on the territorial question, more concrete ideas were expressed. Some Soviets expressed regret that the Soviet Union did not sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty, giving Japanese the excuse that the San Francisco Peace Treaty is not binding on relations between Japan and the Soviet Union. Others held the view that the Soviet Union should have settled the territorial issue in 1956. With regard to specific measures as to how to get out of impasse, some advocated the return of the two islands (Habomais and Shikotan), while Kunashiri and Etorofu should become the free trade zone. Others suggested a Spitzbergen method, whereby both sides should have sovereignty over the islands.

These ideas suggested that throughout 1988 discussions were going on among specialists on Japan. Although officially the MID took the stand that the territorial question had been already solved, it seems safe to assume that this position was being eroded.<sup>38</sup>

## (2) Security Issues

In 1988 two tendencies emerged in Soviet approach to security issues in Asia. First, the Soviets began to appreciate the peculiarities of the Asian situation for which the European based framework could not be directly applicable. Second, although their proposals were still mixed with propaganda, a more realistic approach to concrete problems became discernible.<sup>39</sup> Likewise, Soviet approach to security issues involving Japan became also more realistic, although here, too, there existed different opinions.

First, there emerged a debate among Soviet specialists on Japan as to whether there was a resurgence of militarism in Japan. An increasing number of realistically oriented specialists came to argue that although a constant increase in Japanese defense spending should be a cause for concern, it would be wrong to characterize it as a resurgence of militarism. V. Roshin of IMEMO, for instance, presented an excellent argument, criticizing those who believed that there existed a military-industrial complex in Japan, on the basis of realistic analysis of Japanese industrial strategy.<sup>40</sup> In fact, crying wolf on resurgence of militarism did not square well with Gorbachev's reference to the Japanese model of economic development without militarism. One could easily see an echo in Gorbachev's statement of those realistic Japanese specialists.

Second, some scholars, for instance, Dmitrii Petrov and K. O. Sarkisov (Institute of Oriental Studies) argued that Japan's security alliance with the US should be recognized as reality.<sup>41</sup> This opinion was echoed by Bovin, who stated recently that the Japan-US Security Treaty was no longer considered a stumbling block to better bilateral relations.<sup>42</sup>

Third, some specialists increasingly demand that *glasnost'* be extended to military doctrine in Asia as well.<sup>43</sup> They considered the predominance of the military factor in the Far East counterproductive, and argued that candid explanations as to Soviet military doctrine and the rationale behind Soviet deployment would contribute to dispelling the inflated image of the Soviet threat.

Fourth, Soviet approach to arms control Asia became more realistic, as I will explain later.<sup>44</sup>

In this context, Defence Minister Yazov's interview with the Kyodo Press Agency was important. With regard to the Japanese Self-Defence Force's four divisions deployed in Hokkaido, Yazov shrugged them off by saying that whatever Japan decided to deploy was Japan's business, thus refraining from the usual criticism levelled against them as directed against the

Soviet Union. He further commented on Japan's increasing defense budget, which he did not believe would immediately lead to the conclusion that Japan will become an aggressive country. At the same time, he expressed concern that certain military actions around Japan such as US-Japan joint military exercises in the Pacific, deployment of Tomahawk cruise missiles, port visit of the US Seventh Fleet to Japan posed threat to the Soviet Union. He then called for negotiations in order to achieve mutual reduction of forces and establish confidence building measures. As for the Soviet deployment of troops in the northern islands, he stated that whatever the Soviets decided to deploy in their own territory was their own prerogatives, but revealed that only a few battalions were stationed there, whose tasks were mainly those of a coast guard, and not in the nature of a threat to anyone. This information contradicted with the information supplied by the Japanese and US sources, which indicated that the Soviets were deploying one division. On the question of whether the Soviets were continuing military build-up in the Far East, Yazov flatly denied this and stated that since 1985 no ground troops had been added, but on the contrary they were at present decreasing in number. He said that trend would further continue as Sino-Soviet tensions eased. As for the naval force, he said that the Soviet Union would be interested in reducing the level of the navel force, as it certainly would, as the strategic arms reduction treaty were concluded.<sup>45</sup>

### (3) Development of the Soviet Far East

One of the most important reasons for Soviet specialists' approach becoming more realistic was that Japan's importance in developing the Soviet Far East became more keenly appreciated by them, while economic development of the Soviet Far East was recognized as the most important precondition for the Soviet Union's intercourse with the Asian community.

In fact, there was something new in the emerging Soviet approach to the problem of development of the Soviet Far East as well as the Soviet approach to the Asia-Pacific economic community. First, both became treated integrally. Without previously predominant ideological bias the Soviets came to assess the vitality of the Asia-Pacific region positively. They made it no secret that the Soviet Union wished to be a part of this community, but in order to be a part of this community, they realized that the development of the Soviet Far East would be an absolute necessity. Second, there was soberness with which they analyzed the present economic situation of the Soviet Far East and Siberia and the mistakes of the past. They candidly admitted that the Soviet Union had been an Asian power only in a geographical sense. They acknowledged that the reason why the Soviet Union had not been able to act a major power in Asia was not because of the malevolent intentions of hostile powers, but largely because of the Soviet economic backwardness. They also criticized the past Soviet economic strategy toward the Soviet Far East and Siberia, which they characterized as exploitation of the region for the sake of European Russia. Third, the new approach was connected and had deep roots in the general process of the economic, political, and intellectual transformation that was going on in the Soviet Union.<sup>46</sup>

Although it is often overlooked, it is important to stress that one half of Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech was devoted to economic development of the Soviet Far East, and that he considered such progress a precondition for Soviet entry into the Asian community. After Gorbachev's speech, however, progress was slow to say the least. The only thing that happened immediately after the speech was the hastily drafted long-range plan for development of the Soviet Far East and the neighboring regions to the year 2000, which envisaged the investment of astronomical 200 billion rubles. This plan has been now attacked as useless and even harmful.<sup>47</sup> It was not until the beginning of 1988 that serious effort was begun to map out a

realistic strategy for Far Eastern development.

In March, the Soviet National Committee for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (SOVNAPEC) with Primakov as its chairman, was formed, and began its energetic activities. This organization became the driving force behind the international seminar that was held in Vladivostok in the beginning of October inviting influential figures from the Asia-Pacific region. A large delegation headed by Primakov and which included Lukin and other key personnel in Soviet Asian policy took a tour to the Far East at the end of July and the beginning of August to prepare for this conference. I was told by some Soviet insiders that it was intended to push the opening of Vladivostok by breaking the political and psychological opposition. The too hastily organized conference lost its impact, partly because the world's attention was focused on Gorbachev's coup in the Politburo that took place simultaneously, and partly the world's leading figures they intended to invite to this conference declined to accept the invitation at such short notice. Nevertheless, it seems to have partially achieved its intended result, since soon after this conference, ban on travel in the Maritime Provinces was removed. The Soviets are now seriously contemplating the establishment of a special economic zone in the Soviet Far East, and the opening of Vladivostok seems to be a matter of time.<sup>48</sup>

Another important development in this regard was the attendance of a Soviet delegation headed by Primakov at the Osaka PECC Conference in May 17–20, 1988. The first Soviet representative attended the PECC meeting in Vancouver in 1986 as an observer, but he was an embassy official from Toronto, and did not speak at all. But the Osaka meeting was different; this time the delegation was headed by an influential figure, and the SOVNAPEC as a national committee had been organized. The Soviet delegation was invited to the Osaka meeting as "official guests," which is slightly higher than the observer status. According to Charles Morrison, who attended the conference, Primakov used four minutes of the five minutes allowed to each guest speaker "to express Soviet interest in the PECC, state that hostile Soviet attitudes toward Pacific economic cooperation in the past were based on misconceptions, and offer to host a meeting of PECC's Minerals and Energy forum. He ended his statement attributing his brevity to 'our famous Soviet efficiency and also our famous Soviet modesty,' drawing a good laugh from his audience."<sup>49</sup>

As the plan to develop the Soviet Far East becomes more realistically contemplated, it became clear to those specialists involved that Japan was an essential ingredient in this project.<sup>50</sup> Only Japan had the financial power, managerial skill, and technological knowledge that would be indispensable for economic development of this region. This awareness explains the impatience with which they demanded the reorientation of Soviet policy toward Japan, including re-examination of the Soviet position on the territorial question.

