



The Front Line in the Struggle for Democracy in Japan – Nago City, Okinawa 日本の民主主義のための闘い 最前線は沖縄県名護市

Gavan McCormack

The Asia-Pacific Journal, Vol. 12, Issue 4, No. 3, January 27, 2014.

The Front Line in the Struggle for Democracy in Japan – Nago City, Okinawa 日本民主主義のための闘い 最前線は沖縄県名護市

Gavan McCormack

Introduction

Through the first year of his second term as Prime Minister (December 2012-December 2013) Abe Shinzo's government stirred concern on the part of neighbour countries, Japan's key "ally" the United States, and global opinion generally. Despite some suggestion of economic recovery under "Abenomics," there was something inexplicable about Japan. Abe's revisionist historical views, his commitment to Yasukuni, and his hard-line stance on territorial disputes, had plunged relations with China and South Korea to new depths, while raising the level of tension with the United States. When Abe spoke of "liquidating the post-war" regime so as to replace it with a "new" or "beautiful" Japan, he meant one whose citizens would be expected, indeed required, to love it, with a drastically revised new constitution that would widen state prerogatives and narrow citizen rights, a "national defense army" replacing the existing Self Defense Forces and national security reinforced by a tightened, draconian "secrets protection" law and a Prime Ministerial National Security Council (both now in place). The door also opened to the export of Japanese weapons and nuclear power plants as well as the dispatch of Japanese soldiers to global theatres under a doctrine of "collective self-defense." His is a vision more radical than that of any previous post-war Prime Minister, including his grandfather, Kishi Nobusuke, Prime Minister 1957-1960, who in 1960 pushed through the US-Japan Security Treaty agreement against massive opposition.

Yet the nature of the changing balance of forces in the nation state and the global system is such that the full weight of such changes, or their implications, may not be immediately felt at the centre, in Tokyo, or grasped by the major media, Japanese or international. At the periphery, however, especially in Okinawa, the lines of regional, national, international, and global policy intersect and the grand design has immediate implications for everyday life. Following earlier essays in this journal, and my co-authored book with Satoko Oka Norimatsu in 2012,¹ in the series commencing in this journal late in 2013, I have focussed on the implications of two specific events: the decision by the Okinawa Governor on an application by the Government of Japan for license to reclaim a large sector of Oura Bay in Northern Okinawa for construction of a US Marine Corps base, to which the existing base at Futenma would ultimately be transferred, and the election of a city mayor in Nago, the site of the projected base. Previous articles covered the former, the build-up through 2013 towards the decision eventually announced by Governor Nakaima on 27 December to reverse his previous stance that Futenma should be transferred "outside Okinawa" and grant the license.² This essay considers the latter: the events leading to and from the election held in Nago City on 19 January 2014.

For Abe Shinzo's Government, the security relationship with the United States demanded construction of a replacement facility for the existing Futenma Marine Air station, awkward and obsolescent as it had become sitting in the middle of the bustling town of Ginowan in densely populated central Okinawa. Even without spectacular incidents such as the crash of a marine helicopter onto Okinawa International University in 2004, it was plain that such a huge, sprawling military facility, once described by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as the "world's most dangerous" base, had no place in a major city, just a stone's throw from schools, hospitals, universities and residences. For both governments, however, it was long taken for granted that it would not be closed down, only replaced, and that its replacement would be larger, more comprehensive, technologically advanced, and located also in Okinawa. Nowhere else would it be possible today to construct a new US base on such favourable terms for the United States, yet there is no strategic reason why the base had to be built in Okinawa. It was just that political considerations dictated it for the Japanese leadership. That very fact, however, was taken as proof by Okinawans that their island was a shared US-Japan colony.

In other words, well into the 21st century's second decade, the struggle for colonial liberation,³ democracy, human rights and the rule of law fully engaged the people of Okinawa, and especially the people of this small town which found itself in the eye of the storm, against the forces of the nation state of Japan and its American sponsor/patron.

