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## The Rearment of the Japanese Maritime Forces

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*Postwar Japan has become somewhat of an anomaly in modern political development. She is a nation which, although ranked third in the world in GNP, has still not achieved full statehood in the eyes of many of her citizens. The "missing link" that precludes maturity is the lack of military might commensurate with Japan's economic position.*

## **THE REARMAMENT OF THE JAPANESE MARITIME FORCES**

An International Series Lecture\*

delivered at the Naval War College

by

Admiral Kazutomi Uchida, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (Ret.)

There is no greater honor and pleasure for me, in returning to my alma mater, than being given an opportunity to speak to the future leaders of the U.S. and free world armed forces.

Ten years ago I was sitting where you are now, a student who listened to many never-to-be-forgotten lectures. I was able to observe an excellent example of political victory through seapower in President Kennedy's action at the time of the Cuban crisis, and I heard a prediction that Vietnam would be a stage for world dispute—a prophecy soon fulfilled.

For myself the decade has passed quickly; the lessons learned are as valuable today as they were then. Indeed, the truths pioneered by men like Alfred Thayer Mahan are destined to endure for years.

The Japanese representatives of this class, Commander Itonaga in the Naval Command College and Lieutenant Commander Kokubu in the Naval Staff

Course, will soon realize the similarity of themes at the Naval War College with those at the Staff College in Japan. This can be traced directly to the common lessons learned by the United States and Japanese Navies during the Second World War. As was stated in the lecture of Adm. Arleigh Burke at the first Seapower Symposium, our fleets had been good friends of long standing. I know such friendship will be fostered and maintained through the international students now in the Naval Command and Naval Staff Courses. I encourage each of you to develop relationships with an understanding of the goals from which common strategy and tactics can be developed. This is one of the greatest benefits to be gained from your attendance at the Naval War College.

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\*Sponsored by the Naval War College Foundation; the International Lecture Series program seeks to further understanding and cooperation between the free world navies.

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Permit me to more closely define the word "common" as I used it in conjunction with "strategy and tactics." In the years prior to the outbreak of World War II, it was, in fact, the U.S. Navy and the Japanese Imperial Navy who were the most outspoken in their efforts to prevent war in the Pacific. The then Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Pratt, took a very careful stand not to fall out with a Japan which was at pains dealing with the China incident. His successor, Admiral Stark, also urged President Roosevelt to be prudent in decisions regarding Japan. The policy-makers of both nations, however, either maintained an ambivalent attitude toward the matter or lacked the patience to avoid conflict. I am convinced that this common wish to avoid the war is a valuable inheritance which makes both navies' friendship permanent.

I was fortunate in my preparation for this visit in that I received a good deal of support from many U.S. naval officers in Japan. Included in this group are Rear Adm. W. Haley Rogers, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan; Capt. Wilton L. Atkinson, the Defense Attaché of the U.S. Embassy; Lt. Comdr. James E. Auer, the Political Advisor of COMNAVFORJAPAN; and many others. Each of them strongly urged me to present to you the true facts of Japan. These officers may know more about Japan than I do, and I am certain that they are as interested in the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force and its rearmament as I am.

In 1969, when Japan was en route to becoming the country which ranked third in the world in GNP, the Cultural Congress of Japan, one of Japan's leading literary organizations, held a symposium asking, "Is Japan a State or not?" The consensus was negative. For example, Dr. Jun Tsunoda of the National Diet Library likened Japan to a "Wonderland," in which the Japanese

and interest. Let me explore some of the reasons for this statement.

A review of pertinent documents shows clearly that in the occupation of Japan the Allied Powers opted for a demilitarized Japan. The preamble of Japan's Constitution states, "We, the Japanese people have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace loving peoples of the world." What this statement means is that Japan's security is entrusted to the United Nations, particularly to the Security Council where each of the five permanent members carries a frequently exercised veto. Under such conditions I do not think that the independence of a nation can be safely guaranteed.

While it may be true that there is little possibility of those provisions being applied and little consequent need for fear of the veto, those provisions have long wounded the Japanese people's pride as well as their international political sense. Moreover, contrary to Japanese tradition, the Constitution gives priority to securing individual rights over ensuring national rights. A nation built on these principles is, as Dr. Tsunoda defines, "less a state than anarchy in the basic Hobbesian sense." He says, moreover, that the people in such a nation cannot help but become economic animals.

It might be argued that a Constitution not fitted to the nature of a modern nation may be amended, but unless a two-thirds majority of the Diet members as well as half of the people of Japan say "yes," the amendment of the Constitution cannot be realized. I hope you can appreciate how distressing this is to the Japanese people. Despite these handicaps, the near future will witness a determined effort on the part of sensible Japanese people to overcome the unreality of our international position and escape Dr. Tsunoda's "Wonderland."

