

Anti-American Nationalism and Leftist Factionalism in 1950 and 1960 Japan

HASEGAWA Kenji

Key words: Anti-American Nationalism, Leftist Factionalism, 1950 Red Purge Protests, 1960 Anpo Protests

Introduction

There have been two commonplace and contradictory observations regarding the role of anti-American nationalism in the spread of the massive protests against the US-Japan Security Treaty of 1960. One stresses its significance while the other downplays it. As the 1960 protests as history remain for the most part fragmented into partisan histories or personalized recollections and have yet to become integrated into the mainstream historical narrative of postwar Japan, discussions of the role of anti-American nationalism in the protests often remain selective and superficial. Those stressing its significance tend to draw a connection between the rising national pride deriving from Japan's postwar reconstruction and its successful escape from the status of "fourth-rate nation." The mobbing of US Press Secretary James Hagerty's car at Haneda Airport, one of the iconic moments of the protests, is frequently cited. Those downplaying its significance tend to point out the episodes of American journalists mingling freely with protesting students and the overall lack of violence against Americans, especially in contrast to the Bloody May Day incident of eight years earlier.

Those familiar with the internal dynamics of the protest movement are quick to point out that while the Japanese Communist Party (hereafter JCP) targeted "American imperialism," the student radicals of the Zengakuren (All-Japan Federation of Student Self-government Associations, established in 1948) led by the Bund (Communist League, established in 1958) took the opposing stance of attacking the resurgence of "Japanese imperialism" while also rejecting the JCP's moderate tactics in opposing the treaty. It was for this reason that one former student radical leader of the Bund could go scurrying back home for exonerating evidence of his "anti-communist" activities when his American

student visa was almost denied. It was the students associated with the Bund-led Zengakuren who manufactured the first dramatic incident of the protests with their breaching of the Diet grounds on November 27, 1959, and also their last, with their clash with police at the Diet leading to the death of the student Kamba Michiko. This last was in part motivated by the actions of the JCP affiliated protestors five days earlier, who grabbed the headlines by mobbing James Hagerty at Haneda Airport. The JCP is distracting the protestors with their anti-American actions, Bund statements cried, but clearly the important issue was not theoretical differences between American or Japanese imperialism, but rather the fact that they had been upstaged—the Bund-led Zengakuren’s own Haneda protest of January 1960 having failed to physically affect Kishi Nobusuke’s departure to America for the signing of the treaty.

Were the 1960 protests driven by anti-American nationalism? This question has little meaning if answered superficially through selective evidence, or in a manner that simply recapitulates the ideological battle lines within the protest movement. This paper will work toward a more nuanced answer to the question by showing how nationalism and factionalism became intertwined factors that powerfully conditioned protests in the early 1950s, and how these factors were reconfigured and reproduced in 1960. It will shed light on the background to the sight of student radicals organizing physical clashes with authorities to protest the US-Japan Security Treaty while vehemently attacking anti-American nationalism in rhetoric.

Internal Background to the Post 1950 Transformation of JCP Nationalism

Similar to how the Japanese nation tended to posit a clean rupture in 1945 between a repressive militarist regime and a peaceful postwar regime, Japan’s “New Left” groups that emerged in the late 1950s based their identities on the complete negation of their former association with the JCP. In both cases, the process of identity construction entailed myth-making obscuring the continuities between old and new. In the case of the Bund, the “New Left” group that led the

Zengakuren in 1960, it constructed a myth that their birth in late 1958 was the beginning of a new, “bright” style of activism finally divorced from the dark and repressive JCP. This powerful narrative has led to the widespread misunderstanding of Zengakuren students before the 1958 split to have been enthralled by the JCP’s authority as the sole vanguard of the Japanese revolution.

One of the popular phrases of the immediate postwar period was “from *kamikaze* to JCP.” Unlike the former *kamikaze* who turned to crime or decadence (the so-called *tokkō-kuzure*) after having been abruptly deprived of their object of devotion, those who joined the JCP transferred their loyalty instead of renouncing it. Student radicals who joined the Red Purge protests of 1950 were of a similar generation, with the important qualification that many were slightly younger, with no actual combat experience. Some common reasons for their joining the JCP included: angry rebellion against adults for having deceived the young and sent them to their deaths, and for their shameless conversion to democrats after the defeat; their impatient urge for action after the inevitability of death in battle abruptly disappeared; the complex they felt toward their upper classmen returning from the battlefields; and their urge to devote themselves unconditionally for a cause. This last did not signify, however, that these students remained unconditionally loyal to the JCP. In fact, Zengakuren students became active members in the JCP’s factional infighting that intensified after 1950. One of the key issues in this internal conflict was anti-American nationalism.

