

The Rising East

by Richard Halloran

The tiny, sleepy Portuguese colony of Macao on the southeastern coast of China will revert to Chinese rule on December 20, 1999, marking the end of one era and the start of another that will bring on a profound shift in world power.

The evacuation of this last European enclave in Asia will end 500 years of Western colonialism in the region. More importantly, it will register the opening of an age in which the Rising East will acquire the political, economic, and military power to rival that of North America and Western Europe. That power, much of which has already been accrued, will enable Asians to exert influence not only in their own region but throughout the world. They will become peers with Americans and Europeans in the high councils where decisions are made on war and peace. Asians will not only play in the center court but, as a Malaysian scholar has put it, intend to "have an equal say in writing the rules."

The twenty-first century will thus be shaped by new racial and cultural forces. For several hundred years, the world has been dominated by white Europeans and Americans who hold to Judeo-Christian traditions. They will soon be obliged to accept as equals yellow and brown Asians who adhere to the tenets of Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Islam. Not only will Asian strength be felt on international decisions, but the way they exert influence will differ. Westerners, for instance, tend to be logical and analytical; Asians are more intuitive and sometimes more emotional. Westerners assert rights, Asians respond to obligations. In the West, the individual

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takes priority, in Asia, the community. Westerners, especially Americans, are governed by law and contract, Asians by custom and personal relations. In the West, decisions are made by voting; Asians decide by consensus. As Dennis Bloodworth, the veteran English correspondent in Asia, once wrote, "West and East do not speak the same language, even when it is English."

This Rising East encompasses a vast triangle that extends from the Russian far east and Korea in the northeast to Australia in the south and Pakistan in the west. Within that triangle live more than half of the world's people and many of its fastest growing economies. In 20 years, Asia will most likely have five of the world's six largest economies, the United States being the other. Asians are governed by maturing political orders, many of which are tending toward Asian forms of democracy as middle classes expand. Early in the next century, Asia will be home to 16 of the world's 25 largest cities, which serve as breeding places for middle-class democracy. People in Asia are young, better educated, and healthier than ever before. A green revolution has enabled most Asian nations to feed themselves—and with better nutrition; some even export surplus food. Together, better food and health make Asians competitive workers, citizens able to run modern economies and political systems, and good soldiers in high-tech armed forces.

A lively nationalism born of anticolonial struggle and postcolonial achievement is a driving force in Asia. At the same time, a sense of Asian identity is being generated by embryonic regional institutions, a spreading telecommunications network, and expanding air and sea transport. Today, Asian nations trade as much among themselves as with the West. Military strength is expanding; the world's eight largest armed forces operate in the Rising East, as economic progress has provided the funds and nationalism has demanded the acquisition of arms as symbols of prestige.

So far, Americans and Europeans have shown few signs that they are ready to cope with this Asian renaissance. Rhetoric in the United States occasionally points to a Pacific century, Asia's economic achievements are gradually being recognized, and export promotion to Asia has begun. But there is much more to the transformation of Asia than economics, and little of the magnitude of the changes appears to have been comprehended by the West. In the nineteenth century, Britain and Europe dominated the world in politics, eco-

nomics, culture, and military power. The twentieth century has been the "Age of America," with the United States the only remaining superpower at the end of the century. The twenty-first century will see the rise of the East with such strength that it will break the monopoly of the West on world power.

Throughout Asia, Americans are overlooking chances for forming political alliances, for realizing economic benefits, for acquiring new technology, and for tapping Asian intellectual capital. Perhaps most dangerously, Americans outside of a corps of specialists seem to be unaware of the possible threat from potentially hostile Asian nations, notably China. Americans have fought in Asia five times in the last 100 years. Twice, in the Philippines in 1898 and during the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900, the United States was part of Western empire-building in Asia. Twice, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941 and when the North Koreans invaded South Korea in 1950, America was caught by surprise. Once, in Vietnam from 1954 to 1975, America stumbled into a quagmire. As former defense secretary Robert McNamara wrote in his controversial book *In Retrospect*, "When it came to Vietnam, we found ourselves setting policy for a region that was terra incognita."

Since the days of Commodore Perry, the United States has been inconsistent in its Asia policy.

This failure to attend to Asia is neither a Democratic nor a Republican mistake. Neither President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher nor President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker have fashioned a coherent Asia policy. Beyond the rhetoric, the United States has not had a comprehensive, cohesive policy toward Asia for many years. Christopher, in an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* last fall, said, "American foreign policy has indeed suffered from a long period of neglect regarding the Pacific. We really have had a Eurocentric approach and failed to take into account the importance of Asia. . . . It is the world's most dynamic area, and American foreign policy has not been putting enough energy, drive or resources into its Pacific policy."

Few intellectual leaders in America have recognized the depth of

change in Asia. Paul Kennedy, the Yale scholar, wrote about China, India, and Japan in *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* as if little would differ from the twentieth century. Former secretary of state Henry Kissinger barely touched on Asia in his book, *Diplomacy*, even though power was his theme; instead, he looked at the world through nineteenth-century European spectacles. Paul Krugman, the Stanford economist, disparaged Asian economic strength, asserting, "From the perspective of the year 2010, current projections of Asian supremacy extrapolated from recent trends may well look almost as silly as 1960-vintage forecasts of Soviet industrial supremacy." Samuel Huntington came closer in 1993 in his provocative *Foreign Affairs* article, "The Clash of Civilizations?" in which he said, "A West at the peak of its power confronts non-Wests that increasingly have the desire, the will and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways." Huntington, however, did not distinguish between an ever stronger Asia and the rest of the "non-Wests." But John Naisbitt captured the new reality of Asia in his 1995 book *Megatrends Asia*, writing, "What is happening in Asia is by far the most important development in the world. Nothing else comes close, not only for Asians but for the entire planet. The modernization of Asia will forever reshape the world as we move toward the next millennium."

An Asian intellectual and senior official in Singapore, Kishore Mahbubani, explains, "It is difficult for a European or North American to understand the momentous nature of this psychological revolution because they cannot step into East Asian minds. Their minds have never been wrapped in the cellophane of colonialism."