Between early 2010 and late 2013, an "All-Okinawa" consensus prevailed, in which the Governor, the Prefectural Assembly, the local governing bodies of Okinawan towns and villages, and the Okinawan branches of national political parties (including the ruling conservative Liberal Democratic Party and New Komeito) all opposed the role assigned Okinawa in US and Japanese alliance politics, and above all the construction of yet another base on Okinawa. The climactic expression of that unity was the delegation of representative Okinawans (including 38 city, town, and village mayors, 41 heads of city, town, or village assemblies, 29 members of the Okinawan prefectural assembly) to Tokyo in January 2013 that served upon the national government a document of demand known as *Kempakusho*: the MV 22 Osprey (VTOL or vertical takeoff and landing) Marine Corps aircraft, introduced into Okinawa against universal opposition (due to their propensity to crash and the noise nuisance they created) late in 2012, should be withdrawn, and Futenma should be closed and returned, without replacement in Okinawa. Governor Nakaima and Mayor Inamine of Nago were in the forefront of Tokyo fire because the consent of the former was a legal requirement for the commencement of the process of reclamation of the Oura Bay base site, and the consent of the latter because the site was in mayor Inamine's city.

Through 2013, therefore, the Abe government attached a high priority to defeating that "All Okinawa" movement. It continued to insist to Washington there would be no change of plan: the original deployment of 12 Ospreys would not only be maintained but it would be doubled, and Henoko would be built. To deliver on these promises, it applied steadily mounting pressure through the year on both governor and mayor.

The success first in imposing LDP party discipline on the Okinawan members of the national Diet, then in formally forcing the Okinawa chapter of the party accept Tokyo's discipline, and then in exacting the Governor's consent, i.e. inducing him to reverse his stance and to consent to the base construction, have been covered in previous essays in this series.

Election - Campaign and Outcome

Late in 2013, contemplating the mayoral election scheduled for January 2014, Tokyo's initial concern was that the pro-base vote might be weakened by its vote being split. Initially, two pro-base candidates were nominated, former (2006-2010) mayor Shimabukuro Yoshikazu and former Okinawan Deputy Governor and close associate of Governor Nakaima, Suematsu Bunshin. Tokyo therefore intervened to impose discipline around a single candidate. It chose Suematsu.⁴ Such an intervention, involving senior members of government and of the ruling party (including two former heads of the Department of Defense) was without precedent and plainly in breach at least of the spirit of the constitutional provisions for "local self-government" (articles 92-95). Having chosen "its" candidate, Tokyo then proceeded to orchestrate his campaign, dispatching a steady stream of senior government and ruling party officials to Nago as part of the campaign designed to persuade, bribe, divide and conquer the City. Astonishingly, in the contest between the state of Japan and the city of Nago, it was the people of Nago who on 19 January emerged triumphant, many of its citizens being stirred to anger, wounded pride, and stubborn determination, by the interventions.

The events of that day were at one level quintessentially local and routine. In the quadrennial election for mayor of the city of Nago (population ca. 62,000) in Northern Okinawa, the incumbent, 68-year old Inamine Susumu, supported by minority political parties and a coalition of citizen groups, defeated his 65-year old "conservative" (supported by the national government and the Liberal Democratic Party) opponent Suematsu Bunshin by a substantial majority.⁵ For the first time in a Nago City election the choice was clear: Suematsu insisted there could be no true "development" of the city without embrace of the base project and Inamine that there could be no such "development" if the base went ahead.

Over his four years in office, incumbent Inamine had emerged as the greatest obstacle to the base construction plans of the Japanese and US governments and to Prime Minister Abe. Essentially non-ideological and a small town politician, history and circumstance had made him into a most unlikely "Public Enemy Number One." His offence was his insistence on democratic principle and his refusal to be bought. He was determined to uphold the stance taken in all democratic forums by the Okinawan people over 17 years, and in an especially united and unequivocal form since 2010, that of refusal to allow the construction of a major new military installation for the US Marine Corps on the island of Okinawa. Since the designated site was the hamlet of Henoko, fronting the Oura Bay in the City of Nago, his city was at the centre of the contest. Okinawans feel they have borne the weight of the US military presence in Japan for well over half a century, beginning with its destruction in the Battle of Okinawa, and are united in demanding it now be reduced. With Okinawa's less than one per cent of the national land already burdened with around three-quarters of all US bases in Japan, the thought of adding substantially to that, committing some of the most precious and pristine marine and forest area of Okinawa Island to a further half century or more of subordination to US military purpose, was simply outrageous.



