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Reselecting Nuclear Policy:

Kennedy, Ikeda, and U.S.-Japanese Nuclear Relations, 1961-63

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<Summary>

In the early 1960s, U.S.-Japanese nuclear relations were still unstable. For the United States, Japan was an important ally to support its nuclear test-ban diplomacy while Japanese national security greatly depended on the extended nuclear deterrence of the United States based on the U.S.-Japan Security Pact. In Japan, however, as its economy and technology improved, conflicting opinions on its nuclear policy emerged. Under these circumstances, Hayato Ikeda, assuming the office of the Prime Minister of Japan in 1960, had to handle the relationship with the Kennedy administration over nuclear issues very carefully. Drawing from new historical documents in the Japanese Diplomatic Archives, this paper shows how U.S.-Japanese nuclear relations were developed in the early 1960s and how Prime Minister Ikeda managed Japan's nuclear policy the unstable environment both within and outside Japan after the political turbulence toward the end of the 1950s. While most of the previous studies view Ikeda's nuclear policy as just following the footsteps of his predecessors, this paper argues that his nuclear policy was very important in framing Japan's post-war nuclear policy.

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1. Introduction

Japan is one of the countries that has historically maintained complicated stance toward nuclear weapons. Japan is the sole country to have suffered nuclear attacks. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 have made Japan a strong anti-nuclear weapons country, arguing for nuclear abolition for many years in the United Nations General Assembly. On the other hand, it is also inevitably true that Japan's post-World War II national security has highly depended on the U.S.' extended nuclear deterrence. This contradictory stance, which is often mentioned as "Japan's nuclear dilemma", has often split Japanese public opinion toward nuclear weapons.¹

From this point of view, the early 1960s was much more important for the history of Japan's nuclear policy than has ever been argued. The widespread demonstrations against U.S.-Japan. Security Treaty at the end of the 1950s, which is also known as Anpo Toso, cast doubt on the situation in which Japan's national security greatly depended on U.S.' "nuclear umbrella." As a result, in the early 1960s, there were several types of challenges, both domestic and international, and choices for deciding on

¹ After the Fukushima nuclear accident in March 2011, "Japan's nuclear dilemma" has been used with different meanings in the context of the energy policy. "Japan's Nuclear Dilemma," Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). <https://www.cfr.org/interview/japans-nuclear-dilemma>

Japan's nuclear policy. Under such an unstable situation, Japan's Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda had to deal with several problems related to nuclear weapons.

When discussing Ikeda administration from 1960 to 1964, the leading image is its economic-first policy which was symbolized by the "Income Doubling Plan (Shotoku Baizo Keikaku)."² In fact, most of the previous studies on Ikeda administration have focused on its economic policy while paying little attention to its national security policy.³ It is true that Ikeda, learning from the severe lesson of Anpo Toso at the end of the 1950s, prioritized Japan's economic growth as a political goal to avoid further confusion over how Japan should position itself in the Cold War confrontation. Many studies argue that he was an "honor student of the Yoshida Doctrine", a strategy to concentrate on economic development while depending on the security alliance with the United States in order to reconstruct post-war Japan's economy. They say that Ikeda faithfully followed the policy of his predecessor and long-term mentor Shigeru Yoshida.⁴ Yet, it does not mean that he was focusing only on the economic policy. In fact, some recent studies have revealed various aspects of his foreign policy.⁵ Among them, Ikeda's nuclear policy awaits further study.

² Strictly speaking, Ikeda's slogan was "Income Doubling Policy (Shotoku Baizo Seisaku)," and later, the Economic Planning Agency of Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) framed the "Income Doubling Plan," which is widely known today. Though there was some difference between these two terms, I generally use "Income Doubling Plan" in this paper. Nobuyuki Fujii, *Ikeda Hayato: Shotoku Baizo de Ikunda* (Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2012), pp. 1-2.

³ Yumi Hiwatari, *Sengo Seiji to Nichibei Kankei* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1990), pp. 187-273; Timothy P. Maga, "The new frontier and the new Japan: Kennedy, Ikeda, and the 'end of US protectionism', 1961-63" *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 5, issue. 2 (1994): pp. 371-393; Michael Schaller, *Altered States: The United States and Japan since the Occupation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 163-83; Hayato; Takafusa Nakamura, "Ikeda Hayato: 'Keizai no Jidai' wo Tsukutta Otoko", *Sengo Nihon no Saisho Tachi* edited by Akio Watanabe (Tokyo: Chuo Koron Shinsha, 2001), pp. 175-206; Fujii, *Ikeda Hayato*.

⁴ Qingxin Ken Wang, *Hegemonic Cooperation and Conflict: Postwar Japan's Policy and the United States* (Westport: Praeger, 2000), p. 136; Hiwatari, *Sengo Seiji to Nichibei Kankei*, pp. 187-273.