I would next like to comment on the

well-known article IX of our Constitution. It reads:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

The spirit and ideal reflected in article IX are no doubt worthy, but I do not quite agree with the inclusion of such vague provisions in the national Constitution. What is, in fact, "war potential" or "the right of belligerency"? Lack of definition has led to controversy nationwide. Constitutionally, Japan finds itself as being the only nation who has been denied the right to possess "war potential."

Nevertheless, these pacts, charters, and Japan's Constitution do not deny the right of self-defense nor the military potential necessary to achieve this purpose. Therefore, when we speak of Japanese rearmament, we refer to the capability for self-defense; that is, the substance and future development of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

The Government of Japan has emphasized the deployment of "defensive" weapon systems in terms of their mission. However, whether a weapon is offensive or defensive is not an inherent characteristic of each weapon. Such nature depends on the mission of the Self-Defense Forces—active or passive—and it must also be judged in relation to the other party's actions in a given conflict situation.

The Japanese people's interpretation of joint operations under the United States-Japan Security Treaty is that the

while the Japanese Self-Defense Forces function as a shield. It is an interpretation derived from the fact that our Self-Defense Forces function to protect human life and property only in territories under the sovereignty of Japan, not by dispatching military personnel overseas. And yet there is a possibility that the protection of sealanes is included in the mission.

In contrast to this rather constricted mission, the Soviet Navy's rapid growth and active deployment pose an unusual threat to free nations. This situation can be summarized as follows:

- As a continental power bloc, the Soviet Union and its satellite states need not put absolute reliance upon use of the sea. However, in seeking to establish the influence of Communist revolutionary systems in developing and politically unstable countries, they have realized the significance of naval power. In essence this raises Soviet prestige as a major power, displays a potential for overseas activity, and provides support for a global policy of power politics.

- The Soviet Navy's major weapon systems are missile launching submarines, missile ships, and newly developed helicopter carriers. The Soviets have also rapidly improved their fleet command and control capability. There no longer exists an area of ocean where the Soviet threat can be disregarded.

- This already imposing combat strength is augmented not only by intelligence gathering systems, research ships, and logistic support ships but by a highly cooperative state owned merchant fleet.

Bearing this strength in mind, let us shift our thoughts to current political developments. The fact that major powers conclude successful peace talks which hopefully will lead to promoting friendly relations is not in itself sufficient reason for believing that there has been a dramatic change in an existing threat. The Japanese, like most people, are susceptible to the effects of

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psychological warfare. But the Japanese have learned from long experience in the international field to not necessarily accept everything at face value.

In response to these constant pressures from abroad, Japan will continue to reinforce her defense capability. If I may, I intend to report my own opinion on the important factors. In formulating my opinions on these factors, considerable help was derived from Lieutenant Commander Auer's recent paper titled "Resolving the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Dilemma: Toward a Pacific Maritime Union."

### Nuclear Armament

Nuclear weapons, provided their use is defensive, are not prohibited by our Constitution, but, despite this, the Japanese Government maintains a negative attitude toward nuclear armament. This can best be described by its "Three Nonnuclear Principles": Japan will not possess nuclear weapons, will not make them, nor bring them into the country.

I do not know how much consideration was given to the military realities in the Government's adherence to those three principles, but I can definitely say that the Japanese people show little interest in the acquisition of nuclear armaments. Nor do I believe that the Japanese people will soon change their position, and I for one do not look forward to such a change. There are a number of reasons for opting against the acquisition of nuclear weapons.

- By regarding the nuclear weapon as a political instrument for deterrence, Japanese nuclear power would be redundant at best. As a latecomer, there would be little chance for Japan to contribute to global deterrence as the Nuclear Club already has sufficient weapons to act as a deterrent in any situation imaginable.

- In my opinion it is a false assumption for potential nuclear nations to expect the benefits of deterrence by

obtaining only the limited ability to trigger general nuclear war. Such nations, bent on the blackmail of their nuclear partners, will be abandoned by other members of the Nuclear Club. I am confident that no nation exists that is willing to engage in a general war to support such a dangerous misconception. For Japan as well, if she believes that the Nixon Doctrine will provide a nuclear umbrella only when she herself possesses nuclear weapons, she falls victim to a foolhardy illusion. Where one free nation extends help to another is not due to any threat of nuclear involvement but because that nation is too important for the free world to lose.

- Southeast Asian nations do not want a nuclear armed Japan. For confirmation one needs only to read the press conference opinions of Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew when he visited Japan last May. Any decision that resurrects the fear of a militarist Japan will only isolate Japan, making it difficult for her to secure the important sea transportation routes necessary for the importation of raw materials and oil.