In the early postwar period, JCP nationalism took on a moderate, “loveable” form under the leadership of Nosaka Sanzō. The party hoped to achieve a revolution through peaceful means within the framework of the American occupation. However, after the occupation forces intervened to stop the general strike of 1947, JCP nationalism eventually turned militantly anti-American. This process was fraught with internal conflict in which Zengakuren students played a major role. A turning point in the transformation of JCP nationalism came with the party’s call for a Democratic National Front (*minshu minzoku sensen*) in March 1948. The JCP observed that economic difficulties continued to plague the working class as reactionary forces were joining forces with the “remnants of the military clique” to take away the newly gained rights of the people, thus

endangering the “independence of the Japanese nation” guaranteed by the Potsdam Declaration. The party called on all democratic organizations to join forces under the Democratic National Front to protect the independence of the Japanese nation (*nihon minzoku*) from the reactionary turn in national politics.ⁱ In contrast to Nosaka’s “loveable” nationalism for revolution under the occupation, this was a defensive and beleaguered nationalism against the “reverse course”—though one that still avoided explicit criticism of the occupation. Zengakuren students eagerly sought to join the Democratic National Front but soon found themselves repeatedly reprimanded by the JCP leadership for conducting “provocative” actions against the occupation forces. The transformation of JCP nationalism reached a new stage with the Cominform criticism of 1950, which denounced the JCP’s peaceful revolution strategy and called for an “anti-imperial struggle” against the American occupation forces. An internal split occurred in the JCP, with the “mainstream faction” initially refusing to accept the Cominform criticism and the “international faction” rebelling against this refusal. A significant number of Zengakuren students joined the “international faction” and protested against the JCP leadership and American occupation with their Red Purge protests of 1950.

The 1950 Red Purge Protests as Precedent and Impetus to the JCP’s Anti-American Turn

From late 1949, SCAP and the Japanese government carried out a “Red Purge” of public employees, with some eleven thousand workers, mostly union activists, dismissed on account of their leftist leanings. About the same number of workers in the private sector were purged in the wake of the Korean War.ⁱⁱ University campuses also became targets for the Red Purge. On July 19, 1949, the CIE’s W.C. Eells gave a speech to celebrate the founding of Niigata University advocating the expulsion of communist professors from universities. He sharply criticized the student movement: the student radicals were wasting not only their own time and money but also the money that the government was generously putting aside for their privileged education. Like Communist professors, protesting students were acting as slaves, under the direction of the Communist Zengakuren.ⁱⁱⁱ

After this speech, the problem of the Red Purge in the universities became a nationwide concern. On October 12, in an interview with the *Tokyo University Student Newspaper*, Tokyo University president Nambara Shigeru expressed disapproval of Eells' idea of purging communist professors. Although he stressed that professors should engage in education and research "objectively and with autonomy," he rejected the possibility of purging Communist professors by stating that there was no reason to question the integrity of a professor "simply because he is a member of a particular political party—especially considering that it is a legally recognized party."^{iv} With the university Red Purge attracting attention in the national press, CIE head D.R. Nugent announced on November 8 that contrary to rumors, SCAP was not in fact sponsoring a Red Purge in the universities.^v Suspicion did not disappear, however, as Eells continued to tour campuses the following spring. These well publicized visits provided Zengkauren with the ideal target for their "anti-imperial struggle." The result was two waves of student protests of unprecedented scale and intensity in May and October. In part as a result of these protests, only a small number of educators in the universities were subjected to the Red Purge.^{vi}