⁵ Toshihiro Higuchi, "Kakujikken Mondai to Ikeda Gaiko," *Ikeda Sato Seikenki no Nihon Gaiko*, edited by Sumio Hatano (Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2004), pp. 199-233; Yoshihide Soeya, *Nihon no "Middle Power" Gaiko: Sengo Nihon no Sentaku to Koso* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2005), pp. 81-98; Akira Kurosaki, *Kakuheiki to Nichibei Kankei: America no Kakufukakusan Gaiko to Nihon no Sentaku, 1960-1976* (Tokyo: Yushisha, 2006); Shingo Nakajima, *Sengo Nihon no Boei Seisaku: "Yoshida Rosen" wo Meguru Seiji, Gaiko, Gunji* (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2006), pp. 171-222; Kosuke Yoshitsugu, *Ikeda Seikenki no Nihon Gaiko to Reisen: Sengo Nihon Gaiko no Zehyojiku, 1960-1964* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2009); Hironao Suzuki, *Ikeda Seiken to Kodoseichoki no Nihon Gaiko* (Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2013). Nick Kapur, "Mending the 'Broken Dialogue': U.S.-Japan Alliance Diplomacy in the Aftermath of the 1960 Security Treaty Crisis," *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 3 (2017): pp. 489-517.

Based on newly released document from the Diplomatic Archives of Japan, this paper examines how the Ikeda administration worked on its nuclear policy and U.S.-Japan relationship in the early 1960s. Since the beginning of the post-war period in the 1940s, the United States has been the most important partner of Japan's nuclear policy. It is almost impossible to discuss Japan's nuclear policy without mentioning the role of the United States.

The analysis is broken up into four sections. Section two describes Japan's situation with regard to nuclear weapons immediately after the Second World War. Section three explains how Ikeda's disarmament policy faced troubles during the U.S.-Soviet confrontation over nuclear tests. Section four looks at the rise of the "nuclear-armed Japan" argument within and outside the Japanese government. Section five examines Japan's decision to participate in the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) and policy debates that accompanied it.

2. Japan and Nuclear Weapons after the Second World War

After the defeat in the Second World War, Japan's research on atomic energy was severely restricted by General Headquarters (GHQ). On September 22, 1945, General Douglas MacArthur issued Directive No. 3 (also known as SCAPIN 47), which specifically prohibited "all research or development work which has as its object effecting mass separation of Uranium 235 from Uranium, or effecting mass separation of any other radio-actively unstable elements."⁶ The restriction was gradually eased as the United States changed its nuclear policy. After the failure of the Baruch Plan, a proposal that called for an international organization to regulate atomic energy, the United States at first tried to monopolize nuclear technology in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Yet, the Soviet Union's first nuclear test in 1949 made the United States recognize that monopolization of nuclear technology no longer worked. As a result, at the UN General Assembly on December 8,

⁶ SCAPIN-47: Directive no. 3, Office of the Supreme Commander 1945/09/22, SCA-1 R2, *National Diet Library Digital Collection*. <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/9885109>

1953, President Dwight Eisenhower delivered the "Atoms for Peace" speech, and began to supply atomic energy equipment and information with promises of peaceful use of uranium use for peaceful purposes throughout the world.⁷ The program was also applied to Japan. In 1955, the two countries concluded the U.S.- Japan Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. Along with the agreement, the Japanese government enacted the Atomic Energy Basic Act in 1956, which provided the guidelines for nuclear energy researches. However, even after such progress, militarization of nuclear energy was severely restricted. Through technological cooperation and resource supply, the United States controlled Japan's nuclear policy and did not allow it to conduct any nuclear energy research for military applications.

As nuclear weapons had become highly important in international security through the 1950s, Japan was incorporated into the U.S. "nuclear umbrella." As George Kennan identified, the United States saw Japan as one of the world's five major centers of industrial power against Soviet expansion.⁸ Thus, it was essential for the U. S. Cold War strategy to set up a robust defense system including nuclear weapons for Japan. Plus, in the U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy in East Asia, Okinawa was the most important base due to the limitations on the deployment of nuclear weapons in Mainland Japan. In other words, the United States needed to incorporate Japan in its nuclear umbrella both to defend it and to use it for its regional nuclear defense system⁹.

Such an environment allowed the Japanese government to be surprisingly indifferent, at least on the surface, to the idea to acquire its own nuclear weapons. In fact, Japanese defense plans had never mentioned nuclear weapons until the early 1970s. The Second Defense Build-up Plan, released in July 1961, only indirectly mentioned nuclear weapons by saying that "Japan builds up national defense structure focusing on effective measures against limited intervention with conventional weapons under

⁷ *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (PPPUS): Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953* (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1960), pp. 813-22.

⁸ George F. Kennan, "Contemporary Problems of Foreign Policy," National War College, September 17, 1948, Box 299, Folder 12, George F. Kennan Papers, 1871-2005 (bulk 1950-2000), Princeton University Library.

⁹ Masakatsu Ota, *Nichibei "Kaku Mitsuyaku" no Zenbo* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2011), pp. 43-172.

the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty."¹⁰ The reason for excluding the role of nuclear weapons in its defense plan was two fold: First, Japanese officials were simply indifferent to the issue and, second, they tried not to stimulate anti-nuclear sentiment among Japanese people. Anyway, at least until the 1960s there was little discussion on military and defense issues in Japanese society, much less one on nuclear defense capability.

