

The Internalization of The Cold War in Japan

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Introduction

The year 1960 was an tumultuous one in postwar Japanese history. Millions took part in violent demonstrations throughout the country. Members of the ruling conservative party saw "the writing on the wall" warning of a leftist revolution that would overthrow society and all that had been built up after the disaster of the war. The riots and uproar were sparked by the ratification of the revised version of the Japan-US Security Treaty, which had been signed in 1951 as an important element of the postwar agreement on the terms for peace between the former enemies. The revision of the security treaty had been worked out during year-long negotiations. After a stormy debate in the parliament and serious breaches of the peace, the revised treaty was ratified, but the one who was singled out as responsible for the tumult, Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke, was confronted by the wrath of a unanimous press and public opinion and had to step down.

A decade later, the revised security treaty was due to be prolonged, renegotiated or abrogated. The political temperature rose with the approach of 1970. Newspapers and opinion polls evinced a people nervously waiting for what would happen. Would the riots of 1960 repeat themselves? Pondering over international affairs, a group of journalists and scholars assembled in January 1970 to discuss the role of journalists during a four-day symposium. A number of well-known Japanese and foreign journalists were invited as rapporteurs, but the first to enter the scene after the opening speech was a scholar, Koosaka Masataka, professor of international relations at Kyoto University. Talking on the topic of "International Politics and Japan in An Era of Change," he analyzed international trends and developments and traced their impact on Japan. He

argued that military power could no longer be used as a means of solving conflicts and that the era of peace based on the balance of terror was over. According to Koosaka, the era of Cold War had been replaced by the era of "international domestic war," i.e. a war that was not a reflection of the international cold war being waged between the superpower blocs, but one with roots in domestic factors such as overpopulation, the food problem, and the generation gap. A totally new approach to international politics was now necessary, according to Koosaka.¹

What made Koosaka, who was not only a well-known political scientist but also an influential opinion leader, argue that the gap between generations had become one of the key factors behind "the domestic war" was only too obvious. Two years earlier the international student revolt had shaken not only the countries of Western Europe but also Japan. Waves of violence had swept over the Asian country. Riots and demonstrations made headlines virtually every day.

At the beginning of 1970, when the riots of 1968 were still fresh in people's memories, and with new riots feared to be pending, the "international domestic war" described by Koosaka seemed to make some sense: the uproar of 1960 had been sparked by a foreign policy issue - the revision of the security treaty with the United States - and the riots and demonstrations of 1968 were also attributed primarily to the protests by young Japanese against the US war in Vietnam, even if they were also demonstrating against a society that they viewed as rotten. But 1970 came and went, and, to the surprise of many, nothing happened: the riots of 1960 over the security treaty were not repeated.

With the benefit of hindsight it is easy to see that Koosaka's view was an overreaction. Despite his credentials as an eminent analyst of contemporary world affairs and an outspoken commentator on domestic politics, he seems to have misunderstood the essence of the "international domestic war" that it was reasonable to claim had actually taken place in postwar Japan. It originated much earlier than 1968, the parties to this "war" were not youth versus the establishment, but the ruling circles against the opposition forces; and its main figure was a hero of Koosaka, Yoshida Shigeru, Japanese prime minister in 1946-47 and 1948-54.

What can be called the Japanese "domestic cold war" originated in the country's defeat in the Second World War. Defeat led to the

second opening of the country, the first having taken place in 1853 when it accepted Admiral Perry's demands that Japan end its centuries of isolation.² The opening after the war meant that the country exposed itself not only to a heavy influx of foreign ideas, but also to conflicts bred on other continents and in other cultures. The foremost Japanese authority on the occupation period, Tokyo University Professor Igarashi Takeshi, has written of such a "domestic cold war" in postwar Japan that was a domestic reflection of the Cold War being waged between the US and the Soviet blocs.³

The occupation of Japan has recently been reassessed by American and Japanese scholars in an extensive research project. Their final report, which was published in 1987 under the title *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, was edited by the dean of American historians of Japan, Robert E. Ward of Stanford University, and one of the foremost Japanese authorities on postwar Japanese history, Sakamoto Yoshikazu of Tokyo University.⁴ In his own contribution to the report, "The International Context of the Occupation of Japan," Sakamoto discusses the linkage between international and domestic factors in the creation of the setting for Japan's postwar policies. He argues that the allied occupation of Japan "transfused the Cold War confrontations of Europe and of Asia into Japan, but it did not directly reflect the international confrontation. It was 'deflected' through the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers [SCAP], General Douglas MacArthur in particular."⁵

Thus, Sakamoto argues that the Cold War dividing the world into two antagonistic blocs was brought into Japan by SCAP, and he gives the credit for this to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, General MacArthur. The purpose of the present paper is to show that Sakamoto has underestimated the important role that Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru played in the outbreak of "the domestic cold war" of postwar Japan. By introducing new conflicts into the Japanese polity, and by exacerbating conflicts that already existed within the Japanese political system, conflicts which in many cases did not have domestic roots but originated outside of Japan, Yoshida locked postwar Japanese party politics into a cage of bitter conflicts that only gradually subsided.

