



# KGRI Working Papers

No.2

## **The U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa and Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, 1945–1951**

Version 1.0

January 2019

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## **The U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa and Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, 1945–1951**

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### Abstract

During the occupation of Japan after the end of World War II, the relationship between Japan and the United States changed dramatically. For the first few years, the U.S. government, especially the military, planned to deprive Japan of territorial sovereignty over Okinawa. However, this situation changed completely due to the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The U.S. State Department considered leaving territorial sovereignty over Okinawa in Japanese hands. In concluding the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951, the U.S. government allowed Japan only “residual sovereignty” over Okinawa. There was room for Japan to regain administrative authority of Okinawa.

Previous studies have attributed this U.S. government decision to the strategic importance of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa and state that this was why Okinawa was out of the scope of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed in 1951. However, this does not mean that Okinawa was unconnected to the Japan-U.S. security arrangements at that time. There was a possibility that Okinawa would be included in the scope of the new Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in the future, since Japan had been given residual sovereignty

over Okinawa.

In this paper, I examine how the policies and negotiations of the Japanese and U.S. governments concerning Okinawa were related to their vision of the security treaty from 1945 to 1951. This paper argues that there was the possibility that re-armament of Japan could lead to the return of Okinawa to Japan and reduce the number of U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

## 1. Introduction

More than 70% of the U.S. military facilities in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa.<sup>1</sup> The presence of U.S. forces in Okinawa is based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty concluded in 1951 and revised in 1960. Under the provisions of this treaty, Japan provides bases to the United States and the United States contributes to Japan's defense. This relation between the two countries has continued since 1951.

But during that time, Japan and the United States were considering some changes in their relations. As mentioned in the preamble to the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed in 1951, such relation was provisional, and the Japanese and the U.S. governments planned on establishing new security relations in the future.<sup>2</sup>

Okinawa was an area where the 1951 Security Treaty did not apply. After the June 1945 Battle of Okinawa, the area was mainly under the control of the U.S. Army.<sup>3</sup> In the process of concluding the peace treaty with Japan, the U.S. government decided to

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<sup>1</sup> Okinawa Prefectural Government, *Okinawa no Beigun oyobi Jieitaikitchi*.  
<https://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/chijiko/kichitai/syogai/toukeisiryosyu30.html>

<sup>2</sup> National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS); Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), University of Tokyo, "Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations," <http://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/docs/19510908.T2E.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands, 1945-1950* (University Press of the Pacific, 2005).

keep Okinawa under its control even after Japan regained its sovereignty.

Previous studies have mainly revealed the process by which the U.S. government decided to continue governing Okinawa even leaving Japan residual sovereignty over the area. According to these studies, the U.S. government left Okinawa out of the scope of the 1951 treaty because of the strategic importance of U.S. military bases in Okinawa.<sup>4</sup>

However, just because Okinawa was outside of the scope of the security treaty does not mean that Okinawa was unrelated to the Japan-U.S. security arrangements at that time. There was a possibility that Okinawa would be included in the scope of the new Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in the future, since Japan had been allowed residual sovereignty over Okinawa. Therefore, it makes sense to study the policies and negotiations of the Japan and U.S. governments concerning Okinawa, and their vision of the security arrangements.

In this paper, I will examine how the policies and negotiations of the Japanese

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<sup>4</sup> Robert D. Eldrige, *Okinawa Mondai no Kigen: Sengo Nitibeikankei ni okeru Okinawa 1945–1952* (Nagoya: University of Nagoya Press, 2003); Seigen Miyazato, *Nichibei Kankei to Okinawa 1945–1972* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000); Toru Aketagawa, *Okinawa Kichi Mondai no Rekishi: Hibu no Shima, Ikusha no Shima* (Tokyo: Misuzu Shobo, 2008), Chapter 4; Yasuko Kono, *Okinawa Henkan wo meguru Seiji to Gaiko: Nichibei Kankeishi no Bunmyaku* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1994); Yoshitoshi Taira, *Sengo Okinawa to Beigun Kichi: “Juyo” to “Kyojetsu” no Hazama de 1945–1972* (Tokyo: Hsei University Press, 2012), Chapter 3; Nicholas E. Sarantakes, *Keystone: The American Occupation of Okinawa and U.S.- Japanese Relations* (Texas A&M University Press, 2000), Chapters 1–4.

and U.S. governments concerning Okinawa were related to their vision of the security arrangements from 1945 to 1951. This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes changes in the role of U.S. military bases in Okinawa following changes in the international environment. Section 3 illustrates the emergence of the idea in the U.S. State Department, after the start of the Korean War, of sharing responsibility concerning defense. Section 4 examines the U.S. government's decision to allow Japan to maintain "residual sovereignty" over Okinawa, due to Japan's acceptance of rearmament. Section 5 clarifies the connection between the decision on Okinawa and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Finally, Section 6 presents the conclusions.

