

Introduction The purpose and significance of the book for Japanese Edition

*Revised for English Edition

The need for collecting materials and reviewing the whole history of post Second World War Japanese internees in Siberia has been long advocated in various quarters including the 1984 round-table conference on post-war issues, chaired by Mr. Tatsuzo Minakami, the then Chairperson of Japan Foreign Trade Council. It was the statement made by Mr. Hideyuki Aizawa, the then president of Japan Association of Forced Internees, in the 17th issue of its newsletter that directly motivated the Japanese Government to set about materialising the issue. He pointed out that in the newsletter that “not only high school history textbooks but also university lectures on contemporary history would not touch much upon the Greater East Asia War. Thus the enormous misery of post-war Japanese forced internees in Siberia is not at all widely known to this day”, but despite that “we still have the obligation to keep the record of the fact about the internees for the sake of future historians’ study”. “It might not be an issue for younger people until far later time in the future, when it is not considered as a controversial issue any more,” he stated. “However, I am very certain that our effort is going to be a rewarding one.”

Following his suggestion, the then Cabinet Secretariat Section for promoting special fund project and the Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation Project held the first meeting on 14 April 1997 and decided basic policies including setting up a special committee for the history of internees. The series of nine meetings decided on the general direction of “publication of the perspective of the post-war forced internee”, which would be described in the following section.

The purposes and principles of publication on the perspective of the post-war forced internees

1. General purposes

The purpose of the book is to keep the record of the fact about Japanese forced internees in Siberia in the post Second World War era that is not widely known to day.

The extraordinary experiences of Japanese forced internees in Siberia and other places have been gradually revealed these days by their memoranda and drawings. However, there are no publications that fully describe the overview of the forced internees that lasted long after the war in various places in the midst of the post-war chaos

in Japan and the changing international environment with the development of the America-Soviet confrontation.

Considering the significance of the event in the contemporary Japanese history, we are obliged to publish a book that illustrates the whole picture of the event as an important source of record for the future historians.

2. The editorial body and authors

We set up a special committee for the task within the Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation. The committee would consist of the experts of the event.

3. Fundamental policies for Editing

(This section has been revised and published separately on 2nd October 1989 by the editorial committee. Please note that the following policies are based on this revised version.)

- (1) While consistency of the whole story is vital, the ultimate importance of law, justice and human rights would always be taken into account.
- (2) Attempts to find out as much facts as possible through collecting all the available materials that exist, including archives, official documents, and statements of people concerned the event.
- (3) The book should take neutral position to all the parties concerned, by describing facts as objectively as possible. As such, the authors should never make any judgmental statement about either individuals concerned in the event or ideologies.
- (4) The authors may refer to unproved historical hypotheses as well (with explanatory notes stating that they are no more than hypotheses) when it is considered to be absolutely necessary.

In addition to the original members, the first meeting of the committee on 3 October 1997 was participated also by Ambassador Koichi Arai (former Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines and the Minister to the then USSR), Prof. Yasuo Wakatsuki (former professor of Tamagawa University), and Mr. Takuya Horiguchi (the Secretary General of Japan Association of Forced Internees). Prof. Ichiro Takizawa of Edogawa University and Prof. Kenichi Iida of the National Defence Academy in Japan were also invited. At this first meeting, Ambassador Arai made presentation titled 'some

hypothetical discussion on the history of Japan-Russia/USSR relationship”. Moreover, Prof. Motohide Saito of Kyorin University introduced to the participants historical materials kept in Sakhalin.

At the second meeting held in the following month, Mr. Akira Ishii (a former bureaucrat of the Ministry of Health and Welfare) made presentation about the general situation of Japanese people in Manchuria, North Korea, Sakhalin, and Chishima Islands after the outbreak of Japan-USSR war on 9 August 1945. Furthermore, while Prof. Takashi Nakayama made presentation in December titled ‘on the USSR participation in the Second World War, internees and forced labor of Japanese, and Stalin’, Professor Sergei I. Kuznetsov of Irkutsk State University introduced the material on Japanese prisoners of war’s long-term internee and forced labor in January’s meeting in the following year. Finally, Prof. Wakatsuki have pointed out several problems in describing the history of internees at the February meeting. During each meeting, participants actively discussed the issue from various points of view. The series of meetings were attended by Mr. Kenji Shinoda, Chief of Russian Division of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (other member of the section attended the meetings on behalf of him from the second meeting onward), Mr. Kazuo Takenoshita, Chief of First Business Division of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and Mr. Kazuo Kimura, Senior Fellow at the National Institute for Defence Studies.

