

THE JAPAN SCIENTISTS' ASSOCIATION

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The JSA Symposium on the Kansai Economy It was held on February 11, 2018 at Osaka Keizai University The Background and the Objectives

This symposium was held to make an economic analysis of the Kansai Economy in order to present an economic policy for this region and issue the challenges and policies for the development of the Kansai Economy.

The first report was presented by Tomohiro Okada, Professor of Economics at Kyoto University on The Structural Changes and the Trends of Reconstruction of the Kansai Economy: From the Standpoint of the Regional Economy. The region of Kansai has been strongly affected by globalization. A lot of Kansai financial institutions have gone bankrupt since the 1990s because of the burst of bubble and the capital loss of land assets. The functions of headquarters of Sumitomo/Mitsui Group in Kansai disappeared and transferred to Tokyo. This region strongly got effects of globalization and the manufacturing sectors, especially in textile and wholesale industries, weakened. Large scale metal industries in this region transferred abroad and these industries were totally restructured. Local people wanted to have good effects of construction of Kansai Airport, however the Kansai economy was stagnant by its construction. Much order from this construction was mainly received by the enterprises related to JAPIC and an enormous investment and ripple effects of this construction flowed out of Kansai to the other area and the business in Kansai didn't have good effects. The Airport Corporation ran into debt and caused the fiscal crisis of Osaka Prefecture and Izumi-Sano City. This crisis was partially caused by a weak industrial policy of local communities.

Prospects of "Kansai State" and "Osaka Metropolis" will accelerate a destruction of residents' community. The budget size of Kansai State will become huge and the projects will be big, so markets for the public will be controlled by big businesses and general constructors. Within a large State, big projects will be selected and concentrated in big businesses but small businesses will be crowded out of the markets. An inequality will be enormous between big corporations and small ones.

We should reconstruct the Kansai Economy by transferring the viewpoint from "selection and construction" to "regional continuous development." Main agents of regional economy should be on

small businesses, farmers, corporate associations, NPO, and communities. We should also use the specific resources of these communities and circulate goods and services within the communities. We should establish the rules for development of small business and public contract. We should construct our active communities against the globalization and the serious natural disasters.

The second report was presented by Tetsuo Honda, Professor of Economics at Osaka City University on The Future of Regional Industrial Policy in Osaka City: From the Growth Strategy to the Development Strategy. Last 20 years the enterprises of Osaka City have been declining, particularly small businesses which are hiring a lot of employees around Osaka City. Industrial policy of current Osaka City has focusing on the new industrial creation and a strong economic growth, and has tried to inviting enterprises to Osaka City in order to proceed to a development policy. We should not take an industrial policy based on the trickle-down theory but a regional industrial policy supporting small businesses. We will need a way of thinking how we create a lot of reforms with small businesses around Osaka City, but not create big reforms with big business located in metropolitan areas. We should focus on the supporting system for small businesses and relocate this system to the center of regional industrial policy. We will need to have a plan supporting small business which has already been done by Osaka Industrial Creation House and Osaka ward offices. We will need not evaluate the quantity of regional industrial output but formation of community, self-government, and a contribution to the culture for the development strategy of Osaka City.

On the discussion. There were 40 participants (13 membership of JSA and 27 non-membership), and Ken Yanamoto, a former member of Osaka City Assembly, Liberal Democratic Party, joined the discussion. Akira Miyagawa, Osaka Community Problem Research Institute reported on the activities of the promotion of regional economy of Suita City and Higashi-Osaka City, and had discussions from various point of views.

2018 Bikini Day (March 1), 64 years since US hydrogen bomb tests in 1954

The conference of Bikini Day was held on March 1, at Yaizu City, Shizuoka according to annual custom. 64 years ago fisher men who have been working around Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, were exposed to radiation from the nuclear bombs test. It is noticeable that such conference has established itself firmly for 64 years, and it inevitably fades with time in history.

The conference of this year is the first Bikini Day since the Nuclear Weapons Convention was adopted, and ICAN, nongovernmental organization promoting global civic movements for nuclear disarmament, has been awarded a Nobel Prize for peace. Japanese ban-the-bomb movement, undoubtedly having accumulated experiences, needs to develop corresponding to such global circumstances.