On the other hand, successive Japanese governments has been spending enormous energy on nuclear disarmament and test ban diplomacy since the middle 1950s. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 left a deep scar on Japanese society. In addition, the Japanese fishing boat Lucky Dragon Five (Daigo Fukuryu Maru) was exposed to nuclear fallout from the thermonuclear weapon test conducted by the United States at Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954. This accident kindled an anti-nuclear movement in Japan.¹¹ In August 1955, the first World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima. Pushed by the grass-roots movement, the Japanese government also engaged in anti-nuclear activities. Particularly, the Japanese government showed its strong interest in nuclear test ban agreement among the three nuclear states. Since joining the United Nations in December 1956, in the U.N. General Assembly, Japan continued to commit to the problems related to nuclear test.¹²

3. Ikeda-Kennedy Meeting and Nuclear Test Resumption

When Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda assumed office in July 1960, his strategy toward the next general election, which was supposed to be held in November, was to emphasize economic growth plan, which is well known as Income Doubling Plan.¹³ The political dispute over the U.S.-Japan

¹⁰ Yoshitaka Sasaki, "Kaku Senryaku no Naka no Nihon," *Kaku to Taiketsu Suru 20 Seiki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), edited by Yoshikazu Sakamoto, pp. 190-191.

¹¹ Hiroki Sairenji, "Japan and Nuclear Test Ban Problems," *International Relations*, no. 136 (2004): pp. 3-4. (Japanese)

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 6-12.

¹³ Fujii, *Ikeda Hayato*.

Security Treaty and the resignation of the former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi showed Ikeda the danger and difficulty in openly dealing with national security problems, which apparently include nuclear weapons' problems. Yet, it does not mean that Ikeda completely forgot issues related to nuclear weapons. Rather, nuclear disarmament diplomacy was one of the most important subjects in the relationship between Japan and the United States.

On January 11, 1961, just before Kennedy assumed office, the Ikeda administration asked the U.S. embassy for holding the U.S.-Japan summit meeting in Washington DC.¹⁴ The U.S. government welcomed this request and decided on the date for the meeting as March 3. Ikeda's visit to Washington DC was mainly aimed at demonstrating "Equal Partnership" between the United States and Japan.¹⁵ For this purpose, Japanese officials thought that the discussion should focus on general issues in the international society rather than the issues related to the U.S.-Japan alliance because the latter would inevitably make the power gap between the two states too obvious.¹⁶ In that sense, disarmament and arms control were appropriate issues.

On June 20, 1961, Ikeda visited Washington DC and saw John F. Kennedy for the first time. During his three-day stay in Washington DC, Ikeda and Kennedy met three times. In the first meeting, Kennedy told Ikeda that the United States expected Japan to participate in the international disarmament negotiation more actively. The United States was considering the participation of countries then not represented in the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee and had Japan in mind as one of those countries.¹⁷ Kennedy, who had a bitter encounter with Khrushchev a few weeks previously in Vienna, needed a partner country in his disarmament negotiation.¹⁸ Plus, Kennedy desired an expanding international role for Japan, particularly among non-European nations. "[The

¹⁴ "Ikeda Sori Beika Homon ni Kansuru Hokokusho," August 1961, Homon Kankei Ikken Chosho "Beika Homon Kiroku," A'152 10-3, *Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (DAJ)*.

¹⁵ Schaller, *Altered States*, pp. 169-170.

¹⁶ "Ikeda Sori Hobei Dai 1 Kai Uchiawase," April 17, 1961, Ikeda Sori Beika Homon Kankei Ikken 1961/6, A'152 10-1, *DAJ*.

¹⁷ Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson to Rostow, "Prime Minister Ikeda's Visit," June 19, 1961, National Security File (NSF), Japan, Box 123, *John F. Kennedy Presidential Library (JFKL)*.

¹⁸ Higuchi, "Kakujikken Mondai to Ikeda Gaiko," pp. 207-9.

United States should] encourage and assist Japan," one report prepared by U.S. official argued, "to exercise a moderating and constructive influence in the UN, ...but avoid efforts to overidentify Japan with Western positions to the extent that its usefulness and influence among Afro-Asians is undermined and to this end accept occasional divergencies [sic.] of viewpoint."¹⁹ Kennedy administration regarded Japan's unique position as useful to cooperatively proceed with their nuclear disarmament diplomacy.

Ikeda administration also recognized the importance of the cooperation between Japan and the United States over nuclear disarmament and arms control negotiation. In Tokyo, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan concluded that Japan should "positively participate in the negotiation to improve Japan's international status."²⁰ This "international status" consideration reflected on two aspects of Ikeda's policy. First, as Japanese economy recovered from the ashes of the Second World War, participation in international society became the next important task for the government. Seeking the U.S.-Japan "Equal Partnership" had risen in this political context. Also, since assuming office, Ikeda showed great interest in gaining membership in the OECD.²¹ To improve Japan's international status was one of the important tasks toward achieving this goal. Second, as Ikeda intentionally focused on economic policy to avert public interest from other issues such as military defense problems and the Cold War conflict, he also tried to avert the attention of Japanese people from the narrow U.S.-Japan relationship to the broad range of international relations. The field of nuclear disarmament and arms control, where Japanese government had spent great effort in the United Nations since the middle 1950s, was best fitted to achieve these aims.

