

try's just-issued *Diplomatic Bluebook 1990*:

While acknowledging that there has been an easing of East-West tensions and that Soviet President Gorbachov has been a "major initiator of these changes," the report cautions: "The Soviet Union maintains a huge military capability, and the uncertainty surrounding the situation within the Soviet Union (including Gorbachov's own position) is a cause of uncertainty in the outlook of the future of international relations." The Soviet Union, the report adds, has shown no change in principle in its position regarding the Northern Territories, though "this issue has recently been debated in the Soviet Union with a flexibility that would have been inconceivable before, and it appears that the Soviet understanding of this . . . problem, while still inadequate, is slowly advancing."

The message is clear: Japan is willing and able to assist the Soviet Union in "developing a better understanding of the Kuriles issue." Mr. Shevardnadze was told as much in Tokyo in early September. His proposal in a Vladivostok speech a few days earlier, that Asian security issues be collectively dealt with in an Asian and Pacific foreign ministers meeting in 1993, however, received only polite, but cool attention. The Northern Territories issue is a bilateral Japan-Soviet problem and must be gotten out of the way before other matters are put on the agenda.

Japan and Russia's stormy relationship

by Uwe Parpart

In the late 18th and early 19th century, Czarist Russia became the first of the Western powers attempting to "open up" Japan. In 1792, a Russian envoy, Adam Laxman, landed at Nemuro in northeast Hokkaido (Ezo) and requested trade relations, only to be rebuffed by the *bakufu*—the government of the shogun—which in response drew up plans for a coastal defense system. A second Russian envoy, N.P. Rezanov, arrived in Nagasaki in 1804 with the same request, and upon being refused, ordered his men to attack the island of Etorofu. Again in 1811, Russian Navy Lt. V.M. Golovnin landed on Kunashiri Island and was arrested by the Japanese; all these incidents occurred some 40 years before other foreign nations' attempts to force their way into Japan, and all targeted Hokkaido and the Northern Territories.

After the 1900 Boxer Rebellion in China, during which Japanese troops participated in the allied expedition to rescue foreign nationals in Peking, Russia moved into southern

Manchuria and began to encroach upon Korea, a country Japan had traditionally regarded as a buffer state between itself and China. With China weakened internally and battered by the Western powers' "open door" policy, Meiji Japan consequently came to regard Russian Far East expansionism as the major external security threat. In 1904, Japanese ships attacked the Russian Fleet at Port Arthur to stem further Russian advances. In the ensuing Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese Fleet under Adm. Togo Heihachiro destroyed the Russian Baltic Fleet in the Tsushima Strait between Korea and southern Japan, and as a result of the Sept. 5, 1905 peace treaty signed at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Russia was pushed back out of southern Manchuria, surrendered its economic interests there to Japan, ceded the southern half of Sakhalin Island, and recognized Japanese primacy in Korea.

From this point onward, Japanese influence in Korea and Manchuria continually increased at Chinese and Russian expense, leading to the formal annexation of Korea in 1910, and culminating in 1932, subsequent to the "Manchurian Incident," in the establishment of the Japanese puppet state of Manchuko, formally ruled—since 1934—by the last emperor of the Ch'ing dynasty, but in reality fully controlled by Japan's Kwantung Army.

In line with a League of Nations committee report of October 1932, the early 1930s de facto annexation of Manchuria by Japan has generally been classified in the West as the initial move of Japanese aggression against China. However, in reality, as a consequence of China's weakness, and as understood by Japan, the alternative to Japanese power in Manchuria—and in Korea—until after World War II was never Chinese power—or Korean sovereignty—but domination of the region by the Soviet Union. This finally became clear to all no later than June 25, 1950, with the Soviet-backed and -inspired North Korean attack on South Korea, which had as its strategic aim not only the incorporation of all Korea into the communist realm, but also the subsequent subversion of Japan.

Had American war and immediate postwar policy and policy aims, as enshrined in the Yalta agreements, not been governed by astonishing delusions about the good-natured "Uncle Joe" Stalin, various and sundry world-federalist schemes, etc., such Soviet intentions in Northeast Asia as laid bare by the North Korean attack could readily have been inferred from the circumstances of Soviet entry into the war in the Pacific less than a week before it ended: In April 1941, at a time when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was in force, and after Soviet and Japanese armies had tested each other in two full-scale battles in 1938-39 along the Manchurian border, the Soviet Union signed a neutrality pact with Japan. In spite of urgent American and British appeals for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan, for months after Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945, Stalin, claiming logistical difficulties, did nothing. These difficulties were sud-

denly overcome on Aug. 9, 1945. Three days after Hiroshima, on the day the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and marched into Manchuria. Hundreds of thousands of members of the Kwantung Army were transferred into Siberian labor concentration camps and close to 50,000 of them died there. Soviet troops occupied the southern Kurile Islands and forcibly expelled 17,000 Japanese residents.