Not everything in Asia contributes to its power, by any means. By Asians' own standards, population growth continues to be excessive in China, India, and many smaller nations. Political instability, often rooted in ethnic or religious rivalry, hampers Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. Ideological struggles may soon menace China and North Korea. Human rights are not honored in many places, and repression is rampant in China and North Korea and, to a lesser extent, in Indonesia and Singapore. Infanticide continues in China and India as do abuses of child labor across South Asia. Huge areas of poverty persist in nations such as Bangladesh and in wide pockets of others, such as interior China. The green revolution has been marred by pollution generated by swift increases in the consumption of energy; by 2010, if current practices continue, the World

Bank says, "East Asia will account for more than half of the world's incremental carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide" noxious emissions. Conflicts over energy resources are in the offing as demand may soon outrun supply. Education lags for women and in rural areas. Cities have begun to resemble Bangkok today—choked with traffic and spoiled with slums as millions of people have migrated from rural regions. Traditional ailments have been succeeded by modern ills such as cancer and heart disease, and an AIDS epidemic threatens to disrupt economic progress in India and Thailand.

In addition, a potential arms race could unsettle Asia, draining away financial, technical, industrial, and human resources—though this is a matter of dispute. China is modernizing its conventional and nuclear forces. North Korea has nuclear ambitions, and there is no guarantee that it will honor a 1994 agreement with the United States to eschew nuclear arms. Russia's military forces are still potent; it is slowly modernizing its navy in Asia. Most Southeast Asian nations are expanding their armed forces, and India clearly intends to dominate South Asia and the Indian Ocean. "After all," said one Indian pundit, "it is called the *Indian* Ocean."

Three brewing conflicts jeopardize peace in Asia. Most immediate is the divided Korean peninsula. South Korea seeks peaceful reunification, but North Korea has repeatedly threatened military action to maintain its regime in power or to unify the peninsula under its control. Both India and Pakistan can produce nuclear weapons, making the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir even more dangerous. With China, the most vexing issue is Taiwan; Beijing has repeatedly said it will apply military force if Taiwan declares independence. China's intentions toward the South China Sea, Southeast Asia, and Siberia, where a flow of Chinese immigrants has begun to worry the Russians, are unclear. Beijing dabbles in the Korean conflict, has border disputes with India, harbors disdain for Vietnam, may be selling missiles abroad in violation of agreements, and has a territorial conflict with Japan.

Consequently, Asians have a pressing agenda. Nonetheless, as the distinguished scholar Robert Scalapino has said about Asia, "With all of its travails, this era is the most exciting—and, on balance, the most promising—in history."

FROM SUBJUGATION TO NATIONALISM

The long sweep of history culminating in this Asian renaissance began in the European Age of Discovery. It is a tale of conquest, subjugation, and occasional brutality that has seared the soul of Asia and shapes Asian thought and actions to this day. Six years after Christopher Columbus sailed to America, the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama steered around the Cape of Good Hope into the Indian Ocean and landed at Calicut on the southwestern coast of India in 1498. Four years later, he returned to butcher a shipload of Muslim pilgrims returning from Mecca, then hanged traders and fishermen captured in Calicut harbor. Departing with a cargo of treasure, he left five ships that Daniel Boorstin in *The Discoverers* called "the first permanent naval force stationed by Europeans in Asiatic waters."

During the next four centuries, Asia was overrun from three directions. The first and most intrusive incursion was mounted from the west by European merchants, missionaries, and military forces. Britain came to rule territories that are now Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Spain took the Philippines; France the Indochinese countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; and the Dutch what is now Indonesia. Portugal ended up with only Goa in India, East Timor in Indonesia, and Macao.

The second incursion came from the north as Russian Cossacks, convicts, peasants, and traders trudged across Siberia. Some crossed the Bering Strait to Alaska and established trading outposts in California. The Russians even toyed with colonizing Hawaii in the early nineteenth century. The main Russian movement from Siberia, however, was to the south where they took territory from China, gained influence in Manchuria, and poked down the west coast of Japan. A Russian admiral, Count E. V. Putiatin, almost beat the Americans to the opening of Japan.

The third incursion was by Americans from the east. The concept of Manifest Destiny led American pioneers across the continent during the mid-nineteenth century. Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry was sent to open Japan in 1853, Alaska was purchased from the Russians in 1867, Hawaii was annexed in 1898 and part of Samoa in 1899, and the Philippines were acquired from Spain in 1898.

Western colonialism in Asia reached its high-water mark around

the turn of the twentieth century. Only Thailand and Japan had escaped, the Thais by playing the British in Malaya and the French in Indochina against one another. The Japanese bought time by accepting treaties imposed by the West that gave Europeans and Americans favored treatment.

Even before colonialism peaked, two anti-Western movements began. The first was early Asian nationalism, seen in the Indian National Congress of 1885, in Islamic-led peasant revolts and an anti-Dutch intelligentsia in Indonesia, in the small but intellectual Muslim middle class in Malaya, in Buddhist mandarins in Vietnam, and in the uprising led by Emilio Aguinaldo in the Philippines in 1898. In China, Boxer marauders were violently anti-Western.

The second movement was the rise of imperial Japan. After the forced opening of their country, the Japanese began to build industries and military forces. Japan won the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and acquired Taiwan. In 1905, the Japanese became the first Asians to defeat a Western power by beating Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. The Russians recognized Japanese interests in Korea and Manchuria; Japan annexed Korea in 1910. About this time, Asian nationalists and Japanese leaders opened lines of communication. The Chinese nationalist, Sun Yat-sen, went to Japan after the Sino-Japanese War and got money, weapons, and advice. A Vietnamese leader, Phan Boi Chau, visited Japan in 1905.

During World War I, Asian nationalists and Japanese leaders advanced their causes while the Europeans fought among themselves. After the war, Japan began a campaign to end Western colonial rule, a push that was among the causes of World War II. Japan's aggression ended in devastation in 1945 but left Western colonialism in ruins. The United States gave the Philippines independence on July 4, 1946; Britain partitioned Pakistan and India in 1947, then withdrew from Burma and Sri Lanka in 1948 and from Malaysia in 1957; Singapore seceded from Malaysia in 1965; Japanese rule of Taiwan and Korea ended in 1945; the Dutch were driven from Indonesia in 1949; the French withdrew from Indochina in 1954, and their American replacements left in 1975. Western forces were ousted from China in 1949, except for Hong Kong, which will revert to China in 1997, and Macao.