#### (4) Soviet Approach to South Korea

Another distinct tendency in the Soviet approach to the Asia-Pacific region was the active effort to establish relations with the Asian NIEs. Particularly important was its approach to South Korea. This also corresponded to the new direction boldly taken by the recently installed democratic regime under Roh Tae Woo, who actively sought rapprochement with the Communist regimes in the north. The Soviet Union participated in the Seoul Olympics at the obvious displeasure of North Korea, and it was widely known that the Soviet representative office which was established ostensibly for the sports events were engaged in economic activities on a permanent basis even after the Olympics. A joint venture involving the Soviet Union and a large South Korean conglomerate was concluded. Ignoring a shrill protest by North Korea, Hungary established its official legation in Seoul, and latter restored normal diplomatic

relations. Apparently, the Soviets had to abandon the idea of inviting South Koreans to the Vladivostok conference in October due to protests by North Korea, but some Koreans with US passports did participate. In the words of one participant, there was a commonly felt feeling that one of the major actors in the conference were South Koreans who did not participate.<sup>51</sup>

#### (5) Diversity of Opinions among Soviet Foreign Policy Experts

It is possible to divide Soviet experts on Japan into three general groups.<sup>52</sup> The first group can be classified as hard-liners, who try to maintain the same intransigent line pursued by Gromyko and Kovalenko. The second group are champions of the new thinking, who try to break the deadlock of Japanese-Soviet relations by making reasonable concessions to Japan. They clearly prefer the dominance of economists interdependence, and advocate reducing the military factor in Soviet foreign policy in this region. A great many competent economists belong to this category, and seem to exert considerable influence on people like Primakov. The third group position themselves in between the two groups. Foreign ministry experts such as Chizhov, who try to improve relations but realize the limitations faced with Japan's intransigence, belong to this group. The tendency throughout 1988 was that while the second group was clearly in ascendancy, the second and the third groups tended to be merging. Nevertheless, one cannot dismiss the influence of the first group. One area about which we remain in the dark is what influence the military exert in formulating Soviet policy towards Asia. Also it should be added that although the second group was increasing its influence, their opinion could not be said to have reached the Politburo level.

#### (6) Gorbachev's Krasnoyarsk Speech

While the major target of the Vladivostok speech was China, Japan occupied the most important place in Gorbachev's Krasnoyarsk speech delivered on September 17, 1988. In the Vladivostok speech, the part dealing with China occupied 96 lines, compared with 39 lines for Japan in *Izvestiia*, but in the Krasnoyarsk speech, only 35 lines were devoted to China, compared with 72 lines to Japan.<sup>53</sup>

Moreover, in the Vladivostok speech Gorbachev's approach to China was specific, while his reference to Japan was couched in general, vague terms. This was completely reversed in his Krasnoyarsk speech. With regard to China he referred to general improvement in bilateral relations, positive development in the Kampuchean question, and the need to move to a higher level of contact.

In his Krasnoyarsk speech, first, he mentioned that he had met a series of Japanese leaders, including Ishibashi, Abe, Fuwa, Doi and others, underscoring that in terms of the number of meetings Gorbachev had held, Japan was one of the leading countries. Then, he singled out the importance of the meeting he had with Nakasone, which, he stated: "convinced me more that there does exist a basis and mutual intention for dynamism of our relations on the basis of balancing bilateral and regional interests." He then expressed hope that this positive tone would receive continued support for mutual contact and for normal development of Soviet-Japanese relations. Further he recognized that Japan should be one of the most important economic partners of the Soviet Union. In his words, "the existing problems in the humanitarian and fisheries spheres that are obstructing strengthening of relations can be overcome. I cannot, however, help remarking that Soviet people, together with Japan's other neighbors, are disturbed by the steady growth of Japan's military potential within the framework of burden sharing with the US." One percent of GNP is obviously not much, he

continued, but even if it is only one percent, if one considers Japan's economic power, it cannot be ignored. Japan has shown the world that in the contemporary world it is possible to reach the status of great power without militarism. Why discredit this unique and valuable lesson to mankind, he asked.

The Krasnoyarsk speech indicated (1) that Japan occupied an important place in Soviet foreign policy, but (2) that Gorbachev had not yet come to a conclusion as to how to escape from the impasse. The second conclusion was obvious from the absence of any reference to the territorial question.

#### (7) At Long Last Exits Kovalenko

Ivan Kovalenko, whose expertise in Japan was formed while he interrogated Japanese prisoners of war immediately after the war, had been a permanent fixture of Soviet policy toward Japan. Having occupied for many years the influential position of deputy chief of the Central Committee's International Department, which had been the most influential post dealing with Japan, he was the symbol of intransigence, arrogance, high-handedness, and stupidity that was characterized Soviet policy toward Japan. Even under Gorbachev, Kovalenko lingered on, making many Japanese wonder aloud whether Gorbachev was serious about the new thinking. Now it was learned that after the reshuffling of the International Department as a result of the removal of Anatolii Dobrynin, Kovalenko was finally gone, signaling the Soviet seriousness with which they intend to improve relations with Japan.<sup>54</sup>

### B. Japanese Side

#### (1) Internationalization of the Territorial Question

One of the peculiarities of Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union is that the Soviet Desk of the Foreign Ministry has the virtual monopoly over formulation of policy. In contrast, formulation of Japan's policy toward the US, for instance, involves far more actors than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; MITI, Self-Defence Agency, Ministry of Finance and other ministries, the business community, LDP factions, special interest groups all participate in the act. No such diverse interest groups are involved in formulation of Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Soviet Desk of the Foreign Ministry is known to have hawkish position that adheres to the strictest *iriguchiron*, meaning that the Soviet return of the four islands is the precondition for Japan to come to the negotiating table for normalization of relations.

By the end of 1988 this position came under attack from various quarters. First of all, there was pressure coming from the international environment that was moving in a direction of detente with the Soviet Union. When even such bona fide anti-Communist leaders as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher began to make such dovish statements as "*perestroika* is good for the West" or that "we can do business with Mr. Gorbachev," the Japanese hawks must have felt a bit lonely in holding out on their essentialist view. In addition, detente was not merely an isolated event in the West. In Asia, Sino-Soviet rapprochement was progressing rapidly, while the tensions in the Korean Peninsula was greatly easing, as the process of Soviet-South Korean rapprochement was unfolding rapidly. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan had contributed to the realization of tensions in other conflict-laden regions, notably in Indochina, where Soviet influence behind the scene could not be ignored. In such an environment, Japan stood alone in not actively seeking improvement of relations.

Another pressure came from the assessment of Gorbachev's reforms. An overwhelming

majority of the Japanese academic specialists on the Soviet Union recognized the profound change that was going on in the Soviet Union as well as the inherent connection between Soviet Asian policy and this change. The position taken by the Japanese hawks that the nature of Soviet Union had not changed became increasingly untenable. Along with this there was a change of popular perception. Throughout the post-war period the Soviet Union had enjoyed the dubious distinction of being the least liked country among Japanese.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, since 1985 there has been a marked decline in the degree of unpopularity of the Soviet Union. As popular perception showed signs of change, the educated public in journals and newspapers began expressing opinions different from those held by the Soviet Desk on Japan's policy toward the Soviet Union.

It is also important to note that a new pattern of Soviet-Japanese relations was emerging. Niigata, Hokkaido, and Kanagawa prefectures began pursuing their own independent trade relations with the Soviet Union. This development also corresponded to new independence that was given to each oblast' in the Far East and Siberian regions. The notion of regional economic development is most advanced in Niigata, which is trying to establish a trade and economic zone involving Japan, the Soviet Union, China, South Korea, and possibly North Korea. It is no longer a pipe dream, as Niigata's efforts were largely responsible for opening a direct flight route between Khabarovsk and Shinyang. In the beginning of September Niigata hosted a Japan Sea Coast Symposium, inviting representatives from the Soviet Union and three Northeast provinces of China. The opening of a ferry route between Sakhalin and Hokkaido has been proposed by Sakhalin, while the Hokkaido Agricultural Cooperative Union and other Japanese corporations in Hokkaido, one the most economically depressed regions in Japan, entered into negotiations for establishing joint ventures. A joint fishing venture involving the Ainus and the Soviet Union on one of the disputed islands hastened the Foreign Minister official to fly to Hokkaido and force the Ainus to cancel the deal.<sup>56</sup>

These pressures were finally forcing some Japanese gingerly to reexamine Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union. In June Foreign Minister Uno made an interesting statement during his tour to inspect the northern islands (of course from the shores of Hokkaido) to the effect that although Japan's position on the territorial issue remained unchanged, bilateral relations should not be limited to this problem.<sup>57</sup> Unfortunately, the implication of this statement was not picked up by Soviet side, partly because the Soviets were offended by a mistranslation of his statement by NHK.<sup>58</sup>

The Foreign Ministry was visibly nervous about various opinions coming from unofficial Soviet sources on the territorial question. The way it reacted to a mysterious issue of *senbikiron* (demarcation of the border between the two countries) was an indication of this nervousness. The question of who suggested such a proposal remains a mystery, but Foreign Ministry Councilor Kuriyama made a pre-emptive rejection of such an idea at the vice-ministerial conference with Rogachev in June.<sup>59</sup> Particularly, the JFM showed nervousness about the possibility of the Soviets proposing the return of the two islands, Habomais and Shikotan, and criticized such proposals as an attempt to divide Japanese public opinion.<sup>60</sup>

Faced with these pressures, the Japanese government under Takeshita decided to mobilize the support of other governments on the territorial question. Although the past government appealed to the allies for understanding Japan's position on the territorial question, it was first time that the territorial question became internationalized in the sense that Japan's allies began actively speaking on this question on Japan's behalf to the Soviet government.