Both President Kennedy and Prime Minister Ikeda recognized the urgent need for agreement on nuclear test ban accompanied by effective inspection and control measures, agreeing that it is of crucial importance not only for building cooperative bilateral relationships but also for world peace. They also shared their conviction that renewed effort should be made in the direction of general disarmament.

¹⁹ "Guidelines for US Policy toward Japan," November 20, 1961, *Digital National Security Archive (DNSA)*.

²⁰ "Nihon no Gunshuku Kosho Sanka ni Tsuite," June 21, 1961, Kokuren Gunshuku Mondai, SB'223, *DAJ*.

²¹ Suzuki, *Ikeda Seiken to Kodoseichoki no Nihon Gaiko*.

Overall, the Ikeda-Kennedy summit meeting in June 1961 was a favorable start for the two new leaders to coordinate their nuclear disarmament and arms control diplomacies.

However, the euphoria faded just a few months later when trouble began with the Soviet Union's declaration of nuclear test resumption. When Khrushchev declared the resumption of nuclear tests on August 31, 1961, Japan openly and harshly criticized the decision while understanding that the United States would also restart nuclear tests sooner or later.²² During the meeting with Ikeda in June 1961, Kennedy told him that the United States might resume nuclear tests in the near future under the present gridlock of test-ban negotiations with the Soviet Union.²³ If the United States resumed nuclear tests, then the criticism against nuclear test became a double-edged sword and Japan could not blindly blame the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Japanese government repeatedly asked the U.S. government to inform its allies of the resumption of nuclear tests well before the public announcement.

Kennedy at first tried to take full advantage of Russia's reckless unilateral action and lead international public opinion against Russia, but the hesitant and delayed reaction of the international society soon disappointed him. In addition, as Russia conducted nuclear tests at an unexpected high pace, growing concern in the government pressured Kennedy²⁴. On September 5, Kennedy announced the resumption of underground weapons testing.²⁵

The news of U.S. resumption of nuclear tests was a great shock for Japan not because of the resumption itself but because of the lack of advance notice from the U.S. government. The announcement came just when Japanese representatives had been preparing themselves for the United Nations General Assembly to accuse the Soviet Union of resuming nuclear tests. Soon after hearing the news, Chief Cabinet Secretary Masayoshi Ohira publicly commented that the Japanese government was unconditionally opposed to any nuclear tests and hoped the United States would reconsider and

²² Higuchi, "Kakujikken Mondai to Ikeda Gaiko," pp. 210-213. Telegram from Washington to Tokyo,

²³ "Sori Hobei (Kakujikken Mondai) no Ken," June 20, 1961, Ikeda Sori Beika Homon Kankei Ikken 1961/6, A'152 10-1, *DAJ*.

²⁴ Editorial Note, August 31, 1961, *Foreign Relations of United States (FRUS), 1961-63*, Vol. VII (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office (USGPO), 1986), doc. 61.

²⁵ National Security Action Memorandum No. 87, September 5, 1961, *FRUS, 1961--63*, Vol. VII, doc. 65.

hold back from resuming nuclear tests²⁶. The next day, the Japanese government ordered Koichiro Asakai, the ambassador to the United States, to hand a note verbale, which was the same document handed to the Soviet Union to criticize the resumption of nuclear tests.²⁷

The discommunication between the two governments was soon mended. When the United States decided to announce the resumption of atmospheric nuclear tests in March 1962, it was only Ikeda and British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan among the foreign leaders to whom Kennedy sent a personal letter and explained the decision beforehand. Advised by the U.S. ambassador to Japan, Edwin O. Reischauer, Kennedy recognized that this special treatment was necessary and effective to show Japan his sincere attitude toward the cooperative relationship between the United States and Japan.²⁸ While the Japanese government publicly criticized the U.S. decision, such special treatment was certainly enough to satisfy the Japanese government, which was seeking for the status of first-rate state after the post-war restoration. The United States recognized both the importance of Japan for nuclear disarmament policy and the importance of nuclear disarmament policy for Japan. For the United States, the Japanese presence in the disarmament negotiation was important in terms of its historical experience and region. On the other hand, the United States, especially Walt Rostow, Kennedy's National Security Advisor, also recognized that nuclear disarmament negotiation was a good field for Japan to show its commitment to international society and gain a reputation.²⁹ It was desirable for the United States too that Japan made its presence felt and played a prominent role in the international society.