In recent years, it has been fashionable to preface discussions of international relations with the phrase "Since the end of the Cold

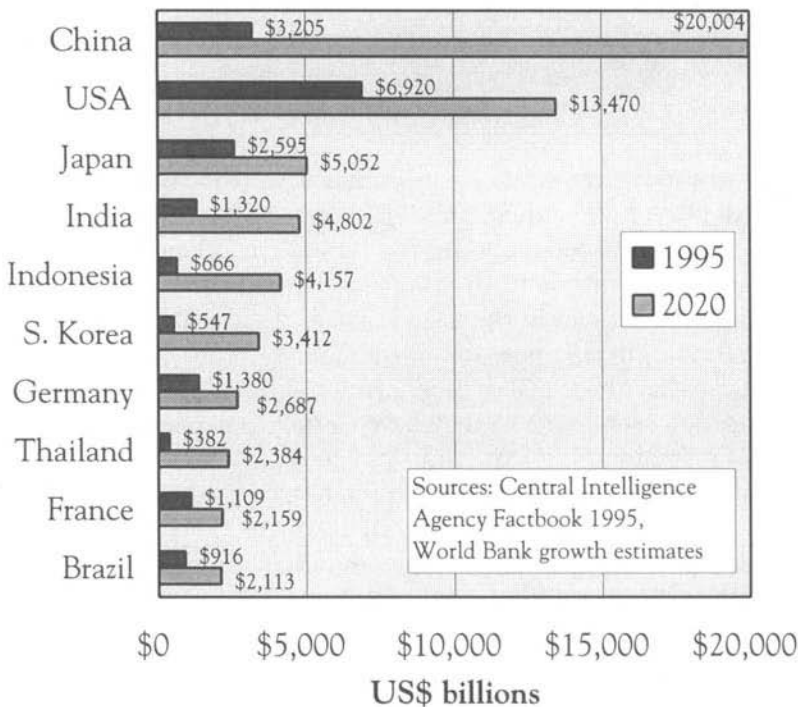
War" To assess Asia today in the context of the Cold War would be misleading, because Asia has been propelled by its own dynamics for the last 50 years. The Cold War was a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union over the heads of their West and East European allies. Other areas were affected, of course, but not to the same degree as Europe. The Cold War was partly behind the Korean War, as the Soviet Union and China sought to test the United States, but the main cause was North Korea's attempt to reunite the peninsula by force. In Vietnam, among the myriad mistakes made by the United States was to view the conflict through the lens of the Cold War. The North Vietnamese were not fighting for Russia or China but for independence from France—and then to prevent the United States from replacing the French. Americans did not realize then that they were fighting the last of the anticolonial wars in Asia.

SEVEN REVOLUTIONS

Westerners call the era starting in 1945 "the postwar period." In Asia, it should be called "the postcolonial period" or, more aptly, "the postcolonial revolution." For 50 years, Asians have been shucking colonialism in seven interlocked revolutions that together are the source of Asia's new power.

Industrial Revolution: A driving force in the Rising East is economic strength, Asians having compressed into 50 years the industrial revolution that the West took 200 years to accomplish. Japan, which began to industrialize about 125 years ago, led the way after World War II. The Asian tigers—Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan—have been catching up, followed by China, whose economy along the seacoast and in the south blossomed under reforms begun in 1978. Today, the new tigers are Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Indian reforms begun in 1991 are freeing its economy from regulations that hobbled it for decades. On average, Asian economies grew 6 per cent last year, compared with 2.8 per cent in Western Europe and 2.7 per cent in the United States. By the year 2020, if growth continues anywhere near its recent pace, China will have the world's largest economy, with Japan, India, Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand in the top 10. The United States will be second, and only two European nations will make the list: Germany and France. Brazil, with the biggest economy in Latin America, will be

The World's 10 Largest Economies (1995-2020)
Gross Domestic Product at Purchasing Power Parity



the tenth. (These are estimates, not forecasts, but nonetheless indicate the trend.)

Asia's economic accomplishments have been neither miraculous nor mysterious. Of prime importance has been hard work by laboring people, business executives, and government officials. Political leaders have guided, cajoled, or demanded economic achievement. The World Bank says pragmatic policy, not ideology, has been largely responsible for Asia's economic growth. In the 1970s, for example, President Park Chung Hee of South Korea required a weekly report on brick production that told him whether enough were available for factory, office, and home construction. A propensity among Asians to save has provided funds for investment, as have foreign direct and portfolio investment, loans from abroad, and, to a much lesser extent, official development assistance. The World Bank estimates that foreign direct investment in East Asia grew from \$1.3 billion in 1980

to an estimated \$42.7 billion in 1994; portfolio investment went from zero to an estimated \$17.6 billion in the same period, while total capital flows tripled from 1990 to 1994 to reach an estimated \$91 billion. As a measure of economic accomplishment, Taiwan's foreign-exchange reserves broke through the \$100 billion ceiling in the spring of 1995, second only to Japan's \$156 billion. Later, they fell back to \$90 billion, while Japan's climbed to \$182 billion. China's, in fifth place at \$71 billion, trailed the United States's by only \$4 billion. Singapore's reserves were \$67 billion, and Hong Kong's were \$54 billion. Thailand, South Korea, and Malaysia each held between \$25 and \$35 billion, in the same range as the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, France, and Sweden.

Asians have become less dependent on agriculture and extractive enterprises, such as oil, as they have shifted to industries that produce everything from steel and ships to automobiles and aircraft. Thailand made \$1.1 billion worth of industrial products in 1970; by 1992, the total reached \$31.2 billion, of which 40 per cent was machinery. Just under half of Indonesian output in 1970 was agricultural; by 1992, agricultural output represented less than 20 per cent, while industry had doubled to nearly 40 per cent of national production. The first domestically produced Indonesian airplane—a twin-engine turboprop—flew in August 1995, and Indonesia plans to build and market jet aircraft within eight years. Asians have cut imports sharply as they have increased domestic production and exports. Of Singapore's import spending in 1970, 16 per cent went for food. By 1993, imported food costs had dropped to 6 per cent, while machinery and transport equipment exports had leapt from 11 to 55 per cent.

The growth of nuclear energy has slowed everywhere except in Asia, where six of the world's seven new nuclear plants were built in 1994 and 1995. Three were constructed in Japan and one each in China, India, and South Korea. India has 10 reactors, Taiwan six, and Pakistan and North Korea two each. Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Vietnam are also planning nuclear-energy programs. China, which has three nuclear plants now and four more under construction, may build at least 20 more. Overall in Asia, energy from nuclear power is projected to grow at 6.6 per cent per year on average and is expected to nearly triple by the year 2010.

Altogether, living standards have risen across a broad base. The

World Bank reports that per capita incomes in East Asia nearly quadrupled over the last 25 years despite growing populations. In national product per capita, Singapore was second to Japan in 1994, at \$19,940, South Korea hit \$10,000 in 1995 and plans to double that in six years, and Taiwan and Malaysia topped \$8,000 each. In Indonesia, 60 per cent of the population lived in poverty in the early 1970s; just 15 per cent still suffered such deprivation by 1990.