President Reagan made his intention known that he would raise the northern territorial issue at the summit meeting with Gorbachev in Moscow.<sup>61</sup> This question was indeed raised

by Secretary of State Shultz during his meeting with Shevardnadze at the summit, but the Soviet side promptly rejected Shultz's proposal to solve this problem.

At the Toronto summit of Western leaders held on June 19 through 21, Japan was, probably for the first time in history of Western leaders' summits, the most important actor behind the scene on the political sphere. Against the major trend toward rapprochement with the Soviet Union, Japan succeeded in persuading other powers that no change of Soviet policy had been discernible in Asia, thus effectively putting a brake in this process. Also the territorial question was raised at the Takeshita-Howe meeting during the summit.

In August, when the LDP's Northern Territorial Map Commission visited the British Foreign Ministry, the latter handed to the commission the British government's official view on the territorial question, which reportedly supported the Japanese position that the Soviet occupation of the northern territories was not justified.<sup>62</sup> The significance of the support by the two parties which signed the Yalta Secret Agreement for the Japanese position is well analyzed by Hiroshi Kimura's article, and there is no need to repeat what he has said eloquently.<sup>63</sup>

Nevertheless, I have a slightly different interpretation on the implication of internationalization of the territorial question from Kimura's. In my opinion, internationalization of the territorial question has changed the nature of the territorial issue. As I have mentioned above, the territorial issue has served as an excuse for Japan not to improve relations with the Soviet Union. Moreover, in Machiavellian terms it has served as a guarantee for the US to continue to count on Japan standing in hostile relations with the Soviet Union. Once it has become internationalized, however, the territorial question is no longer an excuse, but a problem in itself that begs its solution. Thus, Japan has now found itself in a predicament to find a realistic solution to the problem rather than insisting on the return of the four islands with the expectation of Soviet rejection.

## (2) Nakasone's Visit to Moscow

A concrete step in a direction towards the solution of the problem was set by former Prime Minister Nakasone's visit to Moscow in July. Although Nakasone did not officially represent the Japanese government, his stature and influence could not be ignored; his visit represented the first sign coming from the Japanese side to break the stalemate, and it was recognized as such by the Soviet.<sup>64</sup>

The following points can be singled out as important developments connected with Nakasone's visit to Moscow.

Nakasone presented three conditions before he went to Moscow. First, to talk about the territorial question honestly and sincerely. If Gorbachev were to answer that the territorial question was already solved or the problem did not exist, there would be no sense of taking a trip. In Nakasone's words, "even if he cannot say that he would agree with the return of the four islands, it would be better to move ten or fifteen meters ahead on this question." Second, he would be given the chance to speak at a research institute to the opinion leaders of the Soviet Union. Third, he would speak on Soviet television with no editorial cuts from the Soviet side. These three conditions were accepted by the Soviets.

On the territorial question, the following exchanges took place between Nakasone and Gorbachev. Nakasone presented the Japanese position from the legal point of view, starting from the Russo-Japanese Treaty in 1855 and the Karahuto-Chishima (Sakhalin-Kuriles) Exchange Treaty (1875), emphasizing that historically the four islands belonged to Japan. He then explained the joint communique in 1956, in which the return of the two islands had been

approved, and stressed that Japan had accepted the joint communique, since it had expected to have the two other islands returned at the conclusion of a peace treaty. To this Gorbachev replied that if Japan started from the joint communique in 1956, the Soviet Union started from the World War II settlements. If the framework of the World War II settlements were destroyed, the world would be thrown into a state of chaos. Nakasone retorted: At the conclusion of the war, the Soviets moved from the north and stopped before the four islands, and when they discovered that no American troops came in, they then occupied the four islands. It is not true, he insisted, that the World War settlements have not changed. The US returned Okinawa to Japan, although the US suffered casualties there amounting to several hundred thousands. Gorbachev replied that the situation had changed since 1960, when Japan revised the US-Japanese Security Pact. This was met with Nakasone's rejoinder that the revision of the US-Japanese security treaty, which was beneficial not only to Japan but also to the Soviet Union, could not be justifiable ground for changing the Soviet position. Gorbachev said Japanese military cooperation with the US intensified in 1960, but admitted that the situation had become so different now that some means had to be found to get out of the impasse. Later when Nakasone delivered a speech at IMEMO, Primakov said that there were those scholars in the Soviet Union who took the view that, had the Soviet Union signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty, there would not have any territorial problem.

The former prime minister presented his opinion that there were basically three ways to maintain East-West relations. The first was to continue more or less the present framework. The second was to realize profound improvement, while the third was to achieve a great reconciliation on the basis of the new principle. The post-war tensions resulted from Soviet expansionism and Stalinism, which prompted the West to adopt the containment policy. In order to escape from this situation and to establish long-term stability, he continued, a Copernican change in thinking would be necessary. The northern territorial question was an example of Stalinism, and this mistake would have to be corrected. Gorbachev made no comment on this, and said only: "I listened to your opinion with interest. There are some points with which I agree, but there are others with which I disagree. Let us discuss this problem and discuss it again in the fall."

Gorbachev criticized Nakasone for excluding the Soviet Union from the Asian community. Nakasone answered that the military predominance in this region at the expense of economic and cultural attractiveness was largely responsible for the Soviets being excluded from the Asian community. Gorbachev replied that the Soviet Union would open Vladivostok.

Nakasone proposed stabilization of the Korean Peninsula by (1) direct dialogue between North and South Korea, (2) the US and Japan beginning trade with North Korea, (3) South Korea's beginning trade with China and the Soviet Union. Gorbachev supported this proposal on the condition that the division should not become permanent, but promised that he would convey this proposal to North Korea.

Gorbachev promised that Shevardnadze would visit Japan by the end of this year, and hoped that his visit would be realized as quickly as possible.

#### IV Japanese-Soviet Relations in the Changing Environment after December 1988

Shevardnadze came to Tokyo in December 1989, his first visit to Japan in three years, and Japanese Foreign Minister Uno reciprocated the visit to Moscow in May 1989. Thus, it appears that the foreign ministerial conference, which had been derailed since former Japanese Foreign Minister Abe's visit to Moscow in 1986, has been put back on the right track. On

the surface, this development is positive only in the sense that the situation has been restored to the status quo ante, and Japanese-Soviet relations seem to be still in a state of stalemate, since both countries are unable to find a way out of the thorny northern territorial issue. I would argue, however, that Japanese-Soviet relations have entered a new stage that is qualitatively different from the previous stage that existed in early 1986. This chapter aims to identify what I consider to be new factors that differentiate this stage from the previous ones, and speculate on how Japanese Soviet relations are likely to develop in the near future.

