

Chairman's Summary

The Termination of Wars in Historical Perspective

Junichiro Shoji

The subject of this year's Forum is "The Termination of Wars in Historical Perspective."

Interest in the Second World War has risen recently, in no small part because this year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of that war. A remake of the movie "Japan's Longest Day" (*Nihon no ichiban nagai hi*) was released in the summer of 2015, and has been very popular. Incidentally, the underlying theme of that movie was "the military was destroyed in order to enable the survival of the state."

Traditionally, interest in wars has been on how they began, and how they were fought. In the case of research in Japan on the Pacific War, the majority has analyzed the process leading to the war, while research on decision-making in Japan during the war and during the process of ending the war is still sparse.¹

However, analyzing how wars were terminated is clearly equally as important. A number of younger historians have produced significant research concerning the Japanese process of ending the Pacific War, and have made important contributions to our understanding of that process.²

Furthermore, the termination of wars is often more difficult and complicated than their commencement. Regarding this point, Rear Admiral Sokichi Takagi, who was involved in the Japanese efforts to end the Pacific War, referred to the German historian Meinecke's comment that "Reason also follows a narrow path," and reminisced that the efforts to end the war by the peace faction in Japan did not follow a straight path as they had intended.³

In addition, from a national security perspective, (1) the avoidance of war, (2) the limiting of any war that occurs, and (3) the ultimate termination of war, have all become important issues. In particular, the importance of "exit strategies," as can be seen even today in Afghanistan and the Middle East, has attracted much attention. The examination of the termination of wars from a historical perspective therefore should provide many valuable insights and lessons with contemporary implications.

The termination of a number of significant wars which have been fought from the 19th century onwards shall therefore be examined and compared during this Forum. As far as comparative histories are concerned, *Strategic Surrender: The Politics of Victory and Defeat*

¹ Hiromi Tanaka, "Kaisetsu Sengo Saisho no Senshi ni tsuite" (Guide to the First Postwar Military History), Hiromi Tanaka, ed., *Taiheiyo Senso Kaisen Zenshi* (A Prehistory of the Opening of the Pacific War), Ryokuin Shobo, 2001, pp. 646-9.

² For example, see Tamon Suzuki, "*Shusen*" no *Seiji-shi 1943-1945* (A Political History of the "End of the War" 1943-1945), Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011, and Tomoyuki Yamamoto, *Nihon Rikugun Senso Shuketsu Katei no Kenkyu* (A Study of the Process of War Termination of the Japanese Army), Fuyo Shobo, 2010.

³ Shinichi Shibata, "Kofuku no Ketsudan" (The Decision to Surrender), Makoto Iokibe and Shinichi Kitaoka, eds., *Kaisen to Shusen: Taiheiyo Senso no Kokusai Kankei* (The Opening and Ending of the War: International Relations of the Pacific War), Seion-sha, 1998, p. 135.

(Stanford University Press, 1958), which was written in 1958 by Paul Kecskemeti of the Rand Corporation, is considered to be a classic. This work compared Japan, Germany, and Italy during World War Two, and theoretically analyzed forms of war termination. More recently, Gideon Rose analyzed the process of war termination in the seven wars America has fought from World War One through the Afghanistan War in *How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle* (Simon and Schuster, 2010).

In addition to the keynote speech, the first session shall look at the world wars. The second session shall examine various regional wars, and a number of theoretical issues shall be analyzed in the third session. The purpose in each session is to examine, from a historical perspective, the various political, diplomatic, and military aspects of the factors and reasoning behind the decisions which led to the termination of the wars, thereby increasing our understanding of the termination of wars, and further the nature itself of wars.

In his keynote address “How do Wars End? The Problem of Victory and Defeat,” Professor Hew Strachan noted that perceptions of what constitutes “war” and “peace” have become blurred, resulting in less clarity in debates on war and peace. The blurring of the difference between war and peace, or victory and defeat, has made it harder to understand how to end a war. Wars are a reciprocal relationship, involving the clash of two or more sides. Its conclusion therefore must also be reciprocal, and dependent upon some form of negotiation and acceptance by the parties involved.