## 2. Changes in the Role of the U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa

The initial role of the Okinawa U.S. military bases was related to the Allied plans to make Japan demilitarize. The United States was responsible for maintaining order in postwar Asia. The United States thought that two measures were necessary to demilitarize Japan completely: first, disarmament of the Japanese military forces, and second, monitoring Japan after disarmament.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Akira Iriye, *The Cold War in Asia: A Historical Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-

These U.S. ideas were reflected in the Potsdam Declaration that the Japanese government accepted in August 1945. Clause 6 of the Declaration showed that the Allied Powers, mainly the United States, had a policy to drive out irresponsible militarism in Japan. And Clause 7 of the Declaration stated that parts of Japanese territory to be designated by the Allies would be occupied to secure the achievement of basic objectives such as those indicated in Clause 6.<sup>6</sup> In other words, the United States thought it essential not only to disarm Japan but also to monitor it from nearby bases in order to ensure its demilitarization. Okinawa became a likely site to provide bases for monitoring Japan after its disarmament.

During World War II, the U.S. military had been considering where to set up overseas bases after the war.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the military decided it was necessary to secure the right to establish U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

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Hall, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> GRIPS, IASA, University of Tokyo, "Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations," *Potsdam Declaration*,

<http://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/docs/19450726.D1E.html>.

<sup>7</sup> JCS570, "U.S. Requirements for Post War Air Bases" (November 6, 1943), Box 270, Section 2, Central Decimal Files, 1942–1945, RG218, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (hereafter OPA); JCS570/2, "U.S. Requirements for Post War Air Bases" (January 10, 1944), Box 270, Section 2, Central Decimal Files, 1942–1945, RG218, OPA; Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford University Press, 1992), pp. 56–60.

At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, however, the U.S. government avoided discussing how to acquire base rights.<sup>8</sup> In the Atlantic Charter announced by the United States and the United Kingdom in August 1941, the two countries stated they would not seek to take over new territory as a result of the war.<sup>9</sup> In order not to conflict with the Charter, the U.S. government had to carefully consider the method by which to establish the military bases in Okinawa.

Therefore, the decision on territorial sovereignty over Okinawa was postponed. Clause 8 of the Potsdam Declaration said, “the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.”<sup>10</sup> This provision indicated that the Allies were planning to leave the four main islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, and Shikoku as territories of Japan. On the other hand, this provision did not say that the Japanese government could continue to exercise its sovereignty over Okinawa. Thus, the U.S. government still had to consider whether to leave Okinawa under Japanese

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<sup>8</sup> “The Secretary of State to the Acting Secretary of State (June 22, 1945), *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter FRUS): *Diplomatic Papers: The Conference of Berlin (The Potsdam Conference), 1945*, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 185.

<sup>9</sup> GRIPS, IASA, University of Tokyo, “Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations.”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



sovereignty until a peace treaty was concluded with Japan.

After the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 and the Marshall Plan in June 1947, the Cold War began in Europe. For this reason, the U.S. military bases in Okinawa assumed a new role for Japan's security. The U.S. government decided to retain the military bases in Okinawa for an extended period.<sup>11</sup> This decision was made in anticipation of depriving territorial sovereignty over Okinawa from Japan in the near future.<sup>12</sup>

The Korean War, which broke out in June 1950, brought two further important changes to the U.S. military bases in Okinawa. First, as the United States participated in the war, the bases in Okinawa began to be used for bombing runs over North Korea. As the importance of the Okinawa bases further increased, NSC 60/1 was created on September 8, and the U.S. government established a policy that it should continue to rule Okinawa exclusively even after concluding a peace treaty with Japan.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> NSC13/3, "Report by the National Security Council on Recommendations with Respect to United States Policy Toward Japan" (May 6, 1949), *FRUS, 1949, The Far East and Australasia*, Vol. 7, Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 731.