Oura Bay, adjacent to Henoko, Nago City

The formal message presented the electorate by the two candidates as the basis of their respective campaigns was instructive.⁶ The "Association for a Nago City to be Proud Of" (Inamine camp) declared that Nago would not surrender and that the people's will had been made clear by surveys showing 84 per cent opposition to any base transfer to Henoko (*Ryukyu shimpo*, 14 January 2014), 65 per cent not supporting Governor Nakaima [in his late December surrender to the Abe pressure] (*Ryukyu shimpo*, 14 January 2014) and 71 per cent not supporting the Abe government (*Okinawa Taimusu*, 17 December 2013). The Association declared with pride that Nago City had been "reborn as a city that stood on its own feet" and had, over the years of Inamine's first term, substantially increased the city budget, public works spending and the accumulated reserve fund, while rejecting base-related Tokyo monies. Inamine would protect the safety and security of Nago people and protect nature and future generations by preventing the construction of any new base in the city. The "Association for a Nago City of Dreams and Hope" (the Suematsu camp) on the other hand promised to "get Nago moving" under a new leader, to revitalize the economy, improve municipal, educational and health services, including the establishment of a comprehensive hospital, and it promised close cooperation with the national government to help realize "Prime Minister Abe's vision." It offered the prospect of a "Nago

Development Fund" of 50 billion yen and a base relocation subsidy of 26.1 billion yen. (In a city whose annual budget is roughly 30 billion yen, these were astronomical figures.) Although Suematsu had earlier adopted an overtly pro-base construction position, as his campaign evolved he spoke less and less of it, concentrating instead on the monies it would bring.

On the day following the election, the Okinawan daily *Ryukyu shimpo* wrote

"Before Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and President Obama announce to various foreign countries that they 'share the universal values of freedom and democracy, respect for basic human rights, and the rule of law', we want democracy to be implemented in Okinawa too... It is time to give up any thought of a base transfer within Okinawa."⁷

Through 2013, the steady escalation of pressure from Tokyo seemed to be successfully undermining what Tokyo most feared – the "all Okinawa" spirit that underpinned the Okinawan anti base movement. However, while that was undoubtedly true, it was a hollow victory because the submission by the ruling party's Okinawa chapter in November and by the Governor in December reminded Okinawans of past humiliations and stirred anger and resentment. Prominent members of the LDP Okinawa chapter resigned,⁸ and the Naha City branch of the party actually adopted a resolution protesting Nakaima's submission to Tokyo and denouncing it as "far removed from" the thinking of Okinawan people,⁹ and on 10 January the Prefectural Assembly passed a resolution (24:21) calling on him to resign for having breached his repeated pledges of commitment to transfer the base "beyond Okinawa."¹⁰ The prefecture's parliament thus saw him as no longer qualified to serve as representative of the Okinawan people.

The New Komeito, whose strong grassroots organization had always been a key part of LDP electoral strength in Okinawa, also refused to

accept the call for party discipline as demanded by its national coalition partner, the LDP, instead instructing its voters to follow their conscience in the January 2014 election. Many did, into the Inamine camp. A citizen coalition also launched a suit in the Naha District court against Governor Nakaima, seeking cancellation of his license approval on grounds that Article 4 of the Public Water Body Reclamation Act required landfill to make proper and reasonable use of national land and to be environmentally friendly.¹¹

As the wave of anger rose around him in the days and weeks following his Tokyo act of submission, Nakaima gave further grounds to Okinawans to suspect that he had been secretly conspiring against them. Following reports that he had secretly visited Tokyo three days after the Nago election for talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga and LDP Secretary-General Ishiba, Nakaima first responded that he had not done so, but then, told that both Ishiba and Suga had admitted the meeting took place, altered his position to say that "I did not have any intention to have met them" (*"atta tsumori wa arimasen"*), a bizarre evasion that was as much nonsense in Japanese as in English.¹² A formal "recall" procedure, amounting to dismissal, was under discussion. Nakaima's authority had collapsed in all but formal terms.