From the age of the Greeks and Romans into the 18th century, the objective of war was to dominate or possess, rather than to negotiate. When one side dominated the other, therefore, the conflict terminated. However, from the 18th century into the 20th century, war lost its capacity to deliver such a clear outcome. Because of Napoleon’s legacy, it was believed for a long time that winning the “decisive battle” would enable one to win the war itself. However, subsequent wars, culminating in World War One, proved that decisive battles could not by themselves end wars.

The growth of democratic industrialized states exacerbated this problem, by requiring the distinction between the decisions of field commanders who were willing to accept defeat on the battlefield, and the willingness of rulers or governments of states to negotiate a final peace settlement in order to “terminate the conflict.” In the 20th century, the pursuit of “unconditional surrender came to be considered the solution to this problem. Among others, this led to the targeting of the wills of the people to carry on with the war.

The advent of nuclear weapons made even more difficult the sustaining of the idea of victory in war. War was robbed of its political utility and has not completely reacquired it, even after the end of the Cold War. However, war has become an end in itself, in no small part because of the obfuscation of the concepts and definition of war and peace, and the subsequent inability to agree on what is required for conflict termination. Ironically, war must be invested again with purpose, if it is to be brought back into harmony with its ends.

Domestic factors often make the termination of war difficult, and, as such an example, Dr. Holger H. Herwig examined the case of Imperial Germany’s termination of World War One in his presentation on “War Termination in Historical Perspective: Imperial Germany 1918.” He noted that Imperial Germany feared a victor’s peace, which would entail massive

annexations and reparations. The Germans did not readily seek the termination of the war, because they did not conclude that the costs of continuing the war outweighed the value of any political objective to be gained. There were several reasons for this. Constitutionally, the Kaiser was the only person authorized to lead the process of war termination, and he desired to fight to the end for the sake of German war aims. Domestically, German leaders felt they could not persuade the people that territorial expansion was not possible and that all the casualties and suffering on the battlefield and home front had been in vain. On the other hand, Imperial Germany was not the first power to experience the enormous difficulty of terminating a war that had lasted for years, drained the nation's finances, rent asunder its social fabric, and bled its army "white."

Next, Mr. Richard B. Frank reported on the example of the termination of the Pacific War, in his presentation entitled "Ending the Asia-Pacific War: New Dimensions." The overall Allied war aim by 1945 was Japan's unconditional surrender. In May 1945, the JCS approved a strategy which called for blockade and bombardment until November 1945, after which the United States would invade the Japanese home islands. The ultimate concern of the JCS was whether the organized capitulation of both Japan's government and armed forces could be brought about. The Japanese, for their part, were making intense efforts to reinforce their defenses in Kyushu. The Americans knew of these efforts through intelligence, and their senior army and navy leaders began to debate the viability of Operation Olympic, the planned invasion of Kyushu. One result was a new set of directives for the strategic bombing campaign against Japan, issued on August 11, 1945, which prioritized attacks on transportation, in particular rail. This would have seriously disrupted the ability of the Japanese to distribute food, and imperiled a significant proportion of Japan's population with starvation. Before this bombing campaign could take place, Japan agreed to cease hostilities on August 15. In addition to the atomic bombings and Soviet entry into the war, "domestic circumstances" (the threat of revolution), and the Emperor's lack of confidence in the preparations to defend the Home Islands were the main factors behind Japan's decision. The Japanese armed forces agreed to accept the surrender because their leadership was shocked by the Emperor's expression of lack of faith in the military. The Soviet intervention by itself was not a cause for the armed forces acceptance of surrender, but did serve to convince Japan's overseas commanders to accept the decision to surrender.