<sup>12</sup> PPS28, "Recommendations with Respect to U.S. Policy toward Japan" (March 25, 1948), *FRUS, 1948*, Vol. 6, *The Far East and Australasia* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 691–696.

<sup>13</sup> NSC60/1, "A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Security on Japanese Peace Treaty" (September 8, 1950), White House Office, National Security

Second, the bases in Okinawa were no longer being used to monitor a demilitarized Japan. Following the outbreak of the Korean War, the U.S. government decided that Japan needed to remilitarize.<sup>14</sup> Thus the demilitarization of Japan was no longer necessary.

### 3. The Emergence of the Idea of Sharing Responsibility Concerning the Defense of Okinawa

In October 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteer Army entered the Korean War in earnest. This development led the U.S. government to begin reconsidering its policy of depriving sovereignty over Okinawa. At the center of this shift was the State Department, including John F. Dulles, who was appointed foreign policy adviser to the secretary of state.

Since the outbreak of the Korean War, the State Department had thought that securing Japan as a Western ally was absolutely essential.<sup>15</sup> To achieve this, it was thought

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Council Staff, Papers, 1948–61, Disaster File series, Japan (3), OPA.

<sup>14</sup> Ayako Kusunoki, *Yoshida Shigeru to Anzenhosho Seisaku no Keisei: Nichibei no Koso to sono Sogosayou 1943–1952* (Kyoto: Minervashobo, 2009), pp. 122–128; Futoshi Shibayama, *Nihon Saigunbi e no Michi 1945–1954* (Kyoto: Minervashobo, 2010), pp. 298–307.

<sup>15</sup> “Memorandum by the Consultant to the Secretary (Dulles) to the Secretary of State”

that the U.S. government had to stop depriving Japan of sovereignty over Okinawa.<sup>16</sup> The attempt was, however, likely to have an impact on the free use of the bases in Okinawa, a crucial concern, given that the U.S. military was in the thick of difficulties in the Korean War.

On December 13, 1950, Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson suggested a new plan to Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall. It was a proposal that the U.S. government would leave “the Ryukyu and the Bonin Islands under Japanese sovereignty, subject to the provisions of the contemplated military security agreement which would presumably take special account of the position in Okinawa.”<sup>17</sup>

The point of Acheson’s proposal was that the State Department had assumed that the conclusion of the Japan-U.S. security agreements was a prerequisite for leaving Okinawa under Japanese sovereignty. At that time, not only the Department of Defense but also the State Department thought that it was essential for Japan to remilitarize at an

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(July 19, 1950), *FRUS, 1950, East Asia and the Pacific*, Vol. 6, Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 492.

<sup>16</sup> “Territorial Provisions of Japanese Peace Treaty” (October 26, 1950), Hiroshi Masuda, ed., *Rearmament of Japan, Part 1: 1947–1952* (Tokyo: Maruzen Congressional information Service, 1998), 2A142; “Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs to the Deputy Director of the Office (Johnson)” (November 14, 1950), *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. 6, Part 2, pp. 1346–1348; Sarantakes, *Keystone*, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> “The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall)” (December 13, 1950), *ibid.*, pp. 1363–1367.

early stage.

Before Acheson's proposal, John M. Allison, head of Northeast Asian affairs at the State Department, made the following recommendations to Dulles. Both the Japanese and U.S. governments would conclude bilateral security agreements, and Japan should share the burden with respect to its own defense, at least in terms of ground forces.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the State Department wanted Japan to maintain sovereignty over Okinawa, and Japan would take on the responsibility of defending its territories, including Okinawa.

The State Department thought it would not be necessary for the U.S. to govern Okinawa exclusively but only to acquire the base rights there, if the U.S. government could conclude a security agreement with a Japanese government that was able to maintain a self-sufficient military.<sup>19</sup> Thus the State Department had come to associate two issues: Japanese territorial sovereignty over Okinawa and Japan's rearmament.<sup>20</sup>

The Department of Defense opposed the State Department's proposal. It did so because the proposal meant there would be limits on its right to use the U.S. military

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<sup>18</sup> "Japanese Peace Treaty" (December 2, 1950), *ibid.*, pp. 1354–1356.

<sup>19</sup> "The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall)" (December 13, 1950), *FRUS, 1950*, Vol. 6, Part 2, pp. 1363–1367.