Political Revolution: Asians have forged many governments over the past 50 years that are competent, stable, and legitimate. Some are democracies that reflect Western models, while others are home-grown. Several regimes are what Scalapino calls "soft authoritarian," where human rights, housing, food, public health, education, employment, and public safety needs are met, but political freedoms are restricted. Still other Asian nations have strict authoritarian regimes.

India and Australia inherited democracy from Britain, the Philippines from America. Although the Philippines lapsed into dictatorship, it is once again on the road to democracy. Japan's democracy was imposed by the American occupation after World War II. In South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand, democratic governments have replaced repressive regimes. Unfortunately, Pakistan and Sri Lanka remain riven with ethnic conflicts that have blocked political progress. Democracy has spread as economic progress has fostered middle-class communities that have formed centers of power in political parties, bureaucracies, business, labor, academe, and journalism. All demand a greater say in their nation's political processes.

Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew, who was prime minister from 1959 to 1990 and then became "senior minister," has been the archetype of "soft authoritarianism." Malaysia under Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and Indonesia under President Suharto fall into the same category. It seems fair to speculate that expanding middle classes will force those governments to shed the remnants of authoritarian rule once the current leaders pass from the scene.

Authoritarian regimes hold power in China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Burma—the first three of the Left, the last of the Right. Here, too, it seems fair to speculate that growing middle classes, including that in China, will seek a stronger say in the political system. The 1995 release of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi—the acknowledged leader of Burma's democratic movement—after nearly six years of house arrest is a sign of progress.

THREE GENERATIONS OF LEADERS IN ASIA

<u>Nation</u>	<u>First Generation</u>	<u>Second Generation</u>	<u>Third Generation</u>
Japan	Shigeru Yoshida	Hayato Ikeda Kiichi Miyazawa	Ryutaro Hashimoto Yohei Kono Ichiro Ozawa
S. Korea	Syngman Rhee	Park Chung Hee Chun Doo Hwan	Roh Tae Woo Kim Young Sam
Taiwan	Chiang Kai-shek	Chiang Ching-kuo	Lee Teng-hui
Philippines	Manuel Roxas Elpidio Quirino	Ramon Magsaysay Ferdinand Marcos	Corazon Aquino Fidel Ramos
Thailand	Pibul Songgram	Sarit Thanarat Thanom Kittikachorn	Chuan Leekpai Banharn Silpa-archa
Bangladesh	Mujibur Rahman	Ziaur Rahman Hussain Ershad	Khaleda Zia Hasina Wajed
Pakistan	Mohammed Ali Jinnah	Ayub Khan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto	Benazir Bhutto
Sri Lanka	Solomon Bandaranaike	Sirimavo Bandaranaike	Chandrika Kumaratunga
India	Mahatma Gandhi Jawaharal Nehru	Indira Gandhi	Sonia Gandhi Rahul Gandhi
China	Mao Tse-tung Chou En-lai	Deng Xiaoping Zhao Ziyang	Jiang Zemin Li Peng Zhu Rongji
Malaysia	T. Abdul Rahman	Abdul Razak Mahathir Mohamad	Anwar Ibrahim Najib Razak
Burma	U Aung San U Nu	Ne Win	Aung San Suu Kyi
Singapore	Lee Kuan Yew	Lee Kuan Yew Goh Chok Tong	?
Indonesia	Sukarno	Suharto	?
N. Korea	Kim Il Sung	Kim Il Sung Kim Jong Il	?
Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh Vo Nguyen Giap	Do Muoi Le Duc Anh	?

Most Asian nations have had three generations of postcolonial leaders. The first included Mahatma Gandhi of India, Sukarno of Indonesia, and Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam, who led the struggle against colonialism. The second included soldiers such as Park Chung Hee in Korea, Chiang Ching-kuo in Taiwan, and Suharto in Indonesia, who led the architects of today's economic progress. The third generation has come to office in some nations, is waiting in others, and has not yet arrived in a few. Third-generation leaders are mostly practicing politicians who seem to enjoy more public support and legitimacy than did leaders of the first two generations.

First priority for the United States in Asia should be given to repairing alliances and acquiring more allies, because no nation today can go it alone.

In South Asia, prominent political leaders include several women—Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka, and Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh—even though men dominate those societies. Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of Rajiv Gandhi of India, is an important power behind the scenes and appears to be keeping the Gandhi dynasty intact for her son or daughter. These women belong to prestigious families, are well educated, and succeeded fathers or husbands who met brutal deaths. They are also strong willed, steeled by adversity, and ambitious. While not representing a wave of women's rights, they are opening the way for more women to participate in politics.

Demographic Revolution: Asia is bubbling with people power— young, educated, healthy individuals who can operate steel mills, install telecommunication networks, and run railroads. In many Asian nations, 60 to 70 per cent of the people are within the working ages of 15 to 64. Only Japan is showing signs of aging.

The number of children attending school is soaring. By 1993, nearly all children went to primary school in China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand. More

remarkable has been the growing percentage of young people attending high school, which prepares them for productive work. The number of students between the ages of 12 and 17 enrolled in secondary school doubled or nearly doubled in many Asian nations between 1970 and 1992; in several nations, more than 95 per cent of young people are in school. In South Korea, enrollment jumped to 90 per cent from 42 per cent during the same period. Malaysia has compressed university education to three years from four, the Ministry of Education said, to "help ease the acute shortage of skilled manpower." Japan, with a long-established educational system, provides nearly all of its young people with a high-school education. Only 71 per cent of Americans graduate from high school today.

Improved public health has reduced traditional Asian diseases such as cholera. The infant mortality rate in Japan is the world's lowest; it was cut by three-quarters in South Korea between 1970 and 1993; by two-thirds in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore; and by half in China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Thailand. In the United States, it was also cut by half. Asian life spans approach the highest in the world as the number of doctors has increased. Life expectancy in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and Taiwan is 70 years or more. Japan's is the world's highest, 79, with women expected to live to 82. South Asia lags but is improving. In comparison, life expectancy in the United States is 76 years.