The final report of the first session was "The Japanese Termination of War in WWII: The Significance and Causal Factors of "The End of War," presented by Professor Junichiro Shoji, who analyzed the factors behind the war termination processes of Japan and Germany, which followed quite different paths, and concluded as follows. First, the decision by Japanese leaders to change Japan's war aims from the "establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," which meant the expansion of Japanese territory and influence, to the "Preservation of the *Kokutai* (National Polity)," which was a central Japanese value, and the common acceptance of this revised war aim by Japan's leaders meant that the basic orientation towards war termination had been made within Japan. The issue then became how to achieve it. Furthermore, the removal of an ideal (the establishment of the Co-Prosperity Sphere) made a compromise with Japan's opponent more possible. In comparison, Germany insisted on fighting

its “war of extermination,” which was based on its racial ideology, to the very end, which made a termination of war through compromise difficult. Second, a moderate faction existed in both Japan and America during the war, and, regardless of the fact that the two nations were at war with each other, a certain “relationship of trust” continued to exist between the two, which promoted the movements towards peace in both nations. Again in comparison, there was no such relationship of trust between America and Nazi Germany. Finally, Japan and America had different perceptions regarding a campaign for the Japanese Home Islands, and this became a factor in the realization of peace. In other words, the Emperor’s loss of confidence in the Army, which came about because he determined that the Army’s preparations for defending the Home Islands were insufficient, and the shock felt by the Army when the Emperor voiced his lack of confidence in them, were factors behind Japan’s decision to surrender. On the other hand, the Americans were beginning to have doubts about the viability of Operation Olympic, because of the casualty projections, which was one of the reasons America became more amenable to seeking peace with Japan.

A number of regional wars were looked at in the second session. Dr. Ryuji Hirano compared the war termination processes of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5 and the Russo-Japanese War in his report entitled “Politico-Military Strategy for Ending the First Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars.” The Sino-Japanese War was a war fought by Japan and China for the Korean Peninsula, and was a war over hegemony in East Asia. The Western Powers intervened greatly during both the opening and ending of the Sino-Japanese War. In comparison, the Russo-Japanese War was a war in which Japan fought one of the Western Powers, and was also a war fought within international frameworks (for example, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance versus the Russo-French Alliance). When Japan’s stance towards peace in the two wars are compared, Japan was relatively passive during the process of termination of the Sino-Japanese War, while it was more proactive in its political and diplomatic activities aimed at the ending of the Russo-Japanese War. In addition, both wars shared common features, such as the fact that Japan restrained domestic movements to expand the war and managed to fight a limited war in both cases. Also, in both wars, Japan placed greater priority on the seizing of strategic locations rather than the destruction of the enemy forces. Finally, both wars involved the projection of substantial ground expeditionary forces across the seas and onto the continent, and, as a result, the Japanese Navy and its ability to control the seas had great importance. In both cases, overwhelming naval victories were of significance in the war termination process. In conclusion, both wars were “naval limited wars,” and, by strictly adhering to a strategy which was appropriate for such wars, Japan was able to conduct diplomacy to its advantage by skillfully utilizing its military operations. Meanwhile, Japan’s military and political leaders were able to suppress domestic movements which favored an expansion of the war. These were all significant factors which enabled Japan to end each war while still victorious.

The next report was given by Professor Takenori Horimoto, and was entitled “India’s Wars: the Indo-Pakistani Wars and the India-China Border Conflict.” India and Pakistan fought three wars (in 1947-9, 1965, and 1971), and India fought a war with China in 1962. Although territorial claims were the key issue in all of these, domestic political factors and the