#### (1) New Developments since Shevardnadze's Visit to Japan, December 1988

Shevardnadze's second visit to Japan in December 19–21, 1988, was in many ways different from his previous one in January 1986. As I discussed above, throughout 1988 a variety of unofficial opinions on the Soviet side had been aired through various channels with regard to the territorial question. Thus by the end of 1988 it became impossible any more for the Soviet government to insist that the territorial dispute did not exist. In fact, previous to his visit to Japan, Ambassador Soloviev and Shevardnadze himself made it clear that the Soviet side was willing to discuss the territorial question during the forthcoming conference.<sup>65</sup>

Nevertheless, this did not mean softening the position in substance. This time the Soviet side came to the conference table armed with legal rebuttals to the Japanese claim, invoking, in addition to other points that had been familiar, Article 107 of the UN Charter that stipulates that former enemy countries during World War II have no right to claim any part of the World War II settlements.<sup>66</sup> Hard hitting arguments were exchanged at the December conference, and, as expected, no agreement on the territorial issue emerged from it. The joint communique that both sides acknowledged the existence of "difficulties" — note the plural — that stood in the way of concluding a peace treaty. This meant that the Japanese side even failed to make the Soviets include the specific reference to the territorial issue in the communique.<sup>67</sup> The Soviet side, however, agreed to include Gorbachev's visit to Japan in the joint communique. This was the first time that the Soviets officially committed themselves to put Gorbachev's visit in the political agenda in bilateral relations.

The only tangible result of this conference was the conclusion on a treaty on migratory birds. One should not dismiss this treaty as a mere trifle, since the conclusion of such treaties at least contribute to the momentum of improvement of relations, however small step it might seem. Particularly on the Japanese side, this was meant to be a signal to the Soviet side to demonstrate their willingness to improve relations with the Soviet Union without the resolution of the territorial question. In substantial issues, the real significance of this foreign ministerial conference lay in the establishment of a permanent working group toward concluding a peace treaty, headed on both sides by the vice-foreign ministers. For the first time in history a permanent mechanism has been set up through which both sides would be able to narrow differences in order to move toward concluding a treaty. Needless to say, the central focus of this body is the territorial question, although the Soviets insist on including other issues.<sup>68</sup>

Since Shevardnadze's visit, two contradictory, but complementing trends have appeared on the Soviet side. The first is that the Soviet press has begun printing Japanese views for the Soviet audience. The article written by Sase Masanori of the Defence College appeared in *Izvestiia* in January, in which Sase presented the Japanese view demanding the return of the four islands as precondition for improved relations.<sup>69</sup> This article was followed by *Izvestiia's* interview with Prime Minister Takeshita, who urged the Soviet government to return the islands to improve Japanese-Soviet relations. This was first time that any Soviet newspapers

printed the Japanese prime minister's view without substantial cut. Takeshita's interview was characterized in general by the positive tone in which he praised Gorbachev's latest diplomatic moves such as withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the arms control policy, and welcomed Soviet interest in regional stability in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>70</sup> The last point was picked up by Kunadze and Sarkisov in their important article, which I will mention later, as a common goal on which improvement of bilateral relations can be based.

*Izvestiia's* interview with Takeshita was followed by B. D. Piadyshev (chief editor of *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*)'s interview with Uno.<sup>71</sup> This interview covers broader subjects such as Japan's economic policy, Uno's view on the world situation, Japan's policy toward environmental issues, etc. Two points are important, however. First, Uno states that Japanese-Soviet relations have not reached the level where both countries have exhausted their potential possibilities, and further that he believes that improvement in bilateral relations will not only contribute to stability in the Asia-Pacific region, but also to improvement of East-West relations at the global level. Importance here is that the Japanese Foreign Minister places Japanese-Soviet relations in a broader international context beyond the territorial question. Second, as for the territorial question, this interview seems to be designed to advance the view of the interviewer rather than to present the view of the interviewed. Piadyshev interrupts Uno, and presents the Soviet view with smug categoricalness.

Piadyshev's treatment symbolically represents the Soviet approach, because the willingness to present the Japanese view to the Soviet people has been accompanied by a toughening of Soviet official position. The MID began a counterattack against the Japanese position. Prokhorov and Shevchuk of MID's legal department as well as conservative commentators such as Latyshev and Ovchinikov of *Pravda* presented the usual Soviet argument that Japanese claims were legally and historically totally groundless.<sup>72</sup> In April, prior to Uno's visit to Moscow, Vice-Foreign Minister in charge of Asian Affairs Igor Rogachev himself wrote a long article that justified the Soviet claim to the islands from historical and legal grounds.<sup>73</sup> The unyielding, one-sided arguments such as these seem to give one the impression that far from being willing to compromise, the Soviets have decided to have a major confrontation on the territorial issue with Japan.

As expected, at the first session of the working group, which met in March in Tokyo, both sides engaged in heated discussions on the territorial question without budging an inch. Nevertheless, a new line of strategy became discernible during the conference. The Soviet side hinted at shelving the territorial issue in a way similar to the Senkaku Island and Takeshima Island formula, in which Japan concluded a peace treaty with China and South Korea respectively without solving the contested island issue. It seems, thus, the intransigent counterargument presented by the Soviet side could be interpreted as an opening gambit on the Soviet part to bring the territorial question to a draw. This suggestion was, however, rejected by the Japanese side outright.

No tangible result came of Uno's visit to Moscow in May. Although there was some progress on marginal issues such as the conclusion of a treaty on environmental protection and the Soviet decision to allow the Japanese gravesite visit to new areas where they had never allowed, the Soviets did not make any concession on the territorial issue. Neither did Uno extract a positive response from the Soviets on a definite schedule for Gorbachev's visit to Japan. In fact, what was made clear was that Gorbachev's visit would not take place this year.

## (2) Funeral Diplomacy, or the Lack Thereof

Curiously, the Soviets did not take advantage of Emperor Hirohito's funeral in February. Japanese are people who value symbolism, and Gorbachev's attendance to the funeral would have tremendously boosted the image of the Soviet Union, which has enjoyed the status of being the most unpopular country among Japanese.<sup>74</sup> The Japanese government would have taken his visit as an indication of the Soviet willingness to improve bilateral relations, a factor that would have had some impact on the future course of negotiations. The usually obnoxious right wing would not have staged a noisy demonstration, while Gorbachev could have come to Japan without any concrete offer on the territorial issue. Instead, the Soviets decided to pass this opportunity, and sent a second rank representative, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Lukiyarov. Many Japanese speculated on the reasons why the Soviets elected not take this opportunity to boost their positive image among Japanese. In my view, three reasons are important.<sup>75</sup> First, to the Soviets Gorbachev's visit to Japan is one of the greatest bargaining points that they cannot afford to use up carelessly. The second time around is not likely to make an impact as large as the first time. Besides, at the funeral Gorbachev would have been one of many luminaries such as Bush and Mitterand, inevitably diminishing the maximum impact the Soviets wished to create. Moreover, a funeral visit would have been nothing but symbolic without accompanying any tangible results. Gorbachev's visit is supposed to serve as a home run with the bases loaded — namely, the final solution to the territorial issue —, not as a bunt to advance the runner from first base to second (mainly atmospheric effect). The second reason has to do with China. There is no question that for the Soviet Union, the first priority in Soviet Asian policy is China, not Japan. Therefore, Gorbachev could ill afford to visit Japan before he made his first historic visit to Beijing, scheduled in May. Third, by not attending the Emperor's funeral, Gorbachev sent Japan a message that the Soviet Union was less than satisfied with the slowness with which Japan was moving in improving Japanese-Soviet relations.

## V Changing Environment

When one examines the development since Shevardnadze's visit to Japan in December, one might conclude that nothing has changed and that Japanese-Soviet relations are still in as much a stalemate as before. Nevertheless, although we might characterize the relations as stalemate, I would argue that they have reached a new stage qualitatively different from the previous stage. This is partly caused by a significant change in the environment in which Japanese-Soviet relations are placed, and partly by the change in subjective attitude of both sides toward bilateral relations.

The first reason why I believe Japanese-Soviet relations have reached a new stage is that the environment in which they operate has significantly been altered. Specifically, I have in mind 1) Sino-Soviet rapprochement, 2) uncertainties of Asian international relations after the Tiananmen massacre, 3) the political development in the Korean Peninsula, 4) Indochina conflict, 5) US-Japanese relations, 6) arms control in Asia, and 7) changing domestic political situation in both countries. These factors affect Japanese-Soviet relations in different ways, some positive, while others negative, but combined, they undeniably place bilateral relations at the present stage in a different environment that was not present three years ago.