- From the technical point of view, in Japan the proper scientists are scarce; there is no nuclear testing ground; and the basic fissionable elements needed to develop such weapons are insufficient.

- Finally, I feel sure that the technical and material support necessary to develop nuclear weapons will not be offered by the United States. One wonders what the United States-Japan relationship might be in the case that Japan opts to develop nuclear weapons without the cooperation of the United States. To me it is an unthinkable situation.

We must, of course, evaluate the idea expressed in certain circles that as the nuclear power of the Soviet Union and China expands, the relative nuclear capability of the United States decreases to a point where it is insufficient for local nuclear deterrence. Consequently,

the day may come when the United States, in order to compensate for this insufficiency, will assist other countries in the development of nuclear weapons.

To those nations not having nuclear weapons, such an idea sounds highly illogical. As the Communist countries increase the number of nuclear weapons in their arsenal, they invite a reciprocal buildup for use against them. This represents no increase in their security and, in fact, subjects them to increased danger. Another question to be considered is whether a nuclear power would use its nuclear weapons for the regional security of a friend, even if such use jeopardized its own security.

It cannot be denied that the tactical value of nuclear arms, particularly of small nuclear arms, is attractive to operational planners. In fact, the European theater cannot be protected by conventional weapons only. However, we must place some hope in human rationality, buoyed somewhat by the fact that nuclear arms have not been used since World War II, even though they have been developed in small sizes, and certain possibilities for their use have been reported as "discussed" during past incidents. The more experience we gain in using the latent power of nuclear arms for deterrence, the stronger people become in the hope of not again having to resort to the actual use of nuclear weapons.

### Military Cooperation

Japan has legally interpreted article IX of her Constitution to prohibit the dispatch of military personnel overseas. She has also declined to enter into any mutual defense treaty except with the United States. Therefore, it is apparent that under present circumstances Japan is restricted from active participation in the "Total Force Concept" as proposed by Mr. Melvin R. Laird, the former Secretary of Defense.

to limit her cooperation with the United States or with the Western Pacific nations. Indeed, she should begin to enter into talks for that purpose in order to protect both her territory and her marine transportation routes from attack. The security and welfare of Japan and the Western Pacific would best be assured by the sharing of security responsibilities with the Western Pacific nations. Lieutenant Commander Auer has suggested a Pacific Maritime Union as a future development of the present United States-Japan Security Treaty. My idea is similar to his, but on a somewhat less grand scale. What I suggest is that a naval control of shipping system be established in the Southwestern Pacific theater. The question remains, however, as to what extent Japan can contribute to the organization of such a system. Certain circles in Japan, with which I agree, support the following role for Japan:

- We must provide the bases, facilities, and logistic support necessary for the 7th Fleet and guarantee the stationing of the flagship as well as other ships and aircraft of the fleet in the Western Pacific.
- A united effort is needed under the leadership of the United States in developing vessels such as destroyers, patrol and rescue ships and aircraft as well as the support of the Southwest Pacific nations with technology and funds.
- An agreement on communications, procedures, navigation routes, ports, training and exercises, et cetera, for the naval control of shipping system must also be concluded.

The important point is that the above plans should be realized under the initiative of the United States as opposed to that of Japan. Otherwise, efforts would be doomed because of the suspicions the Far Eastern neighbors have of Japan.

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### The Japan-United States Security Treaty

It cannot be denied that the presence of U.S. military bases in Japan has met with considerable opposition. However, just as Japanese journalists changed their attitude on the presence of U.S. forces when China's Prime Minister Chou En-lai pointed out their stabilizing effect on the military balance of the Far East, so may the Japanese people re-appraise their view of the treaty. We must not make the mistake of formulating long-range policies on the basis of a temporary phenomenon. In other words, I am saying that I expect that the Japanese people will become wiser. For lasting mutual assurance, I look for the adoption of the following measures:

- We should discuss both joint and individual actions for mutual support in case of hostilities and examine the necessary preparations required for both during peacetime. These questions should be discussed at political and military levels.

- We should make small-scale adjustments in the interpretation of the treaty in order to maintain friendly relations, but drastic changes such as could significantly alter the Far Eastern balance should be avoided. More precisely, no action such as the withdrawal of the 7th Fleet from its Japanese bases should be taken. There can be little doubt that the military vacuum occasioned by withdrawal of the 7th Fleet would be filled by the Soviet Navy. Were this to happen, the return of American presence would meet with so many difficulties as to be impossible. Japan would no doubt be held accountable for this serious blunder by the other free world nations of the Far East.

- We should elevate the value of the treaty by solidifying the economic and cultural cooperation which is manifested therein.