contemporary international situation played major roles in the process of war termination of all these wars. The Kashmir problem, which was the direct or indirect cause of all three of the Indo-Pakistani Wars, has domestic political significance for both countries, in addition to being a territorial issue. The first Indo-Pakistani War was terminated by a ceasefire resolution of the U.N. Security Council, but the Kashmir problem itself remained unresolved. The second Indo-Pakistani War was ended by Soviet intervention and the resulting Tashkent Declaration, while America was tied down by the Vietnam War, and was hampered by worsening relations with Pakistan. Meanwhile, Britain was no longer in a position to influence events in South Asia. In these international circumstances, the Soviet Union was the only power able to intervene, and, by producing the Tashkent Declaration, was able to expand its influence in South Asia, while simultaneously reducing Chinese influence on Pakistan, at a time when there was tension between the Soviets and Chinese. China also supported Pakistan in the third Indo-Pakistani War, which influenced India's decision to seek a ceasefire. Meanwhile, the start and end of the India-China War, which was fought over Arunachal Pradesh state, was strongly influenced by the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. All of these wars occurred during the Cold War, and the termination of each was ultimately influenced and guided by the intentions and aims of the U.S., U.S.S.R., and other global powers. In other words, the influence of global level factors was strong, and India did not necessarily display its autonomy. However, India has become an Asian power, and is becoming a global power. India's self-perception is evolving into something that is completely different from that of the Cold War period, and it desires that other countries change their positioning of India as well. Any future wars that India may be involved in will therefore likely be terminated in ways that are different from what was seen in the Cold War period.

The termination of a more recent war, the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in 1978-9, was the subject of Dr. Ang Cheng Guan's report "Termination of War: The Cambodian Conflict (1978-1991)." As noted by Dr. Ang, ASEAN, led by Singapore and Thailand, worked towards the termination of the war, but the process of termination took more than a decade, and required the alignment of three complex sets of interacting factors: the international system, domestic politics, and the role of individual actors. First, the Soviet Union, which had been supporting Vietnam, became more amenable to a resolution of the Kampuchean problem, following the transformation of the global geopolitical situation, namely, the start of the process of glasnost and perestroika by Gorbachev, along with the ending of the Sino-Soviet dispute. At the same time, the Vietnamese leadership reassessed its domestic economic situation, and decided that it could reach a solution by political means. By then, the Vietnamese leaders who had been architects of the Vietnamese invasion had passed away, and had been replaced by a new generation of leaders who were more amenable towards such a political solution. Domestically, the Kampuchean resistance had been unable to form a united front, but in June 1982 finally formed the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. Still, it was not until 1989 that Sihanouk and Hun Sen, the two leading political personalities in Kampuchea, were able to reach a power-sharing agreement, albeit imperfectly. Also, it was not until the late 1980s that the United States, which had been disinterested in the Cambodian problem, became willing to discuss the issue with the Soviet Union at the summit level. All these changes were

important factors which enabled the conflict to be terminated in October 1991 in Paris.

The third session examined some of the theoretical or topical issues of war termination. In the first report of the session, Dr. Christopher Tuck focused on the issue of why the ending of wars is so problematic. First, wars logically should end when both sides realize what the outcome of continued fighting will be, whether that is the defeat of one side or stalemate. Terminating a war can thus become difficult when one of the belligerents does not realize that war is not working for it as a tool of policy. This problem arises when, for example, that belligerent does not clearly know what it is fighting for, or when it cannot measure its progress in the war. Also, a losing belligerent might keep fighting if it expects to do better in the future. Second, wars can end only when both sides believe there is a peace to be made. The nature of the objectives pursued by both sides can create difficulties regarding the peace. For example, value-based wars, in which war objectives are highly ideologized, intangible, and belief-centric, tend to be harder to terminate than issue-based wars, whose objectives, such as land and resources, are more amenable to political compromise. In addition, peace may be difficult to attain if a certain degree of trust does not exist between the belligerents. Third, the cost of peace may obstruct the termination of war. For example, a belligerent may determine the cost of peace is too high if it believes it will adversely affect its international credibility or other political relationships. Domestically, a party within one of the belligerents may have interests which will be damaged by peace, which will make that party reluctant to pursue peace. Also, belligerents may be the victims of their own rhetoric, and feel they have no choice but to continue with the war. Fourth is the question of whether the war can be stopped. In other words, the leadership of the belligerent seeking peace must be able to convince key constituencies to back its decision to end the war. These may be domestic constituencies as well as international partners. Finally, the question of whether the underlying issues have been resolved must be addressed. If not, the conflict may be terminated but not resolved, making a future conflict over the same issue possible.