Following the discussion of the meetings, Mr. Nagayama, President of Public Foundation for the Peace and Consolation revealed on 8 June 1998, “the outline of the establishment of the editorial committee for the post-war Japanese internees’ history” as follows:

1. The purpose of the Committee

The Committee would be established to serve the need to keep the record of the sufferings of forced internees and consequently publish a document on the history of the event. The ultimate goal of the history-editing by the Committee would be remembering the great sacrifice made in the Second World War, in order to realise long-lasting peace for the future generation.

2. The constituent members

The Committee would consist of less than ten experts on the post-war internee and forced labour. The Committee might invite other participants to ask their opinion when needed.

3. Opening of the Committee meetings

The Chairperson would call the Committee as the need arises.

4. Commission of the members and related issues

- (1) The Director would be responsible for the commission of the members and choose the Chairperson from them.
- (2) (omitted)
5. The establishment of the special sections

The Committee would set up special sections as the need arises.
6. The Chairperson would be responsible for the decision on any particulars of management of the Committee and specialised divisions.

Based on the outline described above, the President appointed Mr. Tadae Takubo as Chairperson of the Committee. The following individuals are the assigned members of the first division; Mr. Takubo: Prof. Shohei Umezawa of Shobi Gakuen University: Prof. Koichi Endo (a visiting Professor of Takushoku University): Mr. Shinichiro Nakamura. Furthermore, the second division consists of the following members; Amb. Koichi Arai (formerly Ambassador to the Philippines and minister to the former USSR): Prof. Kenichi Iida of the National Defence Academy: Prof. Motohide Saito of Kyorin University: Prof. Takashi Nakayama of the National Defence Academy: Amb. Masatoshi Ohta (formerly Ambassador to South Africa and minister to Switzerland). Finally, the third division consists of the following members; Prof. Ichiro Takizawa of Edogawa University: Mr. Takuya Horiguchi (Secretary General of Japan Forced-internees Association): Prof. Gunji Abe of the University of Tsukuba: Dr. Kenichi Arakawa (Senior Fellow of the National Institute for Defence Studies): Mr. Tsutomu Ito (deputy foreign news editor of Jiji Press): Mr. Isao Kitagawa (head of the third department of the Research Institute of World Politics and Economy): Mr. Shunichi Sugimura (councillor of the Kaikosha Foundation): Mr. Koji Hirano (former President of Japan Ground Self Defence Force School of Intelligence). Mr. Takubo, Mr. Arai, and Mr. Takizawa were nominated as chiefs of these three sections respectively.

Each of them had either sectional meetings or joint meetings with other sections when needed. Moreover, the members visited Russia and other countries concerned in order to collect necessary materials.

The original compilation of historical materials of the event had started around 1999. In the meantime, the Russian Government published a reference book titled *Военнопленные в СССР, 1939-1956 (Prisoners of War in the USSR: 1939-1956)* in May 2000. The provisional translation of the main part of the book has been provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan and the Committee made use of it as additional reference materials. Around that time, Mr. Horiguchi presented a chronological table of the event of forced internee. Further, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

of Japan published wide range of materials about the situation of post-war Japanese repatriates in December 2000. These additional materials helped greatly to realise the publication of the book, *The Japanese Internees and Forced Labor in the USSR after the Second World War*.

The meaning and significance of the project

The ultimate significance of this project is to pass down to the future generations the complete record of Japanese internees' sufferings caused by the former USSR's inhumane actions that were totally against the principles of international law.

It has been twenty years since then Consulative Committee for the Management on Post-war Issues that formed the foundation for the Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation presented a report in 1984 on the issue to the then Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr. Takao Fujinami; which was published on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The 1984 report of the Committee stated "the core purpose of the project is to describe as accurately as possible about the great sacrifice suffered by the internees so that it would not be buried oblivion in time. We would then be able to console those especially affected by the damage caused by the Second World War." As such, it would be reasonable to say that the publication of this book is one of the most important one amongst the various projects carried out by the Foundation.

Although this book might not be considered as a complete record of the event, it fully describes the extent of the tragedy caused by the former USSR's unlawful invasion after then Japanese Government had accepted the Potsdam Declaration, as its title indicates. In order to adequately review these inhumane, unlawful actions of the USSR, we should understand the background of the event, such as Japan-Russia relations throughout modern and contemporary history within the context of the international situation as a whole. We would accordingly be able to have deeper understanding about how the August 1945's USSR invasion had started, how Japan had surrendered and consequently how the tragedy had started.