A Ruler of His Time

Yoshida Shigeru occupied the post of prime minister for seven years and two months, an exceptionally long period for a premier in Japan. At the time he took office, he had behind him a distinguished career as a diplomat. Initially, his rise to power had been blocked by the Americans, but they later endorsed him as prime minister. As he was an outsider to the parties and lacked a footing in Japanese party politics, he based his position mainly on support from the occupation authorities. A symbiotic relationship between Yoshida and the de facto ruler of Japan during the occupation, General MacArthur, soon evolved. Early on, the US authorities had decided to make use of the Japanese government and authorities in the execution of policy changes in the occupied country, and MacArthur used the Japanese government and the prime minister as his instruments in the implementation of his policies. But Yoshida was also able to use the SCAP for his own purposes. He would blame the occupation authorities for reforms and changes that were unpopular, thus avoiding having to take responsibility for implementing necessary but unpopular policies. This pattern of dependence, which continued throughout Yoshida's tenure as prime minister, had been established by the time Yoshida formed his first government in 1946.⁶ According to Masumi Junnosuke, "Yoshida maintained his hold on the government because of the backing of MacArthur; MacArthur executed the transformation of US Japan policy through his hold over Yoshida."⁷

As prime minister, Yoshida negotiated with the United States and succeeded in ending the allied occupation of Japan by accepting conditions prescribed by the war victors. With the signing of the Japan-US Security Treaty in San Francisco in the aftermath of the war (1951), he allied his country firmly to its former foe and gave the United States the right to maintain military bases in Japan even after that country had regained its sovereignty. Yoshida accepted far-reaching limitations of Japanese sovereignty which met the wrath of the nationalists. What annoyed them most, perhaps, was the fact that it was actually Yoshida who had proposed the stationing of foreign troops on Japanese soil. His lack of a footing in party politics made him vulnerable to attacks by his political foes inside and outside of his party once MacArthur was gone. A few short years after Yoshida had returned home in triumph from the San Francisco

peace negotiations, he had to exit the political scene through the back door. He "was hounded from office under a hail of brickbats from both conservatives and progressives, who agreed, if on little else, that the prime minister was an autocrat who had bartered true independence for US security guarantees."⁸

Yoshida and his policies continued to exert a pervasive influence on foreign policy in the decades to come. The path to national recovery that he chose was one of alignment with the Western bloc, reliance on the Japan-US security arrangements for defense, and concentration on economic development, and it became the basis of the so-called mainstream conservatism that has dominated Japanese government ever since.⁹ There was little room for Japan to pursue any independent diplomatic initiative, as the country had to act within the San Francisco political framework.¹⁰

In the mid-sixties, Koosaka started a drive for the rehabilitation of Yoshida. He published a large number of articles arguing for this cause, and when he compiled his articles in a book, it became a bible of sorts for Yoshida fans, whose number rapidly increased.¹¹ Several factors were highlighted in the campaign to rehabilitate Yoshida. One was the reassessment of the postwar system that had begun to take place in Japan. In the face of such great changes in world politics as the US setback in Vietnam and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, a need was perceived for a fresh look at Japan's security arrangements thirty years after the signing of the US-Japan Security Treaty. As Yoshida was responsible for the treaty and considered the "father" of the postwar domestic system, it was natural that he himself come under scrutiny.¹² Another reason for the revival of interest in Yoshida was that the economic success which the country was experiencing was attributed to Yoshida's postwar system. Yoshida was identified with the economism which had become the driving force behind the leap from economic recovery to rapid growth.¹³ One scholar summarized a view held by many in the following way: "The Yoshida system made the rapid economic development of the postwar period possible. It enabled Japan, a country with 0.3 per cent of the world's land area and 3 per cent of the world's population to reach a situation where it now produces 10 per cent of the world's GNP."¹⁴ A third factor was connected with a nostalgic yearning for his leadership on the part of a Japanese public that was now being governed by grey figures like Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkoo and other contemporary politicians.¹⁵ Yoshida's style

contrasted starkly with what Henry Kissinger has described as the "understated" and "anonymous" style of those leaders who have represented Japan internationally.¹⁶ Koosaka was not alone in arguing that Yoshida's policies had been beneficial for Japan, and that he had been unusually far-sighted. Koosaka argued that Yoshida's choice of policy line proved to be a most adequate one for Japan, and that the basic soundness of his foreign policy persisted, because it was "a remarkably wise (though unconscious) adaptation to the new realities of world politics in general and to the basic international position of Japan in particular."¹⁷