<sup>20</sup> Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 428.

bases in Okinawa.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the U.S. government decided to maintain policies based on NSC 60/1, created in September 1950.<sup>22</sup> This was the policy that stated the U.S. government would require the Japanese government to reconstruct self-defense capabilities and would hold the exclusive right to govern Okinawa.

Changes in the role of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa had an important influence on Japan's thoughts concerning territorial sovereignty over Okinawa. Given the U.S. government's desire to retain long-term control over the military bases in Okinawa, the Japanese government anticipated that it would be compelled to give up its territorial sovereignty over the area shortly after the end of the Pacific War.<sup>23</sup> However, as the U.S. military bases in Okinawa were virtually no longer used to monitor Japan's demilitarization after the outbreak of the Korean War, the Japanese government's understanding of sovereignty over Okinawa changed completely.

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<sup>21</sup> "Report by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee to the Joint Chiefs of Staff" (December 13, 1950), *ibid.*, pp. 1385–1392; "The Commander in Chief, Far East (MacArthur) to the Department of the Army," December 28, 1950, *ibid.*, pp. 1383–1385.

<sup>22</sup> "The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall)" (January 9, 1951), Enclosure 1, Memorandum for the President, and Enclosure 2, Draft Letter to Mr. Dulles, *FRUS, 1951, Vol. 6, East Asia and the Pacific* (in two parts), Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 787–789.

<sup>23</sup> "Heiwajouyaku Mondai Kenkyukai Kanjikai niyoru Daiichiji Kenkyu Houkoku, Tainichi Heiwajouyaku niokeru Seijijoukou no Soutei oyobi Taishohoushin," May 1946, *Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy (Nihongaikobunsho): San Francisco Heiwajouyaku Junnbi Taisaku* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2006), pp. 91–99.

Therefore, in concluding the peace treaty, the Japanese government decided to request a guarantee from the U.S. government to delegate the administrative authority of Okinawa to Japan when the United States no longer needed to exclusively govern Okinawa.<sup>24</sup>

#### 4. Japan's Acceptance of Rearmament and the "Residual Sovereignty" over Okinawa

At the Japan-U.S. conference held at the end of January 1951, the Japanese government felt it was likely to lose territorial sovereignty over Okinawa. Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida told Dulles that he would be willing to apply something like the "Bermuda Agreement" to Okinawa. Through this agreement the United States acquired the right to lease naval and air base sites in Bermuda from Great Britain for 90 years.<sup>25</sup> Yoshida made such a proposal so that Okinawa would remain under Japanese sovereignty; however, Dulles completely rejected Yoshida's proposal.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> "Beikoku ga Okinawa, Ogasawara Shotou no Shintakutouti wo Koshitu suru bai no Sochi," January 1951, *Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy (Nihongaikobunsho): Heiwajouwaku no Teiketsu ni kansuru Chousho Daiissatsu* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2002), pp. 869–870.

<sup>25</sup> "1951.1.30 ni Kouhu shita Wagahou Kenkai," *Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy (Nihongaikobunsho): Heiwajouwaku no Teiketsu ni kansuru Chousho Dainisatsu* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2002), pp. 145–154.

<sup>26</sup> "1951.1.31 Dainiji Kaidan Memo," *ibid.*, p. 158.

At the beginning of negotiations, Yoshida refused to rearm. However, the Japanese government understood that a peace treaty could not be concluded if they refused rearmament, so they submitted a document titled “Initial Steps for Rearmament Program,”<sup>27</sup> implying to the U.S. government that the Japanese government was promising to rearm.<sup>28</sup>

However, Dulles thought it was uncertain to what degree the Japanese government would rebuild its defense capabilities. Therefore, he concluded that the U.S. government should not completely guarantee Japan’s security until the Japanese government demonstrated it had rearmed to a certain degree by a certain date.<sup>29</sup>

The U.S. government’s assessment of Japan’s submission of the “Initial Steps for Rearmament Program” had an impact on the U.S. government’s decision concerning territorial sovereignty over Okinawa. As mentioned above, the State Department assumed that Japan would rebuild its self-defense capability as a prerequisite for the U.S. leaving Okinawa under the sovereignty of the Japanese government. However, the rearmament plan that Japan submitted did not fully meet the State Department’s

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<sup>27</sup> “‘Sogo no Anzenhosho notameno Nichibei Kyoutei’ anni taisuru Wagahou ‘Observation’ oybi ‘Saigunbi Keikaku no Hossoku’ no Sakusei to Teishutsu,” *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>28</sup> Shibayama, *Nihon Saigunbi heno Michi*, p. 414.