### (1) Sino-Soviet Rapprochement and Regional Conflicts

Gorbachev's visit to China and the summit with Deng Xiaoping, the first summit for thirty

years, have completed the process of normalization of the two communist giants that began gingerly since 1982. Although Sino-Soviet rapprochement is not a return to the Sino-Soviet alliance similar to that of the 1950s, and although it alone does not drastically affect the existing Chinese relations with Japan and the US, the framework that was established in the 1970s as our approach to the Asian international power balance has to be reconsidered in correspondence to the new environment. Specifically, the bipolarity that characterized the situation in the late 1970s and the early 1980s is no longer applicable to the present international reality in Asia. Furthermore, Sino-Soviet rapprochement has ripple effects on other regional conflicts such as those in the Korean peninsula and Indochina. In addition, drastic arms reduction of Soviet forces along the Chinese border cannot but affect the arms control momentum in Asia. In other words, the US and Japan, which have constructed their policy toward the Soviet Union in Asia mainly on the assumption of "Soviet military threat," are no longer likely to expect China and other countries (even South Korea) to join an alliance designed to exclude the Soviet Union from Asia. For all practical purposes, the Soviet Union is already in Asia, moreover, in a different way from the way under Brezhnev. Contrary to those who argue that the new thinking is not visible in Asia, two of the major tasks of the new initiatives — Sino-Soviet rapprochement and withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan — enunciated in the Vladivostok speech have already accomplished. The danger for Japan and the US may not stem from the intrusion of the Soviet Union into the Asian scene, but rather from the unexpected development of Chinese internal turmoil triggered by the students' demonstration and the Tiananmen massacre, and the resulting anti-reformist trend in China, which is bound to set back the open door policy associated with the economic reforms. The amazing openness with which the first experience of Soviet democracy demonstrated in the form of the Congress of People's Deputies in stark contrast to the Byzantine politics behind the scene in the Chinese leadership and their brutality in dealing with the students' demonstration has made it clear in front of millions of the world's television viewers that political reforms in the Soviet Union have far outstripped the Chinese political reforms. It is still too early to tell how these recent events will affect the power balance in Asia, but the change in people's perception is bound to affect our policies.

Rapprochement between the Soviet Union and South Korea developed rapidly since the Olympics. In October 1988, the Soviet Union established a permanent trade mission in Seoul and exchanged a memorandum on trade with the South Korean government. In February, 1989, Hungary established diplomatic relations with South Korea against strong protest of North Korea. Nevertheless, Roh Tae Woo's "Nordpolitik" seems to have stalled in recent months, partly because of domestic problems within South Korea. South Korean industrialists' visit to the Soviet Union was postponed indefinitely. It remains to be seen whether South Korea's "Nordpolitik" would yield a positive result toward solving the conflict in the Korean peninsula. Nonetheless, it seems clear that we can no longer take it for granted that South Korea is a staunch member of the anti-Communist alliance against the Soviet Union. As for the conflict in Indochina, although the Gorbachev-Deng summit did not produce an accord in the Cambodian problem, the Indochinese conflict seems to be headed toward solution.

All in all, it can be said that up to the Tiananmen massacre Asia was moving rapidly for new stability, and in this movement one could not deny that the Soviet Union was playing a major role. It is difficult to speculate at this point what influence the recent events in China might have on Asian international relations. Nevertheless, if anything, the role of the Soviet Union may have increased rather than diminished to assure stability in Asia. It behooves us,

then, to design a new international order in Asia that ensures stability and prosperity in such a way to assign a positive role to the Soviet Union in this international order.

## (2) US-Japanese Relations

With the advent of the Bush administration, US-Japanese relations seem to have entered a new stage also. Already toward the end of the Reagan administration, a dark cloud was appearing on the horizon in which economic frictions had shown a distinct tendency to spill over into security cooperation which had been shielded from economic frictions. Under the Reagan administration, the President's personal leadership and strong and able Japan hands within the administration and the state department headed by Ambassador Mansfield prevented these frictions from taking on crisis proportion.

The Bush administration seems to be taking a harder stance against Japan on trade issues. Japan was singled out, together with India and Brazil, as a country which was exercising an unfair trade practices under Article 301 of the Omnibus Trade Act.<sup>76</sup> It is clear that the main target is neither Brazil nor India, but Japan, and the main battleline is clearly drawn on the high tech fields. Furthermore, the Bush administration virtually abrogated the FSX agreement under the congressional pressure. The FSX fiasco has left no doubt that Japan will develop the next fighter on its own, which would have been Japan's desire in the first place before she yielded to the Pentagon's pressure to develop FSX jointly.

Underneath the uneasiness of Japanese-Soviet relations is a significant change in the American public opinion. On the one hand, the Americans' suspicion of the Soviet Union has significantly diminished under the "Gorby fever"; on the other, they are increasingly more threatened by the Japanese economic challenge. One influential congressman stated: "Japanese economic threat is more insidious than Soviet military treat." The public opinion polls indicate that nearly two thirds of the public of all political groups — Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike — agree that Japan rather than the Soviet Union poses the bigger challenge to the US — an amazing change in popular perception that would have been impossible only five years ago.<sup>77</sup> Two thirds of Americans believe that Japan is unfair, while only 44% consider the Soviet Union unfair. Certainly, this change in popular perception is reflected in the way the Congress and the White House are reacting to US-Japanese relations. Such popular pressure is expected to move in the direction that the Bush administration will be compelled to be more accommodating with the Soviet Union and less accommodating with Japan. In correspondence to the change in popular perception, a widening gap in the two governments' approach to the Soviet Union seems to be developing. While the US government is clearly moving in direction of integrating the Soviet Union in the world community, as the President stated in his speech before his trip to Europe at the end of May, there are no such ideas surfacing within the Japanese government. The Japanese government has thus far been skeptical about the end of the cold war and unresponsive to the need to integrate the Soviet Union into the world community. As relations between Japan and the US are becoming more adversarial, the Soviet factor might become a complicating element in the future.

For the Japanese government, improvement in Japanese-Soviet relations cannot be an independent variable and it must necessarily be placed in US-Japanese relations, which constitute the cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy. The question is: In what way will the estrangement of US-Japanese relationship affect Japanese-Soviet relations? The importance of the US-Japanese relationship for Japan's survival is such that there is neither room nor possibility that Japan will play the Soviet card to gain a marginal advantage in negotiations with the US. Likewise, any Soviet attempt to split Japan from the US will be resented and counter-

productive. If anything, the estrangement of US-Japanese relations will narrow the parameters of Japanese maneuverability in dealing with the Soviet Union. As long as the Soviets are not forthcoming with realistic solution to the territorial question, Japanese-Soviet relations will have no way of fundamentally affecting US-Japanese relations. US-Japanese relations will face a serious crisis, only when frictions between the two countries coincide with the Soviets' proposal on the territorial question.

### (3) Arms Control in Asia

Arms control in Asia, which has hitherto been dismissed as an impossible dream, has also suddenly entered a new stage.<sup>78</sup> Two interrelated events seem to have initiated a momentum for arms control in Asia which will be impossible to ignore in the future. First, Gorbachev's UN speech in December 1988, which announced the unilateral arms reduction of 500,000 troops, includes a reduction of at least 200,000 in Asia. Second, Sino-Soviet rapprochement has led to the reduction of Soviet forces along the Chinese border. The momentum for arms control created by such moves cannot but affect the military balance in North-east Asia, where the Soviet Union directly confronts the US and Japan, since Gorbachev's arms cuts seem to include the naval force. When Gorbachev proposed an all Asian comprehensive security forum, Japan rejected it — and rightly so — because it did not fit complicated Asian reality. When the Soviets made a proposal to create a forum in which the Soviet Union, the US, and Japan should discuss the ways to reduce military tension in East Asia, Japan rejected this also, because it did not include China. This contradictory policy cannot be sustainable any longer. It is about time for Japan and the US to come up with a comprehensive arms control policy in this region in such a way to enhance stability in the region without impairing our security cooperation.<sup>79</sup> Otherwise, there is a danger that Gorbachev's arms control initiatives, not necessarily altruistic, might sweep away the security consensus that exists between Japan and the US.