For instance, the post- Second World War world had witnessed not only the launch of the Cold War but also the development of internal situation of the USSR brought about by the death of Stalin. The Hatoyama Cabinet was formed in Japan in the meantime and finally started the negotiation with the USSR for the normalization of diplomatic relations and consequently realized the repatriation of internees: that was how the resolution of the internees issue had a close link with the international situation as a whole.

The composition and content of each chapter

In order to accurately understand the sequence of the events and circumstances behind them including Japan-Russia relations within the context of international situation as a whole, each chapter deals with the following issues; Chapter 1 “The Background” deals with modern and contemporary history of Japan-Russia relationship in perspective; Chapter 2 “Surrender of Japan” describes such issues as the USSR invasion and the situation surrounding Japanese surrender; Chapter 3 “The Cold War between the East and West and San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan” discusses American policy on occupation of Japan, the relationship between occupied Japan and the USSR, the end of Stalin-era and the change of Soviet policy towards Japan, the normalization of Japan-Soviet diplomatic relations, and the repatriation of long-term internees.

Furthermore, chapter 4 “the History and Real Situation of Internees”, the core of the book, explains in full detail the enormosity of the physical, mental, and material damages suffered by internees. The chapter for instance contains such sections as the historical background of Russia and the USSR and its affect on post-war internee, the situation of concentration camps in Siberia, internees’ life in concentration camps, forced labor, ideology education, and the actual situation of internees’ deaths and diseases. The chapter for the first time comprehensively compiled the materials on internees’ experiences, although their experiences in concentration camps have been known either in the form of interview or their own writings. It obviously focused on especially tragic cases among others.

While chapter 5 “Repatriation of the Internees” contains two sections, the Beginning of Repatriation and the Problem of Internees Left in Siberia, chapter 6 contains three sections, Cross Examination of ‘war crimes’, the Tribunal on ‘war crimes’, and Imprisonment of Long-term Internees, attempting to thoroughly describe the heartlessness of the judicial decisions on war criminals, the unsubstantial tribunal, and actual situation of prisoners. Although only objective expressions are used in these two chapters, we authors are unhesitating to state that the fact that such inhumane actions were taken by the USSR should not be forgotten.

Chapter 7 deals with the Japanese Government Reaction to the Internee and Public Opinion On the Issue. Immediately after accepting the Potsdam Declaration, the Japanese Government appealed to the government of the USSR through General Head Quarters (GHQ) on internees’ repatriation. From this time onward, the issue was further taken to the UN. After San Francisco Treaty was concluded, the campaign for the complete resolution of internees issue widely spread out all over Japan. The movement

resulted in the establishment of Japan Association of Post-war Forced Internees in 1977, aimed at requiring the compensation from the USSR. The book also described the detailed sequence of these events and the activities of various organizations. Moreover, the activity of the above mentioned Association is explained in detail in its individual section.

Various discourses on this problem have naturally intermingled in the post Second World War Japan. It was Yomiuri Shinbun that had first taken up the issue of Japanese internees in Siberia in its editorial column and urged the government to take actions. Although similar argument have been seen in other newspapers as well thereafter, some of them did not take too strong position when it came to the issue of demanding the USSR for the compensation: they even took sides with the USSR occasionally more or less. The chapter contains the description of this debate among the press, discourses, and the academic circles, in order to understand the situation of the day where they tended to support socialist countries.

Chapter 8 “related issues” contains following sections; Post-war Internee and International Law: the USSR’s View on the Internee Issue: the Treatment of Japanese Prisoners of War by the UK, Australia, and the United States: the Treatment of Japanese Prisoners of War and Japanese Left in China and Korea by Kuomintang, the Chinese Communist Party, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea: Japanese Army’s Treatment of Prisoners of War and Forced Labor of Local Residents. We should be well aware that the USSR’s action was not only inhumane but also illegal one from the viewpoint of international law. At the same time, we should also be conscious of the USSR point of view with regard to the internee. Moreover, the way other nations concerned had treated Japanese POWs and Japanese people in common should also be taken into account. Through the thorough discussions about these issues surrounding the internee, we successfully brought the misery of the event army’s into sharp relief.

Emphasis on the diversity of materials

There seems to be no room for argument as to the need of the compiling materials about forced internees and its publication. Mr. Takashi Nakayama took the lead of the project examining the feature and range of materials to be used including the chronological table. As a result of thorough consideration, as wide range of materials as possible were compiled in the book, such as “Japanese Army’s Formation in Manchuria, Sakhalin, and Chishima Islands (August 1945)”, “the USSR Army’s Formation in the Far East (August 1945),” “an Agreement on the Repatriation of Japanese from the USSR Area

(19 December 1946)”, Information about the Imprisonment of Japanese in the USSR, Russian Materials about the Concentration Camps, General Condition of the Concentration Camps, Condition of Japanese Internees’ Health, and the Data on the Weather of the Time.