Facing the situation that the experiences of atomic bombing victims are sinking into oblivion, so as to expand the support parties of the Nuclear Weapons Convention, it will be a focus in future to debate

the line in which we could inherit such experiences and spread them with ethical influence around civil society in global.

Certainly we cannot take the status around peace in Japan easily, we shall be obliged to assume the severe aspect of affairs as well. The nuclear strategy of U.S. climbed down according to 2018 Nuclear Posture Review under the unstable and opaque Trump Administration. Our global civil society is steadily advancing towards nuclear-free world. The Bikini Day gave us a chance to reconfirm these things.

Many people from every region of the country attended the conference, the memorial service before the grave, and joined the peace march. From flags seen in the procession young participants could be found. It is hoped for young people to partake in such events to know the facts of disaster and exposure and to be successors. The Bikini Day is ranked as a kick-off event of World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs organized in every summer. I felt the necessity to rethink a suitable position of Scientists' Forum against A&H Bombs (organized by JSA) in the whole ban-the-bomb movements.

In addition it is necessary to rethink the role of JSA in the scientists' movements. As far as it goes, while JSA Shizuoka branch plays a central role as executive committee, showing its presence, JSA head office cannot completely deal with state of affairs. The first experience at the conference taught me many things and cast new light on the role of JSA in peace movement. It was a meaningful opportunity to me.

(H. Kitamura, JSA Social Action Dep.)

ACTIVITIES OF RESEARCH COMMITTEES AND GROUPS

The JSA headquarters organizes a number of research committees and groups undertaken on a nationwide scale, which are encouraging the members across the country

1) MR ABE'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY DETERIORATES QUALITY

'Future Investment Strategy' of Abenomics' Growth Strategy (Cabinet Decision of June, 2017) subtitled 'Society 5.0 Realization' positioned the science and technology policy as driving force of growth strategy by the business community that intends the realizing of social reform by technological innovation. The growth strategy aims to "expand research, development and investment in public and private sectors" and also aims to carry out "university reform" including strengthening governance, in order to pour government investment and private fund to the university.

The science and technology policy is being promoted along the lines of the Fifth Science and Technology Basic Plan (2016-20) and the comprehensive science and technology innovation strategy which has been formulated annually from FT2013. As the science and technology policy is incorporated into the growth strategy, from the process of the FT2018 budget formulation, review of the extent of science and technology budget, confirmation of results based on evidence has advanced, and emphasis on national security has also established.

It is also conceived to formulate a “comprehensive innovation strategy”. The science and technology and academic policy that regulate higher education institutions are now under great crisis. The committee for science and technology policy has cooperated with symposiums organized by the JSA academic organization department and systematically analyzes the situation of science and technology and reports on it to the regular general meeting (2017). The committee also made the critical report on the comprehensive strategy (2017) and the science and technology policy (2017). The committee is hoping to utilize them by JSA members and branches to establish precise science and technology policies and academic policy.

2) ACTIVITIES OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE OF FOODSTUFF PROBLEMS

The research committee comprises 18 committees under the board with a chair and 4 board members, having decided activity contents to discuss multilateral themes concerning foods and agriculture changing drastically in our society. Until the fiscal year of 2016 the committee has held open regular meetings with timely themes: TPP proceeded at secret talks not disclosing to the general public, a new agreement of service trade, relaxation of regulation of imported food additives accelerated by the demand of US companies, and agriculture changed at areas stricken by the Great East Japan Earthquake and affected by radiation contamination.

The committee has adopted a policy to conduct field study since the fiscal year of 2017 as inspection of agriculture-welfare cooperation site in Saitama Prefecture and farmer-fresh shop organized by farmers and co-op in Chiba Prefecture. In the situation of Japanese rapid aging, at Funahashi agricultural commodity supply center, which has been run for 43 years, organic agriculture without using agrichemical or chemical fertilizer has been developed so as to cater to consumers’ safety aspiration. The project to amuse culture jointed with agriculture is planned, e.g. a concert held using the bamboo thicket at the shop center. There is the company of consumers with farmers, and young farmers became brought up. We are at the moment to investigate this center to shed light on the ideal situation of Japanese agriculture.