In April, Kyushu University students responded to Eells' visit by conducting a protest strike during final examinations, setting a precedent for the nationwide exam boycotts six months later. It was during this protest that JCP cell members established the first branch of the Hansengakudō (Hansen gakusei dōmei, Anti-war students league), a "mass" organization that recruited non-party member students eager to participate in Zengakuren struggles.^{vii} Just prior to the formal establishment of their organization, the Hansengakudō students denounced American preparations for war evidenced by the construction of military bases, the revival of Japanese military industries, and the anti-Communist statements by Eells. "In three months the preparations for war will be completed!!" they warned. They angrily denounced the subservient Japanese authorities cooperating in the war plans, including the Kyushu University authorities who were allowing "foreign capital" to penetrate the university's Center of Production Science. This was "the obvious logical culmination of subservient *panpan* politics."^{viii} The organization spread rapidly onto other campuses as protests against the Red Purge grew in

intensity and scale, and as their prescient warning became reality with the outbreak of the Korean War.^{ix}

Shortly after the establishment of the Hansengakudō, Tohoku University cell members sparked the first wave of “anti-imperial struggle” in May 1950 by disrupting Eells’ anti-communist speech on May 2. Student activists had spent the previous night widely distributing papers that read: “Academic freedom endangered!” “No more Hiroshimas! No more Eells!” “Japanese education by the Japanese people!” As it became clear that there was no way for him to continue his speech, Eells left the stage. The Zengakuren office in Tokyo was promptly informed of this “victory” through a telegram from Tohoku University announcing, “‘E’ expelled, anti-imperial banzai.” Zengakuren students knew that “E” referred to Eells, and they also understood it to refer to “barbarian,” a pun on the the *jo-“E”* (“Expel the barbarians”) movement of the bakumatsu period. A large group of students demonstrated in Tokyo expressing solidarity with this campaign.

As protests directed against the occupation grew in intensity and scale, in a May 2 speech commemorating the inauguration of the postwar constitution, Douglas MacArthur denounced the JCP as a political party controlled by foreign forces. Zengakuren students at Tokyo University, for their part, directed MacArthur’s criticism toward the ruling government during the May university festival, parodying its subordinate independence with an altered version of a Soviet cartoon depicting the corn-pipe-puffing MacArthur holding a canine Yoshida Shigeru on a leash. When JCP leaders caught wind of the “lascivious placard,” they ordered that it be taken down and that those responsible turn themselves in to party headquarters for inquest. The students obeyed the order to take down the cartoon—but only partially, covering the forbidden cartoon and displaying it on demand to those who requested a peek. They ignored the party’s order for inquest. The JCP promptly punished this act of insubordination by dissolving the Tokyo University cell on May 5.^x

Lacking a strong Japanese tradition for revolution, and rebelling against the ubiquity of American cultural influences under the occupation, student radicals drew inspiration from non-American foreign traditions such as the wartime French resistance movement. Inspired by French resistance literature recently published in

translation, students often referred to Hansengakudō with the more catchy acronym of “AG” (pronounced in French). Even more significant was the influence of “the new China,” which had just successfully completed its revolution after a long period of resistance against Western and Japanese imperialism. Indeed, the establishment of the Zengakuren in 1948 was timed to coincide with the anniversary of the 1931 Mukden Incident of September 18. Zengakuren students’ identification with China stemmed in part from their desire to atone for Japanese aggression in the past war; but in the context of the reverse course and the 1949 revolution, China became more a model for the present and future than a victim of the past. Takeji Teruo urged that Japanese students learn from the “30 year history” of the Chinese student movement beginning with the May 4 movement and culminating in the 1949 revolution. It was an “infinite theoretical treasure trove for anti-imperial national liberation struggle.”^{xi} Zengakuren students drew on this “treasure trove,” for example, by referring to the Japanese government as *baiben*, the imported Chinese word for “comprador,” and they described the Japanese government as acting like the traitorous compradors had in colonial China by playing a subservient role to the American occupation.^{xii}

In May 1950, Zengakuren protests against Eells and against the occupation spread to an unprecedented scale and intensity. The major protests were timed to coincide with major anniversary dates in the history of China’s anti-colonial resistance, most notably May 4. Students’ agitation at Waseda leading up to the May 4 protest was typical of the virulently nationalistic anti-colonial language students employed. “As we walk back from our part-time work exhausted and hungry, ‘excellent’ luxury cars pass in front of us,” it stated. “Wherever we go, the long-legged ones walk by haughtily, holding [panpan] girls looking like monsters of white powder and red lipsticks.” The Americans were building military bases and preparing for war by “sucking the blood out of us Japanese.” They were planning to draft the students and use them as “human bullets” in their upcoming war.^{xiii} Because of their provocative rhetoric and actions, the JCP dissolved the Waseda University cell shortly after this protest.