Green Revolution: Fifty years ago, many Asian nations were granaries for colonial masters. Today, most Asian nations grow enough food for themselves or can import it with export earnings. Making more farmers owners of existing farms, opening more land to cultivation, and improved irrigation, fertilizers, and seed together account for the increase. From 1980 to 1993, farm output outpaced population growth in most of Asia. The value of agricultural production more than trebled in China between 1970 and 1990. Reform in India has cut food imports that consumed much foreign exchange 20 years ago; now India is growing so much grain that it has become the world's third largest exporter of grain. Thailand led the world in grain exports in 1995 with 6 billion tons of rice, up 27 per cent from 1994. The United States was the second largest; Vietnam the fourth. In Indonesia, farm output went up sixfold to make the country, the world's largest importer of rice in the 1970s, self-sufficient by the mid-1980s. Although South Korea has been pumping funds into industry, farm

output rose from \$2.3 billion in 1970 to \$23.4 billion in 1993. A Chinese person in 1977 received an average of eight kilograms of meat per year. Today, he or she can expect 32 kilograms. Not much by Western standards, but nonetheless a fourfold increase. Across Asia, meat consumption rose to 57.4 million tons in 1995, up from 43.6 million tons just five years before.

Revolution in Nationalism: Nationalism, which propelled Asians before World War II to struggle against their colonial rulers, blossomed in the first days of freedom and has now come to full flower. Mohamed Jawhar bin Hassan, a Malaysian scholar, says, "Increased prosperity and economic achievement are giving East Asian states greater national resilience, confidence and self-assurance." A strong sense of national identity shows up in Asian political rhetoric, business decisions, intellectual writing, and the press. Asians have been turning to religion as an expression of patriotism; Hindu fundamentalists have been active in India, while Islam has grown stronger in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Pakistan.

Japanese nationalism is seen in pride in economic accomplishment and in a disdain for foreign products that do not meet Japanese standards. China has revived the mentality of the Middle Kingdom, in which other Asians are seen as inferior and Westerners as barbarians. India, after seeking foreign investment, has turned against some investors for fear they might dominate the economy. The *New York Times* has reported that "Taiwan's new-found economic strength and nascent democracy have infused the Taiwanese with a sense of individual identity." The same could be said for many Asian nations.

Asians are particularly alert to what they consider to be expressions of superiority by former colonial masters. In August 1995, the communiqué released after a meeting of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum in Brunei, in which delegates from the United States, Europe, and Asia took part, was indicative. It noted that all participants were willing "to address substantive security issues in a spirit of mutual respect, equality and cooperation." In another instance, Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia—among the most articulate nationalists and critics of the West in Asia—said, "It is time that Asia too is accorded the regard and the respect that is its due."

Revolution in Internationalism: Asians have become more outward looking as trade among Asian nations has surpassed that with

former colonial rulers and as economic umbilical cords have been broken. Advances in telecommunications help to foster regional awareness. Television and radio have become nearly pervasive, and 50 satellites dot the skies over Asia. Travel among Asian nations will nearly quadruple during the next 15 years. Regional groupings such as ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation have gradually become more effective. Prime Minister Mahathir has proposed an East Asian Economic Caucus that would exclude North Americans and Europeans. In the private sector, research centers have formed the Council on Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific to consider security issues in forums more open than those of officialdom. Australia and New Zealand have turned to the north to trade more with Asian neighbors than with America or Europe, although they are not always accepted as members of the Asian community. Asians are also demanding a greater voice in the United Nations, where Japan and India seek permanent seats on the Security Council.

Revolution in Military Power: At the end of World War II, the United States was the dominant military power in Asia. The Soviet Union soon became a rival superpower, building a large Pacific fleet. China became a regional military power in the 1960s and acquired nuclear weapons in 1964. Today it is building nuclear-powered submarines, as is India. Most medium-size powers have expanded their armed forces and improved the quality of their weapons and equipment. Meanwhile, the United States and Russia, each concerned with internal problems, have retrenched in Asia.

In Asia today, the world's eight largest armed forces—those of China, Russia, the United States, India, North Korea, South Korea, Pakistan, and Vietnam—operate in an evolving balance of power. Taiwan, Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand rank in the top two dozen. If six members of ASEAN—Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Brunei—confederated their forces, they would rank sixth in size. In South Asia, India increased its defense spending by 12 per cent between 1992 and 1994. Pakistan topped that with 19.5 per cent.

Asians have acquired military strength because economic progress has provided the funds. In East Asia, military spending went up about 9 per cent in real terms from 1992 to 1994. In India, Pakistan, and

Sri Lanka, it was up 6 per cent or more. Defense spending decreased almost everywhere else in the world, including the United States. In some cases, new armaments are a source of national pride. In others, armies provide internal security—or shore up oppressive regimes. Several Southeast Asian nations are building small navies to protect Exclusive Economic Zones from pirates and other intruders.

AMERICA'S ASIAN CHALLENGE

In the era of the Rising East, U.S. national interests in Asia are the security, prosperity, and freedom that advance fundamental American ideals. The strategy to defend those interests, however, is in disarray and needs to be overhauled.

First priority should be given to repairing alliances and acquiring more allies, because no nation today can go it alone. Economic friction has eroded trust between Japan and the United States. Koreans resent what they see as U.S. domination, and ill feelings in the Philippines persist after Manila ejected the United States from military bases. Little has been done to gain the confidence of Indonesia, Malaysia, or Singapore, but opening diplomatic relations with Vietnam was a step in the right direction. Australians express dismay over U.S. indifference. Washington's relations with India are fragile, while Pakistan is distressed by what it sees as favoritism toward New Delhi. U.S. attention to Asian regional forums has been sporadic.

In addition to traditional diplomacy, the United States should intensify its public diplomacy to sway influential Asian middle classes. With earlier authoritarian regimes, the United States needed to deal only with governments, as they could brush aside opposition forces. Today, vocal middle classes exert pressures that Asian governments cannot disregard. When those pressures are anti-American, they can force governments into policies detrimental to U.S. interests.

Another top priority should be widening American access to the economic resources of Asia, including raw materials, manufactured goods, capital, and productive labor. Americans must export more to the increasingly lucrative markets of Asia. In 1994, the United States ran trade deficits everywhere in Asia—not just the \$65.7 billion with Japan, but \$29.5 billion with China, \$9.6 billion with Taiwan, \$7 billion with Malaysia, and \$5.4 billion with Thailand. American corporations, with a few exceptions, have for years made only feeble at-

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tempts to export to Asia and have blamed Asian protectionism, rather than their own lackluster marketing, for their failures.

Gaining greater access to Asian technology should be on the agenda, especially for production technology, at which Japan and others excel. In the same vein, access to ideas and culture could enrich the intellectual and social lives of Americans, a thought that may be hard to accept after centuries of Western domination of Asia.