The words of Koosaka and other devoted Yoshida followers did not fall on deaf ears. The negative image of Yoshida gradually changed, and by his death in 1967 he was no longer generally reviled but instead generally respected. Many Japanese saw him as "the father of postwar Japan." The antagonistic view of Yoshida and his policies which was adopted by many of his contemporaries, and which had forced him to leave office, was definitely on the wane. The rehabilitation of Yoshida continued after his death. The end of the 1970's saw the beginning of what was soon to be called a "Yoshida boom" in Japan which continued in the 1980s. This reassessment was a lopsided one, however, as it was based on such factors as Yoshida's "strong" leadership and role in laying the foundations of the economically impressive postwar Japanese system, and overlooked the conflicts referred to at the outset of this paper, which were also part of the Yoshida legacy.

The Internalization of the Cold War in Postwar Japan

In any given polity, conflicts are unavoidable insofar as they represent legitimate clashes of interests, and they are at the center of the political arena in a parliamentary democracy. Different interests are aggregated in parties competing in the electoral arena. In many cases, the immediate reasons for interest aggregation are pork-barrel matters, but political issues such as ideological differences are also common bones of contention. In Japan after the war, as in any country, some of the contemporary conflicts were part of the historical legacy of earlier periods. The problem of conflicts lingering on from prewar times was particularly apparent in the early postwar period. Bitter conflicts in postwar politics originating in the years

prior to or during the war set their mark on Yoshida's time in office. Contrasting affiliations with Seiyuukai or Minseitoo, the major prewar parties, had a pervasive impact on the politics of the early postwar period.

After the war, when the new democratic system was being established, many of the politicians who came to prominence had been active before and during the war. A large number of them were purged by the occupation authorities. With the intensification of the Cold War, the United States shifted its policy from one of trying to break up the foundations of Japanese militarism to one of trying to rebuild Japan and make it a bastion against communism. This policy reversal was also linked to a shift in policy towards those members of the Japanese establishment who had been involved in the Japanese war machine.

Nearly a hundred thousand politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen, who had been purged for wartime activities, gradually returned to public life and demanded a place in the sun again. A number of leaders from prewar times immediately turned against Yoshida, whom they viewed as having usurped power in coming into politics as an outsider. Strangely enough, the political foes that challenged Yoshida's grip on power were often members of the party that Yoshida chaired.

Most conflicts in the early postwar period were of contemporary rather than historical origin, however. Some of the conflicts in postwar Japan were created by Yoshida in the sense that he chose solutions to political problems that damaged the vital interests of some quarters of society, some political party or party faction or some politician or group of politicians. One can also find cases in which Yoshida exacerbated an already existing conflict. With the fading away of conflicts that had originated before and during the war, conflicts originating in the postwar period took over the scene of contentions. Many of them related to Japan's relationship to the United States. The US had been planning its policies towards a defeated Japan before its capitulation, planning how Japan was to be integrated into the US defense system. In a program of 1944, the United States clearly spelled out its postwar objectives. These were two: "(a) Japan must be prevented from being a menace to the United States and the other countries of the Pacific area; (b) American interests require that there be in Japan a government which will

respect the rights of other states and Japan's international obligations."¹⁸

Yoshida's treatment of these goals is significant. In his memoirs, he notes that "these objectives were, in essence, our own, from the moment the war had ended. Thus the fact emerged that, from the point of view of objectives, at least, we Japanese and the Occupation were in agreement."¹⁹ In other words, Japan took its cue from the outside world in adopting its foreign policy goals: the two broad objectives of the occupying forces became those of Japan as well. But in Yoshida's eyes, Japan had no choice.²⁰ Japan's geographical position and demographic and industrial character made it vulnerable, and Yoshida continued the century-old search for a reliable ally or protector among the Western powers.²¹ As Japan had pursued and lost a war of aggression and had thereby forfeited the trust of the international community as well, Yoshida saw his foreign policy as necessary for a defeated country that would not be permitted to rebuild its military power, if Japan was to be able to return to international society. In the face of the massive military power of the US and the Soviet Union, it was neither possible nor particularly meaningful to maintain an independent military power, and neutralism was unrealistic in the Cold War conflict of the superpowers.