The Tokyo belief that Okinawans could in the end be bought, and that it was simply a matter of finding their price, seemed to be deep-rooted. It reflected discrimination and contempt. In the agreement with Nakaima reached on 25 December, the national government was to include a sum of "at least 5 billion yen per year for each year up to 2021 (35 billion yen or roughly \$350 million in total) under the heading of "Northern Development Fund."¹³ When LDP Secretary General Ishiba joined Suematsu on the Nago platform three days before the election, he spoke of a "new" fund of 50 billion yen (roughly \$500 million). Inamine responded that "dangling money in front of people to try to win their attention is money politics pure and simple."¹⁴ When the Tokyo gift horse's mouth was pried open for inspection in the wake of the Ishiba visit, it turned out, even according to LDP party authorities, that Ishiba had not in fact been referring to any "new" fund but to the possibility that Okinawa might create one itself out of its existing and promised monies.¹⁵ Inamine was certainly not alone in seeing this as trickery, pure and simple, and an insult to the Nago people's intelligence.¹⁶ It may well be that this attempted bribe, seen through by Nago people to the point that the promise had to be dropped from later campaign speeches, so offended the pride and dignity of Nago voters that it might have decisively swung the support of a significant group of conservatives towards Inamine.¹⁷

As the election approached Nago City people spoke of an unprecedented atmosphere of intimidation and fear. Nothing could have been more telling of the nature of Abe Shinzo's Japan than the "assault of the state mobilizing its authority and its money" to secure the outcome it wanted in a small town election.¹⁸ "Koan" (public security) officials brandished cameras menacingly at those participating in Inamine election meetings, posters insulting or lampooning Inamine were plastered on "every lamppost" in the city, and car loads of senior officials from government or party headquarters were conspicuous, as rumours spread that they were delivering bundles of cash to businesses or households. As "*kambo kimitsuhi*" (Cabinet Secretariat Secret Funds) had been used to unseat Governor Ota in 1998 when he chose to withhold cooperation from the national government,¹⁹ so there could be no doubt that they were used once again in 2014 to deal with the "defiance" of Mayor Inamine.

Governor Nakaima threw himself with remarkable energy – some saw it as gusto – into the campaign for the pro-base candidate, Suematsu. Though hospitalized in Tokyo only weeks earlier for "severe pains" to his leg and hip and ordered a month's rest upon his discharge, he was to be seen day after day unaided by wheel-chair or walking stick, occasionally even jogging, around Nago on the Suematsu campaign trail.²⁰

For such an uneven contest, pitting an essentially local coalition around the mayor against the Japanese state and ruling party, the January 19 election outcome was astonishing. In the unlikely setting of this small Japanese "backwater," what occurred that day has to be seen as a decisive act in a long running contest between state and locality over basic democratic principles of popular sovereignty and self-government. Nago citizens, resisting a level of intervention – including bribery and intimidation – on the part of the national government for which modern history has no precedent, in effect said a resounding "No," firstly to the government in Tokyo, and secondly, indirectly, to the Pentagon and the US government.