The committee also resumed an open study meeting with the theme “Declaration on the rights of people working in farming villages and family farming” inviting Mr. Okazaki (director, intl. affairs dep., Japan Family Farmers Movement “NOUMINREN”) on April 28, where the significance of a UN draft of “Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas” and the aim and subject of “the UN decade (2019-2028) of family farming” were explained, and discussion on Japanese agriculture relating to UN reports was done.

3) THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE FOR FEMALE RESEARCHERS AND TECHNICIANS

The Global Gender Gap Report ranked Japanese gender gap index (measure of gender inequalities) 114th place in 144 countries, the worst-ever ranking. The dropping is perhaps mainly because of paucity of women in the political sphere, partly because of low level in the economic field as well. That there are few women specialists or technician is thought as one of the central causes.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has carried out ‘Program to supporting research activities of female researchers’ in the period of years 2006-2014, in 2017 MEXT

offered a new program ‘Initiative for the implementation of the diversity research environment’ so as to support and develop the activities of female researchers. Owing to these programs we find an achievement, female teaching staff has increased in number at universities by bits. In comparison to 30 years before, the environment around female researchers and technicians has been ameliorated, while regrettably still remaining lower than a quarter of the world level.

The committee has an attempt to collect the environment of female researchers and technicians and clarify what is difficult for them. The matter of childbirth and childcare is known as an obstacle to their work. Is it really the case in present Japan that through only the solution of such a matter a female as a researcher could fight with males on the equal footing basis? The committee thinks that doubtful, and is preparing an intensive investigation on what hampers participation of females in public affairs.

DISTRICTS’ AND BRANCHES’ ACTIVITIES

The JSA consists of 47 branches which are grouped into 9 districts, and they are independently and/or cooperatively carrying out their activities in addition to the headquarters' ones

1) DISCUSSION ON PREPARATIONS FOR SEDIMENT DISASTERS

Commemorating 50 years since the sediment disaster of Rokko Mountain of 1967, JSA Hyogo branch has planned citizens’ fora ‘Scientific Study on disaster prevention and disaster risk reduction’ and held the first forum in Kobe City on Sept 30, 2017. OKIMURA Takashi (professor emeritus Kobe Univ.) delivered a lecture prior to discussions

Summary of lecture: “Sediment”

(1) Slope failure, landslide, and avalanche of rocks and earth are listed as sediment disasters. The number of cases of the avalanche of rocks and earth in Japan has been increasing in the past 10 years (frequent severe rains). In the Rokko mountain range, there were avalanches of rocks and earth in July 1938, June 1961, and July 1967 with serious damages. The state, prefecture and Kobe City have constructed soil-saving dikes and conducted afforestation projects since 1938, but the number of completed debris barriers is 59% of the plan of 1938.

(2) The following are derived from comparison of disasters in 1938 and 1967. (a) While the number of collapses are about the same, the collapse area changed from 600 ha to 225 ha. (b) The outflow of earth and sand to urban area decreased from 548 m³ to 59 m³. (c) While disaster cases along large rivers, countermeasures for which have progressed, was less, those along mid to small rivers were unchanged. (d) Collapse cases of houses caused by failures of small steep slopes forming borders to urban areas were many.

(3) So far, the rainfall strengths were classified in 4 levels from 5 mm/h to 30 mm/h; recently rainfalls of over 50 mm/h or 80 mm/h are increasing. Since the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, emphasis on viewpoint of ‘disaster risk reduction’ has been posed in addition to ‘disaster prevention.’ Sediment disaster prone areas have been designated accordingly. There are risks of considerable disasters if such heavy rains of recent years fall in the Rokko mountain range. Local communities should independently deal with emergency countermeasures and daily preparations.

There were active discussions after the lecture. The branch is planning to continue the discussion as study of extraordinary climates and rights of victims. (Katsuhisa HIROMORI)

2) AUTUMN SEMINAR OF GUNMA BRANCH “SEXUALITY, GENDER, FREEDOM”

KOTANI Hideo (member of JSA) delivered a speech; dichotomy of normal/ abnormal in sense of sexual identification of human is imprinted from social environments. It is incompatible with the idea of man/ woman/ another. Such ways of thinking that “It is because she is a woman” when she made an error originate from coined man consciousness. Women’s issues are ‘men’s issues.’

Where does gender difference, for instance, the idea of “predominance of man over woman,” come from? Many of them arise from main production structure of the society. Man, in hunter, and woman in farming societies, are predominant. In the capitalism society, those who have higher productivity or higher ability to yield profit have advantage.