The overriding goal for Yoshida during the occupation period was to overcome the national disgrace that the occupation constituted. The occupation "effectively meant that Japan became an American dependency, little different except in scale from the colonial territories of the US or the West European states."²² Yoshida settled on the policy of being "a good loser" as that most effective in reaching this goal, and pursued an active policy designed to impress upon the West that Japan was willing to adapt to changed circumstances.²³ He saw his task as being to do his best in a situation in which he had no power to object to policies and acts that he deeply resented. "Being a good loser does not mean saying yes to everything the other party says; still less does it mean saying yes and going back on one's word later. It was obviously important to co-operate with the Occupation authorities to the best of one's power," Yoshida stated in his memoirs. His policy towards the occupation authorities was "to say whatever I felt needed saying, and to accept what transpired."²⁴ Despite the fact that he was prime minister, Yoshida had often no say in the making of decisions. As the

changes instituted by SCAP were intended to reshape Japanese society completely, it is no wonder that they clashed with the wishes of well-established centers of powers in Japan. Consequently, Yoshida had no choice but to clash with those interests himself if he wanted to remain in office.

The constitution is one example of a radical change instituted by the occupation authorities, and was to be a focal point for national distress and conflict from the day of its inception. Vocal support for the constitution, and, in particular, for the literal interpretation of Article 9, has been the main battle cry of the opposition parties throughout the postwar period.²⁵

In the heady idealism that immediately followed victory, the US occupation authorities embodied in the constitution the idea that power politics had been one of the roots of the war and endeavored to eradicate this force. General MacArthur's objective was to institute a "complete reformation of the Japanese people - reformation from human slavery to human freedom, from immaturity that comes of mythical teachings and legendary ritualism to the maturity of enlightened knowledge and truth, from the blind fatalism to the considered realism of peace."²⁶

In his memoirs, Yoshida notes that it was clear the moment Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration that a need for a revision of the Meiji constitution would arise sooner or later.²⁷ Yoshida had been among those Japanese who fought with dogged determination to avoid the thorough rewriting of the 1889 constitution that the US authorities demanded after the war, but who lost and had to watch while SCAP wrote a new constitution. As premier, it was Yoshida's task to present the constitution to which he had vehemently objected, and which he had tried to prevent from coming into existence, as a result of the work of his government. He therefore publicly denied that the constitution was forced on Japan. "Speaking from my own experience as one of those responsible for its drafting," he wrote in his memoirs, "I cannot entirely agree with the statements that this postwar Constitution was forced upon us."²⁸ And throughout his life he continued to be publicly loyal to the article that he had tried to hinder, and later wrote that he had "always held the view that Article 9 -the renunciation-of-war clause- does not need to be amended. And I still adhere to that view."²⁹

Yoshida Shigeru and Conflict

As prime minister, it was up to Yoshida to take upon himself and his government the responsibility for executing the changes that were to be made in the Japanese social and political fabric -changes which were decided not by the Japanese themselves but by US authorities. The Japanese government simply had to implement whatever the occupation authorities decided. The choice, if there was one, was not one for Japan to make. Thus, even if Yoshida was accused by his contemporaries of being responsible for decisions, in most cases he had no say and could not be held responsible for them. The main conflict lines of postwar Japanese politics were drawn by political decisions made, not by the Japanese and their representatives, but by others.

This fact is not to say, however, that many of the policies devised and acts taken by Yoshida himself did not contribute to the polarization of Japanese politics and heightened general political tensions. On the contrary. Under Yoshida, Japan experienced a sharp polarization between left and right. Many of his policies were based on resistance to communism and the labor movement. Having pursued policies which benefited the labor movement in the initial stages of the occupation, SCAP adopted a changed stance with the rapid growth of the movement and its threat of a general strike. General MacArthur warded off the general strike and began a drive to root out leftist elements. The United States drastically altered its Japan policy in 1947-48 from one of containing Japanese militarism to one of transforming Japan into an industrially strong ally with bases from which US forces could operate effectively to contain communist forces nearby.³⁰ Yoshida saw no reason for objecting to the new policy, and followed suit. He perceived the communist threat as real and thought that what Japan should fear most was the possibility of a Communist revolution following defeat.³¹ His government initiated a purge of the Japan Communist Party leadership followed by the so-called Red Purge which was instituted, as the prime minister himself put it, to drive "Communists and their sympathizers from Government posts, press and industries."³²

