

Japanese Magazine Trends (September 1965)

Of the major monthlies, Sekai was the sole magazine to comment on Prime Minister SATO's Okinawa trip in the October issue. As was partly dwelt upon in the August Magazine Trends, the magazine carried two articles. One was by critic Moriteru NIIZAKI, who discoursed in the context of the Vietnam war and maintained that Japan is already involved in the Vietnam war with Okinawa as an intermediary and that the anti-Vietnam war movement in the Japanese homeland should be the Okinawa reversion movement. The other, a comment in editorial "Japan currents", treated the subject in the context of U.S.-Japan relations and held Okinawa reversionists' protest against the trip quite natural, because the trip had such a character as to evoke U.S. expectations and indirect help to make it effective. November Seikai Orai carried a noteworthy and interesting comment by Asahi editorial associate Tsunejiro HAMADA, who said that the trip was meaningful in the point that the U.S. was shocked by the demonstrations in Naha. Noting SATO's statement, immediately before his departure from Okinawa, that "he would broach the Okinawa reversion issue only when peace has been restored in Asia", HAMADA observed that when SATO said so, he had forgotten the fact that the reversion of Okinawa and the Bonins and Asian peace are two different things, that is, the reversion of those islands would not immediately affect Asian peace, and that postwar Japan is not responsible at all for the unstable Asian situation. HAMADA was also critical of the Cabinet Ministers Council on the Okinawa Problem, which was hurriedly created after SATO's return from Okinawa. The Council's announcement of the Government's unified view on Okinawa's legal status at this belated time is, said HAMADA, no more than a revelation of the negligence of the Okinawa problem by the Government. He was particularly opposed to the announcement by the Council that it would seek the settlement of the Okinawa problem without referring it to the UN. HAMADA thought it unwise of the Government to have closed, by this announcement, the diplomatic channels through the UN for the settlement of the Okinawa problem. As to the settlement of the reversion issue, HAMADA took a view that it should be through direct talks between the Japanese Prime Minister and the U.S. President and that if SATO does not intend to conduct such talks himself, he should level the ground so that his successor may do so. HAMADA hoped that such talks would be conducted in strict but well-intentioned secrecy, because, he said, Japanese diplomacy toward the U.S. has been foolishly too open.

In a Gendai no Me (Nov.) panel discussion, Okinawa intellectuals made the points that SATO's so-called oneness of the homeland and Okinawa is the oneness of the U.S.-Japanese Governments and the GRI, that the promise of economic aid without touching on the administrative rights issue is putting the cart before the horse, that it should be made known to the U.S. that the return to Japan of the administrative rights would not hamper the U.S. use of its bases on Okinawa and that Japan is putting off the settlement of the Okinawa issue for the purpose of insuring its own defense and security at the sacrifice of Okinawa.

Seisaku (Oct.), a brochure-type political magazine published by the Policy Research Institute whose head is LDP Policy Board Chairman Munenori AKAGI, carried a panel discussion by AKAGI, Nobumoto OHAMA (President of Waseda University and President of the Southern Area Compatriots Relief Association, who accompanied SATO to Okinawa as his special aide) and Mainichi political news reporter Hiroshi EGUCHI. The panelists discussed, in relation to SATO's Okinawa trip, how to settle the Okinawa problem, and AKAGI felt the need to retain the U.S. bases on Okinawa at least as deterrence to war but he said that it is about time for Japan to start talks for the recovery of the administrative rights and to prepare a timetable for Okinawa's reversion. OHAMA, too, emphasized the recovery of the administrative rights by separating them from the base issue and held it necessary for the U.S. to realize that the islanders' co-operation is indispensable for security. According to OHAMA, Prime Minister SATO radically changed his view of Okinawa during the three-day trip and his humane contacts with the Okinawa grass-roots were touching and heart-warming.