

J A P A N I N T H E W O R L D C O M M U N I T Y

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preface

Eight Lectures in Peace Research

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PREFACE

December 1986 I had the pleasure of being Visiting Professor at Chuo University in Tokyo, giving a series of lectures on peace related topics. In addition to the lectures given at Chuo lectures were also delivered at Waseda, Soka and Hosei universities, Citizen's University, Soka Gakkai Peace Committee, Rissho Koseikai, Gensuikin and Fujisawa City Hall. Some of the lectures were centered on Japan, the others being more general.

In the present book the lectures are put together. Peace has to do with the regulation of power, so the first four lectures deal with power. Cultural power is seen in terms of religion, which, in turn, is discussed using a distinction between genuine and peace-building, and distorted, divisive aspects of religion. Military power is then taken up in the form of Star Wars, exploring as a basic thesis that Star Wars is essentially a new offensive capability designed to replace nuclear weapons. Political power is explored in a paper on the United Nations. And economic power is brought into the picture, exploring in some detail the highly problematic Japan-US economic relations -here seen as a possible case of economic imperialism.

These four themes, the four types of power, constitute the basic framework for the core lecture of the eight, on Positive Peace Politics for Japan. The key word here is "positive", criticism alone never being sufficient to make for adequate peace research or an effective peace movement. The chapter is an effort, by a foreigner, to spell out standard peace research ideas in a Japanese context. And the next chapter elaborates these ideas a little further in the field of security policies for the region where Japan is a major part: the Pacific. Finally, in the last two chapters the historical role of the peace movement and important tasks for peace research to work on are explored.

I would like to express my gratitude to Chuo University for the invitation and to members of the faculty of law, particularly Professor Sakio Takayanagi for excellent organization, as well as to Professor Jun Nishikawa of Waseda, Professor Yuji Suzuki of Hosei, Professor T. Takamura of Soka University, Professor Nishida of Citizen's University, Mr Daisaku Ikeda of the Soka Gakkai, Mr N. Niwano of Rissho Koseikai, Ms Minami Suzuki of the Gensuikin, and the Fujisawa City Council. And last but not least to my wife Fumiko Nishimura for excellent interpretation, and not only in the linguistic sense.

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EPILOGUE

In Asahi Shimbun 13 December 1986 a 56 years old housewife, Mrs S, wrote a letter to the editor. She told about her son who had come back from university reporting, "you know mother, there is something new called peace studies (heiwa gakku).". The mother was very positive, how fantastic, and also felt this to be very natural for a university known for its international mindedness. A university with lots of students from abroad, joining each month of September. Isn't it a good idea to start peace studies, she asks. To know why war begins? Who starts the wars, she would like to know. But not "war studies". Concrete cases of peace-keeping are needed. Maintenance of peace. What a wonderful name, peace studies!

One might wish more university authorities shared her view. And yet peace studies are now found in many universities in many countries around the world. There is nothing mysterious about it. More peace studies will not dramatically change the world. But systematic training of hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of people around the world in ways of obtaining peace with peaceful means, not with belligerent means such as threats, will sooner or later have an impact.

Peace studies means a focus on peace. Thus, not just celebrating that religious people come together, but asking what kind of religion? Is the message really a peace message? Not just being in favor of all kinds of weapons or against all kinds of weapons, but asking how the weapons work! If they can be used to attack or to threaten, then they are at best belligerent approaches to peace - Star Wars is in this category. If they can be used only for defense, then this is not the ideal approach to peacebuilding, but may be good as a temporary measure. Further, not just United Nations - but what kind of UN is more likely to be peacebuilding? Not just trade and interdependence, but what kind of interdependence, vertical or horizontal, is peacebuilding?

And so on, and so forth. Add together a number of such reflections and an image of a peace policy for a country can emerge. As a set of hypotheses. Social systems are complex. We think we know how they behave, and then they surprise us again and again. So we peace researchers do not guarantee anything. But we might say that the burden of proof is also on the other side, to show how policies that have failed again and again from an peacebuilding point of view, such as the spread of aggressive religion, building of offensive systems, having undemocratic political bodies, penetrating the economy of an other nation suddenly should become peace policies. Cultural, military, political and economic power have to be handled with care if they are to be peace productive.

So I join Mrs S in her plea. More peace studies. And different kinds of peace studies. What is found in this book is only one approach. We need as many as possible. So, go ahead!