Precisely because of the importance of the principle at stake, however, the national government lost no time in declaring that it intended to ignore the outcome and compel the city's submission, even if necessary passing a special law to accomplish it. In the weeks between Governor Nakaima's announcement that he would permit the reclamation of Oura Bay and the Nago election, the Foreign and Defense ministers, Chief Cabinet Secretary and Secretary-General of the Liberal Democratic Party, all declared that the project would go ahead irrespective of Nago's decision.²¹ Citizens could have no say in the future of their city. Despite, or perhaps because of, the polls showing that hardly anyone in Okinawa (just 9 per cent in the immediate pre-poll survey)²² favoured the Henoko project) Secretary-General Ishiba declared

"This is an election about the development of Nago and the northern part of Okinawa prefecture. The location of the base is something the central government will decide."²³

Aftermath

The citizens of Nago had just one day to savour their decisive electoral victory before the government in Tokyo posted notices inviting tenders for the preliminary construction and survey works for the Henoko project.²⁴ The government agenda called for contracts to be signed by the end of March 2014 for these preliminary and planning works, and reclamation to commence in the spring of 2015.

Defense Secretary Onodera Itsunori announced that the election results would not affect the plans for Henoko. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide added that the authority of a city mayor was limited, meaning that he could not block something decided by the national government.²⁵ Abe's government was reportedly contemplating the passage of special legislation to strip the mayor of his powers, and it might be already seeking the cooperation of the National Police Agency and the Coastguard,²⁶ and appointing a special Vice Minister empowered to use lawsuits, administrative direction, and "correctional measures"²⁷ in order to help overcome Inamine's threatened non-cooperation on use of city roads and harbours, and to crush the determined Nago citizenry.

Strictly speaking it was of course true that the national government bore responsibility for national matters, not least defense, but at the same time the establishment of a new US military base, alienating major parts of the town for half a century or more and affecting all aspects of life – environment, human rights, children's education, while exposing the town to risk of annihilation should the military forces they would be hosting ever go into action against a neighbour country – impinged upon the constitutionally entrenched rights to local self-government and to peaceful existence. These are matters of the utmost seriousness, on which no town could be expected simply to trust a national government. History had taught Okinawans in particular to be extremely careful of entrusting their fate to any government. What the Abe government viewed as the relationship between a legitimate national government and a hostile and unreasonable city Okinawans saw as "a classic case of bullying of the weak."

It seems that the Abe government intended to ignore the electoral outcome, and that it was fundamentally shifting its approach to Nago. Till January 19, it had insisted that it would engage in patient and “sincere” explanation to secure the consent of local representative institutions and officials. Afterwards, it declared that the base would be built even if it meant trampling on the wishes of the surrounding communities, moving without delay towards the imposition of a massive new military complex by the same means as the original network of US bases had been built during the 1950s – by bayonet and bulldozer. As the *Ryukyu shimpo*'s editorial writer put it,

“However much one may search, it seems likely that there is no democratic state in the world that so blatantly tramples on the will of the people.”²⁸

Yet national and global attention was scarce, and the significance of the eruption of democratic struggle at the heart of the US-Japan controlled “democratic” world little understood.²⁹

One Okinawan commentator commented after the election that it had produced one victor but three who had been defeated.³⁰ He meant by the latter candidate Suematsu, Governor Nakaima who had supported him throughout, and Prime Minister Abe whose government had orchestrated and supported his campaign. Of the defeated three, however, only one, Prime Minister Abe, who controlled the instruments of military and police force, had the means to fight back. During his first spell in office, in May 2007, by sending the Maritime Self Defense Forces ship, the Bungo, to intimidate civil protesters at Henoko, Abe had done what no other Prime Minister in post-war Japan could have contemplated: use “Self Defense Forces” against Japan’s own citizens. Seven years later, his determination appeared even stronger.

As the re-elected mayor Inamine declared his resolve to use the powers at his disposal as mayor, to refuse any talks with Tokyo predicated on reclamation, and to “fight as long as I live” to ensure that no base be built “on land or sea” within the City, the question of mayoral authority had to be faced. It seemed clear that a mayor strongly opposed to plans for a project within his city could exercise that authority in ways that would immensely complicate and delay construction works. He could refuse permission for the use of city roads, rivers, dams, and harbours for construction-related vehicles.³¹ It seemed improbable that the government would be able to transport around Okinawa the staggering 3.4 million dump-trucks loaded with landfill (21 million cubic metres),³² in the face of an uncooperative or even hostile public and its elected representatives. The resort to special legislation to deprive the powers of a mayor who enjoyed the support of a substantial majority of citizens would be a drastic step, uncertain of success and carrying the risk of destabilizing not just Okinawa but Japan and the region. Whatever else such a process might be, it could scarcely be “democratic.” Mayor Inamine – a modest, quietly spoken, non-ideological but resolute, civic figure³³ – demands to be taken at his word when he says “NO.”



