



The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus

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Letter to the United Nations Security Council: No Nuclear Weapons on Okinawa!

Organizing Committee (NONO!)

March 12, 2003

For six decades Okinawa has been a militarized island, first as Japan prepared to resist the U.S. in the final days of World War II, since 1945 as a military colony of the United States, and since 1972 as the fortress of American military might in an island that reverted to Japanese rule without reducing the base structure. It also boasts Japan's most vigorous and creative peace movements. No Nuclear Weapons on Okinawa! Organizing Committee (NONO!) has just written to the UN Security Council petitioning that the Council, in the spirit of eliminating Weapons of Mass Destruction that it is presently pursuing, send an inspection team to Okinawa to search out and destroy any nuclear weapons that may be found. These weapons not only constitute a violation of U.S.-Japan treaties, they also pose a life and death threat both to the people of Iraq and other targets of U.S. attack, and Okinawa. Their initiative is one that could inspire peace movements throughout the world, beginning in the United States.

H.E. Mr. Mamady Traor Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Guinea to the United Nations President, United Nations Security Council 140 East 39th St. New York, NY 10016 USA

Dear Ambassador Traor,

We are delighted that the United Nations has begun an active campaign to eliminate weapons of mass destruction from the world by sending teams of trained inspectors into countries suspected of possessing these criminal weapons, searching them out, and demanding that they be destroyed if found.

We trust that Iraq will not be the only country where such a search is carried out. And so we are writing to request that the United Nations Security Council form another inspection team and send it to our islands, Okinawa, to determine if there are any weapons of mass destruction, and in particular nuclear weapons, stored in any of the U.S. military bases here.

We make this request for the following reasons:

*Of all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons are the most devastating.

*It is common knowledge that before Okinawa was reverted to Japan, nuclear weapons were kept on U.S. bases here.

*Under the Japanese government's "three non-nuclear principles," nuclear weapons may not enter Japanese territory.

*At the time of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, it was a condition of the reversion treaty that the "three non-nuclear principles" would apply to Okinawa, and that when Okinawa was reverted it would be "without nuclear weapons, and under the same conditions as the mainland." Thus, in Okinawa, the prohibition against bringing in nuclear weapons is more than a mere policy. It is a contract between the governments of the U.S. and Japan, and it is a public promise to the people of Okinawa.

*Despite this, the United States Government has consistently refused to say whether it has removed its nuclear weapons from Okinawa. Few Okinawans believe they have been removed.

*The United States is the only country in the history of the world to have actually used these worst of all weapons of mass destruction.

*The United States, far from promising not to use them again, has been openly threatening to use them both against Iraq and against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). *We Okinawans have no quarrel with the people of Iraq or with the DPRK, and we are confident that they have no quarrel with us.

*Nevertheless, should the United States attack Iraq or the DPRK, a major part of that attack would be launched from Okinawa. Should that happen, there would be terrible destruction, and many people would be killed. Against

our will, we Okinawans would be forced to stand on the side of the assailant.

*Moreover, should that happen it would mean that, under international law, the U.S. bases on Okinawa would become legitimate targets for a retaliatory attack from Iraq or from the DPRK. Okinawa could also become a target of terrorist attacks.

*All the major U.S. bases on Okinawa are located in crowded urban areas, which means that an attack on them could result in a human catastrophe equal to or greater than the World War II Battle of Okinawa, in which one-third of the Okinawan people were killed.

*Thus it is clear that if there are any weapons of mass destruction (especially, nuclear weapons) on Okinawa, that is a serious threat to peace.

It is for these reasons that we request the United Nations Security Council to send an inspection team to Okinawa to determine if there are any of these weapons of mass destruction on our islands, and if there are, to demand that they be destroyed. Should you see fit to grant this request, that would be a significant contribution to peace and security in the East Asian region.

Sincerely,

Kinjo Chikashi, Kunimasa Mie, Taira Hori Etsumi, Taira Osamu, Taira Natsume, Douglas Lummis, Chinin Ushii, Nomura Kouya, Horie Yuri, Makishi Yoshikazu, Mashiki Tomi, Yamaguchi Yoko, Yui Akiko, + 610 signatures (the number is rapidly growing).

We eagerly await your reply. No Nuclear Weapons on Okinawa! Organizing Committee (NONO!) c/o Okinawa Peace Liaison Committee Kyouiku Fukushi Kaikan, 4F, 1-14-6 Furujiima, Naha-shi Okinawa, 902-0061 FAX: +81-(098) 893-0175; e-mail: ya-00-ya@rj8.so-net.ne.jp

cc: Ambassadors of all countries now serving on the Security Council