Next, Dr. Brian P. Farrell further addressed the issue of the gap between conflict termination and conflict resolution by looking at the conflict between Afghanistan and British India during the 19th century and through 1907 in his report on "Living with the Problem: Managing Interminable War." Farrell noted that the British faced a dilemma as they tried to defend Afghanistan against foreign invasion and at the same time preventing or controlling conflicts along the Afghanistan-British India border. This protracted conflict on the imperial Northwest Frontier is a classic case study of the difficulty of terminating a conflict that has no particular or direct cause in the first place, i.e. a war over an issue that cannot be resolved. Neither side could break or annihilate the other by sheer brute force, and neither side would or could capitulate and submit. Also, neither side could find a basis on which a long-term coexistence could be maintained that ruled out military force. The influence of geography, politics, state building, culture, and the interplay of all these with ambitious imperial projects to reorder a modern Asia, which contributed to making the resolution of the British-Afghan conflict so intractable, were then examined. Two of Dr. Tuck's questions, namely, whether there was a peace that could be made, and whether and how the belligerents knew when the war was ended, in order to analyze why Britain could never terminate military conflict on its

Northwest Frontier, were thus used to examine the conflict.

Finally, Dr. Ken Kotani presented a report on “Intelligence Organizations and the Termination of World War Two, in which he analyzed how intelligence organizations are affected by the termination of wars. Compared to the role of intelligence when a war is about to be started, many factors are involved in the termination of a war, which makes it difficult to define and clarify the specific role of intelligence at the end of a war. On the other hand, when viewed from the perspective of intelligence organizations, the termination of a war affects the losers’ organizations differently than those of the victors. Intelligence organizations of the losing side often fear that they will be forced to bear responsibility for their wartime intelligence activities, and thus normally try to conceal their wartime actions. This was the case with the intelligence officers of the German Wehrmacht at the end of World War Two, and also with Japanese personnel who were involved in signal intelligence. The intelligence organizations of the winning side, on the other hand, tend to undertake action to prevent the downsizing of their organizations, which often had expanded during the war. For example, American and British intelligence organizations at the end of World War Two projected the Soviet Union as their next hypothetical enemy even before the war had ended, and concluded agreements to continue their wartime cooperation even after the war, for the conducting of intelligence activities aimed at the Soviet Union. By doing so, American and British intelligence organizations each sought their organizational survival and preservation in the postwar period.

Regarding the termination of war, the following overall observations may be made, based on the reports presented in this year’s Forum. First, the termination of war is affected by many and various intertwining and interacting factors, including interrelations with the enemy, intervention by major powers and other aspects of the international environment, domestic considerations (such as public opinion and existent political systems), the personalities of leaders and other personal aspects, historical backgrounds, and geography and other aspects of the natural environment. There are also factors such as intelligence which clearly influence the process of war termination, but whose specific role cannot be defined. Wars are indeed “easy to start, but difficult to end.” The termination of World War One and the Cambodian Conflict were difficult because many such factors influenced the process, and the termination of such wars is likely to be protracted and complicated in the future as well.

Second, the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars, the Pacific War (in its last stages), the three Indo-Pakistani Wars, and the India-China War could be terminated relatively easily because, among others, the scope of the war, or the war objective, or both, were relatively limited or clear. In each case, one or both of the sides felt that war was no longer functioning as a means of policy, or that there was a peace to be made, or that the cost of peace was acceptable, whether completely or grudgingly. In some of the wars, two or more of these were the case. Each of these wars could be terminated because one or both sides came to have these perceptions.

Finally, it must be remembered that in many cases, the underlying conflict may remain unresolved even if a specific war which occurred based on that conflict is terminated. The Indo-Pakistani Wars, India-China War, and the British wars with Afghanistan are all examples in

which war termination happened, but conflict resolution did not. It was noted that the concepts of “war” and “peace” have become blurred, and that debates on war and peace have become more difficult, but it is likely that such debates will be even more difficult when discussing wars caused by conflicts which are unresolvable or not readily resolvable.