These protests led by Zengakuren students affiliated with the international faction of the JCP continued throughout much of 1950. Mainstream

faction leaders constantly berated them for being “extreme leftist adventurers” inviting repression by the occupation. Then, in a convoluted process, the tables were turned with the mainstream faction leadership adopting the policy of military struggle against the American occupation. Stalin’s unrealistic hope for armed revolution in Japan was the direct reason behind the JCP’s military turn. However, as the historian Itō Akira has argued, the party leadership’s parochial concern over internal factionalism was another major factor.^{xiv} For most of 1950, the mainstream faction leadership found itself constantly attacking the international faction’s “provocative” actions against the occupation forces. In October 1950, just as the international faction-led Red Purge protests were at their most intense on university campuses, and *zainichi* Korean activists were taking direct action to interfere with the American-Japanese war effort, the mainstream faction called for a military struggle against the occupation and Japanese government for the first time. The need to eliminate the factionalists was a ubiquitous theme in the early articles of the JCP’s underground newspaper during its military interlude, *Heiwa to dokuritsu* (Peace and Independence).

For example, in one of the first editorials announcing the new direction of the underground party, on September 23, 1950 *Heiwa to dokuritsu* called for the “strict adherence to underground activities (*hikōzen*) and the overcoming of the factionalists.” In the context of harsh repression, the editorial admonished readers to exercise extreme caution in handling the illegal newspaper. Such discipline would, it stated, serve as the base for “Bolshevik consolidation” of party activities. It pointed to the Cominform’s praise of the party leadership as proof that the factionalists’ slander of the leaders as Titoists had no basis. By destroying the unity of the party, the international faction was acting as “assistants to the enemy.” Through underground activities and the elimination of the factionalists, party members were exhorted to strengthen their “steel-like revolutionary organization.”^{xv} This article among many others gives the impression of a party leadership whose primary enemy was internal.

The party’s initial move towards military tactics was cautious, and it took another year before the military struggle was actually adopted by the party leadership at the 5th Party Conference of 1951. While the ensuing guerilla tactics

turned out to be politically disastrous, from an internal standpoint, merely calling for military struggle and gaining the support of the Cominform and the Chinese Communist Party allowed the party leadership to reclaim its revolutionary credentials from the international faction. The JCP's military turn has often been described as a "suicidal" policy, but the JCP leadership was by no means unconcerned with its political survival. Self-preservation in the face of internal pressures was a major concern in the party leadership's adoption, and later disavowal, of this "suicidal" policy. In 1955, with its 6th Party Conference, the JCP renounced its military interlude and returned to a focus on parliamentary gains within the new "1955 system".

Conclusion: Anti-Anti-Americanism and "World Revolution" in 1960

The older generation of the Bund leadership was shaped by these experiences. After 1955, they began a long process of breaking away from the JCP and establishing their own revolutionary vanguard. In doing so, they inherited and transformed the confrontational style of the JCP before its 1955 return to the "loveable." Instead of Maoist bases in the mountain villages, it was the physical intrusion and temporary occupation of symbolically and tactically significant spaces such as military bases, airports, and Diet grounds. Instead of Molotov cocktails, it was the act of being beaten and bloodied by police batons, together with the zigzag demonstration. And instead of "Yankee go home," it was "world revolution." Through these transformations, the Bund functioned to re-introduce elements of the early 1950s into the 1960 Anpo protests—not, as their official narrative claims, to simply negate and overcome the earlier "dark" period.

Perhaps even more influential than the Bund in channeling the atmosphere of the early 1950s into the 1960 Anpo protests was Matsumoto Seichō's popular book, Black Fog over Japan. The historian Satō Hajime, who as a young man was sentenced to death for his alleged involvement in the 1949 Matsukawa Incident, and published several important works seeking to elucidate Japan's postwar before passing away in the summer of 2009, denounced this

book's popularity as "Matsumoto Seichō's conspiracy." Black Fog over Japan re-examined, detective story style, the mysterious series of terrorist attacks in 1949 blamed on the JCP leading up to the outbreak of the Korean War. According to the book, everything was an American conspiracy for starting the Korean War. Satō has harsh criticism for Matsumoto's careless claims, and more fundamentally, for how the "black fog" obscured problems within the JCP, labor movement, and more broadly surrounding Japan's problem of "postwar responsibility" by deflecting all attention onto an exogenous "American conspiracy."