### (4) Japanese Domestic Policy

The LDP rule under Takeshita and his brief successor Uno was badly shaken by the Recruit scandal, unpopularity of the consumer tax, and equally unpopular agricultural policy to such an extent that the LDP seems powerless to regroup itself to create a stable government. The LDP suffered a series of setbacks in elections, culminating the historic loss in the Upper House election at the end of July 1989. While Japanese political leadership is going through such turmoil, it is natural that the Soviets have concluded that it is not the prime time to make a decisive move to improve relations. It is argued that the effectiveness of Foreign Minister Uno's mission to Moscow was undercut by Takeshita's announcement to resign.<sup>80</sup>

It appears that the Soviets once pinned their hope on Nakasone. It must be recalled that the first possibility of Gorbachev's visit to Japan surfaced when Nakasone's power was at zenith after the big election win, and that this possibility faded away quickly when the prime minister decided to step down after the consumer tax fiasco.<sup>81</sup> When Japanese-Soviet relations seemed to be in hopeless stalemate in 1988, it was again to Nakasone, when he visited Moscow in July 1988, that the Soviets turned to find the initial momentum to escape from this impasse. The former prime minister did indeed play a significant role in preparing Japan to move constructively in dealing with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, when Nakasone visited Moscow as a member of the Trilateral Commission in January 1989, he received a cold shoulder, unable even to get to see Gorbachev tête à tête, as he was promised last July.<sup>82</sup> Characteristically in cold-blooded fashion, Moscow seems to have concluded that due to his dwind-

ling influence because of his alleged involvement in the Recruit scandal Nakasone's usefulness for the Soviets has been exhausted. Improvement of Soviet-Japanese relations may be thus be said to be one of the little known but significant casualties of the Recruit scandal.

If Nakasone has lost his influence, Takeshita has also become no longer useful to the Soviets. When the Soviet foreign minister visited Japan in December, the Soviets were encouraged by Takeshita's statement that both sides should make utmost effort to find a solution so that relations would improve. Takeshita's interview in *Izvestiia* was also encouraging, since the prime minister openly stated Japan's willingness to improve Japanese-Soviet relations in order to establish a stable international environment in Asia. In a few months, however, Takeshita became a lame duck, and Japan was thrust into an unprecedented power vacuum from which no solution is yet in sight. It would be unrealistic for Japan to expect the Soviet Union to come up with a realistic offer on the territorial issue until she can come up with a strong leadership who is able to negotiate them effectively.

#### (5) Soviet Domestic Problems

Primakov once allegedly stated: "The northern territorial issue should have been resolved three years ago." A new element has been interjected into the Soviet political process, in which the will of the people can no longer be ignored. The turmoil of nationality minorities have spread from Nagorno-Karabakh to the Baltic states and to Georgia. The first secretaries of the Communist Party in the Far East (Khabarovsk, Sakharin Oblasts and the Maritime Krai) were soundly defeated in the election of the people's deputies. Power struggle within the leadership has been intensified, and the military has been voicing their displeasure with the way the military influence has been undercut. In this situation, Gorbachev could not come up with a major concession to Japan on the territorial question by fiat, which he might have been able to pull off three years ago.

## VI Subjective Factors

It would be wrong to assume that Japanese-Soviet relations have not moved at all over the last few years. Despite the unresolved territorial question, they have moved quite far. On the Soviet side, I would argue that a significant change in their attitude toward the territorial question has occurred. Although officially the Soviet government has never acknowledged the existence of the territorial question, it no longer objects to discussing it either informally or at the official negotiating table — the fact itself represents a significant policy change. It has also allowed various people to express a variety of opinions, which are designed not only to probe Japanese response, but also to gauge domestic reactions. It is possible to speculate that a serious debate is going on at the top level as to how to solve the territorial question, since the top leadership has been made aware by now that without solving the territorial question, they cannot expect to improve Japanese-Soviet relations. Gorbachev himself has hinted at some form of solution of the territorial question. He indicated the Senkaku island formula when he met Uno in May, and during the news conference at Beijing, he stated that he was confident that some kind of solution would be possible so that Japan and the Soviet Union could improve relations.

Secondly, the Soviets no longer believe that they can detach Japan from security cooperation with the US. In fact, this is a virtual admission that Khrushchev's policy to put pressure on Japan to abrogate the security treaty with the US in 1960 was a dismal failure. An increasing number of Japan specialists such as Mikhail Nosov and Vladimir Petrov are arguing

that the Soviets should take Japan's security arrangement with the US as a given. This sentiment has been echoed in Shevardnadze's statement that Japanese-Soviet relations can be improved even with the existence of the US-Japanese security treaty.<sup>83</sup>

Another very interesting article, written by Georgii Kunadze and K. Sarkisov, appeared in MEMO in May.<sup>84</sup> Unlike the Prokhorov-Shevchuk article that appeared earlier this year, the Kunadze-Sarkisov article introduces the Japanese argument in more detail and more objectively. Moreover, it recognizes that the Japanese demand for the return of the northern islands cannot be solely attributed to the machinations of the right-wing politicians, but rather behind his demand there exists a solid support of Japanese public opinion. It then advances a remarkable argument that one of the reasons for the stalemate of the territorial question stems from the fact that both countries have come to reject the commitment once made in the joint communique in 1956. Kunadze and Sarkisov consider Takeshita's statement that both countries share a common interest to create stability in the Asia-Pacific region — a statement in his interview in *Izvestiia* — a foundation from which both countries must build bilateral relations, and propose the mechanism of improvement through the legal, political, and politico-psychological levels. The Kunadze-Sarkisov article is perhaps the most sophisticated article written by Soviet specialists on the territorial question.

It is a mistake to put the blame for the lack of improvement in Japanese-Soviet relations solely on Soviet intransigence. The Japanese side has been equally intransigent, also. In recent months, however, a significant change in attitude is discernible in the Japanese Foreign Ministry's policy. JFM's Councillor Kuriyama Shoichi, who heads the Japanese team for the working group on a peace treaty, has recognized that Gorbachev's new initiatives in foreign policy are not merely propaganda, but includes an important element that might contribute to stability in international order. He further states that while the return of the northern islands remains to be the precondition for fundamental improvement of bilateral relations, the Japanese government "will continue the dialogue and make effort to improve bilateral relations within the limit of not undermining our basic principles."<sup>85</sup> Togo Takehiro, JFM's European and American Division Chief, who holds another key position, together with Kuriyama, in negotiating with the Soviet Union, also outlined the Japanese initiatives to create the mechanism of dialogue in negotiations in the interview given in *Gaiko Forum*. These efforts behind the scene are based on the Gaimusho's new perception that Japan has to approach Gorbachev's new thinking seriously.<sup>86</sup> Togo makes an important statement in this interview that merits our attention. He states: "What is important is to view Japanese-Soviet relations in the context of a broader development in the Asia-Pacific region, and further in the global context.... The problem of the northern territories should be viewed, not only within a narrow bilateral framework, but also with a broader framework in which its solution will not only improve Japanese-Soviet relations, but also will change the political situation in the Far East, which will contribute to stability of the Western alliance as a whole."<sup>87</sup> These are not merely words, but they are reflected in JFM's negotiating tactic. Although Japan is clear in its insistence that no peace treaty will be concluded without the return of the four islands, it has allowed in a piecemeal fashion insignificant treaties to be concluded only to keep the momentum of improving relations. During the working group session in April, the Japanese side hinted that she would consider including in a peace treaty "aspects of friendship treaty [*yukojoyakuteki sokumen*]," after the resolution of the territorial issue.<sup>88</sup>

Until now the Soviets have had a long-term vision, as enunciated in the Vladivostok speech, in which the Soviet Union will become a bona fide member of the Asia-Pacific community, but they have not come up with the concrete way of finding an exit from the impasse

in Japanese-Soviet relations, the improvement of which is a precondition to achieve their long-term goal. On the contrary, Japan has been too preoccupied with the territorial question without raising a fundamental question about its long-term vision of Japanese-Soviet relations. The development I have described above indicates that both countries are moving slowly to correct this situation.

## VII Prospects of Japanese-Soviet Relations

The perception outlined by Togo and Kuriyama is important, precisely because it comes from the only body in Japan that matters in formulating Japanese policy toward the Soviet Union. I have the opinion that precisely this is the missing link that the Soviets have been looking for in search for the solution to the way out of the impasse. Now that Gorbachev has accomplished his goal of rapprochement with China, we can expect the Soviets to concentrate on the next target of their Asian policy: Japan. When the Japanese political situation stabilizes, it seems likely that the Soviets will come up with concrete proposals on the territorial question.

It is difficult, however, to speculate at this point what sort of proposals Gorbachev will be likely to make. Kimura Hiroshi thinks that there are four possibilities as to Soviet proposals on the territorial question: 1) return of the two islands (Shikotan and Habomais); 2) compromise solution closer to return of the two islands without returning any islands, such as retaining Soviet sovereignty, joint occupation, joint development, leasing, Senkaku-formula on two or four islands; 3) compromise solution closer to return of the four islands, demilitarization of four islands, first, then return of four islands, or return of two islands first, and then return of the other two islands within a certain time limit or leaving the decision up to the next generation, and 4) return of the four islands.<sup>89</sup> This seems a bit confusing formulation. I would reformulate in the following way: 1) no return of any islands, but some form of offer, including demilitarization, joint ownership, leasing, and the Senkaku formula; 2) return of the two islands; 3) two islands plus, including demilitarization, joint ownership, leasing, and the Senkaku formula for the rest of the two islands, and 4) return of the four islands. As Kimura argues, the first and the second opinions will not be accepted by Japan. The likely solution of the territorial question is thus either the two islands plus or the four islands.