<sup>29</sup> Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the office of Northeast Asian Affairs, “Minutes-Dulles Mission Staff Meeting” (February 5, 1951), *FRUS, 1951*, Vol. 6, Part 1, pp. 857–858.

expectations. Therefore, the State Department was not convinced that Japan would take over responsibility for Okinawa's defense.

After the meeting with Japan, the State Department maintained the policy that Okinawa would be left under Japanese sovereignty but avoided guaranteeing this to the Japanese government when the peace treaty was concluded. In the process of completing the draft of the peace treaty on March 23, 1951, the State Department made its attitude clear. When explaining the contents of the peace treaty with Japan to the U.K. government on behalf of Dulles, Alison stated that the U.S. government thought that territorial sovereignty over Okinawa might be returned to the Japanese after a certain period.<sup>30</sup> At the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Dulles explained that the State Department intended to secure an “option” to place Okinawa under the U.S. trusteeship in the draft of the peace treaty with Japan.<sup>31</sup> From both remarks, it was obvious that the State Department would have liked to leave Okinawa under Japanese sovereignty but also thought that it would not be possible to completely guarantee that at the time of the signing of the peace treaty.

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<sup>30</sup> “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Second Secretary of the Embassy in the United Kingdom (Marvin)” (March 21, 1951), *ibid.*, pp. 941.

<sup>31</sup> “Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs,” *ibid.*, pp. 932–935.



In the draft of the peace treaty with Japan completed on March 23, 1951, the State Department amended a clause by adding that the U.S. government “may propose” to the United Nations to place Okinawa under its trusteeship system with the United States as the administering authority.<sup>32</sup>

Based on the aforementioned policies, the State Department tried to obtain consent from the Department of Defense to not apply the trusteeship system to Okinawa after concluding the peace treaty.<sup>33</sup> But the Department of Defense strongly called for securing freedom of military action in Okinawa.<sup>34</sup> By contrast, Dulles explained that such a request could be completely satisfied by the provision in the draft of the peace treaty dated March 23.<sup>35</sup>

He thought that the United States should not make Okinawa its own territory, adhering to the philosophy of the Atlantic Charter. On the other hand, he was concerned about two things. First, if Japan was forced to give up territorial sovereignty over Okinawa, there was a possibility of causing uncertainty internationally about U.S. territorial

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<sup>32</sup> “Provisional United States Draft of a Japanese Peace Treaty” (March 23, 1951), *ibid.*, p. 945.

<sup>33</sup> Eldrige, *Okinawa Mondai no Kigen*, pp. 223–225; Miyazato, *Nichibei Kankei to Okinawa*, pp. 57–59.

<sup>34</sup> “Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State—Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting” (April 11, 1951), *ibid.*, pp. 970–971.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

ambitions in East Asia. Second, it was also a problem if the United Nations did not recognize the U.S. government's application for the trusteeship system to Okinawa. In order to avoid such situations, Dulles thought that it would be a good solution to grant "residual sovereignty" over Okinawa to Japan. The idea was based on the judgment that Japan's residual sovereignty over Okinawa and U.S. exclusive governance there would be compatible.

Ultimately, on June 28, 1951, the State Department got the approval from Secretary of Defense Marshall concerning the treatment of Okinawa in the peace treaty with Japan.<sup>36</sup> In Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace with Japan signed on September 8, 1951, a provision on Okinawa was stipulated as follows:<sup>37</sup>

Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29° north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands), Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan

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<sup>36</sup> "The Secretary of Defense (Marshall) to the Secretary of State" (June 28, 1951), *ibid.*, pp. 1155–1159.

<sup>37</sup> GRIPS, IASA, University of Tokyo, "Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations," Treaty of Peace with Japan, <http://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/docs/19510908.T1E.html>

(including the Bonin Islands, Rosario Island and the Volcano Islands) and Parece Vela and Marcus Island. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters.

Explaining the content of the treaty, Dulles stated that Article 3 would allow the Japanese government to maintain “residual sovereignty” over Okinawa. In this way, the United States established the territorial clause of the peace treaty with Japan in a manner that left open the possibility of U.S. trusteeship in Okinawa while allowing Japan to hold “residual sovereignty.” This meant that there was room for Japan to regain administrative authority of Okinawa.