4. The Rise of "Nuclear-armed Japan" Arguments

²⁶ September 6, 1961, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

²⁷ September 7, 1961, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

²⁸ Washington told Reischauer: "At your discretion you may inform Ikeda that he and MacMillan only heads of government receiving advance notification this decision." Telegram from Washington to Tokyo, February 28, 1962, *DNSA*. Editorial Note, March 2, 1962, *FRUS, 1961-63*, Vol. VII, doc. 143. March 2, 1962, *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Nick Kapur, "Mending the 'Broken Dialogue'," p. 508.

²⁹ Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson to Rostow, "Prime Minister Ikeda's Visit," June 19, 1961, NSF, Japan, Box 123, *JFKL*.

When Ikeda was energetically working on nuclear disarmament diplomacy there had risen "Nuclear-armed Japan" arguments inside and outside the government. There were several reasons for these arguments drawing much attention at that time. First, economic and technological development made Japan capable, at least if there was the U.S. support, of acquiring its own nuclear weapons. Second, after Anpo Toso in the late 1950s, many people cast doubts on the situation in which Japan's national security greatly depended on the U.S.' "nuclear umbrella." Finally, the international situation surrounding nuclear weapons affected those people who claimed the need for nuclear development plans for Japan. These factors made the idea realistic and likely to come true.

On June 21, 1962, during an informal conversation with U.S. embassy staff, Shinsaku Hogen, Director-General of Oua Kyoku (European and Oceanic Affairs Bureau), said that "he personally thought Japan should eventually acquire its own nuclear weapons so as to bring more equality into Soviet-Japanese relations and reduce the massive threat posed by Communist China's development of a nuclear weapons capability." He believed that Japanese opinion would become more realistic and accepting of the idea of national nuclear weapons in the near future. Though other participants of Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs opposed Hogen's idea, he continued saying that it was a question of national prestige and assurance in an age of "nuclear power politics."³⁰ It was not the first time that the Japanese government staff mentioned to the possibility of Japan's possession of nuclear weapons, but Hogen's comment is worth noting in that the government staff directly showed his interest in Japan's nuclear armament in front of the U.S. government staff. At that time in the National Diet, the Socialist Party argued that Japan should declare its nuclear demilitarization, an idea that had once failed due to the disagreement with Liberal Democratic Party in the late 1950s³¹. Hogen's remark went completely against that movement.

This "nuclear-armed Japan" argument was followed by Shigeru Yoshida, the former Prime

³⁰ Telegram from Tokyo to Washington, June 21, 1962, *DNSA*.

³¹ June 4, 1962, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

Minister and Ikeda's long-time mentor. In his speech at the America-Japan Society in July 1962, Yoshida said that Japan should have the spirit and determination to acquire nuclear weapons when time had come in order to develop U.S.-Japan friendship and to contribute to the world peace.³² Shingo Nakajima argued that Yoshida's comment on Japan's nuclear armament implied his critical position against Ikeda's nuclear disarmament diplomacy.³³ Although Yoshida had already retired and not officially worked for the government, he still possessed unignorable power on the political scene. Therefore, his affirmative stance toward Japan's nuclear armament created much more impact than that of general retired politicians.³⁴

U.S. policymakers also recognized that a part of the Japanese conservatives called for Japan's own nuclear weapons, but their view on this trend was complex. As a premise, they never thought that Japan would go nuclear at least in the near future. In September 1961, National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), "Likelihood and Consequences of the Development of Nuclear Capabilities of Free World Countries Other than the US and UK," said that "[Japan] could have its first nuclear device in 5 or 6 years...However, antimilitary, particularly antinuclear, attitudes remain extremely strong among the populace."³⁵ Even after recognizing the rise of the "nuclear-armed Japan" argument, they still made much of the strong anti-nuclear feelings among Japanese people. For example, a report from U.S. embassy in Japan on November 21, 1962, mentioning to Yoshida's speech in July 1962, reported that "The fact that these remarks were considered quite daring, and the pains which Yoshida's supporters took to keep the speech out of the major dailies must also be taken into account."³⁶

Whether "nuclear-armed Japan" was favorable for the United States or not was also an arguable point. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons was one of the top priorities for the Kennedy administration and they made little distinction between allies and adversaries on this matter. At the

³² Shigeru Yoshida, "U.S.-Japan Relations," *The America-Japan Society Bulletin*, 6, no. 1 (May-July, 1962).

³³ Nakajima, *Sengo Nihon no Boei Seisaku*, pp. 200-3.

³⁴ July 13, 1963, *Asahi Shimbun*.

³⁵ National Intelligence Estimate (NIE): "Likelihood and Consequences of the Development of Nuclear Capabilities of Free World Countries Other than the US and UK", September 21, 1961, *DNSA*.