The Bund in 1960 was also, at least in theory, at odds with the anti-American nationalism Matsumoto and the JCP promoted. Their theoretical position was the rejection of the JCP's anti-American nationalism that opposed Japan's semi-colonial dependence on America; instead, they argued that the revision of Anpo reflected the resurgence of Japanese imperialism, thus their emphasis on "world revolution" and class over nation. However, Satō's and the Bund's rejection of Matsumoto's "black fog" are not alike in that the Bund's stemmed in large part from theoretical posturing to establish an identity independent from the JCP. The Bund forcefully declared its independence of the JCP, but it did so in an effort to claim the mantle of the "sole vanguard of the revolution" for which the JCP was now disqualified. Constructing its young identity on its anti-JCP nature, it refused to self-referentially examine the links and ruptures between the early and late 1950s. This refusal was akin to "Matsumoto Seichō's conspiracy" that Satō Hajime denounced: just as Matsumoto deflected all attention onto an American conspiracy, the Bund deflected all attention onto an exogenous JCP betrayal of Japan's postwar revolution.^{xvi}

While much of this theoretical posturing seems curiously parochial in hindsight, the actions that accompanied such theorizing did have a significant impact on the 1960 protests against the US-Japan Security Treaty. It was the Bund-led Zengakuren that was behind many of the confrontational clashes that gave the 1960 protests an ominous unpredictability absent in the tamer and more routinized protests of the established leftist forces. The Bund theorized that their actions would form a part of the impending "world revolution." While it is easy to dismiss this rhetoric in retrospect, these seemingly delusional hopes dovetailed

with delusional fears of political chaos and falling dominoes. The LDP issued a horrified reaction following the Bund organized intrusion into the Diet grounds in November 1959, denouncing the “planned revolutionary destructive act.” They were “gravely worried” about these trends, they stated.^{xvii} In America, as the political turmoil over Anpo continued into June, *Time* magazine expressed wonderment at how unprepared the US government was until “brutally awakened to the fact that Japan has become a cockpit in the cold war.” US ambassador Douglas MacArthur II labeled the violent demonstrations against Anpo as the doings of Moscow and Beijing, whose paramount objective was the “neutralization and eventual takeover of Japan.” Emboldened leftist revolutionaries in Japan might well intensify their offensive in successively toppling US friendly governments. Japan was the keystone of “the great arc of free Asia,” and if it fell to communism, the rest of Asia would follow suit.^{xviii}

These fears would soon prove to be unfounded. Part of the reason has to do with the successful policies by the American and Japanese governments to relocate the political contentious military bases off the mainland to Okinawa, shifting the national attention away from the continuing American military presence to the consensual goal of modernization and economic growth. Another neglected but important factor was the internal dynamics of the leftist protest movement itself, where much of the energy derived from parochial competitions amongst antagonistic factions. “The Communists,” even limited to those within Japan, were far from monolithic; and despite their attacks on “America” or calls for “revolution,” in the end their hatred for each other was greater than that for any common enemy.