Buel Among the most severe American problems in Asia today is a lack of military credibility—many Asian leaders believe the United States will not live up to its commitments. They fear the United States, impelled by latent isolationism, will leave their nations exposed to a militant China, possibly a revived Russia, or, remotely, a re-armed Japan. For American credibility, therefore, maintaining a visible military capability in the Pacific is essential. Admiral Richard Macke, who commanded American forces in the Pacific from his headquarters in Hawaii last year, asserted recently that “no diplomatic note, no political mission, no economic commission conveys the same clear message of enduring commitment.”

Seeking to preclude the emergence of a hostile nation or an antagonistic coalition as the dominant force in Asia should be another high priority. Such adversaries would jeopardize U.S. interests and could eventually, in this day of long-range nuclear missiles, even threaten the continental United States. The potential of a threat from China is the most serious, but hostilities are not preordained; the United States should not, by its own actions, turn China into an enemy.

The United States should seek arms-control agreements to prevent the further spread of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction and to slow the spread of conventional arms. While international agreements such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons apply to nations around the world, few arms-control efforts have been generated in Asia beyond trying to get North Korea to give up its nuclear ambitions. Although Asia has remained relatively unscathed by international terrorism, fashioning an apparatus to prevent future acts of violence would serve everyone's interest. So would collective efforts to eradicate illegal drugs, piracy, and the scourge of AIDS.

Forging an effective American strategy in Asia will take presidential and congressional leadership, a sense of direction, and plenty

of sweat. American policymakers must build a bipartisan constituency that recognizes American interests in Asia and gives continuity to American engagement there. Since the days of Commodore Perry, the United States has been inconsistent in its Asia policy. The three wars that Americans fought in Asia in this century stand as bloody testimony to that failure.

To plan and execute a new strategy toward Asia, American political and corporate leaders would do well to tap the talents of the tens of thousands of Americans who have studied, lived, worked—and fought—in Asia. America has a deep reservoir of people experienced in Asian affairs in the State and Defense Departments, the military services, and the intelligence community. Smaller research offices with Asia specialists are scattered in other government agencies. Outside of government, universities and research “think tanks” from Harvard to Hawaii have centers for Asian studies. Alumni of the Peace Corps, Fulbright fellowships, and student exchange programs are plentiful. Clearly, America has the human assets to respond to the Rising East, but imaginative leadership is needed to mobilize them.

When Charles Malik, a brilliant statesman from Lebanon, addressed Dartmouth College in 1951, he said, “The challenges confronting the Western world are basically three: the challenge of Communism, the challenge of the rising East, and the challenge of the internal forces of decay.” The first challenge has been met. The second is now upon the West, especially America.

Policy Principles for Unthreatened Wealth-Seekers

by John Mueller

We have lived through a truly remarkable period of history. In an incredibly short time, virtually all the major problems that tormented big-country (sometimes known as Great Power) relations for nearly half a century have been resolved: the unpopular and often brutal Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe; the artificial and deeply troubling division of Germany; the expensive, crisis-prone, and apparently dangerous military contest between East and West; and the ideological struggle between authoritarian, violence-encouraging communism and sometimes-panicky capitalist democracy.

In the wake of this amazing transformation, concerns have been repeatedly voiced that there is no longer any consensus about, or coherence to, the organizing principles of foreign policy. Applying a rather unresonant metaphor, President Bill Clinton suggested last October that we need a "mainframe explanation for the PC world in which we're living."

Such concerns, however, are based mostly on faulty historical re-

JOHN MUELLER is a professor of political science at the University of Rochester. His most recent books are *Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War* (University of Chicago Press, 1994) and *Quiet Cataclysm: Reflections on the Recent Transformation of World Politics* (HarperCollins, 1995).

All This Talk of 'Asian Values' Sends an Unhelpful Message

By Timothy Ong

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Brunei — I am not sure what Asian values are. I think I know what Malay, Muslim values are because I live in a Malay, Muslim society. I think I know what Chinese values are because I am a descendant of Chinese immigrants. I think I know what Australian values are because I am married to an Australian woman.

But Asian values — a common, distinctive value system which embraces the rich dynamic cultural diversity of Asia in an interdependent world — I find quite elusive.

Even the simple verities I have just mentioned are constantly challenged. When I observe the emergence of the new Malay in Malaysia — assertive, confident and commercially savvy — I am reminded how rapidly values can change with strong leadership.

When I travel in the Chinese world and observe the differences in work ethic among Chinese in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, I am reminded how values are shaped by the political and economic context. Diligence may be a cultural trait, but it is certainly helped by market incentives.

When I observe the success of McDonald's throughout Asia, when I hear Michael Jackson in Rangoon and witness the emergence of a common youth culture from Bandar Seri Begawan to Bombay, when I read of sharply rising divorce rates in China, I am reminded of the powerful challenge to traditional values posed by modernization and the pressures toward some kind of cultural convergence.

When I observe the growing ranks of young Asian corporate executives spawned by Western multinationals who speak to each other mostly in English and whose common badge is an MBA degree from a North American university, I am re-

minded how intertwined our world has become.

It cannot be denied that values such as the centrality of the family, frugality, hard work and sacrifice, which are so much in evidence in East Asia, have played an important contributing role in its remarkable success. But are these very important values uniquely Asian?

Were they not also very much in evidence in the economic rise of the West? Did not Max Weber have these values in mind when he posited the causal link, largely discredited now, between Protestant religious values and the emergence of capitalism in the West? Will not these values in the diverse societies of Asia be increasingly challenged as those societies develop and modernize?

"Asian values" as the main explanation for Asia's economic success is inadequate on both intellectual and political grounds. There are three key objections.

First, high economic performance in Asia has taken place both within the context of cultural homogeneity and in cultural diversity. Embracing all the high-performing economies of Asia under the category "East Asia" is convenient but obscures a basic distinction between societies of Northeast Asia that are culturally homogeneous (Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong) and the culturally diverse societies of Southeast Asia.

Confucianism may be a plausible explanation for the economic success of Northeast Asia but is hardly so for the successful economies of Southeast Asia, which comprise Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu and a host of other cultural traditions.

Second, "Asian values" cannot explain vast differences

in economic performance between societies sharing the same value system. A stark example of this is the divergence in the economic fortunes of Burma and Thailand, which share roughly the same traditional value system.

At the start of this century, Burma was wealthier than Thailand. Almost a century later, Thailand is almost 10 times wealthier than Burma. The difference, of course, does not lie in culture but in the divergent economic and political paths taken.