Japan will not be satisfied with any other solution but last one. I would argue, however, the return of the four islands will be actually a nightmare for Japan and the US at the present moment. It will be a nightmare for Japan, because Japan has been accustomed for so many years to the fixed notion that the Soviets will never accept this condition that we do not know how to react to such a drastic concession. No comprehensive strategy as to how to deal with the Soviet Union after the return of the islands has not been worked out. As for the US the return of the islands will mean the removal of a secure guarantee by which Japan will not make an independent policy toward the Soviet Union. It is no wonder that at the time when the Lance missile issue was causing such a headache to the Bush administration in dealing with West Germany, the President and the Secretary of State spent so much time asking Takeshita during his visit to Washington about the Japanese assessment of Soviet foreign policy. To the extent that the northern territorial issue remains a condition that is not expected to be met by the Soviet side, the US government can afford to support the Japanese demand for the return of the islands. But the minute Gorbachev decides to return the four islands, US-Japanese relations will experience a jolt, impact of which will be difficult to gauge. One does not have to be reminded of the FSX issue to know that consistency is not necessarily a

strong characteristic of US foreign policy. How the US will react to drastic improvement of Japanese-Soviet relations will depend on two factors: 1) economic frictions and 2) overall development of US-Soviet relations.

Thus, if Gorbachev is smart, he will go all the way to offer the return of all the four islands. It is unlikely, at this point, that he will do so. But we must bear in mind that very few predicted that he would accept the zero-zero option in INF and that he would withdraw troops from Afghanistan. The most prudent advice that one can give both Japan and the US at this point is that they should better be prepared for this contingency.

If our interest is to maintain the basic framework of US-Japanese alliance and to improve Japanese-Soviet relations within this framework without traumatic division of Japanese and American public opinion, it might be better to conclude a peace treaty with the two islands plus formula.

No matter what solutions the Soviets are likely to offer, there are certain conditions that Japan must create in order to deal effectively with whatever proposals the Soviet side might make. Here are my proposals.

- 1) Japan should put the house in order to create a stable leadership which is strong and efficient enough to negotiate with the Soviets. To accomplish this, *perestroika* and the new thinking are necessary both for LDP and JSP.
- 2) Japan should start thinking about what kind of international order it wants to create in Asia, and what role it should expect the Soviet Union to play in it. If Japan continues to take the position that a stable international order can be best assured by excluding the Soviet Union from the Asian political process, then there is no need to improve Japanese-Soviet relations. In this case, we have no need to think beyond the territorial question, which, will serve as an effective means to block further improvement of bilateral relation. If, on the other hand, Japan thinks, as I do, that it is necessary to include the Soviet Union to create a stable international environment, it is imperative to find a way to solve the territorial question. Our entire policy toward the Soviet Union should not become the prisoner of the territorial question. The public debate should focus on this issue, not on the minute tactics of territorial question.
- 3) Japan and the US should jointly work out an arms control policy and integrate it into our security cooperation framework. Japan and the US can ill afford to leave the field of arms control initiatives only to the Soviet Union. A dialogue between military experts in Japan and the Soviet Union should be initiated, the proposal that was made by the Soviet Union in May, but that did not receive endorsement from the Japanese Foreign Ministry.
- 4) It will be increasingly more important for both Japan and US to find a mechanism through which to adjust the widening gap in perceptions on the Soviet Union as well as policies toward the Soviet Union.<sup>90</sup>
- 5) Joint projects to study Japanese-Soviet relations should be organized, including the historical roots of the territorial question, legal implications of the territorial question, Stalinism and Japanese-Soviet relations, the Japanese military threat from the Siberian Expedition to Kanto-kuen, the Neutrality Pact, Stalin's foreign policy leading to the occupation of the northern territories, the Soviet treatment of Japanese prisoners-of-war, history of post-war Japanese-Soviet negotiations. Both governments should make historical archives available to professional historians for these projects.

## NOTES

\* This article was written in August 1989.

- 1 For a detailed discussion on Soviet-Japanese relations under Gorbachev until the end of 1987, see my article, "Japanese Perceptions and Policies toward the Soviet Union: Changes and Prospects under the Gorbachev Era," in Pushpa Thambipillai and Daniel Matuszewski, ed., *The Soviet Union and the Asia-Pacific Region: Views from the Region* (New York : Praeger, 1989), pp. 23–37.
- 2 Kimura Hiroshi, "Hopporyodo to Gorubachofu : Nisso kan no ryodomondai ni ima jyuyo na tenki ga kitsutsu aru," *Voice*, October, 1988, p. 112.
- 3 For reasons for the cancelation of Gorbachev's trip to Japan, see my article cited in footnote 1.
- 4 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 2, 1987.
- 5 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, May 10, 1988 ; May 14, 1988.
- 6 *Asahi Shimbun*, April 17, 1987.
- 7 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 20, 1987.
- 8 *Asahi Shimbun*, June 19, 1987.
- 9 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 17, 1987.
- 10 *Asahi Shimbun*, Aughst 21, 1987 ; *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 21, 1987.
- 11 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 21, 1987.
- 12 For the importance of the Vladivostok speech and different interpretations by Japanese of this speech, see my article cited in footnote 1.
- 13 For instance, see Nakajima Mineo, "Gorubachofu ga nageru tainichi seisaku no bukimina henkakyu," *Gendai*, 20, No. 2 (December, 1986) ; Wada Haruki, "Hopporyodo mondai ni tsuiteno kosatsu," *Sekai*, December, 1986.
- 14 A fascinating debate between Nakajima Mineo and Ito Kenichi was printed in *Shokun*, February, 1987, pp. 27–53. Although Ito's view was in general agreement with the position taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I heard the rumor, though unconfirmed, that the MFA was not happy with this publication.
- 15 See Kumagaya Hitori, *Mosukuwa yo saraba* (Tokyo : Bungei Shunjyu sha, 1988). Kumagaya was the person involved in the deal who tipped the information to the police.
- 16 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 21, 1987.
- 17 *Asahi Shimbun*, November 15, evening, 1987; *Asahi Shimbun*, November 5, evening, 1987.
- 18 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 21, 1987.
- 19 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, September 21, 1987.
- 20 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, June 6 (evening), 1987.
- 21 *Asahi Shimbun*, December 16, 1987.
- 22 One of the most notable cases is the opinion favoring the return of the two islands, Habo-mai and Shikotan, an opinion attributed to Evgenii Primakov, who however denied having offered such an opinion.
- 23 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 13, 1987.
- 24 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, February 28, 1988.
- 25 *Asahi Shimbun*, April 30, 1988.
- 26 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, May 7, 1988.
- 27 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, June 29, 1988 ; July 19, 1988 ; *Asahi Shimbun*, June 29, 1988.