Soviets encouraged by Harriman

Encouraged by U.S. special envoy Averell Harriman, Moscow further demanded to have a say and share in the occupation of the Japanese main islands. Only Gen. Douglas MacArthur's steadfast opposition blocked this Soviet objective, and his practice of ignoring and forestalling directives issued by the Far East commission, set up by the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States to formulate and oversee execution of occupation policy, prevented the Soviets from exercising the desired influence over the occupation and Japan's future international role.

In September 1951, impressed by the obvious implications of the Korean War for the security of Northeast Asia, the United States arranged for the convening of a peace conference with Japan in San Francisco. At the conference, the U.S. government, mindful of promises made to the Soviet Union at Yalta and Potsdam, insisted that Japan not only recognize the independence of Korea and renounce all rights to Taiwan, the Pescadores, and southern Sakhalin, but also to the southern Kuriles. The Soviet Union attended the San Francisco conference, but did not co-sign the peace treaty. Nonetheless, Soviet claims on the southern Kuriles are based on the proceedings of the San Francisco conference and on the previous Yalta and Potsdam agreements, to which Japan, of course, was not a party. Japan, in turn, insists that Soviet failure to sign the peace treaty leaves the Northern Territories question open and its historical rights to the four islands, which it did not seize in war, unabridged.

The U.S.-Japan Peace Treaty and the simultaneously negotiated U.S.-Japan Security Pact went into effect in April 1952, restoring Japanese sovereignty in most respects. Japanese security, however, has remained dependent on the United States, and the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, blocking expansion of Soviet influence in the Asia-Pacific region, has been a target of Soviet subversion ever since it was signed. In 1975, with the final defeat of U.S. efforts in Vietnam and major reductions of U.S. Asia-Pacific military strength, the Soviet Union saw the golden opportunity of moving into the breach and making good its claim of being a major Asian power. Massive military reinforcements, prompted by no defensive requirement, were moved to the Far East, culminating in the reactivation in March 1979 of the High Command Far East, and, most ominously for Japan, the militarization of the southern Kuriles.

Japanese-Soviet trade inches forward

by Lydia Cherry

When Japan and the Soviet Union held inter-governmental consultations at the end of October, the top item on the agenda was when the Soviets would repay the \$470 million owed to Japanese firms. During three days of talks, from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, the issue apparently was not settled, and the Japanese Foreign Ministry on Nov. 9 issued a statement saying it was dissatisfied with the Soviet response. Japan has refused to give credits to the U.S.S.R. until Moscow returns the disputed Kurile islands, and is clearly holding out on numerous forms of economic cooperation hoped for by the Soviets. But in spite of this, some economic deals are moving forward.

Soviet officials have appealed to Japan for emergency shipments of food, medical supplies, and consumer goods. "At a meeting with the Foreign Ministry in October, we mentioned how severely we are suffering economically, especially shortages of consumer goods such as food and medical supplies," a Soviet diplomat in Tokyo was quoted by the *Washington Times* on Nov. 2. The diplomat said Japan has "not yet responded."

Moscow wants Japan's involvement in the full-scale development of Siberia, but Japan has refused. In the areas of steel, aluminum, and oil, however, collaboration is increasing between the Soviets and Japanese private companies that are closely aligned with the ruling party.

Steel

Nippon Steel Corp. announced Oct. 26 that four Japanese steelmakers, including itself, have received an order from the Soviet Union for 105,000 tons of seamless steel pipe, to be shipped between next January and March. This reverses a downturn due to Moscow's shortage of foreign exchange; during the first half of 1990, sales of steel dropped by 58%. A Nippon Steel official added that the export of steel pipe to Moscow had been suspended, pending payment for steel already delivered.

Aluminum

The Soviet Union's external trade agency concluded contracts with several Japanese trading houses, including Mitsui, to sell an additional 8,000 tons of raw aluminum between July and December 1990. If delivered on time, Japanese imports of raw aluminum from the U.S.S.R. this year will amount to 111,000 tons, or about five times the total for