The conflict between conservatives and leftist forces, which both was symbolized by and centered around the constitution that renounced war, was worsened by Yoshida's severely anti-leftist policies. When the Cold War began in around 1947-48, Japan's

leaders, with Yoshida among them, quickly decided to follow the lead of the advanced Western countries. There was little time differential between the adoption of hard-line policies vis-à-vis the USSR by Western countries and adaptation to these major shifts on the part of the Japanese elites.³³ The basis was the anti-communism that was the guiding star of US policy, and it was adopted by the Japanese leadership as national policy. Yoshida noted in his memoirs: "There can be no question to which of the two world camps -free or Communist- we are committed."³⁴ In retrospect Reinhard Drifte has laconically commented: "Japan's conservative leaders had few difficulties in accepting the 'cold war world', as they had no sympathy with communism at home or abroad."³⁵

Yoshida linked the activities of the Japanese communists directly to the threat to vital national interests posed by the world communist movement. In his memoirs he wrote: "Unfortunately, Japan's outward prosperity, and the vitality of our people which made this possible, have attracted the notice of Communist lands, and their efforts to draw Japan into their own camp and away from the free world have redoubled in persistence of late. The rivalry existing between the two world camps today may make this seem a natural state of affairs, but the Japanese people appear to me to be dangerously complacent in regard to the possible effect which Communist propaganda might come to exercise in our country."³⁶ In July 1952 he tried to establish his own variation of the US House of Representatives Un-American Activities Committee.³⁷ A Subversive Activities Prevention Law was passed, and provided many of the control powers of its occupation period analogue. Many on the left fought Yoshida's proposed measures as representing a new version of the repressive Peace Preservation Law of 1925. The onus for such measures shifted after 1952 from the allied occupation authorities to the Japanese conservatives themselves with the consequence being that Yoshida could no longer hide behind the occupation authorities and blame them for unpopular policies. All the pent-up wrath that had been directed against the occupation powers now hit Yoshida with full force. He tried for a while to resist, but soon had to resign as prime minister.

The most important factor in the fall of Yoshida, however, lurked in what was also his greatest triumph: the signing of the San Francisco treaties, which brought the occupation to an end. Yoshida handled this issue in such a way as to aggravate the division which

the campaign against the labor movement had created between the ruling party and the opposition forces. The protracted negotiations over the peace treaty had eventually led to an agreement. At the end of the negotiation process, however, the United States and the Soviet Union were not in agreement over the terms. Two options crystallized: Japan seemed to have the choice of signing either a "total" peace treaty with all its former enemies or a "partial" peace treaty that excluded the Soviet Union. Yoshida chose the latter option, immediately antagonizing broad strata of people in Japan, who were eager to end whatever smacked of the military and militarism and objected strenuously to anything other than a "total" peace. Even the bureaucracy of the Foreign Ministry, wholly under Yoshida's control, contained pockets of discontent.³⁸

Yoshida had to pay a price for the peace treaty, and to thus be able to bring a demeaning occupation to an end. In an assessment made by the foremost authority on modern Japanese diplomatic history, Uchiyama Masakuma, a number of reasons for the resistance to the security treaty that Yoshida was responsible for are given. According to the security treaty, the author wrote in 1980,

"Japan is a countrywide military base for the United States from the strategical point of view. Japan's situation puts it in just the vanguard of the anti-Communist defense line of the American Forces. Superficially, Japan is an independent country, but since the defeat in war and American occupation and its sequel, actually she is a vassal state of the U.S.A..."³⁹

The treaty was bound to stir up unpleasant emotions in a nation which, to a large degree, saw its modern history as a long struggle to resist foreign pressures in the form of unequal treaties, military threats, and economic sanctions. The fact that the Soviet Union and some other socialist countries did not sign the peace treaty meant that Japan's war with these countries continued in a technical sense, and Yoshida was therefore unable to win support from the leftist camp.⁴⁰ But resistance was put up not only by leftists. The conservatives also rejected the treaty, as they saw it as nationally humiliating. Yoshida's critics on the right and on the left agreed in their view of the security treaty as a colonial treaty. In their eyes, the security treaty with the United States encouraged Japan to play an increasingly vital role in the US world strategic plan aimed against the Soviet Union, with Japan becoming "a springboard from which

the United States can launch attacks against the Soviet homeland [and] a shield behind which the US Navy can fight Pacific battles."⁴¹ To them, Yoshida's policies were outrageous, and nothing other than the expression of a submissive and US-dependent stance.⁴² But Yoshida's choice of a policy of dependence was a conscious one. He told a friend that he thought it better to be an American dependency than a weak independent country.⁴³

Yoshida's Conflictive Political Style

In standard textbooks it is often pointed out that one peculiar trait of Japanese politics in the first decades after World War II was that many issues on the political agenda did not originate in domestic politics, but had their roots in international affairs. The editor of a comprehensive survey of the Japanese party system points out that *inter-party* conflict centered around foreign policy issues:

