

Homeporting of an aircraft carrier of the U.S. Navy at U.S. Fleet Activities Yokosuka

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[Summary]

The U.S. Navy at U.S. Fleet Activities Yokosuka is the most important base for the U.S. Navy in Japan, and houses the Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Japan and the U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility Yokosuka (SRF). Until the end of the Pacific War, the Yokosuka Naval Station and the Yokosuka Naval Dockyard were located in Yokosuka City, which developed into a Naval base of the Imperial Japanese Navy. After the war, the SRF took over the assets and functions of the Yokosuka Naval Dockyard.

The former Japanese navy was dissolved, and measures were implemented in the local area of Yokosuka City which converted the former naval facilities and industrialized them. However, due to a sharp decrease in support to reclaim the bases after 1960, the mayor of Yokosuka City submitted requests to reclaim the facilities to the Japanese and U.S. governments. At the outset of the Nixon administration in 1969, the Guam Doctrine was adopted and the bases were scaled down throughout the world. This became an encouraging sign to reclaim the base for Yokosuka as well. Thereafter at the end of 1970, it was decided at the Security Consultative Committee (SCC) that the Yokosuka base would be significantly scaled down, that the flagship and other ships of the U.S. 7th Fleet would be relocated to the Sasebo Naval Base and that the SRF would be returned to Japan, with the exception of some areas.

On the other hand, calling of the U.S. nuclear-powered warships, particularly such as the nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers, at some naval bases in Japan became an issue during the 1960s. The initial proposal at the Japan-U.S. Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting held in 1961 deemed a Japanese port to be necessary for the Nautilus-class nuclear-powered submarines. After going through the negotiations and formalities over the years, the first nuclear-powered submarine came into port at the Sasebo Naval Base in November of 1964. As the visits of nuclear-powered submarines became routine, a new issue developed between the U.S. and Japan involving the visits of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers at Japanese ports. Once again after going through the same negotiations and formalities as with the submarines, the USS Enterprise came into port at the Sasebo Naval Base on January 19, 1968.

As the budget also improved in the beginning of 1971, the U.S. navy started a push to keep its flagship at Yokosuka naval base. At the same time, the U.S. Navy set about planning to homeport U.S. aircraft carriers at overseas bases, and the first stage of the plan required the destroyer flotilla to have its homeport stationed at Sasebo. While there was a possibility that the flagship could remain at Yokosuka per the request of the Prime Minister Sato, the Department of State believed that making Yokosuka the home port for an aircraft carrier would not just have a political impact, but also present a housing issue as well as a nuclear issue. The Japanese side offered a favorable response to keeping the flagship at Yokosuka, and therefore, the Japanese and U.S. governments agreed to postpone the return of the SRF and halt the relocation of the 7th Fleet to Sasebo at the end of March.

Then, the U.S. Secretary of Defense visited Japan in July, held a meeting with Japanese government officials and proposed homeporting of a destroyer flotilla and an aircraft carrier. At the end of August, the Japanese side agreed to homeport a destroyer flotilla at Yokosuka. The U.S. and Japan continued to carefully review the second stage of homeporting an aircraft carrier at Yokosuka until the Tanaka cabinet started in July of 1972. After attaining preliminary approval of the mayor of Yokosuka in October in exchange for a restoration of the SRF to Yokosuka City, a formal agreement was achieved in November. The USS Midway came to the new "home port" at the Yokosuka naval base in October of the following year.

Japan's Defense Concept and the Self-Defense Forces in the "1976 National Defense Program Outline"

Chijiwa Yasuaki

[Summary]

When looking at what impact Japan's "Basic Defense Force Concept" had on calculating the specific defense capability in the "1976 National Defense Program Outline (NDPO)," it was more important that the judgement that the present scale of defense capability seemed to closely approach target goals of the Basic Defense Force Concept, rather than component concepts such as "Maintaining various functions/functional and geographical balance," "Repelling limited and small-scale

aggression without external assistance” and “Expansion.” In implementing the NDPO's attached table during the détente period, the Self-Defense Forces seemed to ensure that defense buildup would continue in order of priority within each permissible scope.

The Naval Expansion Program in the Second Katsura Cabinet: The Battles between the Katsura Cabinet and the Imperial Japanese Navy

Hirano Ryuji

[Summary]

This paper specifically examines the naval expansion program of 1910 (Meiji 43), as part of the national defense policy in the Second Katsura Cabinet which was formed in the severe fiscal conditions which followed the Russo-Japanese War. In previous studies, this issue has been taken up as one aspect of Japan's continental or fiscal policy during the Keien period (from the end of the Russo-Japanese War to the Taisho Political Crisis, or approximately 1905-1912, during which Katsura and Saionji alternately took power), or as one phase of the so-called “Eight-Eight Fleet Plan,” which called for the construction of eight battleships and eight battlecruisers. Therefore, I considered how the Katsura Cabinet, which was implementing an austere fiscal policy, coped with the Navy which submitted a proposal for a large naval expansion program.

The Naval General Staff came to recognize the importance of the appearance of Dreadnaughts, and in 1910 planned a rapid naval expansion to build a large number of new super-dreadnaughts. In contrast, Minister of the Navy Makoto Saito insisted on an expansion program within the limits of the government's fiscal program. As a result of adjustments within the Navy, the "Proposal of the Meiji 43 Naval Armaments Preparedness" was submitted to Prime Minister Taro Katsura on May 23. This consisted of changes in the existing program to modify and improve warship types and a program to newly build super-dreadnaughts. Its cost would exceed 400 million yen.

Katsura, who was trying to curtail government expenditures, tried to persuade Saito to downsize this expansion program. Katsura also obtained Saito's consent for a plan

which merged parts of the new building program into the existing program of modifications, and also proposed that the Cabinet would approve the implementation of the new building program itself in the future without fixing the gross costs and assignments for each fiscal year. Former Minister of the Navy Gonbei Yamamoto realized that Saito was about to compromise, and severely criticized Saito's unilateral concession. Yamamoto tried to force Saito to withdraw his concession by persuading other persons concerned about the need for the naval expansion program. Saito's conciliatory attitude caused serious dissatisfaction within the Navy. However, as a member of the Cabinet, Saito maintained his policy of keeping the naval expansion program within the government's overall fiscal program.

On July 11, Chief of the Naval General Staff Goro Ijuin had a talk with Katsura and tried to persuade him to adopt the Navy's plan. However, Katsura, who could not abandon his fiscal program, expressed his disapproval of the budgeting of the new building program. The cabinet decision of July 12th, the following day, approved only the budget for the revised program, and the budgeting and execution of the new building program was postponed. The Katsura Cabinet thus succeeded in restraining the general account budget by greatly reducing the naval expansion program.

Taking the relatively stable international situation and the severe fiscal condition of the time into consideration, it is reasonable to evaluate as appropriate the judgment of the Katsura Cabinet. From the viewpoint of the Navy, although it failed to secure approval for the budget for the new building plan, I believe that the Navy achieved a certain degree of success by gaining approval for the budget for the existing program to modify and improve warship types during the severe fiscal situation and the international situation in which there was no imminent threat to Japan. In addition, for Saito, planning fiscal consolidation by postponing naval expansion was not his "concession" to Katsura but his own "judgment" in consideration of overall national priorities.