The affirmative action plans of US have schemes to inflate scores of minorities in school entrance and promotion in workplace. Granting special right of leave for women in Japan falls in such category. However, it results in incentive to employ males as it imposes burden to employers. I have hit upon a term ‘*negative action*’ (my naming). It is to obligate men of some years of age to take some term of leave of absence; to impose handicap to men, i.e., enforce equality of working ability among genders.

‘Imposing handicap to men in workplace’ provides more opportunities to for men in family lives and relations with community. Important for human to grow as an individual are to do housework, child care, and to associate with community people. It is a matter of significance of being for men when then referred to as ‘good when husband is vigor and absent’ or ‘a bulky refuse.’ Rather than growing female warriors in workplaces, let us aim for a society where we can expect rich character-building for both genders. I propose *negative action* for that

(HIGUCHI Kazuhiko, former lawyer)

3) STUDY MEETING AT JSA KYOTO BRANCH: AT A CROSSROAD OF THE CONSTITUTION: WHAT IS THE ABE ADMINISTRATION? – ITS SURFACE AND DEPTHS

A study Meeting of Kyoto Branch was held at the Kyoto Lifelong Learning Center (Kyoto ‘Asunii’) on January 8th. Tasaki Motoi, a Kanagawa Shimbun Newspaper correspondent, was invited for lecture on the constitutional revision by the Abe administration. The heated meeting, including discussions and group works, was lasted three-and-a-half hours.

Tasaki began by explaining what constitutionalism is and the predictable revision and its background.

The constitutionalism constitutes the basis of the Constitution of Japan. It limits state power, protects people’s rights and freedom and protects human rights. There are four purposes of constitutional revision: to stipulate the Self-Defense Forces in newly added paragraph 3 of Article 9, to make higher education tuition-free, to declare a state of national emergency, and to resolve emerged constituencies of parliamentary election. Only constitutional revision, among these items, rather than

responding by revision to the law, is considered to make the stipulation of SDF possible. In this case the Article 9 is to be maintained and while a new paragraph is added.

This poses a problem that strict definitions of items such as the scope of self-defense, court-martial, civilian control and finances are not to be provided while these must be specified in case that only addition of a new provision be intended. Thus, while the status quo is recognized, the right to exercise collective defense is to be stipulated. Furthermore, it is pointed out that by making it constitutional, the finances, equipment and the three non-nuclear principles become in danger of going unchecked with financial control disempowered. The military-academia collaboration could also be uncontrollable.

In the group discussion session, topics such as boosting discussions through SNS, having frequent study meetings of interactive type, rather than one-way lecture type, taking advantage of constitution café' and utilization of approaches or systems wherewith successful civil movements, such as 'anti Osaka metropolis initiative' were carried out, were offered. (Reported by Sakon Takuo)

4) SESSION "THE LINEAR CHŪŌ SHINKANSEN PROBLEM"

On December 9-10, 2017 the Tokyo branch organized a session on the problem of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen Maglev Line in the 19th Tokyo Scientific Symposium, where the problem was discussed and experiences against the maglev line were exchanged. Dr. Osada (repr. JSA study committee of the Linear Shinkansen problem) reviewed JSA's attack on the problem and posed the future direction of activities. The defendant JR Tokai submitted a written answer to the court for the plaintiff's claim that the construction permission is illegal, which states nothing substantial behind a cloak of broad discretion. He said, we need to build up the movement through more substantial and faithful arguments, clarify the points of issue to expand understanding of the public.

Mr. Yamakawa (technician, mountain tunnel construction) indicated problematic points of actors, and safety and environmental restoration, digging out the gut issue of the maglev line project. Mr. Amano (repr. Network of Residents Living along the Linear Shinkansen) verified the difficulty of such large construction that needs 30 years for linking Shinagawa in Tokyo and Osaka with cost estimated around ¥9 trillion through considering countermeasures against underwater decrement, excavated soil disposal, and earthquake. He warned that the Southern Alps would incur irreparable damages from the construction ignoring anxiety of residents and the local government.