Third, "Asian values" cannot explain a society's economic

success in one historical period and its failure in another. As one observer has asked: "If Confucianism explains the economic boom in East Asia today, does it not also explain the region's stagnation for four centuries?"

Politically, an emphasis on "Asian values" sends out the wrong message. For some time now I have been concerned that when Asians discuss their economic success with the rest of the world, they should de-emphasize uniqueness and emphasize interdependence.

What separates them from the rest of humanity is less important than what they have in common with it. Asians should de-

emphasize their distinctiveness as a region and emphasize their vested interest in a global economy in which technology, trade and investment flow freely.

Asians should not aspire to an Asian century; that is a futile dream in an interdependent world. We should aspire to a global century in which Asia with its cultural richness has pride of place and so much to offer.

The writer, a businessman, was Brunei's representative in an Eminent Persons Group of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.



Memorandum

July 12, 1996

To: Ambassador Mondale
Rust Deming
Neil Silver
John Penfold

From: Ed Lincoln 

Re: Burma (Myanmar)

The general focus of the reporting from our Embassy in Rangoon has been on the ups and downs in the fortunes of Aung San Su Kyi. Our reporting here has focused on our official contacts with the Foreign Ministry, and MOFA has been fairly supportive of our positions (by pressing SLORC on human rights issues).

However, I think there is another picture of Japan's relationship with Burma which has escaped the official channels. While MOFA may be taking a supportive official line, Japanese business and government have been sending a very different set of signals through economic activity. Here is a brief summary of some developments this year.

- In March Kankeiren (the Kansai version of Keidanren) sent a major mission to explore Mekong Delta development, including a stop in Rangoon. This was led by the vice chairman of Marubeni Corporation, one of the largest trading companies in Japan. Marubeni is also apparently the leading Japanese investor in Burma. Earlier, in January, Marubeni signed a ¥2.6 billion (roughly \$250 million) order for construction equipment, announced as the largest business deal signed between the Burmese government and a foreign corporation. Unable to use ODA financing (since GOJ is not supplying soft loans there), Marubeni offered very generous financing terms on its own (three-year deferred payment).
- I had a conversation in May with JETRO officials who mentioned that they intend to open an office in Rangoon. The only obstacle they foresaw was Burmese insistence that JETRO be housed in the Japanese Embassy (which JETRO is resisting). At no point did they mention political sensitivities as something which might hold them back.

- In early June, Toyota Motor Corporation, through its trading company (Toyota Trading) opened a sales office in Rangoon. Opening ceremonies were attended by both Toyota Trading and high-level officials of SLORC. The propaganda newspaper in Rangoon also mentioned that Toyota donated an ambulance to the government and made money donations to both the state-run television station and radio station, actions that would probably put American firms in violation of our anti-bribery law. This occurred roughly at the point in time when SLORC was once again threatening to arrest Aung San Su Kyi and her followers if they staged a political rally.
- In early May, the Japanese press reported that ANA was applying to MOT to begin direct service between Tokyo and Rangoon. The article emphasized how much time this would save (currently only a couple of cities--Bangkok and Singapore--are the gateways into Rangoon) for Japanese travelers going to Burma. Direct service from Japan would be a major opening with political ramifications.

Japan is by no means the only country maintaining economic ties with Burma. Britain, France, Thailand, Singapore, and even U.S. firms apparently outrank Japan. in the overall amount of investment in Burma. But whereas we have put American firms under strong constraints (with stockholder pressures against involvement in Burma also mounting), there is little sense of such pressures in the press portrayal of Japan's economic relations with Burma.

Marubeni and other Japanese companies do not make any moves in a country like Burma without consultation with the GOJ. ANA may have been floating a trial balloon which MOFA would ultimately block (I have no information other than the initial press piece of its intention to file for the route to Rangoon), but it was at least willing to float such a proposal. Marubeni's generous financing terms on the construction equipment sounds very much like the result of efforts to side-step the prohibition on ODA.

To the extent that the GOJ condones or even encourages business connections with Burma, the signals which Japan is sending to SLORC are decidedly mixed. The official MOFA line and the business message seem to be contradictory. If I were in the SLORC, I would be inclined to pay more attention to the business deals. There is always the possibility that GOJ uses threats of denying such business deals as a form of leverage on SLORC, but I have strong doubts that this is the case.

From time to time, it might be helpful for our own assessment of the situation and diplomacy with Japan regarding Burma to have a better read out of the full range of Japanese activities there. An occasional search of data files is easy enough to do--FBIS can search their own translation files electronically; FBIS and others can also search Nikkei and other Japanese-language newspaper data bases. I do not know what our resources are at the Embassy in Rangoon, but even the state-run newspaper is a useful source of announcements of visiting businessmen and deals

struck. Thailand is also a factor, since some Japanese trade with Burma is routed indirectly; there is a timber trade between Burma and northern Thailand, and Japan is the likely destination for some of the timber (and timber resources are a probable major source of Japanese economic interest in Burma).

EDITORIAL

AGN 12/11/46 p.8

The full lesson of Hiroshima has not yet been learned

Men can behave both wisely and foolishly, and they learn more from their follies. Isn't that what the registration of the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima as a world cultural heritage site teaches?

The registration of the dome is an expression of the will of the world to eternally keep in a visible form the memory of the disaster of a nuclear weapon experienced by men and women.

Now that nuclear weapon tests are prohibited by the agreement of the international community and nuclear weapons are thus becoming hardly visible, we want to take the meaning of the registration as very important.

Now Japan has assumed serious responsibility. The question will be asked about what persuasive action Japan will take in the international community from now on for achieving peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons. The latest step taken by the World Heritage Committee gives a clue to the global thought on that question. We feel that there have been some changes and also some things left unchanged.

The change is that the United States, which dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, did not take any concrete steps to prevent the registration, even though it expressed opposition to the registration. Given the actions taken last year by Congress and a veterans' association that led to cancellation of an exhibition on the atomic bomb planned by the Smithsonian Institution, that was a very big change.

The conventional American position justifies the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a means to halt Japanese militarism. U.S. recognition of the A-bomb Dome as a world heritage site would negate its own stance, and the U.S. opposition must have reflected that fear.

But there has been a change, because the United States can no longer turn its eyes from the tragedy of nuclear weapons as it tries to prevent their dreadful proliferation in the Third World. The fact that a former commander of the U.S. Strategic Air Command recently published a joint statement in Washington seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons also reflects such a change.