- 28 "Vladivostovskie initsiativy: dva goda spustia — Gostinyi dvor MZh," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, No. 7, 1988, p. 145.
- 29 Ibid., p. 150.
- 30 G. Kunadze, "Nisso kankei no genjo to tenbo," *NIRA-IMEMO Tokyo kaigi:shiryō* (NIRA :Tokyo, August 1988), p. 45.
- 31 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 4, 1988.
- 32 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 9, 1988.
- 33 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, October 18, 1988.
- 34 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, October 20, 1988.
- 35 This meeting was supposed to be a foreign ministerial conference. Foreign Minister Uno, however, cancelled a trip to New York due to the Emperor's illness. In my view, this cancelation was a mistake. Had Uno met Shevardnadze, it would not have been a five-minute meeting, and more substantial discussions would have been held.
- 36 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, September 28, 1988.
- 37 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, September 29, 1988.
- 38 Hiroshi Kimura reports that in his recent trip to the Soviet Union in September, 1988, none of the scholars he met used the official expression that the territorial question had been solved, and therefore did not exist. They all agreed, Kimura reports, that since Japan was raising objections, the problem obviously existed. Hiroshi Kimura, "Changing Soviet View," *Japan Times*, October 17, 1988.
- 39 See my paper, "Soviet Policy toward Arms Control in Asia and US-Japanese Security Alliance," presented at the APA/UNA Conference on the Soviet Union and US-Japanese Relations, November 1988, Honolulu.
- 40 V. Roshin, "Nihon no gunjika : keizaigakusha no shiten kara," *NIRA-IMEMO Tokyo kaigi*, pp. 46–61. For arguments that depict Japan as controlled by military-industrial complex, see A. P. Markov, *Iaponiia : Kurs na vooruzhenie* (Moscow : Mezhdunar. otnosheniia, 1970) ; A. P. Markov, *Poslevoennaia politika Iaponii v Azii i Kitai, 1945–1977* (Moscow : Nauka, 1979) ; S. T. Mazhorov, *Voenno-ekonomicheskii potentsial sovremennoi Iaponii* (Moscow : Nauka, 1979).
- 41 "Vladivostovskie initsiativy," pp. 145, 147.
- 42 *The Japan Times*, October 21, 1988.
- 43 See for instance the views expressed by M. G. Nosov and V. P. Lukin in "Vladivostovskie initsiativy," pp. 142–43.
- 44 See my paper, "Soviet Policy towards Arms Control in Asia" ; also Petrov's statement in "Vladivostovskie initsiativy," p. 145.
- 45 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, July 5, 1988.
- 46 See candid discussions in "Vladivostovskie initsiativy" and papers presented by I. Korolev, V. Ivanov, P. Minakir, and V. Zaitsev in *Nira-IMEMO Tokyo kaigi* ; Vladimir Ovsiannikov, "The Facade or the Backyard," *New Times*, No. 32, August, 1988, pp. 9–10.
- 47 See, for instance, V. Ivanov and P. Minakir, "Soren Taiheiyo chiiki hatten ni okeru taigai keizai no yakuwari ni tsuite," *NIRA-IMEMO Tokyo Kaigi*, pp. 8–24 ; "Rifmy na puti: vypolneniia dolgovremennoi programmy 'Dal'nii Vostok' — besada s pervym sekretarem Khabarovskogo kraikoma KPSS A. Chrenym," *Izvestiia*, August 24, 1988 ; L. Piatiletova, "Tsifry radi... : Dal'nii vostok : problemy razvitiia regiona," *Pravda*, September 4, 1988 ; "Khromaia lotsiia," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, August 10, 1988.
- 48 SUPAR Report (Center for Soviet Union in the Pacific-Asian Region, University of

- Hawaii), No. 5, July 1988, p. 2 ; Interview with Primakov in *New Times*, No. 19, May, 1988. As for the Vladivostok conference itself, see an extremely interesting report by Arai Nobuo, *Urajivostoku kokusai kaigini sanku shite*, unpublished memo, October, 1988.
- 49 Charles Morrison, "Osaka PECC Conference," SUPAR Report, No. 5 (July 1988), p. 2.
- 50 An influential scholar who has been long involved in Japanese-Soviet trade at the Institute of the USA and Canada told me in July that Japan was absolutely essential for the Far Eastern development.
- 51 Based on my interview with Arai Nobuo, who participated in the conference.
- 52 I owe this part of my paper to Gilbert Rozman's forthcoming article for *Pacific Review*, which he was kind enough to let me read before publication. Rozman divides the group into five, but I collapsed them into three.
- 53 See *Izvestiia*, July 29, 1986 ; *Izvestiia*, September 18, 1988.
- 54 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, October 19, 1988.
- 55 See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Japanese Perceptions of the Soviet Union : 1960-1985," *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, 5 (1987), pp. 37-70.
- 56 Local governments' independent policy toward the Soviet Union is a neglected subject, but worth examining in detail. See Arai Nobuo, *Nihonkai Shinpoiyumu bochoki*, Mimeo ; Ogawa Kazuo, *Soren Kyokuto to Hokkaido* (Sapporo : Hokkaido Chiiki Sogo Kenkyujo, 1988).
- 57 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, April 18, 1988 ; *Asahi Shimbun*, April 18, 1988.
- 58 *Asahi Shimbun*, April 23, 1988.
- 59 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, June 29, July 19, 1988 ; *Asahi Shimbun*, June 29, 1988.
- 60 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, May 8, 1988.
- 61 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 26, 1988.
- 62 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, August 2, 1988. The British government, however, clarified its position that it never said that the Japanese demand was justified and the Soviet refusal was unjustified. *Asahi Shimbun*, August 5, 1988.
- 63 See Kimura, "Hoppo ryodo to Gorubachofu," pp. 113-117.
- 64 The most interesting source on Nakasone's trip to Moscow is *Yomiuri's* interview with Nakasone himself, which was serialized in five installments in *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 3 through August 9, 1988. The following account is primarily based on this interview.
- 65 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, September 25, 1988.
- 66 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, April 18, 1989.
- 67 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, December 21, 1988 ; *Asahi Shimbun*, December 21, 1988.
- 68 *Hokkaido Shimbun*, December 20, 1988.
- 69 *Izvestiia*, January 2, 1989.
- 70 *Izvestiia*, March 1, 1989.
- 71 "Vzgliad iz Tokio," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 26-35. More accurately, Piadyshev's interview with Uno consisted of only three and half pages, and the rest of interview is Uno's written answers to *MZh's* questions.
- 72 Evgenii Prokhorov and Leonid Shevchuk, "O territorial'nykh pretenziakh Iaponii k SSSR," *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 47-52. Vsevolod Ovchinnikov, "Bessmyslennaia zateiia," *Pravda*, February 7, 1989 ; I. Latyshev, "Ulovki i tseli ili zachem i kak iskazhaetsia," *Pravda*, March 16, 1989.
- 73 I. Rogachev, "Pretenzii, lishennye osnovanii," *Izvestiia*, April 24, 1989.
- 74 See Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Japanese Perceptions of the Soviet Union : 1960-1985," *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, 5 (1987), pp. 37-70.

- 75 See an interesting article, Kimura Hiroshi, "Kosureba hopporyodo wa kaeru," *Voice*, May 1989, pp. 116–17. Kimura thinks that the main reason was that Gorbachev had not made up his mind on the territorial question.
- 76 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 26, 1989.
- 77 *The Japan Times*, March 6, 1989; *American Insight*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 3, 45.
- 78 For the arms control policy in Asia, see my unpublished paper, "Soviet Policy toward Arms Control in Asia and US-Japanese Alliance," A Paper Presented to the APA/UNA Conference on the Soviet Union and US-Japanese Relations, November, 1988, Honolulu.
- 79 It is significant to note that the need to address ourselves to arms control issues in Asia has been voiced recently by military men in the US. See Edwin C. Meyer and Paul H. Kriegsberg, "A Fresh Look at America's Asian Presence," *Herald Tribune*, May 20–21, 1989.
- 80 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 8, 1989.
- 81 See my article, "Japanese Perceptions and Policies toward the Soviet Union." (See fn 1.)
- 82 As for Nakasone's trip to Moscow in January, 1989, see "Gorubachofu senryaku to ugokidashita sekai seiji: Nakasone-Gorubachofu kaiken noto," mimeographed lecture.
- 83 Aleksei Bogaturov and Mikhail Nosov, "Treugol'nik bez uglov," *Novoe vremya*, No. 18, 1989, pp. 8–9; Shavardnadze's statement, see *Asahi Shimbun*, May 4, 1989.
- 84 G. Kunadze and K. Sarkisov, "Razmyshliaia o sovetsko-iaponskikh otnosheniakh," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunaraodnye otnosheniia*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 83–93.
- 85 Kuriyama Shoichi, "Wagakuni no taisogaiko ni taisuru kihonteki tachiba," *Gaiko Foramu*, No. 7 (April, 1989), pp. 12–21.
- 86 "Atarashii peiji o hirakihajimeta nisso kankei," *Gaiko Foramu*, No. 6 (March 1989), pp. 23–36.
- 87 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 88 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 1, 1989.
- 89 "Entakukaigi : Saikin no nisso kankei," Slavic Research Center, *Gorubachofu kaikakuno hamon*, II (Sapporo : Slavic Research Center, 1989), p. 68.
- 90 In this respect, the process of consultation between privately organized groups such as the United Nations Association and the Asia Pacific Association, and the Pacific Forum are serving an important function. See *Gorbachev's Asian Policy : Refashioning American and Japanese Policy toward the Soviet Union*, A Joint Report by the United Nations Association of the USA and the Asia Pacific Association of Japan, March 1989.