

world

Japan's no-armament constitution arouses unrest as threats grow

United Press International
TOKYO — Japan, constitutionally prohibited from maintaining an army, navy or air force, is in the midst of a storm over the nation's defense policy.

U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown's recent call for "combined planning efforts" among the United States, Japan and Western Europe to counterbalance the Soviet global military buildup has provoked a flurry of attacks by opposition leaders in the Diet (parliament).

Although the current controversy was prompted by Washington, the perennial debate over defense is deeply rooted in the Japanese post-war psychology. Since defeat in World War II, the nation has failed to reach a consensus on how best to defend itself.

While the Soviets are rolling tanks in Afghanistan and building military bases near Japan's northern borders,

politicians are still debating the legality of the country's so-called self-defense forces, Japan's armed forces in everything but name.

Like all his predecessors in the Liberal-Democratic Party which has been in power for most of the post-war period, Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira maintains that the Japan-U.S. security pact — in effect since 1952 — forms the backbone of the nation's security and fills what the Defense Agency calls "gaps" in the country's defense capability.

And the gaps seem enormous. In crude numbers alone, Japanese defense intelligence figures that the Soviet Union — the only major power without a peace treaty with the Japanese — has deployed some 300,000 ground troops, over 1.3 million tons of naval ships and 2,040 warplanes in the Soviet Far East.

This compares with Japan's first-line defense of 155,000 ground

troops, 174,000 tons of warships and 440 aircraft.

In terms of quality, the Japanese defense is also far behind in most crucial areas.

Recently the Japanese Defense Agency said the Soviet Union has upgraded its air power in the Far East with deployment of supersonic and low-flying Mig-27 fighter bombers, which reportedly have a range encompassing all the Japanese Islands.

On naval warfare, the Soviet Far East naval command is equipped with the powerful Kiev-class aircraft carrier Minsk, while the Japanese admirals have to content with what one local newspaper call the navy's pride — a couple of missile-firing destroyers and other lesser vessels.

Against Moscow's awesome nuclear arsenal, Tokyo simply has to seek shelter under the American nuclear umbrella.

While internationally acknowledged to have the technological know-how to join the world's exclusive nuclear club, most Japanese — the world's only war victims of the atom bomb — are still adverse to the possession of any form of nuclear weapons.

Japan has officially counted itself out of the nuclear game by adhering to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Tokyo's passive reaction to repeated U.S. calls to arms is very much the result of historical irony.

Mindful of a possible revival of pre-war militarism, the U.S. occupation authorities dictated the unique war-renouncing constitution on the conquered nation.

Article 9 provides that the country "renounces war as a sovereign right of the nation," and declares that "land, sea, and air forces will never be maintained."

Holding the constitution as a sacred document of Japan's democracy, most politicians — particularly those to the left of the political spectrum — have resisted any effort to rewrite it.

Pacifist groups and the vocal left still see militarism a living spectre, and the suggestion last year by the country's top general that the military might be forced to take "supra-legal" action in time of a foreign invasion provoked a national outcry and led to the general's resignation.

Under such fierce opposition, the government has been forced to hold down defense spending and has budgeted \$9.3 billion, just 0.9 percent of the GNP — the lowest ratio in all major industrial powers — for the next fiscal year.

With politicians still sharply divided on national defense, the possibility of Japan playing any significant role in the defense of the western world seems remote.

British urge Afghanistan neutrality

United Press International
ROME — British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington proposed to his European Economic Community partners Tuesday that Afghanistan's neutrality should be internationally guaranteed if Soviet troops move out.

That neutrality must be acceptable to the Soviets as well as the rest of the world, said a spokesman for the nine-nation community said.

There was a consensus among the ministers that the British proposal was a good idea and discussion of it is continuing, said Roger Beetham, a spokesman for community commission President Roy Jenkins.

Asked if Carrington was proposing U.N. force to guarantee neutrality in Afghanistan, Beetham said, "They haven't got to that yet. The Danish delegation said the idea should be handled through the United Nations but the subject of troops would have to be raised at a later meeting."

Beetham also was asked if Washington would have to guarantee it would not go into Afghanistan if the Soviets pulled out. "That is something to be discussed," he replied.

WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG, BAD RUSSIAN BEAR?
(we are)



Beetham said Jenkins had reiterated the community statement of Jan. 15 that the Soviets must not be allowed to leave a Communist regime behind them.

U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance left Washington Tuesday on a tour of Bonn, Rome, Paris and London. He arrives in Rome today to meet Italian Foreign Minister Attilio Ruffini, who will report the present meeting's decisions to him.

Olney pancakes stack up; default win to Kansan

United Press International
OLNEY, England — A television truck blocked the finish line in the Great TransAtlantic Pancake Race Tuesday, producing a pile-up of thwarted flapjack-flipping women and forcing officials to declare two winners.

But no winning time was given because no one could cross the finish line. At least one race official said it looked like the ladies of Olney must default to their competition in Liber-

al, Kan., a few hours later.

"The girls were not able to finish the race properly," said the Rev. Ronald Collins, Anglican vicar of Olney Church. "Nor could I take the time."

Asked how it would affect the trans-Atlantic competition with Liberal, he replied, "It seems to me, we have to give it to them this year. Obviously we just have to renounce any chance of winning this year."



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