One of Japan's most interesting characteristics is the lack of traditional cleavages common in the European societies. In terms of party support, Japan exhibits no significant religious, racial, or ethnic splits [...] Japanese electoral cleavages tend to be based on political issues such as support for the 1947 Constitution and the Japan-US Security Treaty, relations with the Communist bloc, and the continuing debate over capitalism and socialism as principles for societal organization.⁴⁴

This cleavage in the electorate was reflected in the party system. Formal left-right opposition has been open and unremitting in postwar decades. "When Japan regained its sovereignty in 1952, it began a new national career without consensus on defense and security issues," Aruga Tadashi has claimed, describing the postwar situation as one of dissensus among leaders on fundamental beliefs about the international system, the proper Japanese role in it, and appropriate strategies for pursuing the national interest, caused by a desire on the part of the conservatives to revise the outcome of the peace negotiations that preceded independence.⁴⁵ As already noted, the responsibility for this cleft introduced by the partial peace treaty lies with Yoshida and was a result of a conscious choice made by him during the negotiations for a peace treaty. Basically, this cleft was one of foreign policy and it is common knowledge that two

foreign policy camps have existed in postwar Japan, one consisting of the ruling conservatives and the other of the opposition parties.⁴⁶

But the cleavage was relevant to more than foreign policy. In fact, this divergence in foreign policy thinking also had a considerable impact on the political system as a whole, since it came to constitute the very focus and battlefield of national politics. "It must be remembered," Hans Baerwald has pointed out, "that the major crises of parliamentarianism in Japan have revolved around questions of foreign policy."⁴⁷ The basic issue pertained to relations with the United States, which had been set by the security treaty that Yoshida had negotiated and which was ratified in 1952, and according to which Japan was turned into a US partner in the eyes of its supporters, and into a "US satellite" in the eyes of its critics.

Yoshida's critics did not come exclusively from the ranks of the opposition parties, but were also to be found among the conservative rank-and-file, creating a situation of deep *intra-party* conflict. Many of the policies for which Yoshida was responsible, or policies which had been introduced by the occupation powers but which he was made responsible for, were anathema to many conservatives, and they attacked Yoshida ferociously, challenging his government vigorously. The conservatives were deeply split in their views of the security treaty. The clashes within the conservative camp often dated back to prewar times, when many of the basic policy profiles which distinguished Japanese conservatism in the initial decades of the postwar period had been drawn up. Those bitter struggles within Japan were a living memory and divided the conservatives.⁴⁸

Conflicts and clashes within the parties often took the shape of *personal* conflicts. These were a result of the struggle for power within the parties or were elements of vendettas for perceived grievances and injustices. This was also true of Yoshida's party. A number of leading conservatives saw themselves as destined to take up the reigns of power in the party and openly challenged Yoshida. Many of these challengers had been influential in prewar times but had been pushed off the political scene because of their prewar or wartime activities, and fought bitterly for the right to re-enter the political stage. They challenged Yoshida for being both an intruder, without a personal basis in party politics, and a politician who had allowed national disgrace to tarnish the image of the fatherland by "paying the price" required for regaining Japan's independence: a constitution written by foreigners, disarmament, and a land reform

that robbed the landlords of their property. They fought for rearmament through constitutional revision, and for a re-examination of reforms introduced under the occupation, and sought more independent diplomacy, all of these constituting demands that Yoshida bluntly dismissed.⁴⁹ "Constitutional revision, rearmament, and compensation for landlords were not just abstractions; they were rectifications of what the purgees and their allies conceived as grievous wrongs. Securing these changes were a matter of honor."⁵⁰ These politicians whose careers had begun before the war challenged Yoshida's hold on power, and eventually succeeded.

Yoshida created conflict, or exacerbated the conflicts that were brought into Japanese politics, with his political style -his abrasive style, his "one man" approach to decision-making, his tendency to prefer secrecy over openness, and his way of twisting what he said, making for a disparity between his words and his deeds.

Yoshida's abrasive style

Yoshida is often characterized as having been a strong-willed political leader who pursued his policies with determination regardless of complications. He was evasive and equivocal, arrogant and curt, devious and disingenuous. A number of the conflicts that Yoshida was drawn into as prime minister were results of his abrasive style and strong language and his habit of using demeaning epithets when referring to others. On one such occasion, he called an opposition member of parliament an "idiot," which led to an opposition boycott of parliamentary proceedings and later general elections. On another occasion, Yoshida called those who did not agree with his view of the security treaty "sycophants" and "idiots." Another time he expressed the view that the lofty principles of idealists and pacifists were no more than the "babbling of a sleepwalker."