Mr. Nakano (Sagamihara Liaison Meeting to Think of the Linear Shinkansen) raised a question why the Linear Shinkansen needs, and technical issue points about environmental destruction, the energy wastage, measures in case of accident in tunnel, and expressed suspiciousness concerning superconducting magnetic levitation linear motor car propelling system. Mr. Nakano (Musashino section, Tokyo branch) indicated a contradiction of the JR Tokai's assertion arranging data on health hazards caused by magnetic field. Attorney Sekishima explained the progress and feature of the case "Stop the Linear Shinkansen", its legal points of controversy, and issue points in the assertion of the Government and JR Tokai.

On January 19, 2018, at 8th oral proceedings, residents in Tokyo and Kawasaki talked about fear of drought at a deep underground tunnel in Ota ward, detection of arsenic exceeding the allowable limits set

by the Environment Ministry, the effect on welfare and educational facilities near Higashi-Yurigaoka Station, and requested to give up the project.

5) PROBLEMS OF TOP GLOBAL UNIVERSITY PROJECT

On January 24 the JSA Hiroshima branch held a tea party, where the Hiroshima University's current state since selected as a target of Top Global University Project (SGU briefly used in Japan) was discussed with 20 participants including local news reporters.

SGU is a funding began by the Japanese government in 2014 as university reform. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) selected 37 universities from national, public, and private universities in Japan for the project. As for reforms in Hiroshima University since it was selected out, warped aspects have arisen in the minds of staff and students. Because of allowing less time for discussion on a series of jobs for reform, teaching staff are kept busy and become spiritless by, which makes them dream of a career change. Administrative staff became still busier and students lose digestion and felt more discontented.

At the beginning the branch organizing committee posed the following issue points: 1) the term system and lecture in English; 2) pressure of business and reduced budget owing to SGU; 3) research ability declining as SGU proceeds; 4) Hiroshima University's administration.

Subsequently a vivid argument was done. Many participants indicated a gap between the aim of SGU and actual status, and expressed critical sentiments that college administration impels teaching and administrative staffs waving the banner of the achieving of numerical target SGU set.

Although the half of implementation period is not over yet, MEXT-led university reforms such as SGU doubtlessly produce conflict not only in Hiroshima University but in other universities. It is desired for JSA as a nationwide body to clarify the issue points of university reform from above, which bring transfiguration and quality degradation to our university.

6) MINI-COURSE OF HEALTH AS WORKERS' HUMAN RIGHTS AND BASIC RIGHTS AT YAMAGUCHI BRANCH OF JSA

The ninth session of the mini-course was held in the afternoon on March 31st (Sat) with Arita Kenji of Seinan Gakuin University as a speaker on the campus of Yamaguchi University.

Here is his speech as summarized below.

He sees issues as human rights of working people as well as of sole proprietors who are exempt from the Labor Standards Act. Although Japan's Labor Standards Act is based upon the second paragraph of Article 27 of the Constitution, it leaves some ambiguities. He then wants to interpret the rights to the upper limit of labor hours and to safety and health as the basic rights on the basis of labor conditions specified in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1966 and ratified by Japan in 1976, as well as the working conditions defined in the EU Charter. In short, the second paragraph of Article 27 of the Constitution should be interpreted so as to comply with requirements of the Covenant and a legislation should be made accordingly. Also, the rights to safety and health as a basic law must be guaranteed to all workers as thoroughly as possible.

The government is just about to submit a bill purporting to be “Work Style Reform”. This bill was drafted in a very short time and, as it turned out, the intended expansion of the Discretionary Labor System for Management-related Work was withdrawn due to defectiveness of the reality data on which the bill was based on. However there still remain big problems commencing with establishment of “highly professional system”. Among them are: 1. the right to upper limit of labor hours is not guaranteed whereas what is really needed is to ensure rationalization of work load; 2. essentially required legal systems are not established and the “working time interval regulation” system remains to be only a “make effort” regulation, and 3. even as outsourcing of operations becomes increasingly popular, guarantees of basic rights for self-employed workers are not considered.

In the first place, most of work-style reforms can be accomplished by revising cabinet orders under the existing law. Viewpoints as represented by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare such as health as human rights and basic rights of workers are largely lacking and instead what is now highlighted is the line of thinking as represented by Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry which is characteristic of policies of current administration.

In the Q&A session, subjects such as roles and importance of labor unions and the necessity of monitoring were discussed.

(Reported by Mashiyama Hiroyuki)