The chronological table included in the book is a specialised one rather than comprehensive focusing on the Japan-Russia/USSR relations, starting from Russian advancement into the Far East in 16th century to the most recent events. Moreover, the book dealt with significant events in and around Japan, including political, diplomatic, economic and social movements even when they are not directly concerned the internee, in order to help readers’ proper comprehension of the event.

Last but not least important, the use of name “post-war forced internees” has been in fact controversial, even within the Committee. However, considering the fact that the name has not only been in common use among Japanese public but also in laws and ordinances concerned, the Committee decided to use it. As to this matter, President Aizawa of Japan Association of Forced Internees presented the Government “a questionnaire about the situation of forced internees in Siberia” on 31 October 1997 and the government replied to it on 28 November. In the reply, the Government stated “we understand that the Japanese prisoners of war including civilian employees of the army did not receive any unethical nor illegal treatment by the enemy forces” based on the understanding of the POWs defined in “No.1385 Order in China” dated 18 August 1945. “The order stated that” the Japanese government never recognize the soldier and the civilian employees who were put under the control of opponent power after issuance of the Imperial edict as prisoner of war” Furthermore, “from the viewpoint of international law, the army members and civilian employees of the army put under control of opponent power would generally be treated as POWs and entitled to receive treatment as such. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that Japanese Army and civilian employees of it were naturally privileged to receive humane treatment as POWs from the USSR while under control of them.”

The Association objected to the reply stating that the government interpretation about the internees is merely based on the general understanding about POWs. The Association does not take the position to consider the forced internees as POWs, as the Potsdam Declaration clearly stated in its Article 9 “the Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives”. At the same time, the Association argues that the USSR was at least obliged to obey the international treaty that regulates the treatment of POWs when it detained Japanese against the Potsdam Declaration.

Please note that each author takes full responsibility for the wording and content of his/her respective chapter.

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Tadae Takubo,
the Chairperson,
the Editing Committee
for the Japanese Internees and Forced Labor in the USSR
after the Second World War

Introduction for English Edition

At March 2005, we printed and distributed *Sengo Kyosei Yokuryushi (The Japanese Internees and Forced Labor in the USSR after the Second World War)* to major public libraries and universities in Japan. Furthermore, we released the PDF edition through the home page of The Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation, Incorporated Administrative Agency of Japan (<http://www.heiwa.go.jp>).

Immediately after printing, some authors proposed the necessity to publish the English edition for spreading the result globally. Therefore we have proceeded the editing of English edition.

As the Japanese edition is consisted by 8 volumes, we reedit by choosing and translating the major chapters for English edition.

For covering the whole problems on internees after the World War Second this book comprises following 11 chapters; the chapter 1 is “Invasion by the Soviet Forces” by Takashi Nakayama, the chapter 2 “Circumstances of the Surrender of the Japanese Forces” by Takuya Horiguchi, chapter 3 “Negotiations to Normalize Japanese-Soviet Diplomatic Relations” by Motohide Saito, chapter 4 “Repatriation from the Internment of a Long Period” by Takashi Nakayama, chapter 5 “Concentrate Camp in Siberia” by Gunji Abe, chapter 6 “Daily Life for Japanese Forcibly interned in Camps” by Gunji Abe, chapter 7 “Labor” by Kenichi Arakawa, chapter 8 “Deaths, Diseases and Other Tragedies” by Koji Hirano, chapter 9 “Beginnings of Repatriation of Internees” by Tsutomu Ito, chapter 10 “Problem of Non-Returnees” by Koji Hirano, chapter 11 “Campaign to Demand Compensation for Internees” and chapter 12 “Japan Association of Forced Internees” by Takuya Horiguchi and Chapter 13 “Postwar Forced Internment and International Law” by Masatoshi Ohta. In addition, we append the historical document “Decision of State Committee for Defense No.9898 (the Stalin Document)” which is a major cause of forced internees.

Finally, I add that this English edition is published with the supervise and support by the above mentioned authors and Mr. Fumiaki Inagaki (the member and expert of committee for compiling the Foreign Materials, Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation, Assistant Professor, Keio University).

March 2008, Tokyo
Tadae Takubo,
the Chairperson,
the Editing Committee
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