³⁶ Telegram from Tokyo to Washington, November 21, 1961, *DNSA*.

meeting with Ikeda at Hakone in November 1961, when Ikeda said that at least a minority, including people in his own cabinet and party, considered it necessary for Japan to possess nuclear weapons, Secretary of State Dean Rusk made it clear that the United States was opposed to the proliferation of nuclear powers.³⁷ Plus, though the Kennedy administration desired a rapid and effective growth of Japan's military capability to share its defense burden, it was only within the conventional forces. For the United States, the rise of a "nuclear-armed Japan" argument was welcome only in the sense that it implied a faint trend toward a greater acceptance of the realities of the world's strategic situation and possibly the modest decline of anti-nuclear feelings in Japanese society.³⁸ On February 6, 1963, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell L. Gilpatric visited Japan and stayed there for two days to discuss defense matters between the United States and Japan. In the meeting with Ikeda, Gilpatric said that the United States hoped that Japan would continue its defense build-up but that Japan's efforts should be in conventional forces.³⁹ Gilpatric thought that the most serious threat in East Asia was the aggression of Communist China with its enormous deployment of conventional forces and he hoped that Japan played a more significant role in deterring it. In other words, Gilpatric never thought that Japan should take the responsibility of nuclear deterrence.⁴⁰

Whatever opinion Ikeda actually had on "nuclear-armed Japan" argument in his mind, publicly he never showed any support for it.⁴¹ It was only when he talked with Rusk at Hakone in November 1961 that he showed a slight interest in the idea of Japan's acquiring nuclear defense capability in front of the U.S. official. In response to Rusk's comment that the United States was opposed to any nuclear proliferation, Ikeda said that "he had not been thinking so much of Japan's going into the production of nuclear weapons, but of the argument that the presence of nuclear weapons in Japan might be

³⁷ Memcon, November 3, 1961, *FRUS, 1961-63*, Vol. XXII, doc. 346.

³⁸ Telegram from Tokyo to Washington, November 21, 1961, *DNSA*.

³⁹ Telegram from Tokyo to Washington: "Visit to Japan by the Honorable Roswell L. Gilpatric, Deputy Secretary of Defense," February 20, 1963, *DNSA*. Memorandum from Gilpatric to President, February 8, 1963, *FRUS, 1961-63*, Vol. XXII, doc. 368.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ In private, Ikeda several times showed his interest in "nuclear-armed Japan" idea. Yasuhiro Nakaseone, *Nakasone Yasuhiro ga Kataru Sengo Nihon Gaiko* (Tokyo: Shincho sha, 2012), pp. 176-8; Masaya Ito, *Ikeda Hayato: Sono Sei to Shi* (Tokyo: Shiseido, 1966), pp. 196-7.

necessary for its defense" and "he would be interested in learning more about the broader aspects of the nuclear armaments question."⁴² Yet, that comment still remained within the range of a moderate tone. Even when his long-term mentor Yoshida gave supportive comment on "nuclear-armed Japan," the Prime Minister publicly disagreed with his idea.⁴³ Ikeda rationally understood that the political risk to touch nuclear issues was still too high under the then prevailing situation of Japanese public opinions. Overall, due to the Prime Minister's cautious stance, the rise of "nuclear-armed Japan" did not become mainstream in Ikeda administration.

5. Partial Test Ban Treaty

In July 1963, after the tripartite negotiation among the representatives of the U.S., the U.K. and the Soviet Union in Moscow, they finally reached an agreement over nuclear test ban.⁴⁴ Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) prohibited all test detonations of nuclear weapons except for those conducted underground. The treaty resulted from the long negotiation since the late 1950s, but in the short term, many changes in international relations contributed to that outcome. The two most important factors among them were the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Sino-Soviet split.

Kennedy thought that the number of PTBT participants was significantly important for three reasons. First, PTBT was the first nuclear arms control agreement of the Cold War and, therefore, Kennedy hoped to make it look as magnificent as possible. In addition, the draft of PTBT was originally agreed on by the three countries to regulate further atmospheric pollution, but considering that the treaty also aimed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons by directly banning atmospheric tests, it was highly important to make as many countries as possible sign the treaty. Finally, the number of PTBT participants was important to isolate and indirectly contain those that did not join

⁴² Memcon, November 3, 1961, *FRUS, 1961-63*, Vol. XXII, doc. 346.

⁴³ July 20, 1962, *New York Times*.

⁴⁴ "Tripartite Communique on the Conclusion of the Moscow Test-Ban Negotiations," July 25, 1963, *Documents on Disarmament (DoD), 1963*, (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1964), pp. 249-250.

the treaty. Particularly, Kennedy was seriously concerned about the People's Republic of China's nuclear weapon program and saw the rift between China and Soviet Union as a great chance to isolate China.⁴⁵ Actually, in the last part of the radio and television address on PTBT on July 26, 1963, Kennedy called for participation in the treaty and deliberately quoted a Chinese proverb, "A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step," which he quoted even when he first met Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna in June 1961.⁴⁶

For Japan, the international agreement on nuclear test ban was what they had really desired and therefore the U.S. government had an optimistic view on Japan's participation in PTBT. In his report on East Asian countries' probable reactions to PTBT on July 25, 1963, Joseph A. Yager, Director of the Office of East Asian Affairs, wrote that "the overwhelming reaction in Japan will be one of relief and encouragement" and "such feelings will be particularly intense in Japan because of the country's having suffered atomic devastation and being directly in the path of soviet test fallout."⁴⁷ The United States considered that Japan's participation in PTBT was almost guaranteed to effectively bring pressure on ChiCom's nuclear program. When Kennedy called for participation, it was only to three governments, West Germany, France and Japan, that he sent special invitation letters.⁴⁸