## 5. Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and Okinawa

Meanwhile, what was important in connection with Okinawa during the process of planning the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, signed on the same day as the Treaty of Peace with Japan, was the establishment of Article 4, which described the future vision of the two countries. Japan and the United States regarded the 1951 security treaty as a provisional one.

After Japan was able to fully rebuild its military power, the two countries planned to conclude the mutual defense treaty. And what was intended in Article 4 of the Security Treaty Convention as a condition for concluding the mutual defense treaty was that Japan should bear the defense responsibility of “the Japan Area.” Article 4 stated as follows:<sup>38</sup>

This Treaty shall expire whenever in the opinion of the Governments of Japan and the United States of America there shall have come into force such United Nations arrangements or such alternative individual or collective security dispositions as will satisfactorily provide for the maintenance by the United Nations or otherwise of international peace and security in the Japan Area.

Okinawa was clearly included in the “the Japan Area,” which was the area that the Japanese government was to have defense responsibility for, because Japan was able to hold its sovereignty. At that time, Japan and the United States assumed that Japan would be able to defend its territory, including, in the future, Okinawa.<sup>39</sup> In fact, Kumao

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., Security Treaty Between Japan and the United States of America, <http://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/docs/19510908.T2E.html>

<sup>39</sup> Kumao Nishimura, *San Francisco Heiwa Jouyaku / Nichibei Anzenhosho Jouyaku* (Tokyo: Chuou Kouron Shinsya, 1999), p. 24.

Nishimura, director general of the Treaties Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time, testified later that “the Japan Area” in Article 4 of the security treaty included Okinawa.<sup>40</sup>

In the process of the conclusion of the Peace Treaty and the Security Treaty, the relation between Japan and the United States changed dramatically. As a result, there was the possibility that re-armament of Japan could lead to the return of Okinawa to Japan and reduce the number of U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

## 6. Conclusion

When discussing the policies and negotiations of the Japanese and U.S. governments concerning Okinawa in the process of signing a peace treaty, many studies have not fully mentioned the relevance to their vision of the security arrangements. This was due to the fact that Okinawa was excluded from the scope of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed in 1951.

This paper clarified the following three points. First, after the end of World War II, certain changes occurred in the Japan-U.S. security relationship. At first, the United

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

States insisted that Japan be demilitarized. Thus U.S. military bases in Okinawa were expected to play a role in monitoring Japan after its demilitarization. In addition, after the Cold War began in Europe, the bases in Okinawa were expected to play a role in Japan's security. Because of these important roles, the U.S. government decided to maintain the bases in Okinawa for an extended period. The United States postponed the decision about whether to deprive Japan of sovereignty over Okinawa, while keeping that possibility in mind for the future.

However, due to the Korean War, the situation changed completely. Second, the United States demanded that Japan increase not only its ability to protect itself but also its capacity to help the United States maintain local peace and security. As the result, the U.S. military bases in Okinawa would no longer be used to monitor a disarmed Japan. After the Chinese People's Liberation Army entered the Korean War, the U.S. State Department strongly believed it was essential to secure Japan as a member of the Western alliance. Therefore, the State Department thought that it was necessary to prevent rising anti-American sentiment in Japan over depriving Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa.

Changes in the role of the Okinawa bases had an important influence on Japan's thoughts concerning territorial sovereignty over Okinawa. Ever since the end of the war, the Japanese government anticipated that it would be forced to abandon territorial

sovereignty over Okinawa once a peace treaty was concluded. However, as the bases in Okinawa were virtually no longer used to monitor Japan's demilitarization after the outbreak of the Korean War, the Japanese government started to expect it would regain Okinawa someday.

Third, the State Department, which received the "Initial Steps for Rearmament Program" from Japan, had decided to allow Japan to possess residual sovereignty over Okinawa. Ultimately, the U.S. military accepted this policy as well. This decision affected their vision of the security arrangement. Japan and the United States regarded the security treaty signed in 1951 as a provisional one. The two countries had plans to conclude a mutual defense treaty, if Japan took responsibility for the defense of the "Japan Area," including Okinawa. This led to the possibility that sufficient rearmament could lead to the return of Okinawa to Japan and reduce the number of U.S. military bases in Okinawa.