Yoshida's "one man" approach

Yoshida was an individual with unusual personal qualities who also profited from extraordinary circumstances. During most of his term in office, his party commanded an absolute majority in the Diet, which was unusual. He was also able to maneuver in such a way as to utilize the power of the occupation to his advantage. His contemporaries referred to him as "One Man Yoshida" and many criticized his "almost arbitrary rule."⁵¹ Going it alone meant that

Yoshida disregarded the opinions and views of others. He did not care for party affairs but built his political power base on good relations with the occupation authorities and a loyal following of bureaucrats. When he was making the far-reaching decisions in foreign policy which still guide Japan, he was relatively unrestrained by parties or party factions.⁵² His alienation from party politicians disgusted these men. They rejected Yoshida's attempt at governing without the parties as it implied governing without them. It is significant that it was the widespread resentment over his "one-man rule" that eventually resulted in the defection of his outraged associates and ultimately in his downfall.⁵³ Yoshida's attempt to play the Strong Man was initially successful, as he enjoyed the support of General MacArthur. But once the general was gone, problems started mounting. Yoshida's conflicts with party politicians worsened when the old guard gradually reappeared on the political scene. Not only were they his political foes because of his alienation from party politics: they also became his personal enemies as his policies threatened their political survival, and to exclude them from the corridors of power. One of the most infected affairs he was involved in concerned his attempt to outmaneuver a political rival, Hatoyama Ichiroo, who had been purged on the verge on becoming prime minister instead of Yoshida. Rumors immediately spread to the effect that Yoshida had been behind the order to purge Hatoyama, but the premier consistently rejected this accusation. Hatoyama did not accept Yoshida's denial and a bitter fight between the two men broke out, a fight that was to continue infecting the climate of domestic politics for years to come, and which culminated when Yoshida was forced to resign.

The most striking consequence of Yoshida's go-it-alone, one-man approach to politics was his decision to accept a partial peace treaty rather than opt for a peace treaty with all Japan's former enemies, a decision which, as described above, alienated and angered not only the leftists but also rightist politicians and public opinion. The decision was his alone, as was graphically demonstrated by the fact that he was the sole Japanese representative to sign the security treaty on behalf of Japan. He later claimed that it signified that he had taken upon himself full responsibility for the treaty.⁵⁴ He well knew what negative repercussions would sweep over Japan once the contents of the security treaty became known, but he had found that Japan had no choice but to ally itself firmly to the United States, and

he was prepared to face the political confrontations that were inevitable. His decision not to opt for an overall peace treaty was responsible for serious conflict becoming embedded in the Japanese polity - conflict which still is not settled and which is not likely to be, so long as the security treaty, as it now stands, continues to be valid.

Yoshida's oblique strategies

Coming from the bureaucracy, Yoshida had little understanding for openness and preferred secrecy. He also preferred the professionalism of bureaucrats to the meddling of politicians. He was a bureaucrat who depended on the bureaucratic system rather than a proponent of a political organization.⁵⁵ He shrewdly used, what Quentin Skinner has termed "oblique strategies," ways of setting out and at the same time disguising what one thinks about a specific object, leading to concealment of views in whole or in part for a number of reasons.⁵⁶

One such case was Yoshida's handling of the security treaty. Having worked for the most part in total secrecy with the United States in the negotiations that led to the conclusion of the peace and security treaties, Yoshida presented them to the Japanese people as a choice that was in fact a *fait accompli*, thereby introducing cleavages into Japanese domestic politics that would endure for decades to come. Although public opinion and many of his fellow politicians wanted Japan to pursue an independent policy line, Yoshida consented in the negotiations, on behalf of Japan, to the subordination of Japanese policy to the Cold War strategy of the US. He had concluded that, as an occupied country, Japan had no choice but to succumb to the wishes of the United States in order to achieve its top priority during the occupation years: political independence.

When the treaty was presented to the parliament in October 1951, it was no more than an agreement on the part of Japan to allow US troops to stay on after the occupation. All the unpleasant details were found in a special, administrative agreement between Japan and the United States that was not made public until February 28, 1952.⁵⁷ A young nationalist representative and prime minister-to-be, Nakasone Yasuhiro, later said, "The security treaty was concealed behind the peace treaty, and the Administrative Agreement was concealed behind the security treaty."⁵⁸ The Japanese soon discovered that the ostensibly ended occupation was *de facto* a continuing one, a discovery which led to country-wide protests and

severe conflicts in the parties and public opinion. To make matters worse, with Yoshida's characteristic contempt for anything that smacked of popular politics, he "could not spill his guts" and explain the rationale behind the post-occupation tutelage, but hemmed and hawed.⁵⁹