However, Japan's reaction to PTBT was much more cautious than the U.S. had expected. While the Japanese government celebrated the success of the Moscow negotiation on July 26, there was no official comment on whether Japan participated in PTBT at first.⁴⁹ The possible reason for the Japanese government's hesitation might be because they had generally considered atmospheric test ban

⁴⁵ Masaki Sakamoto, "Kennedy's Nonproliferation Policy and Test-ban Negotiation, 1961-63: The Formulation of the U.S. Policy toward PTBT," *Journal of Laws and Political Science* 112 (Spring 2017): pp. 169-200. (Japanese)

⁴⁶ Memcon, June 4, 1961, *FRUS, 1961-63*, Vol. V, doc. 87. "Radio and Television Address to the American People on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty," July 26, 1963, *PPPUS: John F. Kennedy, 1963* (Washington D.C., USGPO, 1964), pp. 601-6. The drafts of the speech show that Kennedy's speech writer Ted Sorensen considered to use Greek mathematician Archimedes' famous quote, "give me a lever and a place to stand and I will move the world," but finally replaced it with the Chinese proverb. Memorandum for Sorensen, July 25, 1963, NSF, Department and Agencies, Box 264, *JFKL*.

⁴⁷ Memorandum: "Public Treatment of Partial Nuclear Test Ban: The East Asian Implications," July 25, 1963, *US Declassified Documents Online (USDDO)*.

⁴⁸ July 27, 1963, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

⁴⁹ July 26, 1963, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

as the issue facing nuclear weapons states. Therefore, Japanese officials expected the treaty to be concluded by those having nuclear weapons. When they accepted the invitation of PTBT from the United States, it was, if not complete, a kind of surprise and they needed at least some time for consideration.⁵⁰ From July 26 to August 9, the Ikeda administration held cabinet meetings several times while collecting more information on PTBT and the international situation surrounding the treaty from the embassies and their allied countries.

Yet, it was not only their lack of preparation but also many other "real" issues that led to their hesitation. First, the Ikeda administration worried that the success of PTBT might bring too much of a euphoric mood in Japanese society.⁵¹ In fact, Foreign Minister Masahiro Ohira, who expressed the most cautious reaction to PTBT among the cabinet members, said in the cabinet meeting on July 26 that "we should not have too optimistic a view without reserve."⁵² There were complicated feelings in the Ikeda administration toward détente. While Ikeda and his staffs welcomed international agreements on nuclear disarmament and arms control, they simultaneously feared that the peaceful mood based on the U.S.-Soviet détente led Japanese people to become more anti-military and anti-nuclear and Socialist party gained more momentum in the Diet.

In addition, the Ikeda administration was also concerned about the extent to which PTBT would restrain Japan's future actions. While Ikeda had already declared that he had no intention to build up nuclear defense capability, it was another issue for him to eternally give up the choice of "nuclear-armed Japan."⁵³ He realized that the international situation concerning nuclear weapons was still very

⁵⁰ Actually, even after they accepted an invitation to PTBT, there was an opinion that test ban was the responsibility of nuclear states and it was useless for Japan to sign the treaty."Bubun Kakutei Joyaku ni Taisuru Wagakuni no Taido," July 30, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

⁵¹ Such concern of Japanese officials about world's euphoria was shared by British officials. "Meeting between Hogen and Cortazzi," August 9, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

⁵² July 26, 1963, *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

⁵³ In the Lower House Budget Committee, Ikeda said that the Constitution itself does not ban nuclear armament unless it goes beyond the range of self-defense capability, while he made sure that he had no intention to acquire nuclear weapons. March 5, 1961, *Asahi Shimbun*.

unstable and likely to change. On this point, a report prepared by Kokusai Shiryo Bu (International Document Section), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on July 29 said that "PTBT intends to ban any nuclear tests except those conducted underground and it does not involve the issues of nuclear demilitarization or nuclear demilitarized zones. Therefore, even if our country joins the treaty, it does not bind our position on the issues of nuclear demilitarization nor nuclear demilitarized zones in the future."⁵⁴ In addition, Kokusai Rengo Kyoku (United Nations Bureau) report on July 30 made it clear again that PTBT had nothing to do with manufacturing, using and storing of nuclear weapons. It also mentioned to the fact that the withdrawal clause of PTBT allowed a party to denounce the treaty "if it decides that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests."⁵⁵ These reports partly showed how seriously the Ikeda administration considered this point.