Mayor Inamine on duty at a local school crossing, Nago City, 20 January 2014

(Photo: *Ryukyu shimpo*)

Nakaima to a plan which, even if it worked in the short term, might in the longer term lead to confrontation with Washington and undermine his resolve to retain the US Marine Corps in Okinawa.

Furthermore, the resort to force to impose the US military facility was not something that could be taken lightly in Washington. Prime Minister Abe could say “No” to Nago City but he could not say “No” to the so-called “Japan handlers” in Washington, nearly all of whom had begun cautiously to express the view that it was time for Japan to start thinking of a “Plan B” in the event of collapse of the Henoko project. When Abe’s mentor, John Hamre, president and CEO of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and former Deputy Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Defense Policy Board, whom Abe had addressed affectionately and respectfully as “John” on his February 2013 Washington visit, opined on the eve of the Nago election that it might be time to reconsider “the long term stationing of large groups of US forces outside the United States because of the friction [they cause] with local residents,” it was an admonition that Abe could not afford to ignore.³⁴

Hamre’s words would have reminded Abe of the rumbles at high levels in Washington over several years, formulated in 2011 in the reference by the powerful trio of Carl Levin (Chair of the Armed Services Committee), Jim Webb (former Secretary of the Navy and Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee on East Asia and the Pacific), and John McCain (ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee) to the Henoko project as “unrealistic, unworkable, and unaffordable.”³⁵ The dilemma for both Tokyo and Washington is posed in part by the stubborn resistance of Nago, but in part too because of the nature of the deal struck between Nakaima and Abe that Futenma be returned to Japan “within five years.” Noting that any construction at Henoko would take far longer than five years, and probably longer than the official estimate of ten years, Peter Ennis writes,

“The political dilemma for both Washington and Tokyo is that a temporary relocation of Futenma’s operations outside of Okinawa would undermine the argument that Henoko is the only viable alternative to the current Futenma site. For Abe, failure to seriously pursue closure of the Futenma base within five years would break his pledge to Nakaima. But pursuit of a temporary site for Futenma’s operations outside of Okinawa would break the united front among Japanese and US officials that Futenma must and will inevitably remain open unless and until the Henoko air base is operational.”³⁶

Abe’s desperation to make progress at Henoko was a product, therefore, not only of his resentment and fear of the people of Nago, but also of the fact that he had committed himself in the agreement with Governor

There was a further consideration, to which George Washington University Professor Mike Mochizuki alluded in saying,

"If the Japanese and US governments will continue to stick to the charade that the coastal landfill Henoko base will be built as planned ... it could give rise to a stridently anti-US base governor in Okinawa after Governor Nakaima retires [late in 2014], and weaken Okinawan support for more strategically critical bases on Okinawa, like Kadena Air Base."³⁷

If reports early in 2014 of the return of Abe's health problems that forced him to resign in 2007 were correct, they would not be without good reason.³⁸

For the moment, however, short-term concerns were uppermost and the outlook was dark. A confrontation between Tokyo and Okinawa, potentially even one in which Tokyo resorted to the overt use of force, would expose not only Japanese politics but the security relationship to huge strains, potentially jeopardizing the base system itself. If Abe, intent on securing "progress" on resolving the longstanding "Futenma relocation" issue to report to President Obama continues to press on by brushing aside or crushing all opposition, the confrontation between the nation state and Okinawa would continue and deepen and, instead of delivering a triumphant "mission accomplished" message, would risk having the planned April Obama visit to Japan postponed or even cancelled.³⁹