Another case of Yoshida's conflict-inducing approach was his handling of the issue of rearmament. Throughout his premiership, Yoshida consistently objected to a Japanese rearmament, and he put up a strong resistance to US pressure for a militarization of Japan. He wanted to be seen as the guarantor of a peaceful and unarmed Japan, and on many occasions went on record to voice his opposition to rearmament. Nevertheless, in February 1951, his government authorized the creation of the National Police Reserve Force of 75,000 men. Yoshida's purpose was clearly to establish a military force, which was a great change from the thoroughly pacifistic interpretation of the article in the constitution renouncing war which Yoshida himself had proposed.⁶⁰ In this way, he took the first step towards rearmament without announcing it, and without the Japanese people realizing it.⁶¹ Despite the fact that he had verbally endorsed Japan's pacifistic policy and declared his refusal to bow to American pressures for a Japanese rearmament, his government initiated the creation of what was to become a Japanese military force. His double-talking approach to rearmament disturbed and puzzled his political enemies, who at least professed to being puzzled and angered.

Yoshida's cautious policy of disguising the rearmament that he had initiated in the shape of a police force probably followed from his awareness of the likelihood that the Japanese would respond to anything that resembled Japanese militarization with protests. Ironically, his refusal to talk of the rearmament that he had de facto started, because of his desire to avoid a conflict with the pacifists, led to a clash with people on the right. Conservative politicians such as Hatoyama Ichiroo, Kishi Nobusuke, Ishibashi Tanzan, Koono Ichiroo, and several other prominent, charismatic figures claimed that it was a national humiliation that Japan did not have its own army, but was dependent upon US assistance for national security. They began to vigorously challenge the pre-eminence of Yoshida and started an anti-Yoshida campaign with the professed aim of rectifying Yoshida's disgraceful policy of US dependency, although elements such as personal rivalry and the desire for revenge,

accompanied by the rhetoric of nationalism and honor, were also conspicuous components of the campaign. When they succeeded and Yoshida was forced to leave, his departure led to a major easing of tension within conservative ranks, as it removed some of the smoldering, highly personalized conflict in which he was involved.⁶²

Concluding Comments

In modern Japanese history, there are few examples of a politician's fall that can match that of Yoshida. Once a hero and the Strong Man of Japanese politics, he had to retire in disgrace, anger and bitterness. When the drive for his rehabilitation started a decade later, a number of factors were quoted in his favor. According to the "new" view of Yoshida that gradually evolved, his greatness rested on the fact that he had created the underpinnings of the postwar Japanese system. He was seen as the leader who not only gained Japan entry into the Western camp on the basis of its ties with the United States, but who also laid the foundations for the economic success and abundance that the nation had come to enjoy. Yoshida's importance was considered to lie first and foremost in the fact that he personally determined the course that Japan was to take in the postwar world.

Another Yoshida legacy, which, while important, has tended to be overlooked, has to do with the conflicts that he introduced, exacerbated or prolonged. One reason for this oversight is the fact that Yoshida's party and Yoshida's disciples have continuously ruled Japan in the postwar period, and they have stressed the necessity of societal harmony -one of them, Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkoo, even made *wa*, "harmony," the ideological slogan of his government. Another reason is "the neglected tradition" in research on postwar Japan, the fact that analyses have been guided by theories ignoring conflict as an element in politics and society.⁶³ Researchers have overwhelmingly focused on harmony and thus disregarded conflict.

Sakamoto argues that the occupation transfused the Cold War confrontation into Japan, deflected through the SCAP and especially General MacArthur. To give the occupation authorities and its supreme commander all the credit or all the blame would, however, be mistaken. The Cold War was brought into Japan in two stages, and Sakamoto disregards the second one. He deals with the fact that the US decision of 1947/48 brought the Cold War into Japan, while

overlooking the fact that the most important factor to establish the Cold War as "a domestic cold war" was Yoshida's subsequent decision to opt for a "partial" rather than "total" peace treaty, which gave Japan its peace treaty but not peace with all its former enemies. The allied occupation ended soon after the ratification of the peace treaty, but US bases and troops were to be found in Japan for the foreseeable future. Yoshida's critics saw little difference between the allied occupation and the new situation, and argued that nothing had really changed: Yoshida had ended the allied occupation by replacing it with one by the US. Regardless of whether they are correct in their views or not, Yoshida's decision meant that he polarized domestic opinion into camps that fought each other bitterly. His decision cemented foreign policy as the centerpiece of contention in domestic politics for many years to come. Even if Sakamoto is correct in his claim that General MacArthur transfused the Cold War into Japan, it was Yoshida who institutionalized "the domestic cold war" of postwar Japan with his conflictual political style.

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