Although there were some concerns in the Ikeda administration to accept PTBT, the drive to urge participation was much stronger. The single and most important factor was that if Japan would not join the treaty, it would seriously damage the image the Japanese government had been building through its long effort on nuclear disarmament and arms control negotiation in the United Nations. Particularly, in his telegram from Geneva to Tokyo on July 29, Ambassador Morio Aoki pointed out that participation in PTBT was important to put pressure on ChiCom's nuclear weapons development and "if ChiCom would not stop, our country could withdraw from the treaty as necessary." He also argued that if Japan took too long time to decide to sign PTBT, it would invite unnecessary misunderstanding that Japan might have an ambition to become "the second France." For Aoki, the question was not whether to join the treaty but when to sign it.⁵⁶

Ikeda also realized that there was not much time for decision making. In addition to Kennedy's

⁵⁴ "Beieiso Sangoku Bubun Kakutei Joyaku ni Tsuite," July 29, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

⁵⁵ "Bubun Kakutei Joyaku ni Taisuru Wagakuni no Taido," July 30, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

⁵⁶ Telegram from Geneva to Tokyo, July 29, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Kari Choin, 2014-5396 (admin.), *DAJ*.

special letter, which called for Japan's participation in PTBT, the U.S. government on July 30 made John K. Emmerson in U.S. embassy deliver a talking paper to Shinsaku Hogen and again asked Japan to join the treaty as early as possible.⁵⁷ Ikeda understood the need for early decision making and decided to hold a cabinet meeting on July 31 to reach a conclusion. Unfortunately, the details of the meeting were not declassified, but on the same day, Ohira announced that the Japanese government had decided to start the process for participating in PTBT.⁵⁸

6. Conclusion

When discussing Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda, many studies have argued that he was an "honor student of the Yoshida Doctrine." The implications of this label they put on him are two-fold. First, as the Yoshida Doctrine explains, Ikeda's policy generally focused on economic issues while letting national security largely depend on the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Second, the phrase "honor student" means his policy was a copy of that of the former Prime Minister and his mentor, Shigeru Yoshida. The idea is that he just followed what his predecessor did and kept the course of established policy. Such an image was also applied to the study of Ikeda's nuclear policy; he never tried to do new things in nuclear disarmament policy, not to mention "nuclear-armed Japan."

This paper does not aim to completely reject these arguments. However, considering the situation surrounding the Ikeda administration, both domestic and international, a somewhat different image of

⁵⁷ Memcon of Hogen and Emerson, July 30, 1963; Talking Paper Submitted by Emerson, undated, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

⁵⁸ "Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku ni tsuite no Gaimu Daijin Dan," July 31, 1963, Bubunteki Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*. The Japanese government kept studying the effect of PTBT and observing other countries' behaviors even after the announcement of July 31 until the official cabinet decision was made on August 8, but it was generally focused on the treaty signing process and other miscellaneous issues. "Waga Kuni no Bubunteki Kakutei Joyaku Sanka ni Tsuite," August 2, 1963, Kakujikken Kinshi Joyaku / Nihon no Sanka Mondai, SB'141, *DAJ*.

him and his nuclear policy can be drawn. When Ikeda assumed office, Japanese domestic politics was in an extraordinary degree of confusion because of Anpo Toso. In fact, when Ikeda decided to run for the President of Liberal Democratic Party, Ohira was strongly opposed to it, warning that the prevailing situation was too extraordinary and too hard to deal with.⁵⁹ Anpo Toso also cast doubt on the U.S.-Japan relationship and required the next Prime Minister to reassure its counterpart. Looking at the international situation, the danger of nuclear proliferation had gradually increased while the tension between the superpowers also began mounting. Such a fluid situation inside and outside Japan forced Ikeda to deliberately deal with nuclear policy, the most sensitive issue for Japanese society.

As most of the existing studies argue, Ikeda's nuclear policy merely invoked following the footsteps of his predecessors. He continued to energetically proceed nuclear disarmament and arms control diplomacy. He reassured the United States on Japan being ready offer the military bases and reaffirmed the agreement on the introduction of nuclear equipment. Those measures did not bring any great change in Japan's nuclear policy. Yet, if situation is changed, making the same choice may be sometimes even more important than it looks. Taking into account the fluid situation inside and outside Japan as discussed above, Ikeda's nuclear policy was more of "reselecting" rather than just "following the footsteps."

After undergoing surgery for laryngeal cancer, Ikeda died of postoperative pneumonia on August 13, 1965. When he announced his resignation on October 25, 1964, he designated Eisaku Sato as the next Prime Minister. On December 11, 1967, Sato declared the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, which consists of non-production, non-possession, and non-introduction of nuclear weapons. Later, he broadened it into the Four Pillars Nuclear Policy of (1) promoting the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, (2) commitment to global nuclear disarmament, (3) reliance on the U.S. nuclear deterrent system, and (4) the Three Principles. These policies provided the basis for Japan's nuclear policy, which remain the same even today. Thus, it may be natural that the nuclear policy of the late 1960s has drawn

⁵⁹ Fujii, *Ikeda Hayato*, p. 227.

more attention. Yet, it should be noted that these policies were based on the great effort made by Ikeda during the quiet crisis after the turbulence of Anpo Toso. In this sense, the early 1960s is, if not more, as important as the late 1960s for Japan's post-war nuclear policy and for the U.S.-Japan nuclear relationship.