What has not changed is the severe view of Asian countries regarding Japan's responsibility for World War II and the problems left unsettled since the end of the war. In

The view dies hard among Asian countries that Japan brings up the issue of atomic bombs simply to cover up the historical fact of its aggression.

connection with the registration of the dome, China referred to Japan's atrocities against Asian people during World War II and practically opposed the registration. ~~The view dies hard among Asian countries that Japan brings up the issue of atomic bombs simply to cover up the historical fact of its aggression.~~

That is a misunderstanding, for the victims of the bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have consistently prayed for peace, keeping in mind not only their own suffering but also the cruel experience other Asian people suffered.

But the fact that Japan has bred such a misunderstanding on the part of Asian people—and that it still exists half a century after the war—shows how deep-rooted the problem is.

Just as the A-bomb Dome—as a symbol of a negative chapter in the heritage of mankind—serves as a warning for the future, leaving the evaluation of Japan's modern history incomplete will continue to be a thorn in our side.

Arata Osada, the late professor of pedagogy at what is now Hiroshima University who compiled a book of children's essays titled "Children of an Atomic Bomb" soon after the war, often said in speeches that the dropping of atomic bombs must not be made a mere "elegy." He meant that viewing the experience of being bombed by atomic weapons simply as a tragedy will not create the power needed to bring about peace.

One of the reasons Hiroshima waged a drive to preserve the A-bomb Dome 30 years ago was the pleading of a young girl who died of acute leukemia. Before she died, she said: "Grown-ups are fools. Why did they make war and make me suffer so much?"

What message will we send to the international community that can turn Hiroshima into a meaningful legacy? Japan must start the hard work of answering that question. (Asahi Shimbun, Dec. 11)

Citizens shake politics

The voice of the ordinary person is finally getting a hearing in the halls of government.

BY TORU HAYANO

Asahi Shimbun

This year, the word "citizens" shook politics.

The appearance of Satoru Ienishi, a newly elected Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan) lawmaker who stood and spoke at the Lower House Budget Committee on Friday, left a deep impression that citizens have indeed emerged on the political scene.

When Ienishi began his comments with the following words, "I am infected with HIV," the chamber fell silent. Ienishi headed a group of plaintiffs in an Osaka lawsuit against the government and pharmaceutical companies for getting them infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, through tainted blood products.

Ienishi spoke of his dealings with the bureaucracy as an HIV patient. He said he once asked an official in the Ministry of Health and Welfare to whom he should file a petition for measures to help people who were infected with HIV by the tainted blood

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Activist candidates won seats through the new electoral systems

CITIZEN FROM PAGE 1

products they were given.

He said the official treated him rudely, saying "Why don't you find out for yourself and take it there?"

He also recounted how mortified he felt when he heard that a senior health ministry official had uttered the words "The human trash problem is over," when the AIDS prevention law was passed.

Ienishi, who spoke in a polite tone, looked like a statue accusing the bureaucracy.

After the lawsuit was settled, Ienishi made up his mind to run for the Lower House, determined to devote what's left of his time to politics. He ran in the Nara No. 1 single-seat district and lost, coming in fourth. But having filed for dual candidacy under the proportional representation system, Ienishi won a seat as the top Minshuto candidate in the Kinki block.

Making use of the propor-

tional representation system is a very good way to send "citizens" charged with major issues to the Diet. When they achieve their aim, they can go back to society as ordinary citizens. Such a system of citizen participation is good for future politics.

Kiyomi Tsujimoto, an activist with Peace Boat, an international exchange group, was also elected for the first time. He was the top candidate from the Social Democratic Party in the Kinki block in the proportional representation system.

The first thing Tsujimoto did when she moved into her room in the Diet members' office building was to get rid of the pre-installed living-room furniture.

"I had the chairs removed because I didn't want to appear arrogant sitting back on one, listening to petitioners," Tsujimoto said.

Instead, she had the furniture replaced with a large working table that people can

sit around to discuss problems. Since she bought the wood and had it made by hand, it only cost 38,000 yen. As the vice chairperson of the party's policy board, Tsujimoto is preparing a bill on the activities of nonprofit organizations.

She said she never thought being a legislator meant so much work.

During the election campaign, a newsletter published by the Social Democrats' Kinki regional chapter carried an interesting exchange of faxed messages between Tsujimoto and Hajime Takano, editor of Insider magazine.

Well known among political observers, Takano initially cooperated with Social Democrats in their efforts to form a new party. But after realizing the effort was fruitless, he threw his energy into forming Minshuto.

The following are excerpts from Takano's comments.

"I find it hard to understand why you chose to get on board

a mud boat like the Social Democratic Party this time."

"After developing a fierce battle of ideas with stupid Social Democrats for a long time, we were finally able to inaugurate Minshuto."

"Minshuto's basic philosophy, which I helped put together, contains a foothold for citizen-oriented politics by a new generation. I feel sorry that you are wasting your effort in giving a futile illusion to the Social Democratic Party, which has no choice but to dissolve for the good of society."

Tsujimoto's answers:

"It's the basic philosophy that you wrote that seems to be giving a futile illusion that people who ran away from the Social Democratic Party can accomplish something. Furthermore, I don't see citizens around Minshuto."

"With the comeback of Takako Doi, who is advocating that we start over again from scratch, we are about to make a new start as a virtually new

party under Doi. I will stake my own future on that possibility."

While the two appear to be at odds with each other, they are in fact close. Social Democrats still can't part with the old "labor union"-like mentality, which has also crept into Minshuto. Eventually, when the two parties shed this mentality, they may be destined to become one as a major "citizens" political power.

The most formidable obstacle that stands in the way of "citizens" politics is (former Prime Minister) Yasuhiro Nakasone. The following are excerpts from his election speeches.

"The 'citizens' that Naoto Kan is advocating mean intellectuals living in residential neighborhoods. The principle of citizenry is nothing more than putting up resistance against the establishment. It may be all right for opposition parties to have such an idea, but when they grow to a certain size, the idea will no

longer hold. This is because once they do, they have to think about national unity and solidarity."

"We in the Liberal Democratic Party are not citizens but the masses. We have always worked with green grocers, fish shop owners, supermarket workers and other hardworking people who sweat to make a living. Crawling on the ground has made us strong. That's the power that has supported our country."

If the LDP is really synonymous with the masses, we can't help questioning why there is such a thing as the iron triangle—politicians, bureaucrats and businesses—forming cozy relationships for selfish reasons.

At any rate, we need to watch carefully whether the word "citizens" will come to shine brighter next year.

The author is an Asahi Shimbun senior writer specializing in political affairs.



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