Prospect

Nago City now constitutes the heart of a challenge by Okinawa to mainland Japan, to US-Japan strategic plans, and to democratic and internationalist movements around the world: if state power succeeds in isolating and crushing democratic forces in Nago, it will surely proceed to do the same elsewhere. During the Nago election campaign, a small group of 29 scholars, peace advocates, and artists from the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia (this writer included) released a Statement opposing the construction of any new base on Okinawa and demanding the unconditional return of Futenma.⁴⁰ The response, especially from Okinawa itself, for what was essentially a modest and long overdue expression of solidarity, was astonishing. Many, including Mayor Inamine, spoke of taking heart from the sense that the Okinawan cause, Nago's cause, was just and internationally supported. Solidarity is something that Okinawans have long looked for and deserved - by the justice of their struggle, their persistence over so many years, and the resolutely non-violent, citizen-centred democratic frame of their movement. Yet such solidarity, whether from mainland Japan or from the international community, has been rare. In the grim days that now seem to lie ahead, a new national and international movement of support will have to be constructed. If any place in Asia deserves a democratic spring, it is surely Okinawa, and Nago City.

Gavan McCormack is emeritus professor of Australian National University, co-author, with Satoko Oka Norimatsu, of [*Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States*](#), 2012, and co-author, with John Dower, of *Tenkanki no Nihon e – Amerikaka, Ajiaka*, NHK Bukkusu 2014. Much of his Okinawa-related writing, including the series posted between November 2013 and January 2014, now concluded by the present article, may be consulted on this site.

See:

Gavan McCormack, "[Introduction: The Continued Saga of the Henoko Base and Japan-US-Okinawa Relations](#)," 25 November 2013.

Sakurai Kunitoshi, "[Okinawans Facing a Year of Trial: the Okinawa-Japan-US Relationship and the East China Sea](#)," 4 March, 2013.

Urashima Etsuko, "[A Nago citizen's opinion on the Henoko Marine base construction](#)," 25 November 2013.

Sakurai Kunitoshi, "[If the law is observed, there can be no reclamation: A mayoral opinion endorsed by Citizens of Nago and Okinawa](#)," 25 November 2013.

Yara Tomohiro, "[Withdrawal of US Marines blocked by Japan in the 1970s](#)," 25 November 2013.

Sakurai Kunitoshi, "[Environmental Restoration of Former US Military bases in Okinawa](#)," 25 November 2013.

Gavan McCormack, "['Okinawa Again' – Okinawa Special Series – A Postscript](#)," 1 December 2013.

Gavan McCormack, "[Bitter Soup for Okinawans - The Governor's Year-End Betrayal](#)," 6 January 2014.

Recommended citation: Gavan McCormack, "The Front Line in the Struggle for Democracy in Japan – Nago City, Okinawa," That Asia-Pacific Journal, Vol. 12, Issue 4, No. 3, January 27, 2014.

Notes

¹ Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands – Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2012.

² For full details of the eight-part series (nine with addition of the present article) on Okinawa published on this site between November 2013 and January 2014 see note at the end of this text.

³ Following his re-election, Inamine Susumu declared his intention to visit the United States in the near future to appeal to public opinion over Okinawa's "colonial situation." ("Saisen no Inamine shicho, 'shokuminchi jotai' o Beikoku de uttaetai," *Ryukyuu shimpo*, 21 January 2014.)

⁴ On the extraordinary manoeuvring to compel the withdrawal of Shimabukuro and unification of the Nago conservative camp around Suematsu, see Nonaki Daiki, "Shusho kantei, jiminto, 'Sankei shimbun' Tokyo kara no ozomashii 'ipponka' atsuryoku," *Shukan kinyobi*, 10 January 2014, pp. 10-12.

⁵ 19,839 votes to 15, 684 in a 76.71 per cent poll.

⁶ Advertisements in the two Okinawan newspapers on 17 January (Inamine) and 18 January (Suematsu) 2014.