- i JCP Central Committee, “Minshu minzoku sensen kessei teian no shuisho,” Kamiyama Shigeo ed., *Nihon kyōsantō sengo jūyō shiryōshū*, v.1 (Tokyo: San’ichi shobō, 1971), p.321-333.
- ii John Dower, “Occupied Japan and the Cold War in Asia,” in John Dower, *Japan in War and Peace* (New York, 1993), p.187.
- iii Speech cited in Kaigo Tokiomi and Terasaki Masao eds., *Daigaku kyōiku—Sengo nihon no kyōiku kaikaku*, v.9 (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1969), p.50-55.
- iv *Tokyo daigaku gakusei shinbun* (October 17, 1949), p.1
- v *Tokyo daigaku hyakunenshi, tsūshi* 3 (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1987), p.428.
- vi The historian of the Red Purge Hirata Tetsuo counts 24 cases reported in newspapers which could be confirmed, 9 of which were later rescinded. Hirata Tetsuo, *Reddo pāji no shiteki kyūmei* (Tokyo: Shin nihon shuppansha, 2002), p.139. The most famous case involved the philosopher Umemoto Katsumi of Mito Higher School, who was forced to leave in the course of the school’s transition to Ibaragi University. The Red Purge in higher education was not simply the result of SCAP orders. As Hans Martin Kramer has shown, the role of Japanese mid-level players was greater than has been generally recognized. Hans Martin Kramer, “Just Who Reversed the Course? The Red Purge in Higher Education during the Occupation of Japan,” *Social Science Japan Journal* (April 2005), p.1-18. Nevertheless, for Zengakuren students eager to conduct their “anti-imperial struggle,” Eells provided the perfect target. The common practice to attribute the Red Purge solely to occupation policy, as well as the term “Red Purge” itself, seems to have originated with the nationalistic narrative of resistance developed in the course of these protests. The term does not appear in mainstream periodicals until the fall of 1950. According to Andō Jimbei, it was during the protests against Eells that the term was invented. Andō Jimbei, *Sengo nihon kyōsantō shiki* (Tokyo: Gendai no rironsha, 1976) p.104.

- vii *Kyūshū daigaku 75 nenshi* (Fukuoka: Kyūshū daigaku shuppankai, 1992), p.145-146.
- viii “Hansen dōmei wo tsukurō!” (April 1950) *SSGU* v.2, p.86.
- ix Ōno Akio, *Zengakuren keppūroku* (Tokyo: 20 seikisha, 1967) p.78.
- x Andō Jimbei, *Sengo nihon kyōsantō shiki*, p.102-103. Kōan chōsachō, *Sengo gakusei undōshi*, p.35.
- xi Takei Teruo, *Sō to shitenō gakusei undō* (Tokyo: Seiunsha, 2005), p.274.
- xii *Ibid.*, p.180.
- xiii “5.4 kinen ni saishite zengakusei shokun ni utau,” *Shinri* (April 27, 1950) *SSGU* v.2, p.92.
- xiv Itō Akira, “Kaisetsu: Teikōken to busōken no konnichiteki imi” in Wakita Ken’ichi, *Chōsen sensō to Suita Hirakata Jiken* (Akashi shoten: 2004) p.773-792.
- xv “Hikōzen no genshu to bunpa no kokufuku,” *Heidoku* (September 23, 1950, no.7), p.1.
- xvi This lack of self-examination is also strikingly reminiscent of wartime Japanese theorizing, where the demonic “Anglo-Americans” were set up as a magical mirror absorbing all the evils of modernity and colonialism, reflecting back the self-indulgent image of a uniquely pure Japan.
- xvii “‘Keikakuteki shinnyū’ to jūshi,” *Asahi Shinbun* (November 28, 1959), p.1. According to the recollections of government members, this statement was not merely a scare tactic but rather reflected real fears of revolution. Nishii Kazuo ed., *60 nen anpo, Miike tōsō* (Tokyo: Mainichi shinbunsha, 2000), p.164. Gotōda Masaharu, *Jō to ri* (Tokyo: Kōdansha bunko, 2006), p.160.
- xviii “The No.1 Objective,” *Time* (June 27, 1960)
<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,827656,00.html>
 (Accessed December 20, 2010)

1950年及び1960年日本における 反米ナショナリズムと左翼ファクショナリズム

長谷川 健治

【キーワード】 反米ナショナリズム、左翼ファクショナリズム、
1950年レッドパージ闘争、1960年日米安保闘争

1960年安保闘争は反米ナショナリズムによって引き起こされたのか？この問いは多くの場合、選択的な証拠に基づくか、あるいは当時の政治的立場に準拠するような形で回答されてきた。本論文は反米ナショナリズムと左翼ファクショナリズムの絡み合いに焦点をあてることによって、この問いへ重層的にアプローチする。新左翼史観が黙殺してきた1950年代前半と後半を貫く連続性を浮き彫りにしつつ、1960年にアメリカ及び日本政府内で「革命」の恐怖が急速に高まり、その後解消していった背景には自閉的な左翼ファクショナリズムの論理があったと論じる。