It would be wise, I feel, to push these plans forward by established navy-to-

navy channels. There can be hardly a more foolish development than for military men—brothers in arms, if you will—to become estranged from one another due to disagreements in the peacetime concerns in economic and trade relations. Antagonists in the world of business should still maintain a congenial relationship in terms of mutual defense.

In order to strengthen navy-to-navy ties, it is good to conduct personnel exchanges. It helps us understand each other better and fosters a new perspective from which to view each other's position. These exchanges should cover all possible military areas—policy, educational training, logistics, research and development, and the like.

### Plans to Strengthen the Maritime Self-Defense Force's Capability

In the year 1980, the JMSDF's effective strength will be 214,000 tons of ships and 200 aircraft. The estimated cost will represent somewhat less than 1 percent of our GNP. This may be a considerably smaller force both in quality and quantity than that which the U.S. Navy would wish for Japan, but it must be remembered that the Japanese military must be particularly sensitive to the suspicions of the Far Eastern nations.

The Japanese people's perception of the Communist threat and their own security needs seems to differ markedly from that of the West. The reason why the Japanese people do not feel threatened is because there appears to be a vague sense of optimism in the belief that there is no nation on the world scene that would use armed force against Japan. In doing so, such a nation would ignore the United Nations Charter and the Japan-United States Security Treaty. In accepting this assumption, does Japan fulfill her responsibilities to the United Nations and

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the Security Treaty? In my opinion, the Japanese people are both overly optimistic and taking the easy road to meet their national security needs.

Concerning the basic concept of consolidation in defense capability, Japan's national opinion is diverse. What should be important is a viable plan that will ensure sufficient military power for conceivable national emergencies. The allocation of scarce national resources to such a goal is a very difficult task. The difficulty in meeting one's international responsibility brings to mind the dilemma of the United States in 1941. Unable to conduct both Pacific and Atlantic Ocean operations, she was forced to adopt the Rainbow-5 and ABC-1 Plans which gave the Atlantic theater priority over that in the Pacific.

The deterrent value of a "peacetime fleet" cannot be denied, but such a force may not be effectual in meeting a given threat. As such, a buildup plan must be developed, and all the major elements must be carefully integrated into the plan to ensure mutual support and proper phasing.

For instance, an intelligence organization will have to be as well maintained and as effective in peacetime as in wartime. The same applies to research and development. Operational units must also have sufficient capability to be effective against an "enemy," and units should be exercised to ensure a high state of operational readiness. That is to say, in requirements for both a "peacetime fleet" and "prompt ready fleet," defense capability must be strengthened. To achieve this objective, Japan's defense power should be founded on the compatible weapon systems and logistics of your Navy.

What should the Japanese Navy's mission be with respect to those of the U.S. Navy?

As I mentioned before, assuming the U.S. Navy is essentially a lance and the JMSDF a shield, the Japanese MSDF

should work toward the following objectives:

- While building up an antisubmarine and minesweeping force which includes guard units for the three straits around Japan, Japan is to link up with the U.S. Navy to help the 7th Fleet freely deploy to the Far East.

- The JMSDF is to take a partial responsibility, within the defined sphere, to protect the sea transportation routes.

- Develop and maintain weapon systems able to repel any forces attacking the mainland of Japan.

To satisfy the above requirements, I predict that the JMSDF will intensify its efforts to organize effective hunter-killer antisubmarine forces, essentially with DDH's as task units. Regarding weapon systems, the JMSDF has a requirement for shore-based antisubmarine aircraft and should strengthen anti-air and antisurface missile systems. Research toward the development of hydrofoils, air cushion vehicles, laser, and other systems is of high priority, and I believe that innovative methods must be developed for the detection and sweeping of mines.

In the procurement of these weapon systems, relative values must, of course, be considered. That is, we must choose

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### BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Adm. Kazutomi Uchida, now retired, is the former Chief of Staff, Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force. He is a 1962 graduate of the Naval Command College, Newport, and has been referred to by

his contemporaries as one of Japan's most distinguished admirals. During World War II, Admiral Uchida served aboard the battleships *Haruma* and *Yamato*. He is a graduate of the Japanese Naval Academy and during his naval career served aboard cruisers, destroyers, submarines, and battleships.



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not only those of high quality but those which are comparatively inexpensive and can be produced very quickly for prompt emergency installation.

This completes my description of the general principles which must be considered in the development of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force. In

way of closing, I would like to say that I believe it very important for the proper growth of Japan that she maintain a spirit of compatibility and mutual understanding with the United States, never again allowing differences to rupture the strong ties that bind our countries together.



A weapon is defensive or offensive depending on which end of it is pointing at you.

*Attributed to Aristide Briand, c. 1930*