- ⁷ "Inamine shi saisen, hokoritakai rekishiteki shindan Nichibei wa Henoko o dannen seyo," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 20 January 2014.
- ⁸ Details in preceding essay, "Bitter soup for Okinawans – The Governor's year-end betrayal," *The Asia-Pacific Journal – Japan Focus*, 6 January 2014.
- ⁹ It was the first such resolution to be adopted in Okinawan history. "Naha shigikai, Henoko shonin ni kogi 'koyaku to mujun' shiteki," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 7 January 2014.
- ¹⁰ "Chiji jinin yokyu o kaketsu, sansei tasu, kengikai hajime," *Okinawa taimusu*, 11 January 2014.
- ¹¹ "Over 120 plaintiffs join lawsuit for withdrawal of Henoko relocation approval," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 21 January 2014.
- ¹² "Chiji mikkai, kenmin e no niyu no uragiri da," editorial, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 25 January 2014.
- ¹³ Sori kantei, "Nakaima Okinawa chiji to no mendan," 25 December 2013.
- ¹⁴ "Nago shicho sen, shubansen ni Sumatsu, Inamine shi, shiji kakudai e zenryoku, Okinwa," *Jiji tsushin*, 16 January 2014.
- ¹⁵ "Zaigen wa kizon yosan nai," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 18 January 2014.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ "Jakusha ijime' no tenkei," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 23 January 2014.
- ¹⁸ Personal communications.
- ¹⁹ For details, Norimatsu and McCormack, *Resistant Islands*, passim.
- ²⁰ "Min-i futatabi, Inamine shi saisen," part 1, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 22 January 2014.
- ²¹ "Nago shi seron chosa, shimin no yokyu ya gimon ni kotaeyo," editorial, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 15 January 2014.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Ishiba on Sunday 12 January, quoted in Eric Johnston, "Incumbent leading in Nago race," *Japan Times*, 17 January 2014.
- ²⁴ [Okinawa Defense Bureau](#) - Henoko Project PDF.
- ²⁵ "Shichosen seifu hanno, min-i mushi wa yurusarenai," editorial, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 21 January 2014.
- ²⁶ "Jakusha ijime'," ibid.
- ²⁷ "[Henoko isetsu, Nago shicho no bogai ni sonae tokumei tanto, seifu, daishikko, sosho nado taisho hoshin](#)," *Sankei Shimbun*, 22 January 2014.
- ²⁸ "Henoko nyusatsu kokoku, minshu kokka no jisatsu koi da," editorial, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 22 January 2014.
- ²⁹ One article, more perceptive than most, appeared in the *New York Times*. Martin Fackler, "In a city on Okinawa, Mayor's re-election real blow to Marine base relocation plan," *New York Times*, 20 January 2014.
- ³⁰ Matsumoto Tsuyoshi, "Nago shicho sen," (special essay), *Ryukyu shimpo*, 23 January 2014.
- ³¹ "Henoko teitai sasezu, Suga shi, kensei enen to," *Okinawa tamusu*, 21 January 2014.
- ³² McCormack and Norimatsu, p. 164.
- ³³ From around 7:30 in the morning of the day following his election triumph, Inamine was in his customary position as road crossing attendant outside the local school. ("Toko jido ni haitachi," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 21 January 2014.)
- ³⁴ "Hamure shi hatsugen – zai Oki kaiheitai tetta no teiki o," editorial, *Ryukyu shimpo*, 18 January 2014.
- ³⁵ McCormack and Norimatsu, p. 203.
- ³⁶ Peter Ennis, "[New election revives doubts that US Marine facility at Henoko will be built](#)," *Dispatch Japan*, 20 January 2014.
- ³⁷ Quoted in Ennis, ibid.
- ³⁸ For reference to those reports, click [here](#).
- ³⁹ "Shicho sen seifu hanno," op. cit.
- ⁴⁰ "International scholars and peace advocates support Okinawan struggle to oppose the Henoko landfill," *Ryukyu shimpo*, 8 January 2014, (in [English](#)), and (in [Japanese](#)).

